

Up to Now

Newsletter of the St. Margaret of Cortona Region of the Secular Franciscan Order

Covering the District of Columbia, Maryland, Delaware, Virginia,
and portions of West Virginia and Pennsylvania

Volume 15, Issue 2

Let us begin again, for up to now we have done nothing.



Fr. Philipps Philippus, OFMCap

November 2011

Nominations for Regional Council

In March 2012, St. Margaret of Cortona Region will elect new officers. We need each fraternity to submit nominees for the offices of Minister, Vice-minister, Secretary, Treasurer, Formation Director, Area Councilor MD/PA, Area Councilor Metro D.C., and Area Councilor VA/WVA.

When submitting a name, give the fraternity name and the office for which the person has agreed to run. Those nominated for office must consent to the nomination. A nomination committee will be announced at the Regional Annual Meeting on December 3.

Those nominated will be asked to submit a short biography, which is to include SFO experience, as well as other pertinent experience.

From the General Constitution of the Secular Franciscan Order:

THE OFFICES IN THE FRATERNITY

Article 51

1. While firmly upholding the co-responsibility of the council to animate and guide the fraternity, the minister, as the primary person responsible for the fraternity, is expected to make sure that the directions and the decisions of the council are put into practice and will keep the council informed about what he or she is doing.

2. The minister also has the following duties:

- a. to call, to preside at, and to direct the meetings of the fraternity and council; to convoke every three years the elective chapter of the fraternity, having heard the council on the formalities of the convocation;
- b. to prepare the annual report to be sent to the council of the higher level after it has been approved by the council of the fraternity;
- c. to represent the fraternity in all its relations with ecclesiastical and civil authorities. When the fraternity acquires a juridical personality in the civil order, the minister becomes, when possible, its legal

representative;

- d. to request, with the consent of the council, the pastoral and fraternal visits, at least once every three years.
- e. to put into effect those acts which the Constitutions refer to his or her competence.

Article 52

1. The vice-minister has the following duties:

- a. to collaborate in a fraternal spirit and to support the minister in carrying out his or her specific duties;
- b. to exercise the functions entrusted by the council and/or by the assembly or chapter;
- c. to take the place of the minister in both duties and responsibilities in case of absence or temporary impediment;

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Minister's Message



RELATIONSHIPS

As I traveled to the National Chapter this year, my thoughts were remembering the many relationships that we have throughout our lifetime.

T We are spouses, when by the Holy Spirit the faithful soul is united with our Lord Jesus Christ; we are brothers to him when we fulfill the will

of the Father who is in heaven.

T We are mothers, when we carry him in our heart and body through divine love and a pure and sincere conscience; we give birth to him through a holy life which must give light to others by example.

T Oh, how glorious it is to have a great and holy Father in heaven! Oh how glorious it is to have such a beautiful and admirable Spouse, the Holy Paraclete.

T Oh, how glorious it is to have such a Brother and such a Son, loved, beloved, humble, peaceful, sweet, lovable, and desirable above all: Our Lord Jesus Christ, who gave up his life for his sheep and prayed to the Father : "Oh holy Father, protect them with your name whom you gave me out of the world. I entrusted to them the message you entrusted to me and they received it. They have known that in truth I came from you, they have believed that it was you who sent me. For these I pray, not for the world. Bless and consecrate them, and I consecrate myself for their sakes. I do not pray for them alone; I pray also for those who will believe in me through their word that they may be holy by being one as we are. And I desire, Father, to have them in my company where I am to see this glory of mine in your kingdom."

These excerpts from our rule animate and guide us with how to live and grow in relationship with the Lord and with each other. Our world needs our witness of loving relationships! Pray with me that we can be the spouses, mothers, fathers, brothers and sisters that we are called to be.

Mary Thuman, SFO

Regional Minister



Mark Your Calendar



December 3, 2011 — Regional Annual Meeting. Tau Fraternity, Herndon, Va., 9:30 a.m.-4:00 p.m.

December 10, 2011 — Life and Justice Concerns of the Catholic Church in Virginia. Holy Family Parish, Dale City, Va. More information on page 15.

December 10, 2011 — Advent Retreat Day with Sister Ilia D'Elio, OSF. Franciscan Monastery of the Holy Land, Washington, D.C. Registration form on page 16 must be submitted by December 1.

March 2-4, 2012 — St. Margaret Cortona Regional Formation Workshop. Bishop Claggett Retreat Center, Buckeystown, Md. Registration form on page 17.

March 24, 2012 — Regional Elections. Franciscan Monastery of the Holy Land, 9:30 a.m.-4:00 p.m.

April 21, 2012 — The St. Margaret Cortona Regional Candidates Retreat, Shrine of St. Anthony, Ellicott City, Md., from 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Registration form on page 18.

July 3-8, 2012 — National Quinquennial. Holiday Inn Northshore, Chicago, Ill.

October 5-7, 2012 — Regional Retreat. Priestfield Retreat Center, Priestfield, W.Va.



Bishop Claggett Retreat Center, Buckeystown, Md.

Regional Formation Director's Message

Greetings to all my Franciscan colleagues!

Much of my Franciscan work these days has been preparation for two big events for this coming spring of 2012: the long-awaited regional formation workshop and the third annual Inquirers' and Candidates' Day of Recollection.

Let's talk first about the regional formation workshop. The date has been set for the weekend of March 2-4, 2012, at the Bishop Claggett Retreat Center in Buckeystown, Md. (northern Frederick County). This is a 266-acre facility set in the near western Maryland countryside. It has many different features to offer its 10,000 or so guests each year. Having a mission statement of "Serve People!," it focuses on team development, strategic planning, spiritual renewal and education for all groups that use it. It has a good variety of technological equipment as well. It also offers several locations for activities and sleeping accommodations, and because of this, there will be some walking distances to travel for the workshop weekend.

The Regional Council has asked that the workshop be mandatory for our fraternity formation director's and/or formation team members, although, because of limits on capacity, only two per fraternity will be able to attend. There is much more about this facility, including photos. I invite you to go to the facility's website at <http://www.claggettcenter.org/meeting-facilities.php>. Registration for this weekend is included with this issue of Up-To-Now. All fraternities are asked to register their representatives as soon as possible and to consider financing, if need be, their attendees.

As indicated, there will be some walking distances involved in the weekend activities, so please indicate on the registration form whether some sort of assistance is needed here. Also, at the request of the facility, please indicate any dietary needs, as well on the registration form. We'd like to arrange transportation for those who will find it a burden to walk long distances. So if you have a van and will be able to provide transport for our brothers and sisters who are not able to walk from place to place, please let us know.

The National Formation Commission (NFC), which presented the National Formation Workshop last May, has asked all the regions that attended to replicate the workshop for their own fraternity-level formation directors and team members as a weekend of training all around to enhance the SFO formation process. As Mary Lou Coffman and I attended as representatives of St. Margaret of Cor-

tona Region, we will be the main facilitators of our weekend in March.

