

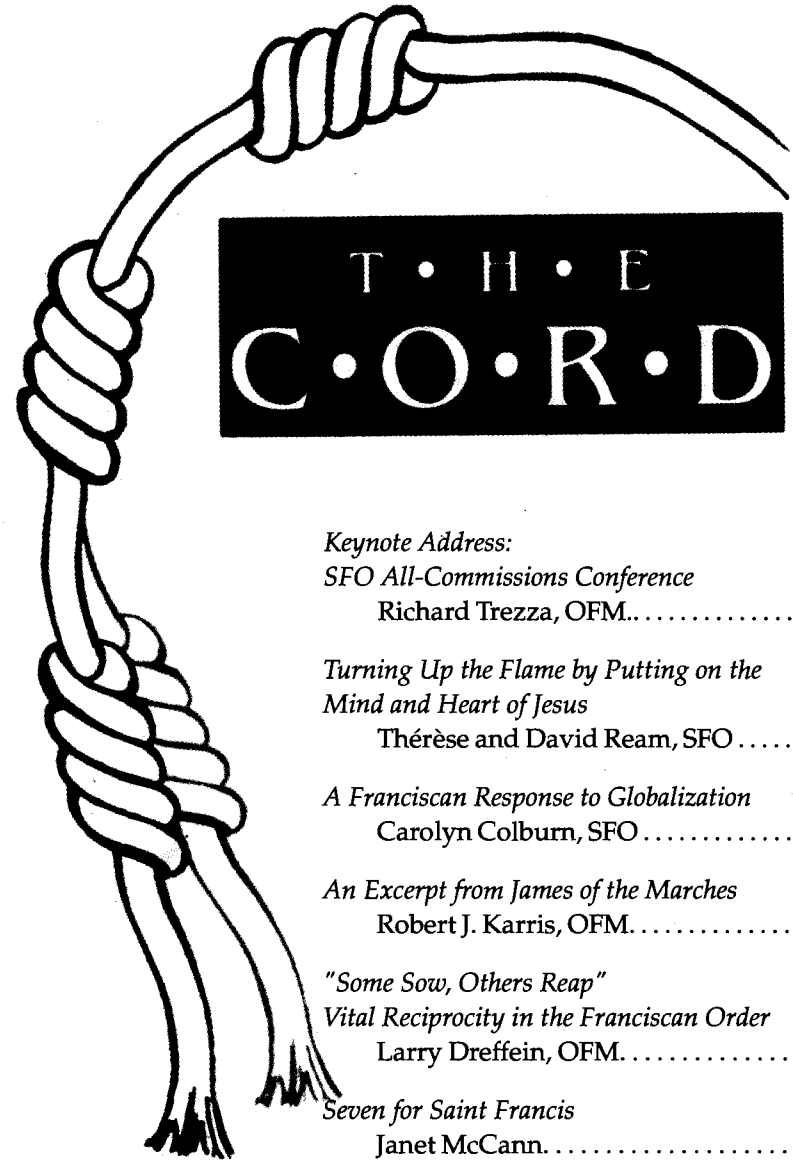
**A WORD FROM BONAVENTURE**

Goods of *fortune*, *nature*, and *grace* are gifts of God. Goods of *fortune* are the least gifts, gifts of *nature* the middle gifts, but gifts of *grace* are the best gifts. Among the gifts of *nature* are counted health and courage. Among the gifts of *fortune* are prosperity and quiet. . . .And since they are gifts of God, so too is the ability to enjoy them.

St. Bonaventure's *Commentary on Ecclesiastes*  
Ch. 5, q. 17, IV

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**THE CORD**  
*A Franciscan Spiritual Review*

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2. The University of Chicago *Manual of Style*, 14th ed., is to be consulted on general questions of style.
3. Titles of books and periodicals should be italicized or, in typed manuscripts, underlined. Titles of articles should be enclosed in quotation marks and not underlined or italicized.
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(1Cor. 13:6).      (2Cel 5:8).  
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## Editorial

Once again we offer an issue dedicated to the values of the Secular Franciscan Order. The first three pieces were prepared under the initiative of the SFO national leadership group. Other parts of the issue were chosen for their complementarity to SFO themes. It is one of the delights of my role as editor to be able to channel materials into the hands of our readers that not only fit a given theme but also enrich all Franciscans. Certainly the excerpt from James of the Marches will be a pleasant source for reflection, and Janet McCann's poem "Seven for St. Francis" should, I think, be another resource for embracing the human side of not only Francis's life, but our own as well.

By the time our readers receive this issue we will be a month past the death of John Paul II and under the leadership of a new shepherd of the flock. Admittedly, the depth and breadth of the media coverage from the time of the Holy Father's last illness through his funeral was amazing, touching, beyond extraordinary. Evangelization through mass media was accomplished (purposefully or not) in a way not seen before: real-time images from a time zone at least six hours different allowed us to focus on the lights in the papal apartment, on the faithful gathered in prayer, on world leaders assembled in homage to the integrity of a holy man. And, although it has not yet happened at the time of this writing, the same technology will allow us to participate in the moments when the election, presentation and installation of the new Bishop of Rome will become reality.

Certainly the world has seen and acknowledged the impact that one life lived in dedication to the Gospel can have. Our own desire to embrace that Gospel and to live our own journeys to the full cannot help but have been strengthened and stretched at this moment of Church history. Whether Secular Franciscan, Friar Minor, Poor Clare, or Third Order Regular Franciscan, we are called to the same intense love of God and each other as John Paul demonstrated in his living and his dying. In his own words: "... the final call will come the moment that the Lord will choose. I desire to follow Him and desire that all that is part of my earthly life shall prepare me for this moment. ... Like all else, this moment too I place into the hands of the Mother of my Master: *Totus tuus*. In those same maternal hands I place all those with whom my life and vocation are bound. Into these hands I leave above all the Church, and also my nation and all humanity."

May it be so. Amen. Alleluia.

*Roberta A. McKelvie, OSF*

## Keynote Address: Secular Franciscan All-Commissions Conference

Fr. Richard Trezza, OFM

One of the great things about being on the commissions is that you get to share your vocation with other people and you get to hear their take on the world, on the church, and on their faith, which is most uplifting. I'm on the Formation Commission and all of the members on the Formation Commission are wonderful people, as all the members on all your commissions. I have to single out one, however. I don't mean to embarrass Anne Mulqueen, but after one of our meetings Anne was urged by the Spirit to write a prayer—which I would like to use this morning as my morning prayer. Indeed, we probably will be reciting it throughout the conference. I'd ask you to turn to the inside cover of your program booklet. And I'd ask you all to stand as we place ourselves in the presence of God.

### Opening Prayer

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen. Together, let us pray.

Eternal Father, source of all good, hear our one desire, that you set a blaze upon the earth that will not be contained until it accomplishes your holy and true will. Good St. Francis, pray for our peace and justice commissions. Help us regard others as you did the Sultan, and seek ways of unity, harmony, and respect, regardless of ideology. May God bless us all as we labor to give birth to a more fraternal world, where the lamb can lie down safely with the lion.

Holy St. Clare, pray for our formation commissions. Pray that we who gaze upon the face of Christ will be formed and transformed by His image into His likeness. May God bless us all as we seek to embody and impart the Good News in our daily lives.

St. Elizabeth of Hungary, patroness of the Secular Franciscan Order, pray for our work commissions. Pray that we never forget that our ability to work is

a gift. May God bless us all as we seek to share in Christ's creation and redemption through the work of our hands.

St. Louis, patron of the Secular Franciscan Order, pray for our youth and young adult commission. You who fathered 11 children and raised them in God's ways, pray for us who work with the youth of today. May God bless us all as we walk with our future into a new day.

St. Margaret of Cortona, pray for our family commissions. You who bore the stigma of unwed motherhood, repented and lived an exemplary life, pray that families will thrive despite so many obstacles. May our families become places of peace, fidelity, and respect for life and be a blessing to society.

St. Bonaventure, pray for our ecology commissions. Pray that all of us who behold the imprint of God in creation will remember that all creation is interdependent and must be protected. May God bless us all as we respect and care for the work of the Creator's hands.

Almighty Father, enable our ministers and commissioners to reflect your light in a dark world and your warmth in a cold world. Mold them into the image of your son, Jesus the Christ, so that the world will know it is you who have sent them. In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

### Radical Franciscanism

There is a tremendous energy in this room. When all of us get together for anything like this, there is tremendous movement of the Spirit and tremendous sharing of all the things that the Spirit has enabled each and every one of us to do for the good of the Church, for the Order, and also for ourselves, as people on a spiritual journey. So I'm very happy to be here, and to absorb a lot of that energy this weekend with you.

I recently attended a workshop, a conference, given by my Province of the Most Holy Name, at our Siena College, on the issue of globalization; this was something I know very little about, but I learned a great deal about it during the conference. Our very own Carolyn Coburn also attended the meeting, and Carol Gentile, in her position as national minister, was invited. That experience colors the remarks that I am making this morning because I believe that in this rapidly changing new world that is being forged there is a tremendous urgency for us to be radical in our approach to Franciscanism and to give an adequate response to our brothers and sisters in the world so that we keep intact the values that are important to us as Christians and Franciscans.

Unfortunately, as you and I as a society, as a Church, as individuals, interface with the terrible phenomenon of terrorism we hear a lot about martyrdom on the part of the people who are terrorists. It's something like a martyrdom that you and I celebrate with the saints, but it is very different in an

important aspect. The martyrs we hear about in the terrorist camp are [said to be] made up of fanatical, fundamentalist followers, somewhat misguided followers of Islam, people responding to a call from God to give up their lives for a cause. And it is a martyrdom of sorts. I won't get into the ramifications of that religious gesture which of course claims their lives but also countless other lives in the process. Yet in all that craziness, there is sort of a veiled admiration on our part for the engagement of somebody's imagination and passion to the point of losing one's life for a cause, for a principle.

Whenever there is a martyr being celebrated in the Christian calendar, I always take that option to celebrate that saint's feast because I think it's very important for us to reflect on the energy, the passion and the intensity of the belief in Jesus and His Gospel that person had, which would inspire them to lose their lives for that cause. And I think it's very, very important, even though some people are embarrassed by our martyrs, because they feel that, [with] a little more practicality, they could have saved their lives: "If they were a little bit more sensitive to indigenous cultures and did not try to convert people, maybe they would have been alive for a longer time." Be that as it may, there was a passion for the Gospel which caused them to put their life on the line for a principle, a spiritual principle, and that is something to be admired. And that's what this keynote address is about.

It's about that urging, that passion, that spirit, which causes us to put ourselves on the line for the things that we know to be true and the things we've committed ourselves to believe in: this Franciscan thing that constantly needs to be identified and finessed every day of our life. Our martyrs also engaged in "fanatical" things, and I'm sure the Roman Emperors sitting in their stands in the different circuses, watching countless Christians give their lives for refusing to burn a little grain of incense to honor Roman gods, might consider them to be fanatical also. After all, the choice of having one's limbs ripped apart by some beast and being devoured by the same could be construed to be a bit insane, we agree.

But there's the challenge for us. Where is our nerve, that we have to risk all for the will of God (which is what Francis did) calling to mind that unique struggle between our will and the will of God? Where is the courage to be driven by that unknown? The will of God is something that we know, and yet it is something unknown, because we're constantly being called to something new day after day if we're serious about the process of conversion. And I really think that if we believe in the incredible, we can do the impossible.

It's our want of faith that holds us back at times. Look at St. Peter. When did he begin to sink as he made his way across the water to meet the Lord? Well, the Gospel gives us the reason. He took account of the winds. He took a mental survey as he put his foot onto the water, and all of a sudden, he remem-

bered that 99.44% of humanity cannot walk on the water. All of his incredulities and all of his problems were in the velocity of the wind and the tumult of the waves, and as soon as he remembered that, and took his eyes off Christ, he sank into the water. We know that Christ is our passion, Christ is our driving force. His agenda is our mandate, and I believe that only a radical Franciscan living out of the Gospel is going to really be the answer to what it is that we're being called to do.

