



Communio

That All May Be One

Newsletter of the
Brothers and Sisters of St. Francis Region
Secular Franciscan Order
Winter 2008

Franciscan Action Network

Transforming the world
in the spirit of St. Francis and St. Clare

By Sr. Sheila Kinsey, OSF

Franciscan men and women from across the United States gathered in Washington, D.C., Dec. 7–8, for the inaugural meeting of the newly launched Franciscan Action Commission. Members serve in a variety of entities that comprise the Franciscan Action Network (FAN).

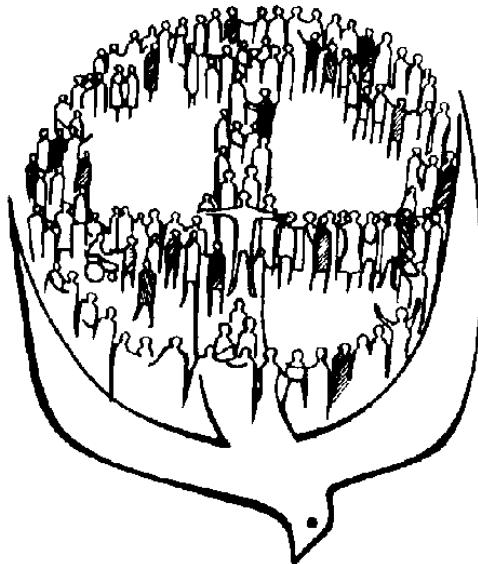
It's mission — to borrow from the starship Enterprise on "Star Trek" — is to boldly go where no man/woman religious has gone before. While FAN's membership need not traverse the universe to bring about justice, they, as a network of friars, sisters, secular, and ecumenical Franciscans, along with the men and women with whom they minister, envision a grassroots advocacy that stretches around the world.

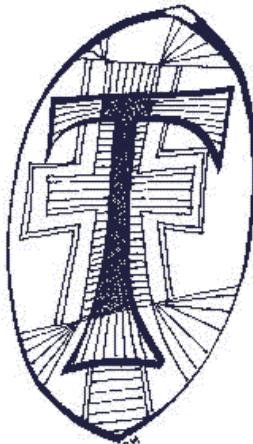
At this meeting — amply representing our Secular Franciscan family — were Ken Beattie, regional minister, LaVerna Region; Tom Bello, NAFRA vice minister; Jan Parker, regional minister, St. Clare Region; Stephanie Sormane, regional minister, Mother Cabrini Region; and Dan Mulholland, FAN representative for NAFRA, past co-chair of the NAFRA Peace and Justice Commission, and member of the NAFRA Computer Committee.

"At the table with us were First Order Friars and Third Order Regular Sisters," Bello said. "Before that meeting, I asked for your prayers. I continue to ask for your prayers. I also welcome your questions and concerns."

The most recent commission meeting, held at Washington Theological Union included the FAN Steering Committee. Some 19 members arrived ready to embark on an action-oriented plan to achieve authentic social transformation by viewing proposed strategies, development initiatives, and economic endeavors through the lens of Franciscan values. The commission's role was defined earlier within the framework of a commitment statement adopted by the FAN

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Minister's Message

May the peace and joy of Christmas be with you now and through the year.

Each new year prompts me to make resolutions. It is a time to mentally begin again, in a very small way — like celebrating the sacrament of reconciliation. With absolution God forgives our sins and offenses. He gives us a new start, a way to begin again.

Yes, we do fall into the same bad habits, but with God's grace, we can keep trying. I am regularly reminded of the words St. Francis spoke to his brothers to begin, for up to now we have done very little.

As we begin another new year, let us pray that we can follow God's will in what we are called to do for him and to make some changes if needed.

The newly elected regional executive council spent a weekend together in October at Living Waters Catholic Reflection Center in Maggie Valley, N.C., to pray and reflect on servant leadership and how we can truly follow God's will.

