

## VOCATION COMMITTEE REPORT

### *Promoting Vocations – Your Job Too!*

Jane DeRose-Bamman OFS, Vocations Committee

The Vocations Committee was formed “to foster and sustain vocation consciousness among all people of the Universal Church by our Profession to the Gospel Way of Life. To initiate, encourage and support the efforts of the national OFS Family to promote the Secular Franciscan Order, with particular emphasis on nurturing individuals who desire, seek and commit to our way of life. Prompted by the Holy Spirit, this objective will be accomplished through prayer, development of promotional materials, sharing of ideas and maintaining national awareness.”

Since August 2014, the Committee has solicited your feedback on what you have done to attract people to explore the Order. To date, the Committee has received 104 suggestions or practices. The top 12 practices were summarized in the Winter 2014 *TAU-USA* article.



As the General Constitutions stress, prayer is critical in promoting vocations. One practice was submitted by Michael Cresenta, OFS, from St. Augustine Fraternity, Pittsburgh PA. He shared with us the Franciscan Family Chaplet prayer and

rosary. After searching on the internet, the following website was discovered which identified the author, another of our brothers, Nicholas H. Kovacs, OFS.

<https://franciscanchaplet.files.wordpress.com/2011/03/franciscan-family-chaplet1.pdf>

For 2015, the National Vocation Committee has challenged each local and regional fraternity to make a special “vocation promotion” effort by using one of the referenced Best Practices or another inspired effort. Geraldine Burton, OFS, from Saint Joseph Fraternity, Saint Joan of Arc Region emailed us with exciting news about the vocations event held in May 2015 — a spin off of a Come and See event — bringing together all the Secular Religious Institutes in her area to meet each other and learn about the charisms of each Order. She shared that while she was Director of Formation she had inquirers that were not called to the Franciscan way of life, but the Council had no idea to whom to refer them. More than 100 persons attended the event and 20 persons visited the OFS table.

It’s not too late to plan something for this year.

Another best practice was shared by Steve White, OFS, from Holy Trinity Region. He suggested giving a small bag of birdseed. I’ve also seen this suggestion from Jim and Sis Hein, OFS, with the following statement:

#### **FEEDING THE BIRDS FOR SAINT FRANCIS**

St. Francis wanted all creation to celebrate the birthday of Jesus. It was his desire that all mayors and Lords of Castles issue a decree that would require the scattering of grain on the roads on Christmas so that our friends, the birds, might have something to eat. The Secular Franciscans, who strive to follow Christ in the footsteps of St. Francis, ask you to use this token of a gift to feed the birds on Christmas Day – in the example of St. Francis of Assisi.

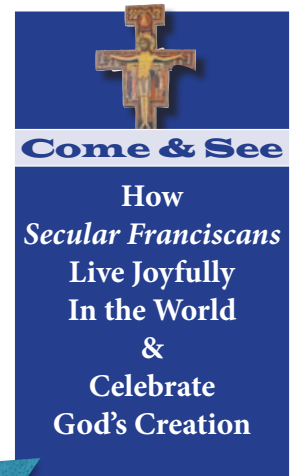
#### **Pax Et Bonum (Peace and All Good)**

The most effective way of promoting vocations is by understanding and living our vocation as Franciscans in the world. Sharing your story alone can give someone the direction they need to transform themselves and the world.

The 1-800-FRANCIS line and email address have been busy. Carol Gentile, OFS, has been responding to those requests and reports. In the last year, 390 emails and 256 phone calls were received including emails from person from all across the United States, Brazil and the Philippines. Efforts have been working! Thank you, Carol, for sharing your joy for the Our Lord, the Order and your vocation in this special ministry.

In addition, the general brochure telling others about the Order has been updated. Check it out so you can have copies ready to distribute:

<https://www.nafra-sfo.org/forms/OFSBrochure-ComeAndSee-General.pdf>



Email your ideas, suggestions and answers to the above questions and “fill-in the blanks” to [OFSVocationsCommittee@gmail.com](mailto:OFSVocationsCommittee@gmail.com). Thanks for helping us to fulfill Article 45 of the General Constitutions by promoting vocations.