The NFC has also asked the regions not to distribute the much-talked-about *For Up to Now (FUN) Manual* to their fraternities until their representatives have attended the regional formation workshop. So this is all the more reason it will be important for all of our fraternities to attend our workshop in March. All the participants of the workshop will receive a copy of the *Fun Manual* to use with their fraternity's formation program. Our regional formation team, Sue Burke, Mary Lou Coffman, Ann Corro, Miguel Maguilon (Tirada), Jeanie McLees and me, will be the staff for the weekend. We plan a walk through of the center for Saturday, February.

Now let's talk about the Inquirers' and Candidates' Day of Recollection. It is to be held again at the Shrine of St. Anthony in Ellicott City on Saturday, April 21, 2012 (third Saturday; Easter is April 8). Mary Lou Coffman will be the main facilitator of the event. The theme will be "Our Hearts are Ready, Lord, Our Hearts Are Ready." We will develop the idea that the first Seculars were Peter, Andrew, James, and John, who left their nets at once when Jesus said "Come after me and I will make you fishers of men." What does it mean to follow? What do we give up and leave behind? What do we gain? The format for the day will be more interaction in smaller groups for discussion. A registration form for this event is also included with this issue of Up-To-Now. The cost for the day is \$30.00 per person, includes a light refreshment breakfast upon arrival, a complete lunch and any materials. The day will begin at 9:00 a.m. and end roughly around 3:00 p.m. We will attend the noon mass regularly scheduled at the Shrine. The thematic activities will be scheduled for the morning and afternoon.

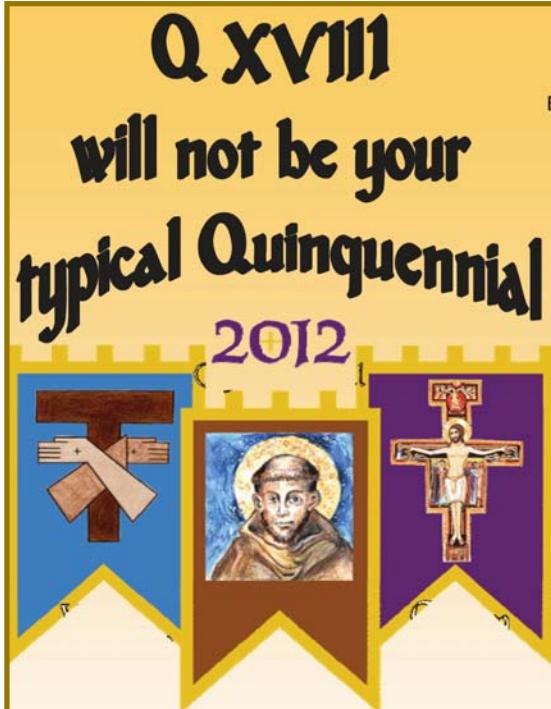
Many have requested that we pay particular attention to an aspect of this day of recollection that has not been emphasized at the first two. The activity is designed for and geared toward our sisters and brothers to be, that is, our inquirers and candidates. Former participants and staff of the first two days of recollection have expressed some concerns as to the content and topics addressed during the course of the day. The day of recollection was originally designed, long before the first one two years ago to be an activity of preparation for a prospective sister or brother of our fraternal community, those who are in discernment and considering whether they have the call to our Franciscan life. We, as those already professed and committed, should encourage and assist them and even consider it

(Cont'd on page 5)

(Cont'd from page 1.)

- d. to assume the functions of the minister when the office remains vacant.
- 2. The secretary has the following duties:
- a. to compile the official acts of the fraternity and of the council and to assure that they are sent to their respective proper recipients;
- b. to see to the updating and preservation of the records and the registers, noting admissions, professions, deaths, withdrawals, and transfers from the fraternity;
- c. to provide for the communication of the more important facts to the various levels and, if appropriate, to provide for their dissemination through the mass media.
- 3. The master of formation has the following duties:
- a. to co-ordinate, with the help of the other members of the council, the formative activities of the fraternity;
- b. to instruct and enliven the inquirers during the time of

- initiation, the candidates during the period of initiation formation, and the newly professed;
- c. to inform the council of the fraternity prior to profession, concerning the suitability of the candidate for a commitment to live according to the Rule.
- 4. The treasurer, or bursar, has the following duties:
- a. to guard diligently the contributions received, recording each receipt in the appropriate register, with the date on which it was given, the name of the contributor, or the one from whom it was collected;
- b. to record in the same register the items of expense, specifying the date and the purpose, in conformity with the directions of the fraternity council;
- c. to render an account of his or her administration to the assembly and to the council of the fraternity according to the norms of the national statutes.



WE ARE SURE YOU WILL BE INSPIRED AND ENLIVENED, AND WILL ENJOY THE FELLOWSHIP OF HUNDREDS OF BROTHERS AND SISTERS.
THIS IS A "WORKING" MEETING,
A CHAPTER OF MATS FOR THE SFO IN THE U.S.

We will explore and reflect upon the wisdom and gifts in our Franciscan heritage, allowing the Spirit to deepen and widen our sense of vocation.

The week will culminate in a process of discernment on the future direction of the SFO in the US.

After every presentation, there will be small group time for sharing and reflecting on what we will have just heard. This culminates in a period of discussion and discernment, as leaders from all the small groups come together with the NEC to share and discuss what insights developed in the small groups. The conclusions from that discussion will be shared at the closing liturgy, and we will depart with a new understanding of the blessing of our vocation as Secular Franciscans.

PLAN TO JOIN US, JULY 3-8, 2012

THE HOLIDAY INN NORTHSIDE, CHICAGO, IL

- Rooms are \$89/night, single or double (some rooms may hold up to 4 sharing closely).
- Registration will be around \$300 (which includes all meals; actual to be determined soon).
- We encourage every fraternity that is able to send one person.
- Space is, however, limited to about 600.
- Information about how to register and reserve lodging will appear in the next TAU-USA.

See you in Chicago! Peace and all good—Quinquennial Planning Committee
Clare McCluggage, SFO & Patrick Mendes, SFO, Co-Chairs

(Cont'd from page 3.)

our duty to promote such activities as the day of recollection to give them opportunities to seriously consider the strong gospel-based life of a secular Franciscan. So, if your fraternity has inquirers and candidates, rather than attend yourself, encourage them to attend and assist, if possible, the day. Promote it as an activity of service to them to help them to make that commitment to the Gospel life.

On to the youth formation planning subcommittee. This subcommittee, under the leadership of Jeanie McLees, is moving full-steam ahead. Having received official approval by the regional council at its last meeting on September 24, they are currently working on formulating a mission statement and standards of operation and recruitment of youth formators. A special thank you goes out to Harry Ford of St. Joseph Cupertino fraternity for drawing up a rough draft of these guidelines and practices for the subcommittee. The subcommittee is in the process of planning a youth ecology presentation for Del Camino fraternity this spring. This event will involve a tree-planting at Capuchin College in observance of Earth Day of 2012. The subcommittee is also open to further ideas and membership. Whether you are an inquirer, candidate or fully-professed of any amount of years, especially if you are versed in youth formation or planning (although you really don't have to have this expertise or experience) we would like to have you. Call Jeanie at JeanieMcLees@cox.net or me if interested. The subcommittee will be working with the youth of Del Camino Fraternity as it continues its work on planning a youth/young adult formation program.

