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# THE DOVERELLO

ST. BONAVENTURE SECULAR FRANCISCANS ✦ DETROIT, MICHIGAN



There are only two portraits of St. Francis that art historians believe were done during his lifetime. One (used on our Fraternity's website) is a painting in Greccio. The other (above), is a more stylized fresco found in the lower church of the Benedictine Monastery of the Sacro Speco in Subiaco, Italy. Notice that it bears the name "Brother Francis", there is no halo and has no stigmata (therefore prior to 1224). (The full-length image can be seen on page 5.) Francis also appears partly hidden in a fresco in Subiaco's Chapel of St. Gregory standing behind Cardinal Ugolino who consecrated that chapel about the year 1218.

Visit our website: <http://www.sfastbonaventure-detroit.org>

# MINISTER'S LETTER

Dear brothers and sisters,

*May our Lord's peace and all good be with you!*

As I write this, in two weeks' time, John and I shall be journeying to Germany for the Bach Festival in Stuttgart. This is a trip that our daughter gave us as a gift. She and her husband were supposed to come along with us, but the Lord apparently had other plans for them. My daughter will deliver another little girl on September 5<sup>th</sup>!

Whenever John and I travel I am always cognizant of *the journey* as being just one more chance to experience something new, meet new people, see more of God's fabulous creation, and possibly, to return more enlightened and a better person for it.

In his book, *Everything Belongs: The Gift of Contemplative Prayer* (2003, New York, Cross Road Publishing), Richard Rohr, OFM, speaks of our daily life's journey and the experiences that we have that may be truly *transformative* in the way that Jesus meant when he spoke of metanoia which is usually translated as "repentance", but really means "move beyond the mind." This moving beyond the mind refers to having the openness to look at situations in a different way and learning to *let go* of our rigid prejudices and preconceptions. We have to make a special effort "to see that others don't see things the way we do" (p. 49). He goes on to give an example of a Native American custom called a vision quest. Those who went on the vision quest were not supposed to come back from their journey until they had seen another world. Until you have seen an alternative reality and God has shown God's face, you are not initiated" (p. 51).

It seems to me that, as Secular Franciscans, we have seen that *other world* and, by profession, have chosen that way (path) of life, i.e., the Gospel way of life. It is not easy to *let go* and be transformed. Through our careful reading of Scripture Jesus reminds us that "my grace is sufficient for you" (2 Corinthians 12:9). With this joyful, loving thought in mind, let us continue our Franciscan journey — trusting, praying, loving and being open to all the possibilities for spiritual transformation!

Thank you for all your prayers, cards and hugs. I love you all.

Your sister in Francis and Clare,

Janet

## Rule Reflections for September 2008

### ARTICLE 10

United themselves to the redemptive obedience of Jesus, who placed his will into the Father's hands, let them faithfully fulfill the duties proper to their various circumstances of life. Let them also follow the poor and crucified Christ, witness to him even in difficulties and persecutions.

**Scripture:** Colossians 3:23, 4:2; Matthew 10:22, 24-25, 28; Matthew 11:16-19; Revelation 3:7-8

#### **For personal meditation:**

Describe obedience and why it is an important quality for Franciscans.

What was Jesus' attitude toward those with rigid opinions who refuse to listen or change?

#### **For group discussion:**

**What are your "duties" in your current "circumstance of life" and how does being a Franciscan make a difference in carrying out those "duties"?**

# Brothers and Sisters

Faye Kluk Boland has volunteered to write a new monthly feature for *The Poverello*, entitled, “Brothers and Sisters”. This is a column *for* and *about* you, our brothers and sisters in the Secular Franciscan Order, and Faye would like to solicit from all of you help in collecting news (good and bad) for the column.

**E-mail her at Boland7@juno.com, or call her at (586) 939-3342 or (586) 996-3342.**

Our Spiritual Assistant, **Br. Pat McSherry**, has been in Switzerland and Italy wrapping up a 4-year research project looking into the beginnings of the first permanent Capuchin foundation in North America, followed by a visit to Rome and Assisi. We really miss him and can’t wait to hear about his trip.

A party was held at our home on July 21<sup>st</sup> to celebrate **Maxine Piaseczny**’s 86<sup>th</sup> birthday and the fifth anniversary of her commitment as a Franciscan Missionary of Jesus Crucified. The highlight of the celebration was a Mass celebrated by Capuchin **Fr. Ray Trejo**, who shared stories about Maxine, and the renewal of her commitment. Maxine said that it was the best birthday she had ever had because her family was present, as well as her Franciscan sisters and brothers, and because she was living with her granddaughter, **Terry**, instead of in the nursing home.

