



The Joy of Francis

Together for the Gospel!

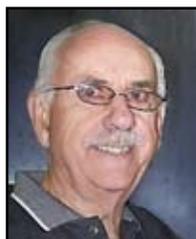
Spring, 2008 - Vol. 15, No. 2

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Joseph Lee and His wife are recognized by Patrick Mendes, SFO National Minister, for his service as the Korean member on the NAFRA multi-cultural committee at the St. Francis Regional Ministers' Meeting and Fraternal Visitation, January 18 - 20, 2008, page 3.



To my Franciscan Family: Preparation for the Upcoming General Chapter

by Rock DeSpain, Regional Minister

Recently, I was forwarded a message from our Minister General asking our help in a major project by CIOFS (our International Council) to gather information at the local level and submit it to CIOFS. It has been over 40 years since local fraternities have been asked for their input. That last occurred when our Rule of 1978 was being produced in the 60's Because of the importance of this project by CIOFS, the St. Francis Regional

executive Council has let National know that we will submit complete responses to the questions that CIOFS has requested. In order to accomplish this, St. Francis Region will utilize all the Spiritual Assistants, Formators with Certificates and those now attending the Lay Spiritual Assistant/ Formator sessions and assign them as facilitators. They will be assigned to local fraternities and conduct

Preparation, continued page 2





Encarnación del Pozo, Minister General, OrdoFranciscanos Secularis, (OFS), Consilium Internationale, Via Vittorio Putti, 4 00152 ROMA, Italia

Preparation, continued from p. 1

the gathering of information in an “Ongoing Formation” setting on the fraternity meeting days. This is not a one meeting situation, but will be spread over several months, and will temporarily take the place of your normal ongoing formation...

All facilitators will go through extensive training so that when they arrive, they will be ready to go. They will bring copies of the letter from our Minister General and the format that we are asked to follow. The information gathered will be shared with each fraternity to assist your formation programs. Please share this historic event with your councils and fraternities. It is a golden opportunity for our multi-cultural voices to be heard by CIOFS in this diverse and ever changing world.

Peace and blessings

Rock DeSpain, SFO
Minister – St. Francis Region



THE PROFESSION OF SECULAR FRANCISCANS AND THEIR SENSE OF BELONGING TO THE SFO

Prot. N.1807
Circ. 64/02-08
Rome, March 5, 2008

To the National Councils of the SFO

To the International Councillors SFO and Youfra

Dear Brothers and Sisters:
May the Lord give you peace!

In order to be fruitful and become a strong moment of grace for the entire Order, the upcoming General Chapter must be preceded by:

- * intensive and constant prayer in all the fraternities throughout the world, so that the Spirit of God our Lord can assist the capitulars of each country in allowing themselves to be guided by Him for the wellbeing of the Order and for the validity of the mission entrusted to the Franciscan Secular Order;
- * a serious intellectual preparation

For the first objective, the CIOFS Presidency has diffused the text of a prayer (*page 9*) to be recited in the entire Order. For the second objective the Presidency has prepared an introductory document on the theme of the Chapter: “The Profession of the Secular Franciscans and their sense of belonging to the SFO”, which we are here attaching, with the purpose of stimulating within the Secular Franciscan

Order a global reflection to help in the individual (international councillor) and collective (all the members and the fraternities of our Order) preparation to the Chapter.

The national councils and the international councillors, in particular, are asked to divulge this important working tool and assure that it is the object of attentive reflection in their national fraternity; it is, in fact, essential that the maximum attention be given to the preparatory phase of the general Chapter so that, with the help of the Holy Spirit, it will achieve its purpose and define the objectives of the Order for the next six years.

I would like to particularly ask the international councillors to adequately prepare themselves for this important event and commit themselves to studying in all earnest the theme of the Chapter. Only then can they truly fulfil their institutional responsibilities and become authentic and prepared representatives of their national and international reality.

I confide in each and every one of you, and on behalf of the Presidency and the general Secretariat I wish all my brothers and sisters in the world a Happy Easter.

Your sister and minister,
Encarnación del Pozo

The Preparatory Document may be found at:
<http://www.ciofs.org/circ/gia8en64a.htm>



Ministers' Meeting and Fraternal Visitation Report

We had a visitation from NAFRA at our annual meeting in January of the fraternity ministers in St. Francis Region.