The regional Formation Team will meet on January 21, 2012. At this time, we will be finalizing our presentations and plans for the regional formation workshop and the day of recollection, among others. We are open to any member of any fraternity to be on either our regional team or the youth subcommittee. If you are interested in any aspect of Franciscan Formation, please give any of us a call. We all have talents and gifts to offer.

I have not made any visits to individual fraternities since the last issue of Up-To-Now, but it looks like I will be seeing you a lot over the next few months, at the upcoming regional affairs. Others of my team have been, however, making fraternity contacts by way of other items of business. Keep in contact with them if you need any formation needs met. We are all so busy, but we still will make visits at your request. Just let me, or any of our team members, know by either phone or email as much before the date of the event you want us to visit as possible. We'll be glad to serve! And from all of us: May the love and peace of Christ be with all of you in the upcoming holiday season!

*Mike Huether
Regional Formation Director*

Litany of Humility

O Jesus! meek and humble of heart,	Hear me.
From the desire to be esteemed,	Deliver me, Jesus.
From the desired to be loved,	Deliver me, Jesus.
From the desire to be extolled,	Deliver me, Jesus.
From the desire to be honored,	Deliver me, Jesus.
From the desire to be praised,	Deliver me, Jesus.
From the desire to be preferred to others,	Deliver me, Jesus.
From the desire to be consulted,	Deliver me, Jesus.
From the desire to be approved ,	Deliver me, Jesus.
From the fear of being humiliated,	Deliver me, Jesus.
From the fear of being despised,	Deliver me, Jesus.
From the fear of suffering rebukes,	Deliver me, Jesus.
From the fear of being calumniated,	Deliver me, Jesus.
From the fear of being forgotten,	Deliver me, Jesus.
From the fear of being ridiculed,	Deliver me, Jesus.
From the fear of being wronged,	Deliver me, Jesus.
From the fear of being suspected,	Deliver me, Jesus.
That others may be loved more than I,	Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.
That others may be esteemed more than I,	Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.
That in the opinion of the world,	
others may increase and I may decrease,	Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.
That others may be chosen and I set aside,	Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.
That others may be praised an I unnoticed,	Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.
That others may be preferred to me	
in everything,	Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.
That others may become holier than I,	
provided that I may become as holy	
as I should,	
Amen and Amen	Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.

*Rafael Cardinal Merry del Val (1865-1930),
Secretary of State for Pope Saint Pius X*

FMS missionaries teach the world, touch lives

A dictionary is a precious thing in Zambia, costing three days wages of a common laborer.

There is only one copy in the English comprehension classes taught by Franciscan Mission Service missionary Sandra Bradford, SFO. She carries it with her so that her 100 students can learn the meaning of unknown words they find in textbooks or magazines.

One morning, a bright student asked, "Mrs. Bradford, do you know the definitions of all the words in the English dictionary by memory?" Sandra responded that she knows a lot of words used in the articles and stories they read together. But just like her students, she has to use a dictionary to look up words used in science, math, economics and government. The girl sighed and said, "That is good. I was afraid that I would have to memorize them all, because I want to be an English teacher like you some day."

At the same school, Sandra's husband Bryce teaches tenth grade math. While Sandra has helped gather books into a library, Bryce has assisted in setting up a computer lab. These rare resources are bright spots of learning and opportunity for local students.

The Bradfords are just two of several of our missionaries using their experience and training to serve as educators in impoverished communities around the world. Education has been core to the organization since its founding in 1990 because it's a wonderful way to engage in the ministry of presence and to work towards systemic change.

Prisoners, farmers, school children, college students and villagers have learned math, English, religion, ecology, computers and more with FMS missionaries over the years. Debbie Ludwick, part of the 14th group commissioned by the organization, even taught karate in Bolivia from 2000 to 2002. Debbie also taught English at the jail, school and local parish.

Today in Bolivia, husband and wife Joel Vaughn and Lynn Myrick split their time teaching at several locations. In addition to prison ministry, they work with small children and youth. At the pastoral juvenile, or youth center, Lynn shows films to students on Wednesday nights. She is excited to help select the films, create questions about them and lead a discussion after the weekly screenings.

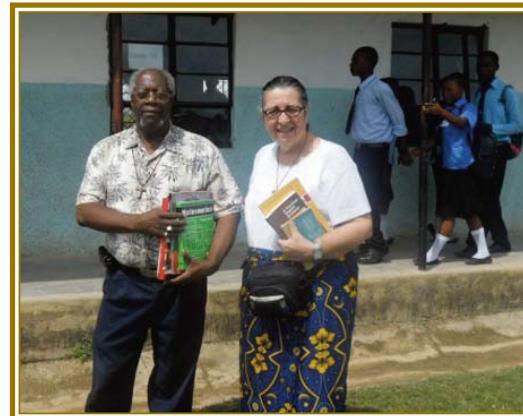
Earlier this year, Lynn and Joel taught at the rural Unidad Academica Campesina — Carmen Pampa where many of the students will be the first in their family to have an upper-level education and professional career. They return

home with their degrees in agronomy, nursing, veterinary science, education and ecotourism to change and revitalize their marginalized communities.

We are thankful for this opportunity to share our stories from mission with you. For more stories from the field, check out our blog,
<http://franciscanmissionservice.blogspot.com/>

For more information about us, visit
www.franciscanmissionservice.org.

By Kim Smolik, FMS Executive Director



FMS missionaries and Bryce Sandra Bradford teach English and math in Zambia.



A student of FMS missionaries Lynn Myrick and Joel Vaughn gives a presentation about plants at the Unidad Academica Campesina — Carmen Pampa, Bolivia.

Did you know?

Many Popes have been members of the Secular Franciscan Order: Popes Gregory IX, Blessed Gregory X, Innocent XII, Pius IX, Pius X, Pope Martin V, Clement XII, and all Popes from Pius IX to and including John XXIII.

From the website of the Saint Clare Fraternity of the Secular Franciscan Order, Omaha, Neb.

<http://members.cox.net/sfobro/page1.html>

Around the Region

RECEIVED AS CANDIDATES

Bill Brewster, Tau Fraternity, Herndon, Va.
 Sandra Cannon, Tau Fraternity, Herndon, Va.
 J. Patrick Enderson, Mt. St. Sepulchre Fraternity, Washington, D.C.
 Oyoua M. Hoba, Mt. St. Sepulchre Fraternity, Washington, D.C.
 William Kidwell, Mt. St. Sepulchre Fraternity, Washington, D.C.
 Kady Konan, Mt. St. Sepulchre Fraternity, Washington, D.C.
 Lorraine Scheider, Tau Fraternity, Herndon, Va.
 Vicki Shanholtz, Tau Fraternity, Herndon, Va.
 Laura Thompson, Tau Fraternity, Herndon, Va.

