

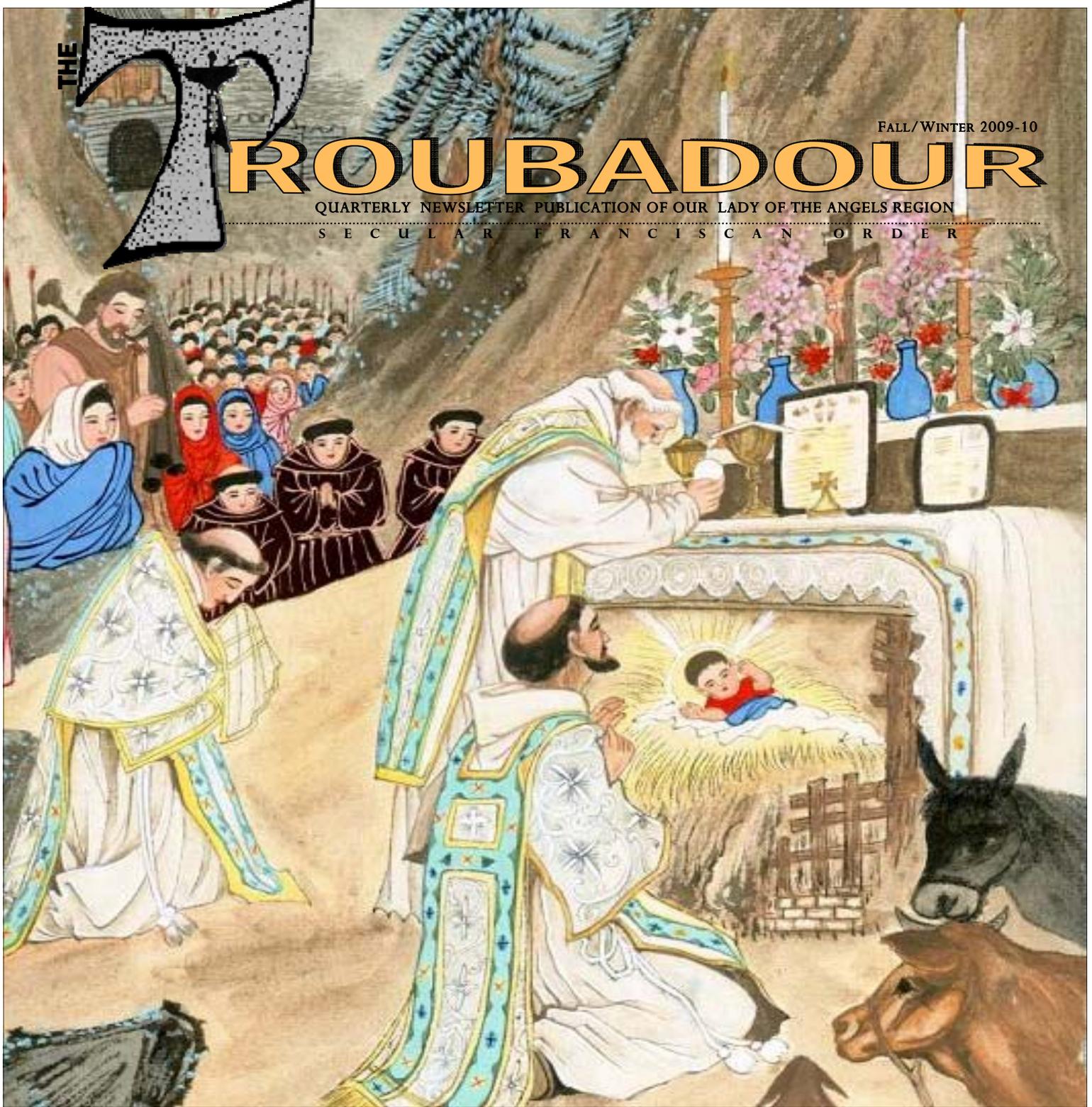
THE

FALL/WINTER 2009-10

ROUBADOUR

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER PUBLICATION OF OUR LADY OF THE ANGELS REGION

SECULAR FRANCISCAN ORDER



VOLUME 11 • ISSUE 45

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INVITATION

You are invited, dear family, to submit articles about your fraternity activities and membership; about your individual and collective expertise, your projects and achievements; wherever you see the spirit of St. Francis at work in the world, in your lives, and in your hearts—we want to hear from you. Come share with us.

—APG, EDITOR

Seeking our Advent Vision Quest

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Francis and Clare,

May the Lord give you Peace!

As I write this, it is the first week of Advent and Christmas preparations are in full swing. I just had the great privilege of taking an hour to spend with a group of my co-workers here at the Archdiocesan Center in Newark in an Advent reflection given by the assistant spiritual director of our seminary. He reminded us of our uniqueness as God's work of art. He reflected on Michelangelo's "Pieta" which he saw as a student in Rome. He mentioned that when it was first unveiled, people asked the artist why he depicted Mary with such a young face, since in the sculpture she was holding the lifeless body of her Son who was about 30 years old, so that she appeared younger than one would presume she would have been at this time in her life. Michelangelo explained that he used his own mother as the model for Mary and that his mother had died at an early age when he was quite young— the point being that he put all of himself, even his love for his own mother, into this work. So it is with God—He put all of His love into His creation and especially into each one of us, and so we have a responsibility to live faithfully according to this design—to show forth God's immense love with which He created us, His masterpiece. It is His great love for us that brings about the Incarnation, God's coming to live among us as one of us so that we could palpably feel, see, touch and experience God's immense love for us by His coming to live as one of us—opening Himself to us in the vulnerability of a helpless child and literally placing Himself into our hands. This is, of course, something He continues to do in the Eucharist.

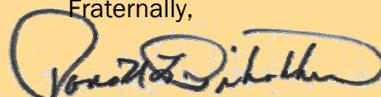
In his little pamphlet, "Meeting Christ at Broadway and Bethlehem," Edward Hays reminds us that the season of Advent is not simply a time for us to prepare prayerfully for Christmas, but that it should be a "training course" on how to live Christmas every day of the year. This is perhaps, why our holy father, Saint Francis, was so devoted to the holy Child of Bethlehem and why the Christmas crèche is a Franciscan tradition, one that many Franciscan churches will keep on display throughout the entire year. What this demands of us is that we live in a way that we are conscious of existing in a world "enfleshed by God." Fr. Hays, in his booklet, suggests that in order to do this, we need to go on an Advent vision quest. He reminds us that Native Americans used to go on a vision quest involving solitude, fasting and prayer and that in the midst of this experience, the Great Spirit, it was believed, would grant the person a vision of their true identity and their life path. After this, the Native American would return to his people to live out this vision.

Jesus, following His Baptism in the Jordan, Fr. Hays reminds us, went on the first such Advent vision quest when He went off into the desert in solitude to seek God. Here He received a vision of "His personal intimate oneness with God" which He then returned to live out among His people. Our observance of Advent should provide us with the opportunity to go on our own Advent vision quest so that we can experience the same vision of intimacy with God and then use that vision to empower us in our living. How deeply aware are we of God's presence in us, in others about us, in our families and in our fraternities, indeed, in all of creation? This is the true measure of the success of our Advent quest.

Do we realize that we and those about us are all God's work of art—His masterpiece? Can we live in this knowledge as we celebrate Christmas and throughout the year as people in whom God is enfleshed?

It has been a couple of weeks now since our Regional Chapter of Ministers meeting in Beacon, NY. I am deeply grateful to all who participated. It was a real experience of God's Spirit manifested among us. I am deeply grateful to Fr. Richard Trezza, OFM, our Regional Spiritual Assistant, for his wonderful sharing on the meaning of profession in the Order. It certainly was a powerful and eye-opening message—one I am sure the ministers and others present will long remember and hopefully share with their fraternities. The sharing and discussion among all the participants was rich and meaningful. I am grateful also to the Regional Executive Council without whose hard work and cooperation the meeting would have been impossible. One of our presenters, Jean Haddad, SFO, our Regional JPIC Chair, presented her plans for the development of the Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation ministries in the Region. (See letter from Jean Haddad on page 4 —Ed.) This is certainly one way in which we can live out our Secular Franciscan Vision of a world enfleshed by God. May it be so! On behalf of our Regional Executive Council, may I extend our best wishes for a Blessed Christmas and a New Year lived out in the Vision of God among us.

Fraternally,



Ron Pihokker, SFO, Regional Minister
Our Lady of the Angels Regional Fraternity

WEB EFFORT INCREASES ADVOCACY TO CARE FOR CREATION

BY
MONICA HERALD

On October 15, the *Franciscan Action Network* (FAN) hosted its first national Web summit, focusing on *Care for Creation*. More than 1000 people joined together to listen to the talented and informed speakers discuss climate change and what we can do in our lives to live more closely in an ecologically-friendly way.

The summit speakers included FAN's director, Fr. Larry Janezic, OFM, Dr. Robert Breen, Sr. Ilia Delio, OSF, Daniel J. Misleh and Russell Testa, director of the Province's Office of Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation.

The speakers began the program by sharing the more dire details of climate change's effects and repercussions. They then moved into a place of hope, wherein they suggested ways to be more at one with creation. Additionally, the web summit examined what the Franciscan tradition brings to the table. Several tools were offered, including an ecological footprint and the St. Francis Pledge.

Toward the end of the summit, participants raised questions fielded by FAN Action Center staff members and then presented to the speakers. There was lively engagement by all.

At this point, little doubt remains that the event has motivated many to a personal commitment to change behavior, and great hope that more engagement in *Care for Creation* advocacy actions will follow.

