

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



Fr. Philippus Philippus, OFMCap

Volume 14, Issue 3

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

February 2011

Regional Annual Meeting

St. Margaret of Cortona Region held its 2010 annual meeting on December 4 in the Parish Hall of St. Joseph Parish in Herndon, Va. More than 90 percent of the region was represented, with 28 of 31 fraternities attending.

The meeting opened with a welcome by Father Jim Angert, TOR, pastor of St. Joseph's Church. He introduced Father John Shanahan, TOR, our spiritual assistant. Father Jim opened with a prayer and a reading from Matthew on the Beatitudes. He then read a testament of St. Francis and a vocational prayer.

Fr. John spoke about his activities. He is allowed to do only five pastoral visits a year. Some of the fraternities visited had not had one for a long time, or not at all. He said that our vocation as Franciscans comes from God. The three major points are belief in what God wants us to do; conversion—making a difference; and mission. All is rooted in the life of Francis.

Tom Bello, sfo, our national minister and regional spiritual assistant, brought greetings from the national region. He noted that there are 14,000 Secular Franciscans in our country in thirty regions. Our region is one of the largest and most diversified. Within our 688 fraternities, the local fraternity is the life of the order. There are four aspects to fraternity:

- † An active prayer life, which brings us closer to Christ;
- † Formation, which is constant education;
- † Social (fraternal sharing). Leadership needs the support of the fraternity in order to succeed;
- † Only as much business as is necessary

Tom also spoke about the Peace Award and the new national head of JPIC, Kent Ferris.



Mike Huether spoke about formation, and his “fraternal visits,” which are informal and a means of introducing himself. The Day of Reflection for candidates and newly professed will be on April 2, at the friary in Ellicott City. Bill Bouffard will act as the facilitator. There is a new formation handbook, *Franciscan Journey*, by Fr. Lester Bach,

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Minister's Message



Hello Brothers and Sisters!

How quickly the days fly past! Soon we will be blessed with the season of Lent and the joyful Easter time. Brother Francis, as you know, reflected often and deeply on the passion and suffering of Our Lord Jesus. I invite us to do the same in a special way this year. There are

many scripture analyses and good books to guide us during this time of prayer, penance and meditation. I am offering a few thoughts that challenge me, and I hope you will find helpful too.

Lent is a time to be awakened to our spiritual blindness — what is it that God wants me to see? What blocks me from loving Him totally? What holds me back from loving relationships with others? As I see your outstretched arms of love and welcome on Good Friday, how can I still be selfish and self centered? How can I be blinded to the needs of those around me? How can I be blinded to the needs of the poor? How can I be blinded to the injustices in today's world? Lord — wipe away my blindness this Lent! Open my heart — open my

eyes!

You endured ridicule, cruel punishments, nails hammered into your flesh, a sword piercing your side, and yet You still loved me. You gave all to save me and all mankind. You completely surrendered Yourself to Your Father's will. Lord, open me to love as you did my Brother Francis. Help me to surrender to God's will in my life. Let this Lent be overflowing with grace to love completely!

Here in our region we have the opportunity to come together on Saturday, March 5 to get a deeper and enriching experience of the Lord's Passion at Our Lady of the Fields Parish in Millersville, MD hosted by St. Conrad's Fraternity. Fr. Andre Cirino, OFM will lead the day. Father has co-authored the book *The Geste of the Great King* based on Brother Francis' Office of the Passion. Please let Judy or Patrick Tyrrell know you will attend tyrrell@annapolis.net.

"We adore you O Christ and we praise You, because by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world."

A Lent of deep reflection and penance and an Easter of true joy to all!

Mary Thuman, sfo
St. Margaret of Cortona
Regional Minister



Mark Your Calendar

April 2 — 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 11.

June 23 - June 26 — Fourth Annual Summer SFO Seminar, "Aspects of Fraternity Life," St. Francis University, Loretto, Penn. See flyer, pages 14-17.

July 15-17 — Chapter of Mats. National Conference Center, Leesburg, Va. accommodations will be single rooms only. Some rooms accommodate two persons, but the price remains the same for each person registered. Registration form on page 9.

There will be no **Regional Retreat** this year.

December 3 — Regional Meeting. Location TBA.



Regional Formation Director’s Message

Hearty greetings once again, my Franciscan brothers and sisters!

Even though we are experiencing once again—but with, thank God, much less snow and ice—the doldrums of winter, the warmth of our Franciscan spirit can still be felt each and every time we gather in fraternity.

Since the last issue of *Up-To-Now*, I have had the opportunity to visit the members of the formation team and council of St. Bonaventure Fraternity. They specifically requested this visit by the regional team to review and critique their formation program. I observed an elaborate, well-orchestrated and extensively organized plan their formation team had put together. They have organized their instructions into five stages: the inquiry phase; the candidacy phase year one; the candidacy phase year two; the temporarily professed phase (one year); and ongoing formation. Each stage is headed up by a different member of their formation team, and each has an aide. Each stage also uses different materials for their lessons, and many are Franciscan publications from Korea in the Korean language. Copies of their materials were shown to me and descriptions of them were translated to English for my review. I thank the formation team and council of St. Bonaventure Fraternity for inviting me to observe their program and commend them on such an unusually thorough layout of their instructions and meticulous detail in the preparation of all of their candidates and professed members.

Again, I will emphasize that if any fraternity of the region is having a special event or gathering that they would like to have me or one of my team members come to visit, please let us know as far in advance as possible. We will be sure to attend and look forward to honoring it.

Another of my active team members, Jeanie McLees, also visited two fraternities: Our Lady of The Rosary and Immaculata. She provided both with the highlights of what the region, as well as the formation team, is currently doing.

The regional formation team met again at the home of Ann Corro on January 22. Besides sharing what we have learned of our fraternity visits, we also discussed the upcoming second annual Inquirers’ and Candidates’ Day of Recollection.

We invited Bill Bouffard, minister of Tau fraternity in Herdon, Va., to attend the meeting as a guest. We first commended Bill and his fraternity for such superb hosting

facilities of the general regional meeting of December 4. Both the food and physical arrangements were fantastic, especially for such a great turnout attendance-wise!

