

TAU-USA

A PUBLICATION OF THE
NATIONAL FRATERNITY OF
THE SECULAR FRANCISCAN
ORDER

Spring 2013 - ISSUE 75

Be the Bridge

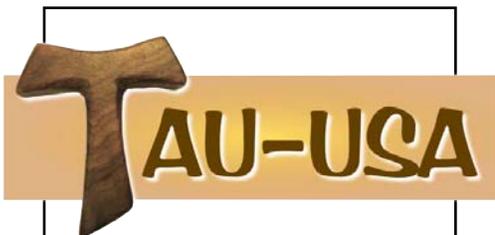


Tau Bridge

J. Wesley OFS

Accept all people as a gift of God

NAFRA Theme 2013



Mission to Share the Vision

The TAU-USA, a publication of the National Fraternity of the Secular Franciscan Order of the United States, is a vital communication link between the NAFRA leadership and all professed Secular Franciscans throughout the United States. The articles within the publication, while sharing the Secular Franciscan charism and vision, are intended to inform, inspire, and challenge.

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Note: All articles followed by * have Spanish translations on the NAFRA website.

TAU-USA is published quarterly. Each professed Secular receives the newsletter without charge. For subscription or change of address information, write to: Randy Heinz, OFS, 810 Steffanich Drive, Billings, MT 59105, or randyheinz@gmail.com. Subscriptions per year cost \$4.00 for U. S., \$6.00 for Canadian, \$15.00 for Overseas.

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THE NATIONAL FRATERNITY OF THE SECULAR FRANCISCAN ORDER – USA

CONVERSION TIMES THREE

by Tom Bello, OFS

National Minister of the Secular Franciscan
Order

Dear Brothers and Sisters of Penance,

May the Lord bring us Peace! By our very definition as “Brothers and Sisters of Penance,” any day is a good day for repentance or conversion. After all, our Secular Franciscan Rule 7 states: “United by their vocation as ‘brothers and sisters of penance’ and motivated by the dynamic power of the gospel, let them conform their thoughts and deeds to those of Christ by means of that radical interior change which the gospel calls ‘conversion.’ Human frailty makes it necessary that this conversion be carried out daily.”

How much more strongly this daily call to conversion should resonate in our hearts during the Holy Season of Lent! As our Lord Himself declares in his very first words recorded in what most scholars say is the first of the written Gospels: “This is the time of fulfillment. The kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel” (Mark 1:15).

I would like to pray for me and for you a threefold conversion this Lent and throughout this Year of Faith in a similar way to the threefold evangelization I urged at our National Fraternity (NAFRA) Election Chapter in October 2012 in Denver, Colorado. (See the last of twelve PowerPoint slides on page six:

[http://www.nafra-sfo.org/NAFRA-2012/
NationalMinisterKeynoteOct2012.pdf](http://www.nafra-sfo.org/NAFRA-2012/NationalMinisterKeynoteOct2012.pdf).

You can also listen to the talk:

[http://www.nafra-sfo.org/NAFRA-2012/
NationalMinisterKeynoteOct2012.mp3](http://www.nafra-sfo.org/NAFRA-2012/NationalMinisterKeynoteOct2012.mp3).)

First must come a personal conversion. Each of us individually must turn away from those personal sins; those internal or external, seen or

unseen, vices; those sinful habits, unique unto us and turn, convert, ever closer to Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior. “Come after me!” Christ calls to his very first disciples (Mark 1:17).

The means for that conversion are offered in the Ash Wednesday Gospel taken from our Lord’s Sermon on the Mount, Chapter Six in St. Matthew’s Gospel: prayer, self-denial or fasting, and works or offerings of charity. This Lent, now, today, let us ask ourselves: How can I pray more or better? How can I give more? What more can I give up?

This does not mean merely giving up chocolate for the heck of it; no, this personal conversion is seriously intended to bring us closer to Christ, away from self and toward God. Even the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass or serving the poor are not ends in themselves, but means to bring us closer to Christ.

Second, as we are called as Secular Franciscans into fraternity, so we must convert our fraternities. Sometimes, unsurprisingly, our fraternities can be guilty of some of the same vices that beset us individually. For example, our fraternities can become as self-centered and self-absorbed as we can sometimes be as individuals. In fraternity, we may become more engaged in individual personalities, good or bad, than we are in drawing each other closer to Christ. We may not be contributing as a fraternity as much as we could in works of penance or charity.

Just as we individually make examinations of conscience on a regular basis, perhaps our fraternities should conduct regular collective examinations of conscience. Our reference could again be the Sermon on the Mount, which is well reflected in our Secular Franciscan Rule 4 to 19, Chapter 2, The Way of Life.

For one example of how a fraternity examination of conscience based on our Secular Franciscan Rule might work, Rule 8 reads: “As Jesus was the

true worshipper of the Father, so let prayer and contemplation be the soul of all they are and do. Let them participate in the sacramental life of the Church, above all the Eucharist. Let them join in liturgical prayer in one of the forms proposed by the Church, reliving the mysteries of the life of Christ.”

How well and how often does our fraternity pray together? When and how could we find richer opportunities to pray together in various forms of liturgical worship? When was the last time, for example, that the whole fraternity celebrated Mass together, or went as fraternity to a Celebration of the Sacrament of Penance or an Anointing of the Sick? When was the last time that our fraternity offered a Holy Hour or the Stations of the Cross?

Another example might come from Rule 13: “As the Father sees in every person the features of his Son, the firstborn of many brothers and sisters, so the Secular Franciscans with a gentle and courteous spirit accept all people as a gift of the Lord and an image of Christ. A sense of community will make them joyful and ready to place themselves on an equal basis with all people, especially with the lowly for whom they shall strive to create conditions of life worthy of people redeemed by Christ.”

When was the last time our fraternity reached out to members who no longer attend regularly because of failing health, job situations or feelings of animosity or incompatibility with one or more fraternity members? Do we as a fraternity spend time together, eat and socialize together? Do we have a phone or social media tree to stay in touch with one another, or an outreach person or infirmarian who contacts the sick?

Does our fraternity have a collective apostolate or any charitable giving on a regular basis? When was the last time the whole fraternity engaged hands-on in an act of charity or service like visiting a nursing home or cleaning up a local park or stream? Do we reach out with other groups in service to the elderly, the homeless, the ill or the imprisoned? What more could we be doing, what more could we be giving?

Third and finally, how might we better convert the world around us? Do we pray, individually or in fraternity, for the conversion of the world, the country or our social, political and economic leaders? When was the last time we invited someone from outside our Secular Franciscan world to a fraternity meeting? When was the last time we held an Open House or an Inquiry Session for people to find out about us?

Does the greater Church, the greater Community, know anything at all about our fraternity or about our Secular Franciscan Way of Life? Why should they care? What have we done, what could we do, to deserve their attention or attract their interest so we might teach them by example and convert them closer to Christ?

St. Francis certainly went outside his comfort zone when he went out to beg, when he tried to convert the Sultan, or when he negotiated with the Wolf of Gubbio. How can we as Secular Franciscans, individually or in fraternity, reach outside our comfort zones and engage the outside world? How visible are our Tau Crosses? How noticeable is our Way of Life to those we encounter in the workplace, at Church, at home, out on the highways?



Let us pray for the grace of conversion times three. We start with ourselves; we cannot convert others to Christ if we are not converted. We then take our prayers and efforts to our fraternities, for fraternity is where we as Secular Franciscans work out our salvation. Finally, we shine the Light of Christ through our Secular Franciscan Way of Life into the world to draw all to Christ. Dear Lord, please convert us, our fraternities, our world closer to you. We pray in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Peace and love,
Tom

Sharing The Vision

NAFRA Executive Council Updates

by Jan Parker, OFS

Being the Bridge

I can't remember a national theme ever having such a profound effect on my life as "Be the Bridge". This theme challenges me daily whether I'm working with our fraternity council, or building relationships at the office. To be a bridge, I try to keep the two ends of a bridge in my mind. One end is openness to others – taking the time to listen and value, and not judge. But this acceptance of others is only possible as I open myself to the other end of the bridge - God's goodness and love. Allowing God's love to come across to others makes me a happy bridge! Writing this column is another opportunity to be a happy bridge – a bridge of communication between the National Executive Council and you. In that light that I happily share the following news.

National Priorities Communication

We are very close to establishing our communications committee and are currently fine-tuning its shape and membership. Our best means of communication is the TAU-USA and many have complimented Editor Jim Wesley's great first issue. Translation efforts have increased thanks to our current team of translators - Cindy Wesley, Willie Guadalupe, Martha Arellanos, Margie Rodriguez, Ileana Mattison and Genaro Gonzalez. They create a bridge of understanding for our non-English speaking members. See the TAU Table of Contents for a list of translated articles. Future issues of TAU-USA in will arrive in June, September and December of 2013.

Formation

Our Formation Commission (NFC) Chair, Bob Fitzsimmons, has announced new commission members: Stephen Berry, Diane Menditto, Patti Reynolds and Spiritual Assistant, Anne Mulqueen. As they move forward we will see that the FUN has only begun!

Spiritual Assistance

By way of fruitful discussion between the NEC and our national Spiritual Assistants, the Holy Spirit is leading us in an interesting new direction for the proposed Spiritual Assistance Development Committee. The next step will be a "Think Tank on Spiritual Assistance" meeting facilitated by Cyl Maljan-Herbelin. This is exciting...stay tuned!

JPIC / Franciscan Youth (FYFA)

Plans are finalized for a national gathering for those interested in JPIC and Youth. See the flyer for the "2013 Fran-

ciscan Summer Confab" in this issue of the TAU. For Rob Breen's vision and future plans for Youth see his article on page 12. Mary Frances Charsky has coordinated a group to attend World Youth Day and the International YouFra gathering. Please pray for these courageous efforts as we "put out into the deep" to engage our youth and support JPIC efforts.

Vocations

The priority of Vocations is being addressed. We are in the early stages of setting up a separate "think tank" for this topic. Again, stay tuned.

Other Updates

Demographic information requested by CIOFS

Our International Council (CIOFS) has requested a new demographic survey for our Order. This survey will be part of this year's annual report from each region. CIOFS uses this important information to report to the wider Church, as well as to help meet our needs and aid in the promotion of the OFS.