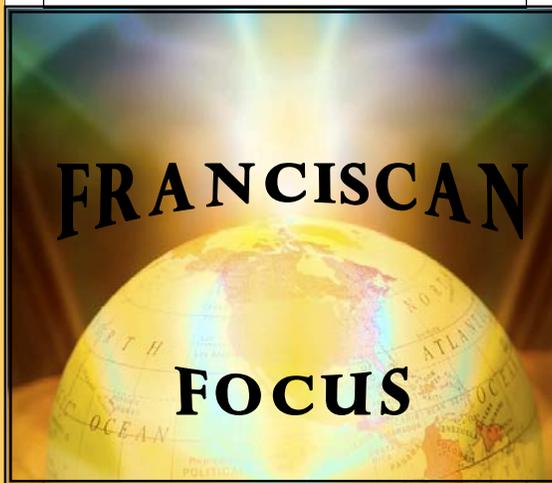
To view the October 15 Web Summit, go to FAN's home page at: www.franciscanaction.org and click on resources for the webinar video link.

THE HUNGARY POSTAL SERVICE issued a special stamp marking the



VIII Centenary of the Franciscan Order. "Saint Francis of Assisi founded the Franciscan Order 800 years ago" reads the text on the stamp.

The main motif of the stamp design is the figure of St. Francis surrounded by some of the major events and places from his life in the form of a cross. The artist is Eszter Domé.



FRANCISCAN INTELLECTUAL TRADITION

A special commission has been working to clarify and articulate the Franciscan Intellectual Tradition as an alternative and orthodox theology for the contemporary Church and world. To learn about the commission's books, programs and other resources, go to: <http://www.franciscantradition.org>

THE SAINT AND THE SULTAN: through a combined Muslim and Christian effort, Franciscan Communications of Cincinnati, OH, is working to produce a 60-minute television documentary about contemporary Muslims and Christians seeking mutual understanding through local dialogue. The story of the 13TH century meeting of St. Francis of Assisi and Sultan Malik al-Kamil in Damietta, Egypt, will introduce viewers to the modern possibility of conversation across cultural barriers, even in a time of war. For more information and to view the documentary trailer, go to:

<http://damietaoproject.org>

SECULAR FRANCISCAN VIDEO, the Secular Franciscan Order in the US has begun a series of Blip TV web/video episodes about the SFO.

In the premier episode, former National Minister J. Patrick Mendes talks about what the SFO is, its member and varied ministries. The second episode, 2009 National Peace Award recipient, Don Ryder, discusses the *Kenya Water Project*. Episode three hosts newly elected National Minister Tom Bello, who discusses the significance of the National Peace Award. Future episodes are expected to vary in length from 3 to 10 minutes and include both interviews and action-Go to <http://secularfranciscans.blip.tv>

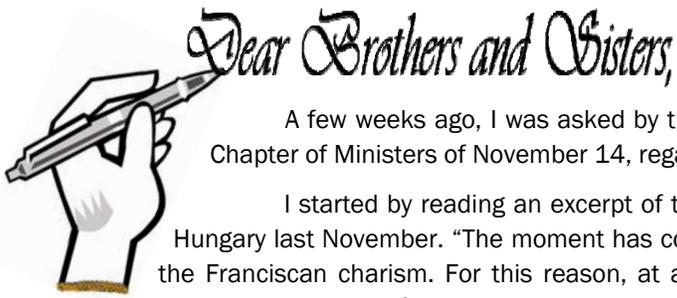
or to: www.youtube.com/Secularfranciscans and click on the archives for episode selection.

WINTER 2009 ISSUE OF TAU-USA IS AVAILABLE ONLINE

All professed SFO members receive *TAU-USA*, the SFO Nat'l newsletter, by mail four times a year. You can read the current issue and past issues at: <http://www.nafra-sfo.org/tau-usa.html>

FRANCISCANS INTERNATIONAL newsletter, *Pax et Bonum*, is now exclusively available online. *FI* decided that they would no longer print *Pax et Bonum*, for environmental and financial reasons. Please continue to follow their work online. It is available in English as .pdf or interactive formats at: <http://www.franciscansinternational.org/node/2995>

A WOMAN FOR OUR TIME: ST. ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY, an hour-long documentary, chronicles the life of St. Elizabeth of Hungary (1207-1231) who has long been recognized as one of the glories of the Franciscan family, but whose details of her life remain far too little known. This documentary tells the story of her life through art, historical re-enactments, narration and interviews with historians & Franciscans. A new film trailer and the original trailer may be viewed for this ongoing project at: <http://www.stelizabethdocumentary.com>



A few weeks ago, I was asked by the Council to speak to the ministers of our region at the OLTAR Regional Chapter of Ministers of November 14, regarding Justice, Peace & Integrity of Creation (JPIC).

I started by reading an excerpt of the SFO Priorities established at the General Chapter which took place in Hungary last November. "The moment has come to be courageous and visible for the service to and the witnessing of the Franciscan charism. For this reason, at all levels, the Order must take up its own responsibilities to be actively present in all the qualified social events and in the promotion of human rights, as well as Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation." "For too long, the Order has not fully entered into its active mission in the world. The moment has come, and it can no longer be deferred, to "enter the city" to exercise with determination and full visibility its own responsibilities to witness, and to promote justice, peace, human rights and the integrity of creation."

This is not a new challenge. Our Rule calls us to promote justice by the testimony of our lives and by our courageous initiatives.

The Secular Franciscan Order is the largest Order in the Catholic Church and we can be a force for good in the world. So How Do We Begin?

The Council would like each fraternity to name a JPIC coordinator to organize your JPIC apostolate. The JPIC coordinator may be a current fraternity council member such as the vice-minister or any other professed member whom the fraternity minister and council wishes to designate.

The next step is to have an open dialogue with members of your fraternity. What are their individual ministries? Which JPIC ministries would inspire and challenge them? Do you have a fraternity apostolate? What would be a good regional apostolate?

A list of possible apostolates for your consideration was sent to all the Ministers, and is also available on our website. Some are obvious, such as Franciscan Action Network and Franciscans International. You may already be involved with many on the list.

Please send me the name and contact information for your JPIC coordinator so that we can have a regional JPIC meeting. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

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Let us accept the challenge of the General Chapter and as St. Francis said, "Begin, at last my brethren, to serve the Lord."

Pax et bonum,

JEAN HADDAD, SFO, OLTAR REGIONAL JPIC CHAIR

64 Distler Avenue, West Caldwell, NJ 07006 • Email: jhaddadsfo@aol.com



AS AGREED AT THE RECENT NAFRA MEETING, THE SFO IN THE UNITED STATES WOULD LIKE TO CONTINUE THE PERPETUAL NOVENA, THIS YEAR ON BEHALF OF THE PEOPLE OF DARFUR, ORISSA, PAKISTAN, AND THE PHILIPPINES.

Individuals may start and end their novena on other days if necessary, or do a different week. If you want to continue to pray before or after your week/month you can certainly do that! You are also encouraged to share the novena with people in your parish, youth groups, or other organizations to which you belong.

Every day members of the SFO will be praying the novena prayer. For this to happen, 5 Regional fraternities are assigned to cover each month.

To make sure we cover the entire month, there will be four to five "waves" of the novena, each starting on Sunday. People are assigned to these waves by Region again, as noted below. For example, the first Sunday of December, members of St. Elizabeth of Hungary Region will begin praying the novena; the second Sunday of the month, Lady Poverty Region will begin the novena. This way the people of Darfur, Orissa, Pakistan, and the Philippines will be held in prayer by the SFO for the entire year.

In the event there are only 4 Sundays in the month, the fifth Region can pray week 1, or choose another week.

A novena allows us to hold a particular concern before God in a special way. The name "novena" comes from the Latin for "nine".

Traditionally we pray a novena every day for nine days, and the prayer is usually a bit longer than a brief intercession. This allows us to give more of ourselves to our prayer for the concern we are bringing before God.

MERCIFUL FATHER,
PRINCE OF PEACE,

SPIRIT OF WISDOM AND
COMPASSION, PLEASE LOOK UPON
OUR BROTHERS AND SISTERS IN
DARFUR, ORISSA, PAKISTAN,
THE PHILIPPINES, AND IN
ALL THE WORLD.

BE CAREFUL WHAT YOU PRAY FOR

BY
FR. RICHARD TREZZA, OFM
REGIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSISTANT



Traveling up to New England in late September gave me a preview of the Fall which seemed so far away here in New Jersey. The sky was clear and the air was just brisk enough to announce a not far away change of season.

In anticipation I took along my mantle to wear for my walks around the grounds of the St. Francis Center in Andover, Massachusetts. Pumpkins already festooned the porches of the homes and my mind raced to Thanksgiving ... already! For me, this also meant the coming of a favorite liturgical season — that of Advent. This will be one of many Advents celebrated. The older I get, I also receive the grace to really “get it” — to really understand just what is being celebrated these 4 weeks before Christmas.

So much of Christian life depends on how we view this season. It dictates the way we reckon this present world and sets the tone for the way we act and treat each other. Advent forces us to anticipate something we have not yet experienced fully, but which we have not been a stranger to, either ... the Kingdom of God.

“ADVENIAT REGNUM TUUM... THY KINGDOM COME...”

we pray often — perhaps too often for our own good. Do we realize what we are praying for? When we pray the Lord’s prayer, we are praying for the coming of the Kingdom in its fullness at the end of time – at the end of this world.

We also pray for the realization that the Kingdom is here. It means that we are serious about being ready to witness to that Kingdom by our actions and attitudes. Anyone taking a spiritual inventory of that personal spirituality will find themselves coming up very short on the readiness to enter that Kingdom when at last we are called. We have so far to go before we can say that our actions and attitudes have conquered war, injustice, hate, homelessness, starvation, etc.