Below, is the letter sent to St. Francis Region by Patrick Mendes, SFO, our National Minister and Fraternal Visitor that contains his observations of St. Francis Region.

Please note Patrick's remarks on:

- The validation of the Formation programs was strongly commended.
- The National visitors were impressed with our Seminar program and asked us to share the videos, PowerPoint presentation and reference work with the rest of the Regions in the USA.
- In Patrick's Recommendation part of the letter, he "strongly supports and encourages us to continue those dynamic ongoing formation workshops."
- Our involvement in Franciscan courses and workshops was endorsed and encouraged. They loved the fact that we were including scholarships as a line item in our annual budget.
- Our progress in Ethnic diversity was recognized.
- In the summation our

communication with the local fraternities was lauded.

- The National visitors were very happy with the ethnic diversity represented on the Regional Executive Council.
- Fr. Kevin Quelly, TOR, our NAFRA Pastoral Visitor, was also our Pastoral Visitor three years ago. At that time, he expressed disappointment in the make up of the Regional Executive Council. At the last election, I brought this up to the fraternity ministers and they responded. They elected a Korean/English speaking Councilor, a Vietnamese/English speaking Councilor and a Spanish/English speaking Councilor to the Regional Executive Council. That is why he and Patrick were so happy about the present make up of



Fr. Kevin Quelly, TOR, National Spiritual Assistant

the REC. This also enabled us to do visitations and elections in all our languages.

Enjoy Patrick's comments.

Rock

Visitation Report on page 4



Fraternal Visitation Report St. Francis Region Marywood Retreat Center, Orange, California January 18 - 20,2008



Patrick Mendes, SFO, National Minister

Patrick Mendes, SFO, National Minister conducted the Fraternal Visitation of St. Francis Region concurrently with the Pastoral Visitation conducted by National Spiritual Assistant, Fr. Kevin Queally, TOR.

Preparatory information :

The pre-visitation questionnaire was very thoroughly and thoughtfully completed and received by the visitors prior to the date of visitation. We thank the Regional Executive Council for their diligent work.

Demographics:

Canonically established fraternities:	32
Emerging Fraternities:	2
Newly forming groups:	6
Professed brothers and sisters:	953
Candidates:	126
Inquirers:	95
Spiritual Assistants:	29

Records:

Regional Directory of Local Fraternities and Ministers provided and up to date. Regional Norms: Well developed and up-to-date. There were a few additions and amendments voted upon and enacted by the Regional Fraternity at this Chapter. Permanent Minutes: Reviewed by the fraternal visitor. They are well organized and reflect the work of the Regional Executive Council. Treasurer's books and reports: These are meticulous; easy to review and reflect careful stewardship of the Region's financial resources.

Newsletter:

The Regional newsletter is called *The Joy of Francis*. It is very polished and well done. It is published three times yearly and is posted on the Region's website. The editor is to be commended for a job well done!

Apostolic activities:

The brothers and sisters are very active in the ministries of their parishes and participate in such activities as feeding the hungry and caring for the poor. The Region is very supportive of Amazon Relief among its other works of mercy. There are 2 Youth and Young Adult Groups in the Region.

Formation:

The Region has been working in a very focused way on issues of formation. They have a solid program in place and are highly successful at reaching the majority of their fraternities. There is genuine enthusiasm for the programs in place. The Council is to be commended for their dedication and hard work. Their efforts are bearing good fruit. There are a variety of opportunities for on going formation which are encouraged by the Regional leadership. One of



National Minister Patrick Mendes, SFO, addresses the gathered Ministers of the St. Francis Region.

the sisters is presently enrolled in the ICFL program from St. Francis University in Pennsylvania and is very enthusiastic about the course. She shared her impressions with the community gathered.

The Fraternal visitor made the community aware of both ICFL and the Summer SFO Workshop sponsored by St. Francis University, Loretto, PA and endorsed by the National Executive Council.

Ethnic Diversity:

The Region is very ethnically diverse and the ethnic fraternities of the Region are flourishing and growing with excellent support from the Regional Executive Council. The fraternal visitor had the opportunity to have dinner and visit informally with the leadership of the various ethnic fraternities of the Region. The brothers and sisters are very enthusiastic, sharing and welcoming. They genuinely enjoy each other and even though they speak several different languages, the communication is warm, friendly and sharing. They genuinely enjoy each other's company as well as that of the English speaking community.