Donations

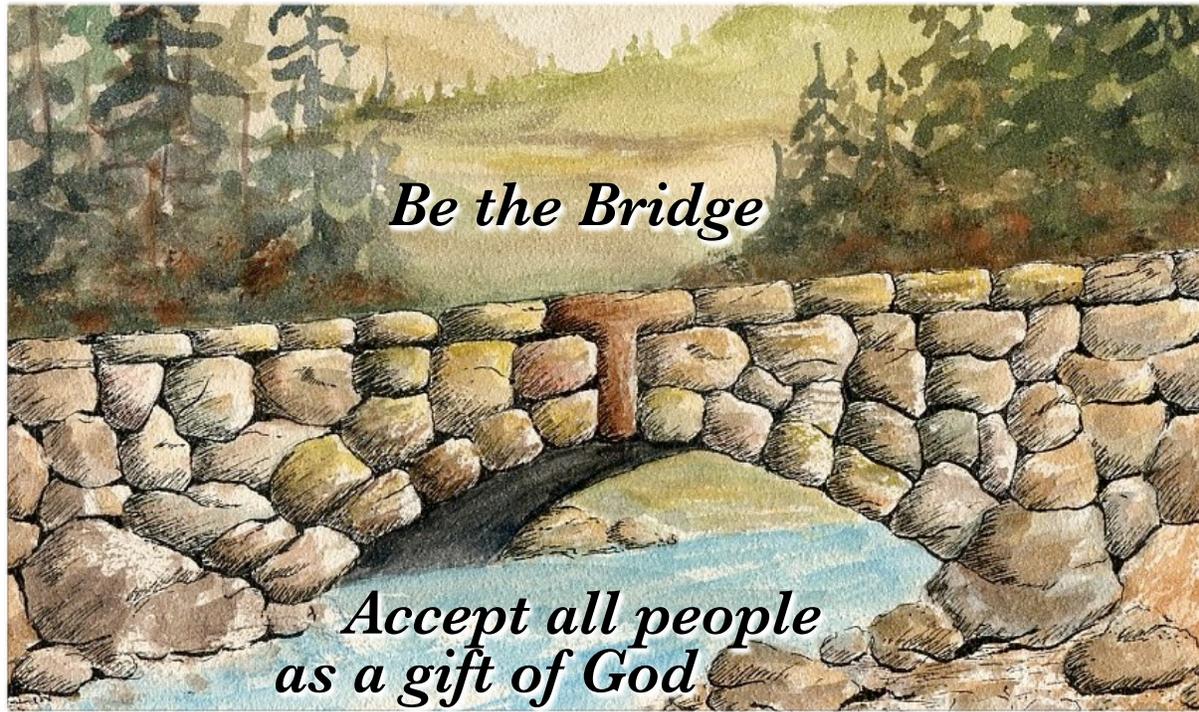
Our National Family has shown amazing generosity! H2O Project: Our 2012 H2O collection of \$7093.50 was donated to Catholic Relief Service for water projects. Our 2013 H2O collection is currently underway. Hurricane Sandy Relief: \$2,050 was contributed to the Donor Fund specifically for Sandy relief efforts and NAFRA contributed \$2,000 from the Donor Fund for a total to \$4,050. Franciscan International (FI) Appeal: \$7752.00 was contributed to the Donor Fund specifically for FI and NAFRA contributed \$1,000 from the Donor Fund for a total of \$8752.00.

Bequests

In light of recent bequests to the OFS, Cyl Maljan-Herbelin and Mary Frances Charsky will co-chair a committee to deal with bequests, endowments, funding and promotion of gifts to the Order.

National Calendar

NEC Meetings: June 20-23 and October 11-14, 2013
Summer Seminar at Loretto University - July 5 to 7, 2013
JPIC / Youth Commission Gathering "Franciscan Summer Confab" - July 25-28, 2013
NAFRA Chapter at Savior Pastoral Center in Kansas City, Kansas, - October 15-20, 2013



The NAFRA theme for 2013 is calling us to “Be the Bridge,” but what does that mean? When I think of a bridge, I think of an arched stone structure like the ones in Yosemite Valley. An interesting fact is that the central stone, the final piece to be placed at the apex of the arch, locks the whole structure together and is referred to as the keystone. For me, the keystone is my Franciscan Way of Life. Read through the following reflections and ponder your own thoughts about “Being the Bridge.”

Jim Wesley, OFS
Bl. Junipero Serra Region

Being the BRIDGE . . .
Is Lessons of GOD’s Grace
and Total Acceptance
of its Path,
Leading to Discover
an Indescribable Unseen LOVE
It is then, that one can Simply
LOVE
And there is no longer the GAP
of Absent LOVE!
Cherryle Fruge, OFS
St. Joan of Arc Region

As our society become more diverse, building bridges among diverse groups of people and, in fact, all of creation is essential if we are to survive as a humane and human family. Jesus gave us a norm of greatness—put the *other* first. In essence, it is the way of humility. Jesus invites us to be *the* bridge spanning the gulf of misunderstanding, powerlessness, humiliation and neglect. The path to this greatness lies in the realization that all of God’s creation is interconnected and when one part of the body suffers, we all suffer. Yet awareness is not enough. Being *the* bridge takes dedication to prolonged dialogue and a firm commitment to right what is wrong.

Anne Mulqueen, OFS
Ecumenical/Interfaith Committee Chair

The very essence of mission work is being a bridge builder – opening oneself to another culture. Mission work is “crossing a bridge” to create a bridge. Building that bridge requires relationship and a ministry of presence. It’s not just about “giving” – it’s about humility, exposing yourself deeply, and marveling at the gift of finding your true self as you open yourself to others. Francis was the ultimate “bridge-builder.

Kim Smolik,
Executive Director of Franciscan Mission Service:
(Shared at our 2012 NAFRA Chapter)

Being the Bridge:

A daily process of having enough humility to be willing to lay down your life for another.

Susan Simeone, OFS
Minister, St. Thomas More Region

To "Be the Bridge" one must "lay down". Jesus showed us how. Jesus laid down his life on the Cross and became a bridge. A bridge connects opposites. On the cross Jesus bridges heaven and earth and brings the full spectrum of humanity into unity within his own Body. He is our peace as he breaks down the dividing walls. (cf. Eph. 2:14) He reconciles. He unites. He bridges. There is no greater love. To "Be the Bridge and accept all people" challenges me, in truth and love, to lay down my pride, my wants, and my desires in order to open myself to others. I need to stretch and reach across the divide, trusting the power of the Cross to help me bridge the gap, no matter how wide or deep the ravine.

Jan Parker, OFS
NAFRA, National Secretary

When I think of "Be(ing) the Bridge" I am reminded that a bridge provides a connection or passage over some obstacle. Some bridges are constructed of suspension cables that have great strength. Others are raised or lowered often to let tall ships pass through. Still some others are covered and purely for strolling. To "be the bridge" I must be the connecting link - strong enough to be stretched, open-minded and impartial enough to new ideas, and compassionate enough to walk on with my sisters and brothers in fraternal charity.

Joan Geiger, OFS
Minister, Tau Cross Region

As I left the Quinquennial gathering last July one phrase stuck in my mind. BE THE BRIDGE! To me this is indeed a challenge. It's one that every Secular Franciscan can take to heart. Whether we are in leadership or not, married or single, young or old, rich or poor, sick or healthy, each of us can be a bridge. There is no need for an agenda, committee or reports. Each of us can listen and show respect as well as reverence for all people even those with whom we differ. There are so many differences among people. We can be a link, a connection to help toward healing, forgiveness and understanding. We can be like Christ who heals, forgives, and understands. I will try.

Marie Amore, OFS
NAFRA, Minister of Vocations

Like Francis we are called to understand where the other person is coming from and to embrace the individual with different ideas – from one extreme to the other, whether they agree with us or not. We should listen and respect one another like Francis did with those he met. He also did not agree with all of them, but he listened and he respected. We always talk about bridge building – what we need to do is not only build the bridge, but BE the bridge. We must embrace our humanity and know ourselves so we can continue our conversion, not only through (initial) formation, but through our entire life. We need to re-build relationships with others, to be open to healing, to go out and witness by our lives and be healing for others. We all have a unique mission or we wouldn't be here – the Lord doesn't waste time. When we are called we need to do it. Like Francis, we are called to be evangelists – going from Gospel to life and life to Gospel.



Pat Johnson, OFS

Pat was a nominee for National Treasurer and made this statement at our 2012 NAFRA Chapter. Just a few weeks after Chapter Pat unexpectedly met Sister Death.



Ecumenical / Interfaith Committee

Walking Together

by Anne Mulqueen, OFS

*Ecumenical cooperation...remains essential,
and will surely bear fruit
in promoting peace and harmony
in a world that so often seems at risk
of fragmentation.*

*From Pope Benedict's State Visit to
the U.K. in September 2010
Meeting with Rowan Williams,
then Archbishop of Canterbury*

By the time this article is published in TAU-USA, we will have a new Supreme Pontiff or at least the process will have begun. So I didn't want this opportunity to go by without quoting Pope Benedict's 2010 comment on ecumenism.

In the last issue I mentioned that the next two articles would explore spiritual ecumenism and growing in communion. This article is devoted to spiritual ecumenism. The original decree, *Unitatis Redintegratio*, states, *This change of heart and holiness of life, along with public prayer for the unity of Christians, should be regarded as the soul of the whole ecumenical movement, and merits the name "spiritual ecumenism."*

The *Dictionary of Christian Spirituality* defines spirituality as the attitudes, faith convictions, and practices which determine the lives of men and women. It is the Spirit-led way we behave before God. In essence, spirituality refers to a lifestyle under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

In his book *That They All May Be One* Cardinal Walter Kasper wrote, ... *every spirituality must be questioned about the Spirit behind it, whether it is the Holy Spirit or the spirit of the world. Spirituality demands the*

discernment of spirits. Thus spirituality is not an exclusively emotional affair devoid of the question of truth; rather, it helps, enables and even compels us to seek the truth. An appeal to spirituality, therefore, does not mean a painless escape from theology. In order to remain healthy, spirituality demands theological reflection and theological discernment.

Reflection on these words will lead us to understand that spiritual ecumenism is not superficial or trivial. It has its roots planted firmly in the action of the Holy Spirit.

Spiritual ecumenism begins with what unites us rather than what divides us. It takes spiritual maturity to enter into respectful dialogue with other Christian faiths. And spiritual ecumenism demands deep and sustained prayer and the firm conviction that the divine seed indwells **all** people. If these attitudes are present, respectful dialogue can proceed. Through respectful dialogue, trust and collaboration will emerge.

To help you understand how the Secular Franciscan Order has entered into spiritual ecumenism, I will quote from a document called *Elements of Franciscan Unity*, prepared by the Joint Committee on Franciscan Unity. Although the OFS participates in this Committee, the Joint Committee operates as a separate entity and enjoys both spiritual and financial support from NAFRA. It is composed of two members from three orders: The Secular Franciscan Order (OFS), the Third Order Society of St. Francis (TSSF) and the Order of Ecumenical Franciscans

(OEF). All three orders share equal responsibility for this Committee.

The first element the Joint Committee considers essential is **Baptism**.

Our Franciscan Orders understand that our Franciscan unity springs from our shared relationship with God through Holy Baptism. The waters of our birth in the name of the Triune God signify our unity in one baptism by one God. This unity through baptism is the underpinning for our shared worship and witness as Franciscans.

The second element is **Vocation**.

Our call to Franciscan vocation implies being conformed to the image of our Lord Jesus Christ by means of the radical interior change that the Gospel defines as conversion – taking up our cross daily to follow Christ. Our particular vocation is to observe the Gospel by following the examples of Saints Francis and Clare of Assisi.

The third element is **Charism**.

As Franciscans, we see in the life of St. Francis of Assisi these gifts of the Holy Spirit: Holy Poverty (humility), love and joy. Through our rules and through the individual and collective work of our Orders, we seek to manifest these gifts. In our unified emulation of Francis, we seek to express a life witness to poverty, love and joy.

