

FRANCISCAN MIRROR

WINTER
2005-2006

Blessed Kateri Tekakwitha Region
covering most of Upstate New York & Northwestern Pennsylvania



'FRANCIS, CLARE & THE EUCHARIST'

Sr. Mary McCarrick, OSF, offered workshops on Franciscan spirituality of the Eucharist, plus practical tips on prayer and meditation.

ON-GOING FORMATION WORKSHOP

Church Council, Islam Had Impact on Francis' View Of God and Eucharist

By BOB & MARY STRONACH, SFO

In an on-going formation workshop, "A Day of Reflection on Francis, Clare and the Eucharist," Sr. Mary McCarrick, OSF, said she believed Francis was influenced by the 4th Lateran Council, which, to counter abuses of the day, emphasized

the sacredness of the Eucharist and the need to understand it as an intimate object of reverence. She also thinks Francis was influenced by Islam during his nearly month-long visit with the Sultan.

See *WORKSHOP* – P. 9

MUSIC OF CLARE

Robert Huttmacher, OFM, a priest who serves in downtown Chicago and who directs a renowned music ministry, performed original pieces on the harp from his composition, *Clare of Assisi*, at the recent national gathering of Secular Franciscans. For more on the gathering, see PAGE 12.



**National
Minister
Visits
In May**

...

**Franciscan
Filmmaker
Coming
In March**

SEE PAGE 7

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FRANCISCAN
MIRROR

WINTER 2005-06

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The SFO is a Catholic order of married and single people who strive to live the Gospel of Jesus Christ in the spirit of St. Francis of Assisi.



By BILL HEINZ, SFO

Minister's Message

Peace and All Good.

"The brothers and sisters are co-responsible for the life of the fraternity to which they belong and for the SFO as the organic union of all fraternities throughout the world." (Pick More Daisies by Lester Bach OFM Cap.)

What are some of the costs involved with the Secular Franciscan Order?

Travel expenses for Council members at all levels. Costs for renting space in parishes, retreat centers, etc. Costs of publishing formation and communication materials (books, bulletins, newsletters, web sites). Costs connected with district, regional, national and international chapters, programs, conventions and workshops (everything from travel expenses for ministers/delegates to stipends for presenters). Local, regional, national and international charities. Assisting apostolic endeavors on various levels. Providing materials for prayer and worship. Re-imbursement to Spiritual Assistants for their service to the SFO.

Those are a few ordinary costs. The annual national financial report published in TAU-USA, the adopted budget for the region published in the Mirror, and the financial report discussed at our annual ministers' meeting give a more detailed picture of the way money is used at these levels.

Please remember that Fair Share is an ongoing, all year process, done with **LOVE**.

As a side note to show you that we lead by example, your Council alone has donated to our region almost \$5000 this year to date. This is not boasting, but with deepest humility, showing our commitment to the Secular Franciscan Order.

AROUND THE REGION

A TALE OF 2 FRATERNITIES: 4 PROFESS, 5 RECOMMIT

By ROBERT
GOODLANDER, SFO
and AL PICOGNA, SFO

To a Franciscan there is initially no greater joy than to be professed and begin the glorious task of truly living the gospel life. So it was on Saturday, September 17 at Holy Family Chapel on the Tuscarora Indian Reservation. During the Mass on this Feast of the Stigmata of St. Francis, Father Peter Calabrese, CRSP, heard the profession of four members of St. Anthony Fraternity in Lockport. These newest Franciscans in Western New York are: **Debra Goodlander**, SFO, **Jeanne Helferty**, SFO, **Sue McCanna**, SFO and **Fredricka Soles**, SFO.

St. Anthony Fraternity, under the ministerial guidance of Robert Goodlander, SFO has been in the process of a rebirth recently after several years of neutrality. Due to age, infirmity and death, the old St. Anthony faded into a cloistered existence with

several members living as Secular Solitaries. Among those former Solitaries was **Rose Ruggeri**, SFO who celebrated 51 years of profession.

Rounding out this celebration, five members of Our Lady of the Angels Fraternity joined

in and offered their lives once again in re-commitment after 25 years of profession. They are **Rose Bonaro**, SFO, **Phyllis Rafter**, SFO, **Patricia Roberts**, SFO, **Ronald Roberts**, SFO, and **Sally Rog**, SFO. It is interesting to note that Our Lady of the Angels began 25 years ago with these people.

In attendance at the Mass and profession were Regional Minister Bill Heinz, SFO, and Western Area Councilor Kim Marks, SFO.

A reception afterwards was hosted at the home of Al Picogna, SFO, minister of Our Lady of the Angels Fraternity.



FR. KEVIN GIVES TALK ON ASSISI FRESCOES

A Franciscan Gathering featuring a slide show and talk on the frescoes in Assisi took place Sept. 18 at St. Joseph-St. Patrick Parish Center in Utica, attracting Secular Franciscans from several fraternities.

The presentation featured Fr. Kevin Kenny, OFM Conv., director of the Blessed Kateri Tekakwitha National Shrine in Fonda, NY. Father Kevin had the

opportunity to spend several months at the Basilica of St. Francis in Assisi as a tour guide and became acquainted with the stories and spirituality behind its artwork.

His two-part talk was sandwiched around spiritual exercises, including praying the Franciscan Crown Rosary and Exhibition of the Blessed Sacrament.

Father noted that there are three levels to the Basilica. The lowest bears the Tomb of St. Francis, with four of the

early friars, plus Lady Jacopa. The Lower Level, whose frescoes reflect the suffering and death of Jesus, is very dark and gloomy in appearance, whereas the design of the Upper Level reflects the resurrection and light of Christ.