Our former Spiritual Director, **Fr. Jogues Constance**, had back surgery on July 24<sup>th</sup> and, after a period of initial recuperation at MediLodge Nursing Home in Rochester Hills, he’s back at Washington Retreat as of August 27<sup>th</sup>. He is doing well but will need to continue recuperating with exercise and rest. Cards would be appreciated, but it’s probably best not to call or visit for the time being.

**Joe and I** were in Texas for a week celebrating the wedding of our oldest blood grandchild, **Cristy Kasmiroski** to **Justin Whitworth**. That was a very exciting week!

On Friday, August 8<sup>th</sup>, at the home of **Jim and Charlotte Heymes**, we celebrated **Nona Mary Hebert**’s 90<sup>th</sup> birthday (sure doesn’t look or act her age!). Mary surprised us all by bringing a gift from her home for each of us with the excuse that she was “downsizing”.

**Janet and John Bodell** left on August 22<sup>nd</sup> for an 8-day trip to Germany to attend the Bach Festival in Stuttgart. We’re sure they will share details of their trip with us also.

**Gina Rizzo** went on a quest to find one of our old-time (over 40-year) members, **Rose Longo**. Rose suffered a stroke which lead to her relocation. Her new address is:

**Rose Longo**  
**Lakepointe Nursing Home**  
**37700 Harper 1-15-A**  
**Clinton Township, MI 48036**  
**Tel.: 586-468-0827**

Lastly, Sister Bodily Death recently claimed two of our Fraternity’s members, both of whom we characters in their own right. On August 3<sup>rd</sup>, our brother and friend, **Joe Doeren** passed away at age 82. His funeral was a clear tribute to his life. Joe will surely be missed by all. Then, on August 16<sup>th</sup>, **Maxine Piaseczny** was called home after being under hospice care for five days at her granddaughter’s house. Maxine, champion of justice, peace and interfaith relations, friend of the downtrodden and poor, touched the lives of countless multitudes. Besides spearheading our SFO Justice and Peace Commission and the Interfaith Justice and Peace Group for years, Maxine also served on our Fraternity Council. These two indomitable forces, now passed beyond our sight, will undoubtedly continue to intercede on our behalf, so don’t hesitate to pray not only *for* them, but *to* them, as well. Following Maxine’s death, someone remarked that Joe had to go first to start the car in order to pick Maxine up on the way. As in life... so in death. **RIP.**

Faye Kluk Boland

# Let us pray

## Deceased Members:



† Joseph Doeren (August 3, 2008)



† Maxine Piaseczny (August 16, 2008)

## Members needing prayers:

Wilhelmina Adkins	Les and Josie Lafata
Peter Aluzzo	Janice Litch
Dan Atkinson	Rose Longo
Kay Balas	Joseph Marra
Gertrude Beattie	Sophie Martin
Evelyn Bishop	Dorothy Matargas
Anthony Brodeur	Maria McNally
Fred Dinverno	Ray Morehead
Wesley Faust	Genevieve Ochenkowski
Marie Fontanive	Dolores & Bob Peckham
Natalie Grabowski	Theresa Pfaendtner
Virginia Hale	Joseph Pierce
James Heymes	Mary Saber
Donna Marie Johnston	Joanne Schumacher (for a job)

Helen Wardowski  
Joseph Wisk

## Relatives needing prayers:

Angel Bettin and Donna Mitchell,  
daughters of Caroline Hojna  
Dawn Bodell and family,  
daughter of John and Janet Bodell  
Marcella Carter, mother of Ona Harris  
Angelina and Joey Daleo,  
daughter-in-law & son of Josie and Les Lafata  
Starr Dehn, niece of Mary Poole  
Raymond Donahue, husband of Julia E-Donahue  
Rose Dreissen, wife of Joseph  
Barbara Erzbischoff, mother of Julia E-Donahue  
Beverly Falzone, mother of Clara  
Stefan Florescu, husband of Caroline  
Bob Fontanive, husband of Marie  
Judy Hojna, Caroline's sister-in-law  
Ted Hojna, husband of Caroline  
Andrew Hudson, nephew of Jan Atkison  
Baby Owen, great nephew of Jan Atkinson  
Fred LaChance, brother of Donna Marie Johnston  
Jane I. Litch, mother of Janice  
Elda Martinello, mother of Gina Rizzo  
Cindy Murphy, niece of Dan Atkinson  
Marilyn Nichols, daughter of Anthony Brodeur  
Jenna Nicholm, niece of Dan and Jan Atkinson  
Jean Nozewski, wife of Thomas  
Lawrence Poole, father of Mary  
Sean Sherman, son of Sandra  
Anthony Wilson, uncle of Dan Atkinson  
Steve Yuhase, father of Claire Johnson

## Memorials

Joseph Doeren • Maxine Piaseczny • Alice Zoya

## Those serving in the Armed Forces:

Andrew Arcznski	Thomas Greenia
Christopher Beattie	John Kristensen
Francisco Biber	John Marra III
Thomas Chmielarczyk	Joseph Marra, Jr.

