

Celebrate

HOW'S YOUR "YEAR" BEEN?

Our year of "Celebrate Youth" will draw to a close this October.

Youth

What large or small steps have we made this year?

Are we more aware of the youth around us?

Are we more aware of how our Rule and Constitutions address youth?

Have we reached out to youth and young adults?

How have we celebrated youth?

WE HOPE TO HEAR FROM YOU!

by **JAN PARKER, SFO**
NATIONAL EXECUTIVE
COUNCIL SECRETARY



As we gather this coming October as a National Family we will acknowledge this past year's efforts. Each local fraternity is asked to write about their response to this year's theme and send it to your Regional Minister as soon as possible – two or three sentences are all we need! With the help of some SFO troubadours we hope these sentences can be put into song, or at least compiled in a little book. This "theme song" will be sung at our NAFRA gathering in October.

MOVING AHEAD FOR YOUTH — NOMINATIONS NEEDED —

As this TAU-USA is going to press our National Executive Council is praying in regards to a plea for nominations from National Minister Tom Bello, sent by email to the NAFRA-L list on July 30th. We hope to have good news to announce as gather for our annual Chapter in October, but at this time we are still open for nominations.

Tom's invitation follows:

For Franciscan Youth,

the National Executive Council is looking, ideally, for a "young" adult or perhaps two "young adults," who can advise fraternities at all levels, especially the local fraternities, on how to attract and motivate Franciscan Youth to work together to further the Franciscan charism.

This person should know the webpage on Franciscan youth:

<http://franciscanyouthusa.com>

and should have direct experience with Youth Ministry. This person might be expected to attend the Annual NAFRA Gathering in Arizona October 26-31, 2010, as well as World Youth Day 2011 in Spain. If you have any advice, suggestions or names, please send them to any member of the NEC or to me.

If you would like to make a formal nomination, please check if the person would like to be considered and have them send a resume and a personal statement to the NEC or to me as to why they would like to be considered for the Chair of the Franciscan Youth/Young Adult Commission. Any nominations made after a Youth/Young Adult Chair has been found will be considered for the Commission.

LET US CONTINUE TO CELEBRATE YOUTH!

We acknowledge with gratitude the wonderful work and the foundation that has been laid in past years by Kathy Taormina and the Youth Commission.

We know that good things have also happened this past year as we have focused on our awareness and outreach to youth. Our progress has always been a communion of our prayers and our efforts, undergirded with love, initiated and blessed by the Spirit.

As we look forward to the next phase for the SFO and Youth, I leave you with a quote from our joyful National Vice-Minister Elaine who says,

"Let our song be sweet and let our song be strong, for our future is to be found in our Youth!"



CELEBRATE YOUTH

by BIEN TORRES, SFO
ST. FRANCIS FRATERNITY
SAN FRANCISCO, CA

C—COME let us celebrate our Franciscan Youths together and,

E—ENCOUNTER Jesus our Lord with one another and show His

L—LOVE, with Mary and the Father's overflowing love and Jesus'

E—ENDURING sacrifices He bore to Calvary

B—BEARING pains from the heavy cross and scourges He received for our sake as He

R—REVEALED the Father's forgiving and everlasting last

A—AND atoned for our misgivings and sinfulness.

T—TOGETHER, together, let's celebrate youth and thank Jesus and the Holy Spirit in

E—EVERLASTING glory and praises, and make our young Franciscans come and say:

Y—YES, we'll follow the Lord Jesus in the footsteps of St. Francis of Assisi in the

O—ORDU FRANCISCANUS SECULARES with

U—UNDIVIDED Franciscan spirit in proclaiming God's Kingdom with

T—TRUE and sincere minds and

H—HEARTS true to live the Gospel to Life, and Life to Gospel.

**COME, CELEBRATE, CELEBRATE,
LET'S CELEBRATE YOUTH,
COME, CELEBRATE, CELEBRATE,
LET'S CELEBRATE YOUTH.**

Franciscans International Partners with Youth to Give Voice to the World's Most Vulnerable

by HEATHER METCALF

"There is a growing awareness of the sublime dignity of human persons, who stand above all things and whose rights and duties are universal and inviolable. They ought, therefore, to have ready access to all that is necessary for living a genuinely human life: for example, food, clothing, housing, the right freely to choose their state of life and set up a family, the right to education, work, to their good name, to respect, to proper knowledge, the right to act according to the dictates of conscience and to safeguard their privacy, and rightful freedom, including freedom of religion."

(Gaudium et Spes
Pastoral Constitution on the
Church in the Modern World
(December 7, 1965))



Franciscans International (FI) represents Franciscans at the United Nations advocating for the rights of the world's most vulnerable. FI advocates at the UN in the spirit of St. Francis, who found God among the rejected, the despised and the poor and worked to build the Kingdom of God on earth together with them.

FI is asking students to join our brothers and sisters from around the world in furthering our efforts on behalf of the world's poor by participating in our **Human Rights Competition**. High school and college students are asked to research issues affecting the world's most vulnerable and express through words, video, song, and art:

"WHY HUMAN RIGHTS MATTER TO ME"

FI will be partnering with schools, universities and parishes across America to launch the competition during the Feast of St. Francis. Each institution will select a winner among its participants to take part in our national competition where the board of Franciscans International will determine the top two winners.

