



The Franciscan Times

A QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER HELPING MEMBERS OF
THE THIRD ORDER OF THE SOCIETY OF ST. FRANCIS SHARE
THEIR COMMON JOURNEY THROUGH NEWS FROM
FELLOWSHIPS AND INDIVIDUALS, REVIEWS OF BOOKS AND
TAPES, POETRY, STORIES, ESSAYS, REFLECTIONS,
MEDITATIONS, GRAPHICS, AND WHATEVER THE HOLY SPIRIT
MIGHT BLOW OUR WAY.

Fall 1998

To Be a Third Order Franciscan

by Lucy Pierce (50 years a tertiary)

I'll start with some background.

I was born in 1924, and grew up in Gambier, Ohio, home of Kenyon College and Bexley Seminary where my father taught. I went to high school at Margaret Hall in Versailles, Kentucky, run by the Sisters of St. Helena, and to college during World War II at Western Reserve in Cleveland. I met my husband, Nicholas Pierce who went to Nashotah, and after his ordination moved with him and our children to Staten Island, then to Ferrell, PA, then back to Staten Island, then to Milton, Massachusetts, Pekin, Illinois, and finally to Peoria, Illinois where we have lived since 1965. In one of these places or another seven children joined our travels.

When we moved to Illinois, I began teaching 1st grade and ended up teaching high school special education classes. Nick worked at Keystone Steel Company and did supply work at parishes around the diocese. I retired in 1989, and Nick a few years later although he still does supply work occasionally.

My husband was the first one interested in the Third Order, but we started off together in it. He later became a Priest Associate of the Holy Cross, but I stayed on in the Third Order I think by the tenacity of the Holy Spirit. I knew that I wanted some framework to carry me through life, to keep me from ever getting lost, to keep me in the Faith. As I look back over the years, I'm somewhat amazed that I'm still here.

I've never had much contact with other Franciscans. In the early days, under the American Order of St. Francis, I reported to the First Order Priests. It was a numerical sort of report—how many times omitted grace before, after meal, morning, evening prayers, meditation, etc. [Ed. See page 17 of the Spring issue of the Times for a sample of this form.]

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by Claire Linzel (30 years a tertiary)

I was living and working in New York City in the 1950s when vocation to God's service became an issue. My Spiritual Director clearly stated that I had two choices: I could marry—or I could apply to the convent. Since God blessed me with several opportunities to explore religious orders, I was able to gain some perspective, and, since my vocation did not seem to be within a convent, and I recognized that I should remain in the world, I applied to the Third Order. It seemed that this provided far more discipline and training than being an associate with any religious order, and that the specific aims were clear and were to be lived out within the culture.

The TSSF solid training in Christian faith, theology, history and church polity, as well as consistent exposure to spiritual classics and contemporary readings, established a wonderful foundation. The system of regular reporting on how I was living out the Rule gave me structure and accountability. All of this promoted growth in Christian spirituality and intentionality in knowledge, love, and service to our Lord. Living the Rule within our culture may seem radical, but it has always seemed challenging and it "fits."

TSSF supports my journey in Christ with St. Francis that is both inward and outward. The precepts of our Rule regarding prayer, study, and work facilitate ongoing Christian formation. Our individual personalities, gifts, and specific calling help establish our particular lifestyle. Wherever we are led by the Holy Spirit we are supported and encouraged by our Fellowship; we are guided by prayer and the help of a Spiritual Director, and we are graced by God to participate in His mission for the Church. I've always experienced great freedom to live fully and explore

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50 Years a Franciscan by Lucy Pierce (cont.)

The reply contained a penance and counsel. I still have a few of the letters that were especially helpful. I don't remember much about the change from OSF to SSF, but I knew enough about the English Franciscans to welcome the change and to be glad to be part of a worldwide Order.

I once went to a retreat once conducted by Father Joseph, and I knew Fr. Vivian Peterson who helped the First Order get started. One of the Sisters of St. Helena, who I knew at school, was in the early Cincinnati Third Order group. I also knew Fr. Baxter Liebler who worked with the Native Americans in Utah, and the peripatetic bishop, Br. John Charles.

Most of the time I have been an isolated tertiary busy with children, or with teaching school. There were times I kept a minimum rule not very well, and hoped that some day I would do better.

I have received a great deal from TSSF and other tertiaries, and from OSF and SSF. I am grateful to have lived for so many years as part of the world-wide and ages-old Franciscan Order.

It's hard to look back over 50 years and come up with anything special. There's too much—the ups and downs, the good, the bad, the ugly, and the mountain-top beautiful. The rather surprising thing is that it really is always a journey. There is never a feeling of having arrived. I always feel that I know a bit more now than I did before.

At the moment, I am impressed with the literalness of St. Francis: the way he seemed to take every reading, every occasion in simple concrete terms. This is what it says; this is what it means. That's a great way, it seems to me, to look at psalms, lessons, and prayers. I stop and look closely at phrase in a collect. I try to look at gospel readings without a life-time of familiarity. I stop and really immerse myself in an idea such as "in whom we live and move and have our being." Peter said that Jesus walked on water—there wasn't a sandbar. The water didn't suddenly freeze. That's what it says. That's what it means.

There are some common sense rules to go with literalness: not taking things, for example, out of context, and being aware of cultural and linguistic analysis, that's for another time. Right now, I'm just trying to take a fresh, close look at old truths. It's a simple idea, and that's about where I am at the moment.

(Lucy's words are from a series of e-mail interviews with the editor.)

And The Location of the Provincial Convocation in 2002 Is...

Chapter voted on our Convocation site for 2002. After considering six different offerings, ranging from Salem Massachusetts, Brockville, Ontario, Rollins College in Florida, Notre Dame, Indiana, and the Rocky Mountain YMCA, they voted to hold the convocation at La Casa de Maria in Santa Barbara. Chris Boesch, TSSF, works at La Casa as a conference coordinator, and this is some of what she wrote concerning the site. (You can also find a Web page with pictures to see more for yourself: <http://www.rain.org/~casadema>.)

The site of the original center was a Franciscan way-station before the mission was built in what is now Santa Barbara. One of our own, Barbara Kelly, a professed member of the Third Order, was honored by having La Casa's Sadako Peace Garden dedicated to her and her husband, Frank. Barbara's ashes were scattered there when she died in 1995.