Father stated that in the Middle Ages, due to the plague, many of the people in Europe whitewashed the walls of their churches in a mistaken belief that the walls contained the plague. The Friars,



however, too poor to afford the whitewash, did not do this so all the frescoes of the Basilica remain in some state of being intact. In the first part of Father's talk, he emphasized the Lower Level frescoes, noting that where the Friars pray they always face the pictures of the suffering Christ -- in case their attention wandered from their prayers they would be reminded of the Crucifixion.

The second part of his talk focused on the Upper Level of the Basilica, where frescoes did not stand the test of time, as did the lower level. These frescoes appeared more like negatives of a camera picture rather than the actual picture itself; Father stated that many of the frescoes were originally painted with too much egg in the dyes so the paintings took on the "negative" look. Father also noted that around the main altar in the Upper Level, the Blessed Virgin Mary adorns the background of the altar, attesting to the Franciscan theology that our Blessed Mary stands for everything that the Church is to be.

★ Wall of Honor ★

IN MEMORY OF

Jean J. Callahan

remembered by
Mary T. Siefert

John J. Koscinski

remembered by
Catherine Koscinski, SFO
St. Joseph Fraternity, Utica

Vesta Covell, SFO

remembered by
St. Joseph Fraternity, Utica
Mary and Bob Stronach, SFO
Karen Szczesniak, SFO

Patrica MacCollough

remembered by
Mary T. Siefert, SFO

Rosella L. Schrempf

remembered by
Betty Frank, SFO

Eleanor Wolak, SFO

remembered by
St. Joseph Fraternity, Utica
Mary and Bob Stronach, SFO
Karen Szczesniak, SFO

IN HONOR OF

Holy Family Fraternity

for its canonical establishment
St. Joseph Fraternity, Utica

How to participate in the Wall of Honor -- Page 18.

OUR LADY OF THE ANGELS EXPANDS RANKS

By AL PICOONA, SFO

The ranks of Our Lady of the Angels Fraternity increased four-fold recently.

On Oct. 26, **Jackie Burris, Anne Trapasso, and James Palazzo** were brought into fraternity in a Rite of Admission ceremony during Mass at St. Leo's Church in Niagara Falls, NY. Fr. David Griffin was celebrant. A fourth person, **Jimmy Dacey Jr.**, was brought into fraternity in a Rite of Admission during a gathering on Nov. 9.

These four will commence the true discernment of their calling over the next 18 months before making their profession.

In addition, **Philomena Trapasso**, mother of Anne Trapasso, was honored during the Oct. 26th Mass with the title of Honorary Secular Franciscan. Her life, which has been marked with serious trials including major health issues, was found to be exemplary and worthy of recognition as a follower of St. Francis.

HOLY FAMILY FRATERNITY FORMALLY ESTABLISHED IN VERNON

“You are called above all to be a community of love.”

With those words **Fr. Peter Knaapen**, OFM Conv., presided over the formal canonical establishment of Holy Family Fraternity during a Mass at Holy Family Church in Vernon, NY.

The new fraternity started with five members five years ago and today boasts 21 professed Secular Franciscans, three inquirers, and a spiritual assistant.

Father Peter, who works out of Toronto, Canada as provincial spiritual assistant for the Conventual Franciscans' Province of the Immaculate Conception, noted:

“Our Franciscan vocation and fraternity go hand-in-hand. They are two sides of the same coin...”

“Today,” he continued, “members of Holy Family Fraternity pledge themselves to make this an ecclesial community and a genuine Franciscan community.” He

AROUND THE REGION

The local fraternity is to be established canonically. It becomes the basic unit of the whole Order and a visible sign of the Church, the community of love. This should be the privileged place for developing a sense of Church and the Franciscan vocation and for enlivening the apostolic life of its members. (Rule: 22)

Fr. Peter Knaapen, OFM Conv.



Sr. Patricia Schofield, OSF, Holy Family's spiritual assistant, signs the document of canonical establishment as a witness. Looking on are Bill Geary, SFO, Fr. Peter Knaapen, OFM Conv., and Regional Minister Bill Heinz, SFO.

added: “The gift of our Franciscan vocation is to be a community of love... In order for you to live your Franciscan vocation, you need the gift of others.”

The document formally establishing the fraternity was signed

by Father Peter and two witnesses, **Sr. Patricia Schofield**, OSF, spiritual assistant, and **Bill Geary**, SFO, a co-founder of the fraternity. The regional minister, **William Heinz**, SFO, and the local ordinary, the **Most Rev. James**

M. Moynihan, bishop of Syracuse, had previously signed the document.

Heinz reminded fraternity members that “you are not only family within your own fraternity, but also” within the regional fraternity,



Holy Family members pose for photos following the formal canonical establishment of the fraternity.

national fraternity and international fraternity.

He noted: "People will know you are Franciscans by the way you live the Gospel... The Gospel, Gospel living is our main goal."

Concelebrating Mass with Father Peter were Fr. Richard Kapral, pastor, and Fr. John Comeskey.

After fraternity members processed out of church, with some swaying and even dancing to joyful music, they were greeted with a continuous flow of congratulatory hugs. A reception followed in the church hall.

The members of Holy Family Fraternity are:

- Shirley Witchley, SFO, minister.
- Carol Beecher, SFO, vice minister.
- Mary Walker, SFO, sec-

retary.

- Cory Magill, SFO, treasurer.
- Delores Faulkner, SFO, formation director.
- Sr. Patricia Schofield, OSF, spiritual assistant.
- Rob Breen, SFO.
- Sharon Brennan, SFO.
- Martha Collins, SFO.
- Mary Collins, SFO.
- Cindy Dutcher, SFO.
- Bill Geary, SFO.
- Duff Geary, SFO.
- Millie Houck, SFO.