## Pray for all who asked for our prayers.

Help keep our list up-to-date,  
to remove or add names, call:  
**Jo Marie Nardi at 586-978-2335**

## Celebrating Joe Wisk

Joe was born in Detroit on June 25, 1925, into a family of four boys and one girl. One of his sisters, Dolores, became a Felician Sister. Joe attended Immaculate Conception Grade School in Detroit's Poletown neighborhood. Growing up, he would go to the Monastery on occasion to request a Mass for some intention, and in that way met Fr. Solanus. After spending his freshman year at St. Stanislaus High School Joe attended Northeastern High School for his sophomore year before enlisting in the Navy to serve our country during World War II. At war's end, Joe resumed and completed his high school education at Cass Tech and Northwestern. He was graduated from the University of Detroit with a Bachelor's Degree, majoring in biology and minoring in chemistry. Joe also did post-graduate degree work in microbiology at Wayne State University.

Joe learned of the Secular Franciscans from his mother who was a member. Later, he joined the Third Order Juniors and Intermediates and was invested in 1949. In 1952, Joe married Alfreda Cynarski who would also join the Franciscan Third Order. Joe and Alfreda's family includes four daughters, 10 grandchildren and three great grandchildren, and numerous cousins, scattered throughout the United States. At one point in our Fraternity's history, there was a group of members known as promoters. Joe was one of them. For a num-

ber of years now, Joe has served as a valued member of our Fraternity's formation team helping with prospective members in orientation and inquiry.

Joe's work experience has been broad: musician at weddings and parties; a variety of industrial jobs in the auto and aircraft industries; Medical School cancer research technician, Health Department Environmental Control staff, hospital Laboratory Technician, Hospital Microbiologist and Supervisor, Dearborn Health Department Environmental Control staff, Dearborn Community College Adjunct Professor teaching food safety (Microbiology), and consultant in Environmental Jail Health for Wayne County Jails.

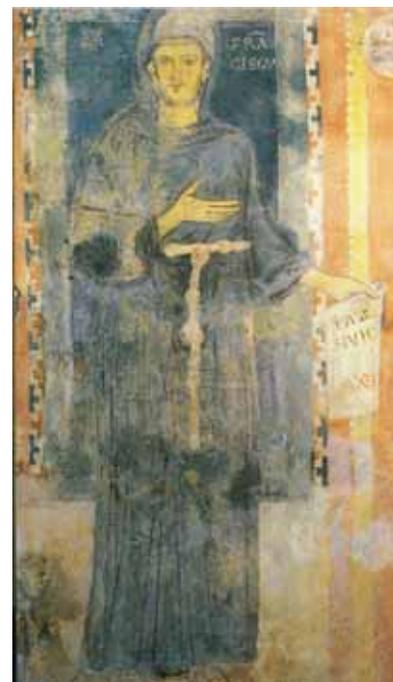
Joe's main involvements these days include his family, morning Mass, the SFO, stock market morning, Jihad Watch A.M., piano, Holy Hour, visiting, exercise and various parish activities.

Thanks for everything, Joe. We love you!



## Feasts of September

- 2 ..... Bl. Severin Girault and Companion Martyrs, I and III Orders
- 4 ..... St. Rose of Viterbo, SFO
- 5 ..... Bl. (Mother) Teresa of Calcutta (not a Secular Franciscan)
- 17 ..... Stigmata of St. Francis (1224)
- 26 ..... St. Eleazar of Sabran and Bl. Delphina of Glandenes, SFO spouses



## Mark Your 2008 Calendars

**PLEASE NOTE:** The dates of our Secular Franciscan Ministry at the Soup Kitchens are now posted below to give everyone advance notice in order to plan ahead.

September 21.. Day of Reflection ( 11 AM ) **A Bag Lunch will be provided for everyone;** no Mass

September 25.. 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday SFO Ministry at the Conner Soup Kitchen: 11 AM to 1 PM.

September 26.. SFO Ministry at the Meldrum Soup Kitchen: 10:30 AM – 1 PM.

October 5..... Second Annual Solanus Casey Concert ( 4:00 PM ).

October 19 ..... Regular 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday Meeting (Candidates at 12; Everyone at 1:30)

October 23 ..... 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday SFO Ministry at the Conner Soup Kitchen: 11 AM to 1 PM.

October 31 ..... SFO Ministry at the Meldrum Soup Kitchen: 10:30 AM – 1 PM.

