

# Communio

That All May Be One

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

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## BROTHERS AND SISTERS OF ST. FRANCIS 2008 ANNUAL REGIONAL GATHERING AUG. 8-10

**W**e encourage and welcome all members and their guests in our region to join us in the mountains for our annual gathering.

It 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.

Remember to bring your fraternity banner.

This year we will explore who we are, how we are called, and where we are heading as Secular Franciscans.

Hope to see you at LifeWay Ridgecrest Conference Center, just east of Asheville, N.C. The price of the room and meals are slightly higher than last year but a four-meal package can be purchased. The meals are served buffet style. (Alcohol is not allowed on the premises, only sacramental wine.)

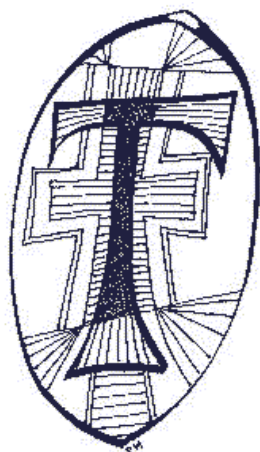
Reservations will be made to BSSF, not the facility, but you will pay Ridgecrest when you check in.

The proposed agenda is included in this issue (pages 5-6).

I look forward to being with you.

Peace and all good,  
Judy





## Minister's Message

Peace and all good! Peace be with you! Let there be peace on Earth!

How do we find *Peace* in this busy world? What is true peace? How do I share and bring peace to others? "True peace consists in not separating ourselves from the will of God" (St. Thomas Aquinas).

I still struggle with finding the peace and quiet to hear the will of God and spend too much time rushing from task to task, from one deadline to another. Do you?

Recently, I read an article on the Spirit Daily Web site ([www.spiritdaily.com](http://www.spiritdaily.com)): "Peace Comes When We Stop Watching the Clock and Control the Passage of Time."

The article suggests that peace comes when we disregard the passage of time: "Now, everyone has to be conscious of the clock — to an extent. You can't ignore an appointment. You have to show up for work. We live in a society that is ruled by it. We can't simply throw away the concept of time. But we gain peace when it is not our central focus — when we stop parceling out our lives according to the minutes, when we stop *pressuring* ourselves into an hourglass."

The article drew its stress-reducing ideas from two of Spirit Daily's publications: *Managing Stress (with the Help of Your Catholic Faith)* by Mary Lou Rosien and *Conformity to the Will of God*, drawn mainly from St. Alphonsus Ligouri's writings:

- ❖ Try to slow down. Let go and let God.
- ❖ If you are stressed because you're burning the candle at both ends, *organize your day by removing a quarter* of what you planned to do; simply snip out certain tasks that take you to (or over) the brink.
- ❖ Learn to say no. Don't overextend yourself. If God didn't want us to rest, he would not have set aside the Sabbath.
- ❖ Do you get all stressed out? Are you overextended? Do you feel pressure? It doesn't make you less holy. Saints too suffered. St. Teresa of Ávila and St. John of the Cross faced immense pressure as they implemented reform of the Carmelites. St. Thérèse of Lisieux held the tense position of novice director. St. Francis endured the criticism of his followers.
- ❖ All of us have tensions! It is how we manage them. The saints learned how to regain their peace by looking at negative matters in a positive fashion.
- ❖ Give it to God. Put it in a "box" for him. And if it's someone causing you stress, recall the Littler Flower — who, stressed over a fellow sister who prayed loudly and rattled rosary beads in the chapel, asked God to love the nun through her, despite her own irritation. That defused the situation.
- ❖ Don't lose sleep worrying. Give your troubles to God; he's up all night anyhow.
- ❖ Focus on sacred objects. Marvel in creation. Examine a flower.
- ❖ Read the Bible. What peace is in that!
- ❖ Take prayer walks. Go on a retreat. Let go of unrealistic expectations. Detach from material objects. Forgive. Engage not with antagonists. Reframe the way you think of negative situations (making them challenges instead). Love in all circumstances.
- ❖ And it's summer.
- ❖ Take a real vacation.
- ❖ Even if you don't leave your home, it's "time" to give it a rest.

Peace and Joy,  
Judy

## Editor's Journal



Ah — coffee: Starts the day. Warms us up. Great to sip on social occasions.

But coffee and social justice?

Absolutely!

DorothyAnn

Rowland, SFO, minister of Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary Fraternity, Hilton Head Island, S.C.,

shared an e-mail she received from Daly Gutierrez, an orientee in her fraternity.

