



Communio

That All May Be One

Newsletter of the
Brothers and Sister of St. Francis Region
Secular Franciscan Order
Summer 2006

ARG 2006: Focusing on St. Clare

Our Annual Regional Gathering is scheduled for Aug. 11-13 at the Wyndham Garden Hotel in Charlotte, N.C.

The gathering begins on the feast of St. Clare of Assisi, who will be our theme as we continue to explore the Spirituality Pillar of our Secular Franciscan life.

St. Clare added the contemplative vision to Franciscan life. The combination of absolute poverty, along with the silence and solitude of contemplative living within enclosed community, can serve as a light to inspire us on our journey.

Sr. Bernadette Marie Cappola, a Poor Clare from the Monastery of Saint Clare in Greenville, will make a presentation.

Carol Gentile, SFO, our national minister, will be with us for a fraternal visitation; Fr. Kevin M. Queally, TOR, will be our pastoral visitor (see visitation guidelines, p. 2). Please encourage your spiritual assistants to attend.

Come meet Carol, Fr. Kevin, and Sr. Bernadette and share in your spiritual growth with your brothers and sisters of our region.

We encourage and welcome all members and guests in our region to attend. Our annual gathering is the opportunity for us to gather as family. We pray together, sing and laugh together, take care of necessary business, and share our Franciscan spirituality.

This is a time for participating. Volunteers are needed to:

- Prepare recognition of members newly professed in past year;
- Purchase some refreshments in Charlotte for socials (funded by region).



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Minister's message

Sometimes we must slow down and reflect. That is not an easy thing for some of us to do.

Secular Franciscans are such joyful and outgoing people we may have trouble with silence.

It reminds me of a talk given by Anne Mulqueen, national formation co-chair, last October.

"We need silence, we need contemplation to be refreshed," she reminded the assembly, "but it's not for wimps" because "when you go into the silence of your own heart, God will show you the truth."

Anne referred to St. Clare of Assisi as an example. By gazing on Christ and meditating on the crib we see poverty, the cross (suffering), and the Eucharist (humility). Daily prayer and silence allow us to see "who we truly are" and how to follow God's plan for us.

*Most High, glorious God,
enlighten the darkness of my heart,
and give me, Lord, a correct faith,
certain hope and a perfect charity,
sense and knowledge,
so that I may carry out
Your Holy and true command.*

When we pray and hear God's call to serve him, it may not be what we had planned. It may not be something we feel inclined to do or feel qualified to do well. We must have faith and trust in the Holy Spirit. Please listen and answer the call to service.

Article 14. Secular Franciscans, together with all people of good will, are called to build a more fraternal and evangelical world so that the kingdom of God may be brought about more effectively. Mindful that anyone *who follows Christ, the perfect man, becomes more of a man himself*, let them exercise their responsibilities competently in Christian spirit of service.

Peace and all good,
Judy



The National Fraternity of the Secular Franciscan Order—USA Guidelines for the Fraternal and Pastoral Visitation to the regional fraternity

While details of visitations may vary between regions, it is important that both fraternal and pastoral visitors attempt to accomplish the purpose assigned to their particular type of visit. It is in this spirit that the guidelines, which follow, are offered. A region can adopt them with the confidence that visits using the guidelines will offer balanced service to fraternities. Prayerful consideration and implementation of its phases can gain the full value of fraternal and pastoral visits.

1. Preparation: Well before a visit the regional minister together with the council should thoughtfully and prayerfully conduct a regional self-evaluation. We enclose a pre-visitation questionnaire for this purpose. So that the visitors can make the best preparation the completed questionnaire should be sent to the visitors at least **two weeks** before the actual visitation.

2. The Visit: The regional fraternity must allow enough time for the visitors to go over the appropriate material. A one-day visitation is **not** enough time. Time needs to be given to the gathering of the regional executive council with the two visitors and to the meeting of the

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Four fraternities have offered to participate more actively this year:

- ❖ St. Michael the Archangel Fraternity, Spartanburg, S.C., will coordinate the registration;
- ❖ St. Francis of the Hills Fraternity, Hendersonville, N.C., will lead the memorial service;
- ❖ Sacred Hearts of Jesus & Mary Fraternity, Hilton Head Island, S.C., will coordinate the Eucharistic Adoration Chapel;
- ❖ Fraternity of St. Clare, Winston-Salem, N.C., will prepare and lead us in the Saturday evening prayer.

Thanks to each of them for their generous service. **T**

**Be sure to bring your
fraternity banner to the
Annual Regional Gathering
Aug. 11-13, 2006
Wyndham Garden Hotel
Charlotte, NC**

**Room \$73.78 (no increase)
Buffet Breakfast Saturday \$10.95
Buffet Lunch \$16
Plated Dinner \$20
Buffet Breakfast Sunday \$10.95**

**Forms are available
Reservations due by July 24**

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the assembled local ministers with the visitors.