Last fall, Bill also volunteered to be the main facilitator of the day of recollection, and I announced this at the annual meeting. Bill talked to the regional team about the specifics of the program he had put together for the day. Bill says the day will focus on a selected group of the admonitions of St. Francis. He is also planning to address the topic of spirituality and relate the topics of the day to passages and quotes from Scripture. With this in mind, the team suggested that it would be helpful if the participants bring a Bible with them to the meeting. Bill also said that he may make use of audio and video clips, as well as have group discussions and question and answer periods.

The Noon Mass will be celebrated by the new director of the Shrine, Fr. Steve Frenier, OFM Conv. Bill will also have a co-facilitator to team with for the day of recollection, Brother Kip Ledger, OFM Cap, one of our regional spiritual assistants. Thanks loads, Brother Kip!

The day of recollection will run roughly from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Saturday, April 2, 2011, at the Shrine of St. Anthony in Ellicott City, Md. Please look for the registration form on page ____, and register now. As always, the day of recollection is for orientators, inquirers, candidates, newly-professed, formation directors, formation team members, ministers or designees for the day.

Mary Lou Coffman and I will be attending the National Formation Workshop, “Form The Formators” on May 12 – 15, 2011 in Belleville, Illinois (St Louis) as the region’s representatives. We are expecting quite a bit of new material out of this workshop for the formation directors of the region. We may need to gather the formation directors together with the regional team to get this information out to them. There will be more on this as we get closer to the workshop time.

Jeanie McLees and I will be proceeding forward with the long-discussed region-wide formation program for Franciscan youth and young adults. We will, with the ideas, suggestions and guidelines of the National Commission, along with recently acquired resources and information from Jeanie, begin to put together a program in the next several months that will be geared predominantly toward the 18 to 24 year-old group. We will also plan for phases of the program that will be suitable for the 14 to 18 year-old group. If anyone is interested in being a part of our planning,

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especially if you have worked in either young adult or youth ministry, please contact me. We are open to any additional input you wish to share. We will keep you posted on our progress in this endeavor.

I conclude with a passage based on Scripture that I feel not only describes the work of Christ and our Father Francis, but anyone of us who are always in formation mode when we teach by our examples of the Franciscan way of the Gospels but "use words if we have to" as well:

Applying all the care of his heart, to fulfill the words of the new grace he had heard, he became, by divine inspiration, the proclaimer of evangelical perfection and began publicly to preach penance with simplicity. Moreover, his statements were neither hollow nor ridiculous, but filled with the power of the Holy Spirit.

They penetrated the marrow of the heart and provoked stunned amazement in those who heard them. But as he himself later testified, he also learned by the Lord's revelation, a greeting of this sort, that he should say: "may the Lord give you peace." Thus, in all his preaching, he greeted people at the beginning of his talk with the proclamation of peace. Filled with the spirit of the prophets, he proclaimed peace and preached salvation, as the prophet said (Isaiah 52:7),. And it happened that by counsels about salvation, he brought to true peace many who had previously lived at odds with Christ and far from salvation."

From "The Life Of St. Francis" by Julian of Speyer,
Francis of Assisi – The Saint – Volume I

Mike Huether
Regional Formation Director

Lenten Fasting

Lent is fast approaching, and during this time the Church asks us to prepare for the commemoration of Christ's passion and resurrection through prayer and fasting. Lent this year begins on Wednesday, March 9, and ends on Saturday, April 23.

We can experience joy and growth in the Holy Spirit during Lent through prayer and fasting. Before Jesus began his public ministry, the Spirit led him into the wilderness where he fasted and prayed. There, he grew in power and wisdom. Jesus fasted in preparation for his ministry. We, too, should fast in preparation for the ministry that God has for us. It should be an important part of our prayer life. It should be done in preparation for receiving the wisdom of the Holy Spirit and for discerning God's will.

When we fast, it helps to decrease the desires of the flesh by denying our passions. It detaches us from worldly things and helps us grow in the knowledge of God. It atones for sins and helps nourish an unselfish love for our neighbor. It increases our faith and shows God that we are willing to back up our prayers with action.

We cannot earn God's love, but we can earn His blessings and favor through fasting. Fasting also helps us grow in humility of spirit. Jesus told His disciples:

When you fast, do not look gloomy like the hypocrites. They neglect their appearance, so that they may appear to others to be fasting. Amen, I say to you, they have received their reward. But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, so that you may not appear to be fasting, except to your Father who is hidden. And your Father who sees what is hidden will repay you. *Matthew 6:16-18*

God sees all our actions, and when we do things with humility, like St. Francis did, instead of seeking praise, we will be honoring the Father who created us. We will be imitating Jesus. The more we are in communion with God through fasting, the more we become in touch with God's perfect will for our life. And the more we obey God's will, the more peace and joy we will have. This Lent, pray for the grace to fast well!



(Continued from page 1.)

OFMCap. The new national formation handbook will come out in May with tools, etc. The fraternities will decide which resource to use.

Mary Thuman talked about the visits and said that formation needs to be foremost. Mike will represent the region at the national formation meeting in May.

Claire Hoagland, regional vice minister and JPIC representative, spoke about JPIC and said that Kent Ferris will be providing more information for her to disseminate. She will continue sharing items of Franciscan interest.

Mary Thuman urged everyone to come to the Chapter of Mats. Teri Egan spoke about the location, housing and general format for the weekend, July 15-17, 2011. More information will be forthcoming, principally through *Up to Now*.

Judith Terrell, the minister for St. Conrad of Annapolis spoke about a Day of Reflection prior to Lent. It will be on March 5, at Our Lady of the Fields in Millersville, Md.

Mary Lou Coffman, Virginia area councilor, has designed a recruitment handout for each fraternity. She requested that any changes that needed to be made to be given to her and said she would send out the corrected version electronically.

Mary Lou reported that all the fraternities in her area have held elections. The last area ministers meeting was in May. She wants to make informal visits. She is receiving more input from the fraternities for *Up to Now*. She gave special appreciation to Beatriz (Betty) Frometa of the St. Thomas More Fraternity in Harrisburg, Penn., for her assistance in translating *Up to Now* for a Spanish edition.

Mary Thuman reminded the ministers that it is their responsibility to distribute *Up to Now* to their members.