"I stumbled across this Web site (<http://crsfairtrade.org/media/solidarity/index.html>) recently, while searching for coffee to order," Daly wrote. "It was very eye-opening to me, as I'm sure it would be for everyone else. If you have 15 minutes to spare, I would recommend that you watch this video from Catholic Relief Services (CRS) on Fair Trade coffee. This applies to both coffee drinkers and nondrinkers, and is an easy, yet extremely rewarding way to help those in need."

Fair Trade isn't a brand name; rather, it's all about social justice. You may have seen the small rectangular black and white logo, stating "Fair Trade Certified" on the front of some packages of coffee at your supermarket.

CRS notes on its Web site that it "works to help coffee cooperatives in Bolivia, El Salvador, Guatemala, Mexico, Nicaragua, the Philippines, Uganda, and Viet Nam to transform their communities by growing great coffee, farming in ecologically responsible ways, and building relationships with Fair Trade coffee companies in the United States."

Fair Trade coffee, which can cost \$6 to \$8 for a 12–16 ounce package, is more expensive than non-Fair Trade.

But consider: According to CRS, if you pay \$1.50 for a cup of non-Fair Trade coffee, the farmer who grew the coffee got

about 2 cents for those ounces, so he received less than 50 cents per pound of coffee.

Companies such as Equal Exchange ([www.equalexchange.com](http://www.equalexchange.com)), that buy Fair Trade coffee, agree to pay farmers "a guaranteed minimum price regardless of market rates, plus social premiums when market price exceeds the minimum" (CRS). Payments to the farmers go from \$1 per pound to \$1.26 per pound for conventional coffee and \$1.41 for a pound of certified organic.

Farmers are able to stay on their land, provide a decent living for their families, and better the conditions in their communities.

Fair Trade is open, CRS says, "only to democratically run, worker-owned cooperatives of small-scale farmers" and that there is a "ban on a wide range of hazardous chemical pesticides."

I've been drinking Equal Exchange's Fair Trade coffee for a couple of years now. I buy mine from St. William Church in Murphy, N.C., and Immaculate Heart of Mary Church, Hayesville, N.C.; both use the coffee for their parish functions and sell it, as well.

Oh, yes, and the chocolate is wonderful, too; I like the dark chocolate bars with almonds. Delicious!

As Daly said, it's "an easy, yet extremely rewarding way to help those in need."

Pace e bene  
Joanita

**Congratulations  
Newly Professed**  
Val Cadarr, SFO  
Connie Singer, SFO  
St. Clare of Assisi, EC  
Aiken, S.C.  
April 5

## Fraternity contributes more than a drop in the bucket

*Praised be you, my Lord, through Sister Water, who is very useful and humble and precious and chaste.*

St. Francis of Assisi,  
“The Canticle of the Creatures”

St. Maximilian Kolbe Fraternity, Charlotte, N.C., helped this year to bring clean water to people in Tanzania and Honduras.

For a week during Lent, participants drank only nonbottled water and donated what they would have spent on coffee and soda. St. Maximilian Kolbe contributed \$289 to our National Fraternity's Youth/Young Adult Commission's collection for the Franciscan Sisters of Dubuque, Iowa's, Sister Water Project.

The commission raised \$12,492 for what became known as the H2O project.

“Thank you SO MUCH for the incredible amount of money collected for the Sister Water Project of our congregation,” Sr. Pat Farrell wrote to Kathy Taormina, SFO, NAFRA Youth/Young Adult Chair. “It is very inspiring and heartening to know of the energy that has been generated by Franciscan youth to be in solidarity with the poor and to care for creation.

“Your spirit, commitment, and enthusiasm are as much good news as the donation itself, which is considerable and which will make it possible to make a difference in the lives of struggling people, especially women and children, who carry water long distances and whose health is often compromised as well by unclean water sources.”

“What a stunning witness to the Franciscan charism of solidarity with the poor and care of creation!” Kathy said in an e-mail. “I have been humbled by all the notes and thoughts which accompany the checks that I receive, and I have been abundantly blessed by serving on this



project. Thanks to all who participated and/or prayed for this year's project.”

Fraternities are invited to contribute to the Sister Water Project during Lent 2009. T

## Congratulations Newly Elected Councils

### Crucified Christ Fraternity

North Charleston, S.C. — April 12

Minister — Diane Curran, SFO (re-elected)

Vice Minister — Cindy Bryan, SFO

Secretary — Jeanne Theobald, SFO

Treasurer — Linda Long, SFO

Formation Dir. — Michael Coleman, SFO

Councilor — Libby Conway, SFO

### St. Joseph Cupertino Fraternity

Bessemer, Ala. — June 1

Minister — Karen Thorne, SFO

Vice Minister — Lannie Newman, SFO

Secretary — Helen Williamson, SFO

Treasurer — Janet Waters, SFO

Formation Dir. — Brosaura D'Amico, SFO

Councilors — Margarita Cabrera, SFO

Mary Snow, SFO

Harvey Sullivan, SFO

### St. Michael the Archangel Fraternity

Spartanburg, S.C. — June 21

Minister — Dr. Edward Babin, SFO

(re-elected)