November 16 .. **Renewal of Profession within Mass (Candidates at 12; Everyone at 1:30)**

November 22 .. Mass for SFO Deceased ( 10 am )

November 27 .. 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday SFO Ministry at the Conner Soup Kitchen: 11 AM to 1 PM.

November 28 .. SFO Ministry at the Meldrum Soup Kitchen: 10:30 AM – 1 PM.

December 21 .. Christmas Concert

December 25 .. 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday SFO Ministry at the Conner Soup Kitchen: 11 AM to 1 PM.

December 26 .. SFO Ministry at the Meldrum Soup Kitchen: 10:30 AM – 1 PM.



1 ..... Michael O'Brien

Rita Collins

Theresa Coschino

2 ..... Maryann Bourgeau

5 ..... Clara O'Keefe

Clara Falzone

8 ..... Mary Burghardt

10 ..... Beverly Joseph

12 ..... Fred Dinverno

14 ..... Mary Schalm

Dennis Whalen

15 ..... Stanley Galup

16 ..... Lorraine Korte

18 ..... George Pelyak

20 ..... Francis Rettig

23 ..... Faye Boland

Thomas Petsuch

24 ..... Sheryl Ann Nordstrom

Br. Pat McSherry

# The Secular Franciscan Order: An Appropriate Lay Vocation Identity and Affiliation

by Fr. Michael Higgins, TOR

(Reprinted from *Koinonia*, 2002, N. 3)

Koinonia is a publication of the Conference of General Spiritual Assistants of the SFO, published in Rome)

## Introduction

The Church provides a means to visibly and vigorously participate in Christ's mission to invite every man and women into a deep and personal relationship with God. In a real and practical sense it is to be the leaven of faith for people, the salt of the earth, the light and soul of the world. It is at one and the same time in the world and for the world. That is, the Church is to be actively involved in transforming the world and the world order as it provides a locus for the sacrament for salvation. In this process it is to use all the means at its disposal to continue the outreach and mission of the Savior.

The starting point of becoming coworkers with Christ and the Church is with the reception of the sacrament of baptism.<sup>1</sup> This sacrament provides a challenge to every Christian to live and witness to the salvific presence of Christ with love, energy and conviction. It is clear that women and men on fire with the love of God are the most efficacious instruments of the transforming ministry of the Church. The paradox is that as one gives him- or herself to God through active participation with the mission of the Church of spreading the Kingdom of God one finds life and meaning.

Some live this baptismal call through a dedication to God in religious vows and an embrace of a life guided by prayer and works of mercy. The consecrated life is a separation from the secular order which allows religious to be inserted ever more deeply into the framework of human life as ministers of the faith. Religious vocation allows religious to be public representatives of the Church as they witness to the saving power of Christ in the vowed life. Even those religious dedicated to the enclosure and contemplation are involved in the currents of the world in a deep and tangible way through their life and prayer.

On the other hand, the lay person, whether married or single, is not only in the world and for the world but also of the world. That is, he or she is inserted into the very fabric of human existence and society on every level. In a sense, this can be called the "secular" dimension of the lay state. The role and challenge of the lay person is to live fully in this situation. Quoting section 31 of the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church (*Lumen Gentium*) the Catechism of the Catholic Church puts it this way:

By reason of their special vocation it belongs to the laity to seek the kingdom of God by engaging in temporal affairs and directing them according to God's will.... It pertains to them in a special way so to illuminate and order all temporal things with which they are closely associated that these may always be effected and grow according to Christ and may be to the glory of the Creator and Redeemer.<sup>2</sup>

Recently, Pope John Paul II reaffirmed this teaching when he addressed the bishops of the Antilles at the end of their *ad limina* visit to the Holy See. He stated that the laity have an important role to play in the Church and stated that, the premier place of the exercise of the lay vocation is in the world of economic, social, political and cultural realities. It is in this world that lay people are called to live their baptismal vocation...<sup>3</sup>

This is what the lay vocation is all about; it is a way of responding the challenge of baptism, the challenge of living and spreading the gospel in the midst of world. The Catechism goes further by stating that the "initiative of lay Christians is necessary especially when the matter involves discovering or inventing the means for permeating social, political, and economic realities with the demands of Christian doctrine and life."<sup>4</sup>

## **Lay Vocation: Priest, Prophet and King**

The important and transforming action of baptism incorporates all who receive the sacrament into the triple anointed role of priest, prophet and king. The Church is very clear that as the laity live out their baptismal identity they share in these important Christological activities of Jesus. Each of the anointed roles highlight the messianic nature of Christ which is shared with the baptized as a way to inform and empower them for their ministry. St. Francis deepens this understanding in his reflection in Admonition V that women and men are created not only in the image of the Divine, but more specifically in the image of Christ “according to body and to His likeness according to the Spirit.”<sup>5</sup> As Christ was and is priest, prophet and king so also are all those created in His image and likeness. The sacrament of baptism enlivens and energizes this image and encourages those who receive it to live up to their birthright. While much can be said about each of these three dimensions it is important to understand them as they are lived out and embraced by women and men in their day to day life.