Ann Corro, D.C. area regional councilor, attended several fraternity elections and made a fraternal visit to St. Mary of the Angels. In 2011, she will visit St. Thomas More. There was an area meeting at the Franciscan Mission Service. She's hoping to hold another in 2011.

Mary Simmons, Maryland/Delaware/Pennsylvania area councilor had an area ministers meeting with 10 fraternities attending.

The spiritual assistants who attended that area meeting decided among themselves to meet together in the future for support. Mary then read a prayer by St. Francis de Sales.

After lunch, the groups broke up by area to discuss topics on servant leadership.

Sheila Solomon, St. Joseph Cupertino Fraternity, Ellicott City, Md., said the servant leader has to be available, a good listener, bring out the gifts of others and be a conduit for information. Barbara Teller, St. Padre Pio of Pietrelcina Fraternity, Forest Hill, Md., added that if there is a problem the council needs to pray and resolve it. Also, we need to recognize each other as family, dying to ourselves.

Marci Grattan, St. Francis of Assisi Fraternity, Dumfries, Va., said it was necessary to be selfless and unbiased in dealing with individuals. Not everyone is the same. We need to accept people where they are. The process is more important than the goal. We need to provide Francis' vision, and when members don't show up for meetings they're depriving others of their gifts.

Jan Benton, St. Francis Fraternity, Washington, D.C., discussed inactive people and the need to phone or write to them. We need to discover the gifts in each member. Ann said the fraternity is like a family. There needs to be open-ended communication between the council and the fraternity.

After the meeting, the group adjourned to the church and celebrated the remembrance ceremony.

Special thanks go to Bill Bouffard and the Tau Fraternity in Herndon, as well as to St. Joseph's parish, for providing and organizing such a hospitable and well-organized meeting site.

Article based on minutes submitted by Teri Egan, Regional Secretary

Odds and Ends

If anyone is interested in Md. SFO license plates, please contact Mary Simmons, sfo. Cost \$25.00 plus old tags.

SFO Magnets are available at \$5.00 each plus postage, and SFO coffee mugs are available at \$8.00 or 2 for \$15.00, plus postage. Please contact Mary Simmons at marysfo_1@msn.com or 410-557-7586.

Around the Region

RECEIVED AS CANDIDATES

Patrick Caughy, St. Joseph Cupertino Fraternity, Ellicott City, Md.

Cindy Mohler, St. Joseph Cupertino Fraternity, Ellicott City, Md.

Franz Staudenmann, St. Joseph Cupertino Fraternity, Ellicott City, Md.

NEWLY PROFESSED

Beth Dykton, sfo, Little Flower Fraternity, Baltimore, Md.

Lisa Gough, sfo, Little Flower Fraternity, Baltimore, Md.

Joyce Manno, sfo, St. Joseph Fraternity, York, Penn.

Katherine Rappe, sfo, Little Flower Fraternity, Baltimore, Md.

Carmen Schaner, sfo, Tau Fraternity, Herndon, Va.

Carl Stacy, sfo, Sacred Heart of Jesus Fraternity, Warrenton, Va.

RECEIVED HABIT

Sister Karen Stapleton received her novice's habit as a Poor Clare in Chesterfield, New Jersey, on January 17, 2011. Sister Karen was professed as a Secular Franciscan in Tau Fraternity, Herndon, Va., in December 1995.

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR NEWLY ELECTED

St. Conrad Fraternity, Severna Park, Md.

Minister: Judith Tyrrell, sfo

Vice Minister: Denise Miante, sfo

Treasurer: Patrick Tyrrell, sfo

Secretary: Joan Faltot, Sfo

Formation Director: Emily S. McGeady, sfo

Councilor: Mary Cicero, sfo

Sp. Assist. Br. Jonathan Ulrick, OFMCap.

St. Mary of the Angels

Minister: Tom McGrath, sfo

Vice Minister: Greg Davis, sfo

Secretary: Frank Barletta, sfo

Treasurer: Helen Hillstrom, sfo

Formation Director: Genie Dutton, sfo

Councilor: Richard Schaefer, sfo

Councilor: Susan Kuehn, sfo

Spiritual Assistant: Fr. Edward Flanagan, OFM

St. Francis of Assisi Fraternity, Triangle, Va.

Minister: Mary Lou Coffman, sfo

Vice Minister: Laura Britto, sfo

Secretary: Stephen Zawisa, sfo

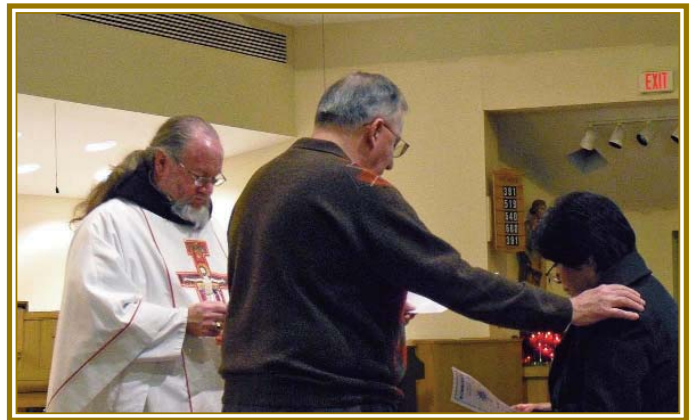
Treasurer: Mark Ingraham, sfo

Formation Director: Marci Grattan, sfo

Councilor (Infirmarian): Jeanne Carter, sfo

Councilor (Corresponding Secretary): Judith Ryerse, sfo

Spiritual Assistant: Fr. Bob Menard, OFM



Father Timothy Harris, TOR, and Bill Bouffard, Minister of Tau Fraternity, preside over the profession of Carmen Schaner, sfo.



Sister Karen Stapleton, formerly a member of Tau Fraternity, Herndon, Va., in the habit of a novice of the Poor Clares.

NATIONAL PRAYER FOR VOCATIONS TO THE SECULAR FRANCISCAN ORDER

O, Good and Gracious God,
God of mercy, compassion, generosity, and love,
As we live our lives today in the model of St. Francis,
choosing daily to live the Gospel life,
Help us to help others hear Your call.
Help us to help others to recognize
their vocation as a Secular Franciscan
that You have already planted in their heart.
Help us, so that together we all may work
to bring the Gospel to life. Amen!