Vice Minister — Catherine Bohnsack, SFO

Secretary — Sandra Rodriguez, SFO

Treasurer — Carol Drum, SFO

Formation Dir. — Sara Nell Boggs, SFO

Councilors — Joanne Babin, SFO

Susan Schweizer, SFO

**Annual Regional Gathering  
Brothers and Sisters of St. Francis Region  
LifeWay Conference Center, Ridgecrest, N.C., August 8–10, 2008  
Theme of Gathering: Celebrating Seculars  
The Profession of Secular Franciscans**

**Friday, Aug. 8**

- 1:00 p.m. REC Meeting
- 3:00 Registration {Channel of Peace Fraternity}
- 3:00 Spiritual Assistant Class — Boardroom
- Choir Practice for Cantors/Musicians — West Wing Conf. Room
- 5:30 -6:30 Dinner Buffet (tickets required)
- 7:00 Welcome, Opening Prayer — Judy Haupt, regional minister
- Gathering Song
- Introductions — New Councils, New Attendees, SA Class
- 7:30 Recognition — Newly Professed, Anniversaries of Profession  
{ St. Michael the Archangel Fraternity }
- 8:00 Introduction to Celebrating Seculars — Fr. Linus DeSantis
- 8:15 Sharing — Cricket Aull
- 8:30 Evening Prayer — Liturgy of the Hours
- 9:00 Social

**Saturday, Aug. 9**

- 7:00 a.m. Morning Prayer — Liturgy of the Hours
- 7:15-8:15 Breakfast Buffet (tickets required)
- 9:00 Gathering Song
- “Concerning Those Who Do Penance” (Lectio Divina) — Joanne Babin
- 9:30 “Call to Vocation” — Fr. Linus DeSantis
- 10:00 “Seeking what is Holy” — Cricket Aull
- 10:30 Break
- 10:45 Celebration of the Eucharist
- \*Procession to Eucharistic Chapel —  
{Franciscan Martyrs of Siroki BrijegFraternity}
- Noon–1:00 Lunch Buffet (tickets required)
- 1:30 “Discerning Profession” — Faye Martin
- Song of Creation — Tamara Marshall
- 2:00 “One’s Sense of Belonging to the SFO and Realizing Our Order’s  
Uniqueness” — Area Group Discussions
- 3:30-5:30 Regional Fraternity Council Meeting\*\*\*  
Opportunity Time\*\* — Self-directed Walk Through Creation (nature  
projects and materials set up in lobby) — Betty Longinotti
- 5:30-6:30 Dinner Buffet (tickets required)
- 7:00 “Where Do We Go from Here: Defining Objectives for the SFO  
for Next Six Years” — Area Group Discussions
- 8:30 Gathering Song
- Gospel Life Rosary (7 decades) — Cathy Arcand
- 9:00 Social

See ARG, page 6

**ARG, from page 5****Sunday, Aug. 10**

7:00	Morning Prayer Liturgy of the Hours
7:15-8:15	Breakfast Buffet (tickets required)
	Time to Check Out
9:30	Gathering Song
	Review Area Sessions
10:00	Celebration of the Eucharist
	Memorial for Deceased Members of Region { St. Francis of the Hills Fraternity }
11:30	Closing Prayer and Sending — Fr. Linus
Noon	Adjournment

Bring your Liturgy of Hours or Christian Prayer Book, Ritual, and Crown Rosary

FRANCISCAN BOOKS AND ARTICLES WILL BE FOR SALE.

**\*A Chapel will be open for Eucharistic Adoration****11:30 AM Sat-10:00AM Sun.**

**\*\*Opportunity Time — group discussions,  
time for reflection, sharing, napping and/or enjoying God's creation.  
Please take this time to introduce yourself to someone  
and get to know each other.**

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**\*\*\*Regional Fraternity Council Meeting**

Opening prayer

*Ritual of the Secular Franciscan Order*

Roll Call

Approval of Minutes

Treasurer's Report

**BUSINESS:**

Approval of Budget for 2009

Plans for Area workshops

Calendar

Other

Open forum — Please discuss items with regional minister before meeting.

Adjournment — Closing Prayer

Every elected fraternity minister is a member of the  
Regional Fraternity Council.

Please be present OR delegate this responsibility to another member.

Send a note with your substitute authorizing that person to vote in your place.