“FIAT VOLUNTAS TUA...”

“THY WILL BE DONE...”

— another prayerful wish which makes us uncomfortable as we go through our lives fulfilling not God’s will, but our own. Do we even know what God wants? Do we desire what God desires for us and for humanity?

As Franciscans, may the coming season of Advent find us ready and willing to bring about the Kingdom in the “here and now” by living lives which give witness to the reality of that Kingdom.

In being faithful to our Rule, may we come to appreciate all the more, God’s will for us as individuals, as an Order and as a society.



WE HUMBLY PRAY:

— For those who have been subjected to violence: women, children, young and old men, we ask for healing, consolation, and relief of further suffering.

*Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be.
St. Francis and St. Clare, pray for us.*

— For those who have done violence, we ask for healing, forgiveness, and the grace of conversion.

*Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be.
St. Francis and St. Clare, pray for us.*

— For those in authority throughout the world, we ask wisdom, creativity, compassion and courage in addressing these situations.

Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be. St. Francis and St. Clare, pray for us.

Lord Jesus, Your Sacred Heart burns for love of all Your people.

Please place in our hearts that same love and inspire us to have the courage, wisdom and ingenuity to take what measures we can personally to relieve the suffering of our brothers and sisters.

We pray this in the Name of Jesus, our Lord, through the intercession of the Sorrowful and Immaculate Heart of Mary.

MEMORARE Remember oh most gracious Virgin Mary, that never was it known that anyone who fled to thy protection, implored thy help, or sought thy intercession was left unaided. Inspired by this confidence I fly unto thee, O Virgin of Virgins, my mother. To thee do I come, before thee I stand, sinful and sorrowful. O mother of the Word Incarnate, despise not my petitions, but in thy mercy hear and answer me. Amen.

	Dec/June	Jan/July	Feb/Aug	Mar/Sept	Apr/Oct	May/Nov
Week 1	St. Elizabeth of Hungary	Bl Kateri Tekakwitha	Fr Solanus	Tau Cross	OUR LADY OF THE ANGELS	St. Katharine Drexel
Week 2	Lady Poverty	St. Margaret of Cortona	Brothers & Sisters of St. Francis	Five Franciscan Martyrs	St. Maximilian Kolbe	Holy Trinity
Week 3	Divine Mercy	Our Lady of Indiana	La Verna	Mother Cabrini	Franciscans of the Prairie	St. Clare
Week 4	St Joan of Arc	Queen of Peace	Juan de Padilla	Los Tres Companeros/ Three Companions	Our Lady of the Rockies	Santa Maria de las Montanas
Week 5 or Week 1*	Our Lady of Guadalupe	Troubadours of Peace	Bl. Junipero Serra	St. Francis	St. Thomas More	Ohana O Ke Aneunue

WE NEED TO TAKE BETTER CARE OF 'SISTER EARTH'

BY
FR. RICHARD ROHR, OFM



As a priest of the Franciscan Order, the very first European “invaders” in the states of New Mexico, Florida, Georgia, Texas and California, I think we have been around long enough to see both the good and the bad that we brought with us. We usually found it congenial to live among the native peoples of the new world because they already shared our vision of both a simple and a communal life. In fact, they often taught us how to live it!

Now we see that these ancient values of living close to the earth, and in union with natural creation, are no longer highly prized values in our world or in our country. In fact, we Christians, Catholics and Franciscans have given little moral leadership to any alternative vision. Strange, considering St. Francis’ daring and clear commitment to nature, simplicity and nonviolence. Strange, considering God’s covenant with Noah, the animals and “all of creation.” Strange, considering Jesus’ loving observation and praise for the sparrows, the lilies, “living waters” and “rich soil.”

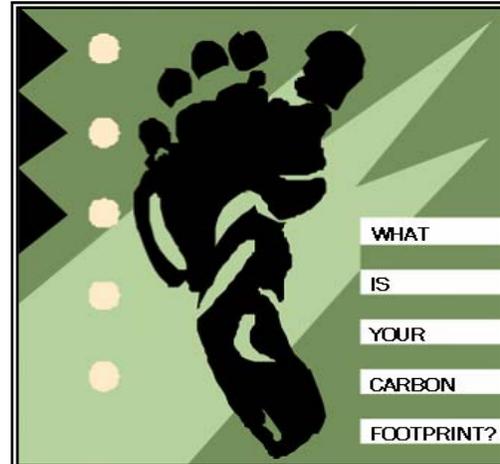
If the nations that built on the Judeo-Christian heritage do not soon see the work of earth care and climate change as a moral and spiritual imperative, one wonders how we will have any moral authority left? As St. Thomas Aquinas said, “Nature is the primary and most perfect revelation of the Divine.” This “Bible” of creation existed for billions of years and sustained us long enough so we could write the next Bible. For St. Francis, the natural world was not an object to be objectified, but a fellow subject that he reverently addressed as “Sister” and “Brother.” Our capital city of Santa Fe is named after him, so there must be a special invitation for us in this “land of enchantment.” In addition, St. Francis is the Patron of Ecology, which is about taking care of our home, Earth.

In his time, St. Francis spoke with and wrote letters to the leaders that govern, offering them moral imperatives for their positions as guardians of the common good. If we are to have an earth to live upon into the future, our leaders must govern now for the common good and take swift and strong action on climate change. Individualism and profit for a few is devastating the planet.

Christians have become so individualistic in our notions of what God is saving that we gradually whittled it down to tiny human groups who always happened to be just like ourselves. Our God became very small in the process, we smaller yet, and the physical world the least of all. There was little room or appreciation for the wonderful “new earth” that the Bible sees as the very ending of salvation history.

Jesus told us, His followers, we would be judged on how we treated “the least” of the brothers and sisters. It seems the very things we all, without exception, share in common – the one earth on which we walk, “Sister Water” who sustains us all, “Brother Sun” who gives life to absolutely everything, have themselves become the very least sisters and brothers of all. Sort of unbelievable.

Would it be strange, or would it be totally predicted, that these literal “fundamentals” would be the very issues that could either bring us all down, bring us all together, or bring us to a universal and all inclusive holiness?



The Nature Conservancy— a leading conservation organization is working around the world to protect ecologically important lands and waters for nature and people.

The mission of the Nature Conservancy is to preserve the plants, animals and natural communities that represent the diversity of life on Earth by protecting the lands and waters they need to survive.

In going about our daily lives, each of us contributes to greenhouse gas emissions that are causing climate change. Yet, according to the Nature Conservancy, “there are many things each of us, as individuals, can do to reduce our carbon emissions.” Step one is to determine the impact left by the actions we take and the choices we make.

Use the Nature Conservancy’s carbon footprint calculator to measure your impact on our climate. The carbon footprint calculator estimates how many tons of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases your choices create each year.

After a few simple questions, the calculator provides your individual emissions number (tons of CO2 eq/year) and shows how you compare to the average person living in the U.S.

To connect directly to the Nature Conservancy’s carbon footprint calculator, go to:

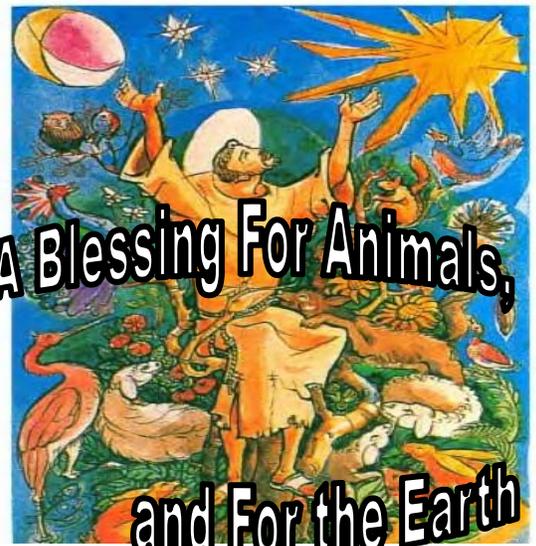
<http://www.nature.org/initiatives/climatechange/calculator/>



BY
FR. JACEK ORZECZOWSKI, OFM

The first weekend of October — on the feast of St. Francis of Assisi, the patron saint of ecology — a number of churches offered a blessing of animals prayer services. One such event took place outside of St. Camillus Church. Some may wonder about the reason why anyone would come to have his or her pet blessed.

A blessing is our prayerful acknowledgment of something good and beautiful created by God. For example, when my sister kisses her two-year-old daughter goodnight, she blesses her child, even though little Victoria is asleep and not aware of it. The blessing that my sister gives to her child is not magic; rather, it is a sign of love and affection. Such a gesture acknowledges and celebrates that which is already present: “This child is a gift from God and I am grateful for it.” My sister is the one affected the most by that blessing. In a similar way, we bless our animals because we want to acknowledge prayerfully that they are special to us. We want to thank God for their friendship and beauty. We also ask God to keep them in good health, so that they may continue wagging their tails, welcoming us when they see us, and delighting us with their beauty.



But there is an even more important reason why the blessing of animals ought to be relevant to us, especially in this time of the unprecedented ecological crisis. First, it reminds us that the animals — and in fact all who are members of the Earth’s community — belong first and foremost to God. Their worth extends far beyond a mere commodity value that we humans ascribe to them. The diverse creatures reflect in their own unique and unrepeatable ways the goodness and beauty of the Divine Creator. Furthermore, the Christian tradition holds up to us the vision of the natural world that is being drawn by God toward a promise of a future fulfillment.