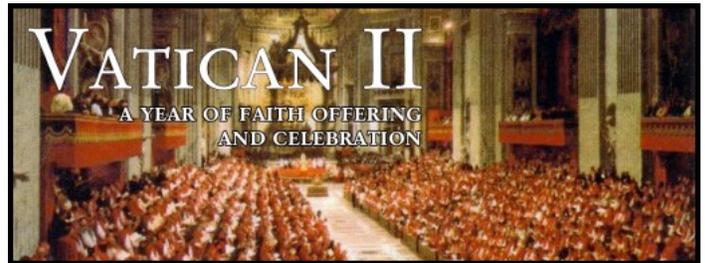
The fourth element is **Christ Centered**.

Franciscan spirituality is Christocentric to the extent that Francis fell in love with Jesus. This love transformed Francis' life. All that Francis did was shaped by what he saw in the Incarnation, and in the ministry and Passion of Jesus. Franciscan spirituality is a way of life that is centered on the person of Jesus. Our unified mission as Franciscans is to make Jesus known to all – and to pray and work for the reconciliation of all creation.

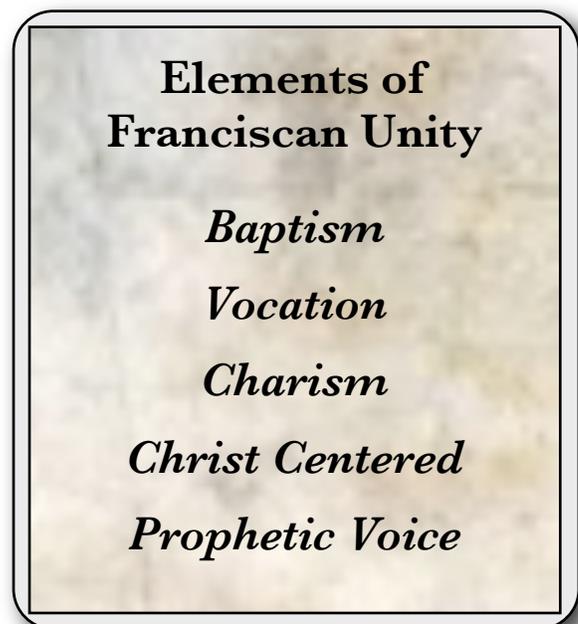
The fifth element is **Prophetic Voice**.

Fundamental to Franciscan spirituality is a commitment to strive for justice and peace among all people – and to affirm the inter-relationship and holiness of all creation. In a world torn asunder by conflict, divisions, intolerance and

exploitation, our unified prophetic witness is an expression of God's light in a dark planet. In our shared understanding of the spirit of Francis, we are called: to courageous initiatives in the field of peace making and justice, to make definite choices in harmony with our faith whenever human dignity is attacked by any form of oppression, violence or indifference, and to protect and restore all of creation.



In conclusion, at the Second Vatican Council, Pope John XXIII spoke of a new Pentecost. From its very beginning ecumenism was a spiritual phenomenon. And when areas of agreement can be reached, we consider it a gift and a grace from the Holy Spirit. Jesus prayed that all may be one so that the world may believe (John 17:21). Therefore, spiritual ecumenism must be inspired and directed by the Holy Spirit. The world will come to believe in the One sent by the Father to be our Brother and who offers us life everlasting when they see us engaging in respectful dialogue.





Formation Commission

SERVANT LEADERSHIP

by Anne Mulqueen, OFS

Spiritual Assistant to the National Formation Commission

When surveys are conducted to determine the needs of fraternities, one of the more frequently requested topics is leadership training.

Many of you know the National Fraternity has published a *Handbook for Franciscan Servant Leadership*. And the Institute for Contemporary Franciscan Life offers a distance-learning course based on the Handbook. Because those resources are readily available, I will not repeat that material here, although my understanding of servant leadership is basically the same. The lens through which Franciscans look at leadership is based on Matthew 20:26-28, in which Jesus tells us we are called ... *not to be served by others, but to serve, to give one's life for the ransom of many*.

Depending on your perspective and position in fraternity, service as a Franciscan servant leader can be undertaken in many different ways. Often, the Franciscan form of leadership is quite different from corporate leadership approaches. Ordinarily, organizations and corporations focus on **managing** people and resources. Secular Franciscans focus on **servicing** God's creation, especially His people.

When leaders look out for number one—they themselves—they seek success, achievement and ascendancy. When leaders are Gospel-centered—they seek wisdom and direction and the greater good for all. With the publication of Robert Greenleaf's book, *Servant Leadership*, some non-religious organizations began adopting the servant leader model.

By virtue of our baptism and profession every Secular Franciscan is a servant leader ... *following the example of Saint Francis of Assisi, who made Christ the inspiration and center of his life*

with God and people. OFS Rule: Article 4. The shape our specific leadership takes will depend on our gifts and talents. We may serve on the fraternity council, visit the sick, furnish refreshments, and so on. If we do this with love and humility, we fulfill our Christian and Franciscan calling. In essence, we *wash the feet* of our brothers and sisters. We are Christ for the other.

Some of the elements of servant leadership can be learned, but others come as the fruit of conversion. For example, one can learn how to communicate with clarity and incorporate all the leadership styles in their interaction with the fraternity members; however, the ability to inspire and motivate others comes from a converted heart. Similarly, establishing and maintaining trust is earned through consistently being **trustworthy!**

Humility is absolutely essential for a servant leader. Without it, we are not servants. Humility and authenticity go hand in hand. Humble people know the truth about themselves. They do not deny their gifts nor do they inflate them. In the play *Hamlet*, Shakespeare writes, *this above all: to thine own self be true, and it must follow, as the night the day, thou canst not then be false to anyone*. Humility is the fruit of a converted heart, a heart that is willing to acknowledge truth about itself and ready to make whatever changes are necessary.

Those who know themselves are able to take charge when conditions call for decision-making. Their judgments are just because they are able to separate their personal hopes and desires from the situation at hand. They do not feel threatened by new ideas and opinions. When tensions arise, they are able to maintain perspective—neither

overreacting nor retreating. A good sense of humor, the ability to laugh at oneself, and the capacity to reduce tensions make the humble leader easy to follow. These leaders are *salt, light and leaven* in their fraternities. The good news is that you don't have to have all of these gifts. But you do have to use the gifts you were given for the good of your sisters and brothers.

Fraternity is based on respect for each member's contribution to the whole. See Saint Paul's analogy of the Body of Christ, 1 Corinthians 12:12-27. For a fraternity to function in a spiritually healthy manner, it must **share responsibility**. A fraternity is akin to a family. All members of families and fraternities share the good times and the challenges – the joys and the sorrows. Every one of us is responsible for the vitality of our fraternity. As Management Consultant Peter Drucker says, *the leaders who work most effectively never say "I." And that's not because they have trained themselves not to say "I." They don't think "I." They think "we."*

Along with the added emphasis on shared responsibility of council and minister, the Rule of 1978 changed the hierarchical structure of the OFS. In the previous Rule, the authority figure was the spiritual **director**. Although the role is still vital, today the spiritual **assistant** is no longer that central authority figure. Article 21 of the Rule states the fraternity is ... *animated and guided by a council and minister who are elected by the professed according to the constitutions*. The duties of the council and minister are to make decisions and perform functions that do not need the approval of the entire fraternity. This shared responsibility keeps the fraternity functioning smoothly.

Although all are called to serve the fraternity, some servant leadership positions call for specific skills and talents. And because you can't share what you don't have, it is especially important when electing council members to make sure the person's gifts and abilities fit the position. It is

unfair to the person elected and to the fraternity to misalign a person with an incompatible position.

I suppose choosing or becoming a servant leader at the council level would be less daunting if I gave you a general list of desired qualities. Then you could reflect on them when considering a position or selecting members to lead your fraternity.

CHOOSE . . .

- Secular Franciscans who demonstrate spiritual and psychological maturity
- Secular Franciscans who show respect for every member of the fraternity
- Secular Franciscans who demonstrate the Franciscan charism by their actions
- Secular Franciscans who are compassionate and just – both ends of the spectrum
- Secular Franciscans who are humble and open to the wisdom of others
- Secular Franciscans who are willing to collaborate with and empower others
- Secular Franciscan who possess good communication skills and a willingness to share information—except that of a confidential nature—with the entire fraternity.

In conclusion, all Secular Franciscans are called to be servant leaders. The form that service takes depends primarily on the leading of the Holy Spirit. Our responsibility is to stay open to the many way the Holy Spirit speaks to us and to trust that *God's Will* won't take us where His grace will not sustain us.

CNSA News and Views

Franciscan life in the 21st Century

Lester Bach OFM Cap

COLLABORATION

Craig Miller (OEF - Order of Ecumenical Franciscans) and Rev. Deacon Joan Verett (TOSSF - Third Order of the Society of St Francis {Anglican}) were welcome visitors at our NAFRA meeting in Denver in October, 2012. Francis' influence extends beyond the boundaries of the Catholic Church. People of other faith traditions are among our brothers and sisters.



Craig Miller

People of other faith traditions are attracted to Francis. Franciscans normally establish and maintain loving relationships with one another. We reach beyond the walls of our churches to join with other Franciscans.

We share our Franciscan spirit, bringing that spirit to the world. Working together we create a path to peace and understanding where relationships and dialogue have a chance to grow among people. We embrace our common goal *to build a more fraternal and evangelical world so that the kingdom of God may be brought about more effectively.* (OFS Rule #14)



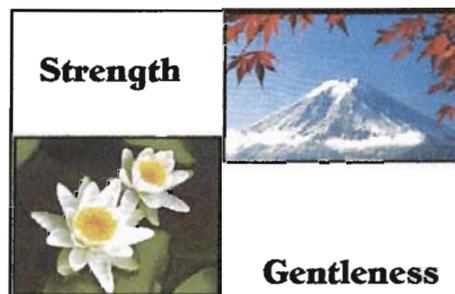
Deacon Joan

The words of Vatican II in the 1960's, Pope Paul VI in *Evangelii Nuntiandi* in 1975, and church leaders in our present century give guidance to our work for peace, ecumenism and evangelization. Vatican II offers these insights about peace.

Peace is a harmony built into human society by God, the divine Founder of all life, and it is a direct outcome of justice. Such a peace is not attained once and for all but is constantly built up as people control their passions and governments remain vigilant. But even this is not enough. For peace is the fruit of love as well. It cannot be obtained and safeguarded unless men and women freely and trustingly share with one another their inner spirits and talents. It is based on a firm determination to respect others, and to live lives of sisterhood and brotherhood. Without such love, peace absolutely cannot prevail in our time. For all of this flows from the peace of Christ, who first loved us and dedicated himself for us. We urge Christians therefore to join with all peacemakers in the world to plead for peace and bring it about. We praise those who renounce violence and find other ways to settle disputes where fairness for all is assured. We dream of the day when we will say with Isaiah (2:4): "They shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks, one nation shall not raise the sword against another nor shall they train for war again."

Gaudium et Spes - Vatican II in Plain English - Vol 2 - Page 183

*While it is important for Catholics to be concerned about their sisters and brothers in other Churches and to invite them to know the Catholic Church, our primary responsibility is to **make sure that our own household is in order.** Only when we confront our own shortcomings and make the necessary reforms will we truly be able*



The pictures above portray two elements of Franciscan life - gentleness and strength. The mountain impresses us with its strength. Even when it is changed by rains, snow, sun, wind, and all sorts of weather, it remains a symbol of strength, not easily moved. When we reach its peak we get a whole new perspective of the earth below. Strength deals with reality as it really is!