## Spirit in Action

This talk concerns itself with spirit. You'll not hear much about the Holy Spirit although it is that same Holy Spirit who is responsible for our selfless response to the grace of God to do more, to become more. But this talk is about the passion we have for the culture that you and I drink in, the culture of Franciscanism that you and I imbibe, even without knowing it, just by being members of the Franciscan movement. And I'm not even speaking exclusively here about Secular Franciscanism, but Franciscanism in general in its most radical form.

At that globalization conference, we had a Sister of St. Joseph who came to speak to us about the Franciscan perspective on globalization, *a la* the theology of Duns Scotus. She was envious that the people in her audience consisted of our friars and many lay people, including many Secular Franciscans, who are our partners in ministry in all of our ministries in Holy Name Province) about whom she said, "Here I am, I had to go to school to learn this stuff. You [Franciscans] have already possessed this over and over again without even going to school." And it's true.

As I was reflecting on this with some other friars, I said, "You know, as she was speaking, I felt that I believed in what she said. I felt I was doing that, not as a pat on the back type of thing, but I was able to resonate with that." And the friars said, "Yes, we kind of like pick that up, don't we, just by being in the movement?" And that's something I think we've got to capitalize on because we have a completely different worldview of things, one that's going to help our sisters and brothers in this world.

We know we've become Franciscans not to become little Francis, but rather, to come to Jesus. Now Francis did that in his own life by wishing to follow the Gospel radically, [trying] to search out the singularity of the Gospel and the one thing that separates it from just another nice story about some super prophet. He went for the jugular, he went

To desire  
one thing alone -  
the Spirit of God  
at work  
within them.

9:32

for the *kerygma* [preaching the gospel of Christ in the manner of the early Church], the kernel of the Gospel, and there he was able to find the roots of Gospel living, which is what the word "radical" means in the first instance.

We as Franciscans, whether Secular or Third Order Regular, or First Order, or Second Order, endeavor to do the same thing with the grace of God. And we find those roots with one another's support, in trying to live this Franciscanism. The challenge is to embrace Francis's unmistakable preference for the poor, his association and collaboration with the poor and their needs and their uncomfotableness, almost to the point of [our] being uncomfotable when we are not around them. There are hands-on things that you and I must do about peace and justice in this world, no longer merely to pray for peace and justice, but to become peace and to become justice in our own little sphere of influence because if we can't do it with[in] our own little sphere of influence, we're not going to do it "out there."

We need to get going on that so that the Franciscan movement becomes that privileged place people can look at and say, "Wow, that's different. They live life different[ly], they found some sort of secret, not only to tolerate what's going on in the world, but to make sense out of it." It's got to start in your privileged places, in your fraternities, in your heart. And people will run to your fraternities. And they will join your fraternities but, most importantly, they will stay in your fraternities. If it's not happening in your fraternity, don't bash the politicians or the bishops, look into yourself and find out why you can't do it. And then ask how you could ever expect somebody out there to do it for an entire nation? I believe truly that this is the Franciscan moment for our world, and we are going to be part of forming a response to what is happening.

The message of Assisi needs to be shouted out once again, and the commissions that we celebrate during this conference are the doors through which this message will pass. We need the courage and the cooperation with God's grace to unlock those doors so that the spirit of each commission will be able to live and to breathe and to transform us from within. Instead of bemoaning the terrible conditions in our world, Franciscans will be able to offer to a myopic world a new vision of the cross and how to live with it, not just how to tolerate it, but how to embrace it. You know as well as I that the cross is not something that has happened, the crucifixion is something that is happening, and it can be found at any place and at any hour in the human race.

Francis's love affair with the passion of Christ was not a morbid sensationalism, steeped in a misguided false piety of his time, but the unmistakable recognition that the cross is an inescapable thing and should be even wished for if only for the life and hope that it affords to those who believe. It was a natural consequence then of this understanding and conviction that Francis should die branded with the stigmata.

The cross comes in different forms. We all know about the suffering that comes with sickness, the different crises which visit us during our lives, and it is a truly Franciscan response to be with people who suffer that way, to be able to let them know that the marks of their sicknesses are the very passport which will get them to heaven, to be one with Christ forever. To offer that glimmer of hope, to offer a new way to be about this world, but there's also the cross of accepting the challenges which come with change, with rapid change.

When I was a student of world history in high school, 1960 to 1964, I studied an evolution of humanity, political life, cultural life, socio-economic life, religious life, which took many, many, many years to evolve. All the textbooks at that time ended with the administration of Dwight Eisenhower, and, if you were lucky, there was a little something there about John Kennedy's election, but stopped there. I would imagine that that same history book has had to undergo I don't know how many revisions to keep up with the tremendous and dynamic changes taking place in our world. We could go on and on about, "Gee, the world is changing so fast. It's terrible, all these new things happening, we can't keep abreast." But we know that the rapid changes . . . are not just changes, they've been major shifts in the way that we live and the way that we think and the way that we worship; in the way that we do business, the way that we recognize ourselves as members in a shrinking world, in a global village, and, unfortunately, in our interaction with terrorism. But fear about these changes should not be an excuse for inactivity. We still need to answer these challenges and to be in this world with a passion for Christ and his Gospel like that Francis of Assisi had in his own day.

The commissions which this conference celebrates are the jumping off points to do the Gospel in our time. No one is going to hand you a recipe on how to be a Secular Franciscan. Your Rule doesn't even do that. It's very broad in its approach. No one is going to tell you how to meet these things head on, as nobody told Francis. Your inner voices, because of your spirituality, will speak to you, as Christ spoke to Francis from that cross, and your inner voices will encourage you to do things and take the creative initiative so that you can change your own life and those of your sisters and brothers around you. We know that Francis found his way and encouraged others to do the same with the grace of God.

He was not mealy-mouthed in his approach, but was radical, passionate, personal, and intimate. His was a response to the world that took even his Church into account, the Church which he loved, a Church which was in the throes of the aftermath of Lateran Council IV. He was aware of tremendous political shifts, alliances of different kingdoms, and of the human condition of his sisters and brothers. He embraced his world in a very gutsy, wrenching, response to things that he knew needed paying attention to and, with the grace of God, needed to be acted upon.

## What Is Ours To Do?

Most of us have a religious, visceral, response to injustice. Would that we be so infected to use that passion for the good! There are two classes of people in the world: those who are afraid to find God and those who are afraid to lose God. Some are afraid to find God, lest in finding Him they lose all their selfish desires, believing all the while, that if they possessed Him, they would have nothing else. Others are afraid to lose God, because in losing Him, they would lose all there is and find in return only their petty selves, which are so useless for giving true and lasting happiness.

Once Francis embraced God and the love God poured out, he embraced the world; yes, embraced the world that his God had created, a world which Francis of Assisi could so easily have complained about constantly. There was no Disneyland during the time of Francis, but you know he did not merely tolerate his condition, obsessing about life here below in the valley of tears, the human condition tainted by original sin. Instead, his life and convictions gave flesh to the ultimate and all-consuming graciousness of God because he saw evidences of his Lord in all creation.

It's the quintessential Franciscan gift to the world to shift people from a useless harboring of and obsession about sin (although it exists and we are sinners) to the much more salvific idea of the graciousness and goodness of God. This is a traditional Franciscan stance, one for which we should not apologize. It does not, of course, give us license to sin. Evil is a reality, but an obsession with it is not a Franciscan thing. The quintessential gift of Franciscanism is to be able to be in the world and to allow that shift to happen with our brothers and sisters.

A galloping globalization has taken place right underneath our noses. It begs for a radical living out of Franciscanism, the gift to the Church, which forever offers humanity the ultimate way of viewing things and people, of regarding one another as worthy of God's love. We do not do this, my sisters and brothers, without passion. We cannot do this without spirit, without the Spirit. Now, we've been on fire about this before. Just think back—on the day that you said yes to your vocation, on the day that you made your final commitment in the Order, for myself, the day I received the habit, the day I was ordained, the day I was finally professed. You know we wouldn't dream of approaching those life-changing ceremonies in a lukewarm fashion or in a way which told those attending those ceremonies that we were just jumping through the hoops to achieve our goal. It's all about Him, and that's what makes the spiritual life difficult—the constant struggle between our will and God's will. Fulton Sheen liked to say that there were no plains in the spiritual life: you were either going up or coming down at any one point.

This All-Commissions conference reminds us that the going forth is definitely worthwhile. Whatever discomfort or pain, the other nagging challenge, the constantly turning up the flame of our ready and selfless response to our gracious God, doing the will of God, will take up most of our efforts and a goodly part of our lives. It takes real spirit to see ourselves in proper relationship to God. The person who thinks only of self is the person who prays prayers of petition: "Give me this, I want that." The one who thinks of neighbor says prayers of intercession: "God, help so and so. Bring this person through this problem." But whoever thinks of loving and serving God in loving and serving others is a person who is involved in saying prayers of abandonment to God's will, which is the prayer of all the saints.

So, when will we touch this passion again? Where will we find it? It is there you know. Is it under stubbornness? Is it perhaps a prisoner of laziness? Is it being held captive by feelings of frustration or feelings of inability to make changes for the better? Without heat that passion will cool. The Franciscan movement and gift to the Church is ever-needed in all the seasons of our Church and world. We would be hypocrites to bear the name without the responsibility.

Membership has its privileges and so, brothers and sisters of penance, anyone worthy of the name Franciscan has divine privileges and earthly responsibilities. The new world order being forged now need not be wicked and self-serving. It need not widen the gap between rich and poor. It need not be anti-Christian or anti-spirit. It need not make us fearful, but it will take another Franciscan uprising to make it God-driven with something in it for everyone.

If globalization is to reshape our society, it will take the radical and passionate living out of Franciscan principles and a good deal of sacrificing to make it in God's image and according to divine design. We will have to make choices, my friends. We will have much to lose, a sense of the spiritual in our world, for one thing. Those who practice religion with a passion could be sidelined. Will we be ready for that preferential treatment? What will be our guiding principles? Those principles which have made our lives easy and care-free with little regard for the suffering around us in our own country or abroad? We cannot serve both God and mammon. We cannot save our life for both time here and for eternity. We cannot feast both here and hereafter. We cannot make the best of both worlds. Either we will have the feast on earth and the feast in heaven, or we will have the feast here and the feast in eternity.

There's real spirit in doing the commissions. It's unfortunate that as I make visitation after visitation, the idea of the commissions seems not to have caught on. I know, however, that each and every one of us actually does the commissions somehow in our own lives, whether we know it or not. I myself have comforted Seculars with that sentiment at many a gathering where the spiri-

Membership has its privileges and so, brothers and sisters of penance, anyone worthy of the name Franciscan has divine privileges and earthly responsibilities. The new world order being forged now need not be wicked and self-serving. It need not widen the gap between rich and poor. It need not be anti-Christian or anti-spirit. It need not make us fearful, but it will take another Franciscan uprising to make it God-driven with something in it for everyone.

tual burden of passionately doing the commissions seems an impossibility. But I don't think we can rest on that feel-good theory anymore, lest people begin to consider us to be spiritually challenged and tunnel-visioned in our approach to the spiritual life.

It's time we knew what we were doing and who we are, what we are about, living Secular Franciscan life on purpose, not by accident but by choice. We shouldn't be on automatic pilot but living fully aware of who we are and what we are doing. The potential Franciscan, Secular or Friar, will be that person who will admire the passion with which we pursue peace, justice, mercy and compassion; and who will be willing to leave mother, father, sister, brother, possessions to follow Christ and who can engender that spirit of passion in his followers.

Looking at Cimabue's representation of Francis, it is obvious that people were not following Francis because of his looks. It was because Francis knew that it was not enough merely to have an intellectual understanding of another person's difficulty. He needed to go further to feel it as his own. He reminds us it is not important to be constantly asking ourselves if we love our neighbor. What is important is to act out that love. We learn to walk by walking, to play by playing, to love by loving. If we do anybody we

hate a good turn, we find that we hate them less. If we do them an evil turn, we find that we hate them more. Doing kind acts to people makes us find all people lovable. And if love is not there, we put it there. And then we find everybody lovable.