Yet, all too often, human beings wreak havoc on God’s earth, threatening the survival of countless species. What we must do is to tend God’s garden with love and justice rather than exploit it with greed and unrestrained consumption. The blessing of the animals also reminds us that we are part of the Earth’s community of life, and that we share the common origin in God and sacred cosmic destiny.

That awareness ought to compel us to certain solidarity with other species and to ensure the survival of the earth’s natural diversity. According to 2007 IPCC report, between 20% and 30% of animal species are likely to be at increased risk of extinction if increases in global temperature exceed 1.5°C -2.5°C. Species are dying 10,000 times faster than natural extinction rates; faster than at any time in the last 65 million years. It will continue, unless we become more serious about doing something about it.

As the US Senate prepares for a vigorous debate over what should be our national response to global climate change, people of faith are becoming increasingly aware of their moral obligation to speak up on this issue. October presents a great opportunity to hold up a vision of sustainable future for all of creation. Many Catholics across our country will be celebrating the feast of St. Francis by joining the Catholic Climate Covenant and taking the St. Francis Pledge to Care for Creation and the Poor.

<http://catholicclimatecovenant.org/the-st-francis-pledge>

One time, at the end of the ceremony at which I blessed various animals, someone asked me facetiously if any of those creatures had been changed spiritually. I said, “My friend, this blessing is really more for us people that it is for these animals. It should empower us to change our erroneous world-views and lifestyles that are bringing us to the brink of the ecological catastrophe.”

Fr. Jacek Orzechowski, OFM, is currently ministering at St. Camillus Church in Silver Spring, MD. He is also co-chair of the Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation Directorate of the Holy Name Province.

CONVIVENZA

APRIL 10

SPEAKER: FR. ROBERT WILLIAMS, OFM CAP.

OLTAR REGIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSISTANT

TOPIC: FRANCIS AND THE SULTAN

TIME: 9:00AM — 3:00 PM

LOCATION: TBA

FORMATION DIRECTORS MEETING

SATURDAY, MAY 1

TIME: 10:00AM—3:00PM

ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI CHURCH, 31ST ST, NYC

SAN DAMIANO HALL

**REGIONAL RETREAT COMBINED WITH
REGIONAL CANDIDATE/INQUIRER RETREAT**

WEEKEND AUGUST 27-29

MT. ALVERNIA RETREAT CENTER

WAPPINGER FALLS, NY

PLEASE MARK YOUR CALENDARS TODAY!

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION WILL FOLLOW

ON ALL EVENTS CURRENTLY LISTED.

SECULARS AT WORK

Sharing the Vision



May 30, 2009
Regional
Formation
Directors
Meeting

PHOTOS CREDIT: DIANE MENDITTO, SFO

SECULARS AT PLAY

8

**OLTAR
REGIONAL
PICNIC**



PHOTOS CREDIT: IRMA CRUSO, SFO

This year's OLTAR Regional Picnic held on Saturday, August 8th at Mount St. Francis Retreat Center in Ringwood, NJ, gave us the opportunity and great joy to gather as a Regional family and share some summer fun. A good time was had by all.

Special thanks to Andy Klutkowski, SFO, and the North Jersey Cluster for organizing this year's picnic.

NORTH JERSEY CLUSTER VISITED THE LAURELWOOD ARBORETUM, WAYNE, NJ, SEPTEMBER 19TH.

Thank you to all the Sisters and Brothers that attended and made for a different and special day. Thank you to Almighty God for giving us a lovely, sunny day. Thank you to the Passaic County Master Gardeners for giving a private tour to our Secular Franciscans of the North Jersey Cluster. And, a special thanks to Dawn Healey (Master Gardener), who was our tour guide and photographer; Jim McHugh (Master Gardener) who provided a six-passenger golf cart for those with walking problems; Sunny Brennan, SFO (Master Gardener) who arranged this special day for us; Jim Brennan, SFO, and David Engelhaupt, SFO, for our refreshments and to Andy Klutkowski, SFO (Regional Councilor) for coordinating the event with Our Lady of the Angels Region.



PHOTOS CREDIT: DAWN HEALEY

SECULARS ON RETREAT

BY VIRGINIA CHIN, SFO
REGIONAL FORMATION DIRECTOR

Fourteen candidates from multiple local fraternities attended the Our Lady of the Angels Regional Retreat on September 11 – 13, 2009 at St. Lawrence Friary, Beacon, NY. Fr. Richard Trezza, OFM, (Regional Spiritual Assistant) and Ron Pihokker, SFO, (Regional Minister) conducted the retreat using conversion as the theme.

Based on the movie “Brother Sun, Sister Moon”, Ron focused on St. Francis’ early conversion experience as the Secular Franciscan model. He pointed out conversion is the hallmark and the heart of our Franciscan Charism.

PHOTO CREDIT: ELIANE ROCCA



September 11-13, 2009
Regional Initial
Formation
Retreat

Candidates were encouraged to be open to changes as Francis was. Change may be difficult and hard to do. The conversion process is different for different people. Conversion is a slow process which will take over a life time. The candidates, as they journey through their Initial Formation Program and experience the fraternity life, should reflect and discern if the Franciscan way of life is truly for them. Profession is the beginning of their journey and a life time of on-going conversion process. “Franciscan” is a way of life.

Fr. Richard reviewed the seven stages of conversion, including context, crisis, quest, encounter, discernment, commitment and outcome. He described each stage as to what it is, what the focus should be, what are the changes and what are the risks if we do not move on. Candidates were encouraged to write down the major changes of their life with a time line. They were provided with a journal to keep track of daily reflections.

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The retreat closed with an overall summary of the Secular Franciscan Constitution, including some of the Rules, the formation process and responsibilities, the candidate’s commitment and priority to the fraternity and the Franciscan way of life. The Regional Council and some fraternity Formation Directors joined the candidates for mass and lunch.

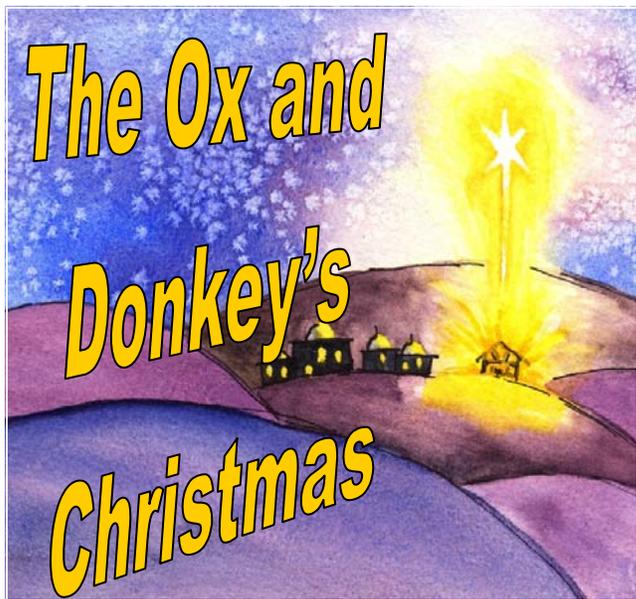
During the retreat, the candidates asked many questions about St. Francis, the fraternities and the Franciscan way of life. They actively participated in all the discussions and talks. Some of the candidates were familiar with the writings of Thomas Merton. We viewed the PBS documentary of the life of Thomas Merton as example of modern conversion experience. The candidates felt the retreat was definitely positive and very worthwhile. They gained knowledge and insights on what this “Secular Franciscan thing” is about. They enjoyed sharing their experience and forming new friendships with the other candidates in the Region.

We would like to thank all the candidates and their Formation Directors for allowing us to share in this spiritual and wonderful retreat with them.

The attendees of the retreat – Ogonna Agu, Jenny Badger, Christina Brodie, John Buccini, Eileen & Vemes Ferrara, Daisy Guzman, May Home, Rochelle Martin, Joseph McKenna, Joey Palermo, Eliane Rocca, Finny Saporito and Patricia Moclair.

PHOTOS CREDIT: ELIANE ROCCA





ST. FRANCIS AND CHRISTMAS

BY POPE BENEDICT XVI

*This reflection on St. Francis and the origins of the Christmas celebration by Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger was published the year he became Pope Benedict XVI, in the book *Immagini di Speranza (Images of Hope)*.*

In his first biography of St. Francis of Assisi, Tomasso da Celano (1200-c.1260) writes about the night of that first Christmas crèche in a manner that remains touching to any reader and which contributed decisively to the dissemination of the most beautiful of Christmas traditions, the crèche, or Nativity scene.

We can therefore rightly say that the night in Greccio gave back to Christianity the feast of Christmas, so that its authentic message, its particular warmth and humanity, the humanity of our God, could communicate itself to the souls of men and give our faith a new dimension. The feast of the Resurrection had focused our attention on the power of God who triumphed over death and teaches us to hope in the life to come. But what was now highlighted was the defenseless love of God, His humility and His goodness, which are manifested in this world in our midst to teach us a new way to live and to love.

It may be useful to pause a little at this point to ask: Where is this Greccio, which has assumed such significance for the story of the faith?

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It is a small town in Umbria, not far from Rome, to the northeast. Lakes and mountains have given the town its particular fascination and silent beauty, which succeeds in moving us even today, especially since it has hardly been touched by the confusion attendant to mass tourism.

The convent of Greccio, some 2,000 feet above sea level, has retained much of its original simplicity; it has remained modest, like the little town at the foot of its mountain. The forest surrounds it as in Francis's time and invites us to pause and reflect. Celano recalls that Francis had a particular liking for the residents of the area because of their poverty and simplicity. That is why he went there often to rest, drawn by the idea of living in

an extremely poor and simple cell, where he could dedicate himself undisturbed to the contemplation of celestial things. Poverty, simplicity, silence and speaking to nature: These were surely the attractions that linked the Saint of Assisi to this place.