The figure of the priest evokes the images of sacrifice and mediation. The priest is one who offers sacrifice as a way to worship and thank God for the divine presence in the world. The priest is also a mediator, one who stands before God and intercedes for people. That is, the priest stands before God in order to ask for pardon, peace and grace. This is the true and proper role of the laity as they participate in the saving mystery of Christ. Through the daily activities of their Christian lives the laity give praise to God and ask for the Divine to be ever more present in the world. In “worshiping everywhere by their holy actions, the laity consecrate the world itself to God, everywhere offering worship by the holiness of their lives.”<sup>6</sup> The lay person is to both intercede for the world and to recognize that they are part of God’s answer to this plea. People everywhere seem to be asking where God is in the midst of the problems of the world. As they cooperate with the Divine will the laity form at least one aspect of this response. God is in and works through the laity.

The role of priestly mediation is heightened with the understanding of the role of a prophet who is challenged to clearly and boldly speak the word of the Lord – even when it is inconvenient or difficult. The prophet is one who lives two realities at the same time. On one hand, he or she is to be deeply immersed in the will of God and know it intimately. Only then can the prophet be a willing instrument in transmitting the divine will to people in a way in which it can be understood and followed. On the other hand, a prophet is also to be deeply immersed in the currents of human society, to know and understand the struggles and travails of the people to whom she or he is called to minister. The prophet’s challenge is to live vibrantly in this dual reality as a way to participate in the Church’s work of evangelization. For lay people, “this evangelization...acquires a specific property and peculiar efficacy because it is accomplished in the ordinary circumstances of the world.”<sup>7</sup>

The identification of the laity as king also brings out the gracious desire of God to share the essence of the divine nature with the women and men who are created in the image and likeness of the Divine. Although the kingship of Jesus is not greatly emphasized in the New Testament,<sup>8</sup> one of the most powerful images of Christ in Christian devotion is his representation as king: king of heaven and earth, king of creation and king of history. In part, this royal title highlights the divine authority that was given to Christ, that same authority that is passed on to his followers in order to empower them for their ministry in the world. Again, the laity are encouraged to exercise this authority in the secular sphere as a way of transforming the world through their witness. As the Catechism states, by uniting their forces, let the laity so remedy the institutions and conditions of the world when the latter are an inducement to sin, that these may be conformed to the norms of justice, favoring rather than hindering the practice of virtue. By so doing they will impregnate culture and human works with a moral value.<sup>9</sup> What a tremendous challenge, particularly in the world of the 21<sup>st</sup> century with its incredible potential...and its myriad problems.

## **Lay Vocation: Specific Mission is the Consecration of the Secular Order**

When Francis started preaching penance after he had received permission from Pope Innocent III in 1209 or 1210 his message touched the hearts of many people who were thirsty for a way to vibrantly express their spirituality. In this way the “Franciscan movement” was inaugurated. In a short period of time three distinct groups evolved. Two developed into “regular” religious communities which were guided by an approved rule, the profes-

sion of vows, and a structured life in community. Thus, the “First” Order for men and the “Second” Order for women who were called to embrace a truly Franciscan approach to religious life were born. Those Christians who wished to embrace a Franciscan way of life “in their own homes” banded together as lay penitents and developed into the “Third Order” of St. Francis. This Order, which has had its own distinct charism from its inception, finds its identity precisely in its secular or lay nature.

It is interesting to note the repetition in the early documents of the phrase “in their own homes” as a way to describe the Third Order, or Secular Franciscan Order. The term identifies an essential reality of the Secular Franciscan Order, defines its proper sphere of activity and identifies its place in the world and the Church. It is precisely in the midst of the secular order that members of the order lived the fullest expression of their baptism.

While there was certainly a wide range of activities which engaged Franciscans in the early years, and more than a little overlap in their self-understanding, a case can be made for identifying members of the First Order as itinerant preachers and evangelists, members of the Second Order as contemplatives, and members of the Third Order as ministers of works of mercy. The arena of their activity was the home and commune [town]. Their secular state was the vehicle or instrument through which they contributed to the building up of the Kingdom.