Marian R. Crosby, SFO

LOSSES IN THE FAMILY



Margaret Hromulak, sfo, Mt. St. Sepulchre Fraternity, professed in 1950. She died on Thursday, January 20, 2011, of pneumonia at the Sanctuary of Holy Cross, Burtonsville. She was born on August 11, 1916, in Barnesboro, Pa. She and her late husband Joseph had lived in Greenbelt over 44 years, 22 of them in Green Ridge House. Mrs. Hromulak was a home-body. She loved gardening at their house on Southway. She was a member of St. Hugh of Grenoble Catholic Church, which she and her husband attended regularly. She was a member of the St. Hugh church sodality. She belonged to the American Legion Auxiliary. Margaret was a member of the Greenbelt Golden Age Club and was interested in senior activities.

Henry Mullen, sfo, January 18, 2011, Mt. St. Sepulchre Fraternity



Ernest Alonzo Smith, sfo, March 26, 1952-December 9, 2010, professed on November 19, 2000, Mt. St. Sepulchre Fraternity.

Charlene Joan Concannon, sfo, February 26, 1944 - January 13, 2011, Holy Family Fraternity.

Last December, our sister in Francis, Charlene Joan Concannon, celebrated the anniversary of her profession into the Secular Franciscan Order. She was our Treasurer until very recently. Carol de George remembers how Charlene and her husband Ken helped her replace and set up a computer and printer when Carol was secretary. I too recall her inexpressible kindness. A life can't be comprised in words and this is very plain in obituaries. Hers says that she was born in Allentown, Pennsylvania, and that she married Kenneth Michael Concannon in 1966, that the couple lost a beloved daughter, Amy Melissa, in 1998, and that they had two sons, Kenneth Michael and Colin, and five grandchildren, Elizabeth, Ian, Sky, Brooke, and Tess, who were her greatest loves. After attending her funeral Mass today, I came back home feeling immensely privileged to have met her. How rich was her life! Eloquently speaking at the Mass, her sons told us how she was diagnosed with terminal cancer several times. At one point, doctors told her that she had to abort and she refused. Charlene and her

husband Ken were whole-hearted supporters of Life and opened their house to pregnant girls. Their younger son, Colin, said that her mother loved everyone, regardless. As Jeanne, our minister wrote, we know that she is now where she has longed to be for so long. Let us keep her in our prayers.

—Adelaida Lower, sfo
Holy Family Fraternity

My Dear Brothers and Sisters in St. Francis and St. Clare:

It is a great privilege to reflect on my friendship with my sister, Charlene Concannon, and to share a few thoughts with you.

Although Charlene began her journey with the Holy Family Fraternity just about 11 or 12 years ago and was professed into the Secular Franciscan Order on December 15, 2001, I believe "Franciscan blood" ran through her veins throughout her life! She was seeking to find a home for her Franciscan heart!

Charlene's life and her activities even as a young wife and mother were characterized by love and service for her family and all those she came into contact with. She and her beloved Ken were pro-life supporters for many years prior to coming to the Virginia area. It was a joy for me to get to know Charlene (lovingly referred to by me as "CHAR"), and as I spent time talking with her, I surprisingly learned that we had quite a few common



Ken and Charlene Concannon

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threads to our lives. It tickles me because I feel “re-lated” to her on several levels. As I learned more about Charlene through the years, I discovered a gem of a woman devoted to God and her family.

Did you know that Charlene had a short stint in a convent as a young woman? Her stories had me in tears laughing as she used her young wisdom to make things better—a classic story: Char wanted to make the collection of the nuns’ teeth a quicker job in the evening (in the infirmary). So, when it was her turn to take on this assignment, Char just collected all the teeth at one time. Needless to say, in the morning, the nuns didn’t know whose teeth were whose. There were other stories that had me in stitches, and one thing we must remember about Char was that she had a great sense of humor—she could laugh at herself and not take herself too seriously!

Mary Lynn Pitts, *sfo*
Holy Family Fraternity

Websites of Interest

Franciscan Focus

<http://www.franciscanfocus.com/>

“Just a simple blog of a Secular Franciscan trying to live life with a Franciscan focus.”

Franciscan Life

<http://franciscanlife.blogspot.com/>

Sr. Ann Marie says: “I’m a member of the Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia. I taught school — both elementary and secondary for many years. I now work in communications, editing and writing for our publications. I hope you enjoy reading about our sisters and the work that we do.”

Desert Nuns

<http://desertnuns.blogspot.com/>

The Poor Clares of Perpetual Adoration of Our Lady of Solitude Monastery in Phoenix Arizona are in the process of building a new Monastery and Chapel in Tonopah, Arizona.

“This blog is intended to keep all of our faithful friends and supporters up to date on the 'latest happenings' regarding this building project. It's also intended to keep you up to date on our day to day life and adventures!”

— *The Tau Signature*, January 2011
newsletter of Tau Fraternity

What Are We Doing?

OLPH Haiti Project of Love sees community progress.

How long Lord will you utterly forget me? How long will you hide your face from me? How long must I carry grief in my heart day after day? (Psalm 13:1-3)

At times, this Psalm seems to be the prayer for Haiti. As we hear of the earth violently shaking while buildings crumble, wild hurricanes with winds and floods washing people out to sea, while new diseases and pestilence sweep across the country, one could view Haiti as a place where one crisis after another each of biblical proportions occur. Some might even say that Haiti is “God forsaken.”

NO! These disasters are not of God’s making, but are the result of decades of mankind’s neglect and greed. All of us together hold some responsibility, and all of us together can bring positive change through love.

Since beginning the Our Lady of Perpetual Help Haiti project in 1996 I told myself, “I will not respond to crisis.” The Haitian people helped me to see over the years that reacting to the various disasters that passed through Haiti just distracted us from working on the fundamental changes needed so that Haitians can weather these natural events that come along. It is the vulnerability of the Haitian people that magnify these naturally occurring events.