- Bob Howell, SFO.
- Chris Howell, SFO.
- Ester Jusza, SFO.
- Mary LaForest, SFO.
- Diane McDonough, SFO.
- Helen Pugliano, SFO.
- Dr. Linda Robinson, SFO.
- Tutti Wagner, SFO.

Another professed member, Sarah McNichols, SFO, just recently embraced Sister Death.

The three inquirers are Maryann Baker, Pat Brophy and Mary Lou Friars.



On hand for the formal recognition of Holy Family Fraternity was Sr. Caritas Barajingitwa, LSOSF, a member of the Little Sisters of St. Francis, who founded Holy Family Orphanage in Uganda in 2003. Holy Family Fraternity has befriended Sister Caritas and raises funds for the African orphanage, which cares for 30 children who lost parents to AIDS and war.



Duff Geary, SFO, a fraternity co-founder, gets a congratulatory hug from Mary Stronach, SFO.

OPEN TO ALL
MEMBERS

GATHERING TO FEATURE NATIONAL LEADERS, AMAZON RELIEF & ECOLOGY

National Minister **Carol Gentile, SFO**, and National Spiritual Assistant **Kevin Queally, TOR**, will conduct a fraternal and pastoral visitation of the region at the regional annual gathering in May 2006.

The annual gathering will take place May 5-7 at Stella Maris Retreat



**National Minister
Carol Gentile, SFO**

**BELOW: National
Spiritual Assistant
Fr. Kevin Queally, TOR**



AROUND THE REGION



Jim Flickinger, SFO, who was the subject of Gerry Straub's film, "Embracing the Leper," will speak at the Annual Regional Gathering in May.

and Conference Center in Skaneateles, NY.

Guest speakers include:

- **Jim Flickinger, SFO**, founder and director of Amazon Relief;
- **Rob Breen, SFO**, director of Franciscan Ecology Center.

The business meeting involving local ministers or their delegates will take place Friday, May 5. Saturday's agenda will feature the guest speakers. The national leaders will participate throughout the gathering, hold an open forum on Saturday and give an exit briefing on Sunday.

The annual gathering is open to all fraternity members, not just ministers and delegates. There will be plenty

of formation, spiritual and Franciscan goods (books, religious articles, etc.), as well as Fair Trade coffee, tea and chocolate. There also will be raffle items.



Franciscan Ecology Center Director Rob Breen, SFO, will offer insight into Franciscan eco-spirituality and on working with youth, during the Annual Regional Gathering in May.

'EMBRACING THE LEPER' PRODUCER TO LEAD DAY OF REFLECTION

A Lenten Day of Reflection will be held in the western area of the region on Sunday, March 5, featuring author and filmmaker **Gerard Straub, SFO**.

Sponsored by the Sisters of St. Francis and the Secular Franciscans of Blessed Kateri Tekakwitha Region, the event will begin with Mass at 9 a.m. and will be held at St. Mary of the Angels, the motherhouse of the Sisters, at 201 Reist St., Williamsville, NY.

Straub was a Hollywood director and producer whose conversion experience was documented in his book, "The Sun and Moon over Assisi."

Not long after that Straub started the San Damiano Foundation to produce films for and about charitable organizations that serve the poor. For example, his film about lepers and the poor in Brazil helped raise money for Amazon Relief, founded by Secular Franciscan Jim Flickinger. In addition to

"Embracing the Leper," he has made five other films exploring global poverty in the U.S., Brazil, Mexico, Peru, El Salvador, India, Jamaica, the Philippines and Kenya.

After Mass and a short break, Straub will lead the Lenten Day of Reflection through the rest of the morning. After lunch, he will show his newest film, "*Patients of a Saint*." The film documents the work of another Secular Franciscan, Dr. Anthony Lazzara Jr., who left the high-tech world of U.S. medicine to enter the harsh reality of extreme poverty near Lima, Peru to provide medical care to the poorest and most desperate of children.

"What's amazing about Gerry's more recent films is that, like Francis, he finds love and beauty amidst the suffering," notes Ed Zablocki, SFO, who has been working with the Sisters on the program. "The dignity of



Filmmaker Gerard Straub, SFO

the persons (however poor) and the love that one encounters through Gerry's films trumps the poverty that is their existence."

"There is no cost for attendees," Zablocki adds. "...Our region's support is through the Alma Kraus Memorial Endowment. Alma had lived in Williamsville so it's fitting that we hold an event there in her memory."

Secular Franciscans need to register in advance so that the Sisters will know how many to expect. To register, leave a message at Zablocki's home at 716-

838-4178 or email him at edzablocki@adelphia.net. Give your name, contact number, fraternity, and names of all others coming with you. Registration deadline is February 15.

DAY'S SCHEDULE:

- 9 a.m. - Mass.
- 10 a.m. - begin Day of Reflection.
- Noon- lunch.
- 3:30 p.m. - ends.

DIRECTIONS: From NYS Thruway (I-90) take Exit 50 (I-290) towards Niagara Falls. Exit off I-290 at first exit (Main St. East- 7B).

Proceed on Main St. for seven-tenths of mile through three lights. At third light (Union) there is a McDonalds on the corner. Go two blocks past Union and turn left onto Reist St. Proceed for four-tenths of a mile. Make sure to continue past St. Francis of Williamsville Nursing Home. Then look for the entrance to St. Mary of the Angels motherhouse at 201 Reist Street.

SISTER DEATH

Vera Carroll, SFO, a member of Immaculate Heart of Mary in Brockport, NY, embraced Sister Death on Sept. 10.