It became his Bethlehem and would inscribe the mystery of Bethlehem once again in the geography of our soul. But let us go back to the Christmas of 1223.

Some land in Greccio had been placed at Francis' disposition by a nobleman named Giovanni who, according to Celano, although he had noble lineage and high position, "gave no importance to nobility by blood, but rather sought to gain nobility of the spirit," such that he earned Francis's affection.

Celano writes that Giovanni had the grace of a marvelous vision, in which he saw a baby asleep in a manger, which awoke when Francis came near. He adds:

"This vision, in fact, coincided with what was really happening, because until then, the baby Jesus had effectively fallen into the sleep of oblivion in many hearts. Through his servant Francis, remembrance of him has been revived and impressed indelibly in memory."

This picture describes with precision the new dimension that, through his vivid and passionate faith, Francis conferred on the Christian feast of Christmas: the discovery of God's revelation embodied in the Baby Jesus.

In this way, God has really become Emmanuel, God with us, from whom no barrier of superiority or distance separates us. As a baby, He made himself so close to us that we can easily address Him familiarly and reach His heart directly. In the Baby Jesus we see the defenselessness of God's love: God comes to us unarmed, because He does not intend to conquer externally, but rather to win us over and transform us internally.

If anything is capable of winning over man, his despotism, his violence and his greed, it is the helplessness of a baby. God took on that defenselessness in order to win us over and lead us to our true selves. In this respect, let us not forget that the greatest title of Jesus Christ is that of "Son," Son of God:

His divinity is indicated by this term, which presents Jesus as a perennial baby. His condition as a child corresponds uniquely to His divinity, which is the divinity of the "Son." Therefore, it is an indication of the way that we can reach God, the way to divinization.

It is in this light that we should understand His words: "Unless you repent and become as children, you will not enter the Kingdom of God" (Matthew 18:3).

Whoever has not understood the mystery of Christmas has not understood the decisive fact of Christianity. Whoever has not accepted it cannot enter the Kingdom of heaven. It is of this that Francis wished to remind Christianity in his time and in all the times that followed.

Following Francis' instructions, on that Holy Night of 1223, an ox and a donkey were placed in the cave in Greccio. In fact, he told Giovanni: "I would like to present the Baby born in Bethlehem, so that in some way, I will see with my own eyes the discomfort which He experienced, not having all the things necessary for a newborn baby, and how He was placed in a manger and lay on the hay between the ox and the donkey." From then on, the ox and the donkey have become part of all Nativity scenes.

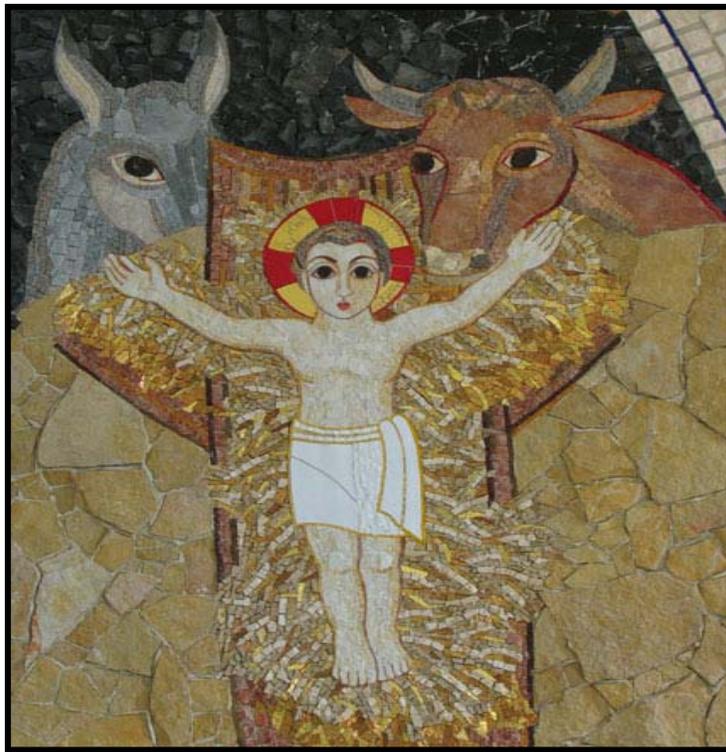
But how did the idea itself originate? As we know, the Nativity accounts in the New Testament do not say a word about them. If we look deeper into the question, then we will discover something important both for Christmas tradition as well as for the liturgical and popular spirituality of Christmas and Easter for the Church. The ox and the donkey are not simply products of popular piety and fantasy, but they have become ingredients of the Nativity because of the Church belief in the unity of the Old and New Testaments. In Isaiah 1:3, we read: "The ox knows its owner, and the donkey, his master's manger; but Israel does not know, and my people do not understand." The Fathers of the Church saw in these words a prophecy which refers to the new people of God, the Church made of Jews and pagans. Before God, all men, Jews as well as pagans, were like oxen and donkeys, without intelligence and knowledge. But the baby in the manger opened their eyes, so that now they recognize the voice of the owner, the voice of their Lord. In the medieval representations of Christmas, we see that the two animals are given almost human faces, how they incline consciously and respectfully before the mystery of the baby.

This was perfectly logical, because they had the value of being prophetic symbols behind which is concealed the mystery of the Church, our mystery, according to which, before the eternal, we are all oxen and donkeys, who had our eyes opened on that Holy Night, so that now we can recognize the manger of Our Lord.

But do we really recognize it? When we place the ox and the donkey in our Christmas crèche, we must remember the words of Isaiah, which are not only Gospel — therefore, the promise of future knowledge — but also a judgment on our current blindness. The ox and the donkey recognize, but "Israel does not know, and my people do not understand."

Who are the ox and the donkey today, who are "my people" who do not understand? How do we recognize the ox and the donkey, and how do we recognize "my people"?

How is it that beings without reason recognize, while reason is blind? To find answers to these questions, we should return once more with the Fathers of the Church to that first Christmas. Who recognized?



And who did not? And why did this happen?

Well, someone who did not recognize was Herod.

He understood nothing when he was told of the Baby. On the contrary, he was blinded even more by his thirst for power and his consequent mania for persecution (Matthew 2:3). And "along with him, all Jerusalem" did not recognize. Neither did the educated, the scholars of Scripture, the specialists of interpretation who knew the exact and correct biblical passage and still understood nothing (Matthew 2:6).

Instead, those who recognized were "the ox and the donkey" — that is, in comparison to those exalted persons: the shepherds, the Magi, Mary and Joseph. Could it have been otherwise?

The cave stall, where the Baby lay, was not inhabited by refined persons; it was, in fact, the home of the ox and the donkey.

And what is our position? Are we very far from that stall precisely because we are too refined and intelligent? Have we not lost ourselves in scholarly biblical exegesis in an attempt to demonstrate the historical

authenticity, or lack of it, of a certain passage, to the point of becoming blind to the Baby and not to see anything more of him?

Don't we perhaps live too much in "Jerusalem," closed in on ourselves, in our self-sufficiency, our fear of persecution, such that we are no longer able to perceive in the night the voices of angels so that we may join them in adoring Him?

On the Holy Night, the faces of the ox and the donkey remind us of the question: My people do not understand; do you understand the voice of your Lord?

When we place the figurines in our Christmas crèche, we should pray to God to grant to our hearts that simplicity that recognizes the Lord in the Baby, as Francis once did in Greccio.

Then we may experience what Tommaso da Celano — almost with the same words Luke used about the shepherds on that first Christmas (Luke 2:20) — said about the participants of that midnight Mass in Greccio:

**AND EVERYONE WENT
HOME, FILLED WITH**

JOY.

On September 9, 2009, the Servants of God Fraternity 168, was certified canonically within the Church as a Franciscan Third Order Fraternity. The evening was marked by a Mass celebrated by Fr. Richard Trezza, OFM, assisted by Deacon Ed Case, SFO. Concelebrating the Mass were Fr. Glenn Sudano, CFR, Community Servant of the Franciscan Friars of the Renewal.



It was a prayerful and beautiful celebration with Br. Timothy providing music and a homily preached by Fr. Trezza that encouraged all of us to truly live our vocation; to recognize the importance of who we are in a world where true Franciscan values is considered counter cultural.

We were honored to be joined by Fr. Benedict Groeschel, CFR, and several other CFR brother and sisters as well as by family members and friends of our fraternity. The evening concluded with a social at St. Leopold's Friary.

Shining Light

You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.

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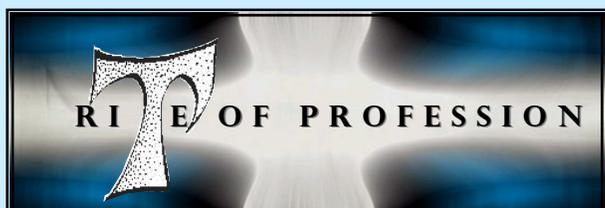
BY
FR. JOHN SUMMERS,
OFM

One evening this past October, my local parish hosted members of a Muslim association for a meal after the daytime Ramadan fast. Daily fasting in the lunar month of Ramadan is one of the central practices of Islam. During Ramadan, Muslims make a special effort to turn away from sin, to strengthen their commitment to God, to practice virtues and nourish heart and soul. Our guests invited us to observe their traditional sunset prayer, and we provided foods permitted by Islamic law. It was a good way for us to break the ice and get to know some of our Muslim neighbors.

