

Communio

That All May Be One

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

Summer 2010

Novena in preparation for our Regional Executive Council election



By Jennye Taylor Johnson, SFO
and Christine Washington, SFO
BSSF Region Nominating Committee

To you, our good brothers and
sisters of our beloved Brothers and
Sisters of St. Francis Region:

As the time for our regional election
draws near, we are asking you, once
again, to pray a novena for a Spirit-led
election.

We ask you to start this novena on
July 22 in final preparation for the
voting on July 31 at our Annual Regional Gathering. Please
use the “Prayer for the Selection of a New Council” in this
novena (see box at right).

As the members of our Regional Fraternity Council
receive the nominees’ résumés, we ask you to pray that the
Holy Spirit inspire them to vote for the nominees he wants
to be elected as our next servant leaders.

We see that our praying this novena is a service we can
each do in this great work of selecting our future servant
leaders. Let us pray this novena as a community. Let us say
“Yes” to the Holy Spirit as we allow him to use each of us
as his servant in **his** election.

And finally, let us recall the words of St. Francis: “Let
us praise the Lord, and give him thanks and serve him with
great humility.”

See nomination information, page 3

Prayer for Selection of a New Council

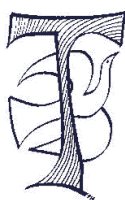
Novena— July 22–30

O my dear GOD,
we pray for the guidance of
your most Holy Spirit
as we review in our minds
the personal attributes required
by the various
Council positions.
Illumine for us our own strengths,
and those of our fellow members,
that YOU may inspire us to
recognize who it is
YOU desire to serve
YOUR regional fraternity.

Dear Francis, we also ask for
your guidance
as we seek a new Council.
Lead us to those who will help us
to grow in your virtues —
humble, polite, peacemakers,
and ardent lovers
of our crucified Lord.
Help each of us to discover
“what is ours to do.”
Not our will, Lord,
but thy will be done.
Amen.

The Four Pillars of Secular Franciscan Life

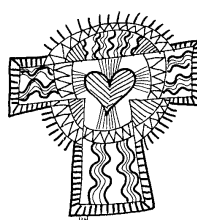
Spirituality



Formation

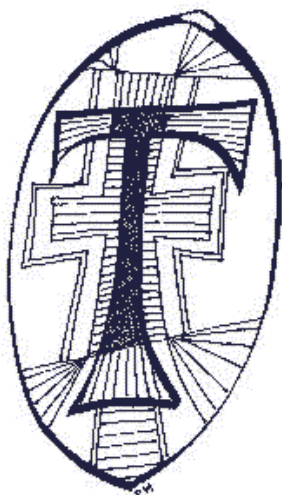


Fraternity



Apostolate





Minister's Message

My time as servant to our region as minister comes to an end Aug. 1. How quickly these six years have passed. It has been a true privilege and joy.

The best part was meeting so many wonderful Franciscans and spending time with our Franciscan family. Everywhere I went, I was greeted warmly with such love. It was very humbling.

There were many times when I wondered what God had planned and how in the world he expected me to do his work. I can truly say that God does give what is needed, if asked. The Holy Spirit is our minister general and leads us if we are willing.

Working with so many dedicated members of the Regional Executive Council made my fears disappear. Let me thank each of them for their support.

Cricket Aull, serving as vice minister 2004–2007, gave me faith by her prayers and gentle presence (we had a few laughs, too).

Dale Anesi was the answer to my prayers for a secretary in 2005 and was always near, keeping me from making mistakes and always there when needed. He continued to be the strong support as vice minister for the past three years.

Joanne Babin did a terrific job as secretary for us and got compliments from our national minister last year.

My dear friend Fran Trecartin served as treasurer even when she doubted her financial skills. She was called to heaven and is missed.

Jerry Rousseau accepted the job as treasurer and has continued for five years. He balanced our budget, established procedures, and made the job look easy.

My good buddy, Paula Zanker visited Chicago to set the stage for our first formation/minster workshops (and sold a zillion BSSF T-shirts at our ARGs).

Faye Martin stepped up and prepared our wonderful manual for orientation and initial formation. Our national visitors said it was the best they had seen. Everyone enjoys Faye's monthly roundtable and benefited from the workshops in the past two years.

Audrey Binet has given more time than anyone in service to our region. What a comfort to know she is always available and gives advice in a loving manner. Her experience has guided the newly forming groups and emerging fraternities on their journey.

All our area councilors have shared their gifts and talents in so many ways. I learned from each and thank each who served in the first term; Glenn Berns (you are missed). Deacon Dennis Arcand (started our adoration chapel at the ARG); Clark Marett (prepared our Liturgy of the Hours aid); Alice Ramos with her joyful presence. Alan Zanker (Area Three) and Pat Cowan have served two terms and have participated actively on the council, in making visitations, and in elections. (Pat has even mastered her computer.)

This past term Willie Guadalupe and Madeline Rousseau worked as a team for Area One. It was neither easy nor comfortable but each gave their best effort and did a great job. Sara Nell Boggs worked with Pat Cowan in Area Two for elections and visitations. Sara Nell took on the task of archivist and set up guidelines.

You all know the great job Joanita Nellenbach does as editor of Communio. My dear sister, Jennye Taylor Johnson has continued to serve in many roles but will always be remembered as the dedicated Apostolic Commission chair. Betti Longinotti brings a fresh enthusiasm to the youth/young adult outreach.

My fraternity sister, Harriet Sporn, faithfully sends prayer requests across the region. Cathy

See MINISTER, page 3

MINISTER, from page 2

Arcand served as Work Commission chair for region and national.

Father Linus challenges us and guides us on our spiritual path. His wisdom and insight have been essential to our spiritual growth. He may live in New York state now, but his heart and soul are still here in the South with the Brothers and Sisters of St. Francis Region. (Some day I may tell about our adventures over the miles across the region)

There are so many others, too numerous to mention, who have worked in service to our region, including the local ministers, leaders, spiritual assistants, and each individual member of our Franciscan family through their prayers and service.

Please accept my sincere thanks for all you give so generously.

Thanks for your faithful support and confidence in me. May God bless each of you.

Peace and all good
Judy

Are you called to serve?

*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 know and 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 you 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. It may be a whisper or a nagging feeling that won't go away. If someone asks you to serve, he or she may hear more clearly the call for you. So listen! Don't be afraid.

SFO Rule, 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."