That is spirit and passion to be courageous in giving Christ a home here on earth, to reveal His face to those who need to gaze upon it. Benet Fonck would write in formation manual that the Seculars are Christmas people, always re-birthing Christ and uncovering Him for all to see. This calls to mind the most tragic words ever written about Christ found in the prologue to John's Gospel, "He came among His own, and His own received Him not." Bethlehem had no room for Him when He was born. Nazareth had no room for Him when He lived, and Jerusalem had no room for Him when He died.

Little by little, Christ is being removed from us by those who think they know best about the destiny of humanity. The Franciscan ethos, on the contrary, seeks to fill every nook and cranny with the presence, love and mercy of Christ.

Let this All-Commissions Conference, then, be for each and every one of us a cause to renew our commitment to the Franciscan way of life. Let it renew in each of us the flame of the spirit in Baptism. Above all, may this conference make us holy. Yes, may a conference make us holy. Sanctity is not giving up the world, it is embracing the world. It is a continuation of that sublime transaction of the Incarnation in which we can hear Christ saying to us, "Give me your humanity. I give you my divinity. Give me your time, I will give you my eternity, give me your limitations, I will give you my power. You give me your slavery, and I will give you my freedom. You give me your death, I will give you life. You give me your nothingness, I will give you my all.

Let this conference then, my friends, find us with generous and open hearts to do more, to be more, to feel the heat of the flame previously ignited by Him who turns up that flame to give us all his warmth and vision.

Editor's note: The graphics on pp. 111 and 115 in this issue are taken from *S. Bonaventura da Bagnoregio* (Rome: Ed. Antonianum), no date, p. 116 (no artist identified) and p. 86. The latter image is found in the sacristy at the church of Santa Croce in Florence, Italy. Attributed to Domenico de Michelino.

## Turning Up the Flame By Putting on the Mind and Heart of Christ Jesus

Thérèse and Deacon Dave Ream, SFO

In light of the overall theme of this Conference, we have been asked to address that aspect of our human, Christian and Franciscan experience centered in the mind of the human person. According to Webster's New Universal Unabridged Dictionary, the mind is: 1. what one intends, wishes or wills; 2. that which thinks, perceives, feels, wills, etc. as the subject of consciousness and the seat of reason and of the intellect.

Yesterday we had the privilege of celebrating the Solemnity of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus; today, we celebrate the memorial which honors the Immaculate Heart of Mary. In the ancient world, the "mind" and the "heart" were widely regarded as essentially interchangeable realities; in fact, the Sacred Scriptures make more references to the heart than to the mind: a "hardened heart" or "heart of stone" is the same thing as a "closed or narrow mind."

So, whose mind do we seek to penetrate, whose heart do we seek to imitate, if not the mind and heart of Our Lord Jesus Christ? In his Letter to the Philippians (2:5-8), Saint Paul gave us a beautiful Christological hymn which begins with these words: "Make your own the mind of Christ Jesus." This is the New Jerusalem Bible's translation of this verse. The same verse in the New Revised Standard Version reads: "Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus." The New American Bible translation, on which our liturgical Lectionary is based, renders this passage as follows:

Have among yourselves the same attitude that is also yours in Christ Jesus, Who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God something to be grasped. Rather, he emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, coming in human likeness; and found human in appearance, he humbled himself, becoming obedient to death, even death on a cross.

We recently saw a little girl wearing a t-shirt which had these words emblazoned across its front: "So Much Attitude—So Little Time!" What is an Attitude? According to Webster, an attitude may mean any or all of the following:

1. the posture, stance, pose or position of a person showing or meant to show a mental state, emotion, or mood;
2. the manner of acting, feeling, or thinking that shows one's disposition, opinion, frame of mind, outlook, point of view, perspective, etc.;
3. one's disposition, opinion, demeanor, etc.;
4. in aeronautics, the position of an aircraft in relation to a given point of reference, usually on the ground level.

We want to focus on this last understanding of attitude, the position of an object in relation to a given point of reference, usually on the ground level. In the context of our presentation this morning, we Franciscan women and men are the objects called continuously to position and reposition ourselves in relation to a given point of reference, the Rule of our Order, which truly can be understood as the ground, the foundation of our way of life.

Being Franciscan provides us with a particular frame of mind, a Gospel-oriented perspective on the whole of our lives. Every aspect of our life experience must be viewed through this set of Franciscan-tinted lenses. In the spirit of that hymn from Philippians, we are to empty ourselves of those attitudes, tendencies, dispositions, that are contrary to the Gospel so that we can become gradually, gradually, gradually ever more Christ-like and ever more faithful to his Gospel of life and love. Our Rule presents us with a set of characteristically Franciscan attitudes which are meant to inform and sustain a Gospel-oriented posture, stance, pose or position toward the Church and the world. For example, article #9 was read during the Morning Prayer we just offered together. It tells us that "Mary was open to the Lord's word and call." As openness was Mary's fundamental attitude toward God working in her life, so this same attitude of openness should mark our response to the invitations of God's grace working in our lives. This same article calls us to express our love for Mary "by imitating her complete self-giving and by praying earnestly and confidently." This summons suggests three attitudes: first, our willingness to imitate someone requires humility on our part; second, self-giving, or altruistic love, is itself an attitude which shapes our response to others; and third, earnest and confident prayer tells us not only what to do—to pray always—but how to do it—with sincerity and confidence. Prayerfulness itself is an attitude.

Our Rule is an inspirational document rather than a prescriptive one that presents us with Gospel-oriented and orienting attitudes and values. We can reflect upon all the articles of our Rule and make explicit the attitudes ex-



pressed in each one of them. In the interest of time this morning, we propose to take a quick look only at those articles directly related to our various Commissions.

We find in Article #7, **Formation**: "Let them conform their thoughts and deeds to those of Christ by means of that radical interior change which the Gospel itself calls 'conversion.' Human frailty makes it necessary that this conversion be carried out daily." This radical interior change (conversion, metanoia) requires an attitude of humility. The supreme value for us is to be more Christ-like. In order to do this, we must have the humility to acknowledge our own shortcomings, weaknesses or maybe even sinfulness. It's plain to see that our formation must truly be a life-long process.

We find in Article #19, **Peace**: "Mindful that they are bearers of peace which must be built up unceasingly, they should seek out ways of unity and fraternal harmony through dialogue, trusting in the presence of the divine seed in everyone and in the transforming power of love and pardon." Harmony is the fruit of a peace-making attitude in practice. Dialogue as a means to mutual understanding emerges from an attitude of profound respect and a belief that the other person has something worth listening to and that we have something worth saying. Respect allows us both to listen and to speak.

Article #15, **Justice**, we find: "Let them individually and collectively be in the forefront in promoting justice by the testimony of their human lives and their courageous initiatives." Our actions in the Church and in the world must reflect a sincere passion and conviction for justice issues. We Franciscans must be willing to be in the forefront in initiating reverence and respect for the legitimate rights of all people. It is not sufficient merely to support existing initiatives and projects. There is more to our individual and collective lives, such as being involved in different apostolates and being willing to commit our time, talent and treasure to build up both the Kingdom of God and this Earthly City to which we belong.

Article #16, **Work**, we find: "Let them esteem work both as a gift and as a sharing in the creation, redemption, and service of the human community." We are challenged to develop a positive attitude toward work. We cannot esteem work if we view it only as a burden and a drudgery. Can we see our work as an opportunity for us to be co-operators with God in the ongoing work of creation, redemption and sanctification? If so, we will find lasting value and meaning in our daily work. We will be living the attitude expressed in the Work Commission's bumper sticker which reads, TGIM - "Thank God It's Monday!"

In Article #17, **Family**, there is the following: "In their family they should cultivate the Franciscan spirit of peace, fidelity, and respect for life, striving to make of it a sign of a world already renewed in Christ." To paraphrase John

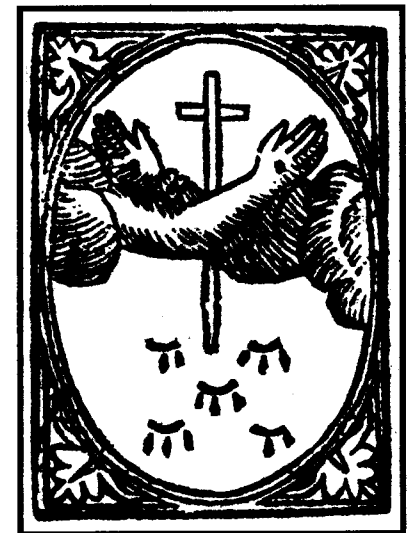
Donne, "No one is an island." Looking at us gathered here this morning, wouldn't it be fair to say: no Secular Franciscan Commission is an island; no Secular Franciscan Fraternity is an island; no individual Secular Franciscan is an island? The attitude of realizing and celebrating our interconnectedness is essential in developing our human, Christian and Franciscan relationships. To quote Saint Paul writing in his First Letter to the Corinthians, "As a body is one, though it has many parts, and all the parts of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ" (12:12).

In Article #18, **Ecology**, we find: "Moreover they should respect all creatures, animate and inanimate, which 'bear the imprint of the Most High,' and they should strive to move from the temptation of exploiting creation to the Franciscan concept of universal kinship." The attitude underlying this article is one of respect for all of creation since all creation is a footprint of God and reflects God. Our Judeo-Christian and Franciscan tradition assures us that everything—absolutely everything—God created is good. As co-partners with God in the unfolding work of creation, we are responsible for our universe and must do all we can to help ensure that all of creation is respected and honored. Every creature is worthy to be called "sister" or "brother."

Lastly, in Article #24, **Youth**, we read: the council is called to organize meetings "with other Franciscan groups, especially with youth groups." We all are invited to develop our appreciation for the gifts, the vitality, the passionate commitments, of our Franciscan youth and young adults. We see the value in sharing our charism with our younger sisters and brothers, all the while, acknowledging that they have much to offer us. There is a mutuality of gifts shared between and among us.

As bearers of the Franciscan charism in the Church and in the world today, we have, in the words of that little girl's t-shirt, "So Much Attitude—So Little Time!" The very theme of this All-Commissions' Conference, "Turning up the flame" (the fire of doing the business of the Gospel) is the attitude to seek to live the challenges of our Rule.

In their April 5th letter to the Secular Franciscan Order commemorating the silver jubilee of our Rule, the Ministers of the Franciscan Family Conference reminded us that we have been called "to be witnesses to communion, solidarity, hope and peace, to be men and women capable of 'courageous choices' in order



to give to the world a radiant face that can only be constructed by beginning again from Christ." Our face is radiant only to the extent that it reflects the light of Christ and the fire of God's Holy Spirit.

Our way of seeing the world and of being present to it, with it and in it somehow has to be contagious. We must pass on to others the gift, that set of attitudes, that has been given to us. We want this fire to spread. We cannot keep the flame going unless it is passed on to others. Our Gospel-oriented values are meant to ignite others with a spark from the fire so that they can add to the flame. Then the fire will spread and consume our very lives. Our vocation is not primarily for ourselves, but for the sake of the Church and the world. It is imperative that we strive to incorporate these Gospel-oriented attitudes within ourselves individually, and then perhaps with our local fraternity, and then maybe even within our region.

What one Gospel-centered attitude do I need to develop in order to live more fully my Franciscan vocation of putting on the mind and heart of Christ Jesus?

This presentation was given at the National Secular Franciscan All-Commissions' Conference last June.