The original site sleeps 160 and a newly acquired center 3.5 miles away accommodates 135. Two handicapped equipped rooms are available at the original retreat center with the newest center eventually developing such facilities.

There are air connections from Los Angeles Airport about an hour away and perhaps some arrangements could be made with the airlines to include the cost of the shuttle in a reasonable fare. There is also a train station and a bus depot from which carpooling could be coordinated to take people to La Casa.

There are ample liturgical and meeting spaces at both locations with the newest site having the largest meeting rooms should 200 people need to congregate in one place. Both have food services that routinely prepare for various dietary needs/preferences. There are hiking trails and swimming pools at both sites, with the original site also having a single tennis court, half-court basketball, volleyball and ping pong. There is no exercise room at either place. The bias is toward retreat so "tourism" or using the centers as a hotel is discouraged. This certainly does not preclude an afternoon and/or evening away to enjoy the many attractions of Santa Barbara. The nearest Episcopal Church to La Casa is All Saints by the Sea, and Br. Tom, SSF, has a sister who works there.

I would like to thank all Fellowships and individuals who put together all the other convocation site bids—we had a wonderful choice of lovely locations!

30 Years a Franciscan by Claire Linzel (cont.) many interests, while maintaining Franciscan focus in diverse activities. Presently, God has called me into four areas: serving as Deacon in my parish, functioning as a facilitator in our Bishop's New School for Ministry, handling TSSF work as an Assistant Formation Director, and working for a Christian counseling agency as a therapist.

I feel deeply concerned when I hear of life-professed tertiaries who are disconnected from the Order—"out of touch" and not participating with their resources of time, energy, finances, gifts, and witness to the TSSF community. We are all impoverished and saddened by their absence. I hope that our larger community can find effective ways to address this issue and reconcile this situation.

The Reverend Robert Joseph Goode, Jr., Died October 1, 1998—Chaplain of the Third Order, 1971-1985 (a.k.a. Gooch)

(From the Diocesan office of the Diocese of Quincy)

Fr. Robert J. Goode, former Vicar of St. Paul's Church, Warsaw, IL, died on October 1, 1998 at Memorial Hospital in Springfield IL after a short illness. Fr. Goode was born in Hyannis, MA on December 10, 1933, to Robert J. Goode, Sr., and Maxine Eleanor Hinckley Goode. Both parents died in 1993. He is survived by a sister, Mrs. Ruth Gifford of Walleston, MA, and two nephews.

Fr. Goode received a B.S. in Education from Bridgewater State College in 1960 and M.Div. from Nashotah House Seminary in 1966. He was ordained to the Diaconate in May 1966 by Bp. William H. Brady, Bishop of Fond du Lac (Wisconsin), and to the Priesthood by Bp. Brady in March 1967.

Upon graduation from Seminary, Fr. Goode was a novice in the Society of St. Francis, and then returned to Wisconsin to serve as Curate of St. Andrew's Church in Milwaukee (1968) and then as vicar of St. Bartholomew's Church in Pewaukee WI from 1968 until 1973. From 1973 until 1981 Fr. Goode served as Rector of St. James Church in Goshen, IN. From 1981 until 1985 he served as Vicar of St. Mary's of the Snows in Eagle River, WI. From 1985 until 1995 he was Rector of St. Mark's Church in Honolulu HI. In 1976 he served in a parish exchange at the Parish in Hollingbourne in Kent, England. In 1997 he became Vicar of St. Paul's in Warsaw IL.

Fr. Goode was noted as a Spiritual Director and Confessor, and from 1971-1985 served as Chaplain for the Third Order of the Society of St. Francis, American Province. He also served in a variety of Diocesan positions including chair of the Liturgical Commission for the Diocese of Hawaii, and Dean of the East Honolulu Deanery.

The family requests that memorials be sent in lieu of flowers to St. Paul's Episcopal Church, 240 South Fourth St., Warsaw IL 62379. Sympathy Cards can be sent to Mrs. Ruth Gifford, 69 Kemper St., Walleston MA 02170.

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T S S F B A S I C S

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Memories of Gooch

From Masud I. Syedullah

I remember Gooch as a person who naturally exhibited qualities of humility and joy. He was my immediate predecessor as Provincial Chaplain for the Third Order. One of the things I remember most about him was the way he responded to me being selected to be the next Chaplain. I was greatly moved when, after Chapter ratified the Provincial Minister's nomination that I be Chaplain, he began right away to plan an induction service. It was marvelous! Not only was the rite constructed well, eloquently expressing the duties and responsibilities of the Chaplain, but also Gooch's joy permeated the event. It was as if he were handing over, not only the symbols of office, but a part of himself, as well— as a personal gift. He embodied for me, in those acts, the Franciscan ideal of egalitarian relationships. It was from him that I discovered much of what it means to humbly serve and, when the time comes, to joyfully celebrate and support the gifts and ministry of those who follow — to cheer them on.

From Robert Durand

My own input from Hawaii regarding Gooch comes from our time together here in Hawaii (1989-1996), when he retired and moved back to the mainland. He was a compassionate and beloved priest of the Anglo-Catholic tradition in his parish (St. Mary's, Honolulu) here with an effective outreach ministry for people with AIDS. He was also regarded an outstanding teacher in the Diocesan Study Program for Anglo-Catholic Church history and liturgy. He was the Chaplain for Franciscans in the Pacific and led a number of retreats.

May his soul rest in peace. Aloha.

From David Burgdorf

Alas, I am not the one to give you Gooch stories, however I have often plagiarized some material that was passed along to me from a retreat he gave, in which he talked about saints and sanctity by describing various people you might run across, knowing something about them- but under the surface was this or that virtue—a long-suffering or kindness or gentleness unlike anything that was ever shown to them. It was their "ordinary life," the supernatural that had become for them natural, etc. Of course his images were vivid. Oh yes. One thing was that he acquired a bit of a legend at LP, whenever he rotated into the cook job. There was always an assistant cook, lucky guy, who got to clean up after the cook and put the meal out. EVERYONE dreaded being assistant to Gooch, because he had a reputation for using every single pot/pan

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whenever the creative challenge of cooking came his way. Of course, everyone was heroically kind and, as with all friars, bathed in Seraphic light.