NEWLY PROFESSED

Ed Burgee, sfo, St. Joseph Cupertino Fraternity, Ellicott City, Md.
 Lynn Cohen, sfo, St. Joseph Fraternity, York, Penn.
 Geri Flynn, sfo, St. Joseph Cupertino Fraternity, Ellicott City, Md.
 Ling Guiron, sfo, Mt. St. Sepulchre Fraternity, Washington, D.C.
 Cornelia Hart, sfo, Mt. St. Sepulchre Fraternity, Washington, D.C.
 Polly Howard, sfo, Mt. St. Sepulchre Fraternity, Washington, D.C.
 Mary Musselwhite, sfo, St. Conrad Fraternity, Annapolis, Md.
 Louis Remlin, sfo, Mt. St. Sepulchre Fraternity, Washington, D.C.

Dave Weir, sfo, Mt. St. Sepulchre Fraternity, Washington, D.C.
 Rosemary Whelan, sfo, St. Joseph Cupertino Fraternity, Ellicott City, Md.
 Deborah McNeilly-Williams, sfo, Mt. St. Sepulchre Fraternity, Washington, D.C.
 Winston Williams, sfo, Mt. St. Sepulchre Fraternity, Washington, D.C.
 Jerry Yu, sfo, St. Joseph Cupertino Fraternity, Ellicott City, Md.

NEW SPIRITUAL ASSISTANT

Br John Paul Kuzma, OFM Cap., St. Conrad Fraternity, Annapolis, Md.

Congratulations to Our Newly Elected

Our Lady Queen of the Angels Fraternity, Lancaster, Penn.
 Minister: Kathryn Arndt, sfo
 Vice-Minister: Julie Rasp, sfo
 Secretary: Rosa Mastromatteo, sfo
 Treasurer: Audrey Shadeck, sfo
 Formation Director: George Garbrick, sfo
 St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Fraternity, Thurmont, Md.
 Minister: Sue Tichy, sfo
 Vice Minister: Jim O'Brien, sfo
 Secretary: Claudette Lucas, sfo
 Treasurer: Elena Spitzer, sfo
 Formation Director: Rick Cooley, sfo
 Tau Fraternity, Herndon, Va.
 Gil Donahue



At the September 4 Tau-SFO General Meeting, Bill Brewster (second from left), Sandra Cannon, Vicki Shanholtz, Laura Thompson, and Lorraine Scheider are received as Candidates in the Rite of Admission ceremony conducted by Formation Director Dick Clarke and Minister Bill Bouffard. Gil Donahue accepts his new role of Tau-SFO Vice-Minister as Minister Bill Bouffard reads from the Celebration of the Fraternity's Chapter of Elections.

Finding God in Community

“And let the peace of Christ control your hearts, the peace into which you were also called in one body. And be thankful.” (Col 3:15).

Some years ago I attended a symposium on religious experience. A variety of speakers made presentations on how they tried to experience God. One woman, a professor of religious studies, shared how she spent nearly three hours each day meditating, using a strict method for centering prayer. She went on to say that, during those periods of prayer, she sometimes felt God’s presence quite intensely.

During the question period, I asked her this: “How would you compare the feelings you have when you meditate privately in this way to the feelings you have when you are at the dinner-table with family or friends?” Her response: “There’s no comparison, not in terms of religious experience. At table, I sometimes have nice, secular experiences, but in prayer I really meet God!”

I’m both pagan and Christian enough to have reservations about that answer, not because I doubt the power or importance of private prayer, we could all use more of it, but because of what such an answer says about God and our experience of God. What’s at issue here?

Someone, I think it was Buckminster Fuller, once said: “God is a verb not a noun.” At one level, that statement is dangerously false. At another, however, it affirms something very important and Christian about our relationship to God, namely, that God is not, first of all, a formula, a dogma, a creedal statement, or a metaphysics that demands our assent. God is a flow of living relationships, a trinity, a family of life that we can enter, taste, breathe within and let flow through us.

“God is love,” scripture says, “and whoever abides in love abides in God and God abides in him or her.” Too often, we miss what that means because we tend to romanticize love. We’ve all heard this passage read at weddings; appropriate surely, but, within that circumstance, all too-misunderstood for it is pictured as romantic love, as falling-in-love, wonderful and holy though this may be. Thus, at a wedding, we can easily miss the sense of what this text means. It might best be rendered this way: “God is community, family, parish, friendship, hospitality and whoever abides in these abides in God and God abides in him or her.” God is a trinity, a flow of relationships among persons. If this is true, and scripture assures us that it is, then the realities of dealing with each other in community,

at the dinner-table, over a bottle of wine or an argument, not to mention the simple giving and receiving of hospitality are not a pure, secular experiences but the stuff of church, the place where the life of God flows through us.

By definition, God is ineffable, beyond imagination and beyond language, even the best language of theology and church dogma. God can never be understood or captured adequately in any formula. But God can be known, experienced, tasted, related to in love and friendship. God is Someone and Something that we live within and which can flow through our veins. To make God real in our lives, therefore, we needn’t sneak off, shamrocks and triangles in hand, to try to somehow picture how three-can-be-one and one-can-be-three. Nor indeed need we read academic books on theology, valuable though these may be. No. God is a flow of relationships to be experienced in community, family, parish, friendship and hospitality. When we live inside of these relationships, God lives inside of us and we live inside of God. Scripture assures us that we abide in God whenever we stay inside of family, community, parish, friendship, hospitality — and, yes, even when we fall in love.

This has huge consequences for how we should understand religious experience: Among other things, it means that God is more domestic than monastic (monks will be the first to tell you that). It means too, that in coming to know God, the dinner-table is more important than the theology classroom, the practice of grateful hospitality is more important than the practice of right dogma, and meeting with others to pray as a community can give us something that long hours in private meditation (or, indeed, long years spent absent from church-life) cannot. Such a concept also blurs all simple distinctions between “religious” and “purely secular” experience. Finally, importantly, it tells us that, since God is inside of community, we should be there too, if we wish to go to heaven. Simply put, we can’t go to hell, if we stick close to family, community and parish.

The most pernicious heresies that block us from properly knowing God are not those of formal dogma, but those of a culture of individualism that invite us to believe that we are self-sufficient, that we can have community and family on our own terms, and that we can have God without dealing with each other. But God is community—and only in opening our lives in gracious hospitality will we ever understand that.