Those selected will be flown to New York in order to spend a day experiencing the ministry of Franciscans International at the United Nations.

Many say the human rights of the youth should be protected because they are the leaders of tomorrow.

Franciscans International believes the youth should be involved with the protection of their rights and the rights of others, not solely because they are the leaders of tomorrow, but because they are the citizens of today.

Come hear Fr. Mike Lasky, OFM Conv. speak about Franciscans International's "**Human Rights Competition**" at our National Conference on October 27, 2010,

and/or email us at

humanrightscomp@fiop.org
to learn how you can participate.

To learn more, please visit our website at:

www.franciscansinternational.org

Celebrating Youth and Young Adults through the Gospel of Service

by BETTI LONGINOTTI, SFO

How many youth and young adults do you know, would live and work a week in the summer without air conditioning, TV, or computer/internet?

Six members from the Diocese of Charlotte participated in a Franciscan Youth and Young Adult Mission trip to the St. Francis Inn in Philadelphia, July 11-19, 2010.

Two from Charlotte, Immaculate Conception Parish, Gabe Hemple and Jake Major; Three from Winston Salem, Our Lady of Mercy/Fatima Parish, Roberta Basquin, Katie Longinotti and Betti Longinotti; One from Greensboro, Saint Paul's Parish, Mary Kate Ferry.

We served the ministries of the St. Francis Inn, Philadelphia-(Kensington neighborhood), preparing and serving meals to the poor and homeless, assisting with deliveries, and the St. Bernadette's Thrift Shop.

The Team of the St. Francis Inn honored them at their Sunday Mass on July 19th within the Inn's Chapel. Brother Fred, Team member at the Inn said, "You all did the 'Iron Man'... not many groups commit to a full week of service, especially during the summer or come this distance to serve!"



The World Youth Day vigil with Pope Benedict XVI, on Saturday evening, August 20, 2011, will culminate with Eucharistic adoration, in which the famous Spanish *Arfe Monstrance* will be used.

Almost 500 years old, it stands approximately nine feet tall, covered with gold and silver. The lightness of its architectural forms in silvergilt and the splendid proportions of all its elements proclaim it a masterpiece.

It weighs 195 kilos and includes 5600 pieces. Enrique de Arfe worked on the monstrance from 1517 to 1524. Juan Sánchez, dean of the Cathedral of Toledo, where the masterpiece is usually housed, said, "We have gladly parted with the monstrance for the youth day celebration thinking of the very great end it will serve."

<http://www.corpuschristitoledo.es/corpus/Ecustodia.php>

YOUTH

FRANCISCAN YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULTS OF THE SOUTHEAST BSSF REGION



Participants with Team*: (back row, left to right) Brother Jeff*, Sister Leslie*, Gabe Hemple, Judy*, Barb*, Brother Fred*, Jake Major; (front row, left to right) Sister Mary*, Roberta Basquin, SFO Candidate, Katie Longinotti, Friar Michael*, Betti Longinotti, SFO, Mary Kate Ferry.

Traveling 10-12 hours by Amtrak to Philadelphia, the participants lived within the Youth Volunteer House of the Franciscan community, on the block where the Inn is located, with no air conditioning, TV or computer. Though we had our challenges and sacrifices to bear, we were richly blessed!

You can learn more about the ministry of the St. Francis Inn by viewing a film created by filmmaker, Gerry Straub, *Room at the Inn*, which may be viewed by a link from his blog at:

<http://gerrystraub.wordpress.com/films>

Straub also wrote the book entitled, *Sun and Moon Over Assisi*, where, as a witness, he refers to an encounter at the St. Francis Inn as the conversion point in his life, from atheist to faithful believer.

More information on the Franciscan Youth and Young Adults of the Southeast, and apostolate of the Secular Franciscan Order (Brothers and Sisters of St. Francis Region) may be found on our website at:

<https://sites.google.com/site/franciscanyouthsoutheast>

or by joining our Facebook Group, *Franciscan Youth and Young Adults of the Southeast*.

Betti serves the Southeast region of the Brothers and Sisters of St. Francis, Secular Franciscan Order, as their Youth and Young Adult Council Animator.

THE SEVEN JOYS OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY MOTHER OF GOD FRATERNITY in Kennebunk, Maine, celebrated youth in a big way this past August. The fraternity, is based at St. Anthony's Franciscan monastery, and are blessed to have a close relationship with the friars, many of whom came from Lithuania during World War II. For a week, the friars hosted some of our Secular Franciscan and Franciscan Youth (YouFra) events.

The National President of the Lithuanian Franciscan Youth Fraternity (YouFra) and SFO, the YouFra International delegate in the National Council of Lithuania, and the YouFra National Spiritual Assistant visited specifically to help evangelize American youth in our locale by speaking about their experiences in serving the Lord through YouFra.