Summation:

This is a vibrant and healthy region which is definitely **on the GROW!!** Including the several vibrant newly forming and emerging groups, they will soon have some 40 fraternities in the Region. The leadership has done a lot to ensure communication and sharing of opportunities for growth in our Franciscan spirituality and charism. District liasons provide a readily available resource as well as a link to the REC. They put themselves at the service of the fraternities in their respective districts.

The pastoral and fraternal visitors met with the Regional Executive Council on the evening prior to the Chapter. We discussed their concerns and hopes for the Region. The REC works well together and the ethnic diversity of the Region is well represented on the Council.



The REC is very supportive of the re-visioned structure of the Apostolic Commissions and the Regional Minister took time to explain the implementation as well as our participation in the Franciscan Action Network and what it means to us as members of the larger Franciscan Family.

The region is blessed with many resources, such as the ability to record workshops and presentations etc. We encouraged them to share these resources as they are able, with other regions with fewer resources. The Region's response to this suggestion was very positive and enthusiastic.

Of the three First Order obediences to which fraternities of the Region are bonded, only one, the Conventual Friars have appointed a Regional Spiritual Assistant. There is a paucity of friars and Franciscan Sisters in the Region and the Region has moved very proactively in preparing lay spiritual assistants to fill the gap. The program is highly successful and would serve well as a model for other Regions.

Recommendations:

I strongly support and encourage you to continue these dynamic on going formation workshops and I do encourage the Regional Minister to share information about the approaches and methods used by the Region with other Regions - perhaps ideally at the National Chapter of NAFRA as well as using the list serve.

Continue to promote servant leadership development through workshops throughout the Region. An additional approach I would suggest is that Ministers at both the local and Regional level do role modeling/mentoring by inviting interested brothers and sisters to attend a REC or local fraternity council meeting on occasion. The opportunity provides insight into servant leadership in action. A word of caution - invite only 1 or 2 persons at any one time. This allows you to give 1:1 attention to the guest and will not disrupt the work of the Council.

Worthy of your consideration, given the rapid growth of the Region and the great geographic distance covered by the Region, begin to think about and prepare for the time when it will be best for you to "parent" a new third Region for California. Begin to have the outline of a plan in place.

In conclusion I want to express my sincere thanks to the brothers and sisters of the Region and the Council for your warm welcome, hospitality and complete cooperation. It has been a wonderful experience of fraternity for me.

Respectfully submitted,

Patrick Mendes, SFO, National' Minister, Fraternal Visitor



Gathering of the leadership of the Language fraternities in St. Francis Region the night before the visitation.



ST. FRANCIS REGION SCHOLARSHIP FUND

By Sylvia Paoli, Vice-Minister

Exciting things continue to happen in our Order and in our Region. Because so many opportunities are being given to us to broaden our knowledge, enhance our Franciscan education and deepen our spirituality, the Regional Executive Council decided to create a scholarship fund to assist our Franciscan brothers and sisters in attending some of these programs. In the budget adopted by the Regional Fraternity at the January annual meeting, \$1,000 was allotted for Scholarships. Obviously that is only a token amount which will not go very far, but it emphasizes the importance we believe it should have.

As an example of programs which assist with our own ongoing formation and give us better tools to help in all the formation programs there is an extensive program offered by mail through St. Francis University in Loretto, Pennsylvania, called Institute for Contemporary Franciscan Life. There are a total of eight courses offered; six of them are \$350 each, and two are \$150 each. Each person who enrolls is assigned a mentor from the ICFL faculty, which includes some distinguished friars, sisters, and SFOs. The Kaleidoscope Institute in Los Angeles, which provided the two speakers we all enjoyed at our Regional Gathering in October, offers outstanding training in multiculturalism.