3. During the Visitation: *Before* and *after* the gathering of the regional fraternity, time should be allowed for the visitor to meet with the executive council and also with the local ministers as a group. The visitors will be present at the regional annual gathering to observe and evaluate. Time should be allowed for the visitors to address the regional fraternity as a whole.

4. Evaluation: The visitors will look at the following services and methods:

- ✓ Spirituality: Spiritual growth, prayer, and liturgy.
- ✓ Service to local fraternities: How needs are communicated and met.
- ✓ Communication: With local and with national.
- ✓ Formation: Description of formation programs both initial and ongoing including text used.
- ✓ Vocation Promotion: Methods.
- ✓ Financial Stewardship: Proper recording and accounting for the region's common funds.

5. The Report: After the visitation the region will receive a written report from the visitors. Implementation of recommendations is a sign of true growth and cooperation.

What happens *before* and *after* the visits themselves are in many ways as important as the visit. One weekend is not enough to bring about sustained improvement. The regional council *needs to review* the report and try to carry out the recommendations given.

Examining the results of a visit a year or so after can be a great help. The region will receive a letter from the national executive council to see if it can be of service to the region in any way. **T**

Before the birth of St. Clare, her mother was praying ... when she heard a voice: "Do not be afraid for you will joyfully bring forth a clear light which will illumine the world." ...[T]he baby girl who came after this prayer was named Chiara, Italian for "clear one" *Treasury of Women Saints*

BSSF Regional Executive Council meeting

June 9-10

Council and commission members gathered for dinner, evening prayer, and open discussion Friday evening at the Wyndham Garden Hotel in Charlotte.

Saturday began at 7 a.m. with Morning Prayer and celebration of the Eucharist with Fr. Jude Duffy, OFM Cap.

At its business session on June 10, the council:

- ❖ Welcomed Sue and Jim Taylor, SFO, of the Fraternity of Brother Francis, Hickory, N.C., who attended their first meeting as newly appointed co-chairs of the BSSF Region Ecology Commission.
- ❖ Reviewed and accepted final draft of regional guidelines. Guidelines will be sent to fraternity ministers and leaders for review prior to the Annual Regional Gathering, Aug. 11-13 and will be formally approved at the ARG.
- ❖ Discussed formation workshops to be held in spring and summer 2007 in Raleigh, Greenville, and Chattanooga. The one-day workshops will be for fraternity ministers, formation directors, and area counselors.
- ❖ Reviewed plan for visitations from NAFRA.
- ❖ Discussed possible locations for ARG 2007.
- ❖ Reviewed activities of area councilors.
- ❖ Voted to approve newly forming group in Conyers, Ga.
- ❖ Voted to ask Jerry Rousseau, SFO, to accept appointment as BSSF Region treasurer, because of the death of Treasurer Fran Trecartin. Jerry is chosen leader of the Franciscan Martyrs of



In Memorium

“Blessed are they who mourn for they shall be comforted.”

Frances Trecartin, SFO, was raised to new life in Christ on June 9.

Fran was a loyal servant for our region as regional treasurer.

She and Bill were married for 47 years. They met in the third grade and grew to know and love each other and were blessed with three daughters, a son, and 11 grandchildren.

Fran was professed Sept. 17, 2000; Bill made his profession April 22, 2006.

A nurse, Fran started Birth Right in New Jersey. She and Bill coordinated RCIA there and continued to direct the program at St. Francis by the Sea in Hilton Head after they moved to that parish.

Fran was a compassionate hospice caregiver. She was a member of the parish council and leader in an effort to start small church communities in the parish. Fran was a faithful eucharistic adorer and witness of her faith.

She was a dear friend and will be missed so very much.

Siroki Brijeg Emerging Community,
Blairsville, Ga.

- ❖ Reviewed and accepted proposed 2007 budget. Ministers will receive budget for review prior to ARG, with

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acceptance of budget at ARG.

- ❖ Asked commissions to research a regional apostolate.

Welcome and thanks to Jerry Rousseau.

After prayerful reflection, Jerry has accepted the offer to serve as treasurer for our region for the remainder of the term. He

Flippin' for the friary

By Jim Taylor, SFO

Fraternity of Brother Francis

The soon-to-be-famous Fantastic Franciscan Flapjack Flippers of the Fraternity of Brother Francis, Hickory, N.C., have completed their first yearly "Flapjack Flippin'" apostolate.