Nomination Information

Nominations for minister, vice minister, secretary, treasurer, formation director, Area One councilor, Area Two councilor, Area Three councilor, can still be accepted. You can even nominate yourself. To nominate yourself or someone (after asking that person if he or she is willing to accept the nomination), contact both:

➤ *Christine Washington, SFO, clunawash@aol.com,*



Editor's Journal

On a wall above the entrance to St. Anthony's Guest House in Assisi, there is a statue called "The Dancing Francis." Francis dances, ever so lightly, on a crescent — the moon. He holds above him a disc — the sun. In that disc is a silhouette cutout of the body of Jesus.

Paul Granlund, the sculptor who created this statue, wrote: "Looking upward, through this silhouette, one can see the sky and how the sun reflects down through the silhouette onto the figure of St. Francis — who becomes a mirror of Jesus — a manifestation of the Christ within."

This statue shows Francis balanced between the sun and the moon. I see in this statue the balance in Francis's life: the active, when he was preaching and ministering; and the contemplative, when he spent time in solitude and prayer.

In his "Canticle of the Creatures," Francis praises God, and describes Brother Sun, "who is the day and through whom you [God] give us light. And he is beautiful and radiant with great splendor, and bears a likeness of you, Most High One." Francis speaks of Sister Moon and the stars, who are "clear and precious and beautiful."

Like the sun, during the day we're busy, we're blazing away with activity, all the things we have to get done.

Then comes the night — and the moon, which is more quiet. Nowadays, we can ignore the moon and have light at the flip of a switch; so, physically, at least, we are never without light. And we can keep on with activity until way into the night.

We can be out of balance.

Our Secular Franciscan Rule tells us that we are to go "from gospel to life and life to the gospel"; to "go forth as witnesses and instruments of [the Church's] mission among all people, proclaiming Christ by [our] life and words"; that we are to "build a more "fraternal and evangelical world" and to "be in the forefront of promoting social justice by the testimony of [our] human lives and courageous initiatives."

We are to be concerned with the Lord's work.

BUT it's easy to get out of balance, to be so busy with the Lord's work that we have no time for the Lord. Francis knew the danger of that; so he spent about one half of his life in active ministry and the other half in solitude and contemplation.

Few of us can spend up to 200 days a year in prayer and solitude, and we're not called to slavishly imitate exactly what Francis did. We are, however, to follow his example in the context of our own time.

Like St. Francis, we can stay in balance, to base our lives in our relationship with God, for our Rule also says, "As Jesus was the true worshipper of the Father, so let prayer and contemplation be the soul of all they are and do."

In the statue, Francis dances between the sun — the busyness, and the moon — the quiet of contemplation and prayer, of time spent with God.

Let us strive to keep the balance.

Pace e bene
Joanita

Communio is published four times a year: in mid-January and at the end of March, June, and September. For the fall 2010 issue:

Copy deadline: Sept. 23

Publication date: Sept. 30

E-mail items to Joanita M. Nellenbach, SFO, editor, sfowriter@att.net

ANNUAL REGIONAL GATHERING

BROTHERS AND SISTERS OF ST. FRANCIS REGION

July 30–Aug. 1, 2010

By Judy Haupt, SFO
BSSF Region minister

Our annual gathering will be held in the same location as last year, LifeWay Ridgecrest Conference Center, just minutes from Asheville, North Carolina.

The theme will focus on Youth and sharing ideas. Chapter of Elections for the Regional Executive Council will be held on Saturday afternoon.

We are honored to have our national minister, Deacon Tom Bello, SFO, join us as presider at our Chapter of Elections.

Our regional spiritual assistant, Father Linus DeSantis, OFM Conv., will give us the opening presentation.

Kelly Hart, will be our keynote speaker is. Kelly was a BSSF scholarship recipient to World Youth Day/Germany and is a graduate student in theological studies at Franciscan University. She'll speak about her walk with the Lord and her experience, past through present, of that World Youth Day.

Sister Bernadette Marie Cappola, OSC will also be with us again.

Lectures and workshops will be available for those not attending the election. Times have not been confirmed yet. Sign-ups will be available Friday evening and Saturday morning.

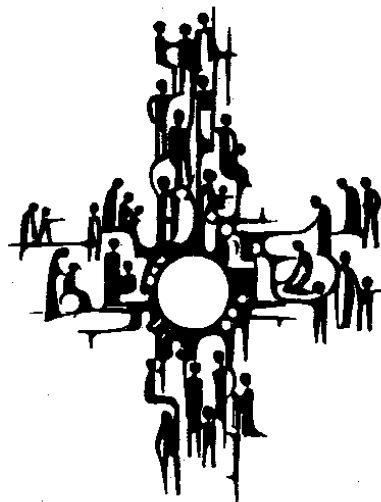
Scheduled topics on Saturday include the following:

- Sister Bernadette will speak and answer questions.
- Cricket Aull, SFO, will give a reflection on the “Symbolism in the Four Allegories,” which are a focal point of the Lower Basilica of St. Francis in Assisi. These allegories — depicting Chastity, Poverty, Obedience, and Francis in Glory — are beautifully painted on the lower basilica’s ceiling. We will look at these four scenes and use the rich symbolism displayed in this art to prayerfully reflect on our own call to follow in the footsteps of St. Francis.
- Kelly Hart and Kathy Taormina, SFO, will lead a discussion on youth and young-adult topics — “Youth, Young Adults and the SFO — Sharing the Charism.”
- Jon Strickland, SFO, Regional JPIC coordinator will lead a discussion on how we can work together for justice, peace, and integrity of creation.
- Helen Jenkins, SFO, will facilitate a workshop on “Mutual Invitation” and respectful communication.
- Joanita Nellenbach, SFO, will show the film “Clare and Francis.”
- Theresa Christie, SFO, will teach how to make a special rosary. Materials included.
- Time will be allowed to pray the Divine Mercy Chaplet and the Franciscan Crown.

Our annual gathering is a special time of sharing and participating. We all work together. Each year fraternities have offered to participate. Thank you!

Bring your fraternity banner, if you have one; and, if not, consider making one.