Sarah J. McNichol, SFO, (above) died Sept. 7. Professed in 1966, she belonged to fraternities in San Francisco, CA before joining Holy Family Fraternity in Vernon, NY, in December 2000. Among her greatest joys was reading the poetry of Yeates.



Eleanor Wolak, SFO, (above) long-time member of St. Josephy Fraternity, Utica, NY, embraced Sister Death on Oct. 31.

MIRROR SPONSOR: PHYLLIS BRUNO, SFO

In honor of the memory of
Bill Williams, SFO, and Marian Kaluzny, SFO
 of St. Peter's Fraternity, Erie, PA

Workshop Celebrates End of 'Year of the Eucharist'

Continued from Page 1

"Francis recognized that Islam has a wonderful understanding of the transcendent God," she noted, and that the word of the Koran, as it is spoken, makes God present in the world – in a way that is parallel to the Eucharist in Catholic theology.

"For Islam, the word becomes real by speaking it. For us, we'd say the Word became flesh."

In short, she suggested, these influences combined to propel Francis to a spirituality of the Eucharist that embodied both a transcendent and immanent God – a God who is above all and a God who is in everything.

"Francis was overwhelmed with the realization that the transcendent God is so immanent – is within all."

These are mutually reinforcing concepts, she said. For Francis, they called forth his praises for the God above all in his "Praises of God", and for the God within all of creation in his "Cantic of the Creatures."

Sister Mary instructed

'DAY OF REFLECTION' HELD IN EAST, CENTRAL & WESTERN AREAS

"A Day of Reflection on Francis, Clare and the Eucharist" helped bring the church's Year of the Eucharist to a culmination in the Blessed Kateri Tekakwitha Region.

This on-going formation workshop was held Sept. 10 in the Eastern Area (Fonda), then repeated Oct. 8 in the Central Area (Syracuse) and again Nov.

19 in the Western Area (Athol Springs).

Organized by Regional Formation Director Patti DeWitt, SFO, and funded by the Alma Kraus Fund, the Day of Reflection featured Sister Mary McCarrick, OSF, a Stella Niagara Franciscan, former provincial, and graduate of St. Bonaventure University's Franciscan Institute.



Patti DeWitt, SFO
*Regional
Formation Director*



**Sister Mary
McCarrick, OSF**
Presenter



The workshop included a period of Eucharistic Adoration, which gave participants time to reflect on Francis and Clare's awesome understanding of God and the Eucharist.

the group to read Francis' "Letter to the Whole Order," looking for words and phrases that might suggest Islamic and Latern Council influences – such as "there is no Omnipotent One besides Him," and "I beseech all of you...to exhibit every reverence and every honor..to the

Continued on next page.



Shirley Uhrinec, Anne Bertini and Ruth Stanek, all from St. Francis Fraternity in Endicott, were among participants at the workshop in Syracuse (held in the Assisi Center at Assumption Parish).

Continued from previous page

most Holy Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Francis’ call, she noted, “is to be in relationship, to bring people to the truth of Jesus.”

“Francis puts the Gospel response in regards to Islam higher than the church’s response at the time...God’s call is always deeper than the cultural call.”

She adds: “This is what Francis challenges us to do...to live the truth of the Gospel, without regard to safety, trusting in God...even in areas where the church isn’t.”

Just as Francis was a practical doer of the Gospel, “you go first to live...to let people see the Gospel.”

In fact, she noted, Francis is not unlike “a used car salesman.” It is as if he is saying:

“Have I got a deal for you! You, too, can find Jesus! You, too, can be poor and humble!”

Sister’s presentation to this point, with Franciscan Eucharistic spirituality and radical response to the Gospel, culminated in Eucharistic Adoration in church.

WORKSHOP TIP

3 Ways of Praying with Stories

Sister Mary McCarrick, OSF, offered three ways of praying by using stories and writings. They could be scripture. They could be by or about Francis and Clare, or any other saint.

(1) The first way of praying with a writing is by thinking it through; that is, while reading a passage, think about obvious and hidden meanings, and about images the words conjure.

(2) A second way of praying with a writing is to repeat key words while meditating, allowing key concepts to penetrate – such as repeating the line, “You are all our riches; you are enough for us” from Francis’ “The Praises of God.”

(3) The third way of praying is to put ourselves in the story and look for parallels in our own lives.

AMONG THE WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS



Jennie Wadsworth



Mickey Ault



Barbara Thomas



Helen Carpenter (front) with other fraternity members from the Fonda area.



A small group discussion at the Fonda presentation.

WORKSHOP TIP

Put Self in Story for Rich Experience

Sister Mary McCarrick, OSF, demonstrated the richness of praying while putting oneself into a story. She asked participants to close their eyes and focus on her voice as she told the story of Clare using the Eucharist to repel Saracen invaders.

The mindset of opposing forces at the time was to destroy and pillage, she pointed out, with armies often more like mobs than disciplined soldiers. So when word reached Assisi that invaders were approaching, one could imagine the concern, the panic.

"Close your eyes and allow your bodies to relax," she urged. "Let yourself come in touch with your breathing...Breathe to your own rhythm."

Sister continued:

"Picture Clare. You are in the monastery at San Damiano. She is calm, but the atmosphere is agitated. Follow Clare into the chapel.

"'Let us focus all our hearts on Jesus', Clare prays, 'whose love enflames our love, whose contemplation is our refreshment'.

"Now she kneels wordlessly before the Blessed Sacrament. Then she takes the Blessed Sacrament and leads her sisters to the city gate closest to San Damiano. She stands with the Eucharist at the gate.

As the first Saracens approach, they stop at a distance, puzzled by what they see. Clare and her sisters may be afraid, but they stand firm in the power of God. Other Saracens come close, say threatening things; Clare stands firm.