Franciscan contacts with the Muslim world go back to the time of the Crusades. But rather than waging war, the friars sought peaceful encounters. In the year 1219, Saint Francis himself traveled to the Holy Land and was able to meet Sultan Malik al-Kamil in the Nile delta. Francis was moved by the sincere expressions of faith that he saw there. He came away convinced that the best way to proclaim the Gospel among people of other religions was not by preaching or disputing in words, but by simply and humbly living among them—what Franciscan missionaries now call a “dialogue of life.”

The Imam who attended suggested that his congregation might host us next Lent, and that we all might look for a way to do a common project to benefit the poor.

I pray that the Spirit may guide us all to express our faith in authentic ways every day.



CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR NEWLY PROFESSED BROTHERS AND SISTERS IN ST. FRANCIS.



PHOTO CREDIT: JOANNE CUOMO, SFO

SAN DAMIANO FRATERNITY 139 , NEWTON, NJ, is pleased to announce the Professions of their new brothers and sisters in St. Francis who were professed on October 14, 2009. **Pictured, they are from L-to-R:** BOB RIZZUTO, SFO; JOSEPHINE O’ROURKE, SFO; DIAN KOSTER, SFO; KATHLEEN RESTUCCIA, SFO; BETH PISANO, SFO, JOANNE CUOMO, SFO; ALEJANDRO NARVAEZ, SFO.

Fr. Cassian Miles, OFM, of Butler, NJ, celebrated an October 11 Profession Mass in Lancaster, PA., at which the co-founders of the non-profit organization, “Mychal’s Message” entered the Secular Franciscan Order of Our Lady Queen of the Angels Fraternity. Kelly Lynch, SFO, and her mother, Sharon Hickey, SFO, founded Mychal’s Message several months after their family friend, Fr. Mychal Judge, OFM, died on September 11, 2001.

ST. JOHN VIANNEY FRATERNITY

BY MARIE PALAZZONE, SFO

On Sunday, August 30, 2009, the St. John Vianney Fraternity celebrated their 50TH Anniversary with a Mass of Thanksgiving at St. Bonaventure's Church, Paterson, New Jersey. The principal celebrant was Fr. Richard Trezza, OFM, Spiritual Assistant of Our Lady of the Angels Region. Con-celebrants were Fr. Christian F. Camadella, OFM; Spiritual Assistant of St. John Vianney Fraternity, and Fr. Lawrence Burke, OFM; Spiritual Assistant of St. Francis Fraternity, Ringwood, NJ.

PHOTO CREDIT: DIANE MENDITTO, SFO

Following the Liturgy, a reception was held at the Paris Inn, Wayne, NJ.



Guests included Fr. Daniel P. Grigassy, OFM; Pastor of St. Bonaventure's Church, and extended family and friends of St. John Vianney Fraternity.

Special recognition was given to the past ministers and those who were professed 50 or more years ago. We gratefully and prayerfully acknowledge the late Fr. Felician A. Foy, OFM, who served as Spiritual Assistant for 42 years, and our present Spiritual Assistant, Fr. Christian F. Camadella, OFM, and those Seculars, living and deceased, who have guided and inspired us through the years. Above all, we thank God, the Holy Spirit and Our Lady for all the blessings bestowed on us.



Congratulations to **THE DWELLING PLACE FOUNDER AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, SISTER NANCY CHIARELLO, OSF**, who was awarded the Francis Medal on September 30, 2009. The Francis Medal is the highest citation of recognition offered by the Province. Sister Nancy's life and ministry epitomizes the values and ideals of St. Francis.

The Dwelling Place is a private temporary women's shelter located in Midtown Manhattan. The 15-bed residence provides a safe haven and support services to help women transition from life on the streets to healthy, independent living. Founded in 1977 by the Franciscan Sisters of Allegany, *The Dwelling Place* fosters an atmosphere of love and respect for their residents. Their ultimate goal is to find appropriate, affordable housing for each of their residents. For more information, go to: www.thedwellingplaceofny.org

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RECOGNITION

NAFRA



PHOTO CREDIT:

MEET MICHELLE KIM

Congratulations to our own OLTAR Region member, Michelle Yoon-Kyung Kim, SFO, PHD, on being elected to National Councilor, and also as Substitute International Councilor at the NaFRA elections held this past October, 2009.

Professed in 2005, Michelle currently serves as Formation Director of the Korean Martyrs NYC Fraternity 119.

She is actively involved with Franciscans International at the United Nations and is chair of the Eco-Spirituality Subcommittee, the NGO Committee on Spirituality, Values and Global Concerns, United Nations, NY.

The NGO Committee on Spirituality, Values and Global Concerns envisions a global culture of peace, solidarity, inclusiveness, shared responsibility, harmony, cooperation, goodwill and reverence for the sacredness of all life through active peaceful engagement. The aim of the Eco-Spirituality Subcommittee is to explore and promote an "eco-spirituality" that can address the current ecological challenge, and do so in a manner that can potentially overcome the fragmentary character of contemporary life. We define spirituality as a "way of perceiving" or a way of being in the world. Spirituality conceived this way does not separate, and can lead us to a vision or a world view that can be shared by all.

This past October 2009, the UN hosted a Week of Spirituality, Values and Global Concerns—Global Peace through Reconciliation. As Keynote speaker on *Reconciliation with our Earth: Wisdom from Spiritual Traditions*, Michelle spoke on discovering and celebrating through an interfaith dialogue, the ecological wisdom that can be shared by all, and transcending the cultural, religious boundaries.

"Spirituality demands reconciliation with the Earth - recognition of our fundamental relatedness and interconnectedness with the earth and earth community, engagement with human and nonhuman diversity, and acknowledgment of our personal responsibility for our actions and to educate others."

The REAL First Thanksgiving

BY
DEACON WILLIAM JOYCE, SFO



Generations of American schoolchildren have learned about the Pilgrims, who, in 1620, sailed in the *Mayflower* to America, seeking religious freedom.

The children also learn how the Pilgrims and their Native American neighbors celebrated their harvest in the autumn of the following year. Our history books tell us that this was America's first Thanksgiving. Unfortunately, the history books are wrong. The textbook version of the first Thanksgiving is eighty years out of date.

Here in St. Augustine, Florida, America's oldest city, we like to point out that the founder of our city, Pedro Menendez de Aviles, celebrated a thanksgiving feast on September 8, 1565, the very day he came ashore here. Usually, around the middle of November, our local newspaper carries a piece about the *real* first Thanksgiving, which, they say, was right here in St. Augustine.

Alas, St. Augustine's "first Thanksgiving" is twenty-four years too late to claim the title.

14 By 1535, Spanish *conquistadores* had overrun Mexico and Peru. Treasure ships crossed the Atlantic laden with plunder from the New World. A new generation of would-be conquistadores, golden visions dancing in their heads, arrived in the Americas. Among them was Francisco Vazquez de Coronado. The Viceroy named him governor of Nueva Galicia, the northernmost province of New Spain (Mexico). Fray Marcos de Niza, a Franciscan priest, had explored the area north of Nueva Galicia in 1539, and returned to Mexico with tales of houses built of gold, silver, and turquoise. Fray Marcos spoke of the Seven Cities of Cibola. Governor Coronado heard rumors of the Seven Cities, located somewhere to the north. Coronado organized an expedition of more than three hundred soldiers, six Franciscan missionaries, and a thousand Christian Indians, to explore and exploit the region of Cibola.

In 1540, he led his troupe north over Indian trails into modern Arizona and New Mexico, guided by Fray Marcos.

When the conquistadores reached present-day New Mexico, Fray Marcos identified the Zuni village of Hawikuh as Cibola. The appearance of the dusty pueblo convinced the Spaniards that Fray Marcos had "not told the truth in a single thing that he said..." Coronado dismissed Fray Marcos, who returned to Mexico.

After occupying Hawikuh, Coronado dispatched groups of explorers into the surrounding area. One party discovered the Grand Canyon. Another scouting party reached the Rio Grande at modern Albuquerque, then explored north along the river into pueblo country as far as Taos Pueblo; and from Taos east to Pecos Pueblo, on the edge of the Great Plains.

The Puebloans were settled people with an advanced culture, dwelling in century old adobes. They irrigated their fields, raising crops in near-desert conditions. Coronado made his winter quarters along the Rio Grande at Tiguex pueblo, north of present-day Albuquerque.

The Spaniards and their Indian allies looted the pueblos' food supplies, stole their clothing, and ravished some of their women. Finally, the Puebloans revolted against their unwelcome guests. In retaliation, Coronado's men destroyed several villages.

On April 23rd, 1541, dwindling provisions forced Coronado to break camp at his winter quarters. He traveled north along the Rio Grande, then east to Pecos pueblo.

An Indian the Spaniards named "The Turk" (because of his turban-like headgear) told the conquistadores of a land called Quivira, far to the east, out on the plains. Turk reported that Quivira was fabulously wealthy. According to him, the people there dined on golden plates with silver utensils. Turk asserted that the chief there took his siesta under a tree "hung with numerous golden bells."

In May of 1541, with Turk in the lead, the Coronado expedition crossed onto the high plains east of Pecos. After the lean winter, the Spaniards rejoiced to find bountiful game, including bison, in the area. On May 23 (or May 29), 1541, at Palo Duro Canyon, Texas, they had enough meat for a banquet. Fray Juan de Padilla, one of the friars accompanying the expedition, offered Mass; then all present celebrated the abundance of food at a feast, the first recorded Thanksgiving in the US.

If the Texan "First Thanksgiving" tradition had caught on, we might be eating leftover buffalo instead of turkey the day after Thanksgiving.

Coronado sent the main body of his expedition from Texas back to Tiguex, while he and thirty horsemen followed the Turk far out onto the plains.