At a time during which many men and women gave up homes, families, careers and communes, others found that it was precisely *in* these areas that they were called to become more involved. Rather than leaving home, family, career and commune, they inserted themselves more deeply in them with gospel love and witness as a way to transform society. This “transformation of the secular order” identifies the specific mission of the members of the Secular Franciscan Order. In doing so, members of the Order associate themselves knowingly or unknowingly into the same way of acting in the world that God has used through the centuries to touch the lives of people. Even a cursory glance at Sacred Scripture highlights the fact that God has consistently become involved in the fabric of human existence in midst of its day-to-day struggle for life and love. Jesus, in his life, death and resurrection, is the greatest expression of this divine outreach at work. It is precisely in the midst of the human condition that the fullest gift and invitation takes place.

In the *First Exhortation to the Brothers and Sisters of Penance*, a document which has been embraced by both the Secular Franciscan Order and the Third Order Regular as an introduction to their respective rules, St. Francis challenges his followers to have a close, intimate relationship to God. After highlighting the five elements of a penitential life (love of God, love of neighbor, hatred of sin, participation in the Eucharist, and a life which produces worthy fruits of penance) he states:

O how happy and blessed are these men and women while they do such things and persevere in doing them, because the Spirit of the Lord will rest on them and make Its home and dwelling place among them, and they are children of the heavenly Father Whose works they do, and they are the spouses, brothers, and mothers of our Lord Jesus Christ. We are spouses when the faithful soul is joined by the Holy Spirit to our Lord Jesus Christ. We are brothers to him when we do the will of the Father who is in heaven. We are mothers when we carry Him in our heart and body through a divine love and a pure and sincere conscience and give birth to Him through a holy activity which must shine as an example before others.<sup>10</sup>

The result of a close union with God is that the penitent is able to “give birth to” Christ, to be pregnant with the Word of God and be willing to share Him with others. What a wonderful description of the action of transformation. One would have to be in total denial of the condition of the world to think that everything is going well and according to God’s expressed desire that all may have life and have it in abundance. The past 100 years have been the most brutal and dehumanizing in the history of the world. Terms like ethnic cleansing, abortion-on-demand, euthanasia, human cloning, and pedophilia have become common place in our language and experience. Every country on the face of the earth lives with the specter of terrorism, prejudice, racism, corruption, larceny and a host of conditions which threaten to rob humanity of its divine dignity. In the face of these seemingly insurmountable problems, the Christian is challenged to bring the enlivening Word of God in word and action into situations which lack God’s transforming presence. To use St. Francis’ phrase, the Franciscan is to “give birth to Christ.” That is,

each Franciscan is to bring Christ into every experience and corner of life. Professed religious are to do this in and through their ministries as individuals and as communities. Secular Franciscans have the harder challenge of giving birth to Christ in their families, their relationships with one another and in their fraternities on the various levels of the Order. They are also to bring Christ to the markets, schools, factories, farms, political and military arenas, playgrounds, theaters, museums – every place where women and men are in need of the presence of God.

To say that the proper place of mission for the Secular Franciscan is in the secular sphere provides a context and a tremendous challenge for those who have embraced this vocation. The laity live and work in the secular milieu, that is in the midst of the ordinary events and currents of daily life. The embrace of a vocation to the Secular Franciscan Order is a declaration, both privately and publicly, that one intends to embrace the deepest expression of the baptismal commitment in the midst of society.

Chapter Four of the Rule of the Secular Franciscan Order states that “the rule and life of the Secular Franciscans is this: to observe the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ by following the example of Saint Francis of Assisi... Secular Franciscans should devote themselves especially to careful reading of the gospel, going from gospel to life and life to gospel.” This Chapter of the Rule sums up the whole text of the document and could very well stand alone as the clearest expression of what the life of the Secular Franciscan is all about. This can be highlighted by paying attention to the verbs used just in these two short sentences. Members of this Order are asked to observe the gospel, to follow the example of St. Francis, to devote themselves to a careful reading of the gospel, and to go from gospel to life and life to gospel. To “observe the gospel” is a challenge that is given to every baptized Christian since at baptism every Christian is incorporated into the life, death and resurrection of Christ and are asked to participate in His mission of salvation in communion with the Church. However, as the dictate “to follow” highlights so well, they are to do this according to the example of St. Francis who dedicated his entire life and all his energies to searching for and following God’s will. This gives a decided “Franciscan” flavor to the living of one’s baptismal identity. The Secular Franciscan is not challenged to become another Francis, but to dedicate him- or herself to Christ in the same way and with the same love and energy which highlighted the Poverello’s life. The only way this can be done is for the Secular to know intimately the essential Rule of life for all Franciscans, the gospel of Jesus Christ. Thus, in devoting themselves to a careful reading of the gospel, they are to exercise another way of “observing” the gospel. That is, they are to study it with care and devotion, to allow it to become an integral part of their own personal identity and to help form how they live in and relate with the world. For the Franciscan, the gospel is to be the lens through which and against which the whole of life is to be lived and evaluated. Understood in this way, the last challenge of this Chapter of the Rule flows naturally. The Franciscan is to enter into relationship with every facet of reality and by allowing the gospel to be the horizon against which everything in life finds its ultimate meaning. The concept of “going from gospel to life and life to gospel” is not to be left as an interesting slogan but as a guiding imperative in the life of the Secular Franciscan.