Our fraternity has been laying the groundwork for a few years to begin a YouFra chapter. To this end, we organized a day dedicated to familiarizing area young people, aged 18-35, with the mission of YouFra locally, within in the United States, and worldwide. YouFra has a strong evangelistic presence in Lithuania for their young people, and they were excited about this opportunity to educate others about the mission and calling of YouFra.

On Saturday, August 28, 2010, with the help of our fraternity Spiritual Assistant, Fr. John; Lithuanian Provincial Fr. Astijus; and the National YouFra Spiritual Assistant of Lithuania, Fr. Algis, we arranged a Spirit-filled day on monastery grounds for SFO members and young adults discerning a possible call to YouFra.

At 9:00 am, participants gathered for the morning session of conferences, testimonies, and worship. This was held in two groups, professed secular Franciscans and those who are discerning YouFra.

After a brief break in the afternoon activities continued, concluding the day with Mass at 6:00 pm.



Budding Filmmakers Take Note:

Your filmmaking skills could earn you a trip to next year's *World Youth Day* in Spain.

The organization Goodness Reigns is sponsoring a short-film contest for Catholic teenagers and young adults. The films, which must be seven minutes or shorter, should have a subject relating to one of these four categories:

Church history; Sacraments; Church teachings; or present-day missionary spirit of an individual or Church Ministry.

The top filmmaker in each category will win a trip to Madrid for the youth gathering, which takes place August 16-21, 2011. There will also be awards for high school group and young-adult group entries.

Deadline to compete for the contest is December 1, 2010. For more information, visit: www.goodnessreigns.com



A CALLING To Know God and Share Him with Troubled Youth

by **ROBBIE MACDONALD, SFO**

It is the fourth Sunday of the month. It is a typical San Diego day, sunny with high clouds. As I drive up State Route 163, I wonder how the teen-agers will respond to today's Gospel reading. I exit the freeway and proceed to my destination, Juvenile Hall.

I get out of my car, greet the team members that got there before me and we wait for the remainder of our team. We are a mixed group men, women, young adults and the occasional deaconate candidate. We are called to know and love God and share Him with the young people held here. A priest is assigned for each week. He comes to the facility to hear confessions and offer spiritual counseling. When all the team members have arrived, we join hands, and we pray for the Holy Spirit to inspire us and for the Lord to open the hearts of the children we are about to visit. We are buzzed into the facility. We hand over our drivers licenses in exchange for badges that let us go inside the facility to visit the children.

We walk to the central area and are given our "assignments" - young boys (under 15), girls, or older boys (generally 16-17 years old). We are given two areas and go to the units in pairs. If only two of us have come to the facility, we go alone and must decide which two areas won't have church today. We visit each area for 40 minutes.



As we enter the room where the children and the officers have gathered, we greet them; tell them our first names. The children appear hesitant and eager at the same time. We have Holy Water to give them to bless themselves. We start out with music. Something from the Newsboys, Philips, Craig and Dean or John Michael Talbot. All are Christian musicians and artists that speak to the young people.

Next, we hand out the Gospel readings for the day. We ask for volunteers to read. The girls and younger boys all want to read. The older boys are a little reticent. They seem more peer conscious. But, eventually, four boys do put their hand up to read. When the reading is finished, we ask questions. The questions are open ended - what about the reading spoke to you?, did anything "jump" off the page at you? Can you explain further? We tell them that there is no right or wrong answer. The girls and younger boys often have lively and good discussions. The older boys need a little coaxing. There are times when there is little said. There are also times when there is just no way they will stop talking about the readings and the Lord.

When the discussions are over, we pray intercessory prayers: for just results to court hearings, for the children and their families, for the officers and their families. There have been a couple of times when the children have prayed for us. That was a pleasant surprise. At times, someone will ask us to pray for a quick placement. That is perhaps the saddest intercession of all. You see, that young person is not going home or in all likelihood to a family member, he or she is being placed in the foster care system or going to a group home for drug and alcohol rehabilitation.

Before we leave, we play music and pass out Divine Mercy Prayer Cards and Saint Dismas Icon cards. The cards we hand out must be unlaminated and made of paper not plastic. It is interesting that when the 3x5 inch picture of The Divine Mercy is held up and the children are asked who would like one, every hand in the room goes up. I say a silent prayer thanking the Marians of the Immaculate Conception for having these cards available.

As we leave, the officers thank us for coming and we thank them for allowing us to be there today. We turn in the badges and get our drivers licenses back in return. As we part company, we hug each other and say we will see each other next month.

Driving home, I am filled with a deep sense of peace and joy, yet at the same time, my heart is breaking. You see, the recidivism rate for Juvenile Hall is 29%. I pray that the Lord used me today to change the heart of one of those children in the 29% category to keep them from becoming one of those unfortunate lost children that go into California Youth Authority and eventually become one of the lost children of God in Prison where the recidivism rate it 70%. I will keep returning to Juvenile Hall on Sundays until they take away my driver's license.

Would you consider praying and meditating to perhaps discern a calling to Restorative Justice Ministry? The need is so very great.