The note is to be given to the regional secretary before the Regional Fraternity Council meeting.

The delegate does not have voting rights without the authorization.

Members of fraternities, emerging communities, and newly forming groups  
are invited to observe the council meeting.





## Embracing creation in Francis' spirit

By Faye Martin, SFO

BSSF Region formation director

*Francis, go, repair my house, which, as you see, is falling completely to ruin.*

Jesus' words to St. Francis from the San Damiano Crucifix

"Thomas of Celano and Bonaventure tell us that the voice of the crucified Christ directed Francis to rebuild that *house* that was falling into ruin. From the first of the many references to houses or dwelling places that we find in Francis's writings, it becomes clear that the call haunted him throughout his life and that it gradually prompted him to think not only of the universal house of God, the church, but also of the *house* that is the dwelling place of God, each Christian" (Regis Armstrong, OFM Cap., *St. Francis of Assisi*).

In *Care for Creation: A Franciscan Spirituality of the Earth* (St. Anthony Messenger Press, 2008), Ilia Delio, OSF; Keith Douglass Warner, OFM; and Pamela Wood prompt us to think that Francis' understanding was more inclusive—that *house* embodied not only the Church and each Christian, but all of creation.

They note that because there is a footprint/vestige of God in every creature, every creature is in itself a little word of God: "In this respect, the whole of creation is both sacramental and incarnational."

*Care for Creation* says that after Francis' encounters with God's creatures (animate and inanimate) — "especially the birds" — he "woke up" and recognized his fellow creatures as his brothers and sisters.

Francis began walking "the earth with a unique sense of kinship with all the earth." He saw himself as "standing in the web of life and not above or beyond it" (*Care for Creation*).

The following are a few of the better-known stories about Francis' encounters with his brothers and sisters — water, trees, fire, rock, and flowers:

- ❖ When he washed his hands, he chose a place where the water would not be trampled underfoot after the washing. Whenever he had to walk over rocks, he would walk with fear and reverence out of love for him who he called "the Rock."
- ❖ He also told the brother who cut the wood for fire not to cut down the whole tree, but to cut in such a way that one part remained while another was cut.
- ❖ Francis used to tell the brother who took care of the garden not to cultivate all the ground in the garden for vegetables but to leave a piece of ground that would produce wild plants that in their season would produce "Brother Flowers." Moreover, he used to tell the brother gardener that he should make a beautiful flowerbed in some part of the garden, planting and cultivating every variety of fragrant plants and those producing beautiful flowers.

Through these encounters with his brothers and sisters, there is no doubt that "Francis discovered his interrelatedness to the cosmos through compassionate love by which he came to experience a unity of all things in Christ" (*Care for Creation*).

Although we live at a different time, the purpose of creation for us remains the same as it was for Francis and Bonaventure — "to lead us to love and praise God, its Maker" (*Care for Creation*). The book notes that:

Francis taught the brothers to accept the gifts of God's goodness in creation and to respond with grateful hearts through bonds of love, care, concern, and companionship.

**FORMATION, from page 7**

Francis valued the home of the earth not only as *his* home, but first and foremost as *God's* home....

The word, creation, implies relationship, unlike the word, nature, which holds no inherent religious meaning. Creation points to a Creator, a God who creates. In this respect, talk of an “environmental crisis” from a Franciscan perspective must immediately signal a “religious crisis” simply because environment is more than nature alone....

There are a number of reasons why we find ourselves in an environmental crisis: technological, cultural, and economic revolutions.

In the past, environmental changes have been manageable. However, as *Care for Creation* points out, “Planet Earth now faces an unprecedented threat: global climate change. This environmental problem challenges our ecological understanding as never before, because it defies traditional tools of conventional science. It poses a greater threat to the integrity of creation than any other human-caused environmental.”

Since we are the only creatures who can reflect upon our behavior and make the changes needed to restore creation, we are the other creatures’ only advocate. “We must begin to recover our ecological niche, our role in creation based on our identity as in-relationship — to the rest of the Earth” (*Care for Creation*).

We can begin doing this by developing a “greater awareness of the choices we make that harm



our brothers and sisters. These are individual and collective choices. Making choices to simplify our lives, to lessen our use of resources, is fundamental to developing a Franciscan ecological consciousness.

“Because the United States is the greatest consumer of our natural resources, we have the power to express concern for creation on a daily basis. We can make a greater impact by engaging others. Francis can inspire us to speak on behalf of God’s creatures, to take action to protect their habitat, and to promote policies” (*Care for Creation*) to protect the environment.

If you are looking for a book to raise your awareness of ecology as a science, a Franciscan spirituality of creation, and hands-on approaches that will “reconnect us with the earth and act in right relationship” (*Care for Creation*), I recommend this book as an excellent resource.