"Now let the picture change," Sister Mary told participants, "so that YOU are now carrying the Eucharist, with Clare's hand on your shoulder. You face some other enemy. Allow to come to mind something of which you are afraid...and allow yourself to stand firm in the power of God. You do not need to fight or hurt...whether it's a person, doubt, physical ailment... Holding the Eucharist, you recognize the self-emptying God has given you...Whatever your feelings, you are able to stand firm in peace...in the power and wisdom of God.

"If you need to say something, it will come to mind. If you need to do something, you will know it...

"Stand firm in the power of God who is all our riches and who is enough for us."

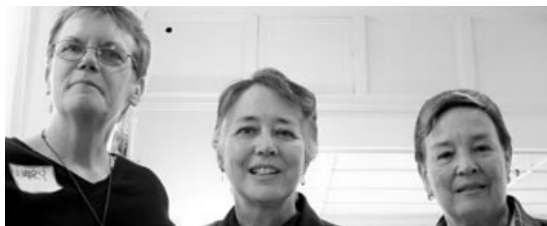
Sister Mary concluded: "We can take any of the stories of Francis and Clare – their experiences – to open our own heart in our experience... Look for parallels in their experience and in ours."

RIGHT: Sr. Mary and Regional Minister Bill Heinz.

BELOW: Sr. Mary with Ceil Beard, minister of St. Elizabeth-St. Bonaventure Fraternity in Syracuse, and Terry Olsen.



Ruth & Gary Martino, and Carol Miller. Carole Razzano



RIGHT: Linda Robinson and Cory Magill.



NATIONAL FRATERNITY (NAFRA) ANNUAL GATHERING

Regional Leaders Meet, Discuss, Pray

MUNDELEIN, IL. -
- Soft uplifting music greeted some 80 Catholic Secular Franciscan leaders from around the U.S. as they entered the chapel at University of St. Mary of the Lake Conference Center in Mundelein, Illinois, just outside Chicago. It helped set the mood for the start of the annual national gathering of the Secular Franciscan Order in the United States, held Sept. 21-25.

As the music in the chapel faded, National Youth Commission Chair Kathy Taormina addressed the assembly, quoting St. Clare of Assisi: *"Transform your entire being into the*

image of the Godhead... through contemplation."

Several minutes of silence followed, allowing the delegates and observers to contemplate why they were there -- to represent over 17,000 Secular Franciscans and to look at ways to foster the life of an Order that professes Gospel living in the spirit of St. Francis of Assisi.



National Formation Co-Chair Teresa Baker, SFO

FRANCISCANS FOCUS ON PRAYER OF THE HEART

MUNDELEIN, IL -
- Monastic prayer is prayer of the head, whereas Franciscan prayer is prayer of the heart.

Noting that distinction, Teresa Baker began an on-going formation session for some 80 delegates and observers at the national gathering of the Secular Franciscan Order in the United States, held Sept. 21-25 at University of St. Mary of the Lake.

Baker, who co-chairs the Order's National Formation Team, pointed out that monastic prayer stresses the ascending Christ -- "He leads us up...Contem-

plation begins here and finds fulfillment in heaven...Contemplation is constantly seeking the presence of the divine... putting things of the world aside (in an environment such as a monastery or cloister)."

But St. Francis of Assisi saw the *world* as his cloister, she noted.

"Franciscans see an immanent God," immersed in creation, she explained.

"Franciscan prayer of the heart requires that we be with the Lord in friendship...Friendship requires that we go out to the other" -- just as Francis reached out in a defining moment when

he overcame his fears and embraced a leper.

"Who," she asked, "is the leper in your life?"

Baker encouraged the assembly to look within themselves to see what needs to be changed in order to be in friendship, in union with God.

She concluded her presentation by pointing out another difference in perspectives -- the monastic approach sees the soul journeying *TO* God (in Latin, "ad Deum"); but Franciscans, as expressed by St. Bonaventure, recognize the journey of the soul *INTO* God (itinerarium mentis in Deum).



National Youth Commission Chair Kathy Taormina, SFO, led the opening morning prayer service.

PRAYER, PLUS PLEDGE OF SUPPORT

MUNDELEIN, IL -- Prayers for the victims of hurricanes took on an urgent note at the opening of the national gathering of the Secular Franciscan Order in the United States. A regional leader representing the Hurricane Katrina-struck Gulf States suddenly left to return home to Texas to participate in the evacuation for Hurricane Rita.

The Secular Franciscan leaders concluded their national gathering with a pledge of support for the U.S. Catholic Bishops' initiative to reach out to those hit hardest by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita -- especially the poor and those who lost everything.

IN HIS BUDGET report, National Treasurer Dennis Ross said the National Council had sent \$1,000 to Catholic Charities for Hurricane Katrina relief, and prior to that, with donations from fraternities from around the country, he had sent \$20,000 to Catholic Relief Service for tsunami relief in South Asia and another \$2,000 for aid to Sudan refugees.

SILENT PRAYER REFRESHES, BUT IT'S NOT FOR WIMPS

MUNDELEIN, IL -- Since Secular Franciscans are a friendly and outgoing group, they can "have trouble with silence," National Formation Co-chair Anne Mulqueen told some 80 delegates and observers at the national gathering of the Secular Franciscan Order.

"We need silence, we need contemplation to be refreshed," she reminded the assembly, in an on-going formation session that opened the second full day of the gathering. "When you contemplate, when you go into the silent space, you must go through yourself, and everything

is illuminated."

However, she noted, "it's not for wimps" because "when you go into the silence of your own heart, God will show you the truth."

That's where poverty of spirit helps, she added. "The more attachments we have, the less able we are to pray. True poverty of spirit sets us free."