1999 Convocation Information Thus Far

- **Southeast:** 9/10-12, Ignatius House (Atlanta GA). Contact Michael Shrewsbury (San Damiano Fellowship)
- **Western:** 8/13-14, The Angela Center (Santa Rosa CA). Contact Davis Fell.
- **Midwestern:** 8/7-9, Divine Word International (Teckny IL). Contact James Janiec.
- **Nebraska/Wyoming:** 7/15-18, Hastings NE Contact Betty Wood.
- **South Central:** 5/14-16 St. Crispin's, Wewoka OK Contact Sue Heinsohn.
- **Northeastern:** 8/27-9, Graymoor Friary (Garrison NY). Contact Stephen Smith.
- **Trinidad/Tobago:** 4/30-5/2. **Guyana:** ?. Contact Gloria Waldron on both of these.
- **Southwest:** 5/14-16 Canossian Spirituality Center (Albuquerque NM) Contact Becky Thompson.
- **Order of Ecumenical Franciscans:** 7/8-11 Palatine Renewal Center, St. Louis MO. Contact Fred Ball.

Are You In An Order or A Pious Fellow Traveler?: An AngFran-L Discussion

A question that has been on my mind for a while has to do with the elements that make a TSSF Fellowship healthy and strong.

Peace, The Rev. Gerald Sevick

Gerry, I'm not sure if you're asking what it means for a Fellowship to be healthy and strong (the attributes) or what we would do and say that would produce those attributes... or both. Either way, it's a good question.

Fellowships vary greatly in size and in geographical coverage; some tertiaries live hundreds of miles from their nearest TSSF neighbor. For example, the Chi Rho Fellowship covers the city of Chicago. My own Heart of Texas Fellowship covers Central Texas, with some members coming down from North Texas. The Brother Wind fellowship to the north covers the states of Oklahoma, Kansas and Missouri; and the Little Sparrow Fellowship covers the entire eastern half of Canada. *The Provincial Statutes* simply say

"Where 3 brothers and [sic] sisters of the Order live in reasonable proximity, they may constitute a Fellowship ..."

The Fellowships have no formal role in governing the Order, but they are seen as an integral part of the ongoing formation process of all tertiaries, and Chapter does use the Fellowship network as one channel of two-way communication. Each Fellowship has a Convener (some have co-Conveners) who makes regular reports on Fellowship activities and well-being to the Minister Provincial of the Order. There is also at least one Fellowship Coordinator for the Order, appointed by the Minister Provincial, who works with Fellowship Conveners and serves on Chapter, the governing body of the Order.

The Provincial Statutes also say,

"The tertiaries should take every opportunity and make every effort to meet together for worship, study and fellowship, because such common activity expresses their life as an Order, rather than individuals living under rule."

What counts as "taking every opportunity" and "making every effort" is left to the judgment of the tertiary. Some will drive for eight hours to get to a three hour meeting; others wouldn't bother to go to a meeting if it were next door. Most of us fall somewhere in between. At the root of this behavior is the question of what it means to be an Order, which is why *The*

Statutes explicitly point out the distinction between an Order and a group of isolated individuals who happen to be living under the same rule (or at least living under part of it).

The Statutes recognizes that TSSF is a diverse, dispersed Order, and that some tertiaries are unavoidably geographically isolated. Others find it difficult to attend meetings because of their age, health, or lack of transportation. Hence, *The Statutes* also say,

"Other occasional meetings of tertiaries should be encouraged where there is no regular Fellowship."

I take that to mean, among other things, that we who are mobile have a responsibility to go out of our way to stay in contact with tertiaries who are not. One major purpose of AngFran-L is to provide one means whereby unavoidably isolated tertiaries can have regular contact with other members of the Order. However, as Bob Kramish recently pointed out so well, AngFran-L is not a TSSF list, and it cannot directly substitute for a TSSF Fellowship. One thing the Order might want to consider is establishing a TSSF "Cyber-Fellowship" designed to be the default fellowship for those who are unavoidably isolated. Its goals, organization and activities would be different from those of a list like AngFran-L, although there would be some overlap. I was instrumental in starting such a "Cyber-Chapter" for a national professional organization, and it is a model that can work.

Unavoidable isolation is a nagging problem the Order will always have; but there are things we can do to ameliorate it. Much more disturbing to me is the problem of the tertiary who is isolated by choice. Probably the most common conversation at any meeting of tertiaries is the one that goes like this:

Tertiary: "Have you heard from So-and-so [a tertiary who should be at the meeting]?"

Convener: "No, I keep sending them letters and leaving messages on their answering machine and sending them email, but they haven't responded."

In my opinion, based on my current understanding of *The Statutes* and what it means to be an Order, this always is a problem, not a normal situation that should be left alone indefinitely. It may be a problem of understanding or commitment on the part of the tertiary; it may be that the person is suffering from some sort of serious personal or spiritual problem that nobody has heard about; and/or it may be a larger problem with dysfunction in the life of the Fellowship which is leading people to avoid meetings or drop out of sight. Whatever the case, it should be a trigger for action by someone —perhaps the Fellowship, the Order, individual tertiaries, but someone.

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TSSF Community (cont.)

Of all the things that periodically scandalize me about the Third Order, this is the greatest: that some tertiaries are allowed, de facto if not de jure, to drop out of sight indefinitely. That this happens with no sense of alarm on the part of many tertiaries renders meaningless for me words like "Order," "Rule," "vocation," "community," "formation," "brother," "sister," and others that are fundamental to who we are and what we're doing here. When these words become meaningless or trivial, I lose my anchor to Franciscan reality and struggle with why I am part of the Third Order at all.

As I quoted above, the *American Province Provincial Statutes* do include explicit statements about being in community, but I wonder if it's enough. *The Statutes* are officially part of the Rule, but I suspect that the "average" tertiary has about as much mastery of *The Statutes* as the "average" Anglican has of canon law. *The Statutes* are sort of the "Leviticus" of the Rule, consisting mostly of necessary but hardly riveting material about the structure and governance of the Order. I would conjecture that most tertiaries see them once during formation and don't look at them again unless they become directly involved in governance. Is the last chapter of "Leviticus" the best place to put crucial material about what it means to be an Order?