On my most recent visit in November to the rural valley of Cabestor, tucked between Lascahobas and Lake Peligre, I could finally see that our projects were gaining traction in improving the health and spiritual lives of the rural Haitians who live there. Having built three schools, and providing pay for teachers to teach since 2001, 94 percent of the students taking the most recent national certificate exam passed.



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Accompanying me this time to Cabestor were Hector Clervoi, a Haitian-American from Roanoke, and Barney Horrell, a civil engineer. We ran several focus groups to assess community needs and progress, one group included two female students around sixteen years of age. We were all impressed by how well they both expressed their opinions, how thoughtful and how confident these young women were. Hector commented on how surprised he was to see young women of such confidence out here in this rural valley. Things have definitely changed here!

Education is health and dignity, and these young women will make good choices regarding their future health, and the health of their families. We have also provided school lunches for these children, because you can't listen to the teachers when you're listening to your stomachs. And since clean water is life, we surveyed the second clean water project that is being completed in this valley. Clean mountain spring water has been capped and gravity piped to reservoirs, and then to water stations down the hillside. Barney helped survey a third spring near our school in Roche-Milat where we will plan a similar water project in the next few years, partnering with Zanmi-Lasante (Partners in Health – Haiti).

Solar panels were placed on the new kitchen and bookstore so that night classes, youth groups, and church activities can be held out here where there are no roads, no phone service, and no electricity. In another of our focus groups at a small rural chapel, we talked with the community about needs and wishes for the future, which were many. Then at the end of the meeting we asked them all to vote on the one top priority that they would like to see. Would it be clean water, a health clinic, better nutrition or roads? No. Their number one request was for a new church, because, they said, "We need all of these other things, but our faith is our life. It is what keeps us going everyday."



Wow! Many may find this hard to believe, but consider this: We brought one other gift to Cabestor during this visit, a church bell. All these years they have just been banging on a piece of metal. When we announced the arrival of this new bell, you would have thought that Haiti had just won the World Cup of soccer. There was clapping, followed by screaming, followed by more clapping and dancing and singing. The church is their life.

The OLPH Haiti project has been a faith filled journey of love these last fifteen years, and for all the structural changes we have made for the better in the Cabestor valley, it is the building up of their faith that has sustained them. Their faith in themselves, their faith in community, their faith in that God has not abandoned them, and their faith in our shared table fellowship: the Eucharist.

Though the mountains may fall and the hills turn to dust, still the love of the Lord will stand. (Isaiah 54:10)

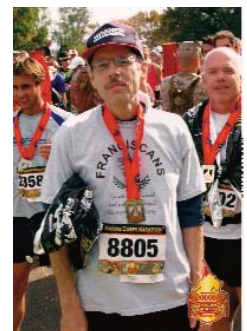
—Tom Fame
Companions of Francis and Clare Fraternity
Salem, Va.

Learn more about the OLPH Haiti project at
<http://haiti.olphsalem.org/>



Running for Francis

John Wagner, sfo, of Immaculata Fraternity in Fredericksburg, Va., ran as a Secular Franciscan in the Marine Corps Marathan in October 2010. John raised \$700.00 for one of his fraternity's apostolates, the Paul Stefan Home (see www.paulstefanhome.org).



REGISTRATION FORM 2011 CHAPTER OF MATS

\$100.00 Non-refundable Deposit due before June 1

Name: _____

Fraternity: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Cost: SINGLE: \$235.00

DOUBLE: \$470.00 (\$235.00 per person)

DAY RATE: \$68.00 (with lunch)

(Indicate name of roommate for double):

(Double rooms consist of a full or queen bed and a pull-out sofa.)

PHYSICAL DISABILITIES: For those requiring assistance, the conference center has a shuttle bus at the registration center that can accommodate a wheelchair. There are elevators in our building.

Please list other requirements: _____

FOR THE HEARING IMPAIRED: Kits that include a strobe light door knocker, strobe light smoke/fire alarm, TDD for the phone, closed captioning television, and vibration alarm clock are available. Be sure to indicate your need so the room will be prepared.

Yes, I need a kit for hearing-impaired occupancy.

Send completed form with check (made out to St. Margaret of Corton Region) to:

Theresa Egan, SFO
8604 Wandering Fox Trail, Apt. 408
Odenton, MD 21113

For questions, call 410-695-2925
or ortygia77@verizon.net.

Directions to National Conference Center

18980 Upper Belmont Place
Lansdowne, VA 20176
800-640-2684
www.conferencecenter.com

From Baltimore/Pennsylvania Area:

Proceed as though going to Priestfield, taking I-70 towards Frederick.
Take exit for Leesburg/Charlestown US 15/US 340
In a short while, look for signs for LEESBURG US-15S
Entering VA 19.7 miles
Take the exit toward VA-7 E/Tysons Corner
Merge onto E. Market St. 3 mi.
Turn LEFT at Belmont Ridge Rd./Xerox Training Center Rd. 0.4 mi
Continue onto Upper Belmont Place 0.6 mi
Turn left into conference center.

From Washington Beltway

Take exit 267 West, the Dulles Toll Road (stay in local lanes on right).
Remain on this road for about 20 miles following signs to the Dulles Greenway West towards Leesburg.
Take the Dulles Greenway (you will go through a second toll) for about 6 miles, exiting at Rte. 659 North (Exit 4), which is BELMONT RIDGE ROAD.
Proceed on Route 659 North for about 3 1/2 miles (crossing Route 7, Harry Byrd Highway and Riverside Parkway) to Upper Belmont Place.
Follow signs to the entrance of the National Conference Center located at the end of Upper Belmont Place.
Check with Gatehouse Security for directions to parking lots and registration check-in.



What Are We Reading?

The Holy Spirit at Work in Assisi Today

Accomplices of the Spirit — The Young Francis and Bishop Guido: A Meditation by His Eminence Domenico Sorrentino, Bishop of Assisi, Nocera Umbra-Gualdo Tadino

On a pilgrimage in Assisi in August, my wife Judith and I were blessed to be introduced to a small book written by the Bishop of Assisi. The book contains his reflections on Bishop Guido’s relationship with Francis, with emphasis on Guido’s reaction when Francis rejected his inheritance, stripped off his clothes, and returned them to his father Pietro Bernardone. Judith noticed the book (in several languages) in the Church of Santa Maria Maggiore (Mary Major) adjacent to the Bishop’s residence and offices. I read the book that evening after dinner and wanted to thank the Bishop personally for writing such a thoughtful, Spirit-filled reflection.