Mulqueen pointed to St. Clare of Assisi as a prayer template. Follow her example, she urged, by gazing on Christ and meditating on the Crib (poverty), the Cross (suffering) and the Eu-



Anne Mulqueen, SFO

charist (humility).

Daily prayer and silence, she said, allow us to see "who we truly are", and help propel us to "seek to be like Christ."

Seeking to be like Christ, she explained, means bringing Christ to life by reflecting Christ's face to the world. "That is our ministry."

GEOGRAPHIC BREAKOUTS PRODUCE TIPS

Some 80 regional ministers and others of the Secular Franciscan Order met in geographic sessions and then in Open Forum at the National Gathering held in Mundelein, Ill. Their purpose was to discuss regional and national issues and, whenever possible, to suggest plans of action. Their meetings and the open forum produced a variety of ideas to help resolve or improve situations.

Among them are:

ISSUE: Concern over the rising average age of SFO members

RESPONSE: Recruiting

- a. Improve SFO visibility by attending Diocesan Youth Rallies, Ministry Fairs, and even State Fairs.
- b. Publicity in local publications and diocesan newspapers.
- c. Hold professions at regularly scheduled Masses.
- d. Approach people in mid-life who are looking for greater spirituality.
- e. Approach young families and provide a venue for bringing the children to fraternity gatherings.

Continued on next page.

GEOGRAPHIC BREAKOUTS

Continued from previous page.

ISSUE: The quality of fraternity life

RESPONSES:

- Have fraternities gather together for professions.
- Provide regional retreats for on-going formation and for candidates.

ISSUE: Finances

RESPONSE: Bequests

Invite a CPA to talk to fraternities about wills and bequests. Establish the fact that the SFO is part of the family and could be remembered in one's will.

ISSUE: Declining number of friars and other religious to serve as Spiritual Assistants

RESPONSE: Promote the Life-Giving Union course to recruit Spiritual Assistants from among SFO members.



Fr. Richard Trezza, OFM, center, a national spiritual assistant, joined the Northeast Geographic Group discussion. At left is Regional Minister Bill Heinz.

ISSUE: Presence in dioceses

RESPONSE:

- Communicate with bishop via letter, newsletter.
- Send birthday/anniversary greetings to local bishop.
- Ask to be placed in diocesan directories.

EASTERN RITE FRATERNITIES JOINING SFO REGIONS

Secular Franciscan Fraternities of the Eastern Rite Churches have been part of the U.S. Secular Franciscan Order under the non-geographic Exultation of the Holy Cross Region, since 1993.

A national assembly of the Order, meeting in Mundelein, IL from Sept. 21 to 25, voted to transfer the Eastern Rite Fraternities into four regular geographic regions.

The transition was formally requested by Eastern Rite Secular Franciscan leaders to better accommodate their local needs.

"This is a transition.



Eastern Rite representative Ed Pane, SFO, lights candles representing various U.S. SFO regions. The ceremony symbolized the transfer of Eastern Rite fraternities into those regions.

We're simply moving to another street," noted **Edward Pane**, SFO, Exultation of the Holy Cross Region's transition leader. "Byzantine spirituality is part of the texture and color of the

fabric of our Franciscan spirituality, and it shall continue."

Regions welcoming the Eastern Rite fraternities are: **St. Maximilian Kolbe** (covering most of northern half of Ohio),

St. Thomas More (covering Arizona and southern Nevada), **Lady Poverty** (covering most of western half of Pennsylvania, most of West Virginia, far western Maryland and far eastern Ohio), and **St. Katharine Drexel** (covering Delaware and parts of Pennsylvania and New Jersey).

In a brief ceremony, Pane ignited candles held by representatives of those four geographic regions, then blew out the flame of his own candle.

"The bond is unbroken, and the flame has been passed," declared National Vice Minister **John Sanborn**, SFO.

'SMOKE SIGNALS'

Isolation from the Regional Vine?

By ED CZAPLA, SFO

From time to time, the members of the Regional Executive Council are made aware of difficulties or tensions that arise within fraternities in our region. Usually, these fraternities are small, or in the process of dwindling. Their members are in the upper age bracket and, physically, becoming less active... What usually follows this is that the fraternity ceases to attract new members -- particularly those of youth and young adults. Ironically, then, the fraternity is soon deprived of the very element that it needs the most, to bring about its resurgence, namely: growth in numbers. Other negative results are: waning interest and participation in inter-fraternity and regional activity, difficulty in meeting the *fair share*, etc.

It is always a sad experience when this state of affairs is observed in any fraternity. Remedial measures are usually



Ed Czapla, left, is advisor to the Regional Executive Council and author of the periodic newsletter, Smoke Signals.

difficult to apply because they run in opposition to habits of long standing -- and usually require the full cooperation of the Fraternity Council and the higher level of fraternity: the Regional Council.

To delay or reject remedial measures only aggravates the problem, so that the fraternity in question slowly drifts into isolation from others in the Region and from the Regional Fraternity itself. When this happens, the spirit of community -- which is so highly prized in Franciscan circles -- suffers: other local fraternities lose the benefit of association with it, and the reverse is also true! In the end, there is a sense of loss endured by all

parties concerned. *Community is a hallmark of the Franciscan Family and is never treated casually!*

Since the cause of the difficulties is rarely simple or direct but complex and subtle by nature, and since it is risky to deal with such problems from a distance, but ideally, face to face, the logical first move toward a solution is for members of the fraternity and of the regional team to get together in a spirit of open and fraternal dialogue. In their capacity as canonically empowered visitors, the Regional team owes it to the local fraternity to listen and offer support; and the local fraternity equally owes the Regional team

its respect and openness.

