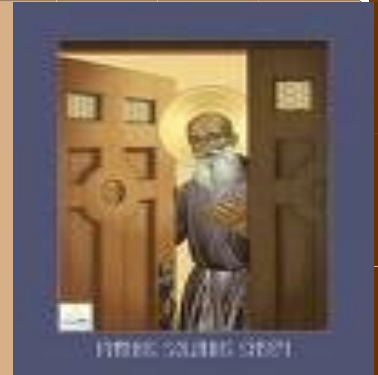


The Doorkeeper's Notebook

A Publication of the Fr. Solanus Casey Regional Fraternity



Franciscan Service by Sally Haddad Fr Solanus Casey Regional Minister

Matt 20: 25-28 *But Jesus summoned them and said, "You know that rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and the great ones make their authority over them felt. But it shall not be so among you. Rather, whoever wishes to be great among you shall be your servant; whoever wishes to be first among you shall be your slave. Just so, the Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve and to give His life as a ransom for many."*

Article 21 of the Rule. *On various levels, each fraternity is animated and guided by a council and minister who are elected by the professed according to the constitutions. Their service, which lasts for a definite period, is marked by a ready and willing spirit and is a duty of responsibility to each member and to the community.*

This year, we have had & will continue to have several elections in our region. I also will be traveling to New Mexico in order to participate in the election for our National Executive Council.

When we made our permanent profession to our Holy Rule, we made a commitment to serve our Order for as long as we live & as long as we are able. One of the means in serving our order is to accept a nomination to serve on a position of the Council at any level whether it is local, regional, national or even international. We should not turn down a nomination unless there is a serious reason for doing so. For example, family responsibilities or health concerns may prevent us from accepting certain nominations. We also need to receive all our nominations with prayerful consideration.

If we are elected to any position on the Council, we need to remember that we are humble servants. Our General Constitutions Article 32-Paragraph 2 reminds us to reject all ambition when we serve on any position of the Council. Every Election is supposed to begin with a prayer to the Holy Spirit seeking His Guidance as we choose our leaders. Therefore, we are doing God's Work when we are serving on the Council.

Furthermore, once we are elected to the council, we need to perform our duties faithfully. For example, if we are treasurer, we need to make our deposits, balance the checkbook, etc. in a timely manner. If we are new to the office to which we have been elected, we can seek guidance from the brother or sister who had previously held the office or we can seek guidance from the appropriate person from the next higher level council. We also need to attend all the Council meetings if possible. All councils need a quorum in order to perform its duties. A quorum is $\frac{1}{2}$ plus 1 or a majority of its members. If it should happen that a council does not have a quorum at a particular meeting, the members that are present may have some discussion & make some plans, but they must postpone the vote until sufficient numbers are present. A council may conduct business over the phone or through email.

I would like to point out that, according to Article 51-Paragraph 1 of our General Constitutions, it is the co-responsibility of the council & the minister to guide & animate the fraternity, & it is the minister's responsibility to carry out the directions & decisions of the council. This is not a power trip, but a work of humble service & love.

Our General Constitutions Article 32-Paragraph 2 also reminds us that our term in office is limited to a specific time period, & that we will need to relinquish our offices in a spirit of humble service to the person who is elected in our place.

Finally, the true minister of our Order is the Holy Spirit. Each Prayer for the Regular Meeting of the Council in our Ritual includes an invocation to the Holy Spirit.

I was elected as your regional minister last April. I am new to this position. Please pray for me that I may remain your humble servant & that I may perform my duties in a way that reflects the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Please also pray for the rest of the regional council as well.

Articles for the fall edition will be due on August 15, 2009.