*Being Franciscan provides us with a particular frame of mind, a Gospel-oriented perspective on the whole of our lives. Every aspect of our life experience must be viewed through this set of Franciscan-tinted lenses. In the spirit of that hymn from Philipians, we are to empty ourselves of those attitudes, tendencies, dispositions, that are contrary to the Gospel so that we can become gradually, gradually, gradually ever more Christ-like and ever more faithful to his Gospel of life and love.*

## A Franciscan Response to Globalization

Carolyn Colburn, SFO

In their Chapter of 2002, Holy Name Province of Franciscan Friars called for an all-Province gathering to probe and deepen their understanding of globalization. That process brought 435 friars and partners in ministry to Siena College, Loudonville, New York, on June 9–12, 2004. Before the Globalization Assembly occurred, goals and outcomes had been formulated:

- A good understanding of the current form of globalization and the factors and institutions that are advancing it
- A clear and direct moral reflection upon the current form of globalization from a Franciscan spiritual foundation
- Analysis and action on issues related to Holy Name Province Franciscan Ministries
- Concrete suggestions for local ministries and individuals to follow in addressing globalization so that people do not leave with a sense that it is so vast they can do nothing
- Steps to take in preparation for Chapter 2005

The Assembly began on the evening of Wednesday, June 9, with an opening prayer and welcoming session. This was followed by individual stories of persons who have been affected by the forces of globalization. Unfortunately, thunderstorms over Albany delayed my plane for four hours in Chicago, and I missed the opening session.

### What Is Globalization?

The theme for Thursday, June 10, was "Seeing—What is Globalization?" The first keynote presentation was by Dr. Maryann Cusimano Love. Dr. Love teaches courses in globalization, terrorism, homeland security, sovereignty, and ethics at both the Pentagon and Catholic University. She described globalization as it exists today and made suggestions for how we can respond to the forces shaping it.

She defined globalization as the rise of private power due to the spread of open societies with open economies, technology, and infrastructures. Then she stated three myths about globalization. The first myth is that it has little to do with me. This is a myth because globalization is very personal for all of us. What we eat, what we wear, even the air we breathe is affected by the forces shaping globalization. She asked that when we take our clothes off at night we look at the labels, take note of the different names of countries, and think of the human hands that made our clothes. Do the same with the food we eat. Think of the hands that harvested it and of the countries from which the workers come. Then we should ask ourselves how we are in relationship with those hands.

The second myth is that globalization is something new. It is not new. The difference now is in the speed and reach of the forces. To use her words, globalization today is "quicker, thicker, deeper, and cheaper" than it was in the past.

The third myth is that globalization is bad, and the Catholic Church is against it. This is definitely not true. Globalization has made it possible for individuals and countries to be in closer relationship with one another. The infrastructure of globalization can bring about positive change.

The current backlash against globalization is because the benefits are not equally distributed. There is no underpinning of rules based on shared social objectives. A fairer globalization could be a solution to poverty in some of the least developed countries. This is not happening because governmental responses and legal responses cannot keep up with the pace of globalization. The rules are being made by the private power of corporations, which has increased the wealth of the affluent countries and deepened the poverty of the poor countries.

There are jurisdictional gaps because the problems extend further than the authority of institutions. There are participation gaps because the people affected by globalization are excluded from the meetings that set the rules in places like the World Trade Organization and the World Bank. There are ethical gaps because the organizations setting the rules have no values except market values. Their rulings are often at odds with the common good. There are legitimacy gaps because the institutions that manage and regulate globalization are not perceived by the society as representative of the members of the society. These gaps are being filled by private power.

Our job is to shine the light on this and to educate people to understand that change is possible. We have a great deal to offer. Catholic social teaching is an alternative vision that is expressed in the common language of faith. Corporations see the world as a market. We see the world as the body of Christ. We have the responsibility to speak for those that have no voice. We must participate in advocacy. We must speak up every day about what is happening.

## Conversations

The Thursday afternoon sessions were called General Topic Conversations. Seventeen conversation topics were listed. Each group was held twice. Therefore every person was able to choose two groups to attend. For my first group, I chose "How to be a peacemaker in the time of war." The group moderator was Ms. Jean Stokam of Pax Christi USA. She began by telling us about A Peoples' Peace Initiative: Articulating the Challenges of Peace in the 21st Century.

Pax Christi USA is celebrating the twentieth anniversary of the bishops' peace pastoral "The Challenge of Peace," by inviting Catholic organizations and communities to join in developing a grassroots process that would lead to the writing and publication of a "people's peace letter." The hope of Pax Christi is that this process will contribute to the *sensus fidelium* of the Catholic Church in the United States regarding the challenges of peace in the 21st century. A complete description of the initiative along with participating organizations and steps taken and contemplated is available on the Pax Christi website, <http://www.paxchristiusa.org/>. After the presentation, the conversation was about the difficulty of getting pastors to preach about the position of John Paul II on the Iraq war.

For my second group, I chose "Employment in the Global World." The conversation was to be about how employment is changing in the United States and the world because of the trends of globalization, and what can be done to assure the dignity of all workers. The group moderators were Dr. Richard Shirey and Dr. James Booker. Both men are professors of economics at Catholic colleges.

The session began with Dr. Shirey going over the basic principles of Catholic social teaching. Then he asked us to imagine what our economy would be like if these principles were put in place. What would employment be like in a world in which all six billion people were treated with the human dignity to which they are entitled? Then we were asked to think about the world as it is. The way we allocate a resource such as labor is a reflection of our priorities. More than one-third of the world's workers earn wages that leave them in poverty. One billion people live on one dollar a day or less. Fifty percent of the world's labor force is in the informal segment of the economy. They sell on the streets or work without set wages or any labor protections.

Because of the length of the presentation, the conversation part of the session was very brief. It centered



on the demise of labor unions in the United States. There was agreement that Americans do not wish to identify as members of the "working class," since most of them expect that they or their children will be business managers or owners some day. It was suggested that we should inform others of the plight of the working poor in this country, of the increasing number of people who now belong to this group, and of the almost impossibility of upward mobility for these people or their children.

## Judging Globalization

The theme for this day was "Judging Globalization." The keynote speaker was Dr. Mary Elizabeth Ingham, CSJ. Dr. Ingham serves as Associate Academic Vice President and teaches at Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles. She is recognized as a brilliant scholar of Franciscan thinking with particular emphasis on Franciscan philosopher John Duns Scotus.

Dr. Ingham spoke of a Franciscan alternative to the forces shaping globalization based on the Franciscan intellectual tradition. She presented five dominant values of today's globalization. They are the values of the neo-liberal economic agenda. For each value she showed how it is manifested at the present time in the forces shaping globalization. Then for each value she presented a Franciscan alternative:

1. The market as a "type of religion." This value is manifested in a blind faith in the power of market forces. Market forces are concerned with the amount of products and the profit that they generate. There is the belief that the end justifies the means so long as the outcome is increased profit.
2. The second value concerns the use of power in exchanges between people. The rules that guide the use of power have to do with control and manipulation. The maximum impact of power is felt in exchanges between the strong and the weak.
3. The third value has to do with the means used to obtain the desired outcomes in exchanges between persons. Outcomes are considered to be driven by rational thinking. They are utilitarian: useful, practical. One means used is competition in which there are clear winners and losers. The outcome of competition is financial loss or gain.
4. A fourth value has to do with goods and resources. It asks the question, "Who are the intended beneficiaries?" The beneficiaries are the private individuals who are the owners. The outcome is successful when they experience an increase in personal goods.

5. A fifth value has to do with the market forces themselves. They are impersonal. They evolve naturally as individuals experience profit and loss and then adjust their behavior to reflect this experience. The owners are the ones who change course. The majority of the workers are passive participants in this process.

Following this, Dr. Ingham gave a Franciscan alternative for each of the values she had just described.

1. For the market as a type of religion, she presented the person as the summit of creation. Instead of concern for the product and for profit she suggested concern for the well being of individuals. Using the symbol of a lamp, she said that light must shine forth from each individual. This is the light that will shine on the understanding of market forces as preminent.
2. In a Franciscan alternative, power is replaced by mutuality. It is a process of give and take, always including respect for the other. The Franciscan world view is centered on God's graciousness, not on sinful relationships. Each of us must ask ourselves, "What is the quality of my power relationships?"
3. The desired outcomes in the Franciscan alternative are two—an ordered love and an affection for justice. The objective good does not have to be useful or beneficial to me. It is good if it is beneficial to those in need.
4. The intended beneficiaries in the Franciscan view are the many, not the few. Material goods are gifts of God. They are for the many, each receiving his just share.
5. The forces driving globalization should not be impersonal market values. Those must be replaced by individual personal values. To use her words, "I as an individual must cultivate the conscious intention to act in accordance with my values, to the extent that I am able, within the circles of life where I live, work, play, and pray."

Franciscans today can offer a new world view with the person at its center. Each of us must ask ourselves, "What do I believe?" and then ask ourselves, "What are the implications of what I believe?" We must be informed. We must be able to speak intelligently about globalization. We must be thoughtful consumers. We must not be "a deaf hearer of the Gospel." A Franciscan is in right relationship with God, with self, with others, and with all of God's creatures and creation. Franciscans are less inclined to think about themselves and more inclined to feel tenderness and compassion for others. We make loving

choices even when the choice costs us something. We hold others accountable for their action, but how we do it is important. Do we impose our values, or do we propose our values to others? The most transforming act is an act of presence—to be there for the other person. Always we speak truth to power. We are authentic people who stay in the light. In the presence of authentic people, others become authentic. The text in the box below is from a handout placed on the tables by Dr. Ingham.

### **The Challenges of Franciscan Life and Ministry in a Globalized World**

As best I can, I will:

1. strive to recognize the dignity of every person as a unique “portrait of Christ”;
2. strive to receive every person with respect;
3. have the intention and make every effort to do good and to be loving;
4. seek to actively participate in working to create and establish relationships in which
  - people, not products, are given priority and consideration;
  - power is exercised respectfully and mutually;
  - the common good is given due and honest consideration; and
  - I assume ownership and responsibility for how well I am living, loving, relating and serving in imitation of Christ after the example of Francis and Clare.

By Dr. Mary Elizabeth Ingham, CSJ

### **Franciscan Advocacy and Action**

At the Friday afternoon session there were seventeen General Topic Conversation groups. Each topic was presented twice. For my first conversation group I chose “Advocacy in the Globalized World.” The moderator was Father Joseph Rozansky, OFM. The majority of the people in the group were involved in advocacy for the rights of the indigenous people in Mexico. The conversation was about how the Franciscan message about the plight of these people under the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) could be

brought to the attention of the laity. It was agreed that testimonials were very important and useful. It is important that the friars working with the indigenous people of Mexico write up their experiences for distribution to the Provinces. The information should not be politicized. Any program of the friars that can be replicated should be described to all. Franciscan pastors should be included in the effort. They are the ones that can bring the information to the parishioners.

For my second conversation group I attended Franciscan Spirituality in the Web of Global Relations. The moderator was Br. Edward Coughlin, OFM. The presentation took the entire time, so there was not an opportunity for conversation. According to Brother Edward, theology is concerned with the coming together of theology, prayer, and practical Christianity. Franciscan spirituality is characterized by the values and behaviors that have their foundation in the religious experience of Francis and Clare of Assisi, and the movement begun by them. The Franciscan spiritual tradition is consistent in its focus on the poor and suffering Christ. The Franciscan spirit offers the world a way of peace and a model for human life based on the Gospel of Jesus Christ. First is the encounter with Franciscan values, which shakes the self-world relationship. This can cause anxiety because our sense of identity is threatened. Next is true change or conversion. The result of conversion is a new consciousness of one’s position in the world, which leads to action.

### **Moving Forward to Change the World**

The theme of the Saturday morning session was “Action—Moving Forward to Change the World.” The original plan presented in the program was to have the two keynote speakers and the connector, Fr. Francisco O’Conaire, OFM, engage in a public conversation regarding how they saw the assembly progress and commenting on the suggestions for further action. Because of the enthusiasm of the participants, it was decided to change the original plan and give participants an opportunity to speak to the entire group. A microphone was set up in the center aisle and soon there was a long line to speak. The Partners in Ministry were eager to compliment the Province on the assembly and to tell what is happening in their ministries.