By contrast, every tertiary who is keeping the Rule, reads and meditates on *The Principles* twelve times a year, a little each day. Yet one looks in vain for anything in *The Principles* about the tertiary's responsibilities to the Franciscan Community. It's possible to rigorously live out *The Principles* and never see or talk to another Franciscan, and some apparently do. I speculate that this gap in *The Principles* is there not by design but because they were developed by Christa Seva Sangha, a group of Franciscans in India who were living not only in community but in a commune. I.e., daily, shoulder-to-shoulder contact with other Franciscans was assumed. If anyone has information to the contrary, please correct me. In this sense, *The Principles* are well-suited to the conventual First Order, but less so to the necessarily dispersed Third Order.

Lest I be misunderstood, let me say emphatically that I am NOT arguing that there is no place in Franciscan life for periods of withdrawal from the larger community. Even in Jesus and Francis's lives we see alternating periods of engagement and withdrawal, the impulse toward public involvement and the impulse toward eremitical life. But eremitical life is just about the exact opposite of unilaterally dropping out of sight for an indefinite period of time. In most orders, when a member of the order feels called to a period of withdrawal from the active life of the community, that

person withdraws only with the blessing and, yes, permission of the community.

Typically there is some period of discernment leading up to the withdrawal, and that discernment is carried out in the context of the community. The community then sends that person out with mutual understanding about the nature and duration of the withdrawal, and in any case the person remains an active part of the community in spirit, if not in body. The hermit does not become inactive and disconnected, but active and connected in a different way. This way of doing things strengthens both the hermit and the community.

In my view, letting people just unilaterally drop out of sight hurts everyone directly involved and weakens the Order as a whole. Perhaps we as an Order do not make this natural Franciscan oscillation between communal and eremitical expressions of commitment explicit enough. Perhaps we should have explicit recognition of these two states in *The Statutes* and spell out procedures for moving from one state to the other. Perhaps we should have common rituals for sending someone out of our Fellowships for a period of time and welcoming them back in when their "eremitical time" is up. Are we missing a major piece of Franciscan formation and the ongoing community structures that would support it?

Fraternally,

John Snyder

Bro. Hereticus offers these thoughts concerning fellowships, their problems, and their successes. The emphasis on fellowships is relatively new in the Third Order. I don't know how long the idea has been fostered in the Order. Many of those who have long been members of the T.O. were more or less isolated members, or at least not living near to other tertiaries. Some of these have been in this "isolation" a long time, and, of course, being Anglican, have found it difficult to break with "traditions." Others have embraced the idea with great enthusiasm.

Probably one of the key questions that has been asked is simply "Why be a part of a fellowship?" Not having lived in anything close to the community ideals of an order, it may be difficult for some to see the value. The operative word is community.

Just what is a community? What does it mean to you? What are your responsibilities to the community in which you live? What kind of responsibilities would be expected of one to live in a religious community, even

if that community only gathers periodically? Responsibilities? To many, the response might be, "Why in the world do I need to take on more responsibilities?"

I think John S.'s note touches on many of the facets of how our communities operate. I would encourage the community to first adopt some ground rules—just like you probably have at home. Maybe the basic rule is the agreement of all the members to disagree. As can be seen on this list, there are many opinions and many of them are quite different. Some are from the many religious heritages of those involved. We have some who are "cradle Episcopalians" while others come from the Roman tradition, or Orthodox, or more fundamentalist Protestant bodies. Indeed, many are still members of such groups. We each see things from a different perspective.

The fellowship is no different. Sharp differences of opinion can occur. The important thing is not to go to war to convert others to your position. The important thing is to communicate those differences so everyone will know how everyone feels. If there is disagreement, it's okay—as long as each person RESPECTS the ideas, beliefs, feelings, etc. of others. If you drive each other away, it is very difficult to come to consensus or just the acceptance of the other person's right to their beliefs.

Of course, underlying this has to be a basic foundation of LOVE for one another. To visit when a member is sick. To go out of the way to do something for the benefit of another. To give up a "sacred cow," or at least the argument over it, for the good of the group. To discuss rather than argue. To seek to forgive rather than seek to be forgiven, (Sound familiar?).

As in all families, there will be trials and tribulations from time to time. But the secret is in how they are handled.

The fellowship should try to have a meal together and, in doing so, let everyone share something about their life, their walk on the Franciscan path, some act of

ministry, or maybe even seek the counsel of others in how to handle a problem. Of course, time should be taken to share in the joys each has in their life.

It takes time to build community. It takes time for trust to develop. Any of you that have ever attended a support group know that it takes a long time for some to gain enough trust to share - especially the hard stuff of life.

If you are spread out, move your meetings around so that no one person has to be the one who always has to travel the greater distance.

And as John said, it doesn't mean a person cannot have some time in the Wilderness. There are times all of us need to retreat from the greater body to seek out our Maker and enjoy the fellowship of God—one on one. It makes it all the sweeter when they return to the community to share the experience.

But our strength is felt most when we are together. I think of a story which, at least in one tradition, is attributed to one of the Wesleys. He was visiting a member of his flock who rarely, if ever, attended church. He asked the man why he didn't attend. The man responded that he could worship God just as well alone as he could in a church full of people. Wesley took a tong and pulled a hot coal away from the fire in the man's fireplace. He said nothing, but just watched the coal which slowly cooled. Apart from the other coals, it lost its heat. The coals actually drew heat from each other.

Finally the man looked up and said, "I see what you mean. I will see you in church Sunday."

Well, these are just a few thoughts that came to mind. Maybe they will help.

In Christ and Francis

I send you my love.

Bro. Hereticus

John Tolbert

CONVOCATION NOTES ATTENTION CONVENERS:

The Franciscan Times will reach interested and/or isolated tertiaries in your region (and elsewhere) who might make plans to attend your gathering. Advance notice and a name of a person to contact will be helpful to them. Please send the details. to:

R. John Brockmann TSSF,

P.O. Box 277, Warwick, MD 21912-0277.