My Lord be Praised in Brother Sun

Update on Franciscan Action Network by
Mary Lou Scebelo, SFO

In March 2008, FAN, the Franciscan Action Network began in the USA. As a member of FAN, through NAFRA, the Secular Franciscans, are included in the voice which brings a Franciscan perspective to the

US Government. FAN works together with the USCCB, the Catholic Coalition on Climate Change and the Alliance to End Hunger. FAN met with the incoming Obama Administration concerning upcoming legislative sessions. As a Catholic organization, FAN embraces a position promoting life at all stages. FAN helps track issues in Peace Making, Poverty, Human Rights, Care of Creation, Economic Recovery and Immigration Reform. I encourage you to register individually and receive *Action Alerts*, which for this year, focus on Immigration Reform and Global Warming. Current membership is around 1800. FAN is a non-profit organization. Sign up as a member on their website www.franciscanaction.org. The website gives *Action Alerts* and an easy way to contact your Congress person or Senator via email on many issues of concern to Franciscans. FAN has recently introduced its "Little Portion Appeal," looking for many to catch the spirit of the appeal for social transformation with your help. FAN invites you to send a leadership representative to the Immigration Advocacy Conference & Training in September in Chicago. FAN held a *webinar* in June to explore what we can do to be instruments of peace in the Holy Land.

Father Solanus Casey Regional Day of Recollection

Fr. Matthias Wesnofske, OFM, Cap. Will give another regional day of recollection at St. Joseph's Residence, Enfield from 10:15 A.M. till 3 P.M. Saturday, September 19, 2009. Participants are asked to phone or e-mail the number of participants to Sally Haddad at sallyhaddad@sbcglobal.net or Mary Ann Julian at nonamar01@aol.com. Bring a bag lunch. Fr. Solanus Casey Region will cover speaker costs and hall use. Participants may give a free-will offering.



They also held a *webinar* on Climate

Change. Be informed and inform our government representatives through the FAN website with our Franciscan views in our country and in the world. Peace, Mary Lou Scebelo, sfo Fr. Solanus Casey FAN representative

*Secular Franciscan Burse
for
Seminarians of the Capuchin
Franciscan Province
of St. Mary's*

*If you wish to contribute to this
burse, please send a check to the
Regional Office,
made out to the*

*Fr. Solanus Casey Region with
Burse-SFO written on the subject
line.*

*"Let humanity fear, let the entire universe
tremble and the heavens exult,*

*when on the
in the
the priest, is
Son of the
God."*



*altar,
hands of
Christ,
living*

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Attention Fraternity Ministers:

Report change in your mailing address or change in the number of newsletters required for your fraternity to the Distribution Manager.

Pope Benedict XVI's Address to the Franciscan Family

by Fr. Matthias Wesnofske, OFM, Cap., Regional Spiritual Assistant



At the conclusion of the International Chapter of Mats, our Holy Father spoke to us Franciscans, as we journeyed to Castel Gandolfo, just as St. Francis journeyed to Rome 800 years before, in 1209, for approval of the Rule. The Holy Father's address can be found on pages 2 and 3 of the recent copy of TAU-USA, which you should have all received. I would like to comment on this address, so that we don't just skip over it, as we might have done to the excerpts given us in the previous issue of the TAU-USA from President Obama's Inauguration speech. Hopefully, we all are aware of where our allegiance lies and have our eyes set on the eternal kingdom.

Returning from the Chapter, I have particularly emphasized several points of the Pope's address in speaking to various fraternities about the experience, and I would like to take this opportunity to very briefly share these considerations with all of you.

First of all, it is important for us to realize that the Pope was speaking not just to those gathered there that Saturday in Castel Gandolfo, and not just to the First Order, but to all of us, "the Friars Minor of the three branches,the members of the Third Order,....the Franciscan women religious and the members of the Franciscan secular institutes, and....the Poor Clares, which con-

stitute the 'second order'."

The Minister General of the Secular Franciscans, Encarnacion Del Pozo, and her Council, were also present for the address. So this is the Holy Father, the Vicar of Christ, the Successor of St. Peter, speaking especially to you.