A National Formation Workshop will be given in Missouri in mid-

May featuring Teresa Baker, SFO, national formation director, Anne Mulqueen, SFO (former national formation team and now our International Councilor), and Fr. Richard Trezza, OFM. The cost of room and board for that meeting is \$260 (double room). A seminar entitled "Development of Lay leadership in the Secular Franciscan Order" will be given in June at St. Francis University, by Fr. Bernard Tickerhoof, TOR and Anne Mulqueen, SFO. The cost of that seminar is \$225 registration, and \$170 room and board (double room). In September, in Michigan, a Congress for Spiritual Assistants will take place, featuring the four national spiritual assistants teamed with four SFOs. The cost of that Congress is \$300.

All of these programs are highly recommended, but as you can see, all require funding. There are also transportation costs to get to the various locations. Yet, everyone who is able to take any of the courses will not only find them of great personal benefit but will be able to better assist with formation in their own and other fraternities.

In addition to these, when Rock, Fr. Steve and I had the opportunity to meet in February with Fr. Mel Jurisich, OFM Provincial, we were told by Fr. Mel that while the province simply cannot provide spiritual assistants to us because of their lack of numbers, they do have friars with great expertise in Franciscan spirituality who can and will provide seminars, such as the ones above, for us so that we can learn from them to take full control of and manage our own Order. So

you can see that there is a desperate need for a viable scholarship fund so that we can send people to such programs.

Therefore, if your fraternity has been fortunate enough to receive bequests and other donations that have enlarged your treasury beyond your own needs, please give serious consideration to making a donation towards the Region scholarship fund. If you are not so blessed, you might be inclined to hold fund-raisers for the Fund. We ask that you discuss this among your fraternities as you pray for guidance in the wise use of the funds entrusted to you and consider the Scholarship Fund for a donation.

For related information, see **Bequests**, page 13



Love Is The Measure

Dorothy Day; The Catholic Worker, June 1946

What we would like to do is change the world – make it a little simpler for people to feed, clothe, and shelter themselves as God intended for them to do. And, by fighting for better conditions, by crying out unceasingly for the rights of the workers, of the poor, of the destitute ... we can, to a certain extent, change the world; we can work for the oasis, the little cell of joy and peace in a harried world. We can throw our pebble in the pond and be confident that its ever widening circle will reach around the world. We repeat, there is nothing that we can do but love, and, dear God, please enlarge our hearts to love each other, to love our neighbor, to love our enemy as well as our friend.



Season of Giving



December 19, 2007 — \$1000.00 check presentation to Valley Restart Shelter. The grant came from The Southern California Gas Company's **Season of Giving Program**. From left to right: Jim Harr, SFO; Rocky Burge, SFO—Employee of So. Cal. Gas Co.; Linda Rodgers-- Executive Director of the Valley Restart Shelter; Jess Green, SFO; Rock DeSpain, SFO.

Through the Southern California Gas Company's *Season of Giving Program*, a corporate campaign in support of employee's working with charitable nonprofit organizations — but primarily in response to the efforts of the SFO fraternities of St. Francis and St. Clare of Hemet, and St. Padre Pio of Moreno Valley, a check in the amount of \$1000.00 was presented to Linda Rodgers, Executive Director of the Valley Restart Shelter.

Valley Restart Shelter in Hemet is a 24-hour facility open every day of the year to provide housing and food to people in need. The Shelter's mission is to provide essential services to families, adults, and children who lack basic resources

to sustain themselves within the community.

Over the past year, actually over many years, the two SFO fraternities have taken responsibility for providing dinner on the 3rd Monday of every month. Other churches and organizations work to help provide dinners on other nights, and according to Linda, she does not know how she could make it through without that help.

In various ways and forms but in life-giving union with each other, they intend to make present the charisma of their common Seraphic father in the life and mission of the Church. II (from Chapter I of the Rule).



From St. Clement of Rome

The strong must make sure that they care for the weak.

The rich must be certain to give enough to supply all the needs of the poor.

The poor must thank God for supplying their needs . . .

We all need each other: the great need the small, the small need the great.

In our body, the head is useless without the feet and the feet without the head.

The tiniest limbs of our body are useful and necessary to the whole.

Human Rights, Poverty & Extreme Poverty

A position paper on *Human Rights, Poverty and Extreme Poverty* was written by Franciscans International, based on the responses received to a questionnaire that was sent to Franciscan brothers and sisters who work with the poor, and represents input from all continents and all branches of the Franciscan family.