Cricket and Jerry Aull provided the retreat experience. We shared our ideas about what business the council should be about, and what we think God would like *us* to be about. We got to know each other better and shared our stories. We connected with each other and with God.

At the end, Cricket encouraged us to have faith and to do God's will. In doing God's will, we can be sure of his help.

Special thanks to Fr. James Cahill for celebrating Liturgy on Saturday morning and inspiring us with his message to serve.

Spend time reflecting on what you can do to live your Franciscan life as fully as you can.

Peace and Joyous New Year to love and serve
Judy

Editor's Journal

Recently, I was talking with my new pastor, Fr. John T. Denny, OSA, and we got onto the subject of vocations. He said that a friar's solemn vows or the promises that a Secular makes help us to embrace our baptism.

Which goes right along with something Fr. Linus said during my fraternity's day of recollection last April: "Franciscan identity is over the mantle of our Christian identity, which is over the mantle of our individual identity."

Fr. Denny added that, for vowed religious, and he thinks this would apply to Seculars as well, "If we invest in our religious life, the structure of that life will save us from ourselves, that even if we face crises that structure will keep us from getting into trouble."

How true that is.

Our structure, of course, is our Rule. Our investment is whatever we do to deepen our Franciscan way of life, to strengthen our four pillars — fraternity, spirituality, formation, and apostolate.

Just as with financial investments or investments in education, the more we put into becoming more and more SFO, the more we will get back as a return on our investment.

Pace e bene
Joanita



FAN, from page 1

gathering in Baltimore, Md., last March. Commission members affirmed FAN's future development as an organization and the manner in which members and affiliated organizations implement methodologies.

As members of FAN's core, the Action Commission also agreed to accept responsibility for increasing FAN's visibility within the Franciscan family and beyond. FAN intends to focus on U.S. policies and how they impact the world. FAN's

advocacy efforts shall be strategic, acquiring the critical upfront information for effective implementation. FAN's representatives are intent on formulating focused action initiatives based on perspectives and input gathered directly from those associated with membership communities.

The gathering was marked by an enthusiastic group of attendees. Each of the proceedings at this historic event was conducted within the context of prayer. Some of the members were called upon to don several organizational "hats" as regional representatives and members of leadership teams or committees.

At the outset, the agenda ensured that members achieved a measure of progress as FAN prepared for its debut in unified advocacy.

After the introductory remarks, members shared some biographical information, which helped to nourish the formation of relational connections. Participants went on to share their hopes and expectations for FAN's future expansion into the world.

The bulk of the meeting was spent identifying the aspects of FAN slated for presentation for acceptance to the FAN gathering planned for March 7. The next

FAN gathering will include time to discuss progress and stumbling blocks; the event will also be tied to the annual Ecumenical Advocacy Days, scheduled for March 7-10 in Washington, D.C.

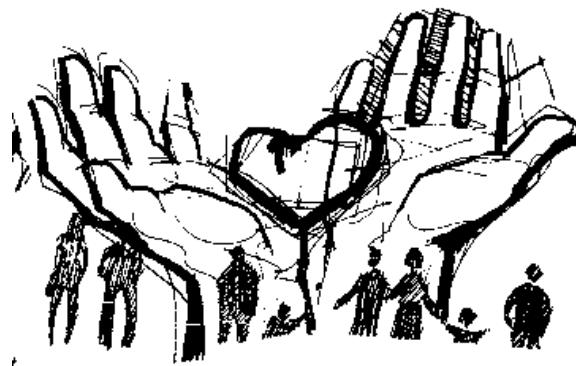
In organizing FAN, the United States was divided into six geographic regions. Each region within the Franciscan province in the United States was represented on FAN. Although the Poor Clares were not present at this session, they were with the group in prayer.

Contacted after the meeting, Sr. Claire Andre, OSC, from the Poor Clares, Chesterfield, N.J., said that the sisters definitely kept the Washington, D.C., meeting in their prayers over the weekend. She was delighted that the Poor Clares were included in spirit at the meetings and she was pleased to hear of the results. She said that the Poor Clares have an ongoing ministry to offer assistance to whoever shows up on their doorstep. Their prayers also touch the concerns of the world.