This address was given during Easter week when we were celebrating Christ's Resurrection and the call of the followers of Jesus, both men and women, to go and witness to His Resurrection. So the Holy Father was telling us to go, just as Pope John Paul the Great said to us, when the final revision of the Constitutions of the Secular Franciscans were approved in Chapter, when he said, 'Duc in alto,' 'Cast into the deep'. Once again, the Pope is saying. "Go, and continue to 'repair the house' of the Lord Jesus Christ, his Church." But very importantly, the Holy Father reminded us, "Like Francis, always start with yourselves. We are the first house that God wants to restore." This, of course, is our vocation as brothers and sisters of penance; penance, the process of conversion, repairing, restoring. "Start with yourselves" the Pope said, and we do this, always realizing that the process is never finished and is on-going.

With that thought in mind, consider the Holy Father offering what he

called "a spontaneous reflection: Francis could have not gone to the Pope." The Holy Father explains, "Many religious groups and movements were forming during that time, and some of them were opposed to the Church as an institution, or at least didn't seek the Church's approval. Certainly a polemical attitude towards the hierarchy would have won Francis many followers." According to Webster's dictionary, polemic or a polemical attitude would be, 'a controversial, argumentative, or a refutation of the principles of another, an aggressive attack.' No doubt it would be true today, if we were more controversial, argumentative, disagreeing with the hierarchy or teaching of the Church, we could be more noticeable, more conspicuous, maybe even get on the evening news, and perhaps even attract more members to the Order. The Holy Father continues, "Instead, he (Francis) immediately thought to put his journey and that of his companions into the hands of the Bishop of Rome, the Successor of Peter." The Franciscan movement began 800 years ago with the Church's approval of our way of life. As we conclude this year of St. Paul, let us all renew our commitment to the faith, the Catholic faith, and to the Holy Father. Let us strive to "make more and more beautiful the Church's face. Let us always go to the Church for guidance and advice. Let us always strive to be in complete union with and in conformity with the teachings of the Church and let us not be afraid to say it, and to witness to it.

At the conclusion of the Pope's address, the Generals of the Order knelt before the Pope and renewed their vows. It was a very moving moment. Let us spiritually renew our commitment at the feet of the Pope and resolve to make our profession to "Pope Honorius and his successors."



Conversion

by Maureen Haege, SFO,
Regional Formation Director

Perhaps the most important, yet most challenging, task for a fraternity is the coordination of formation activities. Over the past several years, CIOFS – the International Presidency of the SFO, has been focusing on formation and the development of a universal plan of study. Our National Formation Team has responded with a very comprehensive initial formation program, which is expected to be released sometime within the next year. A topic has been assigned to each month of the formation process, beginning with orientation through candidacy, on subjects related to the Catholic Church, Francis’ life, and his spirituality.

Such a plan of study is long overdue, yet it is only part of the formative activities we need to grow in our Franciscan vocation. Yes, we must form ourselves on an intellectual level – one must *know* Francis and his way of life before one can *follow* in his footsteps – but individuals and fraternities must also pray that the good Lord will grant them a conversion of heart. In the early life of Francis, we recall that it was an unexpected encounter with a leper that is often considered his “conversion” moment. Francis would later write in his Testament, “When I was in sin, the sight of lepers nauseated me beyond measure; but then God himself led me into their company, and I had pity on them. When I had once become acquainted with them, what had previously nauseated me became a source of spiritual and physical consolation for

me.”

In a modern commentary on the life of St. Francis, when describing the above experience, the phrase “I had pity on them” was translated as “I practiced mercy towards them”. We “practice” something in order to get good at it. So, although the encounter with the leper may be considered Francis’ conversion *moment*, it is not too difficult to imagine that it took practice for him to receive the spiritual and physical consolation that he describes. And so it is with us. To become who the Lord is calling us to be, we must die to self – not once but many times – a lifetime of little deaths to peel away the layers of our false self.