Fr. Eric Doyle, OFM, wrote: “To love is to be in relation with another, creating a bond between the self and a part of the world, and so ultimately between self and all creatures. If one person can love one other person, one unique animal, one flower, one special place on this earth, there is no reason why that love cannot stretch out to embrace every single creature to the furthest reaches of space.”

May we “respond with grateful hearts through bonds of love, care, concern, and companionship” with all of creation, as exemplified by St. Francis and his brothers. **T**



## SFO vocations still strong in long-professed couple

By Joanita M. Nellenbach, SFO

Communio editor

In June, Barbara and Larry Carter celebrated a total of 127 years as Secular Franciscans.

Larry, 90, made his permanent profession on June 15, 1941; Barbara, 84, made her profession on June 20, 1948.

Originally members of St. Elizabeth Fraternity in Royal Oak, Mich., they became members of St. Francis of the Hills Fraternity, now located in Hendersonville, about a year after it's establishment in Maggie Valley in 1987.

"They encourage everyone just by their presence, and they're attentive to each person," said Patricia Cowan, a charter member of St. Francis of the Hills, who currently serves as the fraternity's formation director.

"They always see something as new, nothing ever gets old," Cowan continued. "They're just as excited about coming to meetings as they were when they first joined our fraternity. They're just very special people."

At its March meeting, St. Francis of the Hills Fraternity surprised Larry with a perpetual Mass card and a birthday cake topped with candles in the shape of 9 and 0.

Larry credits "the example of my grandmother and my mother" for his entrance into the Order: "I think my mother (who died at age 85) was the oldest one in *her* fraternity. They were always helping somebody."

That included people from poor black neighborhoods.

"They begged for food," Larry said. "They would come over to our house, and my mother always fed them."

Larry joined St. Elizabeth Fraternity in Southfield, Mich., about two years before he entered the U.S. Army and was sent to Lancashire, England, as a member of an engineer unit attached to the U.S. Army Air Corps.

When off duty, he visited Secular Franciscan fraternities, attending meetings in Taunton, England, and Cardiff, Wales.

Secular Franciscans are "supposed to take care of the widows and the orphans," he said, so he and another soldier asked the local parish priest about orphanages. Learning that there were two nearby, run by Missionary Sisters of St. Francis, he and other members of his unit started visiting the children.

"We'd take trucks full of GIs over to the orphanages, and the kids would really swamp them," Larry said. "A lot of the kids wrote to me after I got home."

Larry cherishes his memories of getting to know the children, bringing them candy he bought at the PX and that he received from home. He shows pictures of himself in uniform, surrounded by smiling youngsters with Buster Brown haircuts, and sisters in their Franciscan habits.

Mustering out of the Army in 1946, Larry returned to his pre-war job, sorting industrial diamonds for Wheel Trueing Diamond Tool Co. in Detroit.

"There was a young people's club at the shrine of the Little Flower (now the National Shrine

See COUPLE, page 10



**COUPLE, from page 9**

of the Little Flower) in Royal Oak,” Barbara said. “He belonged before he went in the service. When he came home, naturally he came to the doings at the club.”

Which is where he met Barbara, who’d also become a member. At the end of a six-month engagement, they married on Feb. 1, 1947.

What with settling back into civilian life, Larry hadn’t been to SFO meetings since coming home, but now he returned to St. Elizabeth Fraternity.

Under the 1883 Rule, in effect at that time, if a woman wanted to join the SFO, she had to have her husband’s permission. For Barbara *permission* wasn’t an issue.

“No, I had his order,” she said. “At the time I wasn’t sure, I really wasn’t, but during the year of formation it really took.”

What attracted her?

“First of all, the people in the fraternity,” she said. “They were so welcoming, so eager to answer my questions. We were married in February 1947, and our first baby was born in December of 1947. There was a couple on the formation team — Mr. and Mrs. May. I think they were more concerned about the fact that I was having a baby than that I was joining the Third Order.”

Nowadays, Secular Franciscans wear the Tau as a sign of their SFO commitment, but under the 1883 Rule they wore a white cord, with three knots, around their waists under their clothes.

“When we were professed we had to wear the (St. Francis) scapular and the cord,” Barbara said. “When I was pregnant, I didn’t like that.”

Barbara and Larry had seven sons and six daughters in 18 years. They have 36 grandchildren and 16 great-grandchildren.

Their grandson, Noah, is studying for the priesthood at the Pontifical College Josephinum, in Columbus, Ohio.