The commission made clear that its objective would be to help the larger FAN organization with the formulation of focus issues for which to pursue advocacy and, ultimately, to achieve positive transformation. The mission, values and procedural strategies were outlined.

While moving to activate FAN for the purpose of social transformation, commissioners came away with a sense of how we wanted to operate as an organization that functions as a network. Relational connections were identified as being very important if the organization is to succeed. Commissioners accepted the challenge to make every effort to enhance communication among groups within the total network. They agreed to use the

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FAN Web site (www.franciscanaction.org) and its list-serve. Members committed themselves to participating in regular conference calls with affiliates and to report their findings to the commission.

It was decided that an Action Commission would engage in a formation process to assist FAN in its effort to keep on task and to provide a resource for the spiritual, technical, and other practical aspects.

Of course, at the heart of the matter lies FAN's intention to apply Franciscan values and echoes the spirit of Sts. Francis and Clare in all elements of this local, national, and international movement. Although these values are more fully developed, the following list addresses the areas of the Franciscan heritage that must be reflected in any endeavor:

1. Advocacy will not dehumanize or demonize those with whom we disagree.
2. Poor and marginalized fare better after the action for change.
3. Framework insists on a consistent ethic of life.
4. Nonpartisan focus involves bipartisan actors.
5. Policies involve reconciliation of injustices in larger social sphere.
6. Work in a collaborative and consultative manner.
7. Balanced desire to be prophetic and to make noticeable improvements in people's lives.
8. Love in action is our method and process for actualizing how we follow in the footsteps of Jesus.

Participants in the Franciscan Action Commission's inaugural meeting were energized and excited about continuing to develop the "Franciscan voice." Enriched by and filled with the Spirit, they committed themselves to preparing for the first formal gathering of the total FAN membership, set for March 7.

Stay tuned for more details. **T**

**In Memorium**

Mary Ophelia Ethier, SFO, of St. Francis of the Hills Fraternity, Hendersonville, N.C., died Dec. 22 at the elder-care facility where she had lived for some time.

She was born Aug. 24, 1918.

Mary made her perpetual profession as a Secular Franciscan on Aug. 7, 1960, in Boston, Mass. She served as the first minister of St. Francis of the Hills Fraternity after it was canonically established in Maggie Valley, N. C., in 1987.

At the Annual Regional Gathering last August, Mary was among those honored in the service for all those long-professed members of the region. Although her health didn't permit her to attend the ARG, she loved the memorial card that had been prepared for her.

Members of her fraternity, joined by members of St. Clare Fraternity, Asheville, N.C., held a Franciscan Wake Service for Mary just prior to her requiem Mass at St. Margaret Mary Catholic Church in Swannanoa, N.C., near Asheville.

Interment is in Chestnut Hill Cemetery, Dandridge, Tenn. **T**

[T]he Rule reminds us of our connection with Secular Franciscans who have died. They remain part of our lives through the communion of saints. We are blessed because of their lives among us. We continue to be blessed as they offer praise to God and celebrate their new life with our loving God. We remember them in prayer.

Lester Bach, OFM Cap.
Pick More Daisies

Let there be peace on Earth – and let it begin with me

By Faye Martin, SFO
BSSF Region formation director



Francis wrote in his testament of 1226, “The Lord revealed to me that I should say this greeting: ‘May the Lord give you peace’.”

In his small, beautifully written book, *The Greeting of Peace Revealed to St. Francis*, Gianmaria Polidoro, OFM, presents a fuller understanding of peace: “It is a term filled with salvation history and connected to the Jewish *shalom*; a term that we can [use to] express health, sanity, safety, prosperity, salvation, benevolence, joy, serenity, security, beatitude, solidarity, collaboration, and reconciliation.”

St. Francis reminds us that we cannot announce peace with our mouths unless it abides within our hearts. We are not following the poor way of Christ if we seek only our own salvation and spiritual perfection. As Lawrence Cunningham writes in *Francis of Assisi: Performing the Gospel Life*, like St. Francis each of us should see our “life as a gift to others.”