We held pancake breakfasts to raise funds to help rebuild the St. Fidelis Friary, destroyed by a super-typhoon, on the island of Guam.

The Franciscans living in that friary have been ministering and helping in the Pacific Rim for more than 100 years. They now need help in securing funds to rebuild their friary, home to over 20 Franciscans. We put on pancake breakfasts at St. Joseph in Newton, St. Francis in Lenoir, St. Aloysius in Hickory, and St. Vincent in Charlotte.

The St. Maximilian Kolbe Fraternity of Charlotte joyfully joined hands with the Fraternity of Brother Francis for the Flapjack Flip at St. Vincent and had great fun flippin' and enjoying wonderful fellowship with their brothers and sisters working for such a worthwhile cause. The four fun-filled flapjack flips raised \$2,500.

For more information on how to join with the Fraternity of Brother Francis in an interfraternity apostolate "Flapjack Flip" or "flippin'" on your own for these dedicated Franciscans in the friary on Guam, please contact Dr. Jim and Sue Taylor at TaylorsPeak@netscape.com or call (828) 264-0054. **T**

will continue to serve as leader of the Franciscan Martyrs of Siroki Brijeg Emerging Community.

Jerry will be away from July 3–Aug. 4. Judy will continue to collect checks for ARG meals.

Please welcome Jerry with prayer. We are blessed to have servants willing to share their talents. **T**

Calendar

Ministers may contact editor with fraternity events for the calendar.

2006

July 9–13.....Fr. Linus' Province 100th anniv.,
Chapter of Mats

Aug. 11–13 ARG—NAFRA Visitation

Oct. 1–12Fr. Linus & Judy: Pilgrimage—
Assisi, etc.

Oct. 24–29Judy: Wisconsin—NAFRA

Nov. 10–11.....REC-CG: Plan to meet in
Hendersonville

Nov. 11–17.....Visitations: Hendersonville,
Asheville, Franklin

2007

July 3–8Quinquennial:
Steubenville, Ohio

Aug. 9–12ARG (elections)

2008

OctoberBSSF Region hosts NAFRA
(week of 12th or 19th)

...St. Francis began to speak about God in such a sweet and holy and profound and divine and marvelous way that he himself and St. Clare and her companions and all the others who were at that poor little table were rapt in God by the overabundance of divine grace that descended upon them.

Little Flowers of St. Francis, Chapter 15

St. Francis and penance

By Bret Thoman, SFO

Immaculate Conception Fraternity

As Secular Franciscans, we are heirs to a long movement of penance in the Church. From the days of St. Francis until 1978 our order was known as the Brothers and Sisters

of Penance. But our story as penitents predates St. Francis, who actually identified himself first as a penitent and later as a friar minor.

In the original Greek New Testament, both Jesus and John the Baptist urge their followers towards *metanoia*, which means “change of heart.” In the Gospel of Matthew they say “*Metanoete!*” which was later translated into Latin as “*Agite poenitentiam!*” (literally “Do penance!”), and then into English as “Repent, the kingdom is at hand!” Thus, the original biblical meaning of penance is to have a change of heart and turn from sin.

Later, the idea of penance shifted from an interior conversion to external acts that accompanied the experience. In Christianity’s first few centuries, penance was a way for the baptized who committed serious sins after baptism (murder, sorcery, renunciation of the faith, etc.) to be reconciled to the Church.

To effect a conversion in the Christian, the local bishop assigned certain penitential acts, such as fasting, daily prayer, wearing particular garb (usually a hair shirt), and other practices for a period of one to three years. Successfully completing the penance reintegrated the penitent into the community.

Around the sixth century, the practice of private reconciliation/confession (directly to a priest) spread from the monasteries of the British Isles into continental Europe and became the normative way a Christian received forgiveness for sins; involuntary penance fell into disuse.

However, about this time Christians who had committed no serious sin, but who desired to imitate Christ and his Passion more closely took on these penitential practices voluntarily. Voluntary penance was a grassroots movement among laypersons not associated with established religious orders or monasteries.

This took different forms, like living as a hermit or recluse either alone or in small communities, or associating, as an oblate or *converses*, with a church or monastery. It

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could involve married or singles, consecrated or lay, men or women.

They maintained many of the established penitential practices of fasting, daily prayer, wearing penitential dress, refraining from military service, or occupations like merchant or public servant.

When Francis began his conversion experience, he identified with the many lay penitents living around and passing through Assisi. He chose to live as they did and took on this well-established penitential way of life.

After he publicly renounced his father in front of the bishop, he became a penitential oblate under San Damiano's resident priest. And it was for this penitential life that his first followers joined him. When asked who they were, Francis and his first companions responded, "We are penitents from Assisi."