Please plan to attend and be a part of our community. See you there. T



2010 ANNUAL REGIONAL GATHERING
**BROTHERS AND SISTERS OF ST. FRANCIS
 REGION**

LifeWay Conference Center Ridgecrest, North Carolina
 Johnson Spring Building – 2nd Floor Azalea Room B&C

July 30–Aug. 1

Theme of Gathering: Celebrating Youth

FRIDAY JULY 30

- 3:00 P.M. Registration (Mountain Laurel Lobby) – St. Clare of Assisi Fraternity
 3:00 Meeting REC (Johnson Spring Board Room)
 4:00 Meeting spiritual assistants- (Mountain Laurel Board Room)
 Choir practice for cantors and musicians (Johnson Spring ?)
 5:00 Liturgy of the Hours- (Johnson Spring 2nd Floor Azalea Room B&C)
 5:30 -6:30 Buffet Dinner (tickets required)
 7:00 Welcome, Opening Prayer– Judy Haupt, Minister
 Introductions and Recognition of New Councils, New Attendees
 Review Agenda and Workshops by presenters
 7:15 Recognition of professed, SFO Anniversaries-
 Our Lady of Good Counsel Fraternity
 7:45 Celebrating Youth – Fr. Linus DeSantis
 8:45 First Call for Nominations Deacon Tom Bello, SFO National Minister
 Prayer for New Council
 9:00 Social (Mountain Laurel Lobby)

SATURDAY JULY 31

- 7:15-8:15 Breakfast Buffet
 8:15 Liturgy of the Hours Morning Prayer
 8:45 Second Call for Nominations
 9:00 Youth Activities
 Update on H2O project
 Youth Mission Trip - Betti Longinotti, SFO
 Guest speaker- Kelly Hart
 10:00 Third Call for Nominations
 10:15 Break
 10:30 Celebration of the Eucharist then*Procession to Eucharistic Chapel
 Stigmata of St. Francis Emerging Fraternity
 Noon- 1:00 Lunch
 1:00-4:30 Regional Fraternity Council Meeting Chapter of Elections
 **Opportunity Time incl. Workshops, Discussion groups, Rest
 4:30-5:30 Open Time
 5:30-6:30 Dinner buffet
 7:00 Announcement and Introduction of Newly Elected Council

See ARG AGENDA, page 7

ARG AGENDA, from page 6

7:30 Liturgy of the Hours Evening Prayer

8:00 Memorial for Deceased Members of Region- Immaculate Conception Fraternity

8:30 Social (Mountain Laurel Lobby)

SUNDAY AUGUST 1

7:15-8:15 Breakfast Buffet and time to check out

9:30 Celebration of the Eucharist, Morning Prayer – Mass of Installation

11:00 Closing Prayer

Theme Song

Adjournment

11:30-12:30 Meeting: Newly Elected and Outgoing Regional Executive Council

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-9:30AM Sun.**

**Opportunity Time – Time for reflection, sharing, napping and/or enjoying God's creation.

Workshops in Johnson Spring Classrooms 1, 2, 3 (Across from Azalea Room)

Room 3 A-D with 120 seats Sr. Bernadette Marie Cappola, OSC

Room 2 A-D with 120 seats -Cricket Aull, SFO

Room 1 A with 30 seats Youth Presentation and Open Discussion

Room 1 C with 30 seats JPIC /Apostolates Open Discussion

Room 1 C with 30 seats "Mutual Invitation" process

Room 3 A-D with 120 seats Divine Mercy and Crown Rosary

Johnson Spring Board Room with 16 spaces Rosary Making

Room 1 B & D with 60 seats DVD: "Clare and Francis"

REGIONAL FRATERNITY COUNCIL MEETING

Every elected Fraternity Minister and REC is a member of the Regional Fraternity Council.

Please be present or delegate this responsibility to another member.

OPENING PRAYER

Ritual of the Secular Franciscan Order

ROLL CALL

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

REPORT OF TREASURER

BUSINESS

Approval of Budget for 2011

Approval of Regional Formation Manual

OPEN FORUM – Please discuss items with regional minister before meeting.

CHAPTER OF ELECTIONS**ADJOURNMENT – CLOSING PRAYER**

MEMBERS OF FRATERNITIES, NEWLY FORMING GROUPS AND EMERGING COMMUNITIES ARE INVITED TO OBSERVE THE COUNCIL MEETING.

Immigration Workshop for Secular Franciscans

Sunday, July 11

9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

St. Francis Springs

Prayer Center

Russ Testa, facilitator

This program is part of the
Justice and Peace Institute of
St. Francis Springs
Prayer Center



The United States, like so many nations on the earth, is undergoing an enhanced experience of migration. Increased numbers of persons are moving within the United States and into the United States. This creates strains on those on the move and those experiencing new “neighbors.”

The Franciscan story also is one of itinerancy, one of movement. From the beginning, St. Francis and his early followers were people of faith on the road. This daylong retreat experience will help us explore insights from the Franciscan and larger Catholic tradition with regard to migration and immigration.

God calls us to do what is ours to do in our own time. Through prayer, stories, (our own and others), reflection, and the creation of a safe space for honest, civil conversation we hope to create an environment that will enable us to answer that call.

Russ Testa serves as the director of Programs, Policy & Organizing for the Franciscan Action Network, after serving from March 2008 through September 2009 as the organization’s founding executive director.

He has been the director of the Office of Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation for Holy Name Province of the Order of Friars Minor since its inception in 2000 — the same year he founded the Center for Ministry and Public life at Washington Theological Union. He was the director of both organizations until 2006. Russ has also worked in Campus Ministry at the University of Kansas, for Catholic Relief Services, and in a national training program with the Center of Concern.

St. Francis Springs Prayer Center has made special arrangements for the workshop to be presented with a Franciscan focus to our Secular Franciscan family. This special program will include lunch and Eucharist. The program is available to any Secular Franciscan and his or her family. There is no charge except for a donation for lunch.

This workshop is also being offered to the general public on July 10, from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. for \$25 per person.

Reservations required — call Ann Bauer at 336-573-3751

Please make your reservations by July 10

Workshop will be held at St. Francis Springs Prayer Center

477 Grogan Road, Stoneville, N.C. 27048

As the Father sees in every person the features of his Son, the firstborn of many brothers and sisters, so the Secular Franciscans with a gentle and courteous spirit accept all people as a gift of the Lord and an image of Christ.

From SFO Rule, Article 13



Formation book review

By Faye Martin, SFO

BSSF Region formation director

I would like to introduce you to *Poverty and Joy: The Franciscan Tradition*, by William J. Short, OFM, and *Clare of Assisi: A Heart Full of Love*, by Sister Ilia Delio, OSF, author of *Franciscan Prayer* and *The Humility of God: A Franciscan Perspective*.