The book provided me with new insights into the work of the Holy Spirit in both the complete reliance of Francis on “his Father in heaven” and Bishop Guido’s act of covering Francis’ nakedness with his cloak. Bishop Sorrentino states that Francis’ “decision is made in the intimacy of his heart. But it is the Church, in the person of the Bishop, that confirms and seals the decision. . . . There was a real need for the Bishop’s protection because the life of Francis had become a “sign of contradiction.” He further notes that “the cloak that unites Francis to the Bishop is an icon of Mother Church. Francis is now reborn in the womb of the Church. . . . It is the time of the Spirit: the ‘strong wind’ of the day of Pentecost, normally contained, but always flowing through time, breathes on this young man of Assisi.” Guido, no doubt moved by the Spirit, “puts his seal on Francis’ consecration.”



Church of St. Mary Major festooned with streamers in preparation for the Feast of the Assumption.

The same evening that I read the book, my wife Judith and I attended the Vigil Mass for the Feast of St. Clare, where Bishop Sorrentino presided. The next day, we also saw him at St. Clare’s Feast Mass. Finally, he presided that night at the Vigil Mass in honor of St. Rufino, the patron of Assisi and its first bishop, and

after Mass led the procession to the main square of Assisi. Despite my desire to thank the Bishop for writing the book, none of these celebrations presented an opportunity to get close enough to him to do that.

In the book, Bishop Sorrentino writes about a room in his residence called the “Throne Room” or, as he prefers to call it, the “stripping room,” where Francis may have taken off his clothes before returning them to his father. The room contains a painting of that event. Hoping to see the room, we stopped at the residence several days later (at about 6:30 p.m. on the Feast of the Assumption—a Sunday) to see when the offices would be open. We were standing in the courtyard of the residence when we looked up to see the Bishop coming out the door! “Oh, Your Eminence,” I said, “I’m so happy to be able to thank you for your book about Francis and Bishop Guido.” He surprised me by responding, “Have you read the book?” I answered that I had read it and he, Judith and I spoke briefly about our pilgrimage to Assisi and our SFO vocations. He ended our conversation by excusing himself, because he was already late to “say the Rosary with a group of people,” but invited us to join him. We followed him around the side of Mary Major, where the “group of people” was a crowd of 150 or more gathered on a patio overlooking the Umbrian valley at the rear of the church. He spoke to the gathering and led the Rosary in Italian, and although we couldn’t understand much of what he said, it was clear to us that this was a holy man. To me, it seemed clear that the Holy Spirit continues to work in Assisi: the Bishop has written a wonderful reflection on the relationship between Francis and Guido and I was given the gift of the opportunity to thank him for it.

The book is a thoughtful consideration of the work of the Holy Spirit in the relationship of Francis and Guido before, during, and after the “stripping.” It contains many quotes from and references to the original sources and Scripture, and is amply illustrated with relevant paintings and photographs. Unfortunately, there appear to be only a few sources for the book at this time (November 2010): by visiting Mary Major or by ordering from one of three online sources in Italy, the easiest of which to navigate seems to be www.deastore.com (search Google for “accomplices of the spirit” to find the other two). Although they offer the book for €5.00 (five Euros or about \$6.65), shipping costs almost an additional €10.00). The book is published and copyrighted 2010 by Edizioni Frate Indovino, Perugia.

—Pat Tyrrell, SFO, St. Conrad Fraternity (Maryland)



A Reflection on the Admonitions: A Walk with Our Seraphic Father Day of Recollection For Inquirers and Candidates Lent 2011

Saturday, April 2, 2011, 9:30 a.m. - 3:30 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

Presenters

Bill Bouffard, SFO

Brother Kip Ledger, OFM Cap

Come join us during this Lenten Season and reflect on the Admonitions handed down to all of us as spiritual guidance from Saint Francis. Come take this journey as we learn more about Franciscan Spirituality in relation to the Admonitions and how it pertains to everyday life. We will incorporate the Bible, God's Word grounding our understanding and its relationship to the Admonitions.

(Formation teams and newly professed are also invited.)

Cost: \$15.00 per person.

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

Name _____

Fraternity _____

Address _____

City, State, ZIP _____

Email _____

Phone _____

Please return this information with payment by March 25 to:

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

**For in one Spirit we were
all baptized into one body,
whether Jews or Greeks,
slaves or free persons,
and we were all given to
drink of one Spirit.**

1 Corinthians 12:13

**We invite you to come
drink with us!**

Franciscan Saints, Blesseds and Feasts

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

FEBRUARY

- 17 **Bl. Luke Belludi**, religious, I Ord.
- 19 **St. Conrad of Piacenza**, hermit, III Ord.
- 27 **Bl. Sebastian of Aparicio**, religious, I Ord.

MARCH

- 2 **Bl. Agnes of Prague**, virgin, II Ord.
- 3 **Bls. Liberatus Weiss, Samuele Marzorati and Michele Pio Fasoli, priests and martyrs, I Ord.**
- 5 **St. John Joseph of the Cross**, priest, I Ord.
- 9 **St. Frances of Rome**, religious, III Ord.
- 12 **Bl. Angela Salawa**, virgin, III Ord.
- 18 **St. Salvator of Horta**, religious I Ord.
- 20 **Bl. John of Parma**, priest, I Ord.
- 22 **St. Benvenute of Osimo**, priest, I Ord.
- 23 **St. Catherine of Genoa**, III Ord.
- 24 **Bl. Ludovico of Casoria**, priest, I Ord.
- 30 St. Peter Regaldo, priest, I Ord.