St. Francis, in his service to the leper, presents to us the challenge of offering ourselves in loving, vulnerable service to others, as a means of conversion. This can be a difficult thing to do – to take a risk, to become vulnerable. We live in a culture that tells us not to risk, not to be vulnerable – if we reach out to someone, we’d better have something worthwhile to offer them, or else, why bother. The Franciscan spirit of service tells us otherwise. When we offer ourselves in loving service to others, we often realize that our hands are embarrassingly empty – we do not necessarily come with hands full of money, skills, or solutions. But empty hands are ready to take hold of another hand; empty hands are naked, revealing our true selves. In this weakness is the strength of God. In this poverty is God’s richness. When we offer ourselves in loving service to others, we learn another important

When we accept His invitation to be His hands, His feet, His heart, He lavishes us with riches the world cannot give us.

Remain open to the Spirit of the Lord – the Spirit who led Francis among the lepers. It is through the power of this Spirit that we will be transformed from being self-centered to being Christ-centered. That, after all, is the goal of our formation!

SFO Retreat

Mount Alvernia
Retreat House

Wappingers Falls, NY
sponsored by Most Holy
Stigmata Fraternity

October 9 – 11,
2009

Franciscan presentations
and prayers throughout
the weekend.

Cost for retreat is \$150.00 per person; semi-private room with private bath, 5 full meals. To register: send name, address, telephone, email, and fraternity name with deposit of \$25.00 payable to Mount Alvernia Retreat House to Lorraine Mendel, SFO, 80 Gold Road, Wappingers Falls, NY 12590. For additional information, contact Bruce or Roberta at 845.454.9586 or email minister



Address of Encarnation del Pozo

Eiudem corporis Membra existentes", Urban IV, Bolla Spiritus Domini

The secular Franciscans throughout the world are striving to constitute:

- a Franciscan fraternity with a clear and precise identity to help its members and to abolish any type of barrier and separation between spirituality and daily life, with its responsibilities;
- a more committed fraternity, in the spirit of the Vatican II and the Pauline Rule, where it is possible to live authentic Church experiences;
- a fraternity which is actively inserted in the Franciscan Family, where communion and vital reciprocity can be experimented, having the same status as the other members;??
- a fraternity which is at the same time a school of Christian perfection and social and civil commitment.

I would like to take this opportunity, when so many Superior majors of your respective orders are united, to thank you for your services of pastoral care and spiritual assistance to the local fraternities of the SFO erected within your jurisdiction. Please let me say that pastoral care and spiritual assistance to the SFO must stem, not so much from rules, but from the love and trust in ones vocation and from the desire to make it known, respecting the nature of the secular fraternity and giving priority to witnessing Franciscan life and, especially, in fraternal accompaniment.

Assisting the SFO today entails a fraternal service to which you are called: to help the secular Franciscans, by your closeness to each locally erected fraternity in your jurisdiction, to be individuals that passionately live their faith in the Church and in society with the values and behavior of Francis. But evidently no one can give what they do not have. Nevertheless, the SFO continues dreaming. It dreams of churches and parishes that are given to you which are authentically Franciscan, where the values and the needs of one's vocation and charism are lived and made known.

As I have already mentioned, the SFO is committed to formation, for which it needs confident support. It needs spiritual assistants who will actively collaborate, especially in the formation walk, in making our fraternities convincing and consistent with their vocation. It needs spiritual assistants who can help them to fully comprehend the mission that has to be accomplished. Assistants with the awareness that helping today's youth and adults to discover the true sense of life is indeed an extraordinary task. Please help my brothers and sisters who are striving to be individuals of faith, coherent and exemplary in their lives and courageous in their choices. Help us to be "witnesses".

We must not forget the diverse living conditions of our fraternities in many parts of the world: Africa, Central America, Paraguay, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, India, Belarus.... Some of them live without any material means, but they seriously live their faith and their Christian and Franciscan vocation, a spiritual gift which we should all aspire. I have met formators living in the most absolute poverty who have deeply moved me for the beauty of their dedication and moral strength, as well as the basic knowledge that they convey to those being formed. Can we actually sustain that in this poverty, which Francis chose for himself, we cannot be Franciscans today? That without thorough academic formation we cannot live the perfection of charity and the spirit of the "Letter of Francis to all the faithful"?