Both books are included in the regional formation texts and resource list, which can be found in our *Provisional BSSF Region FORMATORS' Guidelines for Initial Formation*.

Father Evan Eckhoff, OFM, former spiritual assistant to my fraternity, Channel of Peace, chose *Poverty and Joy* as a way to introduce us to the history of the Order, the founders, others who helped shape the Franciscan tradition, and key themes.

Brother William, who also co-edited the three-volume *Francis of Assisi: Early Documents* — *The Saint*, *The Prophet*, and *The Founder*; writes in *Poverty and Joy* that Francis was convinced that he was being guided by “the Lord Jesus Christ to live a life based on the gospel.”

The friars, Brother William says, “were part contemplatives, in part popular preachers, who lived by the work of their hands, frequently living with the sick, and begged when necessary. ... They sought to reflect the face of Christ to the world, particularly to the violent and troubled world of Assisi itself.”

Each chapter examines a key theme: the Incarnation, Holy Poverty, lepers, hermitages, the cross, and creation. You will read how Bonaventure, Angela of Foligno, Jacopone da Todi, and John Duns Scotus helped shape the Franciscan tradition.

St. Francis' understanding of Holy Poverty came from reflecting upon John 14:6–9. The Son of God, as Brother William notes, “relinquished his wealth, status, and domination over others” — the foundation of how we are to live. “Following Jesus Christ's example, living *sine proprio*, means without anything of one's own. Today that implies the refusal to arrogate to one's self what belongs to all, because all belongs to the Creator. Everything is a gift, nothing is ‘property.’”

Clare's desire for Holy Poverty was not a glorification of physical poverty but her desire to find fulfillment in God. “My God my All!”

Showing how Clare helped shape our Franciscan tradition, Sister Ilia writes in *Clare of Assisi: A Heart Full of Love* that, “Poverty is not so much about want or need, but relationship. Poverty impels us to reflect on our lives in the world from the position of weakness, dependency, and vulnerability. It impels us to empty our pockets — not of money — but the pockets of our hearts, minds, wills — those places where we store up things for ourselves and isolate ourselves from real relationships with *God and others*.”

She explains that, “It means relinquishing that which we possess to smother the ego or barricade it against the intrusion of others. Holy Poverty is the antidote to human violence.” T

Despite all his legitimate reasons for discouragement, Francis was known as a man of deep and abiding joy. He knew that after all was done and undone, he was still “the herald of the Great King.” No one should ever doubt that Francis was quintessentially a man of love, and a man in love with the greatest of lovers. There was simply no bottom to his grateful happiness. He told his friars that it was their vocation “to lift up peoples' hearts and give them reasons for spiritual joy.” They needed no other justification for their life. They needed no other ministry in the Church. They, like he, were to be troubadours and minstrels of the Lord.

Father Richard Rohr, OFM, *Hope Against Darkness: The Transforming Vision of Saint Francis of Assisi in an Age of Anxiety*, p. 118

Charism: The gift that keeps on giving

From “Franciscan Family, Vocation, and Charism,”

www.franciscans.org.au/sfo/sfo26/3famvochar.htm

What is a charism?

Jesus endows his members with gifts to build his Body, the Church. These gifts are called “charisms.”

It is clear that in the letters of St. Paul the term *charism* has a double meaning. In the broad sense, it designates the “gift” of Christian life in general received at baptism. In the strict sense, it means a particular, specific “gift” received by an individual or by a group for the service and building up of the Christian community.

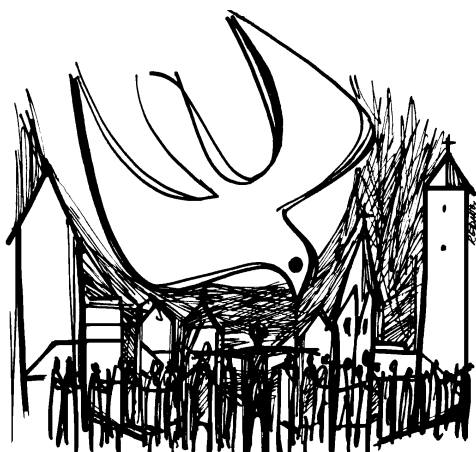
The Greek word *charisma* (from *charis*, grace, gift, present) had the generic sense of a free gift. In this sense it is used to denote Christian salvation, which is the free gift of eternal life, as St Paul explained to the Romans, “the present given by God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Rom 6:23).

However, it has a more precise meaning in other texts, particularly in Paul’s first Letter to the Corinthians. He writes, “Be ambitious for the higher gifts” (1 Cor 12:31). Here, charisms are special gifts that the Holy Spirit distributes to the faithful for the good of the whole community: “There are many different gifts but it is always the same Spirit; there are many different ways of serving but it is always the same Lord. There are many different forms of activity but in everybody it is the same God who works in them all.” (1 Cor 12:4-6).

Paul lists some of these gifts, such as prophecy, preaching, faith, healing, and the power of miracles (1 Cor 12:8–10).

Not all charisms had unusual or extraordinary manifestations. Some, such as that of apostolate, teaching, assistance, and government were obviously brought about and sustained by the Spirit for the ordinary service of the Church.

At Corinth the abundance and variety of charisms had created a delicate situation. There the gift of “speaking in tongues” was highly esteemed and avidly sought after. From the description given by the apostle (1 Cor 14:6-25), it seems that the gift came with a kind of ecstatic rapture during which enigmatic words or sounds were uttered, which then required someone with a charism for interpreting them. Paul was wary of persons presuming to speak “in tongues.”



All charisms are the Spirit’s work, but there is among the Spirit’s gifts a grading of value that is to be respected, and especially so in the Christian assembly (1 Cor 14:26-39).

Prophecy is the most useful for the good of the community, and therefore one should aspire to this. Paul exhorts the community to proceed with order and harmony in whatever has to do with charisms.

Paul affirms that love is above all charisms. Without love, every charism is empty, and love will remain when all charisms will have outlived their usefulness (1 Cor 13).

We speak of the charism of religious families, each of which has received from the Spirit through its founder a particular charism to realize a specific mission in the Church.

In the history of salvation, God has a loving design for each religious family that gives it its reason for existing, its identity and its proper mission. This does not, however, reduce it to a

See CHARISM, page 11

CHARISM, from page 10

mere instrument, predetermined in a divine plan.

The charism of religious life is not a rigid structure or program but a spiritual energy from the Holy Spirit, a power of life to be communicated. It is a dynamic force that incorporates religious men and women into a family gifted with a “charismatic mission.”