To walk in the footsteps of the “Prince of Peace,” as exemplified by St. Francis, our unceasing peacemaking attitude and behavior must seek to become one.

“The peacemaker is one who establishes a climate of dialogue and interaction to achieve the true and proper balance of rights and responsibilities, one who identifies the causes and finds the ground for mutual respect and cooperation, understanding and concerted effort” (Benet Fonck, OFM, *Called to Follow Christ*).

When I become discouraged and disappointed with my peacemaking efforts and am tempted to think that I am called to be successful, I reflect upon the following:

The Lord revealed to St. Francis “that the highest activity of persons and their maturity does not rest in the pursuit of an idea, however lofty and holy it may be, but in the humble and joyous acceptance of whatever it is—of all that it is. The one who accepts this reality and rejoices in it from the heart has found peace. God alone is God” (Eloi Leclerc, OFM, *Wisdom of the Poverello*).

May we be channels of his peace. T

Fr. Linus assigned to Syracuse U.

Many have asked about Fr. Linus’ new assignment and if he will still be our regional spiritual assistant (RSA).

After much-needed time spent in quiet and prayer, Fr. Linus is ministering as Catholic chaplain at Syracuse University in Syracuse, N.Y. Judy is most happy to report that he is very well and hopes to continue as RSA in whatever way possible.

Keep him in your prayers.
His mailing address is:

Fr. Linus DeSantis, OFM Conv.
St. Francis Friary
812 North Salina St.
Syracuse, N.Y. 13208

New council

Congratulations to the new council of Franciscan Martyrs of Siroki Brijeg Fraternity, elected Dec. 2:

Minister — Jerry Rousseau, SFO
Vice Minister — Nancy Haizlip, SFO
Formation Director — Madeline Rousseau, SFO
Secretary — Marie Diehl, SFO
Treasurer — Caroline Richbourg, SFO
Councilor — John Paul McGuire, SFO

Spiritual assistant course set to begin in March

By Judy Haupt, SFO
BSSF Region minister

“**T**he Holy See has entrusted the pastoral care and spiritual assistance of the Secular Franciscan Order (SFO), because it belongs to the same spiritual family, to the Franciscan First Order and Third Order Regular (TOR). These are the ‘Institutes’ who are responsible for the *altius moderamen*, referred to by canon 303 of the Code of Canon Law” (General Constitutions, Art 1.4).

Each fraternity, emerging fraternity, and newly forming group should have a spiritual assistant to communicate Franciscan spirituality. Sadly, 15 of our 31 do not have spiritual assistants. This is a common concern across our country.

To meet this need the Conference of National Spiritual Assistants prepared *Franciscan Family Connections*, a guide for training Secular Franciscans for this special ministry. “Franciscan Family Connections (FFC)” is also the name of the program to prepare people to serve as spiritual assistants to the SFO.

People who are eligible to take the course are:

- Secular Franciscans, professed for at least five years, who are recommended by their fraternity councils;
- Other individuals who may be appointed as SAs — clergy, religious, or laity;
- Those who already serve as SAs and wish to upgrade their knowledge and skills.

FFC was designed as a correspondence course but has been successful with regular gatherings.

Our region plans to begin the course March 15, 2008, to complete by August 2009, with scheduled meeting times.

Gatherings will be held in various locations, generally on Saturdays and will require independent study. We have 13 potential applicants: one from Alabama, seven from Georgia, three from North Carolina, and two from South Carolina.