Fr. Ron Rolheiser

We Rejoice in a New Secular Blessed

On Saturday, September 17, the Most Rev. Cardinal Angelo Amato, Prefect of the Congregation for the Causes of Saints presided over the rite of Beatification of the Venerable Servant of God, Francesco Paleari, Priest of the Cottolengo Institute of Turin and Franciscan tertiary

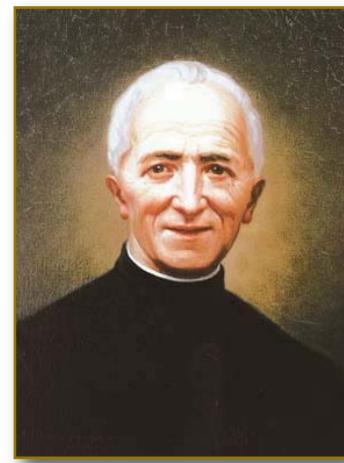
Francis Paleari was born in Pogliano Milanese in the Archdiocese of Milan on October 22, 1863. He was brought up in a truly Christian family peaceful, joyful, and well disposed in nature.

On January 8, 1877, he entered the Seminary of the Little House of Divine Providence in Turin, founded by St. Joseph Benedict Cottolengo. This seminary, placed under the protection of St. Thomas Aquinas – hence its name, “Family of Tommasini,” – welcomed aspirants without financial resources to the priesthood.

Having completed his theological studies with great results, Father Francis was ordained a priest on September 18, 1886. He served in the Little House of Divine Providence as a teacher, confessor and spiritual director of young seminarians. He showed himself inspired in all things by the same spirit of charity that moved the Holy

Founder who loved to help the poor, materially and spiritually, with boundless trust in Divine Providence.

He carried out important tasks for the Archdiocese of Turin as Pro-Vicar General, Vicar for the Nuns, and Promoter of Justice. He joined the Third Order Franciscans in the early years of his priesthood, renewing his membership to it in both 1920 and 1927.



The last three years of his life were marked by illness, which nonetheless did not prevent him from exercising his mission as a confessor. He died on May 7, 1939, in the Little House of Providence in Turin

The cause of beatification begun in 1947 was entrusted to Rev. Br. Antonio Cairoli, Postulator General, OFM, in 1980.

Taken from <http://www.ofm.org/ofm/?p=1375&lang=en>

U.S. Secular Franciscan Order Demands the Deficit “Super Committee” Ensure Justice for All.

The U.S. Secular Franciscans met for their national gathering from October 25 through 29 at the St. Francis Retreat and Renewal Center in San Juan Bautista, CA. The national group represents approximately 13,500 Secular Franciscans across the United States. The statement is based on the Rule of the Secular Franciscan Order, chapter 2, article 13 that they “place themselves on an equal basis with all people, especially with the lowly for whom they shall strive to create conditions of life worthy of people redeemed by Christ.”

We issue the following statement to the “Super Committee”:

Do not further oppress and penalize those who are poor and those who are already most vulnerable, here and around the world.

We realize the moment of decision is rapidly approaching, and in this critical time it is essential that you understand the impact each decision may have. Justice for all requires that we pursue the common good.

It is essential that the “Super Committee” reach a decision

by November 23rd. It is morally irresponsible for this committee to delay a decision and default to the automatic cuts that are applied at a fixed percentage, doing further injustice to the poor here and abroad.

Editor's Note: Unfortunately, we now know the conclusion of the “Super Committee’s” work. Pray for us all!

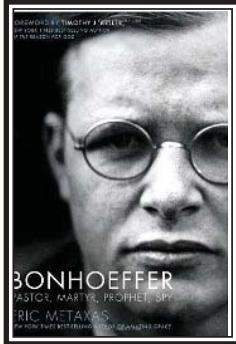
H2O Project 2011

The H2O Project for the 2011 year came to its conclusion this past May 31st, 2011, having raised a total amount of \$13,628.50 which will be donated to Catholic Relief Services for clean drinking water in Haiti.

A total of 19 Regions and many individuals participated in this year’s Fundraising campaign, making it a holy success.

Donations received after June 1st, 2011, will be donated towards the 2012 H2O Project.

These should be mailed to: NAFRA c/o Dennis Ross, SFO, 8933 Trailwood Ct. Mentor, OH 44060.



What Are We Reading?

Bonhoeffer: Pastor, Martyr, Prophet, Spy by Eric Metaxes, 2010, Thomas Nelson, Nashville, Tenn., ISBN-10: 1595551387; ISBN-13: 978-1595551382; List \$29.99

What is the response and responsibility of a committed Christian when confronted with evil? The book Bonhoeffer: Pastor, Martyr, Prophet, Spy by Eric Metaxes provides a good insight into how Dietrich Bonhoeffer responded to this crisis.

Bonhoeffer came from an almost aristocratic German heritage. On his mother's side were many well-known artists, musicians, and theologians. On his father's side were scientific and medical talents. His mother provided the spiritual and social foundations for Dietrich's life, while his father provided him with the analytical skills necessary to almost unemotionally evaluate situations. The beginning of the book discusses Dietrich's struggle to decide what path in life to choose. His decision to pursue theological studies was not opposed by his father, but not completely understood either.

In the background of his decision making process was the dawning of the Nazi age. Germany had been punished extremely hard as a result of losing World War One, and this brought about much misery and resentment in the nation. Adolf Hitler fed heartily on this resentment, ultimately rising to be the German leader. Observing this with increasing alarm and anxiety was the Bonhoeffer family, and especially Dietrich from a theological point of view. Dietrich finally came to the realization that an attack upon Jews was an attack upon Jesus and God himself and could not be tolerated by any true Christian. His struggle with the German Lutheran Church and his attempts to provide alternate education away from the German Church is very interesting. His discussion of how the government co-opted the churches in to serving Hitler may provide some

warning signs for our times. In fact, many at that time felt that Hitler would be a short-lived fad, and once the people understood his agenda, he would be gone. Sadly, this was not to be the case until it was entirely too late.

There are so many fascinating aspects to this book. His musical background helped him to change the worship service to have the congregation join in the singing, rather than only the choir. His experience with the African-American community when he was in the United States gave him an entirely new understanding of community, participation and worship. Sometimes, it seems, however, that the author believes that Dietrich invented praying in a method similar to the Liturgy of the Hours and monasticism. He seemed to trying to be Catholic without acknowledging it.

Dietrich's involvement with the plots to assassinate Hitler is one of the stages on which this book plays out. Bonhoeffer was not a pacifist, and never encouraged his students to become conscientious objectors. Of course, he informed them that in so doing, they were signing their death certificate! He acted as a spy, and passed information concerning the assassination plots and death camps to the English secret service in hopes that, once Hitler was killed, a quick and just peace would be obtained. In hindsight, we can see that would never have been possible.

In many ways, it is unfortunate that one knows the outcome. He had high expectations for the future, even during his imprisonment and almost up to his execution. He went to his death with a firm belief that he was carrying out the will of God. This is a long book, but well worth the effort to read it. I feel that a lot of the information is pertinent today, especially in the relationship between religion and the public sector.

Harry Ford
in The Flyer, newsletter of St.
Joseph Cupertino Fraternity
Ellicott City, Md.