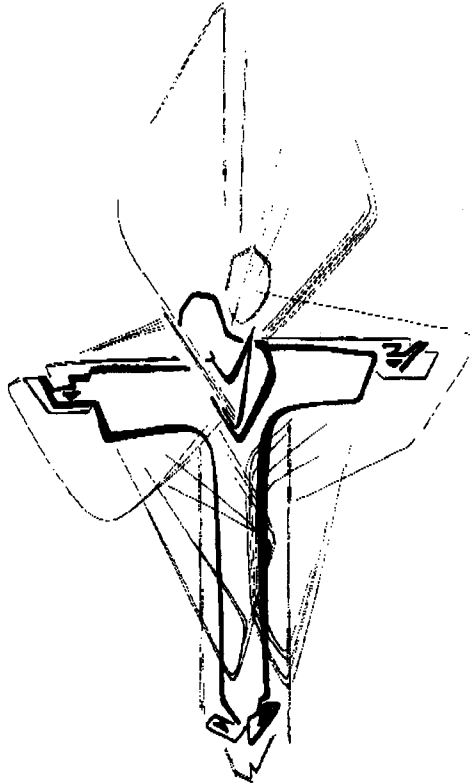
For their contribution to the session, the keynoters and the connector prepared a handout that was distributed to the participants. They commented that the energy unleashed in the days of the assembly was a sign of the Spirit moving all to the cusp of a new day in the life of Holy Name Province. Under the heading of An Initial Response, the keynoters and connector said that they felt empowered, not paralyzed, because our tradition has much of value to offer. Our response rests on the spirituality that grounds the Franciscan tradition. That includes listening to those harmed by and benefiting from global-

ization. We build skills for dialogue about differences; move beyond charity to work for justice and social transformation; and nurture the virtues of solidarity. We will try to live what we profess to believe, keeping our centers of gravity outside of ourselves—institutionally and personally.

Under the heading “Where We Will Go From Here?” the keynoters and connector said that some steps are clear, but many will require ongoing discussion and discernment as this analysis and understanding is integrated into Holy Name Province ministries and into institutional and personal responses to globalization. This assembly will impact on preaching and teaching and lead to advocacy and other forms of action for systemic change. It will encourage education and reflection on Franciscan values, Catholic social teaching, and globalization in parishes, educational institutions, and formation programs. There was support for many action ideas: parish twinning, purchasing fair trade products, work for corporate accountability, immigration initiatives, and sustainable living. All are committed to taking next steps on these proposals and to others that came from ministerial groups, topical conversations, workshops, and other sharing opportunities of the assembly.

### My Comments

This was the most interesting and informative Franciscan gathering I have ever attended. I appreciate the invitation of Holy Name Province and the opportunity afforded by the Executive Council of the national Fraternity of the Secular Franciscan Order in the United States to attend. I met many Secular Franciscans from fraternities in the region of Holy Name Province because Secular Franciscans are part of the Holy Name Province Partners in Ministry Program. Many of the Seculars I met are active in peace and justice work, but a surprising number knew very little about the work of the Regional and National Peace and Justice Commissions.



## An Excerpt from James of the Marches

St. James of the Marches, a Franciscan priest and preacher, died in 1476. There are 99 Sunday Sermons.

The third sign that divine love is present occurs when someone gladly hears about and openly sings the praises of a friend. Matthew 22:28 says: “From the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. The person who is from God hears the words of God.” Listen to Magdalene, who loved much and always had the word Jesus on her lips. John 11:21 reads: “Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.” John 20:15 has: “They have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him.” Likewise, John 20:15 states: “If you have taken him away, tell me.” Moreover, John 20:18 reads: “I have seen the Lord, and he told me.”

O Magdalene, how ardently did you love Jesus in your heart! And therefore, you ardently spoke of Jesus with your lips and loved to hear about him. Chrysostom comments: It is the practice of lovers not to hide their love behind silence, but to frequently tell others about it so that by their eagerness to tell of their love everyone might enjoy its comforting warmth. They cannot contain the flames of their love in their breasts. Thus, when everyone else left the tomb, Magdalene did not, since the chain of her love held her enchained with Christ. And so according to Gregory: Christ first appeared to her, since she loved him more than all the others. Thus, when Martha said: “The Master is here and calls you,” she immediately rose up and came to Jesus. Thus Christ said: “My sheep hear my voice, and I give them eternal life.” And so Magdalene sat at the Lord’s feet and listened to his words. Luke 10:39. Likewise, Luke 2:19: “Mary stored up all these words.” John 14:21: “The person who loves me listens to my words.”

Translation by Robert J. Karris, OFM

Taken from Sermon 75 in *S. Iacobus de Marchia, Sermones Dominicales*. Volume III. Introduzione testo e note di Renato Lioi, OFM. Falconara: Biblioteca Franciscana, 1978, p. 71.

## **“Some Sow, Others Reap” Vital Reciprocity of the Franciscan Order**

Larry Dreffein, OFM

Francis, in the course of his growth, conversion process and travels met many individuals. His spirit and inspiration touched many of them and the group of lesser brothers grew quickly. His example and his words inspired many people of his day to emulate and follow his way of life.

### Francis and the Penitents

The effect of the preaching of Francis and his brothers was described by Celano:

Thanks and the voice of praise resounded everywhere, as many, casting aside earthly concerns, gained knowledge of themselves in the life and teaching of the most blessed father Francis and aspired to love and reverence for their Creator.

Many people, well-born and lowly, cleric and lay, driven by divine inspiration, began to come to Saint Francis, for they desired to serve under his constant training and leadership. All of these the holy one of God, like a fertile stream of heavenly grace, watered with showers of gifts and he adorned the field of their hearts with the flowers of perfection (1Cel. 37).<sup>1</sup>

The point that I would like to make with this reflection is that already there is a connection between Francis and those with whom he and the brothers came into contact. There is a relationship that developed. Inspired by the life and preaching of this simple man of Assisi, others in their own state of life were touched, felt a call and wanted to live in a similar way. Thus the Third Order, Secular Franciscans, were called to live the Christian ideal in their homes and in their world.

The Legend of the Three Companions states, “Similarly, both married men and women given in marriage, unable to separate because of the law of matrimony, committed themselves to more severe penance in their own homes on the wholesome advice of the brothers” (L3C 60).<sup>2</sup> There is once again, insight into this reciprocal, life-giving connection. In many ways it was the simple sharing of ideas, reflections of the gospel and mutual gatherings, or possibly having listened to a preached lesson of the friar(s) that led these men and women to put the questions before the lesser brother.

One Franciscan scholar writes: “The unexpected increase of the number of urban penitents is attributed, as we know, to St. Francis of Assisi who himself lived as a brother of penance before founding his religious order.”<sup>3</sup> Further Raffaele Pazzelli, states that:

Without forcing the issue at all, we can say that the best Franciscan sources clearly indicate that the penitential movement had a rapid increase in numbers from the very beginning of the itinerant preaching period of Francis and his brothers, and that the new penitents expressed the desire to be associated with him forever, under his guidance.

Once he and his first companions had begun their itinerant penitential preaching, Francis could certainly not forget or neglect the penitents. The unexpected growth of the movement and his guidance was primarily due to his and his brothers’ preaching and therefore demanded his involvement.<sup>4</sup>

In the course of his travels, St. Francis met a merchant in the town of Poggiobonsi, whose name was Luchesio (Lucian). Luchesio and his wife Bona Donna, were generous to the poor, gave lodging to the pilgrims and helped widows and orphans. They were apparently part of one of the penitential movements of the time, though this is not certain. Having been befriended by St. Francis, he gave them a norm of life which could be considered a forerunner of the Rule. After this, Luchesio devoted all his time to works of charity, especially care of the sick in hospitals. A number of people of the same spirit gathered around Luchesio. These would be the first “Brothers and Sisters of Penance” as the Secular Franciscans were then called. St. Francis gave them a rule of life. They sought to imitate, in the world, the ways of St. Francis and his brothers.

At this point, a discussion of the details concerning Francis’s writing of the Rule of Life that has been lost or of the Letter to all the Faithful is unnecessary. The research on this has been done by others. What is our focus is this constant connection with the Orders of the Franciscan Family, because the Poor Ladies, were a part of this connection, too.

When there were no specifically established institutions that were labeled "Franciscan," what was it that inspired and challenged the faithful to make the Gospel alive in their day, in their situation.

Men and women experienced contrition when they began to grasp the depth of God's love for them and their own failure to respond to it; such remorse would lead to a decision to change one's life. As a prominent Franciscan preacher, Bonaventure of Iseo (c.1247) put it: "affective love" (contrition) must lead to "effective love" (making peace with God and with one's neighbor). In this way, Franciscan ministry appealed to the urban value of freedom; the preacher tried to make the listeners realize that they were responsible actors in their own salvation with control over their own futures.<sup>5</sup>

These women and men had a vision and this thrust them into the history of the Church. There was the recognition of a need and a response to this need.

In Ingrid Peterson's *Clare of Assisi: A Biographical Study*, she writes that "The evidence about Clare indicates that her vision was firm while Francis struggled to give birth to his Order."<sup>6</sup> From where did this vision come? I think the roots start with her upbringing in the home of Ortulana, Clare's mother. I am not going to go through the details that Peterson presents about Ortulana; suffice it to say that she was a faith-filled woman, who imparted her faith and principles to her daughter Clare. This strength, allowed Clare to run off to join Francis and the brothers, have her hair cut and begin living the life which attracted other Poor Ladies.

Ortulana's responsibility was to raise a family which would adhere to the faith-filled principles that she presented. That she succeeded seems obvious, for as Peterson writes: "Ortulana was root and stem of the Poor Ladies."<sup>7</sup> Ortulana raised her daughters to be women of principles, probably strong-willed as well. The fact is these girls grew up and began to live on their own yet in community capably supporting each other.

This sense of vital reciprocity can be understood in the same way. A message is given. Grace is gained. Gifts grow and the message moves out. Yes, there is need for a "touching base," sharing stories, renewing and rebuilding always in respect with each other. That the brothers were sent out two by two was not just Scriptural but psychologically and emotionally supportive. If one was having a bad day, the other was there to get them through it. A shared joy on the success of their reception or encouragement on their rejection—their "perfect joy." Whatever happened they were there for each other.

One of the key words in the stories about the friars is *when*. "When the brothers got together. . . ." This speaks of time apart, albeit, two by two in the early days, yet the coming together was important. In the early days of wan-

dering the world and spreading the message by word and deed, it was good for the brothers to come together and share their stories with each other. The cultural differences, the languages they learned, the experiences that they had. A case in point is the story of Alexander of Hales, a Parisian scholar, once accompanied by an uneducated brother. The story states that as Alexander was preaching to the Poor Ladies at San Damiano:

Although the Italian farm-hand could not match the Englishman in study, in one thing they were both equal: in a great fervor of soul that in Alexander showed itself in a delicate and polite language, while in Giles it gushed forth in straight-from-the-shoulder remarks and popular proverbs.

While the English Brother spoke, Giles would sit in a corner of the church, his legs crossed, and his tonsured head resting on his knees. One might have thought he was sleeping, but he was listening and meditating. The honeyed words of Alexander of Hales had a sweetness that filled him with joy. In spite of this he feared that the Ladies on the other side of the grille were not getting very much consolation at all, so he slowly stood up and interrupted:

"Stop talking, Master, because I want to speak!" With clumsy gestures he shouted out with reference to humility:

"The way to go up is to go down!"

In his harsh country voice he asked:

"How could we possibly carry on our back a heavy millstone that would keep your head always bent down?"

Then he said:

"When you're in a fight and you want to win, lose; because the way to win is to lose."

Remembering his former position as a farm-hand, he said;

"This world is a great farm where he who has the largest field has the most work. . . ."

Alexander of Hales humbly stopped his sermon in order to listen to and to allow these words of the country Brother.<sup>8</sup>

The Brother had an insight here: "If you want to go up, you must go down." Humility is the key to our life. Recognizing that others have insight and wisdom helps us practice humility.