Flowers gently offer color and wonder and beauty that is enjoyed for a brief moment. They change as the seasons change. In a fresh beginning they give us joy and support quiet reflection as we absorb their beauty. It is a gift that comes, gives its gift, and then leaves only to return again.

Franciscans need both gentleness and strength. Strength comes from the Trinity, whose love strengthens our Franciscan life. The Holy Spirit gives us courage and persistence to be faithful to our profession. In a world filled with violence, anger, hatred, and destructive arguments, we receive the strength to create peaceful hearts, forgiving hearts, hearts that show compassion, hearts that keep learning fresh ways to love. *It is what we are and do.*

We are bridges leading to peace, understanding, dialogue, forgiveness, compassion, and reconciliation, together with a love that brings people together in relationships. The gifts of strength and gentleness come to us at profession. We learn ways of gentleness and strength as we deal with the tough work of being peacemakers, serving one another, and growing in our contemplative spirit.

BE STRONG AND GENTLE!

to discern the will of Christ and bear witness to Christ's teaching. Yes, through the grace of God, the Catholic Church has maintained the truth that was first given to us. But through shortcomings, stubbornness, and sin, the Catholic Church as a whole and the individual members within it have often failed to live by it.

Decree on Ecumenism (Unitatis Redintegratio) Vatican II in Plain English - Vol 3 - Page 51-52

A first step in spreading the faith is to make certain that we have our own house in order. If we speak with a forked tongue, saying nice things while we neglect the poor and those in need, or proclaim as doctrine what is simply a personal opinion, we do no service to evangelization. Neither can we bridge gaps between ourselves and people of other faith traditions or beliefs. The example of our lives is a powerful evangelization tool. But if our actions do not match our words, then we appear to be hypocrites rather than Christians who love the people in our lives - even enemies. Each of us needs to be honest in our personal examination. We choose to change whatever hinders our ability to share the faith and to love God, neighbor and self at all times.

We should also have respect and love for those who think differently than we do in social, political or even religious matters. In fact, the more deeply we understand others, the more we can dialogue with them, seeking understanding.

Gaudium et Spes - Vatican II in Plain English - Vol 3 - Page 146

We often find that the magisterial teaching of Vatican II invites us to change some of our perspectives that we assumed were unchangeable. Our faith is not narrow. There are varying degrees of teachings in the Church. Therefore it is normal to have different responses within the *community of love*. Liturgical changes, for example, are not enough to proclaim the entire value of the Eucharist. A true *community of love* involved in loving actions day in and day out are part of the vibrancy of the Eucharist. Without loving inter-action among the People of God, or when there is an absence of community love-in-action, the rich, interior meaning of Eucharist does not find its complete fulfillment.

Eucharistic devotions that prompt no loving activity on the part of the People of God diminish some of the power of the Eucharist. Eucharist is a community-in-action, both during the Eucharist and in the time between the gatherings for Eucharist. The Scriptures guide us on how to treat one another. Scriptural stories and reflections require that we give visible witness to Scripture, never satisfied to only gain insight into the biblical words. It is a both/and situation. Intellectual scriptural understanding is a partial element of community activity. It needs to find expression in everyday living. We need both qualities in order to be a Eucharistic people. Eucharistic adoration should open the door to a multiplicity of ways to love one another in more effective and consistent ways. St. Paul speaks to this issue:

Then have done with falsehood and speak the truth to each other, for we belong to one another as parts of one body. If you are angry, do not be led into sin; do not let sunset find you nursing your anger, and give no foothold to the devil.

The thief must give up stealing, and work hard with his hands to earn an honest living, so that he may have something to share with the needy.

Let no offensive talk pass your lips, only what is good and helpful to the occasion, so that it brings a blessing to those who hear it. Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, for that Spirit is the seal with which you were marked for the day of final liberation. Have done with all spite and bad temper, with rage, insults, and slander, with evil of any kind. Be generous to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another as God in Christ forgave you.

In a word, as God's dear children, you must be like him. Live in love as Christ loved you and gave himself up on your behalf, an offering and sacrifice whose fragrance is pleasing to God.

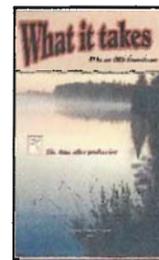
Ephesians 4:25-37; 5:1-2 (REB)



A NEW BOOK

2. The fraternity has the duty to **give special attention** to the formation of the newly professed and of the temporarily professed, to help them become fully mature in their vocation and develop a true sense of belonging.

GC - Article 44.2



Continuing on-going formation is important for the newly professed. **What it Takes** to be an OFS Franciscan - by Lester Bach OFM Cap is focused on the newly

professed and approved by the National formation chair. The book has seven chapters plus a "Potpourri" chapter explaining issues in our OFS life. It should be available from *Smoky Valley Printing* sometime in Spring, 2013.

SA TRAINING

Several OFS regions are developing training programs for spiritual assistants. We encourage such programs. We ask that the regions dialogue with CNSA. They may also share brief ideas about their programs on CNSA or NAFRA websites.

NAFRA - <http://www.nafra-sfo.org>
CNSA - <http://www.nafra-sfo.org/cnsa.html>

If your program has a history, share what was most effective and what didn't work.

A Franciscan community need not begin a program from scratch. Sharing experiences in developing the SA program is one way for us to help one another. Each region is different. Your assistance can help.

Franciscan spirituality does not blossom in isolation. It is at its best in vibrant communities.



Vision for Franciscan Youth in the United States

Ríobart (Rob) Breen, OFS
Chair, Franciscan Youth and
Young Adult (YouFra) Commission
riobart.breen@anamduan.org



In the previous issue of *Tau USA*, we looked at some of the challenges for developing a strategy and goals in reaching out to young people with the Gospel life in the spirit of Francis and Clare. What worked for previous generations of young Catholics will not be appropriate for most of this next generation today. We will need the Holy Spirit's vision, creativity and sensitivity in order for us to touch the hearts of young people, and invite them into the Franciscan Family. Let us first review how YouFra is set up, and then see the vision for a new YouFra movement in the U.S.

Officially, YouFra is supposed to be its own organization, with its own constitutions, its own local, regional and national fraternities, its own elected leaders, and its own financial resources. The Secular Franciscan Order is to provide support, mentoring, guidance and assistance with formation for YouFra. The relationship is similar to the relation the Friars have with the Secular Franciscan Order. The Secular Franciscan Order should also have structures in place to support YouFra at every level, and always ready to invite YouFra members should they want to pursue a deepening adult vocation to the Franciscan Gospel life as professed Secular Franciscans.

Since there is no YouFra organization established in the United States yet, according to our rule and constitutions, it is the responsibility of the Secular Franciscan Order in the United States to rebuild a viable and active Franciscan Youth (YouFra)* movement and organization. In the words of Francis, "Let us begin again, for until now we have done nothing." Here is the general vision that we will be unfolding over the next few years to make this happen.

Rebuilding YouFra will be done primarily by regional fraternities and councils working with local fraternities. However, there is a strong need for the first several years for initial capacity building and visioning by the National Fraternity and Council (NAFRA) to spur this nationwide YouFra movement. This will be done by building the capacity of regional councils to help both local OFS fraternities and emerging YouFra fraternities. This will require:

1. Establishing a national YouFra vision and goals through a collaborative national YouFra commission;
2. Facilitating national networking and communication with regional and local OFS Franciscan Youth chairs, and with YouFra members and leaders as they emerge;
3. Initiating a communications and outreach project to connect with young adults who are interested in forming YouFra fraternities;
4. Developing new YouFra materials and curriculum for formation, and servant leadership training;
5. Developing initial draft guidelines for YouFra constitutions;
6. Disseminating successful models for YouFra fraternities;
7. Hosting annual regional gatherings for YouFra and OFS ;

8. Training Secular Franciscans who the gifts and vocation to work with YouFra as Animators; and
9. Facilitating a new generation of YouFra leaders to eventually take over responsibility for building the basic infrastructure (remembering “more charism, less structure”) to foster a perpetual, viable, and dynamic YouFra movement throughout the United States.

The hope is that within the decade, there is a national movement and network of YouFra members embracing the Gospel Life, giving life to the Franciscan Charism, and organizing themselves enough so that the movement maintains its staying power to continue to mobilize each succeeding generation of young adults that the Holy Spirit calls forth.

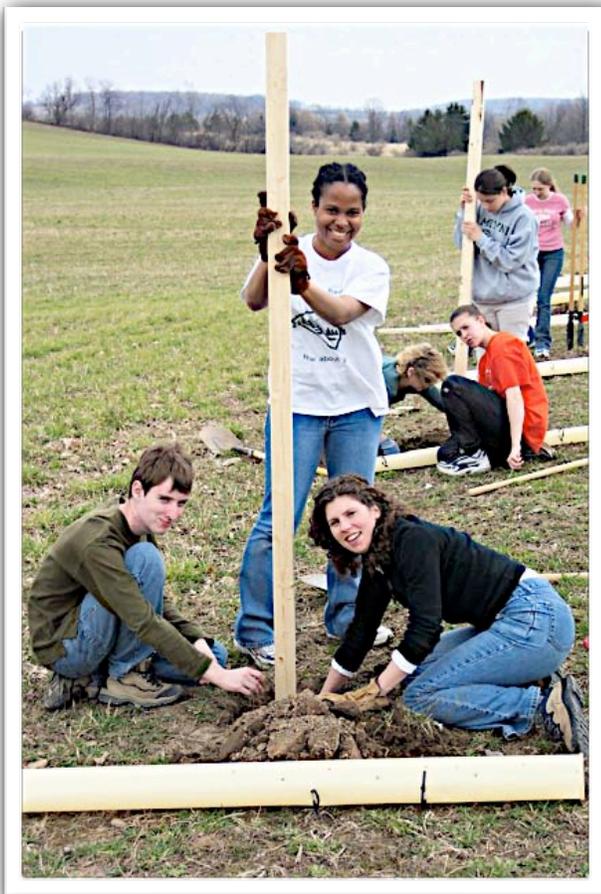
In the immediate future, the YouFra focus will be on young adults (ages 18 to approximately 28) rather than “youth” (minors under age 18), although support can be provided to regional councils that have local fraternities who, in collaboration with diocese and parish, wish to engage in work with young people under the age of 18. At this time in the Catholic Church, it is neither wise nor logistically and financially feasible to develop the capacity of the Secular Franciscan Order to engage in safe and effective ministry with minors. Our focus on working with young adults is also strategic for several other reasons:

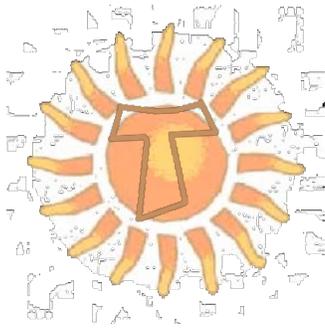
- It is during the times of transition out of adolescence (late adolescence and young adulthood) that young people are taking stock of their spiritual lives and identities, and choosing to live Gospel lives... or not. Developmentally as they enter the adult world and take on adult responsibilities, it is a very appropriate time for young people to be approached informally in intergenerational friendship by mature adult Secular Franciscans, and for these young people to be invited to try out Christian community and spiritual formation through a Franciscan YouFra fraternity experience.
- Young adults are generally in increasing need of Christian support and mentoring, since this age loses most of its formal social and institutional supports that were provided earlier in their lives by healthy Christian adults in their nuclear family, parish, school, and youth clubs. Catholic parishes are generally very ineffective in reaching out to this young adult population; most have not assumed responsibility for young adult ministry, and so the need is great. This is both a ministerial need and opportunity consistent with our Call and our Secular Franciscan Rule.
- According to research, young adults today have a strong desire for, and are in strong need of, authentic spiritual formation. As a generation who are being raised without the Catholic institutions that formed all earlier generations of Catholics, contemporary Catholic young adults simply do not have the healthy Christian models, relationships, support and quality formation that they are longing for.
- Young adults today are looking not so much for simply an intellectual experience of faith, but rather an active and integrated *applied* experience of their faith. They want to *experience* Christian faith, and they want to live and serve the Gospel in *relevant ways* for the 21st century. Franciscan spirituality, which integrates both contemplative spirituality and active apostolic service, is amazingly appropriate for today’s young people, with the Franciscan focus on joy-filled incarnational theology, community, simple and sustainable living, ecospirituality and care for Creation, service to marginalized people, engagement in social justice advocacy, and commitment to authentic Gospel lives of transformation.