It is entirely possible that the root causes of at least some difficulties afflicting fraternities can be traced back to habits of thinking formed under the Leonine Rule, abrogated in 1979. In offering our Order the precious gift of the Pauline Rule, the Holy Spirit of God, in his infinite wisdom, provided, not only for its *autonomy*, but also for *fraternity* on four levels of our global Order. *How fittingly, then, St. Francis referred to the Holy Spirit as the **minister General of the whole Order!***

CALENDAR

March 5, 2006

Lenten Day of Reflection, featuring Gerard Straub, SFO, filmmaker and author, Williamsville, NY.

March 24-25

Central NY Franciscan Experience, Sisters of St. Francis, Syracuse.

What are we doing about justice?

By SANDY McCOY, SFO
Peace & Justice Chair

When did we see you hungry or thirsty, and you are not a stranger and you were never naked and you were never ill or in prison? What are you saying?

Jesus answered: anything you failed to do for my sisters and brothers, however insignificant, you failed to do for me. *Matthew 25: 44-45*

The gap between the rich and the poor is growing larger and larger. The economy is not healthy and the national debt is growing fast. Budgets are being cut for health care, education, housing, and food programs for the poor



Sandy McCoy, SFO

and elderly. I live in a northern Pennsylvania rural area. Cost of heating gas went up 7.9% in September, 12.7% in October, and 22.8% in November. There is much concern for the elderly on tight budgets of less than \$1000/month who may have to decide between medications, food or heat. I'm assuming it much the same in New York.

Rule 13: Our sense of community will make us joyful and ready to place ourselves on an equal basis with all people, especially with the lowly for whom we shall strive to create conditions of life worthy of people redeemed by Christ.

Rule 15: We shall individually and collectively be in the forefront in promoting justice by the testimony of our human lives and our courageous initiatives.

Rule 16: We shall esteem work both as a gift and as sharing in the creation, redemption, and service of the human community.

We must be present to those who are in need

and at the same time work with government – federal, state, local – for their benefit. We can do this through advocacy groups, such as:

- US Conference of Catholic Bishops
- NETWORK: A National Catholic Social Justice Lobby
- FCNL: A Quaker Lobby in the Public Interest
- Sojourners

I urge you to do advocacy work because it works. If you give me your e-mail address, when any of these groups need action, I will forward the documents to you. My e-mail is smccoysfo@verizon.net.

Pax et bonum.



Marie Diehl, SFO

Our Differences Count

By MARIE DIEHL, SFO
Family Commission Chair

As in any family, we each differ widely from each other. God realizes this and has His own plans to make use of these very differences. These are all needed in dealing with our present world.

We may not even be aware of the qualities or traits which He has given to each, but He knows and will use us in the ways known only to Him. Is this an unfathomable mystery and too difficult for us? Not if we stay close to Him, listen for His guidance, and trust Him

completely, relying on Him. Let us not say, "Who, me?" and "No, I can't." Remember, with Him we can. His sublime love is with us always, as individuals and in all that He may lead us.

There may be times when He may make us

Continued on next page.

Francis Understood the Cross

SUFFERING LINKS US TO CHRIST

By KEVIN KENNY, OFM Conv.

As a faithful follower of St. Francis, I'm sure you have visited the sick in hospitals and nursing homes. You know, of course, that the Order's very first ministry was caring for the generally neglected lepers of Assisi. St. Francis, though initially repelled by their disease, eventually saw the suffering Jesus in them. This is not just a poetic or symbolic presence. Jesus is really and truly alive and suffering in the sick.

This is something we should remember not only when we minister to the sick but also when we are sick ourselves or too old and infirm to function normally. God does not abandon us. Jesus continues to live



Kevin Kenny, OFM Conv.

in us when we suffer personal pain. There is great meaning in this. His sacrifices on the cross, remember, is eternal and our sufferings, when united to His on the cross, are truly redemptive. We celebrate this reality every time we are privileged to celebrate Mass together.

Not long ago I got out of the hospital myself after another episode of a chronic condition. This condition has been

a great source of annoyance to me. Yet I should see it as an opportunity to help bear the cross of Christ. Although unwanted, this physical ailment is something I expect I will have to live with for the rest of my life. There must be a reason for it and it must be part of my Christian vocation. I have to learn to bear this burden patiently and be confident that it all means something in God's eternal plan of salvation.

So, if you are ever a little depressed by your personal illnesses and burdens, take heart! God will give you strength to bear them. And, remember, there is redemptive value in all your suffering. It goes toward saving you and, as St. Paul says, "fills out what is

lacking in the sufferings of Christ." As Jesus' suffering led to resurrection and eternal life, so does yours. So you are important and your suffering is important. That's why St. Francis saw any suffering that came his way as a source of perfect joy. When he embraced and married Lady Poverty, he understood the cross and understood a great deal about the deep mysteries of human life.

We all savor life here on earth as a tremendous gift. Suffering, unfortunately, is a divinely ordained penalty for sin and a necessary part of human life. As Jesus reluctantly accepted His chalice of suffering from the Father, we too must learn to do the same. While we learn to embrace the cross with St. Francis, let us remember what Jesus has promised us: Take up your cross and follow me for my yoke is easy and my burden is light.

Fr. Kevin is director of National Kateri Shrine and Indian Museum in Fonda, NY.

DIFFERENCES

aware of what His plans are, but there may also be other times when we may not see or realize until later or not at all. The important thing is for us to "be there" for Him and to trust the

Continued from previous page.

results to Him. Just be sure that it is He, not you, who is doing the leading. Trust Him and be confident in Him.

Note: Let us help each other. If you have problems or questions,

let each other know so we can help. Also, if you or your fraternity have some great ideas or accomplishments, share them with us. Let us be family.