If we look at the early development of those who sought to follow the Gospel way proclaimed by Francis and the friars, the impact on the laity was powerful. Yet, as we see these lay people strive to live out the message in their lives what is clear is that there was a mutuality. St. Louis, the King of France, had been influenced by St. Bonaventure. Bonaventure, as a professor at the



University of Paris, used his influence to instruct and encourage the future saint, Louis, in his dealings with his world. Louis tried to influence and reconcile the eastern and western parties of the Church. Here we have two noted individuals in dialogue striving to "rebuild the Church."

Another example to be considered is St. Elizabeth of Hungary. She was known for her humility and efforts on behalf of the poor. Maybe part of that effort came from the difficulties that she faced in her reign. When Elizabeth's husband Ludwig IV died, the royal family members decided enough was enough with this foreigner and they exiled her. She was exiled from the country that she and her husband ruled. She was exiled because she was not "one of us" and she was "squandering our royal treasury." Yet, by popular demand, when the Crusaders returned and heard of her fate, they reinstated her as queen. The few facts known of her life indicate that she had a Franciscan friar as her spiritual director. Again, we see the "reaping and sowing." The friar offered insight to Elizabeth and she took the insight and lived it out in her life.

Another example is John Vianney, the Curé of Ars. Most of us know about his educational struggles to become ordained and that he became known as a great confessor. But his first connection with the Franciscan life of penance was his mother, a Secular Franciscan. With his mother's example, it is not surprising that he was able to endure long hours in the confessional and periods of fasting. John's early life prepared him for this.

John was conscripted in the French army but was considered a deserter. Somehow he lost his connection to his regime. He stayed where he was and cared for the sick and needy. Perhaps the Franciscan call to peace directed this course in his life.

One of the SFO Provincials, while preaching on the feast of John Vianney, told this story about John's life. It went something like this:

When John Vianney wanted to follow through on his vocation, he went to the seminary and asked for admission so that he might study for the priesthood. The priest who answered the door, knew of John's inaptness with his studies and told him: "John, you are an ass. There is no way you will make it through the course of studies here at the seminary."

John responded to the priest's remarks: "You know that David slew Goliath with the jaw of an ass. Just think what God can do with a total ass!"

The fact is that now we see what God was able to do with a person humble and willing to serve. Long hours of readily offering mercy and compassion and reconciliation. The town he was sent to serve made a turn around because of his presence. "One sows, another reaps."

Pius X, known as the Eucharistic Pope, was a Secular Franciscan by choice. His mother before him was a Secular Franciscan. Pius's devotion to the Eucharist and his desire to have the Divine Presence available to more in order that they might be strengthened and blessed by the Presence of Christ the Lord may have been rooted in his Franciscan life. Our Franciscan devotion to the Eucharist is nothing new. Respect for the Eucharist was present from the very beginning. In the writings of St. Francis, we read:

All those who saw the Lord Jesus according to the humanity, therefore, and did not see and believe according to the Spirit and the Divinity that He is the true Son of God were condemned. Now in the same way, all those who see the sacrament sanctified by the words of the Lord upon the altar at the hands of the priest in the form of bread and wine, and who do not see and believe according to the Spirit and the Divinity that it is truly the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, are condemned. [This] is affirmed by the Most High Himself Who says: This is my Body and the Blood of my new covenant [which will be shed for many] (Mark 14:22-24); and Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life (John 6:55). It is the Spirit of the Lord, therefore, That lives in Its faithful, That receives the Body and Blood of the Lord. All others who do not share in this same Spirit and presume to receive Him eat and drink judgment on themselves.

Therefore: children, how long will you be hard of heart? Why do you not know the truth and believe in the Son of God? Behold, each day He humbles Himself as when He came from the royal throne into the Virgin's womb; each day He Himself comes to us, appearing humbly; each day He comes down from the bosom of the Father upon the altar in the hands of a priest.

As he reveals Himself to the holy apostles in true flesh, so He reveals Himself to us now in sacred bread. And as they saw only His flesh by an insight of their flesh, yet believed that He was God as they contemplated Him with their spiritual eyes, let us, as we see bread and wine with our bodily eyes, see and firmly believe that they are His most holy Body and Blood living and true. An in this way the Lord is always with His faithful, as He himself says: Behold I am with you until the end of the age (Mt 28:20).<sup>9</sup>

This reflection started with the words "vital reciprocity." Sometimes our "vision" is limited when we speak of this. Perhaps what most SFO fraternity members are thinking is that the friar or sister will be there for us. This has not always been the case throughout history. Ideally it is wonderful when there is a dynamic, inspirational and, God-be-praised, charismatic Franciscan giving

assistance. The lives and preaching of the early Franciscans touched the hearts of people. The example lingered and lasted. That example is what saw the brothers and sisters through the "dry" times. Some went specifically to hear the friar preachers, whether on mission or in their own town church. That even happens today.

In the recent publication of reflections about the recently-beatified Mother Teresa of Calcutta, we can see she had the spirit of the Gospel message as did Francis and Clare. The question, then, is how we live this in our life.

Let's look at some reflections that Mother Teresa offered to her sisters and the world, describing who Jesus is to her.

*Jesus is the Word – to be spoken.*

*Jesus is the Truth – to be told.*

*Jesus is the Light – to be lit.*

*Jesus is the Life – to be lived.*

*Jesus is the Love – to be loved.*

*Jesus is the Joy – to be shared.*

*Jesus is the Peace – to be given.*

*Jesus is the Bread of Life – to be eaten.*

*Jesus is the Hungry – to be fed.*

*Jesus is the Thirsty – to be satiated.*

*Jesus is the Naked – to be clothed.*

*Jesus is the Homeless – to be taken in.*

*Jesus is the Sick – to be healed.*

*Jesus is the Lonely – to be loved.*

*Jesus is the Unwanted – to be wanted.*

*Jesus is the Leper – to wash His wounds.*

*Jesus is the Beggar – to give Him a smile.*

*Jesus is the Drunkard – to listen to Him.*

*Jesus is the Mentally Ill – to protect Him.*

*Jesus is the Little One – to embrace Him.*

*Jesus is the Blind – to lead Him.*

*Jesus is the Dumb – to speak to Him*

*Jesus is the Crippled – to walk with Him.*

*Jesus is the Drug Addict – to befriend Him.*

*Jesus is the Prostitute – to remove her from danger and befriend her.*

*Jesus is the Prisoner – to be visited.*

*Jesus is the Old – to be served.<sup>10</sup>*

In reading these words, we can see that Mother Teresa, and Francis, "got it." They got the message. In the process of reading scriptures, we begin in the Book of Genesis with the words: "In the beginning God created them male

and female he created them, in his own image and likeness he created them" (Gen 1:27). The Bible begins with the words that humanity is reflecting the divine in this life.

Moving along in salvation history, we read in the Book of Isaiah "The Lord himself will give you this sign: the virgin shall be with child, and bear a son, and shall name him Immanuel," (Isa 7: 14). Matthew, in his writing on the words of Isaiah, states: "a name which means 'God is with us' (Mt 1:23). God is in our midst. With Matthew's revelation that God is with us, there can be little doubt why at the Last Judgment, we will be asked: "I was hungry, and you gave me food, thirsty and you gave me drink . . . I assure you, as often as you did for one of my least brothers (or sisters), you did it for me" (Mt 25:31-46):

In the Book of Revelation, we read, "Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth. . . I heard a loud voice from the throne cry out: 'This is God's dwelling among men. He shall dwell with them and they shall be his people and he shall be their God who is always with them. He shall wipe every tear from their eyes, and there shall be no more death or mourning, crying out or pain, for the former world has passed away'" (Rev 21: 1-4).

In the beginning, God created a paradise which Man and Woman were invited to share. They missed the message then. They were excluded and we have been striving to return to this "vision" ever since.

This reflection also began with the words, "one sows, another reaps." Our Spiritual Assistants must have a vision of the Kingdom. In *Franciscans in Urban Ministry* Beverly A. Carroll speaks of the friars (Roy Gasnick, OFM, James E. Goode, OFM, Francis Gorman, OFM, Neil J. O'Connell, OFM, and Ben Taylor, OFM) who contributed to the thrust for a united and racial diversity and equality in the Kingdom. Their tales and names live on. This is vital reciprocity. The name and vision of Phillip Marquard, OFM, touches the hearts and minds of many in his tireless efforts for the hungry, homeless, abandoned and marginalized. This is vital reciprocity. The person of Solanus Casey, OFM Cap, lives on in the legacy that he has left us with his writings and the example of the simple, humble life of a friar who had vision to embrace all. The message, the vision and the challenge lives on and nourishes those who come after. None of these individuals were seeking their own glory, only striving to recognize Jesus in our midst.

Sometimes the absence of a Spiritual Assistant in an SFO fraternity causes pain and at times lack of focus. We all need to be mindful of the "vision," "the Kingdom of God is at hand, in your midst" (Lk 17:21). St. Paul, in his letter to the Romans states: "The kingdom of God is not a matter of eating or drinking, but of justice, peace and the joy that is given by the Holy Spirit" (Rom 14:17). Yes, a Spiritual Assistant, to offer further insight to the fraternity in their living situation is a blessing. Yet to do that well, the individual must be a person of

vision, living in hope and faithful in love, tirelessly striving to read the signs and messages of the time. Those are qualities of a good spiritual leader for the community.

Francis was an inspiration for his time, as was Clare, directed by Ortulana. Agnes was encouraged by Clare. Those in contact with Agnes shared the vision, the vision of the Gospel message. All of us have them to fall back on. We need to read, reflect and reestablish ourselves with the Saints who had vision. We need to embrace that vision and move forward in our time, in our place and space. The response is fundamental conversion. Yet each geographical area may have certain specifics that are different. Let us follow the vision left us by Jesus the Lord, let us follow the message give us by God. "In his own image he created them, male and female." Vital reciprocity means mutually learning and growing from and with each other. It reaches beyond our day and time. There is hope for the future and faithfulness to the past for our day.

There are saints in our midst. When we humbly follow in their example, we are enlivening this mutuality. Vital reciprocity is not merely a legalistic observance. It is a sharing, a faith, a vision that is rooted in Gospel living. It is our call as Franciscans. Yes there is established order. However, we are all called to holiness. Holiness begins with a humble stance before the Creator and recognizing the holy in all. Francis, Clare and our present day Mother Teresa of Calcutta did that. "If you did it for on of the least . . . you did it to me."

We have taken a broad "vision" of the meaning of vital reciprocity to stretch the imagination. Can we have visions of a "new heaven and a new earth?" We are the creators of this. "God dwelling in His people." Have there been moments that God "visited" us and we missed it? Any activity or attitude that inhibits our loving others, no matter who they are, inhibits our life and the Gospel message.

Vital reciprocity recognizes that one sows; another reaps. Sometimes you are able to see the fruits of your labor. At other times, we must trust that somehow God's glory will be manifested in how we all have chosen to live out our Gospel call. We need each other for this ongoing dialogue. So, as we look to the shortage of First Order Spiritual Assistants for our Secular Franciscan fraternities, let us not forget that we have a wealth of individuals who have given us example and challenge us to creatively respond to the needs of our day.

#### Endnotes

<sup>1</sup>Thomas of Celano, The Life of St. Francis, *Francis of Assisi: Early Documents*, Vol. I (New York: New City Press, 1999), 216. All later references from *Francis of Assisi: Early Documents* will be identified as FAED.

<sup>2</sup>The Legend of Three Companions, FAED II, 103.

<sup>3</sup>Cited in *St Francis and the Third Order*, Raffaele Pazzelli, TOR, trans. Aidan Mullaney, TOR (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1989), 102. Original source: G.G. Meersseman, *I Disciplinati e Penitenti nel Duecento* (Perugia, 1962), 46, note 1.

<sup>4</sup>Pazzelli, 102-104.

<sup>5</sup>Cited by Dominic Monti, OFM, "Franciscan Life and Urban Life: A Tense Relationship" in *Franciscans in Urban Ministry* (St. Bonaventure, NY: Franciscan Institute Publications, 2002), 22. See note 46 on that page for information about Bonaventure of Iseo.