To rebuild YouFra in the U.S., Secular Franciscans will need to embrace a “New Story” in order to effectively carry that Story to the next generation of young people. The New Story is simply the renewed Franciscan charism and ecospirituality for today, focused on reaching out to young people whose hearts are already burning with the desire to know and love God by loving Creation and their neighbors. As Secular Franciscans, we need only help young people to connect the dots, and walk with them as they do so. Facilitating this New Story is the task at hand for the Secular Franciscan Order in the U.S.

What can you do right now? Make sure every region has a qualified Franciscan Youth Chair appointed to serve the needs of the region. If your fraternity has qualified people with a gift for working with youth, appoint that person as a fraternity chair. Any local or regional chairs should contact me and be added to our e-network. If your region has an emerging or active YouFra group already, contact me with the names of leaders. Plan to participate in this season’s Lenten H2O Project as a first mobilizing event for young people, or plan to participate in our JPIC-FYYA Summer Confab this July.

* Some explanation of terms: Our national commission has been called the “Franciscan Youth and Young Adult (FYYA) Commission,” which is consistent with the U.S. practice of separating out young adults (ages 18-30+) from youth (ages 13-17 or middle school and high school students). In much of the rest of the world, the term “youth” is inclusive of both groups. Worldwide, “YouFra” (from “Franciscan Youth”) is also usually inclusive of youth and young adults. I will use the terms Franciscan Youth, YouFra and Franciscan Youth and Young Adult interchangeably, but know that most of our initial work will focus on the young adult ages from 18 to about 28.





**The Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation Commission
and The Franciscan Youth & Young Adult Commission**

present

The 2013 Franciscan Summer Confab*

Join us for a joint gathering of the National Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation (JPIC) Commission and the National Franciscan Youth & Young Adult Commission this summer! In order to spark some creativity and synergy, we are hosting a joint Franciscan Summer Confab of hearts, minds, bodies and souls to shape the vision and direction for the next phase of our Secular Franciscan journey. We will come together to share our past experiences, our wisdom, our dreams and vision for ushering forth the Gospel and Franciscan charism into the world. These two national commissions will meet jointly to integrate how we address justice, peace and care for creation with the mobilization and engagement of the next generation.

(* **CONFABULATION:** *Latin confabulates from com-+ fabulari to talk, from fibula story*)

When is it? The Franciscan Summer Confab is being held on July 25-28, 2013 (Thursday, 5:00 pm through Sunday 11:00 am).

Where is it? We are gathering at the National Shrine of Our Lady of the Snows Conference Center in Belleville, Illinois. The nearest major airport is Lambert-St. Louis International in St. Louis, Missouri. (Airport code: STL)

How much will it cost? This event, which includes food and overnight accommodations at the Shrine, will be \$275 for a double room, \$375 for a private room, *for those registering by May 1, 2013*, plus your transportation costs. Financial assistance may be available. Costs will increase by \$40 after the "May Day" deadline. A \$100 deposit is due at the time of registration.

How do I sign up? A complete registration and information packet can be found on the NAFRA website at http://www.nafra-sfo.org/meetings_and_resources.html. To access the packet, look for "Resources" and click on the top line. A copy may also be obtained from your Regional Minister. The deadline for early registration is May 1, 2013.

Franciscan Summer Confab's Franciscan Youth & Young Adult Track

What is it? This is a gathering of a small group of passionate Secular Franciscans and Franciscan-hearted young adults who will come together to help give vision to rebuild the new Franciscan Youth (YouFra) Movement in the United States. This is a time to discuss the needs and challenges of Franciscan young adult ministry today, brainstorm strategies, and set goals for turning ideas into action.



Who should attend? I am a new member of the national Franciscan Youth & Young Adult Commission OR I am a young adult (18 - 28-ish) with leadership skills who is already active in a YouFra Fraternity or am chomping at the bit to get one started OR I am a Secular Franciscan with experience in leading youth and young adult ministry and I want to help get a new YouFra fraternity started in my area.

Why should I go? I have been concerned about the needs of young adults and our Franciscan obligation to engage the next generation of Franciscans in the Gospel life. I feel God has been nudging me to take on leadership, and I have some background in working with youth and young adults. I want to be part of history in helping rebuild a new YouFra Movement. I am good at big picture thinking, dreaming, and turning ideas into action.

Where can I get more information? I should contact Ríobart (Rob) Breen, OFS, Chair of the National Franciscan Youth & Young Adult Commission at (Riobart.Breen@anamduan.org)

Franciscan Summer Confab's JPIC Track



What is it? This is a gathering of a small group of Secular Franciscans who have interest in and are committed to justice, peace and the integrity of Creation locally or regionally, and are willing to contribute to our national effort.

Who should attend? I am a member of the national JPIC Commission OR I am involved in local or regional JPIC efforts OR I would like to get a new JPIC initiative started in my fraternity.

Why should I go? I have been concerned about the needs of peace, justice and integrity of Creation and our Franciscan obligations to be engaged. I also appreciate that there is great potential for our Order in connecting with youth and young adults by way of JPIC.

Where can I get more information? I should contact Kent Ferris, OFS, Chair of the National JPIC Commission at (ferris@davenportdiocese.com)

JOIN YOUFRA FOR OUR ANNUAL H2O PROJECT

"I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink" ... (Matt.25:35)

What is the H2O Project? This is an international project to promote Christian solidarity, advocacy and financial support for poor communities in developing nations who have no access to the Earth's clean drinking water. During one or two weeks in Lent, we abstain from drinking any beverage except tap water, and we set aside any change we would normally spend on other beverages. In solidarity with our brothers and sisters who do not have even clean water to drink, we increase our connections and responsibility to poor families and communities and God's Creation. Money raised is pooled together nationally and donated to drill fresh, clean water wells in poor communities in Central & South America, Asia, and Africa.



Who should participate? Franciscan Youth (YouFra) groups, Secular Franciscan fraternities, and other family and friends who want to help.

Why should we participate? Our poor brothers and sisters need us. This can also be our Lenten experience of daily and ongoing Franciscan transformation and conversion into the Gospel Life. Journeying through Lent with a broader, tangible impact gives meaning to our lives by helping those whom Christ called us to serve.



How do we participate? **1.** Make a commitment as a YouFra Group or Secular Franciscan fraternity to do the H2O Project for a particular week in Lent (March 13 – 29), and designate one or more organizers. **2.** Email Franciscan Youth and Young Adult Commission Chair, Riobart (Rob) Breen, OFS at RBreenOFS@anamduan.org to register your fraternity as part of our national YouFra/Secular Franciscan effort. **3.** Visit the H2O Project website at <http://www.theh2oproject.org> and use any of the free resources and promotional materials to plan your local project. **4.** Get as many people involved as possible, and carry out your project. **5.** At the end of the experience, collect any funds and send a check to the National

Treasurer, Cecilia Maljan-Herbelin, OFS, 1933 Tudor Drive, San Jacinto, CA 92583-6035.

How do we get more information? Visit the H2O Project website at <http://www.theh2oproject.org> or email Franciscan Youth and Young Adult Commission Chair, Rob Breen, OFS at RBreenOFS@anamduan.org

\$1 can give 1 person water for 1 year



FRANCISCANS INTERNATIONAL

We are a Franciscan voice at the United Nations, protecting the vulnerable, the forgotten, and our wounded earth.

<http://www.franciscansinternational.org>

Franciscans on the World Stage: Curbing Abuse, Suffering

by Mary Stronach, OFS
International Councilor - USA

Through its presence at the United Nations, Franciscans International (FI) performs a vital role for the entire Franciscan Family -- bringing Franciscan values to the global stage and influencing leaders to curb abuse and human suffering.

Such an advocacy presence comes with a cost, especially with staff advocating at three key U.N. offices around the world -- New York, Geneva and Bangkok. FI has been solvent for most of its life, but shortfalls in funding and rising overhead for the past five years led to a mounting deficit. It didn't happen overnight, but a new board of directors, with Secular Franciscan Vice General Minister Doug Clorey as president, recognized a fiscal crisis and decided on a two-pronged course of action:

1. restructure, or "re-dimension" FI, as Doug put it, to slash overhead costs while keeping an effective advocacy presence.
2. issue an urgent appeal for donations to help with the immediate crisis, and plan for stable, on-going funding.

By the end of January 2013, staff was cut from 17 to 5. The higher cost of having its own physical office space was being converted to having a desk at a compatible agency in two of the cities.

U.S. Secular Franciscans responded to last October's appeal, enabling the National Fraternity to contribute more than \$8,500. Also responding were the first orders, the Third Order Regular, and the worldwide Secular Franciscan Order, who all comprise the Conference of the Franciscan Family.

"The appeal to the Franciscan Family has been successful," Doug said in February. "It resulted in significantly reducing the organization's outstanding debts at the end of 2012 and was sufficient to keep FI's ministry at the U.N. alive and active. We're still not 'out of the woods', but in a much better place than we were in October."

He added: "The staff of FI has been cut to a bare minimum and the offices in Bangkok and New York have been replaced with an FI desk in each of these locations. At the moment, we have one advocacy officer in New York, one advocacy officer in Bangkok, and two in Geneva, all managed by a transition manager who will be in place during 2013."

The longer challenge for Franciscans International is "to find sources of funds that are more stable over time," Doug noted. FI and its board is "hoping that, especially Secular Franciscans, will consider donating through 'Five for Francis'." This is an ideal way for Secular Franciscans to donate a small, or large, amount every month that ensures long-term viability for the organization. We have also been encouraging three- and five-year pledges from Franciscan communities and congregations."

Founded in the early 1980s, FI was recognized by the U.N. as a NGO (non-governmental organization) in 1989, and in 1995, received General Consultative Status with the U.N.'s Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), allowing it to participate through oral and written statements.



5 ways to support Franciscans International

1. Sign up to give \$5 each month
2. Take 5 minutes to visit the FI website at the top of this page.
3. Email the Franciscan Voice e-newsletter to 5 friends
4. Name at least 5 of your Human Rights
5. Ask 5 friends to give 5 for Francis



Franciscans International Resource

Some of the resources available on the Franciscans International website are a variety of informative publications dealing with important international issues. Below are a few of these downloadable PDF documents.