Deadline for the Winter issue is January 15, 1999

1998 Chapter Discussions on Community, Rule, Vow, and Lapsed Member Status

by John Brockmann

The AngFran-L discussion thread in May 1998 reprinted on the previous three pages was entirely serendipitous, but many of the same topics were extensively discussed at Chapter this year. One problem with working on the idea of "community" was that an essential little section was left out of the Rule and Principles, our daily readings, when the new edition came out, and the deleted section had to do with spelling out the difference between "vow" and "pledge" and explaining the role of the Order in the vows of an individual.

In the old Rule and Principles was this section:

The terms vow and pledge which appear in the Order for Admissions at Profession are interpreted as follows: a Tertiary's vow is made to serve God in a particular calling. At the same time, a pledge is made to the Order to keep the Rule of Life which gives effect to the vow.

In the Third Order, the vow is made with a lifelong intention, whereas the pledge is made and renewed for a year at a time. The effect of this is two-fold. First, it allows the Order to respect the life-long intention, and to permit the vow, but to give it effect only one year at a time, so that it is possible for a Tertiary to take on and fulfill a life-long dedication provided he or she renews regularly.

Secondly, and on the other hand, if anyone fails to renew, or if the Order thinks it right not to accept the renewal for any reason, though the Tertiary would thereby cease to be a member of the Order, he or she would not be burdened by the life-long obligation of the vow. Since under this arrangement it requires the repeated action of two parties to maintain the vow, if one is missing, the vow lapses. The purpose of a lifelong vow is thus secured, and both the Third Order and the individual member are protected. However, there is a moral duty for a member under a vow made with a life-long intention to renew the pledge annually, unless he or she is convinced it is against God's will to do so.

Based upon this understanding of vow and pledge, Chapter revisited the listing of "lapsed" members in the Directory and came to the conclusion that in the Third Order "lapsed" has no meaning. At times it may be appropriate for a professed member of the Order to ask the Chaplain of the Order for a sabbatical from the Rule from for a specific length of time to recoup and regain direction. Just as John Snyder noted "In most orders, when a member of the order feels called to a

period of withdrawal from the active life of the community, that person withdraws only with the blessing and, yes, permission of the community." That has been and is the understanding in our Third Order. The Chaplain of the Order is available by letter, phone, or e-mail to discuss limited sabbaticals—his name and address are listed in the masthead of this issue.

But either someone is in community and in the Order, or is not in community and not in the Order. Area Chaplains and the Chaplain of the Order will make every effort to write or phone those few lapsed members in the current directory to get clarification from them as to their intentions. Thus the next Directory will not list "lapsed" members, this designation will not be used in the future, and the *Provincial Statutes* have been amended accordingly.

Chapter also came to the conclusion after much discussion that the three marks of a professed member of the Third Order are:

- yearly renewal of vows,
- annual report on living the Rule made to the Area Chaplain or someone else designated in the Order,
- yearly financial pledge.

The renewal of vows can be done in the Fellowships or at Convocations. The annual report on living the Rule can be done in writing, with a form, or orally to the Area Chaplains. And, the financial pledge can be of any amount, but everyone does need to pledge to support the existence of the Order. This year at Chapter, the Bursar's and the Chaplain's reports indicated that only 40% of the professed members of the Order in the American Province made pledges last year and made an annual report. We all must make renewed efforts to ensure that we "live community" and not just pass each other as isolated, pious, fellow travelers.

Nightlight by Emmett Jarrett, TSSF

As the tortoise
withdraws its limbs—
first the right front
foot, then the left,
next the left rear
foot, then the right—
its unsupported shell
rocking gently on the ground—
looks all around
beady eyes unclosing,
then goes inside:

So the contemplative turns on the light
with open eyes embraces and sits
the desert she has always inside the circle.
lived in,

For Our Soul's Health: A Perspective On The Sacrament of Reconciliation

Masud I. Syedullah

[Editor's Note. At the most recent Chapter there was some discussion regarding the expectation of the Order that each member receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation twice during the year—ostensibly during our preparations for Easter and Christmas. Father Masud Syedullah's explanation in Chapter made a lot of sense to me, and I wanted to share it with everyone else.]

I think it is true that for most of us, as we experience the sacraments over time, we discover new layers of meaning in them for us. That's one of the reasons why they are so powerful. They are not stagnant. Their meaning and ability to address and to transform our lives is inexhaustible. We discover the healing, restorative Presence of Christ through them continually, sometimes in unexpected ways.

Earlier in my spiritual journey I viewed and used The Sacrament of Reconciliation (Private Confession) as something to engage when I "really needed it." That is to say, when I thought that I had done something (or had not done something) that I considered a major sin. Since I was not robbing banks, murdering, raping, and pillaging, it was hard for me to understand the need to "go to confession" for what I considered trivial infractions. Over time, however, I've come to understand something else about that sacrament and my life in the Spirit. I am learning to experience it as a means to help me to "increase in the gifts of faith, hope, and charity" (Collect for Proper 25, BCP p.235).

The process of preparing to make my confession has become one of preparing to give account of "big," or for that matter, "little" sins, but rather, one of considering how I regularly miss the mark of expressing the Life and Presence of Christ through my life. In other words, I ask such questions as: do I really trust God in all matters of my life? Where do I doubt or mistrust God's ability and will to respond to my needs and those around me (faith)? Do I live my life with an attitude of joyful expectation that something good is going to happen because of God's Presence and action in the world? What experiences or situations hinder my attitude to joyful anticipation of life (hope)? When people experience me, do they experience the open, compassionate heart of Christ? Or, do they experience something less than that—insensitivity, self-centeredness? When? How? (charity)

These are the areas, more subtle ones, that can destroy a spiritual life. Most of us are not notorious in our failure to express Christian character. As my mother

would say, "it's the little foxes that destroy the vine."

It is both an exercise in humility and an experience of love and healing. As we are faithful to confess our less than trusting, hopeful, compassionate attitudes and behaviors, God is merciful to assist us, through a human "agent" towards more complete expressions of God's nature. We acknowledge to ourself, to another human being, and to God that we are less than what we want to be. But we do so, trusting in God's goodness to continue the creative work of goodness within us. Both the process of preparing for, and the experience of receiving understanding and acceptance (love) through a fellow traveler, is often just what our souls need.

Notorious sin? Well, from time to time that may be the case. But more often it may be just for the good of our soul's health.

17th Century Nun's Prayer

LORD, Thou knowest better than I know myself that I am growing older and will someday be old.