That is why a founder’s charism can never be identified with his or her “works” that are marked by the needs of the founding period, the 13th century in the case of St Francis.

A charism is a living gift, a breath of the creator Spirit at the service of a dynamic history that is never a simple repetition of the past. This life power, this spiritual energy, should constantly be adapted to times and places, to diverse societies and cultures and to the needs of people everywhere. It promotes a particular response to the Gospel for building the Body of Christ, the Church.

Franciscan charism

The Franciscan charism is the sum of gifts that God gave to St Francis to “rebuild my Church.”

References to the “specific charisms” of the different Orders of friars are not theologically correct and are divisive. Neither is it correct to affirm that the Secular Franciscans have a specific Franciscan charism. Rather, all Franciscans enjoy the one Franciscan charism, the gift that St. Francis received from God. Professed Secular Franciscans are full participants in the common Franciscan charism, as are professed friars and Poor Clares.

Fraternity is an essential characteristic of the Franciscan vocation and charism, both religious and secular. This charism is not given to an individual person but to a group of persons and that as times change it has to adapt to “the needs and expectations of the Holy Church” (SFO Rule, Article 3). The group is shaped by the Church, and it is only within the Church that the charism can thrive.

With regard to the “various ways and forms” (SFO Rule, Article 1), there is only the one Franciscan charism but there is a great variety of Franciscan states of life, histories, legislation, customs, habits, and spiritual emphases that distinguish one Franciscan Order, Institute or association from another.

The origin of the Franciscan charism lies within the Church of the time of St. Francis. At that time, a new way of living the gospel was needed. St. Francis gave birth to a new approach and had his way of life approved by the pope. His way of life gave birth to three Franciscan Orders, one of friars, another of contemplative nuns, and another of secular people, out of which religious institutes developed.

Francis gave rise to groups of secular brothers and sisters of penance inspired by his living the evangelical life. He associated them with his own vocation to restore the Church.

The Secular Franciscan Order participates in the charism of our common spiritual father, St Francis. This identity of charism has resulted in some Secular Franciscan individuals or fraternities strengthening the bonds of fraternity with the local friars, taking part in some hours of prayer, and collaborating in apostolic activities.

The relationship between religious and secular Franciscans is not one of seculars adopting the modalities of the Franciscan charism of their religious sisters and brothers, but one of “life



CHARISM, from page 11

giving union” with each other. This statement implies that the Seculars have their own modalities, their own secular way of living the Franciscan charism that is not the same as the way of their religious sisters and brothers, yet it is precisely by the combined contribution of various states of life and gifts that the Franciscan family is built and fulfills its mission.

The ability of the friars and the Secular Franciscans to acknowledge their specific difference, and yet to combine in practically expressing their common Franciscan charism, will be a sign of how they really love one another. The SFO General Constitutions state: “Fidelity to their own charism, Franciscan and secular, and the witness of building fraternity sincerely and openly, are their principal services to the Church, which is the community of love. They should be recognized in it by their ‘being’, from which their mission springs” (Article 100.3).

Vita Consecrata follows two models when discussing fostering and implementing co-operation between religious and seculars: exchange of gifts and sharing the charism.

We might look upon the exchange-of-gifts model as describing the situation when we contribute to another what he does not have, sharing what is different or specific. The SFO Rule furnishes many examples, such as Article 17, which speaks about living family life.

Sharing a charism according to *Vita Consecrata* (54) applies when the laity are invited to share more fully in the life and mission of a religious institute.

Being “secular” is a modality of the Franciscan charism, one of the “various ways and forms” by which the Franciscan charism is made present in the life and mission of the Church (Rule, Article 2). Moreover, being secular is an essential part of the Secular Franciscan way of life.

This characteristic is the key to understanding the Franciscan charism as lived by Secular Franciscans, as distinct from the Franciscan charism as it is lived by religious. The Rule exhorts Secular Franciscans to operate within the context of their lives, specifically “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” (Article 14).

One of the most important consequences of this charismatic modality of being “secular” is that the specific spiritual formation of the Secular Franciscan must cater for those whose vocation is, “motivated by the dynamic power of the Gospel,” to live in “secular” circumstances (Article 7).

The General Constitutions express the “secularity” of the Secular Franciscan when they say: “The secular state characterizes the spirituality and apostolic life of those belonging to the SFO” (Const. 3.1). **T**

Use Me

Dear Lord,

Use me to radiate love, peace, joy — your presence.

Use my hands, my feet, my eyes, and my tongue to demonstrate your message and spread your presence into here and now.

Use my heart, my mind and the talents and abilities you’ve granted me, to serve others by spreading your love.

Use my job as one means that will contribute to building a more beautiful earth, and hasten the coming of your kingdom on earth.

Use my smile to spread joy and more joy.

Let me play skillfully my part in your plan of salvation for all, Lord.

Dear Lord,

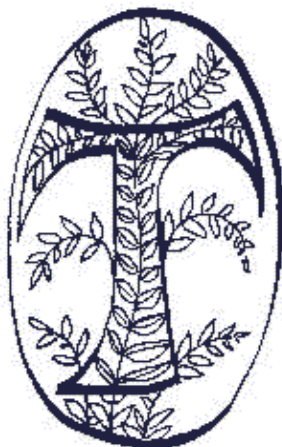
Please use me as an instrument of your will.

Use me to radiate you.

Jean Maalouf

Bold Prayers from the Heart

Editor’s note: This is one of the prayers that we prayed at the Annual Spring Retreat. (See story on the retreat, page 16.



Youth/Young Adult Ministry

By Betti Longinotti, SFO
BSSF YYA fraternal animator

Celebrate Youth!

As your fraternal animator I would like to encourage all fraternities to participate in activities that support youth in your parish, community, or as an individual apostolate, truly celebrating our youth!

Fraternity ministers received an e-mail from Judy Haupt to submit a paragraph reporting how they are celebrating youth with your fraternity, as requested within the most recent Tau-USA. I would also love to know what our regional fraternities and individual SFOs are doing in our region.

Our regional fraternity has been busy with youth but would like to see more direct interaction and support in the initiatives we have been embracing from both the fraternities and individual SFOs.

We are coordinating a mission trip to the St. Francis Inn, Philadelphia, July 11–19. Though it is a small group registered, we are blessed to be participating in a life-changing experience for these youth to serve the poor. We will have pictures and a report for you at the upcoming ARG.