If you feel called to begin to serve in this special ministry, please ask your minister to submit your name after approval for your council’s approval. Those currently serving are also invited to attend. Send names and information to both Judy Haupt, SFO, regional minister, and Joanita Nellenbach, SFO, coordinator, by Feb. 12:

Judy Haupt, SFO
12 Angler’s Pond Court
Hilton Head Island, S.C. 29926
jahaupt@yahoo.com

Joanita M. Nellenbach, SFO
124 Pleasant Hill Road
Clyde, N.C. 28721-9699
jnell@dnet.net



Chinese SFOs struggle in secret

Dear National Family,

The following letter from our SFO brother Patrick White in China speaks for itself. I'd like to add my own thanks for your contributions of Franciscan religious goods, money, and prayers. Let us pray for all our Franciscan family who face persecution for their Catholic faith.

Peace and love,
Tom Bello, SFO
NAFRA vice minister

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

All Catholic religious orders are banned in China, including the SFO.

The local fraternities legally function only as parish organizations for the faithful. They are forbidden to contact each other and are not allowed to form regions or a national fraternity.

Belonging to the SFO guarantees that you and your family will be discriminated against in everything from promotion at the workplace, to getting your kids into college, to maybe procuring a phone line into your house.

In spite of these obstacles, many Chinese have elected to follow Christ as Secular Franciscans. Almost 99 percent of SFOs live in the poorest parts of China, where monthly incomes are less than \$200 a month.

However, they are very active and full of the Holy Spirit. They visit the sick, care for the homeless, and pray for those in need. To be a Chinese SFO means that you have committed your life to Christ and a substantial part of your time to serving both Church and society. It is no easy job.

The Chinese SFO has been cut off from the rest of the world since the early 1950s. Their prayer books and formation materials are photocopies of prewar versions. They have no access to items such as Franciscan holy cards, San Damiano crucifixes, and Franciscan Crown rosaries.

When I began visiting local fraternities, I took with me some Franciscan holy cards and Franciscan Crowns that had been

donated by my own fraternity in Virginia. I soon discovered that the demand far outweighed my scant supplies.

Some cried at seeing, for the first time, items that had actually been made in Assisi. Since then, I have always tried to bring at least a small amount of this "Franciscan gold" on each visit.

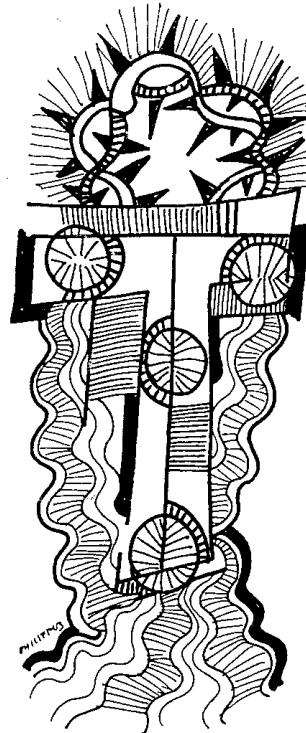
It gives me the greatest pleasure on behalf of the 10,000 Chinese members of the Secular Franciscan Order to thank you for the many Franciscan religious articles you donated these last few months. The entire Chinese SFO is so very grateful for this precious gold. (Judy Haupt, BSSF Region minister, reports that our region sent a small package of rosaries, holy cards and some religious items.)

If I may be so bold, can I ask (maybe beg is a better Franciscan term) for some small cash contributions, too? We desperately need to purchase some updated formation materials in Chinese.

In addition, the friars operating secretly in China have given us the use of one of their places to use as a "safe house" where we can allow local fraternity leaders to privately meet each other and where they can receive formation out of harm's way. But we must pay the upkeep and utilities. It is not expensive, but when you are almost broke, it is still much.

Any amount, no matter how small, will be greatly appreciated and put to good use. We hope that you get the chance to come

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visit China someday, so you can see for yourself the great work being done with your help by the SFO.