FRATERNITY
FORMING
IN DELHI

The Regional Fraternity Executive Council on Nov. 4 approved a request by Cecelia Hoffman, SFO, to start a newly forming fraternity in Delhi, NY.

The council offered the option for the newly forming fraternity, at the appropriate time, to reactivate a deactivated fraternity and adopt its name instead of going through the process of a new canonical establishment.

FRANCISCAN
MONASTERY
IN MAINE

Kim Tison, SFO, writes that St. Anthony Franciscan Monastery in Kennebunkport, Maine is “a place of peaceful retreat.”

“Our beautiful monastery, grounds and guest house draw visitors from all over the world for a change from the usual summer and fall vacations.”

Tison is a member of a fraternity at the monastery. For more, check out websites, www.fratmon.net and www.franciscanguesthouse.com.

HOW YOU CAN HELP SPONSOR THE MIRROR

We are looking for sponsors to help defray the cost of printing so that the Regional Fraternity can continue to improve your Franciscan Mirror... with more color, more pages, more features.

Individuals, fraternities and businesses may sponsor one or multiple issues, and receive recognition in a special ad. The sponsor ad is a one inch strip across the bottom of a page (6" x 1"). Sponsors may use this space to offer a message or

advertise something. The sponsorship cost is as follows:

\$100 – ad on regional/feature news page.

\$150 – ad on inside back cover.

\$200 – color ad on back cover.

To reserve a sponsorship, mail your message/ad, with check made out to BKTR, to Franciscan Mirror, PO Box 232, Marcy, NY; or contact Mary Stronach at 315-796-9284, or at stronach1@adelphia.net.

HOW YOU CAN PARTICIPATE IN THE WALL OF HONOR

The Regional Fraternity started a Wall of Honor page in the Franciscan Mirror to provide a way to memorialize or honor Franciscans, family members or friends.

For example, you may want to remember a Secular Franciscan who has embraced Sister Death, or honor someone for such things as an achievement or anniversary, or to publicly thank

him/her for something done for you or the fraternity.

To submit a name for the Wall of Honor, fill out the form and mail it along with a \$10 donation. Funds raised through the Wall of Honor will be used by the Regional Fraternity to help pay for publications aimed at benefiting the region’s fraternities (such as The Mirror and formation materials).

WALL OF HONOR FORM

Name of Person Submitting Form

Contact info: phone Email

Address

Name of honoree

Select one: in memory of in honor of

List reason/occasion

(e.g., profession anniversary, gratitude for service, etc.)

Donation: \$10 per name.

Please make checks payable to Bl. Kateri Tekakwitha Region (BKTR).

Send completed form with check to:

The Franciscan Mirror, P.O. Box 232, Marcy, NY 13403

OUR FILIAL BOND: BROTHER SUN, SISTER MOON, EVEN SISTER DEATH

As Franciscans, we welcome and celebrate the glorious praise of the universe -- the incessant prayer of creation for the Creator. We come to recognize our filial bond. Brother Sun, Sister Moon. Even Sister Death. When it is time for God to call us from this life to the next, we embrace Sister Death. But have we given thought to how we would like our Franciscanism to shine following our passing?

Regional Vice Minister Phyllis Bruno, SFO, developed the following questionnaire aimed at helping our families and loved ones celebrate our Franciscan commitment upon our deaths.

PRACTICAL PREPARATIONS FOR SISTER DEATH

As a Secular Franciscan, I would like the following arrangements made at the time of my death.

Name _____

Type of Church Service

Name of church _____

Special reading for liturgy:

First reading _____ Response _____

Second reading _____ Gospel _____

Homily suggestions _____

General intercessions _____

Special music:

Processional song _____

Offertory song _____

Communion song _____

Recessional song _____

Wake Service

Franciscan attire ____ yes ____ no If yes, please specify _____

Special readings _____

Honor attendants _____

Rosary ____ yes ____ no

Other: please specify _____

Name of next of kin (relationship) _____

To contact the family, please call:

(name/relationship) _____

(phone number) _____

Inform funeral director concerning:

Secular Franciscan Order membership ____ yes ____ no

Print SFO on memorial cards? ____ yes ____ no

Should SFO be etched on tombstone? ____ yes ____ no

Use SFO after name in newspaper? ____ yes ____ no

Should memorial donations be made in your name to the Fraternity in lieu of flowers? ____ yes ____ no

Do you have any formalized plans of your own other than those described above? Please specify.

Franciscan Memorabilia: Give to whom:

Liturgy of the Hours _____

Books _____

Statues _____

Other items _____

After completing this form, please give copies to family members and to the Fraternity minister.

signature _____ date _____

print name in full _____

Pope Encourages 'Apostolic Drive' of Secular Franciscans



Pope Benedict XVI greets Encarnación del Pozo, general minister of the Secular Franciscan Order, after encouraging the Order to witness to the Gospel in the world. Before taking leave of 25,000 pilgrims gathered for a general audience Nov. 9 in St. Peter's Square, the Pope expressed the hope the Secular Franciscans' general chapter (taking place Nov. 5-12 in Assisi) "will be for all of you an opportunity of renewed apostolic drive when it comes to spreading the Gospel everywhere, following the example of St. Francis of Assisi."



U.S. Minister Carol Gentile (third from right) and U.S. Spiritual Assistant Lester Bach, OFM Cap., (right) were the key-note speakers for the general chapter held Nov. 5-12 in Assisi. With them are: International Spiritual Assistant Michael Higgins, TOR; U.S. International Councilor Deacon Juan Lescano, SFO; General Minister Encarnación del Pozo; and U.S. Spiritual Assistant Richard Trezza, OFM.

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