It was not until they went to Rome seeking official hierarchical acceptance for their way of life (and Pope Innocent III granted oral approval) that they began to call themselves friars minor. Their way of life distinguished itself from other penitents, and their own distinct order developed.

During Francis' lifetime, the penitential movement in Italy and elsewhere in Europe lacked direction. Many practices were merely external, not leading to a change of heart.

Francis' order had become hugely popular and penitents were naturally drawn to the Franciscan way of life. Francis wrote his "Letter to the Faithful" in response to the needs of penitents who wished to follow his way of life but remain in their respective states among the laity.

This "Exhortation of St. Francis to the Brothers and Sisters of Penance" forms the prologue to the update of our Rule—which Pope Paul VI approved on June 24, 1978. It was in 1978 also that we came to be known as the Secular Franciscan Order.

The original Gospel intent was to cause a change of heart so that we will turn from our old ways of doing things and live as Christ wishes. Throughout our history we've had periods in which we fell into external observance and lost penance's original meaning. But as long as we're faithful to our Lord's call we come back—penance means conversion. **T**

Brothers and Sisters of St. Francis Region Offices

Regional Executive Council

Minister: Judy Haupt, SFO, Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, Hilton Head Island, S.C.

Vice Minister: Cricket Aull, SFO, Immaculate Conception, Jonesboro, Ga.

Secretary: Dale Anesi, SFO, Seven Dolors of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Nashville, Tenn.

Treasurer: Jerry Rousseau, SFO, Franciscan Martyrs of Siroki Brijeg, Blairsville, Ga.

Formation Director: Paula Zanker, SFO, Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament, Burlington, N.C.

Spiritual Assistant: Fr. Linus DeSantis, OFM Conv., Lithia Springs, Ga.

Councilors and Areas of Responsibility:

Area 1: Glen Berns, SFO, Franciscan Martyrs of Siroki Brijeg, Blairsville, Ga.—Chattanooga, Tenn.; Knoxville, Tenn.; Macon, Ga.; Nashville, Tenn.

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Area 2: Deacon Dennis Arcand, SFO, St. Benedict the Moor, Macon, Ga.—Bessemer, Ala.; Decatur, Ala.; Duluth, Ga.; Jonesboro, Ga.

Area 3: Audrey Binet, SFO, St. Elizabeth of Hungary, Augusta, Ga.—Aiken, S.C.; Athens, Ga.; Blairsville, Ga.; Columbia, S.C.; Franklin, N.C.

Area 4: Diane Curran, SFO, Crucified Christ, North Charleston, S.C.—Charleston, S.C.; Hilton Head Island, S.C.; St. Simons Island, Ga.; Wilmington, N.C.

Area 5: Pat Cowan, SFO, St. Francis of the Hills, Hendersonville, N.C.—Asheville, N.C.; Burlington, N.C.; Greenville, S. C.; Hickory, N.C.; Winston-Salem, N.C.

Area 6: Alice Ramos, SFO, Our Lady of Good Counsel, Greenville, S.C.—Augusta, Ga.; Charlotte, N.C.; Hendersonville, N.C.; Spartanburg, S.C.

Area 7: Alan Zanker, SFO, Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament Fraternity, Burlington, N.C.—Elizabeth City, N.C.; Fayetteville, N.C.; Greensboro, N.C.; Morehead City, N.C.; Raleigh, N.C.

Commission Chairs

Coordinator: Jennye Taylor Johnson, SFO, St. Maximilian Kolbe, Charlotte, N.C.

Youth/Young Adult & Webmaster: Betti P. Longinotti, SFO, Fraternity of St. Clare, Winston-Salem, N.C.

Peace and Justice: Hal Seibler, SFO, Franciscan Family of Greensboro

Work: Cathy Arcand, SFO, St. Benedict the Moor, Macon, Ga.

Family: Lana Aumer, SFO, St. Maximilian Kolbe, Charlotte, N.C.

Ecology: Jim and Sue Taylor, SFO, Fraternity of Brother Francis, Hickory, N.C.

Archivist: Vacant

**Communio**

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Upcoming deadlines for copy submission and publication dates:

- ❖ **Fall 2006** deadline, Sept. 22
Publication date, Sept. 29
- ❖ **Winter 2007** deadline, Jan. 12
Publication date, Jan. 19
- ❖ **Spring 2007** deadline, March 23
Publication date, March 30
- ❖ **Summer 2007** deadline, June 22
Publication date, June 29

To contact me or submit copy:

E-mail to jnell@dnet.net

Postal mail to 124 Pleasant Hill Road
Clyde, N.C. 28721-9699

Phone: 828-627-9209

Joanita M. Nellenbach, SFO
Editor