Keep me from the fatal habit of thinking I must say something on every subject and on every occasion.

Release me from craving to straighten out everybody's affairs. Make me thoughtful, but not moody; helpful but not bossy.

With my vast store of wisdom, it seems a pity not to use it all, but Thou knowest Lord that I want a few friends at the end.

Keep my mind free from the recital of endless details; give me wings to get to the point.

Seal my lips on my aches and pains. They are increasing, and love of rehearsing them is becoming sweeter as the years go by. I dare not ask for grace enough to enjoy the tales of others' pains, but help me to endure them with patience.

I dare not ask for improved memory, but for a growing humility and a less cock-sure-ness when my memory seems to clash with the memories of others. Teach me the glorious lesson that occasionally I may be mistaken.

Keep me reasonably sweet; I do not want to be a Saint—some of them are so hard to live with—but a sour old person is one of the crowning works of the devil.

Give me the ability to see good things in unexpected places, and talents in unexpected people. And, give me, O Lord, the grace to tell them so.

AMEN

Sent in via AngFran-L from Judy Douglas

Book Reviews

Desire by Brother Tom Carey
New York: Painted Leaf Press, 1997—75 pages, \$12.00

Many of us have met Br. Tom at convocations, most recently at the 1998 Southeastern Convocation where he led an insightful discussion of the IPTOC diversity document noting that in nature, "Diversity simply is!" Many of us have prayed for this brother of ten years as we pray for all the First Order Brothers and Sisters. However, his new collection of poetry from 1986 to 1996 invites us all to meet the urban diversity where he lives in Brooklyn from his own unique poetic eye.

Original Sin.

There is an object
in my future,
sailing towards me
through time,
our coordinates etched
in the mind of the world.
My list is pregnant with danger:
"meet Linda" "snow boots."
Yesterday my middle digit
met the razored lid
of the cat food can. I know
something was laughing.
So much happens
without incident, yet
the world knows
its malevolence.
Accident crouches
between a tree and a bush,
his pockets lined
with bags of oil, mouth
filled with carpet nails.
I remember my cousin's finger
between the blades
of his lawn mower,
and the man strangling
on the electric window-glass
of his Thunderbird.
The union of object
and hasty intention,
a *danse macabre*
of mind and matter.
Japanese mystics are right:
Don't move.
I was at the hospital
waiting for sutures
when I cracked my head
on a low-slung beam,
an architectural nicety constructed
more than thirty years ago,
waiting for me.

Holding Your Prayers in Your Hands: Praying the Anglican Rosary (1997) —67 pages, \$13.95 postage and shipping & *Praying The Way of the Cross with the Anglican Rosary* (1998)—19 pages. Denton, TX: Open Hands (e-mail bkseibt@iglobal.net) (The first is already in the TSSF Library.) Kristin Elliott and Betty Seibt

The Anglican Rosary was developed, as Kris and Betty write, as a meditation tool by a group of Episcopalians who wanted to create a new tool rather than amend the traditional Roman Catholic rosary. It is slightly smaller with 33 large and small beads and a cross based on four groups of seven beads emphasizing four weeks. Based upon this concept of four weeks, the book is broken up into four parts:

Week 1: The Ladder of Prayer (petition, intercession, oblation, penitence, thanksgiving, praise, and adoration);

Week 2: Prayers for the Christian Life;

Week 3: Prayers for the Family; and

Week 4: Prayers for the Liturgical Year.

(If you don't have an Anglican rosary, they recommend contacting an Episcopal hermit nun in Texas who makes these rosaries—Solitaries of DeKoven, Bishop Jones Center, PO Box 6885, San Antonio, Texas 78209.)

Kris and Betty create a number of their own prayers here, drawing from Francis and Clare as well as Julian of Norwich, Scripture, and the *Book of Common Prayer*. For example, there is the following "Prayer of Dedication" taken from some of St. Clare's words:

*Help me to hold what you have given me,
to do what you ask of me,
to move with swift pace, light step and unswerving feet
stirring up no dust,
to go forward securely, joyfully, and prayerfully,
to believe nothing or agree with nothing that leads me away
from you,
to seek ye first.
I will proclaim the goodness of your name.
Amen.*

There is a good explanation of how to physically pray the rosary as well as tips on effective contemplative attitudes to use with the rosary.

In the *Way of the Cross*, they have adopted material from the *Book of Occasional Services*, and kept the entire service and prayer experience simple and meditative, and very effective for both individuals and groups.

Reviews wanted on *The Lessons of St. Francis* by John Michael Talbot and Steve Rabey, Plume Penguin, 1998, \$11.95; *The Perfect Joy of St. Francis* (a novel) by Felix Timmermans, Ignatius Press, \$12.95.

A Franciscan Anacrostic Puzzle

John R. Synder

Notes from a Peripatetic Convocation Visitor

by John Brockmann

I was lucky this Summer and Fall to represent Chapter at two different convocations, the Midwest in Chicago at the Divine Word Center in Techny, Illinois and the Southeastern in Atlanta, Georgia at Ignatius House, as well as at my own convocation here in the Northeast at Graymoor—what interesting contrasts! *Keep in mind that all of us are invited to attend any convocation we would like to, and that doing so allows us to meet a whole new group of tertiaries and experience their version of a convocation.*

In all three there was plenty of prayer and fellowship and worship with many people renewing their vows or making their professions. The **Midwest Convocation** was rather small drawing primarily from the Chicago Fellowship, and thus had the feel of more of an intimate meeting with people who had long known each other—it was also nice to see two visitors come up from Tennessee. Rhonda Baker talked about her visit to Israel which was underwritten by the Jewish League and which gave her an opportunity to hear from Likud Knesset members as well as peace-movement Israelis and members of the PLO peace delegation. The high points for me were two “puppet shows” performed by Br. Jon Bankert—Creation and Noah—as responses to the Gospel in two of the Eucharists.