Websites of Interest

The Vatican now has an online news service:

<http://www.news.va/>

Below is a web cam link hookup at the tomb of St. Francis. It's an actual live feed from Assisi. Keep in mind that there is a six-hour time difference (later) in Assisi. So, in the evening you may not see anyone at the tomb, the earlier in the day, the better the chance of seeing pilgrims at

the tomb. The tomb is open until 8:00 p.m. Assisi time (2:00 p.m. EST).

http://www.sanfrancescopatronoditalia.it/webcam_tomb_saint_francis.php

Take the St. Francis Pledge to Care for Creation and the Poor and joining the Catholic Climate Covenant at <http://catholicclimatecovenant.org/the-st-francis-pledge/>.



Julien Green

What Else Are We Reading?

God's Fool: The Life and Times of St. Francis of Assisi, Julien Green, 1983, English translation, 1985. Harper & Row, Publishers, Inc., New York, N.Y.; list price \$15.99
ISBN-10: 0060634642; ISBN-13: 978-0060634643

The author of God's Fool, Julien Green (1900 – 1998) was a novelist and essayist, and the son of Protestant parents. As an adult, Green converted to Catholicism. He was American born and yet he wrote in French, and was eventually elected to the French Academy. In the 'Word from the Author,' at the end of God's Fool, Green states: St. Francis "was and still remains a man who transcends our sad theological barriers. He belongs to everyone, like the love that is unceasingly offered to us. You couldn't see him without loving him was said in his day; and that love has stayed the course." This biography is a labor of love.

The Setting: In order to understand a man's life, you must put him in the context of the times. Green does this better than any other biographer I have read. He writes of the town of Assisi: rebellion lodged within the heart of its people, who had to be continually won back to the Christian ideal. In vain the churches multiplied and rang the bells from dawn to dusk. There was faith, but there was also the irresistible hankering after pleasure, luxury and profit. The picture of the Church in the 1200s is terrible and accurate.

Reading this book, you learn about the sects of the time, serious dangers to the Church — the Cathars, Bogomils, and others — who, Green writes, "used the Gospel for their own purposes."

The riotous environment goes a long way to explain the adolescence and early youth of our founding father. "Francis," Green goes on, "was one of the hotheads." He was completely wrapped up in the politics of the time and, with his friends, ransacked the home of the noble house of Offreduccio, forcing the family to flee, young Clare among them. Francis enjoyed parties and music, and French poetry.

The Difference from other biographers: Green believes that these early years are hard for some of St. Francis' biographers, who "dance around the truth." Green bases firmly himself on Celano, who wrote quite clearly: "He

misspent his time, lamentably wasting until around his twenty-fifth year."

Green is not bashful about hagiographers. He does not like "plaster saints." Some readers might feel uncomfortable with Green's analysis of some early chroniclers, who have "no great horror of lying." As an example, he asks us to review the different accounts of Francis' interview with Pope Innocent III.

In fact, Green discerns the man from the legend, legend in the modern sense, and ends up delivering a critical look that is respectful throughout. He addresses the differences among his biographers by pointing out that biographies are personal portraits. We are called to remember what they are not — sacred scripture.

Green's description of those early years: The young Francis "desired what he would later despise. His faults were like a reverse mirror of his earlier virtues."

The Life of Saint Francis: The reader gets to know Francis from the early days of his conversion, when the people of the town of Assisi called him pazzo, madman. The long struggle with his father is detailed, as is the sublime moment when the young man crosses over, when it becomes clear that Francis is extraordinary, when Francis gives way to Christ. "He remained a human being, but he was possessed by Christ."

The trajectory of Francis' ongoing journey is reflected in issues such as that of the mortification of the flesh. Francis goes from calling his body "Brother Ass" and taking very poor care of it to making peace with it.

How he accomplished everything he did boggles the mind. Francis was almost always in poor health. But his inner energy was boundless. "His soul was tireless." Green tells us how he connected with his first companions and with Saint Clare, through joy and love. "He gave them God."

And he remained constant. Francis recommended to his brothers the adoration of the Real Presence. "The Gospel was the fountainhead of all the rest, which flowed from it by a rigorous logic." The respect due the Church was sacrosanct. Meeting a priest, Francis advised, "The brother had to greet him and kiss his hands. There was a formal prohibition against judging the rich; they too had to be respected."

In Francis' time, some thought his ideas were dangerous,
(Cont'd on page 13.)

(Cont'd from page 12.)

revolutionary and even heretical. "An assembly of beggars outside of the bounds of a religious order would spread a certain disorder... how could they live without money?"

Fascinatingly, Green traces back to the person of Saint Francis the two distinct currents in Franciscan spirituality: active and contemplative life. "Francis had special graces that are indispensable to living both kinds of life."

Again and again, Green highlights St. Francis' unshakeable ties to the Church: "When Rome spoke, he never argued.... Francis' influence, however, would make itself felt, if only through the respect that the brothers accorded the clergy and that gradually made priests realize what people expected of them.



A September 11 Remembrance: Fr. Mychal Judge, OFM – "The Saint of 9-11"

On the tenth anniversary of the September 11 nears, Franciscans may wish to briefly pause to remember one of their own: Fr. Mychal Judge, OFM, often referred to as "the Saint of 9-11".

For those unfamiliar with his story, Fr. Judge was a Franciscan friar, priest, and Chaplain of the Fire Department of New York.

Recently nominated for a Congressional Gold Medal in recognition of his service and sacrifice, Fr. Judge was the first recorded victim of the September 11 attacks.

From Wikipedia: "Upon hearing the news that the World Trade Center had been hit, Fr. Judge rushed to the site. He was met by the Mayor of New York, Rudolph Giuliani, who asked him to pray for the city and its victims. "Judge administered the Last Rites to some lying on the streets, and then entered the lobby of the World Trade Center North Tower where an emergency command post was organized. There he continued offering aid and prayers for the rescuers, the injured and the dead.

"When the South Tower collapsed at 9:59 a.m., debris went flying through the North Tower lobby, killing many inside, including Judge. "At the moment he was struck in the head and killed, Judge was repeatedly praying aloud, "Jesus, please end this right now! God, please end this!," according to Judge's biographer and New York Daily News columnist Michael Daly. "Shortly after his death, an NYPD

Then, as throughout its entire history, the Church was threatened. Green writes: "Chosen souls, living in silence were spared the corruption, and as in all times of deadly peril, saints came forward." The Church was undoubtedly threatened in Saint Francis' time. In this biography it is very clear that St. Francis was one of those chosen souls, destined to influence the Church, and not only the Church but the world at large for centuries.

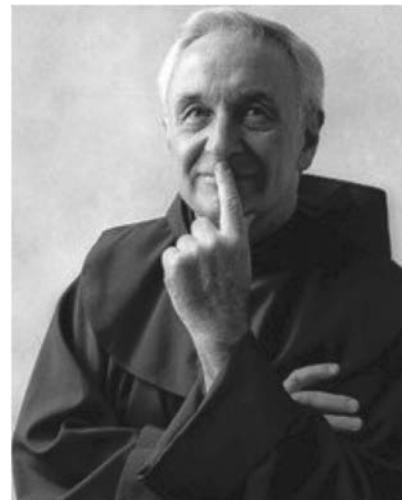
Gods Fool is written in beautiful prose and excels in lucid explanations about St. Francis conversion and about the troubled times in which he lived. Highly recommended.