By stating that life is the focal point of the dialogue with the gospel the Rule reinforces the Church’s insistence that the arena for the evangelical presence of the laity is precisely in the midst of life. Again, it is clear that this entails that the Secular Order is the arena in which the lay Franciscan is to be actively and attentively involved. With this understanding in mind it is definitely fair to state that the Secular Franciscan Order is an appropriate lay vocation. The vocation lived fully deepens the reality that it is precisely in the living out of one’s lay life in the love of God, the service of the Church and participation in the Franciscan family that one grows in holiness and transforms the world.

“The laity must take up the renewal of the temporal order as their own special obligation. Led by the light of the Gospel and the mind of the Church and motivated by Christian charity, they must act directly and in a definite way in the temporal sphere. As citizens they must cooperate with other citizens with their own particular skill and on their own responsibility. Everywhere and in all things they must seek the justice of God’s kingdom. The temporal order must be renewed in such a way that, without detriment to its own proper laws, it may be brought into conformity with the higher principles of the Christian life and adapted to the shifting circumstances of time, place and peoples. Preeminent among the works of this type of apostolate is that of Christian social action which the sacred synod desires to see extended to the whole temporal sphere, including culture.”<sup>11</sup>

## Endnotes:

<sup>1</sup>Catechism of the Catholic Church, art. 1213.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., art. 898.

<sup>3</sup>“Laity Must Not Be Clericalized Nor Clergy Laicized,” as reported by zenit.org, May 10, 2002.

<sup>4</sup>Catechism. art. 899.

<sup>5</sup>*The Admonitions*, no. V, in *The Saint, Volume I of Francis of Assisi: Early Documents*, edited by Regis Armstrong, Wayne Hellmann and William Short (New York: New City Press, 1999) 131.

<sup>6</sup>Catechism. art. 901.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid. art. 905.

<sup>8</sup>Cf. the section “King” in John L. McKenzie, *Dictionary of the Bible* (New York: MacMillan Publishing Co., 1965) 479. McKenzie points out that one reason for this was that Jesus changed the popular understanding about what a king and kingdom in relationship to his messianic character and mission.

<sup>9</sup>Catechism. art. 909.

<sup>10</sup>Earlier Exhortation to the Brothers and Sisters of Penance, 5-7, in *The Saint*, 41-42.

<sup>11</sup>Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity, no. 7

## A CAPUCHIN RETREAT FOR THE MEN OF ST. BONAVENTURE SFO FRATERNITY SEPTEMBER 19-21, 2008

A weekend retreat provides an opportunity to deepen your relationship with God and find the strength to face the challenges of Christian living with renewed hope and determination.

So, **take time to slow down** at Capuchin Retreat, a place of unequalled beauty, peace and quiet where you can actually hear God speak to your heart. It is our belief at Capuchin Retreat that God’s voice is most easily heard in the silence and waiting experience of prayer. Each year thousands of individuals find their way to Capuchin Retreat to spend some time in restful silence.

Join the men of St. Bonaventure SFO Fraternity for a weekend retreat at Washington Retreat (Washington MI) beginning on Friday, September 19, 2008, with arrival at approximately 6:00 p.m. The Retreat will end on Sunday, September 21, 2008, with a noon lunch. Throughout the weekend your experience with God will call you back to him over and over again. So join us, enjoy the beautiful Retreat Center and its grounds, and see why so many come back year after year to have this wonderful experience of God!

For more information, reservations and directions, call Retreat captains **Joe Driessen (313) 581-1783**, **Jerry Marsh (313) 884-7322** or **Gene Snyders (586) 764-6963**.



**REMEMBERING FATHER SOLANUS  
— A SIMPLE MAN —  
THE SECOND ANNUAL CONCERT**

October 5, 2008 at 4:00 PM  
St. Bonaventure Monastery Chapel  
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Tickets are \$15.00

For ticket information call:  
Patricia Meldrum at 586-296-7966,  
or the Secular Franciscan Office  
at 313-579-2100, ext. 136.  
*Limited seating.*

**Plan on attending this year's Transitus  
commemorating the Passing of St. Francis  
St. Bonaventure Chapel  
October 3, 2008 at 7 PM**



## From the Friars' Choir

"I know God will not give me  
anything I can't handle.  
I just wish  
that God didn't trust me so much!"