“The most striking part in family life was our (commitment to) poverty—explaining to the kids when they complained that they couldn’t have something,” Barbara said, “(telling them), ‘Look you have everything you need. Look around and find someone who doesn’t have as much as you do.’ Being Franciscan, I look at things differently, at what I can forgo, what I don’t need.”

Larry agrees. He eventually became vice president of Wheel Trueing and could have afforded a luxury car, but he never bought one: “My sister used to ask, ‘Why don’t you have a big car?’ I’d say, ‘I don’t need that.’”

“And I’d say that our kids are the same way,” Barbara added. “Another thing that comes from a Franciscan influence is always being ready to give something to someone who needs it.”

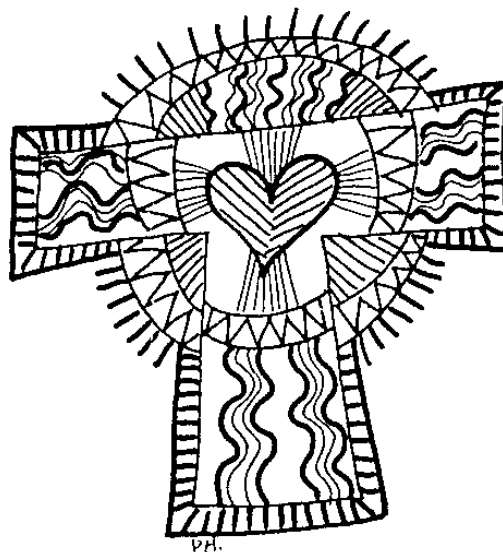
Larry volunteered with several credit unions, interviewing people to see how the credit unions could help them. He also served with the Harold and Carolyn Robison Foundation, a benevolent organization in Michigan.

Barbara did volunteer work. After moving to North Carolina, she taught English to Koreans who attended Mass at her parish, St. Barnabas in Arden.

Why have their Secular Franciscan vocations remained important to them?

“It hasn’t changed,” Larry said. “I’ve always felt that call. It’s a way of life that Francis

See COUPLE, page 11



**COUPLE, from page 10**

followed. It strengthens your faith.”

Francis’ “humility” also inspires Larry. He notes that Francis “could have had everything, but he was just humble.”

“Having the courage to embrace the leper,” Barbara said. “From then on, he had an extreme love for everybody. I’d say, if you want to be a better Catholic (and) get closer to God, look to St. Francis, his determination. He gave up a rich life, he gave all that up to do God’s work.”

Nowadays, the Carters don’t drive and they have some health problems, but when a fraternity member or one of their children can drive them, they still attend St. Francis of the Hills fraternity meetings.

“I miss it, not being able to go,” Larry said. “If we can get a ride, we go.”

Although Barbara has severe back trouble she doesn’t let that keep her away.

The examples of St. Francis’ later life

and Jesus’ death on the cross have been especially helpful. She recalls that Francis experienced severe stomach and eye trouble and, after receiving the Stigmata, was unable to walk.

“Reading about St. Francis and St. Claire was very influential,” Barbara said. “And now, when I’m in so much pain, I pray to St. Francis. He was in pain, too, and even had to be carried. And our Savior suffered for me, so I should be more than willing to bear a little pain for him.”

Fraternity members stay in touch with phone calls and visits, and the Carters receive the monthly meeting minutes and newsletter, as well as Communio.

Her fraternity membership, Barbara said, “keeps me tuned in to reading more about Franciscans and what they’re doing. It keeps me wanting to be active when I can.” T

**Treasurer’s report and forecast**

By Jerry Rousseau, SFO

BSSF Region treasurer

Our 2008 budget of \$18,400 appears to be tracking as projected and should give us a balanced budget for the second year in a row, as presented to the membership during the 2007 ARG.

The 2009 expense forecast (see page 14) is \$25,390. The majority of increases are the results of:

- a. increase in National Fraternity fair share of \$1,440,
- b. National Fraternity visitation to the Region (every three years) of \$1,800,
- c. spiritual assistant course expenses for 15 trainees and facilitator of \$2,500,
- d. fuel-related increases of \$1,200.

The projected income for 2009 is \$20,300, resulting in a deficit of \$5,090.

The Regional Executive Council recommends that the per capita fair share remain at \$40 per member and that the deficit be absorbed from our account balance: \$19,751.30 at the end of calendar year 2007 (see page 15).

Should expenses continue to exceed projected income in 2010 and 2011, we may need to consider an increase of per capita. However, at this time, we believe that we can “stay the course” in the spirit of St. Francis.

The Regional Fraternity Council will review and approve the 2009 budget during its meeting at the ARG.