The document is intended to be used as a tool to raise the issue of poverty and extreme poverty at the national, regional and international levels, and to enable the Franciscan family to present its concerns and recommendations to States and different bodies and experts at the United Nations. It is available at:

www.franciscansinternational.org



Tertiary Mass

In the Diocese of San Bernardino

August 16, 2008

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

May the grace and peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. It is with great joy that I announce to you a very special Eucharistic celebration on Saturday, August 16, 2008, 10 a.m. at St. Paul the Apostle Catholic Church (14085 Peyton Drive, Chino Hills, CA, 91709). The Secular Branch of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and Mary Congregation is hosting.

The purpose of the Mass is to bring together the members of the Third Orders and Secular Branches of Religious Orders and Congregations in the Diocese of San Bernardino and its neighbors, and celebrate their vocations and valuable contributions to the Church.

Please put August 16th on your calendar. You and all the members of your community and their family and friends are cordially invited. The Mass will be open to everyone. A reception will follow the Mass in Maher Hall of the parish. (Coordinate through your local minister.)

This is a unique opportunity for us to get to know each other, and to learn about the spirituality of the various Secular Branches and Orders.

Sincerely yours in Christ,
Marta Kassai, SS.CC.Sb.
Overall Event Coordinator

4006 Laurel Ct.
Chino Hills, CA 91709

Prayer for the General Chapter of the Secular Franciscan Order

The 2008 General Chapter will be celebrated in November, 2008, in Hungary

Most High Glorious God, we praise You for Your presence in the world and for the tremendous gift of our Franciscan vocation.

We beseech You to inspire every brother and sister of the Secular Franciscan Order as we prepare for the upcoming General Chapter in Hungary.

Grant the necessary wisdom to our brothers and sisters who will take part in the Chapter to develop the priorities for the Order for the next six years and to elect those You want to lead and animate us.

Guide and direct us so that we may follow the Gospel and our Rule more closely and be coworkers with You in the rebuilding of the Church and the World.

We ask this through Christ our Lord and through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary, St. Francis, St. Clare, and our holy patrons St. Elizabeth and St. Louis.

Amen

Oración por el Capítulo General de la Orden Franciscana Seglar

Oh alto y glorioso Dios, te albamos y te damos gracias por tu presencia en el mundo y por el don inmenso de nuestra vocación franciscana.

Concede, Señor, a cada hermano y hermana de la Orden Franciscana Seglar tu santa inspiración en el camino de preparación del próximo Capítulo General en Hungría.

Concede la sabiduría necesaria a nuestros hermanos y hermanas que formarán parte del Capítulo, que sepan discernir las prioridades para la vida nuestra Orden y elegir a aquellos que tú quieres para guiarnos y animarnos.

Fortalécenos, Señor, para que podamos seguir el Santo Evangelio y nuestra Regla con mayor fidelidad y seamos tus colaboradores para reconstruir la Iglesia y el mundo.

Te lo pedimos por Jesucristo nuestro Señor y por intercesión de la Bienaventurada Virgen María, San Francisco, Santa Clara y nuestros santos patronos, Santa Isabel y San Luis.

Amen.



I was Blind but Now I See...

A Lenten Day Retreat with Michael Harvey, OFM and Jose Marcos Gonzalez, OFM

by Ray Hardwick

On Saturday, March 8, the Social Concerns Office and Office of Small Faith Communities of the Diocese of San Bernardino sponsored a Lenten retreat day entitled, *That I May See*, at the Diocesan Pastoral Center. Over 150 persons participated.

It was unique to my experience in that we started with the Liturgy of the Word, the homily was the retreat experience and we ended the day with the Liturgy of the Eucharist.

Fr. Jose Marcos Gonzalez, OFM, of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, was retreat director for the Spanish-speaking, and he guided participants to mine scripture for spiritual insight. Fr. Michael Harvey, OFM, pastor of SS



Retreat Director (English Language) Fr. Michael Harvey, OFM

Simon & Jude parish in Huntington Beach, was retreat director for English speaking participants. He helped us to identify “who God is in our lives” and “how we respond to sin and temptation.” Their presentations of Franciscan theology and spirituality were presented in a truly spirit-filled, thought provoking manner for both groups.

Fr. Michael began with a picture of the pool of Siloam where Jesus healed the blind man. Fr. Michael said that we should embrace our own blindness, trust and follow Jesus so that we might be healed.