God bless you all!
Patrick White, SFO, chair
SFO China Commission

Contributions can be made to:
The Saint John of Montecorvino Society
1001 Rockville Pike, Unit #819
Rockville, MD 20852

All donations are tax deductible to the full amount permissible by law.
Please check our website
(www.saintjohnofmontecorvino.org/please_support_us.htm). **T**

REC-CG meeting overview

By Joanne Babin, SFO
BSSF Region secretary

The BSSF Region Executive Council met Oct. 27 and covered the following:

- NAFRA meeting — Judy attended the NAFRA meeting held in Bellville, Ill., Oct. 2–8. She reported the following:
 - NAFRA has acquired a liability insurance policy that will cover all SFO activities and events. Copy of document is available if needed.
 - The number of professed members is decreasing in many regions, but our region has the largest increase in vocations.
 - NAFRA voted to join with Franciscan brothers and sisters, Religious and Secular across the United States, to discern the possibility of a unified Franciscan voice for justice. The Franciscan Action Network Steering Committee and Commission will be preparing a plan in the next few months.
 - The annual NAFRA budget for 2008 was approved, copy in TAU-USA.
 - Business included a vote to restructure and integrate the four apostolic commissions — ecology, work, family, and peace and justice — into “Justice and Peace and Integrity of Creation,” commonly known as “JPIC.” This name comes from the First Order of Franciscans and is used by other religious groups as well. So we are not reinventing the wheel; we are just joining in a structure or plan that has already been successful. An ad hoc committee will work on the plan and process.
- Jennye Taylor Johnson and Cathy Arcand were appointed as commission chairs of Peace and Justice and Work, respectively, for one more year until the structure for JPIC is in place. (Local fraternities will continue current structure until the new process is presented.)
- The Annual report format has been revised:
 - **new format will be sent to ministers and leaders by year end;**
 - **local fraternity reports will be due to region by April 1, 2008.**
- NAFRA will hold its annual meeting in Nashville, Tenn., Oct. 14–19. Our region will be the host (details regarding plans and ways to be involved will follow)
- Formation plans — Faye shared excellent comments on formation for all of us to focus our attention on the importance of good formation. Faye cited information found in SFO documents that clarified that the council guides and animates the formation program. Faye plans to include all the local formation directors on the regional formation team.

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REC-CG, from page 8

She will disseminate information through monthly letters by e-mail.

- Judy and Faye will attend a national formation workshop in San Pedro Retreat Center in Orlando, Fla., in January. They will consider the possibility of another round of regional formation workshops in the different areas.
- Spiritual assistant course — Based on advice from Fr. Stephen Gross, OFM Conv., national spiritual assistant, a plan will be implemented to train Secular Franciscans as spiritual assistants. The course will follow the book *Franciscan Family Connections*. Joamita agreed to contact the people who applied for the course and coordinate the paperwork.
- Commissions reports:
 - Youth and Young Adults — Betty said that she has decided not to have our region's youth participate in the Australia trip because the cost is prohibitive. Rather, she would like to go again to St. Francis Inn, the soup kitchen in Philadelphia, because that trip was so successful this past summer. Any of the Seculars (meaning adults) are invited and welcome to accompany Betty and the youth on these trips. Betty would also like to plan some Franciscan youth retreats.
- Jennye will continue with her e-mails to update us on the issues of peace and justice. She will be on this commission for another year, until JPIC is in place, as will Cathy Arcand on the work commission. Jennye said that anyone interested in continuing with ecology for another year should get in touch with her.
- Calendar — Visitations and Elections, REC gatherings — Judy handed out a list of fraternities and when they needed a visitation or had upcoming elections (see schedule, page 13). She asked the area councilors to make a schedule of when they can go to these various fraternities.
- Archives — Judy has received recommendations from NAFRA regarding what records should be kept in archives and for how long. Sara Nell Boggs and Pat Cowan agreed to work on this project.
- Next regional executive council meetings will be on March 1–2 and June 28–29.
- Mark the dates for our annual regional gathering in Ridgecrest, N.C., Aug. 8–10. **T**

Fraternities learn lessons of togetherness

By Sheila Geist, SFO

Immaculate Conception Fraternity

“Loving in Community: Two by Two”: the theme for Immaculate Conception Fraternity’s retreat Sep. 14–16 at the Monastery of Our Lady of the Holy Spirit in Conyers, Ga.

We chose this theme because we wanted to foster love not just within our fraternity but with other fraternities as well.