— Adelaida Lower, in *The Troubadour, newsletter of Holy Family Fraternity, Manassas, Va.*

lieutenant, who had also been buried in the collapse, found Judge's body and, assisted by two firemen and two civilian bystanders, carried it out of the North Tower lobby to nearby St Peter's Church.

"This event was captured in the documentary film 9/11, shot by Jules and Gedeon Naudet. Shannon Stapleton, a photographer from Reuters, photographed Judge's body being carried out of the rubble by five men. It became one of the most famous images related to 9/11. The Philadelphia Weekly reports the photograph is considered an American Pieta."

From the Tau, newsletter of Tau Fraternity, Herndon, Va., September 2011 edition.



Fr. Mychal Judge, OFM

Friar Receives National 'Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation' Award

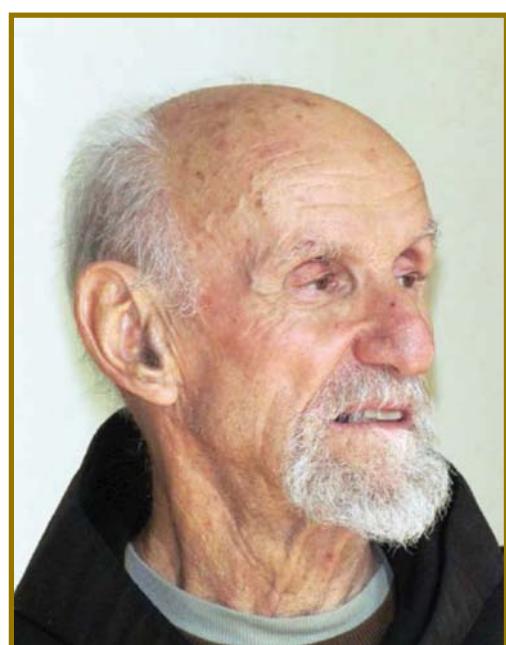
Father Louie Vitale, OFM, a Franciscan friar known for protests against war and torture and advocacy for the poor, is the recipient of the U.S. Secular Franciscan Order's Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation Award. The award was presented at the order's recent national chapter at St. Francis Retreat Center in San Juan Bautista, CA.

Formerly known as the Peace Award, it was "renamed this year to capture the significant efforts in the areas of justice, peace and the integrity of creation," noted Award Chairman Kent Ferris, SFO, who also chairs the order's Justice, Peace & Integrity of Creation (JPIC) Commission. "Our Franciscan Rule reminds us of our responsibility to 'individually and collectively be in the forefront of promoting justice by the testimony of our lives.' The JPIC Award allows us to recognize those who have modeled such courageous efforts."

Letters of nomination, Ferris noted, spoke not only of the issues Father Louie has focused on -- such as nuclear disarmament, School of Americas watch, and torture -- but also on his personal lived experience. "Father Louie is the ultimate model for us on our journey of following in the footsteps of Saints Francis and Clare," he quoted one letter. And in another, "Father Louie sees each and every person as part

of the Integrity of Creation and a gift from our Loving God as a path towards humbled holiness."

Fr. Louie Vitale, 79, who resides at St. Elizabeth Church in Oakland, CA, is an Air Force veteran



who became a Franciscan friar. He co-founded the Nevadea Desert Experience, a movement to end nuclear testing, and Pace e Bene, an organization that aims to transform lives through education and nonviolent action

for social change. He travels extensively throughout the United States speaking on nonviolence, the moral dimensions of torture and drone warfare, and living as a peacemaker.

He holds a Ph.D. in sociology and has taught classes at colleges and universities throughout the Western states. He has served as provincial of the Franciscan Friars' Santa Barbara Province, and for more than a decade, he was pastor of St. Boniface Church in a low-income neighborhood in San Francisco, CA, where he opened its doors to the homeless so they could sleep in the pews during the day.

Father Louie has engaged in civil disobedience for some four decades in pursuit of peace and justice. He has been arrested an estimated 300 times standing up against war, nuclear weapons, drones, and the training of Latin American soldiers at what was formerly called the U.S. Army's School of the Americas. The Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation Award comes with a St. Francis statue and a \$2,000 prize.

The annual award was revived in 2007 after a lapse of several years. The 2007 award recognized the work of Dr. Tony Lazzara, an American physician and Secular Franciscan who operates a clinic and shelter for ailing children in Peru. The 2008 award honored Marie Dennis, a Secular Franciscan who directs the Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns and who is immersed in advocating on behalf of people marginalized by society, poverty, abuse, war, violence, and human trafficking. The 2009 award went to Don Ryder, a Secular Franciscan from Wisconsin who helped save the Maasai people in Kenya from disease and drought by drilling water wells. Last year it honored Br. David Bauer, OFM, for his work with the homeless and marginalized in Tucson and Las Vegas. Among the more notable prior recipients were the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and Mother Teresa of Calcutta.



Franciscan Saints, Blessed and Feasts

(Click on the name to go to a Web link)

NOVEMBER

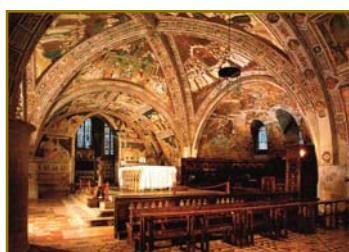
- 17 **St. Elizabeth of Hungary**, widow, Patron of the Third Order
- 18 **Bl. Salome**, virgin, II Ord.
- 19 **St. Agnes of Assisi**, virgin, II Ord.
- 25 **Bl. Elizabeth of Reute**, virgin, III Ord.
- 26 **St. Leonard of Port Maurice**, priest, I Ord.
- 27 **St. Francis Anthony Fasani**, priest, I Ord.
Manifestation of Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal (OFM Conv.)
Bl. Umile de Bisignano, religious, I Ord.
- 28 **St. James of the March**, priest, I Ord.
- 29 **All Saints of the Franciscan Order** (We pray the *Franciscan Litany of the Saints*)



The Charity of St. Elizabeth of Hungary by Edmund Blair Leighton (1895)

DECEMBER

- 2 **Bl. Maria Angela Astorch**, virgin, II Ord.
Bl. Rafal Chylinski, priest, I Ord.
- 8 Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Patron and Queen of the Franciscan Order
- 10 **Bl. Peter Tecelano**, III Ord.



Crypt, St. Francis Basilica

13 Finding the Body of St. Francis

- 15 **Bl. Mary Frances Schervier**, virgin, III Ord.

JANUARY

- 3 Holy Name of Jesus
- 6 **Bl. Diego José of Cádiz**, priest, I Ord.
- 7 **Bl. Angela of Foligno**, religious, III Ord.
- 8 **Bl. Eurosia Fabris**, III Order
- 12 **St. Bernard of Corleone**, religious, I Ord.