During the last decade the new course of the SFO received, even before the Vatican II, a generous and important prophetic stimulus from many religious. The memory of numerous General Ministers and Assistants follow us, their names remembered as a blessing and with infinite gratitude. Much of what we know today we owe to them and to a

several courageous “tertiaries”; with their inexpressible love for the Franciscan Family and the Third Order, and their admirable prophetic commitment, they were able to persevere in their project, despite numerous difficulties and prejudices (some of which still exist today), and impart strength and substance to the rebirth of the Secular Franciscan Order.

Let me say with sincere simplicity and satisfaction that, in all this, the SFO has accomplished, perhaps unknowingly, a special and irreplaceable mission: we have been effective catalysts of fraternity and unity in our Family. Thanks to the requirements of the collegial exercise of pastoral care and spiritual Assistance, we have prompted occasions of encounters, of dialogue and of fraternal knowledge, not only among ourselves but especially among you dear brothers and sisters of the First Order and the TOR, because by sharing our responsibilities you have given life to the Conference of the Assistants, true cenacle of fraternity and mutual affection, family experiences, foresights of a broader and vital communion. I, personally, have recently witnessed the first meeting of all the Superior Majors of a European Country, on the occasion of a fraternal and pastoral visit to the SFO, during which the Visitors had to meet with those responsible for exercising the “*Altius Moderamen*”.

Brothers, please allow me to tell you what is expected and what we need from you: that you truly be not only the guarantors of spiritual assistance, but also brothers, street companions, that walk with us side by side, neither ahead nor behind. We need you to accompany us and flank us as educators throughout the entire growth of our vocation and in exercising the mission that we have been assigned, in the quick and sincere passage “from the Gospel to life and from life to the Gospel (R.4). We need that you are convinced and that you have a clear and updated vision of the SFO and the Youfra and of their position in the Church and in our Family. We need you “suitable and prepared” (R. 26) in order to offer assistance and pastoral care that is complete and adequate.

A sign of this family maturity could be that of realizing the project embarked on with a motion of our General Chapter in 2008: that, at the next World Youth Day, all the young people of our Family be united together before the Church and before our Holy Father. There will naturally be specific moments of formation for each group, but they could also have moments of formation as a young Family and to witness the spirituality we are living, just as other associations and Church movements do.

This grace of origins that we are celebrating, is the corner stone on which the whole building of our Family leans on. Lets take advantage of it. Let us be alert so as not to lose this important historical opportunity to recuperate the significance of the Family of St. Francis of Assisi. We have to wake up and take action because there is much lethargy and negligence in our family.

This is the memorial that we are celebrating: the grace of a special charism which regards Francis and, in him, an entire Family an ecclesial project to be fully lived.

Thank you and the Lord bless you, bless us, and fill us with grace, maturity and the courage needed to recover the gift of the conversion of our origins.

‘WHAT HAVE YOU THAT YOU HAVE NOT RECEIVED?’