<http://www.franciscansinternational.org/Publications.82.0.html>

Franciscans International; Seeking Justice through the United Nations

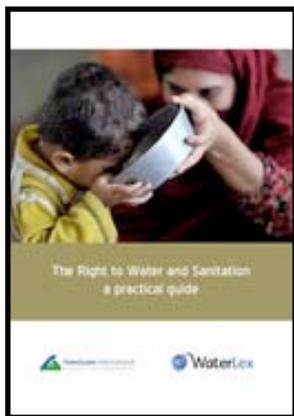
FI Introduction and Reflection Booklet



FI is pleased to release *Franciscans International; Seeking Justice through the United Nations*, a collection of case studies which reflect the variety of human rights challenges that FI addresses through our advocacy at the UN. This booklet serves as an introduction to the work of FI, with first-hand accounts of the experiences of our Franciscan partners at the grassroots around the world and their collaboration with FI in bringing crucial human rights issues to the attention of leaders at the highest international level. We invite readers to consider each case study from both a practical and a spiritual perspective.

This resource offers an excellent introduction to our work, the work of Franciscans defending human rights around the world, and the broader challenges in ensuring human development and social justice. We hope it will challenge you to reflect on the contribution you can make in seeking justice in your community, in your country, and across the world.

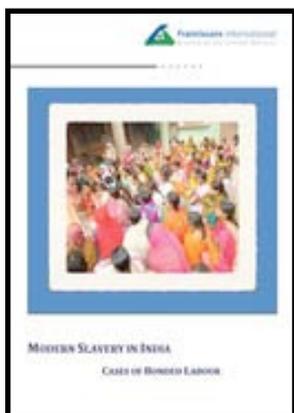
The Right to Water and Sanitation: A Practical Guide



On 28 July 2010 the United Nations General Assembly officially recognized the Human Right to Water and Sanitation. To help make this Human Right a reality, Franciscans International and WaterLex co-developed a learning manual for grassroots religious communities.

The purpose of this manual is to provide the Franciscan Family and any other interested stakeholders with an overview and some tools to address water access and governance challenges in everyday life. It explains progressively over seven sections how to become aware of water and sanitation challenges as well as the planning of facilitation and advocacy activities at the local, national and international level.

Modern Slavery in India: Cases of Bonded Labour



Compiled by the FI Advocacy Team, "Modern Slavery in India: Cases of Bonded Labour" features cases of contemporary forms of slavery from the first-hand experience of Franciscans and partners working in India. Examining issues surrounding child labour, prostitution, human trafficking, and forced and bonded labour in industrial and agricultural sectors, this publication serves as a comprehensive introduction to the scourge of contemporary slavery and the challenges we face in eradicating this grave violation of human rights.



JUSTICE, PEACE AND INTEGRITY OF CREATION



The Franciscan Presence at the 2013 March for Life

By Kent Ferris, OFS, Chair JPIC Commission

On January 22nd, on the 40th Anniversary of the Roe v. Wade U.S. Supreme Court decision legalizing abortion, I boarded a train with our 13 year old daughter, Clare, and headed for Washington D.C. Clare and I set off on our journey to not only represent the Diocese of Davenport, but also our Secular Franciscan Order. We were able to attend the Pro-Life Leadership Mass celebrated by Sean Cardinal O'Malley, OFM Cap, from the Archdiocese of Boston and reconnect with fellow Secular Franciscan and 2012 JPIC Award Winner, Jan Benton. Cardinal O'Malley was very gracious, both with the challenge in his homily, but in agreeing to be photographed with us and later blessing Clare's rosary!

The message that we carried to the staff of both our U.S. Senators was consistent with both pro-life/respect life efforts from the Diocese and the JPIC efforts within the Order. Clare spoke of her reason for being part of the March, the right for nascent life to reach birth. I spoke of two nationwide postcard campaigns that are being undertaken, one relating to the need for immigration reform and the other stressing the importance of religious freedom. Even though Clare is younger yet than the cohort group that will command the Youth Commission's attention, she received compliments from Senate staff members.

Two other facets of the trip also had a Franciscan feel to it. Patrick Carolan, Executive Director of the Franciscan Action Network invited us to be part of two conversations in his Franciscan parish, St. Camillus, in the DC Metro section of Maryland. One night we were able to participate in a strategizing session relating to climate change, while the second night we listened to a conversation with young adults in the parish and the prospects of working collaboratively with FAN.

Finally, while at the March, we were able to meet, Chad Judice, the author of *Waiting for Eli: A Father's Journey from Fear to Faith*. The book is about a couple and their infant son, Eli who was born with a dreaded birth defect called spina bifida. It is an inspiring story of faith, hope and the power of prayer. This moving story has a strong pro-life, pro-love message, and is made even more compelling by

the author's descriptions of little miracles along the way. I highly recommend the book available through Trent Angers, OFS, Publisher of Acadian House Publishing, info@acadianhouse.com or at (337) 235-8851.

What Would Francis Do?

by Jim Hanna OFS, JPIC Commission Member

What would St. Francis do about our global environmental crisis? As Franciscans, we cannot ignore the devastation that our beautiful planet faces. To say the crisis is now, not tomorrow, is not an overstatement. Just ask the people of the Carteret Islands. Due to climate change, the waters of the Pacific Ocean are rising and covering the island, home to several thousand people. CNN calls them the world's first environmental refugees.

Our Lady of Mercy Fraternity in Springfield, Ohio, recommends the award-winning documentary, *Sun Come Up*, as a way to bring the message home that we must take action now to help protect the environment. The movie touches the heart while showing the plight of a people who for centuries have loved their land and their homes but must leave to survive. The extreme weather patterns we have experienced this past year seem to be a wake-up call. We must listen to our Popes who have spoken on this issue in the past. Surely St. Francis would agree.

Pope John Paul II's 1999 World Day of Peace Message said, "The danger of serious damage to land and sea, and the climate, flora, and fauna, calls for a profound change in modern civilization's typical consumer life style, particularly in the richer countries." He continued to talk about the depletion of the ozone layers and the "greenhouse effect" consequences of industrial growth, massive and urban concentrations, vastly increased energy needs, and unrestricted deforestation. He pointed out that these are known to harm the atmosphere and environment.

Pope Benedict XVI in 2010 in a World Day of Peace Message asked, "Can we remain indifferent before the problems associated with such realities as climate change?"

The inspiring DVD and additional resources are available by contacting the Catholic Coalition on Climate Change at their link:

<http://catholicclimatecovenant.org/resources/sun-come-up-screening/>.

National Fraternity of the Secular Franciscan Order - USA

ANNUAL TREASURER'S REPORT

by Dennis Ross, OFS, National Treasurer

NAFRA BUDGET FOR 2013

Approved at the Annual NAFRA-USA Chapter in Denver Colorado, October 19, 2012

Account #	--- INCOME ---	Amount			Per Capita
6110	FAIR SHARE @ \$17 (13,400 members)	227,800			17.00
6120	INTEREST	1,000			0.07
6200	FORMATION BOOK SALES	40,000			2.99
6140	MISCELLANEOUS				
	TOTAL INCOME	268,800			20.06
	--- EXPENSES ---				
7110	FAIR SHARE	22,000	CIOFS		1.64
7115	FAN	13,400	Dcn. Tom Bello		1.00
7120	NEWSLETTER	40,000	Jim Wesley		2.99
7130	ANNUAL MEETING	50,000			3.73
7135	QUINQUENNIAL CONGRESS	5,000			0.37
7140	COUNCIL OFFICERS	4,000			0.30
7145	CIOFS MEETING				0.00
7150	COUNCIL MEETINGS	19,000			1.42
7155	LIABILITY INSURANCE	3,800	Actual cost		0.28
7160	CIOFS VISITATION				0.00
7171	DIVERSITY COORDINATOR				0.00
7172	PEACE AWARD	3,000	Kent Ferris		0.22
7173	ARCHIVE	4,000	Sharon Deveaux		0.30
7175	HISTORIAN				0.00
7176	COMPUTER COMMITTEE	6,640	Dan Mulholland		0.50
7180	FORMATION - PRINTING	20,000			1.49
7181	FORMATION	18,100	Bob Fitzsimmons		1.35
7182	S A DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE	4,000			0.30
7186	JPIC	6,000	Kent Ferris		0.45
7187	YOUTH	6,000	Elaine Hedtke		0.45
7188	ECUMENICAL COMMITTEE	6,000			0.45
7199	CONF NAT SPIRITUAL ASSISTANTS	8,000	John Sanborn		0.60
7197	OTHER EXPENSES				0.00
7198	COMMUNICATIONS (NEW)	4,000			0.30
	TOTAL EXPENSES	242,940			18.13
	NET INCOME (DEFICIT)	25,860			1.93

National Fraternity of the Secular Franciscan Order - USA

ANNUAL TREASURER'S REPORT

by Dennis Ross, OFS, National Treasurer

2012 REGION REPORT - FAIR SHARE

as of December 31, 2012

Reg #	REGION'S NAME	ESTAB	REGION'S FAIR SHARE AMOUNT	Reg #	2012 FAIR SHARE PAID IN 2012	on 10/11/12 Professed Members for 2012	2012 DATE Received
50	OHANA O KE ANUENUE	10/25/91	40	50	\$ 516.00	43	10/31/12
51	FIVE FRANCISCAN MARTYRS	10/23/92	55	51	\$ 8,400.00	700	9/7/12
52	ST FRANCIS	10/29/93	42	52	\$ 9,540.00	795	6/26/12
53	BL JUNIPERO SERRA	10/29/93	31	53	\$ 7,440.00	620	6/28/12
54	TROUBADOURS OF PEACE	10/23/92	50	54	\$ 3,288.00	274	6/3/12
55	QUEEN OF PEACE	10/23/92	45	55	\$ 6,324.00	527	9/22/12
56	DIVINE MERCY	10/29/93	37	56	\$ 7,704.00	642	7/11/12
57	ST MARGARET OF CORTONA	10/29/93	18	57	\$ 4,656.00	388	7/17/12
57	ST MARGARET OF CORTONA			57	\$ 4,656.00	388	9/16/12
58	ST THOMAS MORE	10/29/93	35	58	\$ 2,328.00	194	5/22/22
59	MOTHER CABRINI	10/23/94	25	59	\$ 6,840.00	570	5/13/12
59	MOTHER CABRINI			59	\$ 24.00	2	7/30/12
60	ST JOAN OF ARC	10/29/93	25	60	\$ 3,396.00	283	6/26/12
61	BRO & SIS OF ST FRANCIS	10/23/94	40	61	\$ 6,084.00	507	5/6/12
63	FRANCISCANS OF THE PRAIRIE	10/23/94	25	63	\$ 2,832.00	236	5/27/12
64	HOLY TRINITY	10/23/94	25	64	\$ 3,000.00	250	5/17/12
65	LA VERNA	10/12/95	50	65	\$ 1,338.00	112	5/6/12
65	LA VERNA			65	\$ 1,338.00	112	6/20/12
65	LA VERNA			65	\$ 1,338.00	112	8/28/12
65	LA VERNA			65	\$ 1,338.00	112	10/31/12
66	OUR LADY OF INDIANA	10/23/94	22	66	\$ 3,624.00	302	10/4/12
66	OUR LADY OF INDIANA			66	\$ 108.00	9	12/20/12
67	LOS TRES COMPANEROS	10/23/94	50	67	\$ 3,204.00	267	7/17/12
68	LADY POVERTY	10/23/94	25	68	\$ 4,752.00	396	4/30/12
69	ST KATHARINE DREXEL	10/23/94	25	69	\$ 8,880.00	740	8/3/12
70	ST MAXIMILIAN KOLBE	10/23/94	26	70	\$ 4,964.00	414	9/7/12
71	BL KATERI TEKAKWITHA	10/23/94	40	71	\$ 5,292.00	441	7/11/12
72	SANTA MARIA DE LAS MONTANAS	10/23/94	48	72	\$ 2,664.00	222	8/24/12
73	OUR LADY OF THE ROCKIES	10/12/95	25	73	\$ 900.00	75	5/13/12
74	ST CLARE	10/12/95	30	74	\$ 2,782.00	232	4/30/12
75	OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE	10/12/95	50	75	\$ 3,792.00	316	5/17/12
76	FR SOLANUS CASEY	10/17/96	25	76	\$ 9,408.00	784	6/3/12
77	OUR LADY OF THE ANGELS	10/12/95	34	77	\$ 10,344.00	862	10/29/12
78	ST ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY	10/17/96	35	78	\$ 7,788.00	649	8/24/12
79	THE TAU CROSS	10/16/97	25	79	\$ 7,452.00	621	3/28/12
80	JUAN DE PADILLA	10/17/96	32	80	\$ 1,980.00	165	4/5/12
80	JUAN DE PADILLA			80	\$ 840.00	70	4/16/12
TOTALS					\$ 161,154	13430	
					Average 34.50	13430	100.00%
						13430	PAID