St. Agnes of Prague

APRIL

- 2 **Bl. Elisabetta Vendramini**, religious, III Ord., founder
- 3 **St. Benedict the Moor**, religious, I Ord. (Sometimes celebrated on April 4)
- 6 **St. Crescentia Höss**, virgin, III Order
- 16 **St. Bernadette Soubirous**, cord-bearer of St. Francis
St. Benedict Joseph Labre, cord-bearer of St. Francis
- 21 **St. Conrad of Parzham**, religious, I Ord.
- 23 **Bl. Giles of Assisi**, religious, I Ord.
- 24 **St. Fidelis of Sigmaringen**, priest, martyr, I Ord.
- 25 **Bl. Pedro de San Jose Betancur**, religious, III Ord., founder
- 27 **St. Zita of Lucca**, virgin, III Ord.
- 28 **Bl. Luchesius**, III Ord.
- 30 **Bl. Benedict of Urbino**, priest, I Ord.
St. Benedict Joseph Cottolengo, III Ord.



St. Bernadette Soubirous

MAY

- 3 **Bl. Arthur Bell, Henry Heath, John Woodcock**, et al., priests, martyrs of England, I Ord.

- 7 **Bl. Agnellus of Pisa**, religious, I Ord.
- 8 **Bl. Jeremiah of Valacchia**, religious, I Ord..
- 9 **St. Catherine of Bologna**, virgin, II Ord.
- 10 **St. Ivo of Brittany**, III Ord.
- 11 **St. Ignatius of Laconi**, religious, I Ord.
Bl. Antonio of St. Anne Galvoa, I Ord., founder
- 12 **St. Leopold Mandic**, priest, I Ord.
- 16 **St. Margaret of Cortona**, III Ord.



St. Margaret of Cortona

Thoughts from St. Francis de Sales

I made myself small to guide little ones, and like the Good Shepherd, I adjusted my steps to the steps of my little lambs. True, I led them, but I did not force their pace for fear of tiring them.

I received everyone graciously, dismissing no one unceremoniously, whatever his condition. I listened to each one calmly and as long as he wanted, as though I had nothing else to do. Was not his Guardian Angel there watching me and judging me?

I adjusted myself to the wishes of others, desiring not that they should come my way but rather that I should go to theirs. Oh, it is a great thing, and leads to great peace, to be thus pliable and easily turned in all hands.

I regarded this life as a journey which we must make in the company of those whom the good God has placed beside us on our way. And these "companions on the road," I accepted them willingly, since God had sent them to me. I bore with them, I assisted them, I loved them. Should they not tell God at the end of the journey that I had been good to them?

In all my life, I have been angry but once; and I have always regretted it.

I have ever acted like the Good Samaritan who could not pass by a sufferer without stopping and consoling him; and like him I have poured oil and wine on the wounds of suffering souls. My God, if we should err at all, let it be on the side of gentleness.

Whatever the "mess" that God may put me in, it is all the same to me provided I serve Him. It is wonderful to be able to say these words. And so I used to turn them over and over again in my mind, and let them as it were to melt in my mouth. If only you knew in what tranquil contentment they left my soul.

There is no one in the world more sensitive than I to the sufferings of the heart. But I esteem this life so little that I never turn to God with deeper sentiments of love than when He strikes me or permits that I should be struck. My heart is like the trees that yield balm. The more you strike them, the more they yield forth their perfume. The more I was wounded, the more I esteemed meekness, sweetness. I would wish that these words were written on every one of my words and actions.

4th Annual Summer SFO Seminar

Endorsed by the SFO National Executive Council

Saint Francis University, Loretto, PA

"Aspects of Fraternity Life"

Presenters:



Fr. Lester Bach, OFM Cap.

and



Mary Bittner, SFO

**Thursday evening, June 23, 2011 –
Sunday lunch, June 26, 2011**



Lester Bach O.F.M.

Fr. Lester celebrated his Diamond Jubilee (60 years) of his first Profession in the Capuchin Order in August 2010. He was ordained in 1957. He is the author of many of the books used in both our initial and on-going formation as well as *Franciscan Family Connection*, the text used by many regions as the primary text for training Lay Spiritual Assistants.

Fr. Lester has worked with the Secular Franciscans since the 1960's. He is the current President-in-Turn of the Conference of National Spiritual Assistants (CNSA) where he represents the Capuchins. He also serves as Provincial Spiritual Assistant for St. Joseph Province to the Secular Franciscan Order and as the Regional Spiritual Assistant to La Verna Region. Fr. Lester has conducted many regional retreats across the country.

He has worked with the formation program with Capuchin Brothers as well as sharing ministry in a parish, worked with the Cursillo and Search programs, and served as chaplain at a county nursing home. He has been director of a retreat center and done retreat work for many years. Fr. Lester is currently stationed at San Damiano in Madison, WI.

Mary Bittner, SFO

Mary, one of the Councilors on NAFRA's Executive Council, is the Chairperson of NAFRA's Fraternal Life Committee. Mary has most recently served as minister of Divine Mercy Region for six years. She has also served as regional vice minister and served on the regional formation team. At her local fraternity, she has served as formation team member, secretary, minister, and councilor. Mary is a research assistant professor at University of Michigan Medical School in Ann Arbor, and resides in Ypsilanti, MI.

Directions to St. Francis University

By Car:

From Northwestern Pennsylvania: Take I-79 to Rt. 422 east to Ebensburg. In town, turn left at the traffic light onto High Street. Continue straight at next light. Turn left on to Manor Road. Saint Francis University is six miles on the right.

From Cleveland (Ohio area): Take Ohio Turnpike east to I-80 east. Take I-680 south to Route 422 east (approximately 120 miles) to Ebensburg. In town, turn left at the traffic light onto High Street. Continue straight at next light. Turn left on to Manor Road. Follow this road for six miles to the Saint Francis University entrance on right.

From southwestern PA and southeast Ohio: Take Route 22 east from Pittsburgh to second Ebensburg exit (Ebensburg/Loretto exit). Bear right at end of exit ramp. Proceed straight (crossing over Route 22). Turn right at the first light on to Manor Road. Follow this road for six miles to the Saint Francis University entrance on right.

From Northeastern PA/Central New Jersey: Take I-80 south to I-80 west to exit 161 (Bellefonte). Take US99/Rt. 220 south approximately 50 miles to Altoona and Rt. 22 west. Take Rt. 22 west to Lilly/Portage exit. Turn right onto Rt. 53 north. Continue on Rt. 53 north approximately two miles to traffic light (Sheetz on left). Turn left at light and continue beneath railroad overpass. 200 yards beyond overpass, bear right at Saint Francis University sign onto St. Joseph Street. Take this road four miles to Loretto. At Village Cross monument on traffic circle, bear left. Saint Francis University entrance is 200 yards on left.