## Daily conversion: Refined in the fire of God's love

*United by their vocation as "brothers and sisters of penance," and motivated by the dynamic power of the gospel, let them conform their thoughts and deeds to those of Christ by means of that radical interior change which the gospel itself calls "conversion." Human frailty makes it necessary that this conversion be carried out daily.*

*On this road to renewal the sacrament of reconciliation is the privileged sign of the Father's mercy and the source of grace.*

Article 7,  
Rule of the Secular Franciscan Order

Malachi 3:3 says, "He will sit refining and purifying silver" (NAB).

This verse puzzled some women in a Bible study and they wondered what this statement meant about the character and nature of God.

One of the women offered to find out the process of refining silver and get back to the group at the next Bible study.

That week, the woman called a silversmith and made an appointment to watch him at work. She didn't mention anything about the reason for her interest beyond her curiosity about the process of refining silver.

As she watched the silversmith, he held a piece of silver over the fire and let it heat up. He explained that in refining silver, one needed to hold the silver in the middle of the fire where the flames were hottest so as to burn away all the impurities.

The woman thought about God holding us in such a hot spot; then she thought again about the verse that says: "He will sit refining and purifying silver." She asked the silversmith if it was true that he had to sit there in front of the fire the whole time.

The man answered that yes, he not only had to sit there holding the silver, but he had to keep his eyes on the silver the entire time it was in the fire. If the silver was left a moment too long in the flames, it would be destroyed.

The woman was silent for a moment. Then she asked the silversmith, "How do you know when the silver is fully refined?"

He smiled at her and answered, "Oh, that's

See **SILVER**, page 13

### **Secular Franciscan Retreat**

"Using Our Gifts to Rebuild the Church"

Aug. 29–31, 2008

Host: Immaculate Conception  
Fraternity

Everyone invited.

Retreat Guide: To Be Announced

Call or e-mail for reservations:

Our Lady of the Holy Spirit Monastery

Phone: 770-760-0959

E-mail: [monastery@trappist.net](mailto:monastery@trappist.net)

Check-in after 1 p.m. on Friday

Check-out after lunch on Sunday

\$30 nonrefundable registration

donation is requested to hold rooms.

We suggest that you give an additional free will offering upon departure of \$60 to \$100 per night (the \$30 will be applied to your first night's stay).

If this is beyond your means, please come anyway and give as much as you are able. We are now able to take credit cards for your donations. After you have confirmed your reservation, you may make a deposit

by credit card by phone

(770) 760-0959 or on a secure page.

You can access this page on  
[www.trappist.net](http://www.trappist.net).

Click on Retreats page and go to the bottom of the page to access secure page icon. Send your check to:

Monastery of the Holy Spirit

Attn: Guest Master

2625 Hwy 212 S.W.

Conyers, Ga. 30094-4044

Please indicate on your check the dates of your retreat, for posting purposes. Also, please provide us with a day-time telephone number in case we need to contact you.

Questions/concerns, call or e-mail:

Willie Guadalupe, 770-683-7648;

[awildag@numail.org](mailto:awildag@numail.org)

**SILVER, from page 12**

easy — when I see my image in it.”

If today you are feeling the heat of the fire, remember that God has his eye on you and will keep watching you until he sees his image in you.

Reprinted courtesy of Mountain Talk

*As Francis himself points out in his letter used as the prologue (of the Rule), if we love the Lord with all we are, build a eucharistic community and remove those things that prevent such union, we become one with him, fulfill the Father’s will, and project his image into the world. Thus, our daily conversion becomes a primary means of putting on Christ and conforming ourselves to him. The sacrament of reconciliation, then, is a privileged means and practical assistance for achieving this objective.*

Commentary on Article 7

*From Gospel to Life: The Rule of the Secular Franciscan Order—With Commentary*

## On the care of creation

**From Franciscan Action Network  
Inaugural Address, Alexandria, Va.**

By Michael A. Perry, OFM

Francis is oftentimes depicted as a bird-bathing nature lover plopped down in gardens throughout the United States.

This “soft side” of the visionary 13th century prophet masks a more fundamental truth about Francis’ vision of the fundamental connection between human beings and the natural environment in which they live.

Environmental care is a matter of justice and the survival of all species, equally dignified before God.

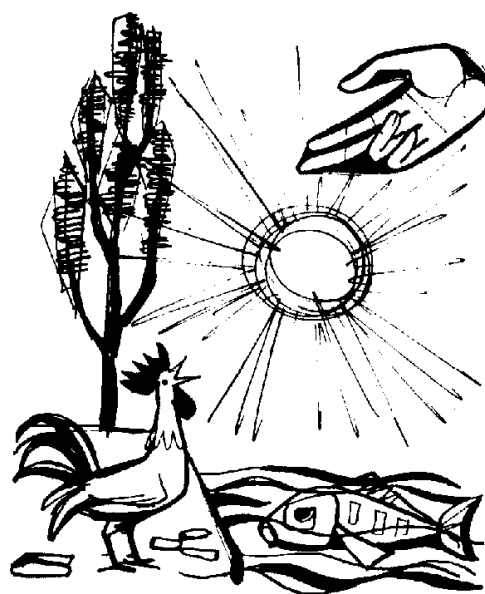
In Francis’ view of the world, nature inhabits us, it dwells within us and shapes our every thought, the choices we make and the actions we take.