They wandered across the panhandles of Texas and Oklahoma, and found themselves in central Kansas, along the Arkansas River. Suspicious that Turk was leading them in circles, the Spaniards interrogated the Indian.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 15



Turk admitted that the Pecos people had asked him to guide Coronado, as the explorer put it, "to a place where we and our horses would starve to death." Coronado's men garroted the Turk. The explorers spent twenty five days among the Quivira (Wichita) Indians somewhere between modern Lyons and Salina, Kansas. Then, using a nautical compass, the expedition recrossed the trackless plains and returned to the Rio Grande for the winter. The following Spring, Coronado returned to Mexico.

In the Spring of 1542, as Coronado headed south, Fray Juan de Padilla, accompanied by Lucas & Sebastian (*referred to as Native American Franciscan tertiaryes or postulants*) and two soldiers, returned to Kansas to evangelize the Quivira Indians. In November of 1542, while he was traveling toward a neighboring tribe (somewhere in present-day Kansas or Nebraska), a party of Quivira Indians shot Fray Juan with arrows, killing him. Father Juan de Padilla became the protomartyr of the United States.

Although the exact date of the first real Thanksgiving is not known for certain, we do know Spanish explorers celebrated a Eucharist and thanksgiving feast in the Texas panhandle in May of 1541, eighty years before the Pilgrims' more famous thanksgiving. And Franciscans were there.



BAMBINO BREAD

Looking for something special to make?
Try this bread recipe, shaped to resemble Jesus
in swaddling clothes.

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 cups lukewarm milk
- 2 packages active dry yeast
- ¼ cup sugar
- 1 beaten egg
- ¼ cup (1/2 stick) butter, melted
- 2 teaspoons salt
- 5¾ to 6½ cups of all-purpose flour

DIRECTIONS

1. In a medium-sized bowl, sprinkle yeast over milk and stir to dissolve. Let stand for 5 minutes to develop.
2. Add in sugar, egg, butter, and salt and mix well. One cup at a time, add 5 cups of flour and beat thoroughly after each addition until flour is incorporated. Add enough of remaining flour to make a soft dough that is slightly sticky.
3. Turn out onto a lightly floured surface and knead, adding small amounts of flour as necessary to keep dough manageable. Knead for 6 to 8 minutes, until dough is smooth and satiny.
4. Lightly oil the surface of the dough and place it back into rinsed bowl and cover with a clean, dry towel. Allow to rise in a warm place free from drafts until doubled, about 60 minutes.
5. Punch dough down and divide in half (one for each bread).
6. Roll each half of the dough into a rope about 24 inches long, and form the braid as illustrated.
7. Place on a lightly greased baking sheet; cover with a clean, dry towel and let rise for 30 minutes or until doubled.
8. Bake at 350° for 25 to 30 minutes.



TIME OF ELECTIONS

CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL OUR NEWLY ELECTED COUNCIL OFFICERS.

Let us pray that each may be led by the Holy Spirit in their leadership roles in the Secular Franciscan Order.

—APG, Editor

ST. JOHN'S FRATERNITY 151

NEW YORK CITY, NY

CHAPTER OF ELECTIONS—JUNE 28, 2009

THE NEW COUNCIL:

Minister: CONCEPTION C. MALLONGA, SFO

Vice Minister: BERNADETTE PACIFICO, SFO

Secretary: LILIA FRANCISCO, SFO

Treasurer: LORNA LOPEZ, SFO

Formation Director: AIDA ABUNDO, SFO

PRESIDERS OF ELECTION:

JULIA MCCANTS, SFO, AND VIRGINIA CHIN, SFO

FRIAR WITNESS:

FR. JOHN BAPTIST RIORDAN, OFM CAP.

MOST HOLY NAME FRATERNITY 112

LITTLE FALLS, NJ

CHAPTER OF ELECTIONS—AUGUST 3, 2009

THE NEW COUNCIL:

Minister: PAM BROWN, SFO

Vice Minister: SAM MONACO, JR., SFO

Secretary: AGNES ARENA, SFO

Treasurer: KATE ASSELIN, SFO

Formation Director: TOM BROWN, SFO

PRESIDER OF ELECTION: DIANE MENDITTO, SFO

FRIAR WITNESS: FR. THOMAS CRANGLE, OFM CAP.



L-to-R: Agnes Arena, SFO, Sam Monaco, Jr., SFO, Tom Brown, SFO, Pam Brown, SFO, Kate Asselin, SFO.

PHOTO CREDIT: DIANE MENDITTO, SFO

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L-to-R: Harry Henky, SFO, Mimma LoMuscio, SFO, Lucy Stamilla, SFO, Joseph Coralluzzo, SFO, Patricia Franz, SFO, Ed Atwood, SFO.

PHOTO CREDIT: DIANE MENDITTO, SFO

ST. FRANCIS FRATERNITY 137, HACKENSACK, NJ

CHAPTER OF ELECTIONS—OCTOBER 7, 2009

THE NEW COUNCIL:

Minister: HARRY HENKY, SFO

Vice Minister: ED ATWOOD, SFO

Secretary: PATRICIA FRANZ, SFO

Treasurer: LUCY STAMILLA, SFO

Formation Director: JOSEPH CORALLUZZO, SFO

Councilor: MIMMA LOMUSCIO, SFO

PRESIDER OF ELECTION: RON PIHOKKER, SFO

FRIAR WITNESS: FR. BRIAN TOMLINSON, OFM CAP.

SAN DAMIANO FRATERNITY 139

NEWTON, NJ

CHAPTER OF ELECTIONS—

NOVEMBER 11, 2009

THE NEW COUNCIL:

Minister: CYNTHIA BELIVEAU, SFO

Vice Minister: DOREEN BADER, SFO

Secretary: RUTH E. PISANO, SFO

Treasurer: KEVIN BENT, SFO

Formation Dir: DIANE VITALE, SFO

PRESIDERS OF ELECTION:

RON PIHOKKER, SFO AND

DIANE MENDITTO, SFO

FRIAR WITNESS:

FR. RICHARD TREZZA, OFM

SACRED HEART FRATERNITY 146, YONKERS, NJ

CHAPTER OF ELECTIONS—OCTOBER 26, 2009

THE NEW COUNCIL:

Minister: SHEILA TUOHY, SFO

Vice Minister: BENEDICTA FONACIER, SFO

Secretary: EILEEN POWERS, SFO

Treasurer: MARY TRAVERS, SFO

Formation Director: MAUREEN BRENNAN, SFO

PRESIDER OF ELECTION: RICHARD SPANA, SFO

FRIAR WITNESS: FR. CHARLES SAMMONS, OFM CAP.

DIVINE MERCY FRATERNITY 166, CLIFTON, NJ

CHAPTER OF ELECTIONS—NOVEMBER 8, 2009

THE NEW COUNCIL:

Minister: JOZEF KRAWONTKA, SFO

Vice Minister: VIOLETTA KOS, SFO

Secretary: HELENA BOWSA, SFO

Treasurer: LEOKADIA MARMUROWSKI, SFO

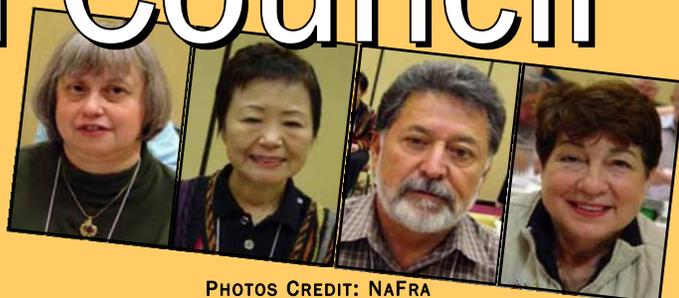
Formation Director: KRYSZYNA BEDNARZ, SFO

PRESIDER OF ELECTION: ANDREW KLUTKOWSKI, SFO

FRIAR WITNESS: FR. MICHAEL SOCHA, OFM CONV.

MEET
OUR

National Council



PHOTOS CREDIT: NAFRA

PHOTOS APPEAR IN SAME SEQUENCE AS ARTICLE, BEGINNING FROM LEFT-TO-RIGHT

MINISTER: Deacon Tom Bello of Arlington, VA, is the new national minister of the Secular Franciscan Order in the U.S. He was elected Saturday, October 24, 2009, at the Order's elective chapter held October 21-25, 2009, in Albuquerque, NM. Tom, who was professed in 1983, has served the order at all levels. He was elected vice-minister of his local fraternity, St. Thomas More Fraternity in Arlington, VA, in 1986 and became minister in 1988 and again in 1992. He was a member of the Provincial Executive Council, Holy Land Province from 1988 until the province became a region. He then was elected to the regional council of St. Margaret of Cortona region and has served in numerous positions, including regional minister. On the national fraternity, Tom has worked on the National Statutes and up to this election; he served as National Vice Minister. He has worked as an ESOL teacher for the past 21 years. He and his wife Judy have three children.

VICE MINISTER: Elaine Hedtke of Port Angeles, WA. She has been serving as minister of Troubadours of Peace Region. Elaine, who was professed in 1965, has served the Order at various levels. At her fraternity level she has served as Ecology Commissions Chair and formation director. She was regional commissioner for liturgy and regional vice-minister and minister. Most of her career has been spent as a law enforcement officer. She has four adult, married children.

SECRETARY: Jan Parker of O'Fallon, MO, and minister of St. Clare Region. She was professed in 1988. Jan has been professed for over 20 years and has served the order at several levels. She is a member of San Damiano Fraternity where she served as formation director, secretary and minister. At the regional level she has served both as minister and formation director. Jan is a full time pastoral associate at Immaculate Conception Catholic Church and works in liturgy and music.