- Bl. Teresa of Calcutta



## **Lea Lawrence**

3 years old

### **Acute lymphoblastic leukemia**

Three-year-old Lea, with her dark brown eyes and rosebud lips, loves putting together puzzles. Not too long ago, Lea's mother, Joyce, had her own puzzle to solve: What was causing the usually active toddler to lose her energy and run high fevers? One afternoon, to her mother's horror, Lea passed out. Joyce rushed her little girl to the local emergency room, where a doctor on staff thought he had figured out the puzzle. Lea's symptoms were characteristic of leukemia. The drive to St. Jude, which only took an hour and half, seemed like a lifetime for Joyce. "My first thought was 'my child has cancer, she's going to die,'" she said. Lea arrived at St. Jude a very sick little girl and our doctors confirmed her diagnosis as acute lymphoblastic leukemia, the most common form of childhood cancer. Lea was immediately put on a two-year treatment protocol. After spending six weeks inpatient at the hospital, Lea and her mother are now back home with their family. They return to St. Jude twice a week for Lea's chemotherapy treatments. Joyce is grateful for the donors who help support the lifesaving research that happens every day at St. Jude. When she first learned of Lea's diagnosis, Joyce, a single mother with three children, wondered how she would pay for Lea's treatment. When she learned she would never receive a bill, it was a relief because she could focus on what was important: Lea's health. "She's getting back to her old self," Joyce said. "Because of St. Jude, Lea is getting better."



## **SEPTEMBER'S DAY OF REFLECTION**

**September 21**

**11 AM**

**No Mass**

**Everyone is asked to attend.**

**Through the kindness of one of our members,**

**a Bag Lunch will be provided for everyone.**

**Bring a snack or beverage.**

# SEPTEMBER 2008

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	<b>1</b> LABOR DAY	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b> First Thursday Meeting: 1 PM	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>7</b> 23 <sup>rd</sup> SUNDAY ORD. TIME Pss: Wk 3	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b> St. Joan of Arc: 1 PM	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>14</b> 24 <sup>th</sup> SUNDAY ORD. TIME Pss: Wk 4	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b> SFO COUNCIL: 6:30 PM	<b>18</b> EMB Board: 10 AM	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>21</b> 25 <sup>th</sup> SUNDAY ORD. TIME Pss: Wk 1 <b>Day of Reflection</b> 11 AM - Everyone	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b> <b>CHRISTIAN SERVICE:</b> Conner Kitchen 11 am – 1:00 pm	<b>26</b> Bl. Luchasio: 7:30 PM Interfaith Meeting: 7 PM - 9 PM <b>CHRISTIAN SERVICE:</b> Meldrum Kitchen 10:30 am – 1 pm	<b>27</b>
<b>28</b> 26 <sup>th</sup> SUNDAY ORD. TIME Pss: Wk 2	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>				

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### Minister

Janet Bodell

### Vice Minister

Ona Harris

### Treasurer

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Patricia Meldrum

### Formation

John Bodell

### Councillors:

Clara Falzone

Caroline Florescu

Gary Johnson

Frank B. Kraimer

Maryann Kummer

### Spiritual Assistant:

Br. Patrick McSherry

### APPOINTMENTS

#### Infirmarians:

Jo Marie Nardi

Sylvia Stanik

#### Continuing Formation:

Maryann Kummer

#### Christian Service:

Frank B. Kraimer

#### Ecology:

Clara Falzone

#### Work:

Gary Johnson

#### Family:

#### Peace and Justice:

Jo Marie Nardi

### Eucharistic Mission Band (EMB):

Caroline Florescu

### MEETING CONTACTS

(for Locations and Times of Meetings)

#### Fr. Solanus Cell (2<sup>nd</sup> Friday, 7:30 pm):

Faye Boland

#### St. Joan of Arc Satellite (2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday, 1 pm):

Frank Liccardello

#### First Thursday Meeting (1 pm):

Raymond Morehead

#### Third Sunday General SFO Meeting:

Maryann Kummer

#### Bl. Luchesio Cell (4<sup>th</sup> Friday, 7:30 pm):

Connie Musial

### OTHER SFO-AFFILIATED GROUPS:

#### Interfaith Justice & Peace Group (4th Friday, 7-9 PM):

Jo Marie Nardi

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Deadline for articles is 3:30 PM  
of the 3rd Sunday of each month.

# *Corporal Works of Mercy*

*Feed the hungry.*

*Give drink to the thirsty.*

*Clothe the naked.*

*Shelter the homeless.*

*Visit the sick,*

*Visit the imprisoned.*

*Bury the dead.*



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Secular Franciscan Fraternity  
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