Nature stands in direct relationship to the human community, providing opportunities for the survival and the well-being of all human persons — *all human beings equally*.

Francis and his revolutionary movement have been called to once again declare sacred all that God has created and entrusted to human beings. FAN, much like the Franciscan movement, arises at a particularly critical moment in the course of human history, a moment when the future of the planet and its inhabitants will be decided.

As Franciscan environmental scholar Keith Warner argues, “The erosion of our planetary life support systems may be irreversible; yet before full ‘scientific proof’ can be amassed, it will too late to prevent a series of humanitarian and ecological disasters” (“Taking Nature Seriously: Nature Mysticism, Environmental Advocacy and the Franciscan Tradition,” WTU Symposium — “Franciscans and Creation What is our Responsibility?” May 2003, p. 3).

We, the Franciscan Action Network, assume our responsibility as a “moral ecological community” and commit to the development of a “socio-political project that can enhance the protection of our natural world” (Warner, 2003, p. 3). **T**



**Brothers and Sisters of St. Francis Region  
2009 Proposed Budget**

June 29, 2008

**EXPENSES**

\$ 5,640	NATIONAL FRATERNITY FAIR SHARE (470 professed x \$12)
\$ 600	ANNUAL NATIONAL MEETING (NAFRA in New Mexico)
\$ 1,800	NATIONAL VISIT TO REGION – VISITATION (travel, lodging, stipend for 2 visitors)
\$ 3,500	ANNUAL REGIONAL GATHERING \$ 1,400 socials \$ 300 room, meals Spiritual Assistant \$ 300 room, meals REC \$ 400 audio visual etc. equipment rental \$ 500 materials, handouts \$ 600 scholarship funds, if needed
\$ 3,600	EXECUTIVE COUNCIL – COMMISSIONS GATHERINGS lodging 1 night and transportation costs for 3 gatherings 12 members
\$ 900	FRATERNAL – PASTORAL VISITATION EXPENSE (travel and materials, if needed)
\$ 1,250	COMMISSIONS (excluding formation) \$ 500 scholarship support \$ 450 materials \$ 300 travel
\$ 1,800	FORMATION/COMMISSION WORKSHOPS
\$ 1,100	OFFICE SUPPLIES, POSTAGE, COPIES
\$ 1,500	SPIRITUAL ASSISTANT (stipend, travel costs)
\$ 2,500	SPIRITUAL ASSISTANT COURSE (travel , lodging )
\$ 500	INTERNATIONAL FRATERNITY (CIOFS) DONATION
\$ 700	CHARITY
\$ 0	GENERAL FUND

**\$25,390 TOTAL EXPENSE****INCOME**

\$ 18,800	Regional Fraternity Fair Share	(470 professed x \$40)
\$ 1,500	OTHER	

**\$20,300 TOTAL INCOME**\$ 5,090 Deficit

**BSSF Region 2007 Actual Budget**

<b>Income</b>	<b>Actual Income</b>	<b>Budgeted Income</b>
Fair share contributions	\$15,560.00	\$15,200.00
Ed Campbell Fund	390.00	
Formation workshops	1,113.56	
Stipends received/donations	281.00	
General Fund reimbursements	424.90	
T-shirt sales	670.00	
<b>Total Income</b>		<b>\$15,200.00</b>
<b>Expenses</b>		
National Fraternity Fair Share	4,000.00	3,800.00
Annual National Meeting	359.20	1,000.00
Annual Regional Gathering (including National Visitation)	3,521.87	5,000.00
REC-CG/Visitations	4,437.97	3,800.00
Commissions & Formation Workshops	3,488.05	1,950.00
Communication (Office and Postage)	1,050.00	900.00
Spiritual Assistant Course (including course materials)	1,472.00	1,000.00
Charity/Donations (including FAN)	550.00	500.00
International (CIOFS) Donation	400.00	400.00
Youth Congress	500.00	0
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$19,779.09</b>	<b>\$18,350.00</b>

End of year account balance — \$19,751.00

## Communio

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### **Fall 2008**

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Publication date, Dec. 24, 2008

### **Summer 2009**

Copy deadline, June 19

Publication date, June 26

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