Assisi, April 16, 2009



Franciscan Living

In Community

August 17—21, 2009

Mount St. Alphonsus Retreat Center

Esopus, New York

Come away with your brothers & sisters

Review your Call

Refresh your Spirit

Renew your Community Life

This Year’s Theme: Gospel Living

Single/double occupancy; all meals
\$390.00

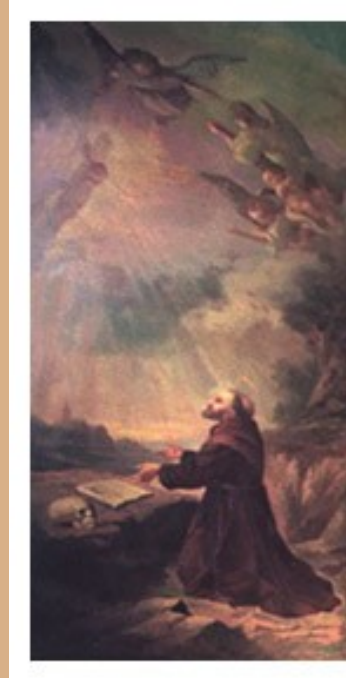
Secular Franciscan visits Malawi

Some general information on Malawi: there about 14 million people there; Lake Malawi is the third largest lake in Africa; and the average life span of women is 37, and for men, 50-55. The people are very warm and polite. It is a beautiful land, rich soil with rolling grass, land, and rivers. I truly enjoyed seeing the land and its people. When I went to Windhoek, Manimbia in 2007 and to Lilongwe, Malawi in 2009, I stayed at Poor Clare Monasteries. I wish to thank my Sisters very much for their warmth, love, peace and joy they gave me. They made me feel most welcome.

By Michael L. J. Guertin, SFO

Fr. Matt Celebrates 50th

Fr. Solanus Casey Region wishes to congratulate our Spiritual Assistant, Fr. Matthias Wesnofske, OFM, Cap. on his 50th Anniversary as a Capucin Friar. As the Poles would say, Sto Lat, Father Matt!



Holiness by Mary C. Welborn. Regional Secretary

Many believe that holiness consists in doing great and wonderful things for which the world will long remember us. Our Holy Father Francis and most of the saints knew differently, however. Holiness consists in performing the duties of our state, day after day, to the best of our ability. Lives such as that of the father who sacrifices all to feed his family, the mother who slaves over her hot stove, the teacher who gives his all to teaching, these are the lives that give opportunities for holiness. To perform the day after day grind, over and over again to the best of our ability, offering it to God — that is the way to become holy. We do not have to become great men and women. We have only to be humble and faithful doorkeepers.



Od Polski Strona

Franciszkański Zakon Świeckich

Święty Franciszek utworzył ten zakon, aby mogły się w nim uświęcać osoby świeckie. Ma on na celu kształtowanie osobowości w duchu ewangelicznym. Idealem jest życie według Ewangelii, osiągnięcie spokoju i zadowolenia z dążenia ku najwyższym wartościom.

Gromadzimy się regularnie, aby przeżyć i doświadczyć Boga żywego we Mszy Św., wspólnocie siostr i braci, godnie słuchać Słowa Bożego, które jest dla nas światłem.

Czujemy się odpowiedzialni za życie parafii. Jesteśmy do dyspozycji Kościoła lokalnego, gotowi do pomocy w jego działalności. Co drugi tydzień prowadzimy modlitwę różańcową, zbieramy ofiary na cele charytatywne, włączamy się w obsługę Mszy Św., uczestniczymy czynnie we wszystkich uroczystościach i akcjach parafialnych. Poza parafią bierzemy udział w całonocnych czuwaniach w I sobotę miesiąca w kościele p.w. Św. Jozafata w Lublinie, a także uczestniczymy w spotkaniach i adoracjach

Stowarzyszeń i Ruchów Katolickich organizowanych w Archikatedrze Lubelskiej oraz spotkaniach franciszkanów świeckich z całego regionu lubelskiego.



Sz szczególnie uroczystie obchodzimy święto Św. Franciszka w dniu 4 października oraz Święto Matki Boskiej Anielskiej w dniu 2 sierpnia, którą Św. Franciszek ustanowił opiekunką Zakonu.

Zakon Braci Mniejszych. Według historyków św. Franciszek otrzymał w 1209 r. od Papieża zatwierdzenie swego „sposobu życia”, czyli tego, co później zostanie nazwane „Protoregularą”. Teksty napisane przez samego Franciszka, po upływie wielu wieków nadal pozostają aktualne i zachęcają młodych ludzi do wybrania drogi zakonnej. *Reguła i życie braci mniejszych polega na zachowaniu świętej Ewangelii Pana naszego Jezusa Chrystusa przez życie w posłuszeństwie, bez własności i w czystości (ReB 1,1): w tych słowach Reguły zawiera się kwintesencja modelu życia, który Franciszek ukazał swoim naśladowcom i który sam uwiarygodnił przykładem swojego życia.*