Another interesting aspect of this meeting was to catch up with Hattie Irish and hear of her stories about the new all-Spanish-speaking fellowship that is slowly being put together in Santo Dominigo. A picture of this fellowship is included below: *left to right—The Rev. Robert Carlson, visiting US priest; Hattie Irish, Elsa Monica Silvestre; The Rev. Manuel Rodriguez, Francisco Leroy Irish, and Ramon Ubiera.*

Four additional members of Los Franciscanos are not in the picture, but they have all been meeting monthly since October 1997, and most never miss a meeting! Elsa Silvestre, on vacation as a teacher from Santo Dominigo, accompanied Hattie to the meeting, and told us of writing their rules and spiritual autobiographies.

Los Franciscanos and their Spanish language needs are being addressed by the Order with the translation of half the formation letters done. Abbreviated editions of *The Principles* and the *Devotional Companion* have been previously done. At Chapter a Formation Director for Spanish Speakers, The Rev. Roy Mellish of Louisiana, was also appointed. One way we could all help this new fellowship, Hattie mentioned, is by donations of Spanish books on Franciscanism and spirituality. (Contact Hattie at her new Nevada address for further information: c/o St. Jude's Ranch for Children, PO 60100, Boulder City, Nevada 89006-0100.)

As usual, **Graymoor** had about 50 folks in attendance from Maine to Toronto, Boston to Washington DC. The pilgrimage theme was explored in various methods of prayer as well as two wonderful talks, one given in the beginning by one of the Roman Catholic Franciscan brothers resident at Graymoor, and responded to by Father Gary Parker, TSSF Chaplain to the U.S. Marines who guard embassies around the world. His words about meeting God in the valleys and dark places rather than only on the hilltops and mountain peaks was a lovely way to end the weekend. A special order of the Eucharist at which Admissions and Renewals took place was written by The Rev. Rick Bellows and is currently being considered by a subcommittee of Chapter for distribution throughout the Province.

In **Atlanta**, I was so pleased to finally met some of the legends of the Order I had heard of for so long, Kale King and Paddy Kennington, as well as new members who are very involved in AngFran-L, The Revds Emmett Jarett—whose poetry appears elsewhere in this issue—and Harry Coverston. This Convocation attempted to have both an initial quiet retreat with meditations as well as later general presentations and fellowship meetings. Brother Tom Carey was there to talk about the reality of diversity, and a lovely celebration of the Transitus using a “readers’ theatre” approach was created by Jacqui Belcher. It was also quite interesting to experience the cross-fellowship that went on at this convocation; there was a member of the Roman Catholic Secular Franciscans who participated as did three Associates of the Society of St. Francis whose ideas and concerns are also elsewhere in this issue.

If you have the opportunity to visit a convocation other than your own, I heartily recommend it.

Los Franciscanos in Santo Dominigo

The Third Order & Franciscans International at the United Nations

Franciscans International, a Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) at the United Nations has General Consultative Status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council. (The Anglican Communion also has a representative to the UN whose office has the same NGO status.)

Franciscans International is

- a network of the Franciscan Family (trans-denominational) collaborating on world issues,
- a forum for the poor to have a voice at the United Nations,
- a place where the Franciscan Family and the 185 UN representatives of the member states, the UN civil servants and other NGOs can share the heritage of Saints Francis and Clare for peace, and
- a clearinghouse of UN information on global concerns vital to the Franciscan Family in its global mission in the world.

Through collaboration, education, and action, the mission of Franciscans International is: care of creation, peacemaking, and concern for the poor.

As an Order, Chapter 1998 voted to contribute \$300 dollars to Franciscans International. It winds up, however, that it is more advantageous for FI in UN NGO reckoning if individuals rather than groups contribute and join, and thus all Chapter members voted to join Franciscans International as members.

If you would like to find out more or join, you can write to Franciscans International at 345 47th Street, 2nd Floor, New York, New York 10017-2392. Fifteen dollars is the nominal membership offering.

Living Stones, European Province's York Chapter 1999

The American Province has been invited to attend the European Province's York Chapter, July 2-4, 1999. The Chapter's theme is "Knit together in community and prayer—open and ready to include all people" (the IPTOC focus). They have created 24 different seminars, discussion sections, and workshops for the weekend. The keynote address will be given by Bishop Holloway. The cost of the weekend is £110 due by Easter 1999. For further information as well as reservations contact Garth Kellett, 2 Westville Avenue, Ilkley, W. Yorks LS29 9AH, England.

Sweat Equity

Paddy Kennington (Georgia Fellowship July 1998 Newsletter)

Having lived all my life in Georgia, and a goodly portion of it in south Georgia, I am more than familiar with sweat. Shhh. (sweat) IT was not mentioned in polite company by proper little girls. After all, women perspire. They don't sweat. At least this is what we were told. I knew better. Everybody sweats in summer in the Georgia heat, and this has been reality before and after the advent of the BIG AC!

Forty years later, I am still sweating. Politely, of course. In a four day period this June, 1998, I along with my husband, three cats, and several friends, moved our mountain of junk, stuff, books, and furniture from Madison Heights, Michigan, to Marietta, Georgia, and from Savannah, Georgia, to Marietta. The cats only participated in the Michigan to Georgia run and their best effort was to sleep most of the twelve-hour drive. For the Savannah haul, we inadvertently chose the hottest day of the year so far, 99 degrees with a heat index of 105 degrees. Even after bottles and bottles of replenishing spring water, soda, and Gatorade, I can unequivocally say that we all sweat. Most of the time, we looked as if we had just emerged from a nearby swimming pool. Feeling warm?

This is all by way of introducing what anyone familiar with Habitat for Humanity knows as sweat equity. Families who are to receive a house with a no-interest loan are expected to help build their house and other houses for so many pre-determined hours of carpentry, painting, or even serving as builders' helpers. Hence the terms, sweat, as in physical labor, and equity, meaning investing in one's home. The requirement is that recipients participate in building houses for people who could otherwise not afford their own home.

I believe that sweat equity is both an apt metaphor and good descriptor for the concept of community for Third Order. You must be wondering how I got from sweating in south Georgia to Third Order community. I know these may seem to be unrelated topics but stay with me please.