We also are hoping to have a table at the Life Teen Youth Conference in Atlanta, July 16–19. Matt Hair, son of Randy Hair, SFO, minister of St. Francis of the Hills Fraternity, Hendersonville, N.C., has volunteered to be present, to represent BSSF YYA. If you are in the Atlanta area and can assist Matt with manning the table for a period of time over those dates, please let me know.

Also, at the upcoming ARG you should look forward in meeting one of our speakers, Kelly Hart. Kelly, now a young adult, was a BSSF scholarship recipient as a high school senior several years ago to the World Youth Day Pilgrimage to Cologne. Kelly went on to Franciscan University, earned her bachelor's degree, and is now earning her master's so she can work with youth ministries.

Reminding all that we've gone electronic:

- YYA Web site at: <https://sites.google.com/site/franciscanyouthsoutheast/>
- Facebook page — *Franciscan Youth and Young Adults of the Southeast*, and we would like to see more members join.
- my e-mail address is bettisfo@gmail.com

We hope you will check us out and keep us informed of how you are celebrating youth!

We also have just composed a brochure for our YYA Council. Please look for one at the upcoming ARG, or download from our Web site listed above, and perhaps take one back to your parish youth minister!

See you at the ARG! T

As I held the hands of one who hated his very being, as I listened to a man who described his whole life as worthless, as I looked through my own tears upon the face of one who had come to the Portiuncula seeking the mercy of God, I saw before me another Francis. I saw before me not a 13th-century Francis but a desperate young man seeking to change his life. I saw not the merchant's son seeking a knight's glory and imprisoned in Perugia but rather a wayward son seeking self-glory and imprisoned by his own self-hatred. I saw not the Francis who in his Testament had written, "When I was in the sin, the Lord led me ...," but the Francis before me who had been led by the Lord to sit there and to pray, "Bless me, Father."

Father Robert M. Stewart, OFM

"St. Francis and the Feast of Pardon," St. Anthony Messenger, August 1998

The Portiuncula Indulgence: Legend, tradition, rubrics



By Carol Ann Morrow

St. Francis said, “Holy father, if it please your Holiness, my wish is that, because of the great things which God has done in this place, all those who shall come here with lowly and contrite hearts shall have remission of all their sins, and that there shall be no dispute about this.” And the pope said, “I grant you that it shall be so.”

This is the testimony of the Lord James, priest of

Santa Lucia di Colle, given on Aug. 14, 1277, and included in the fourth revised edition of *St. Francis of Assisi: Writings and Early Biographies*, often called the *Omnibus*. It’s good to have, since nowhere in Francis’ own writings or in the early biographies by Thomas of Celano and St. Bonaventure, or even in the whimsical *Fioretti*, is the Portiuncula Indulgence mentioned.

And it is an incredible story. Prior to this indulgence with its simple requirements, the only such indulgence was offered for participation in a Crusade! And it was known only by word of mouth until 1921, according to Franciscan scholar Father Murray Bodo, OFM.

And now the privilege extends beyond the Portiuncula to churches throughout the world. The indulgence—a remission of the temporal punishment for sin if all the conditions are fulfilled—may be gained by the faithful from noon Aug. 1 to midnight Aug. 2 through a devout visit to a parish church, a cathedral or some other oratory (such as a chapel of the Franciscans). An Our Father, the Creed and another prayer of one’s choice are to be prayed. Reception of the sacraments of penance and Eucharist, as well as prayer for the intention of the Holy Father, are to happen within several days of the visit (see *Enchiridion of Indulgences*, especially #65).

In *Tales of St. Francis: Ancient Tales for Contemporary Living* (St. Anthony Messenger Press, 1992), Father Murray writes, “Though present Church practice does not emphasize the granting of indulgences, especially those attached to a particular place rather than to the practice of virtue, thousands of pilgrims still flock to Assisi on the day of the Portiuncula Pardon, some crawling on their knees through the large basilica to the Portiuncula chapel, which rests under the central dome.”

Francis would have been pleased that all who come with lowly and contrite hearts are finding pardon.

“The Portiuncula Indulgence: Legend, Tradition and Rubrics,” by Carole Ann Morrow, from *St. Anthony Messenger* magazine, ©1998 is used by permission of St. Anthony Messenger Press. 800-488-0488. www.americancatholic.org. All rights reserved.

Editor’s note: For a beautiful story of one Franciscan’s experience (an excerpt is on page 12), see “St. Francis and the Feast of Pardon,” by Father Robert M. Stewart, OFM, at www.americancatholic.org/Messenger/Aug1998/featurew.asp.

Brothers and Sisters of Saint Francis Region Calendar

Visitations

*Nashville, Sept. 20

*Bessemer, Ala., Oct. 4

*Asheville, Nov. 12

*Augusta, Ga., Jan. 9

*Charleston, S.C., Feb. 13

*Garden City, S.C., Feb. 14

*Hilton Head, S.C., March 6

*Franklin, N.C., March 8

*Morehead City, N.C., March 15

*Elizabeth City, N.C., March 16

*Raleigh, N.C., March 17

*Duluth, Ga., May 16

*Hendersonville, N.C., May 23

*Decatur, Ala., June 5

*Jonesboro, Ga., June 11-12

*Chattanooga, Tenn., June 12-13

*Charlotte, N.C., June 27

Knoxville, TN rescheduled to November

Fraternal

Madeline Rousseau

Willie Guadalupe

Willie /Madeline

Judy Haupt

Judy

Judy

Judy

Sara Nell Boggs

Jerry Rousseau/Pat

Judy

Judy

Judy

Faye

Sara Nell

Willie

Judy

Pastoral

Cricket Aull

Joanita Nellenbach

Cricket

Pat Cowan/Joanita

Cricket

Joanita

Joanita

Audrey Binet

Joanita

Fr. Linus DeSantis

Fr. Linus

Fr. Linus

Audrey

Kathy Taormina

Nancy Brochu

Laura Haukaas

Barbara Smith

Joanita

Audrey

Elections

*Hendersonville, N.C., Nov. 22, 2009

*St. Simons Island, April 11

*Winston-Salem, N.C., May 11

*Aiken, S.C., May 17

*Hickory, N.C., June 13

Asheville, N.C., July 15

Blairsville, Ga., Nov. 21

Presider

Sara Nell

Judy

Pat

Sara Nell

Pat

Pat

Formation Workshops

* Feb. 27 —Chattanooga, Tenn., at St. Stephen Catholic Church

*April 24, Burlington, N.C. at Blessed Sacrament Catholic Church

*June 19, Greenville, S.C., at Our Lady of the Rosary Catholic Church

REC

*November 14-15, 2009, Poor Clare Monastery, Travelers Rest, S.C.