The Triumph of the Name of Jesus
Giovanni Battista Gaulli

- 14 **Bl. Odoric of Pordenone**, priest, I Ord.

- 16 **Sts. Berard**, priest, and companions, protomartyrs of the Order
- 18 **St. Charles of Sezze**, religious, I Ord.
- 19 **Bl. Thomas of Cori**, priest, I Ord.
St. Eustochia Calafato, virgin, II Order
- 20 **Bl. John Baptist Triquerie**, priest, martyr, I Ord.
- 24 **St. Francis de Sales**, bishop, doctor, III Ord., founder
- 27 **St. Angela Merici**, virgin, III Ord., founder
- 29 **Bl. Roger of Todi**, religious, I Ord.
- 30 **St. Hyacinth of Mariscotti**, virgin, III Ord.
- 31 **St. John Bosco**, priest, III Ord., founder

FEBRUARY

- 1 **St. Veridiana**, virgin, III Ord.
Bl. Andrew of Segni, religious, I Ord.
- 4 **St. Joseph of Leonessa**, priest, I Ord.
- 6 **Sts. Peter Baptist, priest, and companions**, martyrs (Martin of the Ascension, Francis Blanco, priests; Philip of Jesus, cleric; Francis of St. Michael, Gonsalvo Garcia, religious; 17 tertiaries), I and III Ord.
- 7 **St. Colette of Corbie**, virgin, II Ord.
- 8 **St. Giles Mary of St. Joseph**, religious, I Ord.
- 15 **Transfer of the Body of St. Anthony of Padua**



May you have a blessed Advent and a holy and joyous Christmas season. Peace and all good to you from the entire Regional Executive Council.



Life and Justice Concerns of the Catholic Church in Virginia

Presented by the Virginia Catholic Conference (VCC)

in conjunction with the

Catholic Diocese of Arlington's Peace and Justice Commission
and the Catholic Diocese of Richmond's Office of Justice and Peace.

Saturday, December 10, 2011

Holy Family Parish

14160 Ferndale Road

Dale City, VA 22193

10 a.m.—12 p.m.

Presentations by

Jay Brown, Director | Office of Justice + Peace

Theological Sources of Our Church's Social Mission: a reflection on the ethical principles that support our public policy initiative

Jeff Caruso, Director | VCC

Chris Ramos, Assistant Director | VCC

*A Presentation of Six Areas of Concern from Our Virginia Bishops:
Beginning of Life, Death Penalty, Economic Concerns, Education,
Immigration and Health*

Moderated by

Reverend Gerry Creedon | Chair

Catholic Diocese of Arlington's Peace and Justice Commission



Giving Birth To God:



Lessons from the Saints

Please come and join us for an Advent Retreat Day

The day will include:

- ◆ Eucharistic Liturgy and Common Prayer
- ◆ Two conferences given by Sr. Ilia Delio, OSF and
- ◆ Time for reflection and private prayer

DATE: Saturday, December 10, 2011

TIME: 9AM – 4PM Gathering at 8:30 AM

COST: \$35.00

Please bring your own lunch; snacks & drinks will be provided.

**PLACE: Franciscan Monastery of the Holy Land
1400 Quincy Street NE
Washington, DC 20017**

Sponsored by the Franciscan Sisters of Washington

Phone: 202-526-4262

Email: franciscansistersdc@yahoo.com

Deadline for Registration is December 1st

Clip and return bottom portion along with payment.

Please send registration to:

**Advent Retreat c/o Sr. Lisa Marie Drover
1334 Perry Street NE
Washington, DC 20017-2531**

Please make checks payable to: **Franciscan Sisters of Washington**

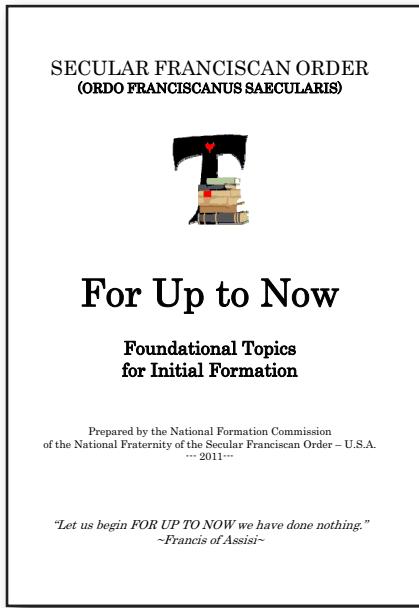
DEADLINE TO REGISTER—December 1st

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____ **PHONE:** _____

CITY: _____ **STATE:** _____ **ZIP CODE:** _____

EMAIL ADDRESS: _____ **AMOUNT ENCLOSED:** _____



Forming the Formators

Regional Formation Training in Use of the new For Up to Now (FUN) Manual

March 2-4, 2012

Bishop Claggett Retreat Center
Buckeystown, Md.
(301) 874-5147

Sponsored by the St. Margaret of Cortona Regional Formation Team

Presenters

St. Margaret of Cortona Regional Formation Team
Jan Parker, SFO, National Formation Team

This workshop is a requirement for all Formation Directors.

REGISTRATION FORM INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Submit form no later than **February 15, 2012**.
2. Please type or print all information clearly. (This form can be filled in on your computer and then printed out.)
3. Only one participant per registration form.
4. NON-REFUNDABLE registration fee of \$190.00 must accompany this form.
5. Make your check payable to **St. Margaret of Cortona Region** and mail this form with payment to:

Mike Huether
4312 Greenhill Avenue
Baltimore, MD 21206
(410) 488-9375
mhuether1@cavtel.net

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Home Phone _____ E-mail _____

Fraternity _____

No single rooms available. For room assignments purposes, please indicate: Male Female



Come, Follow Me

Franciscan Day of Recollection For Inquirers and Candidates Easter 2012

Saturday, April 21, 2012, 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
Shrine of St. Anthony
12290 Folly Quarter Road
Ellicott City, MD 21042
(410) 531-2800

Sponsored by the St. Margaret of Cortona Regional Formation Team

Presenter

Mary Lou Coffman, SFO

Jesus invited his friends to follow him. Is he inviting us to follow him in the footsteps of Francis? Are we ready to answer his call? Spend the day in the company of your brothers and sisters, and consider what it means to answer the call.

(Formation teams and newly professed are also invited.)

Cost: \$30.00 per person.

- Yes! I plan to attend the Franciscan Day of Recollection for Candidates and Inquirers.

Name _____

Fraternity _____

Address _____

City, State, ZIP _____

Email _____

Phone _____

- I am an Inquirer I am a candidate I am newly professed
 I am a member of the formation team.

Please return this form with payment by April 7 to:

Mike Huether
4312 Greenhill Avenue
Baltimore, MD 21206
(410) 488-9375
mhuethe1@cavtel.net

My heart is ready, oh God; my heart is ready.

Psalm 57:7