National Fraternity of the Secular Franciscan Order - USA

ANNUAL TREASURER'S REPORT

by Dennis Ross, OFS, National Treasurer

QUARTERLY GENERAL FUND REPORTS FOR CALENDAR YEAR 2012 AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2012

Acct #	Quarter Ending On: INCOME	3/31/12	6/30/12	9/30/12	12/31/12	TOTAL FOR YEAR	BUDGET for 2012
		6110	PER CAPITA	9,780.00	71,130.00		
6120	INTEREST	74.83	58.07	38.46	39.68	211.04	1,000
6200	FORMATION SALES	14,449.35	11,283.65	8,195.55	10,552.85	44,481.40	41,000
6140	MISCELLANEOUS					0.00	18,600
TOTAL INCOME		24,304.18	82,471.72	74,128.01	24,942.53	205,846.44	221,400

EXPENSES

7110	CIOFS PER CAPITA		10,000.00		8,424.97	18,424.97	18,000
7115	FAN Fran. Action Network			7,000.00	5,830.00	12,830.00	13,400
7120	NEWSLETTER	5,880.00	9,123.00	9,891.87	9,843.75	34,738.62	38,400
7130	ANNUAL MEETING	3,400.00	3,400.00	16,353.28	34,326.06	57,479.34	50,000
7135	QUINQUENNIAL CONFERENCE	648.18	850.21	566.21	773.14	2,837.74	5,000
7140	COUNCIL OFFICERS	408.32	836.95	943.62	994.38	3,183.27	4,000
7145	CIOFS MEETING			22.07	1,305.20	1,327.27	
7150	COUNCIL MEETINGS	4,495.98	3,104.84	5,251.23		12,852.05	12,000
7155	LIABILITY INSURANCE			3,799.00		3,799.00	3,800
7160	CIOFS VISITATION					0.00	2,000
7171	DIVERSITY COORDINATOR					0.00	
7172	PEACE AWARD CMMTTEE			519.20	2,124.90	2,644.10	2,500
7173	NATIONAL ARCHIVES		2,202.98	549.31		2,752.29	3,200
7175	HISTORIAN		1,000.33	-507.28	233.55	726.60	3,000
7176	COMPUTER COMMITTEE	405.00	1,200.00	600.00	1,551.14	3,756.14	6,100
7180	FORMATION-PRINTING	25,546.40	2,635.91	69.40	428.35	28,680.06	20,000
7181	FORMATION	588.60	1,884.57	1,846.86	1,671.39	5,991.42	19,000
7186	J P I C	-735.03	4,600.23		16.86	3,882.06	6,000
7187	YOUTH				195.00	195.00	4,000
7188	ECUMENICAL COMMITTEE		1,691.63	3,173.29	214.29	5,079.21	7,000
7199	CNSA			4,000.00		4,000.00	4,000
7200	OTHER EXPENSES					0.00	0
TOTAL EXPENSES		40,637.45	42,530.65	54,078.06	67,932.98	205,179.14	221,400

NET INCOME(EXPENSE)	-16,333.27	39,941.07	20,049.95	-42,990.45	667.3
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Bank Balances of General Funds:

Beginning: CHECKING - HSBC	75,651.46	146,858.11	242,684.86	130,613.39
SAVINGS - HSBC	100,320.74	12,780.82	-43,104.86	89,016.56
TOTAL - Beginning Bal.	175,972.20	159,638.93	199,580.00	219,629.95
Ending: CHECKING - 1st Nation	146,858.11	242,684.86	130,613.39	67,283.56
SAVINGS - HSBC	12,780.82	-43,104.86	89,016.56	109,355.94
TOTAL - Ending Balance	159,638.93	199,580.00	219,629.95	176,639.50

Respectfully submitted by Dennis W. Ross SFO, National Treasurer

**QUARTERLY GENERAL FUND REPORTS
FOR CALENDAR YEAR 2012
AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2012**

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National Fraternity of the Secular Franciscan Order - USA

Quarterly Financial Report for Calendar Year 2012

RESTRICTED FUNDS REPORT

Acct#	DUNS SCOTUS GRANT	BEGINNING BALANCE	Quarter Ending On:				YEAR TOTAL	ENDING BALANCE
			3/31/12	6/30/12	9/30/12	12/31/12		
8110	AVAILABLE FOR GRANTS	18124.00	-2,500.00	-1,081.00	-2,000.00		12,543.00	12,543.00
8220	LEGAL & OTHER EXPENSES	182.07					182.07	182.07
OTHER RESTRICTED FUNDS								
7303	REGIONAL NEEDS	0.00				10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00
7304	EMERGENCY FUND	0.00				10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00
7305	CHARITABLE PROJECTS	0.00				10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00
7306	NATIONAL EVENTS	0.00				10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00
7307	DONOR FUND	42904.43	60,307.25	-16,212.50	-23,062.50	-50,795.00	13,141.68	13,141.68
7310	CIOFS OFFICE FUND	1868.00	100.00	-1,900.00	150.00	-218.00	0.00	0.00
7314	FORMATION COMM FUND	1317.10					1,317.10	1,317.10
7315	ECUMENICAL COMM FUND	1138.20					1,138.20	1,138.20
7316	YOUTH H2O COLLECTIONS	1143.65	695.00	4,184.75	110.00	-5,354.70	778.70	778.70
7317	Y/YA YOUTH SCHOLARSHIP	3438.05				-950.00	2,488.05	2,488.05
7319	GIFT FUND	0.00					0.00	0.00
7335	QUINQUENNIAL FUND	15061.67	29,012.50	70,752.50	-108,069.76	740.00	7,496.91	7,496.91
7375	HISTORY BOOKS print, sales	-6545.00		200.00	789.30	-3,722.00	-9,277.70	-9,277.70
		0.00					0.00	0.00
		0.00					0.00	0.00
TOTALS		78632.17	87,614.75	55,943.75	-132,082.96	-20,299.70	69,808.01	69,808.01

DUNS SCOTUS SECULAR FRANCISCAN FORMATION TRUST FUND

		Available for Grants	Investment Account	Total Value
12/31/06	Trust Fund Balance	9,967.39	605,319.00	615,286.39
	Investment gains/losses: during 2007	319.00	40,908.00	41,227.00
12/31/07	Trust Fund Balance	10,286.39	646,227	656,513.39
	Grant to SALT TEAM 3/25/08	-5,000.00		-5,000.00
	Investment gains/losses: during 2008	170.00	-225,260.00	-225,090.00
12/31/08	Trust Fund Balance end of 2008	5,456.39	420,967	426,423.39
	Investment gains/losses: during 2009	20.49	116,864.92	116,885.41
12/31/09	Trust Fund Balance end of 2009	5,476.88	537,831.92	543,308.80
	Investment gains/losses: during 2010	76.77	78,665.43	78,742.2
12/31/10	Trust Fund Balance end of 2010	5,553.65	616,497.35	660,194.21
	Duns Scolus Wiltdrawal		-24,000.00	-24,000.00
	Investment gains/losses: during 2011	369.00	-6,745.00	-6,376.00
12/31/11	Trust Fund Balance	5,922.65	585,752.35	591,675.00
3/31/12	Investment gains/losses: First Quarter		70,691.00	70,691.00
	Trust Fund Balance		662,366.00	662,366.00
6/30/12	Investment gains/losses: Second Quarter		-32,742.00	-32,742.00
	Trust Fund Balance		629,624.00	629,624.00
9/30/12	Investment gains/losses: Third Quarter		30,108.00	30,108.00
	Trust Fund Balance		659,732.00	659,732.00
12/31/12	Investment gains/losses: Fourth Quarter		-1,166.00	-1,166.00
	Trust Fund Balance		658,566	658,566

QUARTERLY GENERAL FUND REPORTS
FOR CALENDAR YEAR 2012
AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2012

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Performance of Duns Scotus Investments

a	DRTHX	Dreyfus Third Century Fund				
b	NBSRX	Neuberger & Berman Socially Responsive Fund				
c	PAXWX	Pax World Fund				
d	DSEFX	Domini Social Equity Fund				
						ANNUAL
						PERCENT
						CHANGE
Value at 12/31/00	179,896	82,144	150,357	124,595	536,992	
Value at 12/31/01	137,232	80,031	136,693	108,694	462,650	-13.84%
Value at 12/31/02	96,924	68,467	124,578	86,205	376,174	-18.69%
Value at 12/31/03	121,847	92,073	145,745	109,590	469,255	24.74%
Value at 12/31/04	129,232	104,563	165,662	119,740	519,197	10.64%
Value at 12/31/05	133,711	112,486	174,586	122,168	542,951	4.58%
Value at 12/31/06	145,755	128,735	193,287	137,542	605,319	11.49%
Value at 12/31/07	156,769	138,367	211,540	139,551	646,227	6.76%
Value at 12/31/08	103,000	84,729	146,549	86,689	420,967	-34.86%
Value at 12/31/09	137,294	110,660	177,840	117,514	543,308	29.06%
Value at 12/31/10	153,584	135,879	198,981	133,607	622,051	14.49%
% change for 2010	11.87%	22.79%	11.89%	13.69%	14.49%	
% change 2000 to end of 2010	-14.63%	65.42%	32.34%	7.23%	15.84%	
Balance on March 31, 2011	162,536	145,268	209,749	142,482	660,035	
% change for First Quarter	5.83%	6.91%	5.41%	6.64%	6.11%	
Balance on June 30, 2011	163,617	144,468	210,222	144,749	663,056	
% change for Second Quarter	0.67%	-0.55%	0.23%	1.59%	0.46%	
Duns Scotus Withdrawal	\$24,000					
Balance on September 30, 2011	118,154	119,180	181,266	123,966	542,566	
% change for Third Quarter	-27.79%	-17.50%	-13.77%	-14.36%	-18.17%	
Balance on December 31, 2011	129,800	131,940	195,340	134,595	591,675	
% change for Fourth Quarter	9.86%	10.71%	7.76%	8.57%	9.05%	
% change during 2011	-15.49%	-2.90%	-1.83%	0.74%	-4.88%	
Balance on March 31, 2012	148,194	145,826	213,188	155,158	662,366	
% change for First Quarter	25.42%	22.36%	17.61%	25.16%	22.08%	
Balance on June 30, 2012	140,367	136,551	204,798	147,908	629,624	
% change for Second Quarter	-5.28%	-6.36%	-3.94%	-4.67%	-4.94%	
Balance on September 30, 2012	147,411	143,842	214,629	153,850	659,732	
% change for Third Quarter	5.02%	5.34%	4.80%	4.02%	4.78%	
Balance on December 31, 2012	144,935	146,384	217,380	149,867	658,566	
% change for Fourth Quarter	-1.68%	1.77%	1.28%	-2.59%	-0.18%	
% change during 2012	11.66%	10.95%	11.28%	11.35%	11.31%	
% change 2000 to end of 2012	-19.43%	78.20%	44.58%	20.28%	22.64%	
	DRTHX	NBSRX	PAXWX	DSEFX	TOTALS	