After leading us in a breathing meditation to get us quieted, centered and focused, he shared that it is a true miracle when we finally wake up to what God has always meant for us to be! We can do this when we take time to be connected to the Divine. Then he told us a story about a beggar who had been sitting on an old box by the roadside for 30 years begging for spare change. A passerby asked the man if he had ever looked in the box. The beggar replied, “No, what’s the point, there is nothing in there.” The stranger insisted he look inside and when the beggar pried it open, he was astonished to find it filled with gold. Fr. Mike asked us to look inside ourselves to discover



El Padre José Marcos Gonzalez, OFM, se enfocó en el texto de la escritura, ayudando a los participantes en Español desglosar de la historia como un alimento espiritual.





Fr. Harvey and Fr. Jose bless the congregation after Mass

the treasure God put there.

After a brief cosmology introduction to get us out of our myopic viewpoint, he asked for our definitions of God. Then he took us through what is called “Sandbox Theology,” that quite a few Catholics are stuck in. This views God as angry, or the big policeman in the sky who’s just waiting to catch us in sin so he can damn us to hell, etc., etc.

He introduced us to St. Francis of Assisi and the *Canticle of Brother Sun*, followed by an introduction to St. Clare. He told us that 80% of Catholics and all Protestants follow Dominican / Scholastic Theology. This is the theology espoused by St. Thomas Aquinas and St. Augustine. The starting point of this theology is Good Friday and the Crucifixion and the emphasis is on sin. The other 20% of Catholics follow Franciscan Theology as taught by Francis, Clare, St. Bonaventure, and Blessed Duns Scotus that starts with Christmas and

the Incarnation with the emphasis is on Grace and Original Blessing.

Fr. Michael took us through a basic introduction to Franciscan Theology and spirituality. He told us the best, least wrong description of God, Jesus, the Holy Spirit and the Sacraments was one word, LOVE. After showing us an Icon of the Holy Trinity in which the one viewing it is placed in the middle of all that LOVE. He ended with a quote from Teilhard de Chardin who said,

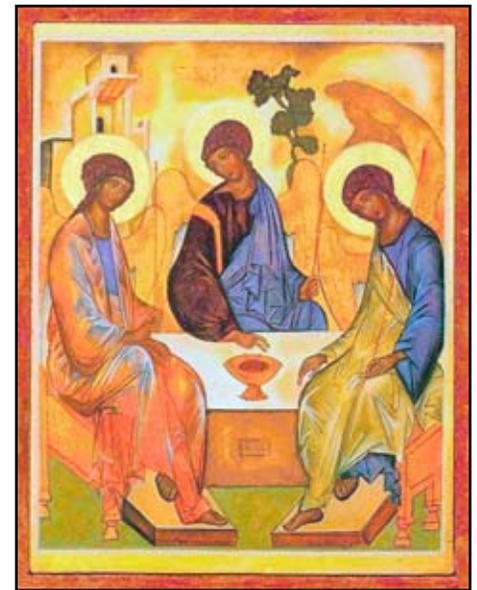
Someday, after mastering the winds, the waves, the tides and gravity, we shall harness for God the energies of love, and then, for the second time in the history of the world, we will have discovered fire.

Fr. Mike spoke of ORIGINAL sin and ORIGINAL GRACE, pointing out that the state of GRACE is the position of openness, receptivity, and vulnerability to the presence of

God. What keeps us from GRACE is SIN, defined as the fracturing of a relationship. After a discussion on what constitutes sin, he asked the question, “What is Heaven? What is Hell?” He quoted St. Gregory of Nysa who said, “Heaven and Hell are exactly the same thing—the love of God.” He went on to say that everything is in God, therefore Hell is in God, for nothing exists outside of God. When we asked, “What was God doing in Hell,” he answered by saying, “He is loving the people there.”

The rest of the day was taken up discussing, “The Three Centers of Intelligence” and the Seven Deadly Sins plus two (the patterns of behavior

That I May See, continued p. 14



The Icon of the Trinity was painted circa 1410 AD by Andrei Rublev.

It depicts the three angels who visited Abraham at the Oak of Mamre - but is often interpreted as an icon of the “Old Testament” Trinity.