From Southeastern PA and Baltimore, Md, Washington, D.C.: Take PA Turnpike (I-76) west to Bedford exit 146 (220 North/I-99 North). Turn left after toll booth. At top of hill, turn left onto US99/Rt. 220 north to Altoona. Travel approximately 30 miles to Rt. 22 west. Continue from Altoona -- previous paragraph.

Driving Distances:	
Pittsburgh	80 Miles
Baltimore	185 Miles
Cleveland	200 Miles
Scranton	210 Miles
Philadelphia	230 Miles
Buffalo	260 Miles
Columbus	270 Miles
New York City	300 Miles

TENTATIVE Schedule ***"Aspects of Fraternity Life"***

Thursday- June 23, 2011

Afternoon – Registration beginning 1 P.M. (*Christian Hall*)

5:00 PM – Dinner (*Torvian Dining Hall*)

6:30 PM – Evening prayer – (*DiSepio Institute for Rural Health and Wellness*) Lester Bach, OFM Cap

7:00 PM – **Session #1** – Mary Bittner, SFO – Overview of Seminar

8:30 PM – Social (*Christian Hall*)

Friday – June 24, 2011

8:00 AM – Breakfast (*Torvian Dining Hall*)

9:15 AM – Morning prayer – (*DiSepio Institute for Rural Health and Wellness*) – Mary Bittner, SFO

9:45 AM – **Session #2**– Lester Bach, OFM Cap - *What do we mean by a fraternity-community and why is it important in our Franciscan life?* Small group discussion/ Feedback

11:35 AM – Break

12:00 noon – Lunch (*Torvian Dining Hall*)

2:00 PM – **Session #3** – (*DiSepio Institute for Rural Health and Wellness*) – Mary Bittner, SFO
What tools are available to develop a healthy fraternity/community life?
Small group discussion / Feedback

3:40 PM – Break

4:00 PM – Eucharist (*Immaculate Conception Chapel*) - Lester Bach, OFM Cap

5:00 PM – Dinner (*Torvian Dining Hall*)

6:30 PM – Evening prayer – (*DiSepio Institute for Rural Health and Wellness*) Lester Bach, OFM Cap

7:00 PM - **Session #4** - Mary Bittner, SFO / Lester Bach, OFM Cap - *Open forum*

8:30 PM – Social (*Christian Hall*)

Saturday – June 25, 2011

8:00 AM – Breakfast (*Torvian Dining Hall*)

9:15 AM – Morning prayer – (*DiSepio Institute for Rural Health and Wellness*) – Mary Bittner, SFO

9:45 AM – **Session #5**– Mary Bittner, SFO - *What is the role of ongoing formation in fraternity life? What is the value of community experiences and service for developing our ability to enhance community life?* Small group discussion / Feedback

11:35 AM – Break

12:00 noon – Lunch (*Torvian Dining Hall*)

2:00 PM – **Session #6** – (*DiSepio Institute for Rural Health and Wellness*) – Lester Bach, OFM Cap
Issues that arise in fraternity. Small group discussion / Feedback

4:00 PM – Eucharist – **Sunday liturgy** – (*Immaculate Conception Chapel*) – Lester Bach, OFM Cap

5:00 PM – Dinner (*Torvian Dining Hall*)

6:30 PM – Evening prayer – (*DiSepio Institute for Rural Health and Wellness*) Lester Bach, OFM Cap

7:00 PM – **Session #7** – Mary Bittner, SFO - *Develop a model fraternity gathering and/or an ongoing session about fraternity/community and its role in the SFO.*
Small group discussion / Feedback

8:30 PM – Social (*Christian Hall*)

Sunday, June 26, 2011

8:00 AM – Breakfast (*Torvian Dining Hall*)

9:15 AM – Morning prayer – (*DiSepio Institute for Rural Health and Wellness*) – Fr. Lester Bach

9:45 AM – **Session #8** – Mary / Lester - *What is the role of a Spiritual Assistant in creating vibrant fraternity life?* Small group discussion / Feedback

11:00 AM – Closing remarks by Mary Bittner, SFO and Lester Bach, OFM Cap

12:00 noon – Lunch (*Torvian Dining Hall*) – Departures

A Summer Seminar for SFOs

Endorsed by the National Executive Council of the SFO

“Aspects of Fraternity Life”

Presenters:

Fr. Lester Bach, OFM Cap. and Mary Bittner, SFO

Thursday evening, June 23, 2011 - Sunday lunch, June 26, 2011

**St. Francis University
Loretto, PA**

Important Instructions:

1. Please TYPE or PRINT all information clearly.
2. Payment must accompany this form and is NON-REFUNDABLE.
3. Registration Fee includes registration, air-conditioned dorm room, van shuttle to/from dorm, and all meals. **LIMITED NUMBER OF SINGLE ROOMS AVAILABLE!**
4. Make your check payable to: **ST FRANCIS UNIVERSITY.**
5. Mail this form with payment to: Cecilia Maljan, SFO, 1111 Freyburg Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15203-1211.

REGISTRATION LIMITED TO 100 PARTICIPANTS!

Absolutely no registrations accepted after June 9th, 2011!

Early Registration:

Single Room \$ 260 = \$_____ (includes registration, air-conditioned dorm room, van shuttle to/from dorm, and all meals)

After April 30, 2011 the registration is \$ 285 per person.

Double Room \$220 pp = \$_____

After April 30, 2011 the registration is \$240 per person.

Amount Enclosed: \$ _____

I will be rooming with _____

I will need a roommate – match me up if you can

PLEASE TYPE or PRINT CLEARLY

Title First Name(s) Last Name

Fraternity Name Region

Address City State Zip

Home Phone Work Phone/ Cell Phone E-Mail Address

Questions? Contact Diane Rombouts, St. Francis University's Institute for Contemporary Franciscan Life (814) 472-3219 (daytime) or e-mail icfl@francis.edu - OR - Cyl Maljan at cylmaljan@earthlink.net