*March 12-14, with Visitation Workshop Fr. Linus, Belmont, N.C.

*June 19-20 with formation workshop in Greenville, S.C.

Annual Regional Gathering

Ridgecrest: July 30-Aug. 1, 2010 Election / July 22-24, 2011 / Aug. 3-5, 2012

NAFRA Chapter Oct. 26-31, Franciscan Resource Center, Scottsdale, Ariz.

*Completed

BROTHERS AND SISTERS OF ST. FRANCIS REGION (61)

2011 BUDGET Proposed (5-12-10) Approved by REC (6-20-10)

EXPENSES

\$ 5,880	NATIONAL FRATERNITY FAIR SHARE (490 professed x \$12)
\$ 600	ANNUAL NATIONAL GATHERING
\$ 0	NATIONAL VISIT TO REGION – ELECTIONS/VISITATION (travel, lodging, stipend for 2 visitors)
\$ 5,200	ANNUAL REGIONAL GATHERING \$ 2,000 socials \$ 1,700 room, meals - REC \$ 400 audio visual etc. - equipment rental \$ 500 materials, handouts \$ 600 scholarship funds, if needed
\$ 4,200	EXECUTIVE COUNCIL GATHERINGS \$ 3,240 lodging 1 night for 3 meetings (12 members @ \$90) \$ 960 transportation costs for 3 gatherings
\$ 2,100 needed)	FRATERNAL – PASTORAL VISITATIONS/ELECTIONS (travel and materials, if needed)
\$ 900	JPIC and FYYA \$ 500 scholarship support \$ 150 materials \$ 250 travel
\$ 1,800	FORMATION (including workshops)
\$ 600	OFFICE SUPPLIES, POSTAGE, COPIES
\$ 1,800	SPIRITUAL ASSISTANTS (stipend, travel costs)
\$ 0	SPIRITUAL ASSISTANT COURSE (travel, lodging)
\$ 500	INTERNATIONAL FRATERNITY (CIOFS) DONATION
\$ 700	CHARITY
<u>\$24,280</u>	<u>TOTAL EXPENSE</u>

INCOME

\$ 19,600 REGIONAL FRATERNITY FAIR SHARE (490 professed x \$40)

\$ 4,680 OTHER

\$24,280 **TOTAL INCOME**

Retreat explores violence and peacemaking

By Jon Strickland, SFO

BSSF Justice, Peace, and Integrity of Creation coordinator

May the Lord grant you peace!

The Gospels and our SFO Rule call us to be peacemakers in a violence- saturated culture.

The Annual Spring Retreat has a different topic each year. This year's theme, "Learning to Live the Law Written on Our Hearts," was an opportunity to learn about what causes these violent behaviors and what we Franciscans can do to change — beginning with ourselves.

Several fraternities in our region have been getting together for a number of years for this retreat at the DuBose Conference Center in Monteagle, Tenn. This year, May 28–30, there were about 30 of us from Channel of Peace Fraternity, Chattanooga, Tenn.; Franciscan Martyrs of Siroki Brijeg Fraternity, Blairsville, Ga.; Seven Dolors of the Blessed Virgin Mary Fraternity, Nashville, Tenn.; Stigmata of St. Francis EC, Duluth, Ga.; and Sts. Francis and Clare NFG, Knoxville, Tenn.

Father Albert Merz, OFM, who, for 33 years has been in ministries related to promoting justice and peace and who now runs the Franciscan Peace Center in Nashville, had been invited to guide us.

He spoke on helping us to get in touch with the effects of living in our culture of violence. He paid special attention to discovering and dealing with nonrelational behaviors and building on our existing relational behaviors that are key to peacemaking within the Franciscan tradition.

This law of God written on each of our hearts is summed up in the two great commandments: love of God and love of one another. ("The first is this: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength. The second is this: you shall love your neighbor as yourself" (Mark 12:30-31; Deut. 6, 4-5; Matt. 22, 37-39).

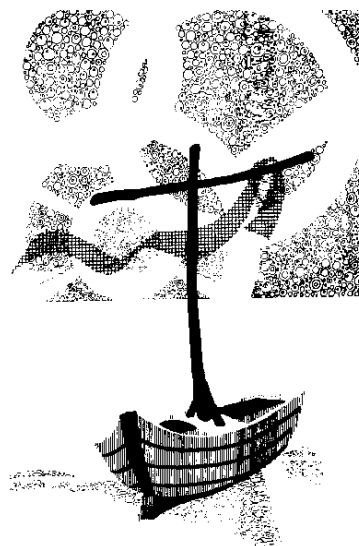
To become effective peacemakers, we all need to be sincerely committed to living this law. Father Al's presentations to us, and at the Franciscan Peace Center, are designed to help people grow in this commitment and are, therefore, different from the usual orientation of justice and peace seminars where the emphasis is on dealing with economic, political, and social change.

A sense of urgency dominates Father Al's presentations, which emphasize that we must become better peacemakers and help others become peacemakers.

"Consciously or not, we are continually being schooled in the logic and practice of emotional, verbal, physical, or structural violence." (Ken Butington, *From Violence to Wholeness*, Pace e Bene Franciscan Nonviolence Center, 1997, p. 2.) So many contemporary voices, writers, and teachers are attempting to understand and analyze the pervasive character of this violence in American culture. Aware of its pervasiveness, we realize that peacemaking will involve "getting at the root causes of violence."

Our individual and social woundedness is where individual, social, and cultural violence really begins.

Francis of Assisi clearly realized this: "For Francis of Assisi violence was not something 'out there' that he had to resist with some active or passive technique. Violence is of the human heart. It is in everyone, and the way to peace is the way to peace of soul. It means first of all acknowledging one's own potential for evil and that of others, then embracing it and allowing the grace of God to redeem it. Yet one's potential for sin and violence can never be totally



RETREAT, from page 17

erased, for one is always free to reject the grace of God.” (Murray Bodo, OFM, “Francis of Assisi,” in Joseph T. Culliton, CSB, “Nonviolence — Central to Christian Spirituality: Perspectives from Scripture to the Present,” *Toronto Studies in Theology*, Vol. 8.)