The image is full of symbolism designed to take the viewer into the Mystery of the Trinity.



Kiss a Leper with Amazon Relief

by Jan De Spain, SFO



Jan De Spain, SFO

the Amazon River. The poverty in the region can hardly be described. Many children and families live in overcrowded shacks, built on stilts over perpetually fermenting sewage. There are no roads into these areas — only foot traffic over precarious docks. And then there's the heat, the humidity, the disease, the lack of food.....

The *San Damiano Foundation* has prepared a 32-minute video, showing the work of Amazon Relief. The video is available in either DVD or VHS (tape) format. To secure a copy, write

Amazon Relief,
c/o James B. Flickinger, SFO
1456 Blythe Drive NW,
Grand Rapids, Michigan 49504

His e-mail address is
flickingersfo@prodigy.net or
his phone number is (616) 453-9104

Specify that you would like a copy of the video *Embracing the Leper*, and indicate whether you prefer the video in DVD or VHS format. There is no charge for the video.

Peace, Jan



Have you *Kissed the Leper* yet? That's the question I asked of all the minister's that I had e-mail addresses for right after Easter. My inquiry was to see how many ministers had presented information and the DVD to their fraternities for consideration of support for Amazon Relief. I have received only a few replies back so far.

If you are one of those who wanted a DVD to share, but did not get one, please request one from Jim Flickinger, SFO.

I know of two groups so far that have been supporting Amazon Relief for some time. One sister has placed them in her will. I also found out that Linda Nelson's fraternity supports a leprosarium in Tala, Philippines.

Thank you to all who are *kissing the leper* in many ways. I hope to hear from more of you as you view the DVD.

Amazon Relief brings aid and Christ's love to "at risk" children and the poor who live in "The Green Hell"— an area near the equator, 1,200 miles up





Home with Hope

Come, you who are blessed by my Father. For I was . . . a stranger and you welcomed me.

Might you be called by Jesus to welcome back into the community those least of his brothers and sisters reentering society after imprisonment?

Volunteers are very much needed to work with the San Bernardino Diocesan *Home With Hope* mentoring program. Mentors demonstrate the love of Christ to returning former offenders who have already begun the process of rehabilitation while in prison. They do so by providing spiritual and emotional support, referrals to concrete assistance, and a welcoming introduction to the Church.

For additional information about *Home With Hope* and training for volunteer mentors please call:

Diocese of San Bernardino Ministry of Social and Community Services,

Verne Schweiger
909.885-7101

Sr. Carmel Crimmins, R.S.M.
909.475-5475



MAKING BEQUESTS

By Sylvia Paoli, Vice-Minister

Some of our fraternities have recently been fortunate in receiving bequests from people who remembered the fraternity in their Will. Many educational institutions and charitable organizations have long encouraged their alumni or members, and others, to remember the school or charity in their Wills. We would like to bring this means of making gifts to the Order to the attention of our brothers and sisters. Our Scholarship Fund could benefit greatly from such bequests, and would allow us to leave something for those who follow in our footsteps as Secular Franciscans. You should consult your attorney to draw up a Will, but the language set out below can be used to identify the recipient of any bequest you would like to make in your Will.

I, (name), of (city, state, ZIP), give, devise and bequeath to St. Francis Region of the Secular Franciscan Order of the U.S., located in Southern California, the sum of [written amount or percentage of estate or description of property] for the Region's Scholarship Fund.

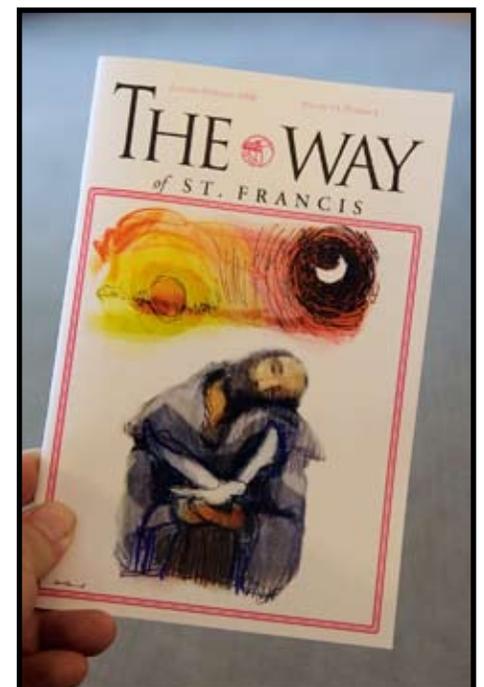
If you wish to leave the gift to honor someone, you can add language such as: "in honor of (name)" or "in memory of (name)." You could also specify that a scholarship be awarded in that person's name. Sometimes a person will leave a large sum, and specify that a scholarship (in any amount, or in a specific amount)