<sup>6</sup>Ingrid Peterson, *Clare of Assisi: A Biographical Study* (Quincy, IL: Franciscan Press, 1993), 5.

<sup>7</sup>Peterson, 51.

<sup>8</sup>Piero Bargellini, *The Little Flowers of Saint Clare*, trans. Edmund O'Gorman, OFM Conv. (Padua: Messaggero Editions, 1997), 96-97.

<sup>9</sup>Admonition 1: 8-22; See FAED I, 128.

<sup>10</sup>Mother Teresa of Calcutta, *My Life for the Poor*, ed. José Luis Gonzalez-Balado and Janet N. Playfoot (San Francisco: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1985), 106-107.



Seven  
For Saint Francis

Janet McCann

Trying to understand what it meant  
to give it up, pile it on a table,  
a chair, to say no to it.  
To say, I am who am not, nothing between  
me and the wind, the earth.

ENVY

he seems to be capering in the dawn light  
building a circle of figures in wet snow

just snow on snow, no coal for eyes  
no sticks for arms, just white protrusions leaning

ghosts of persons never to be born  
vague bodies gesturing for help

the snow-statues he makes of wife and children  
tells himself they have to be clothes, fed

imagining ice flesh covered with fine linen  
frozen gullets warmed with good thick soup

is enough to stop his wanting them,  
to turn his back on them, to let them go

back into the landscape, lumps of snow  
melting beside the stony path.

GLUTTONY

having eaten "a little chicken" in illness  
he made me lead him through the streets clucking,  
flapping his arms, asking for mockery

*I pretend to be one of the Lesser Brothers  
and here I have sinned, wallowed in gluttony,  
I ate a chicken, laugh at me, throw mud*

*that I may return cleansed to the sparse turnips  
and rough crusts given me as alms,  
I am a sinner, mock, throw dirt in clumps*

and sticks, but no one laughed  
not even the lout who always snaps  
willow wands at the dogs, they stepped aside

and let us pass, a few leaned out to touch him.  
his small, white body wasted by illness,  
he could have been a chicken, flapping his arms.

GREED

how you could give up  
everything, everything

just like dying. Of course  
and the new birth naked

but not to want anything  
or if you did, to deny it

deny your heart's  
your body's dream, body

thrown into snow to slake  
desire, to refuse it

brother body a donkey  
beaten into silence

obedience. But we who  
want you want things

too, ice cream and good  
friendships at least, even

walking together in the  
long penance parade

in the rich mild light  
of this Italian town where

you were, are, every atom  
scattered golden dust

#### LUST

he threw himself into snowbanks  
to cool the heat of his lust,  
snow melting to trickle  
of muddy water, cold

penetrating into the heart of  
desire, panting, last falling flakes  
kissing the planes of his face  
as his mind rose finally to God

nearly breathless drawing cold  
into his chest like stars  
he felt the exhalation of desire  
no longer part of him

before adjusting his dark  
damp, heavy habit to leap  
happy as a child  
in the sparkling air.

#### SLOTH

Sleeping on ground, rock for pillow  
and still the first pre-dawn cry

awakens him from a dream troubled by angels,  
brother body does not want to move,  
rock soft to exhausted head, arms  
grasping at rough blanket, body

wants only to be left alone, only to be  
unbruised and disordered, curled  
against the first beginnings of light,

locked into darkness. But the man  
stretches, kneels to pray in the cold.  
His cold, blue statue penetrates my dream

as he kneels at the edge of the crevice  
of the mountain, as my hand reaches  
to touch the plane of his cheek

from the happy abandon of quilts and warmth  
and silence, wanting only to stay here  
in this clutched sleep, light blazing through slats.

#### PRIDE

Five inches shorter than me, you tell me to kneel.  
I kneel. Here in the woods  
I kneel in the mud, my hands folded, I do not want  
to be proud, it is pride that keeps us from offering  
ourselves, whatever we are.

And I admit, Francis, I have nothing  
to be proud of. Nothing, no thing of mine  
will stand to time. Nor did I dwindle  
in His service, body growing thin,  
outlines sharper as the shadow grew.

And you, then, proud only in being of Him,  
his life your life. Pride never  
to be thought of as good, as they say in  
He takes pride in his work, or She  
has too much pride to accept charity,

You who broke the bowl you were molding  
because you started to like it, its shapeliness  
began to please you, the way the curves  
came alive under your steady fingers,  
so that you thought of it and not of God.

#### ANGER

I need you here most. St. Francis,  
you who chased after a brother told in anger  
to preach naked, preaching with him, together

in your skivvies, moving souls  
despite the gooseflesh on your shivering limbs  
teaching yourself humility from anger

Now my eyes are aflame with it,  
I think of your torment when they cauterized your eyes  
with burning iron and I am ashamed

but not humble not yet humble I tell myself  
I have to pray at most  
that my enemies be shown the truth

I may not ask, Why do they prosper  
I may not ask, Why do their flocks increase  
I may not say, But here I am, faithful

Older sister who never left the fold  
And I may never pray, Hey, Lord, just this once  
And never, ever, even in dream, hope

to see them whirled away in windy light  
a field swept clean of them

*Pax et bonum*

*The Cord*, 55.3 (2005)

## Book Reviews

*The Passionate Troubadour: A Medieval Novel About Francis of Assisi*. Edward Hays. Ave Maria Press, 2004. 640 pp.

“Troubadours” is the name given to lyric poets, strolling minstrels, of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries who were attached to courts of Provence and northern Italy. Francis of Assisi, from his teenage years, was strongly attracted to imitate them. Edward Hays has called Francis a “passionate troubadour.” Hays emphasizes that Francis was naturally inclined toward expressing strong emotion with passion. The author gives the reader a picture of a real person developing his personhood through the various experiences of his daily life. *The Passionate Troubadour* is offered to the reader as a novel about, rather than a biography of, Francis of Assisi. Acquainted with the historical record of the life of Francis, Hays uses his imagination to present characters and events that brought about the finished product that we honor as a saint. Some historical personages who influenced Francis were Bishop Guido of Assisi, Cardinal Ugolino of the papal court, Pope Innocent III, Clare Scifi (Offreduccio) of Assisi, and Sultan Al-Kamul. The author’s imagination created Emeliano Giacosa, a boyhood friend of Francis, Padre Antonio, a Benedictine monk, Claude of Lyons, a lute maker, Samuel Jacob, a Jewish banker, and Ali Hasan, a Sufi Muslim.

In his youth, Francis had various ideals he wanted to realize in his life, from becoming a knight to being a traveling minstrel, a merchant, a beggar. His attempts at becoming a knight were severely tested when his fist try led to his being captured and imprisoned in Perugia. His long recovery from a serious illness contracted while he was in prison dulled his yearning for a while. After a second attempt at becoming a knight ended with his abandoning his goal, Francis returned to Assisi to become the laughing stock of his hometown. He continued going about as a minstrel and strongly resisted his father’s desire that he work in his father’s shop as a merchant. After a period of intense prayer and solitude, Francis divested himself of his belongings and became a beggar. Convinced that God was calling him to “repair my church,” he began physically to rebuild a couple of chapels until he realized that he was called by God to do more.

As a traveling minstrel proclaiming God’s love, Francis came in contact with people of various religious beliefs and practices. The diversity of these experiences broadened and strengthened Francis’s appreciation of his own religious beliefs. His energy and joy-filled exuberance led many to want to fol-

low his way of life. Eventually, the number of his followers brought about the need for a Rule of Life. Papal approval for his way of life offset critics who found his emphasis on a life of Gospel poverty and the openness to non-ordained followers to smack of heresy. Poverty and simplicity of life characterized Francis's way of life. Francis had an open heart and an open mind to various ways of seeking God and serving God. His freedom of spirit and discomfort with the legalist rigorism of some in the Church led to his being misunderstood and criticized. Yet, he maintained his drive to love God with all his heart and soul. Francis's perseverance in his calling and his ardent love of Christ Crucified culminated in his receiving the gift of the stigmata, the wounds of Christ on his body, two years before his death. This reviewer's appreciation of *The Passionate Troubadour* leads him to recommend this book to all lovers of St. Francis and to all who seek to do the will of God in their daily life. Francis listened to the Spirit of God and strove to follow the Spirit wherever the Spirit led him. All of us are called to respond to the Spirit Who calls all to holiness.

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## Books Received

*Loving the Church: Scriptural Meditations for the Papal Household.*

Raniero Cantalamessa, OFM Cap. Translated by Gilberto Cavazos-Gonzalez, OFM and Amanda Quantz. (Cincinnati, OH: Servant Books, 2003). Reflections on the Letter to the Ephesians prepared by the preacher to the papal household raise the questions: "Do we love the Church? Do we understand its nature? Do we weep over its sins or merely criticize? Are we building up or tearing down?"

*Instruments of Christ: Reflections on the Peace Prayer of Saint Francis of Assisi.*

Albert Haase, OFM. (Cincinnati, OH: St. Anthony Messenger Press, 2004). Haase reflects on each phrase of the Peace Prayer and explores six seeds to sow if Easter Peace is to blossom in the world.

*The Catholic Challenge: Six Keys to a Deeper Spiritual Life.*

Therese Cirner. (Cincinnati, OH: Servant Books, 2004). Cirner, a clinical counselor, offers practical help for those longing for more of God.

*White Water, Bears, Dry Flies and Other Ways God Speaks to Guys.*

Randall Cirner. (Cincinnati, OH: Servant Books, 2004). Cirner shows that ordinary events are moments of encounter with God.

*Intercession: A Guide to Effective Prayer.*

by Sister Ann Shields, SGL. (Cincinnati, OH: Servant Books, 1988). This practical guide to revolutionizing a person's prayer life is written by an internationally known evangelist and host of a daily inspirational radio program, "Food for the Journey."

*Pathways of Trust: 101 Shortcuts to Holiness.*

John H. Hampsch, CMF. (Cincinnati, OH: Servant Books, 2004). Hampsch, a popular conference speaker and retreat leader, shows how to trade worries for confident trust in God.

*Catholic & Christian: An Explanation of Commonly Misunderstood Catholic Beliefs.*

Alan Schreck. 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary edition. (Cincinnati, OH: Servant Books, 2004). This popular seller provides answers to questions about commonly misunderstood Catholic teachings and practices.

*Spirituality of Sport: Balancing Body and Soul.*

Susan Saint Sing. (Cincinnati, OH: St. Anthony Messenger Press, 2004). Sing explores the mind-body-soul connection that is at the heart of all sport, play, dance and competition.

*Catholic Traditions: Treasures New & Old.*

Joanne Turpin. (Cincinnati, OH: St. Anthony Messenger Press, 2004). Untangling threads of traditions so pre-Vatican and post-Vatican Council Catholics can find and cherish a common heritage.

*John Paul II: A Life of Grace.*

Renzo Allegri. Translated by Marsha Daigle-Williamson. (Cincinnati, OH: Servant Books, 2005). Allegri focuses on John Paul's personality as well as the events of his life.

*Until the Trumpet Sounds: Seeking Holiness Now.*

Zachary Grant, OFM Cap. (Cincinnati, OH: St. Anthony Messenger Press, 2005). This book is for those who are serious about their relationship with God . . . about becoming holy.

More>

*Life with Mother Teresa.*

Sebastian Vazhakala, MC, (Cincinnati, OH: Servant Books, 2004). In the story of the founding of the Contemplative and the Lay Missionaries, Fr. Sebastian provides fresh insight into Mother Teresa through unedited letters, photos and anecdotes.

*What Does the Bible Say About the End Times?: A Catholic View.*

William Kurz, SJ. (Cincinnati, OH: Servant Books, 2004). Kurz leads the reader to a deeper understanding of God's intent in creating humanity, his persistent efforts to rescue us from our sin, and Jesus' final return in glory to judge the living and the dead.