Francis did not content himself, though, with simply confronting the violence within himself or his immediate society. Having embraced reconciliation with his own experience of violence within his own soul, he went further by seeking to instill peace in his personal and social relationships. We see that attitude of peace in “The Lord give you peace,” his greeting to all he met.

To be peacemakers, we must address the violence that exists within us. What we discover in ourselves must lead us to further reconciliation and to peace in our personal relationships and in society.

Our Franciscan spirituality continues to inform us that prayer and contemplation are essential if we hope to develop any consistent response to our own violence. Contemplation can move us outside of our comfort zone toward action and new experiences, which can, in turn, bring us to further moments of contemplation.

Nonrelational behaviors — Seeds of Violence:

1. *Lack of meaningful communication* leads to further distrust and frustration.



2. *Unspoken assumptions* lead to more assumptions and misunderstandings.
3. *Closed mindedness* — retreating behind a wall of our own convictions, formed out of our life experiences, leads to stonewalling and a polarized effect; we cannot head off every situation, but we can accommodate creatively to some of reality, calling the other person to greater open-mindedness
4. *Overprotection of possessions* leads us to further closed-mindedness and protection of our time, energy, space, intentions, even to a sense of jealous protection of our ideas. Sharing our ideas can lead to clarification, growth, and extension, but, instead, we buy security systems, locks, and alarms.
5. *Lack of gratitude* leads to further forlorn behavior, lack of integration.
6. *Fear* gets in the way of understanding but is most often associated with our sense of security and safety, our health, and what others may or may not do, isolating us from others. We need to sort out what fears are reality-based and are related to our basic survival.
7. *Anger/resentment/reactions (vs. responses)* immediately signal that these are NON-relational behaviors. These are not “sins” but legitimate emotions elicited by the situation. Distinction is in how we use these emotions: Do we deal constructively with the situation or do we create more harm?
8. *Self-esteem issues* range between exaggerated/elevated views of self (independent, aloof, controlling, aggressive, egocentric) to poor or negative views of self as reactions to our own personal value, dignity, or worth; often directly associated with emotional, verbal, mental, physical, or sexual abuse
9. *Negative cravings and desires* — desire for the other person to have less or for oneself to have more; addictive.

RETREAT, from 18

10. *Disrespect of others* can range from verbal to emotional abuse.
11. *Exclusion* can be the MOST violent nonrelational behavior pattern since it pushes people away; can range from subtle (tokenism and access without equity) to blatant forms of exclusion (actual and physical exclusion)

Relational Behaviors: Seeds of Peace

1. *Contemplation and Prayer* — format is not as important as the intent; as Franciscans, we are called to the Office (Liturgy of the Hours) daily, but we should see it not as obligatory but as a genuine opportunity to encounter God. Perfect contemplative moments abound. We do not need to be alone in a forest or on an ocean shore; use a “reflective process” to simply sit with the reading, in the moment, reflecting on what is happening in life’s broader sense and how the reading touches on that life event
2. *Humility/truth* — co-relative terms; we must recognize who we are and that we are created in God’s image; seeing that dignity in ourselves allows us to recognize it in others; to love someone is to see the face of God
3. *Dependency on God* — Jesus does not intend the “birds in the air” story to apply to starving mothers in Africa, but really wants us to see that if society is doing its job at ensuring true equality for all, then everyone will have sustenance accordingly — sharing across the board, equal access to time, energy, space, food, with a concentration on the common good.
4. *Integrity and personal integration* — truly living by what we believe, focusing heart, mind, body, and soul on what we believe, and applying it to our lives
5. *Communication and listening* can lead to better relationships and open love; silence and reflection are necessary aspects of communication, allowing the reflection and timing (delay/space between stimulus and response) to know what and how to communicate what is needed, using the filters around us (experiences, images); can often feed off of the unspoken nonverbal cues as well
6. *Hospitality* is our answer to the call to serve. In the story of the Good Samaritan, it is crucial to realize that the Samaritan stopped in a spot that was very dangerous for him, where he could have fallen victim to foul play; but he cares for the stranger in a variety of ways, repeatedly. The Levite and the rabbi, acting on whatever controlled their behavior, continued on, but they may be simply foils to the plot, emblematic of the standards of the day; representing that, when institutions fail to meet personal needs, the responsibility falls on the individual
7. *Compassion* — the primary Gospel virtue; must be in touch with our own dignity and worth, knowing ourselves, allowing us to offer ourselves to others so that they can identify their need for God; our own pain allows us to relate to another’s pain. When Jesus confronted those accusing the woman caught in adultery, he bent to write in the dirt. Did he list the sins of the accusers so that they, on seeing their own sins listed, drifted away? Or did he simply doodle in the sand to demonstrate his sheer lack of interest in what they were saying/doing? Or, was he simply writing the Law on the ground by which the accusers saw God’s higher law?



RETREAT, from page 19

8. *Reverencing creation.*
9. *Service* — unconditional, without expectation of a return.
10. *Generosity* — Francis went beyond merely dropping off clothing and food for the lepers at the appointed safe place to actually embracing the leper, thereby changing his own life forever; the poor widow gave her last coins, while the rich young man retained control of his wealth.
11. *Forgiveness* must be unconditional or it is not forgiveness at all; calls on us to enter ourselves to forgive our own faults as well as others' faults.
12. *Reconciliation* — a step beyond forgiveness, continuing the relationship with the other person beyond simply balancing the scales.
13. *Affirmation* — seeing the good in others and affirming it to them
14. *Inclusion* — reaching out to and embracing everyone. Jesus washed the feet of all 12 apostles, even the one he knew would betray him. **T**

Congratulations

Newly Professed

St. Maximilian Kolbe Fraternity

Charlotte, N.C., June 19

Rob Buchanan, SFO

Gabe Conway, SFO

Valerie Gebhardt, SFO

Angela Kaufman, SFO

Amber Luckey, SFO

New Councils

Five Georgia Martyrs Fraternity

St. Simons Island, Ga., April 11

May 11

Minister: Ann Mallon, SFO

Longinotti, SFO

Vice Minister: Lois Cutia, SFO

Lindquist, SFO

Secretary: Laurie Smilski, SFO

Weppner, SFO

Treasurer: Sherry Barrett, SFO

Fraternity of St. Clare

Winston-Salem, N.C.,

Minister: Betti

Vice Minister: Jim

Secretary: Dave

Treasurer: Kris Jonczak,