TREASURER: Dennis Ross of Mentor, OH, who begins his third term as national treasurer. He was professed in 1986. He also served as treasurer of the SFO province of St. Augustine from 1990 to 1996. On the regional level, he has been treasurer of St. Maximilian Kolbe Region from 1995 to 2001. He also served as minister from 2001 to 2003. At his local fraternity, Br. Jacopa, he was treasurer, vice minister, minister and newsletter publisher. He is a retired teacher. He and his wife, Lynn, of 39 years have six children and seven grandchildren.

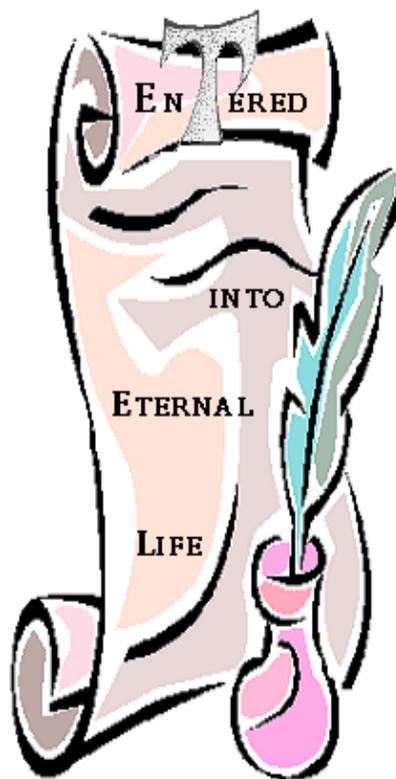
NATIONAL COUNCILOR: Mary Bittner of Ypsilanti, MI, and former minister of Divine Mercy Region. She had served as regional minister for six years. At her local fraternity of St. Joseph, she has been formation team member, secretary, minister, and councilor. At the regional level, she has also been vice minister and on the regional formation team. She is a research assistant professor at University of Michigan Medical School in Ann Arbor, MI.

NATIONAL COUNCILOR: Michelle Kim, Ph.D., of Scarsdale, NY. She also was elected **SUBSTITUTE INTERNATIONAL COUNCILOR**. She serves as formation director of the NY Korean Martyrs Fraternity. She was professed in 2005. Michelle is an adjunct professor at the State University of New York, Westchester Community College. She is involved with Franciscans International at the United Nations and is chair of the Eco-Spirituality Subcommittee, the NGO Committee on Spirituality, Values and Global Concerns, United Nations, NY. She is married to Stephen Kim and has one daughter, Clara.

NATIONAL COUNCILOR: Arturo Villareal from El Paso, TX. He has served as vice minister of Empress of the Americas region and was professed in 1981. He is member of St. Patrick's Fraternity in El Paso. His wife, Sofia, is a Secular Franciscan. They have two daughters and a son – Diana Lopez, Natalie and Ben.

INTERNATIONAL COUNCILOR: Anne Mulqueen of Baltimore, MD. This is her second term. She has served as spiritual assistant to Padre Pio Fraternity in Maryland, is a member of the Joint Committee on Franciscan Unity, a secretary of the Duns Scotus Formation Trust Fund, a contributor to the forthcoming Formation Manual and a board member for the Institute for Contemporary Franciscan Life based at St. Francis University in Loretto, PA. She is married to Bill Mulqueen and has two daughters, Peggy and Nan, and two grandchildren.

LET US PRAY FOR ALL OUR DEPARTED SISTERS AND BROTHERS
IN CHRIST AND ST. FRANCIS. MAY ALL OF OUR BROTHERS AND
SISTERS WHO SLEEP IN THE LORD SHARE ETERNAL JOY AND PEACE.



MAY
THE
SOULS
OF THE
FAITHFUL
DEPARTED,
THROUGH
THE MERCY
OF GOD,
REST
IN
PEACE.
AMEN.

ST. FRANCIS FRATERNITY 137, HACKENSACK, NJ

† **AMELIA BARTELUCE, SFO**

Passed away during the week of August 21, 2009.
Professed in 1958, she was an active member of the
fraternity for many years, until recently when she was
permanently excused.

**ST. ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY FRATERNITY 154
PERTH AMBOY, NJ**

† **NEURICE HARRIS, SFO**

Passed away October 7, 2009
Professed April 29, 1979

Born in Trinidad & Tobago, Neurice was 94 years old, and
would have been 95 on November 1st. She died on the
Feast day of Our Lady of the Rosary, to which she had a
great devotion.

† **ANNA MALINOWSKI, SFO**

Passed away December 3, 2009
Professed April 16, 1989

Anna was a very dedicated member, attending all meetings
and activities, until recent years when she was no longer
physically able.

† **FRED MCCARTHY, SFO**
1918–2009

Universally-known creator of the cartoon character based on one of
the original followers of St. Francis, Br. Juniper, died October 26, 2009. He
was solemnly remembered at a Mass of Christian burial on Thursday,
October 29, at Emmanuel Catholic Church in Delray Beach, Florida.

Present at the Mass, was his faithful wife, Lilly McCarthy, SFO, many
friends and parishioners, all devotees of Fred and his cartoon personality,
Br. Juniper. The Mass was celebrated by a local diocesan priest and
concelebrated by seven other priests.

Brother Juniper first saw the light of day in the summer of 1942 in the
main reading room of Friedsam Memorial Library at St. Bonaventure. It was
here that McCarthy was prompted to learn about the historical Brother
Juniper and discovered how much his generic cartoon character
resembled him.

The beloved “*Brother Juniper*” comic strip is the only
religious themed comic EVER to be syndicated internationally in
the 110-year history of the “funnies.”

It was first published in 1958 and ran until 1989.
After 31 consecutive years, “*Brother Juniper*” was retired by
McCarthy. It eventually ran in over 100 papers in the United
States, and overseas in Argentina, Australia, Brazil and Italy with
over 15,000,000 potential readers. *Brother Juniper* was also
collected in eight monographs.



“Don’t worry about me Fred. I’ll be okay...with you
watchin’ over me from Heaven.”



GIFT OF THE HEART

BY VALERIE MORENO, SFO

*Based on the Christmas Crib
of Greccio, Italy 1223*

“Aaaooohh!” It was a sound of surprise and wonder. An ox and donkey were quiet in a cave corner, candlelight and the bright moon illuminated a manger filled with straw below an altar of rock.

A slight figure in deacon’s robe stood nearby, his vibrant dark eyes aflame with joy that seemed to glow about him.

Rudolfo was startled as he studied the beaming smile and signs of weariness on the man’s face. Ordinary, Rudolfo mused, yet there was something... something.

“Peace and all Good, dear friends!”

The man’s voice seemed like music filling the night.

“Come to the manger of the King of Heaven and Earth, Jesus the Lord!”

Rudolfo heard little of the little poor man’s speaking, staring into the compassionate eyes ablaze in the candlelight. He met the warm, dark gaze, feeling a sudden urge to cry.

Images flashed in his mind, a blood-splashed landscape strewn with crushed and broken bodies.

Something pulled him from the horror in his mind, the cry of a child.

Opening his eyes, he took in the awe and wonder visible on every face.

The flow of time seemed suspended as the kneeling figure lifted a small sleeping infant in his arms, his sweet and melodious voice filling the mountainside.

Many were weeping as still others began to sing praise to God.

Rudolfo stared transfixed as the baby opened his eyes, his tiny hand on the Poverello’s sparse beard.

Fabritsa was kneeling beside him as he sank to his knees, sobs filling his heart and spilling out as tears streaming in hot relief down his face and beard.

Had he felt something in his spirit loosen and shift, a wall of pain crumbling?

He didn’t know, but now his voice lifted with those around him, his eyes meeting those of the Poverello who stood, still holding the baby.

“How can he know?” Rudolfo murmured as the gentle eyes rested on him. Did it matter? Rudolfo thought not.

All he knew was something had awakened in his soul and tomorrow was once more a promise of hope.

Fabritsa’s brow creased as her soft blue eyes studied her husband worriedly.

“Is there something I can do, Rudolfo? Please talk to me about what’s troubling you. I love you. Please.”

Rudolfo’s stormy dark gaze softened a little.

“It has nothing to do with you, Britsa.

It’s something in me. Since the battles I am lost. I see and hear them in my mind again and again and it doesn’t stop. I must be weak. It’s inconceivable to see anything but hate, blood and suffering around me.”

“There is only calm and love around you now,” she said, tears filling her words.

“You are home. It’s Christmas, dearest. No one fights here.”

Rudolfo looked away, saying nothing. How could she understand when he hardly did himself.

After a heavy silence, Fabritsa said slowly,

“Il Poverello is speaking at Mass, in the mountain cave at Midnight.” She brushed back long, gleaming curls.

“The whole town is going and...”

He looked up as her voice trailed off, hurt and anguish darkening her tear-filled gaze.

“You want me to go with you? I am curious, I admit, to see this unusual man.”

A smile lit Fabritsa’s face as she brushed tears from her pale cheeks.

Voices sounded in the street with the ringing of bells and shouts of excitement. Rudolfo found himself swirling in a growing crowd of neighbors and strangers all carrying candles and colorful baskets.

“God’s peace, Rudolfo!” There were hugs and smiles everywhere he turned, old and young faces alight with joy. Moon shadows danced in the flickering candle glow as the throng began to sing, making their way up the mountainside.

Fabritsa was beside him, her sweet high voice ringing with the others. As they neared a cave brightly lit, a cry spread through the crowd.



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—APG, Editor

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2008-2011

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SUBMISSIONS:

E-MAIL: acpg@aol.com

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