Fr. Noel Danielwicz, O.F.M. Conv., director of the Shrine of St Anthony in Ellicott City, Md., guided the retreat. Eight fraternities in our region participated. Judy Haupt, our regional minister, also honored us with her presence.

Holy Mass, adoration, vespers, rosaries, and silence. We had all those during the retreat. What can compare with that?

Early morning at the monastery: I walked down a lane with huge magnolia trees on either side. So peaceful and beautiful. I didn’t walk alone, however, as I had one of my Franciscan sisters beside me. Fr. Noel encouraged us to do things with our brothers and sisters.

Sharing meals and getting to know so many from different fraternities was wonderful. We

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are all so different but also very much alike in our walk with Our Lord and with Francis. I truly felt what it was to be true brothers and sisters —with my own fraternity and with others as well.

We had a really fun social where we all sat in circles and just shared fellowship with one another. I loved hearing what everyone had to say. There was so much laughter, and the monks are so fun.

I am wowed by my brothers and sisters. Each one has something very special to give each of us. We must be open to one another. We must take the time to be with one another.

How much time does Jesus give you? How much time do you think Jesus wants us to give one another?

Fr. Noel did a wonderful job with all of his talks. Many brothers and sisters came away with a new awareness of what it means to be a part of this Franciscan community.

Some of the things I learned about growing closer in community:

- ❖ Fix your eyes on Jesus; then the rest will fall into place.
- ❖ Where am I:
 - Purgative — Still into “stuff” (don’t stay here).
 - Illuminative — Look into the mirror. Do you see Christ in you? You can’t see Christ in others until you see Christ in yourself.
 - How can we build up our community? What is our mission? What are we doing about it?
 - Unitive — In communion with God and the community.
 - If you try, God will pull you the rest of the way!
 - Companion — to break bread with. How often do I break bread with my brothers and sister in community? Do we go to Mass together? Do we share a meal outside of Mass?
 - Not I, not I, not I — but Jesus. Always Jesus first in my life! He is before all else that is. Jesus!
- ❖ Fraternities:
 - love each other as brothers and sisters;
 - keep on praying;
 - make hospitality your special care;
 - build a more fraternal and evangelical world;
 - have a profound respect for one another;
 - fraternity as context for faithful Gospel Living.
- ❖ Choose that which is life-giving. Eucharist is center! Practice lectio divina. Pray the rosary. Get into the mantra of prayer.
- ❖ See your table as an altar and your home as your church.
- ❖ Take your brokenness, your pain, your sinfulness: brokenness + giftedness = holiness.
- ❖ Accent the positive and let the negative go.

Our next retreat is scheduled for Aug. 29–31 at the monastery in Conyers. All are welcome to attend. Let’s all grow together as true brothers and sisters in Christ and Francis! **T**

You come to me

By Sarah Beth Quinn, SFO
St. Michael the Archangel Fraternity

Seated at the right hand of Our Father,
You stand, shining in wondrous glory.
You roll back the sleeves of your royal
robe
And you descend the steps of the
throne room.

Who would ever want to leave? But
you do — for love of me.

On the steps, you encounter your
mother, my Queen.

Suddenly, the powers and splendor of
heaven are gone.

King of kings, you become the Holy Babe of Bethlehem
Held in your beautiful Mother's embrace.
Peacefully, you sleep.

And, who would ever want to leave? but you do —
for love of me.

Though you receive homage with the gifts of the Magi,
You soon must flee
Or be destroyed before your hour.
In Egypt you live as a refugee —
for love of me.

But you do not stay.

Nor do you remain the young child of Nazareth,
Learning the language of men and of hearts
at your mother's knee.
You grow patient and skillful as a young boy
at the side of saintly Joseph,
Learning to cut once but measure twice
The wood entrusted to your hands.

You are astoundingly bright, awesome in your answers to the temple teachers.
You are in your Father's house, about your Father's business.

But you do not stay. For me you love.