be awarded annually to someone in the decedent's name or in the name of someone the decedent wanted to honor. Occasionally with large gifts, the giver will specify that the principal be held and only the interest used to give annual (or other) scholarships.

Please consider our regional Scholarship Fund in your Will, knowing that it will benefit many of our brothers and sisters in the future.



The Way of St Francis



Today the Franciscan tradition is continually reborn in the lives and works of the Franciscan Friars, the Poor Clares, the Franciscan Sisters and Secular Franciscans. Our mission at *The Way* is to give you a view of our world through the eyes and ears and hearts of those who follow Francis in their daily lives.

Franciscan Friars of Santa Barbara

<http://www.sbfranciscans.org/THEWAY/>



that blind us from Grace). The two deadly sins added to the original seven were Fear and Deceit.

In the discussion of the seven deadly sins plus two, Fr. Michael pointed out that each dominant sin in our life is a result of a particular lost essential quality in childhood combined with a compensating belief or mask which results in the pattern that keeps us from GRACE. He showed which Grace or Virtue was needed to overcome that particular dominant sin. He concluded saying

The work of conversion is seeing the world as it is, and not as it appears from inside the box my basic sin has created, causing me to see through the lens/mask of my sin.

We then celebrated the Liturgy of the Eucharist and I have to say from a personal point of view that I never have been so profoundly moved by any day, weekend, weeklong retreat that I have ever attended as I was by this particular day. I would like to end this article with a quote that Fr. Michael used at the end of his presentation. Thomas Merton said,

The beginning of love is to let those we love be perfectly themselves, and not to twist them to fit our own image. Otherwise we love only the reflection of ourselves we find in them.

The success of this year's retreat has guaranteed that next year, on March 7 and 14, 2009, a Lenten retreat will be held based upon the Catholic Social Teaching: *Care for God's Creation*. 

San Bernardino / Riverside District Retreat

by Geri Merchant, SFO



An enlightening Lenten retreat was held March 8th, at Holy Spirit Church in Hemet. It was sponsored by St. Padre Pio Fraternity of Moreno Valley and the St. Francis & St. Clare Forming Fraternity of Hemet. This was truly a spiritual and rewarding day. Br. John Gray, BBSE, Spiritual Assistant at the Moreno Valley Fraternity, was the facilitator of the event. There were about 65 in attendance, many coming from other fraternities in the area, including family and friends.

Br. John presented topics on: Family, Friends and Foe; Mass in slow-mo; How would I like to be remembered?; and Biblical Prophecy in End Times. The environment Brother presented with each talk was inspiring as it was the lead-in and example for each presentation.

The first part was presented prior to the luncheon gathering with our Franciscan brothers and sisters and guests. After Lunch the 2nd, 3rd & 4th parts were presented. There was time for question and answers and sharing. The gathering ended with a raffle of a sterling silver Trinity Cross in memory

of Norma Candelaria. Proceeds from the raffle went to the Valley Restart Center for the Homeless food bank in Hemet.

***It was a day well spent
In preparation for lent
It was a spiritual call
And nourishing for all
Learning the word,
Understanding the gospels
Is worth the while
For God's apostles*** 

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A Reminder

Mike Morris SFO, Web Master

If you know of any events we might be able to attend together, let me know. Also, if you have access to the Internet you can look at our Calendar located on our Regions website,

www.stfrancisregion.org

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The Joy of Francis

I promise to live all days of my life the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ in the Secular Franciscan Order by observing the Rule of Life.

May the grace of the Holy Spirit, the intercession of the Virgin Mary and our holy father Francis, and the fraternal bonds of the community always be my help, so that I may reach the goal of perfect Christian Love.



Ministers' Meeting and Fraternal Visitation, January 18 - 20, 2008