Secular Franciscans Changing Lives



Miguel Pro Mission
by Daniel Schell, OFS
President Miguel Pro Mission

The work of Miguel Pro Mission was started by Fr. Peter Urban, a retired priest from the Archdiocese of Denver. Miguel Pro Mission was incorporated and given non-profit status in January 2010. Our mission is to bring hope to the poor in the city of Juarez, Chihuahua, Mexico. Juarez is a border city under siege by drug lords fighting for control of the drug trade north into the United States. It is considered one of the most dangerous cities in the world. Living in this environment the people of the poorest barrios can lose hope in the future and the future for their children.

Miguel Pro Mission is a small Mission with a big job.



We work with and provide support to three projects in Juarez to help bring about social justice and peace for the people of Juarez. In order to do that, Miguel Pro Mission begins with education.

To help achieve social justice, the children of Juarez must be educated to raise themselves out of the poverty and dire conditions that exist. Through Miguel Pro Mission donations and volunteers, support is provided to these projects:

- ❖ Working with Madre Petra and Hermana Maria de las Angeles (Angie) at the four centers in Juarez named the “Centro Mujeres Tonantzín.” A monthly

stipend is provided to more than 80 students to help pay for tuition, paper, pens and uniforms needed in the public schools. There are students from kindergarten through the university. The centers provide classes for the mothers, a safe and secure study area for students and a preschool room. A program is also overseen where families are provided money to purchase small farm animals, chickens and goats, for eggs and milk for themselves and to sell.

- ❖ Las Hormigas Comunidad en Desarrollo, providing counseling and educational services for children and adults traumatized by living in a city of immense poverty and violence, where thousands have been murdered.
- ❖ Support is provided to Madre Mariana and the Mision de Nuestra Señora de las Esperanza. Madre oversees the operation of a clinic providing medical services at \$8 a visit and free pharmaceuticals, with a daycare center across the street from the clinic for preschoolers. She is also responsible for a Montessori school with 120 students 6 to 14 years old and eight teachers.

October 2012 was a milestone for Miguel Pro Mission. A one-week mission trip was organized with Fr. Christopher Popravak, OFM Cap, of the Capuchin-Franciscans Mid-America Province. Daniel Schell, OFS, Fr. Christopher and three postulants spent a week in Juarez. They worked to complete an indoor ecologically friendly bathroom for a family of five. They no longer need to use an unsanitary outhouse. The friars also spent time with the families and children at the centers learning how support and encouragement can change lives and give hope.

Miguel Pro Mission believes social justice can be achieved; there can be peace. Hope is not lost. We can make a difference in the lives of each child, student, parent and family we touch. We will not change the whole world, but we will change the world of those we touch.

Miguel Pro Mission joins the proclamation for religious freedom and human rights of the Cristeros by repeating the last words uttered by Blessed Miguel Pro seconds before he was executed by firing squad, **“VIVA CRISTO REY.”**

FOR MORE INFORMATION SEND INQUIRIES:
MIGUEL PRO MISSION, P.O. BOX 74, BROOMFIELD, CO 80038-0074 Telephone: 303-908-1462
Website: www.MiguelProMission.com Email Address: info@miguelpromission.com
Facebook: Miguel Pro Mission



Franciscan Living

The New Evangelization: Franciscan Style

By Francine Gikow, OFS



Today, many of us live in families with varying degrees of faith commitment. We might have multiple faiths, no faith or lukewarm faith – all in the same family. Sharing our faith is no longer simple. The “New Evangelization” is the Catholic Church’s attempt to recapture the lukewarm, the unchurched, the rarely churched and the uninvolved. So how do we reignite the flame of passion among those who already profess the faith? How do we reach out to them? I am convinced that evangelization for a Franciscan is one of Witness and Presence.

Since I am a Catholic Christian in a multi-faith family, who I am and how I approach God, matters. I am constantly aware that for many in the family, I represent not only my church, but also the love of God to them. I am accepted because I do not proselytize nor do I talk about God much. Instead I prefer to use my actions to speak for God’s love for each of them. The family already knows that I live my faith intensely, and all that I am and all that I do, is a reflection of this faith. Hopefully, I do not mess up reflecting God’s love for them and they can find God through me.

St. Francis’ early followers were not clerics but rather they were people who earned their keep through manual labor. Francis did not seek the church’s permission to preach. Instead, Francis asked for the church to bless his style of living the gospel life. What a crucial difference this made in the development of the Franciscan order! Francis believed in living the gospel life as an overflowing demonstration of the love that God had given him. Francis was first IN LOVE with Christ, and then his evangelization followed.

Like Francis, in order to become effective evangelizers, we must be totally infatuated with God! Christ must be so real and so personal, that He is all that matters! We have to spend time with Him to constantly recenter our relationship with Him. We have to be so open to Him in our lives, that all our whole life depends on Him and His will for us! Humbly, we make room for God who takes over our lives more and more. This is the continuing oblation that we offer when we make our profession into the Order.

Because we rely on God more, we become more confident in His love and we become free to ex-

press it to others. Our confidence does not stem from judgmental attitudes towards others; rather it is a humble quiet confidence steeped in the knowledge that we are not in control, God is! For we are nothing without God and his gift of faith is just that – a wonderful gift!

I guess there is a place for apologetics for some in this new evangelization, but traditionally for Franciscans, we are lovers not arguers. I know I do not have the quickness of intellect for appropriate responses that apologetics demand. We can leave the arguments to others! However, how nice it is to be more drawn to be a lover not a lawyer!

We need not feel second best if we do not have all of the answers (after all, our faith is a mystery and a gift). We just need to love with the love of God... simple but difficult! We may spend the rest of our lives trying to do just that!

However, others *do* notice how we live since many in our society do not live intentional lives. They become aware that we *are different* and start asking questions. There is something about us and how we love, that is attractive to others (just like Francis was attractive to many during his era). This attraction can start many meaningful discussions about the place of God in our lives and His love for us. We evangelize people by love and not by arguments!

My appreciation for our particular Franciscan style of evangelization has increased living in a multi-faith family. I am drawn to be a witness for our faith and to be present to others with the quiet compassionate love of God (compassion, in the Franciscan tradition, means to share in the passion of others).

It has been said that Francis found great joy sharing in the lives of the lepers and those considered the least in society. To do so, Francis found, is to be truly alive in Christ. It is our sharing in Christ’s passion and His sharing in ours that is the meaning for the suffering in our lives and the way to Him! It is how we grow in the love of God. It is a privileged place. It is the paradox of the gospel – in order to live our life, we must lose it! In order to evangelize others, we must be “in love” with God! It’s just that simple.

Little Weeds

DIDJA KNOW?

By
M. Marko, OFS

Didja know that St. Dominic suggested to St. Francis that they combine their Orders? Francis quietly declined. I'm sure he'd given it some thought and come to the conclusion that it wouldn't work, if only because no one thereafter would want to be either a Franinican or a Domiscan.

Didja know that when the Church was getting ready to name a Patron Saint of Ecology, Francis wasn't the only one in the running? St. Benedict was a contender, too. Apparently, the Benedictines take very good care of the grounds around their monasteries and were therefore considered good stewards of Mother Earth. Francis, however, went beyond that, insofar as he didn't think of himself as a mere steward but rather a member of her family along with Brother Sun, Sister Moon, etc. So Francis got the title of Patron Saint of Ecology. We understand Benedict was offered Patron Saint of Congeniality, but he passed.

Didja know that King Henry VIII (yeah, THE Henry VIII) had two Tertiaries in his life? St. Thomas More, an important councilor of Henry and Lord Chancellor for a couple of years, eventually lost his head (literally), as he couldn't go along with Henry's plans for a second marriage and taking over the Church in England. He eventually became the Patron Saint of Lawyers. The other Tertiary in Henry's life was his first wife, Catherine of Aragon. She fared better than Thomas, in that she was merely divorced rather than beheaded. She has not been canonized. But I'm sure if the Church were looking for a Patron Saint of Ex-wives, she'd be one of the first to raise her hand.

Didja know that St. Clare is the Patron Saint of Television? She spent her last few years in ill health. One Christmas Eve, when the other

Sisters were celebrating Midnight Mass, Clare was confined to her sickbed. But on the wall opposite her bed, she saw everything at Midnight Mass, much as if it were on TV. Needless to say, if someone had had the foresight to invent the telephone and the Internet back then, she could've become the Patron Saint of Bundling. At the very least, you'd think they'd add on the title of Patron Saint of Mass for Shut-Ins.

Didja know that of the 300+ Franciscan saints over the past seven centuries, more than 40 percent were martyrs? And many of these were missionaries to foreign (to them) countries.

Didja know that our Tertiary "ancestors" run the gamut from royalty down to seamstresses? There have been actors, writers, priests, bishops and popes. There have been people who were important to governments and the Church; there have been people who were important only to their own families. There have been founders of religious congregations and societies.

Didja know that while Louis IX was a Tertiary and later became one of our Patron Saints, another Louis, Louis XIV, persecuted the Order in France in the 18th century?

Didja know that while San Francisco is obviously named after St. Francis, there are at least a couple other well-known towns that can claim Franciscan names? Los Angeles, which is actually named after the Portiuncula, Our Lady of the Angels; and Santa Fe, whose whole name is "The Royal City of the Holy Faith of Blessed. Francis."

Didja know the story of our Order isn't over yet? You and I are still writing it. It'll be interesting to see what the next eight centuries hold for us.



5th Summer Seminar for the OFS

Endorsed by the National Executive Council of the Secular Franciscan Order – USA

July 5, 2013 – July 7, 2013

Finding Our History:

An Interactive Theater Presentation of the History of the Secular Franciscan Order in the United States 1917-2007

with

William Wicks, OFS – *Historian of our Order and Former National Minister*

Jim Wesley, OFS – *Editor, TAU-USA*

Cindy Wesley, OFS – *Minister, Bl. Junipero Serra Region (Northern CA and Nevada)*
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