YOU, from page 11

I see you, now, as you leave the Jordan's
waters,
Withstand the devil's testing, gather
disciples,
Miraculously feed the five thousand,
Receive the adoring thanks of the cleansed
leper,
And the death threats of a disquieted
council.
You tell your closest friends what will
happen if you leave the safety of Galilee.

But you cannot stay, for me you love.

Your passion awaits, your crucifixion,
Your death, your resurrection.
You withstand it all and defeat all comers.
You ascend, the victorious champion of life,
To you Father's throne.

But you cannot stay away — for me you
love.

You know how desperately I need you —
Your strength, your powerful healing —
But most of all, your love.

Now, up ahead, I hear the words spoken,
“The body of Christ.”
I move prayerfully forward,
unworthy to receive you,
and with you, all of heaven.

But, you come to me — the one you love.

In ecstasy, “O Lamb of God”
I come, I come — to you.

Prayer is not a one-sided relationship. It
is not simply *my* longing for God but it
is God's longing for me as well. Prayer
is an awakening to the fact that the
fulfillment of my desire lies in God.
God delights in his creation and loves
each of us with a personal love.

Ilia Delio, OSF
Franciscan Prayer

Round about**Phoebe goes to Washington**

Phoebe, an assistance dog-in-training, took the Amtrak train to Washington, D.C., in November, accompanied by Dr. Jim and Sue Taylor, SFO, members of the Fraternity of Brother Francis in Hickory, N.C.

While in Washington, Phoebe and the Taylors were guests at the Franciscan Mission Service facility near Catholic University of America.

The Taylors are Phoebe's trainers and “puppy parents” and are board members for New Life Mobility Assistance Dogs in Wilkesboro, N.C.

Phoebe and the Taylors toured the White House, visiting Sen. Elizabeth Dole, Rep. Walter B. Jones, and associates of others senators and representatives.

They also visited the Department of Veterans Affairs, Walter Reed Hospital, and other offices and individuals to discuss how trained assistance dogs can help persons with disabilities.

Phoebe saw the changing of the guard at Arlington National Cemetery and toured the Smithsonian Institution, the Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, the Lincoln and Jefferson memorials, the Washington Monument, and the Franciscan monastery.

According to Jim Taylor, Phoebe's personal favorite was the Franklin D. Roosevelt Memorial, where FDR and his dog Fala stand together, immortalized in bronze.

For 10 years, NLMAD has been rescuing dogs from shelters and training them as assistance dogs, giving the dogs and those with disabilities a new lease on life. Karen Brown, NLMAD's founder, is wheelchair bound and relies on an assistance dog. She has rescued and trained more than 45 dogs.

The organization's Web site is www.nlmad.org. **T**

2008 Schedule — Elections and Visitations

Visitations are recommended one year after election

and at least every three years upon request by minister and council of local fraternity.

Area One

	Blairsville, Ga.	Election (completed Dec. 2)
March	Chattanooga, Tenn.	Election
June	Bessemer, Ala.	Election
November.....	Nashville, Tenn.	Election
	Franklin, N.C.	Election

Area Two

	Charleston, S.C.	Election
February (sched. Feb. 2, 2008)	Hilton Head, S.C.	Election
June	Spartanburg, S.C.	Election
August.....	Greenville, S.C.	Election
January 2009	Augusta, Ga.	Election

Area Three

	Fayetteville, N.C.	Visitation
March	Wilmington, N.C.	Visitation
May (requested May 4, 2008)	Greensboro, N.C.	Election
August.....	Wilmington, NC....	Election
October.....	Burlington, N.C.	Election

Newly Forming Groups and Emerging Fraternities

Athens, Ga.....	Sponsoring Fraternity — Jonesboro	Schedule visit
Conyers, Ga.....	Sponsoring Fraternity — Jonesboro	Schedule visit
Knoxville, Tenn.	Sponsoring Fraternity — Chattanooga	Schedule visit
Columbia, S.C.	Sponsoring Fraternity — Hilton Head.....	Schedule visit

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