As I reflect on 1990's headlines, it seems to me that much of the violence that surrounds us, road rage, random shootings at schools, hunger and poverty, is part of a push-pull phenomena of isolation, alienation, economic insecurity, and just plain inability to take another's perspective, all intertwined, each causing and being caused by the other. I sense that we are not "invested" in each other. Values such as loyalty, sacrifice for another, and that old stand-by, going the extra mile, are not only not a priority but are subjects of

(continued on page 14)

TSSF Library Update

Rosie McFerran, Third Order Librarian,
(excerpted from her Chapter Report)

I am happy to report that the TSSF library circulated 112 books, audio and video tapes this year which is an increase over the 86 circulated last year. The library list is on the TSSF website, and there are book discussions on AngFran-L which I monitor for new purchase suggestions and on which I announce new library acquisitions.

Of the 112 items circulated, 42% dealt with Francis, Clare, or Franciscanism and 42% were audio and video tapes. Apparently Tertiaries are just as busy as everyone else and try to make best possible use of their time. The library has acquired such new books and tapes this year as: Elliott and Seibt's *Holding Your Prayers in Your Hands* and Yvonne Willie's *The Boy Who Didn't Want to Be Black*. Occasionally TSSF authors have donated a copy of their books to the TSSF Library, and I would like to encourage more of them to do so. It seems important to me to have books by our members in the Library, as well as books purchased for them.

Other new books in the library include:

- Peta Dunstan, *This Poor Sort: A History of the European Province of the Society of Saint Francis*
- William Hugo, *Studying the Life of Francis of Assisi: A Beginner's Workbook*
- Paul Marshall Allen, *Francis of Assisi's Canticle of the Creatures: A Modern Spiritual Path*
- Duane Elgin, *Voluntary Simplicity: Toward a Way of Life That is Outwardly Simple, Inwardly Rich*

Sweat Equity (cont.)

derision and skepticism. Of course, this is a blatant generality and as such, is merely opinion with only my observations and experience to validate what I am writing.

Community in general, and Third Order community in particular, means an investment of patience and commitment to other community members and to the wider social community. Caring about the other requires loyalty and going the extra mile. These are nice words, but transforming them into action is where sweat equity is required. To commit to another is to agree to sweat, to physically and psychologically work to understand their perspective and to communicate acceptance IN THE FACE OF polar opposite disagreements. It takes sweaty, wringing wet work to stay in community with someone whose presence reminds you of fingernails scraped across a chalkboard. An investment of self is necessary to think of the other when they cut you out of the exit lane in 5 o'clock rush-hour traffic. And loyalty means getting in touch with old and new friends more than the Christmas catch-up newsletter about new children, grandchildren, and retirement.

You have built up equity in the human race and must sweat to "build more houses," when you follow Francis of Assisi. Teens shooting teens on city streets or schoolyards are a warning bell clanging in the night, a reflection of how we adults distance ourselves and are often unwilling to invest ourselves in each other. Community is sweating together and celebrating our history, our equity, together. And even more, community translates into bringing God-with-us to each other.

And Now A Word About the Associates of the Society of Saint Francis

Sister Jean (Secretary of the Associates) in her Chapter report noted that there are about 100 Associates of whom 35 are inquirers and 16 are new members. A new introductory brochure, admission form, intercession leaflet, and a Franciscan Feasts booklet were all created this year, and all Third Order Conveners received copies of the introductory brochure as well as a list of Associates' names and addresses so that local Associates can be contacted and invited to Fellowship meetings and Convocations. Sister Jean will also be visiting Trinidad, Tobago, Jamaica, and Barbados to promote the Associates in 1999. [TSSF Chapter voted to underwrite a small portion of Sister Jean's expenses.]

When I attended the Southeastern Convocation in Atlanta I was able to meet with three Associates who attended—Gayle, Sara, and John. They observed that they felt a real sense of connectedness to the charism of the Franciscan Order, and that they met with both Roman Catholic and Anglican Franciscan groups. These three felt that the Associates, in not calling for the whole nine yards of Third Order Rule and formality, better fit their lifestyle limitations and the work they all seemed to do with those on the fringes of society. The three also seemed to like how the Associates encouraged them to work on the "spiritual shadowside" of their busy work lives in such areas as journaling and meditation.

Thoughts From Chapter 1998 on What the Third Order Means

Unconditional love and acceptance from others with similar commitments to mine of seeking and serving Christ in all people (within the boundaries of Franciscan and Anglican spirituality) is what is unique about the Third Order and the “pearl of great price.”

God’s grace for me and others. Humanity’s interconnectedness.

Mutual support in all aspects of life— especially in ministry and in trying to live the gospel life.

All the marks of a Christian spiritual community— a rule; shared prayer; well wrought liturgies; a strenuous formation process; shared stories; spiritual friendship; heroic pioneers like Francis and Clare.

Shared, continuing struggle and surprising moments of grace in living in this world while also living in intimacy with God.

The gift of living by a Rule of Life. The joy of God and being His child; the fellowship of each other; the service to each other. The Franciscan vision of Peace and Good.

The Third Order community is being drawn

closer to God through prayer, study, and fellowship. Accepting others as God’s children and therefore as brothers and sisters regardless of color, class, or creed.

The Third Order which holds up for me the example of Francis. Francis shows me how humility reveals dignity.

The teachings of the Third Order help me grow in simplicity, humility, patience, and love together with sharing and caring.

The Third Order represents a blend of things that Francis inspired - contemplative prayer with a charismatic flair; periods of quiet counter-balanced with periods of active ministry; evangelical; liturgical; simple and uncomplicated; Christ-centered.

Member of Chapter, Left to Right:

Anita Catron (Minister Provincial); Sister Pamela Clare and Brother Robert Hugh (First Order Visitors); David Burgdorf (Chaplain), Masud Syedullah, Ken Norian (Bursar), Caroline Benjamin (Newly Elected Secretary to the Order), Joan Verret, (Fellowship Coordinator); John Brockmann (Newsletter Editor), Gloria Waldron (Caribbean Formation Director), Muriel Adey (newly elected member of Chapter), Julia Bergstrom (Assistant Chaplain); Fred Ball (Minister General, Order of Ecumenical Franciscans), Jacqueline Richards, Dee Dobson, Carol Tookey (Formation Director); John Tolbert (newly elected member of Chapter)

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Coming Next Issue

Please send in your contributions on the following topics as soon as you can!

- TSSFers Look at *The Apostle*, A Movie
 - ANGFRAN-L On-line Discussions/Musings on
(a) Following Jesus and Following Francis; (b)
Franciscans and Benedictines
- Anything else that lands in our nets!