*The Journey Within: Prayer as a Path to God.*

Kathryn J. Hermes, FSP. (Cincinnati, OH: Servant Books, 2004). Hermes offers tips to help overcome experiences of personal defeat to find that God is not simply with us—but is with us as one who serves us, heals us and restores us.

*How Much is Enough?: Hungering for God in an Affluent Culture.*

Arthur Simon. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House Company, 2003). Possessions may capture the hearts, but they cannot nourish the soul. Simon's book points us away from captivity to things toward fulfillment in following Christ.

*Francis of Assisi: Writer and Spiritual Master.*

Thaddée Matura, OFM. Translated by Paul Lachance, OFM. (Cincinnati, OH: St. Anthony Messenger Press, 2005). The author describes this book as “ a kind of simple summary . . . ” but prominent Franciscan scholars describe it as rich, prayerful, important, admirable, a synthesis, a small treasure.

*201 Inspirational Stories of the Eucharist.*

Compiled by Sister Patricia Proctor, OSC. (Spokane, WA: Franciscan Monastery of Saint Clare, 2004). A collection of stories which are both moving and powerful.

## About Our Contributors

**Carolyn Colburn, SFO**, was professed as a Secular Franciscan at St. Francis Fraternity in San Francisco in 1991. At the present time, she is a member of Our Lady of Angels Fraternity in Burlingame, California in Blessed Junipero Serra Region. Carolyn has an A.B. degree in Psychology and a M.A. in Education from the University of California, Berkeley. Before retiring she worked in the field of elementary education as a teacher and director of student teachers. Since profession in the SFO she has been a Fraternity Minister, Fraternity Peace and Justice Commissioner, and Regional Commissioner for Peace and Justice for Blessed Junipero Serra Region. In addition to serving as National Peace and Justice Commission Chair, she works in prison ministry at the San Mateo County Juvenile Detention Facility.

**Jaime Bernardo, SFO**, is a member of St. Mary of the Angels Fraternity in Rockville, MD. He is active in his Pastoral Council at St. Catherine Labouré Church in Wheaton, MD, and in many SFO projects. He holds a B.S. in Architecture from the University of Santo Thomas in Manila, Philippines. The image on p. 131 in this issue is taken from a calendar published for the SFO.

**Larry Dreffein, OFM**, is a friar of Sacred Heart Province. He is the Regional Spiritual Assistant for the Mother Cabrini region of the Secular Franciscan Order. He also serves as the President of Mayslake Village, a community for retired persons.

**Janet McCann** is Professor of English at Texas A & M University in College Station, TX, where she has taught since 1969. This is her first submission to *The Cord*, although she has previously published in *Kansas Quarterly*, *Tendrils*, *Poetry Australia* and other journals. Janet has also co-edited two anthologies, *Odd Angles of Heaven: Contemporary Poetry by People of Faith* and *Place of Passage: Contemporary Catholic Poetry*.

**Robert J. Karris, OFM** is a friar of Sacred Heart Province. A New Testament scholar, Fr. Karris is on the research faculty of the Franciscan Institute. A well-known author, having completed last year a three-volume translation of St. Bonaventure's *Commentary on the Gospel of Luke*, and co-authored the *Commentary of Ecclesiaste*, he is currently working on a translation of the *Commentary on the Gospel of John* by St. Bonaventure.

**Thérèse and Deacon David Ream, S.F.O.** Professed in 1988 into St. Margaret of Cortona Fraternity, Duncansville, PA, Thérèse and Dave are currently members of St. Elizabeth of Hungary Fraternity, Quincy, IL. They served as Co-Chairs of the National Formation Commission from 1996 until 2002. Both earned Master's degrees in Education and in Pastoral Ministry from St.



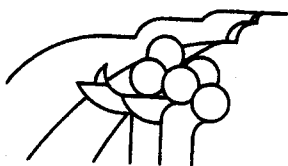
Francis University, Loretto, PA. Thérèse is a Curriculum Consultant, having obtained her Ph.D. in Curriculum and Instruction from Penn State in 1995. Since 2001 she has been the Coordinator of the Institute for Contemporary Franciscan Life at St. Francis University, Loretto, PA. Dave is a Licensed Professional Counselor with a doctorate in Counseling Psychology also from Penn State in 1995. He was ordained a Deacon for the Diocese of Jefferson City, MO, in 1999. They are both involved in full-time ecclesial ministry, serving their local parish in Kirksville, MO and their Diocese in a variety of capacities. Additionally, Dave currently serves as the Spiritual Assistant of St. Elizabeth of Hungary Fraternity, Quincy, IL.

**Fr. Richard Trezza, OFM** is a friar of Holy Name Province, New York. He currently serves as Provincial Spiritual Assistant for the SFO for his province and Parochial Vicar at Holy Name Parish in New York City. He has ministered to the SFO since 1968, and is presently the Spiritual Assistant for the National Commission chairs and also Spiritual Assistant to the National Formation Commission. His SFO ministry also extends to that of Regional Spiritual Assistant to Our Lady of the Angels Region. He is also a chaplain for the Genesis Program—a middle school for gifted children sponsored by the Diocese of Brooklyn, NY. Father joined the Franciscans in 1966; he has graduate degrees in Music, Education, and Theology.

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presented by Kathleen Warren, OSF Franciscan Scholar, Author

Dates: June 12-18, 2005

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**2005 DREAMS OF EARTH RETREAT** Led by: Patricia Sablatura, Ph.D., Teacher and Licensed Professional Counselor and Cecily Schroeffer, OSF Pastoral Minister and Spiritual Companion

Dates: July 8-12, 2005

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## Collected Writings of Eric Doyle, Friar Minor, Theologian

Author of *St. Francis and the Song of Brotherhood and Sisterhood*  
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Eric Doyle was a man of vision. It was a vision of Christ seen through the eyes of St. Francis of Assisi, which vision brought a unity and a dignity to all creation, as well as a fraternal connection with Christ, the first brother of all. This same vision led Eric to his fascination with Teilhard de Chardin on the one hand and his interest for "mother earth" and ecology on the other.

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On the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Eric Doyle's death, Josef Raischl, SFO and André Cirino, OFM present a collection of his extensive writings. This volume of more than 600 pages includes articles on Franciscan Spirituality, St. Bonaventure's and Bl. John Duns Scotus' theology, Teilhard de Chardin, various theological and spiritual themes such as the theology of religious life or the future of the papacy.



Throughout the text, the editors wove biographical notes, photos and memories of people who knew Eric. Two of his recorded talks on CD accompany the text. A complete bibliography closes the collection.

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## On the Franciscan Circuit Coming Events

**Sisters' Retreat. June 3-9, 2005. Friday, 4:00 p.m.-Thursday, 1:00 p.m.**  
Fr. Loman MacAodha, OFM. This year's retreat centers on Jesus Christ, the Risen One, our mediator in the presence of the Father. His spirit draws us into the ministry of forgiveness and peacemaking. We join in the struggle to bring God's blessing to a pilgrim and struggling people. At The Franciscan Center, 3010 N. Perry Avenue, Tampa, FL 33603-5345.(813) 229-2695. E-mail: francnr@tampabay.rr.com.

**Seven Day Directed Retreat. June 20-26, 2005. Monday-Sunday.** Directors to be announced. An individually-directed retreat provides time for prayer, silence, and solitude. Daily meetings with the director focus on the individual's experience of God and prayer, as well as discerning the movement of the Spirit in one's life. At the St. Francis Center for Renewal, Bethlehem, PA. For information, contact the office at 610-867-8890 or email: peace@enter.net.

**Directed Retreat. June 26-July 3, 2005. Sunday-Sunday.** With Sr. Carol Czyzewski, FSSJ, Dr. Carolyn Nickerson, and Fr. Bernie Tickerhoof, TOR. This individually-directed retreat offers time for solitude, prayer, and spiritual guidance. Each retreatant meets with a spiritual director once each day to discuss their experience of God and prayer. The Eucharist will be celebrated daily. For information, contact the Franciscan Spirit and Life Center, 3605 McRoberts Rd., Pittsburgh, PA; 412-885-7247 or email FSLCCOM@aol.com.

**Directed Retreat. July 31-August 6, 2005. Sunday-Saturday.** With Fr. Rod Damico, Sr. Yvonne Fischer and Sr. Paulette Schroeder. At St. Francis Spirituality Center, Tiffin, OH. Registration requested by July 10th. For information, contact: 419-443-1485 or email: retreats@stfrancisspiritualitycenter.org.

**Workshop/Retreat. August 11-14, 2005. Thursday-Sunday. Journeying Into the Early Documents of Francis of Assisi.** Marla Lang, FSPA and Corrina Thomas, FSPA. Addresses the context of Franciscanism today which continues to be influenced by the interaction of Eastern and Western philosophies. At The Portiuncula Center for Prayer, Frankfort, IL. For information, contact Mary Ann Hamilton at 815-464-3880 or Corinna Thomas at 815-469-4883; or email: portc4p@aol.com.

## Abbreviations

### Writings of Saint Francis

Adm	The Admonitions
BIL	A Blessing for Brother Leo
Ctc	The Canticle of the Creatures
CtExh	The Canticle of Exhortation
1Frg	Fragments of Worchester Manuscript
2Frg	Fragments of Thomas of Celano
3Frg	Fragments of Hugh of Digne
LtAnt	A Letter to Br. Anthony of Padua
1LtCl	First Letter to the Clergy (Earlier Edition)
2LtCl	Second Letter to the Clergy (Later Edition)
1LtCus	The First Letter to the Custodians
2LtCus	The Second Letter to the Custodians
1LtF	The First Letter to the Faithful
2LtF	The Second Letter to the Faithful
LtL	A Letter to Brother Leo
LtMin	A Letter to a Minister
LtOrd	A Letter to the Entire Order
LtR	A Letter to the Rulers of the People
ExhP	Exhortation o the Praise of God
PrOF	A Prayer Inspired by the Our Father
PrsG	The Praises of God
OP	The Office of the Passion
PrCr	The Prayer before the Crucifix
ER	The Earlier Rule ( <i>Regula non bullata</i> )
LR	The Later Rule ( <i>Regula bullata</i> )
RH	A Rule for Hermitages
SalBVM	A Salutation of the Blessed Virgin Mary
SalV	A Salutation of Virtues
Test	The Testament
TPJ	True and Perfect Joy

### Writings of Saint Clare

1LAg	First Letter to Agnes of Prague
2LAg	Second Letter to Agnes of Prague
3LAg	Third Letter to Agnes of Prague
4LAg	Fourth Letter to Agnes of Prague
LEr	Letter to Ermentrude of Bruges
RCl	Rule of Clare
TestCl	Testament of Clare
BCL	Blessing of Clare

### Franciscan Sources

1C	The Life of Saint Francis by Thomas of Celano
2C	The Remembrance of the Desire of a Soul
3C	The Treatise on the Miracles by Thomas of Celano
LCh	The Legend for Use in the Choir
Off	The Divine Office of St. Francis by Julian of Speyer
LJS	The Life of St.Francis by Julian of Speyer
VL	The Versified Life of St. Francis by Henri d'Avranches
1-3JT	The Praises by Jacopone da Todi
DCom	The Divine Comedy by Dante Alighieri
TL	Tree of Life by Ubertino da Casale
1MP	The Mirror of Perfection, Smaller Version
2MP	The Mirror of Perfection, Larger Version
HTrb	The History of the Seven Tribulations by Angelo of Clareno
ScEx	The Sacred Exchange between St. Francis and Lady Poverty
AP	The Anonymous of Perugia
L3C	The Legend of the Three Companions
AC	The Assisi Compilation
1-4Srm	The Sermons of Bonaventure
LMj	The Major Legend by Bonaventure
LMn	The Minor Legend by Bonaventure
BPr	The Book of Praises by Bernard of Besse
ABF	The Deeds of St. Francis and His Companions
LFl	The Little Flowers of Saint Francis
KnSF	The Knowing of Saint Francis
ChrTE	The Chronicle of Thomas of Eccleston
ChrJG	The Chronicle of Jordan of Giano