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FROM THE GUARDIAN

On the commemoration of St. Francis receiving the Stigmata, September 17th, I find myself reflecting upon that event, and the meetings of September 15th of the Standing Committee and the Trustees. As so often, business meetings seem to be necessary evils and discussions about scheduling, audits, even drafts of provincial statutes, are far from the spirituality and joy we share in the inspiring example of Francis in response to the Good News of Jesus. While it is not a usual image in our thinking about Francis, obviously there was much time spent by him in meetings - it could not have been otherwise, with the enormous growth of the little brothers and sisters and the hundreds of people who sought after him. The fact that his followers and closest associates often out-voted him in matters of just what should be in the rule, and what style friars would follow did not cause him to go off in a pique, or refuse to continue to participate in deliberations. "He who is great among you, let him be your servant."

Therefore, not only in the great conquests of fear and self-doubt that Francis overcame with joy for love of simplicity and humility, but in his presence amidst the adversities of living with his brethren, can we understand the mystery of the Stigmata.

By November 6th, the Standing Committee had met twice; and much thought has already gone into the draft Provincial Statutes, prepared so thoughtfully by Bro. Warren Tanghe which you are now receiving. By our next meeting, January 12th, we would like to adopt them; so please make your comments as soon as possible, and send them to me.

We would like to meet the following timetable: January - adoption of Statutes; February - tertiaries to nominate brothers and sisters for the seven Chapter members and the Guardian; April - hold elections; and October - first meeting of Chapter, under the new interprovincial Constitution and American Provincial Statutes. We will have achieved a structure that will make possible the Third Order's conduct of its life and affairs, in which there will be maximum input by each tertiary.

I give thanks for the growth of our numbers, but more especially, the deepening of our commitments and the freedom of service in the style of Francis. I give thanks, too, for the coming alive in fellowship of our brethren in the several countries of Africa and formation of the new Third Order Province of Africa, even though the friars are still within the English Province.

(The Rev.) John M. Scott
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In Tanzania, Africa at the Friary, there was a feeling of having settled down and of home, with a lawn in front of the house, a garden with vegetables and citrus trees, and even a small hermitage. The new chapel was in the process of construction.

In Dar, they had experienced a wonderful healing mission; and Br. Geoffrey conducted a retreat for clergy and diocesan workers, and found interest in the Third Order. At the Fiwila Friary, there was much discussion about the hospital work, and future organization. They are in urgent need of trained nurses, who might feel called to do a term there. Perhaps the most exciting thing was news of several aspirants who want to join the Franciscan family.

"The Third Order in Africa is becoming a Province, and I have been asked to be the Guardian for the time being. Because of the immense distances, the political divisions and also differences of language, we will have to organise it on a Regional basis; so that Tanzania, Zambia, Rhodesia, and South Africa will each have their own officers and Chapters, and it will be my business to coordinate them and advise them. But again, we want them to manage their own affairs and develop on lines suitable to Africa."

In Rhodesia, there were encouraging signs of growth. In South Africa, there are great difficulties, but what joyous loving Christians they are, and so full of Franciscan spirit.

Br. Geoffrey said his time in England "began with a very anxious time for Michael, the Provincial Minister. He had been asked to become General Secretary of the U.S.P.G. which was a great honor, and he and all of us had an agonising time as we tried together to discover God's will for him. In the end, he decided to remain as Provincial Minister, and turned down the U.S.P.G. invitation." Br. Geoffrey enjoyed taking part in the Alnmouth Festival for the first time; and said it was also good to see that Harold's life at the hermitage is developing so well, and to know that John-Baptist from America **is to join** him later on.

The Inter-Provincial Third Order Chapter went splendidly. Some may question whether it is right to spend so much money on these meetings. "Personally, I cannot see how we are going to maintain any real family relationship or understanding, and know each other, or remain a community, unless we do in fact meet from time to time, face to face, and that these meetings take place in different Provinces, so that those of us to whom is entrusted the care of the Society know the people." It is important that we use money aright, but people are much more important and valuable than money, and must not be valued by how much it costs.

The success and problems of the English Province seem to center round its rapid growth in numbers. Michael with his Secretary Godfrey and John Charles and Angelo, who is assisting at the Church, have moved into the flat at St. Paul's, Knightsbridge, in London; and this is to be the headquarters which will make a much more central and accessible base from which to operate in England.

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"In America, I had a good talk with Bishop Paul Moore, Bishop of New York. You will be glad to know that he has very generously agreed to become the Protector of the Society of St. Francis, in addition to being Protector of the American Province. It is an immense joy and privilege to have him to guide us as Protector, and I know we will all be praying for him, in his heavy responsibilities as Bishop of New York.

May God keep us in eternal life. With my love and prayers, "Geoffrey, SSF "

FELLOWSHIPS

In New England, a fall get-together of Franciscan Tertiaries, Associates and friends of SSF, was scheduled October 13th at the home of Mrs. Whitney Hale in Marlboro, New Hampshire.

The Philadelphia Fellowship had meetings in August and November, including book discussion as well as general visiting, discussion, and prayer.

The San Bernardino Fellowship has been meeting regularly, with much enthusiasm.

The New Umbrian Fellowship, of San Francisco, reported the appointment of Guy Littman as Treasurer, Joy LaValle as assistant secretary, Br. Bede as secretary, and Don Carlson as Convenor. However, Don asked to be replaced in October because of an over-crowded schedule; and it was decided that the duties of Convenor would be divided so that George Gray would serve from December 1973 to June 1974, and MaryAnn Marchesi from June to December 1974. Monthly meetings are held at San Damiano Friary. Other events were - a painting party at the Bishop's Ranch, and a retreat for Tertiaries and Associates. Br. Philip is working on plans for a joint retreat of the First and Third Orders early in 1974.

Other Fellowships, attention ---we'd like to hear from you, too, a little about what you are doing and planning. (An easy way is to include Helen Webb on your mailing list.)

STANDING COMMITTEE

On September 15, 1973, the Standing Committee met, following a meeting of the Trustees of the Corporation. Newly elected officers of the Corporation were Hendrik Koning - President, and Morris Hulsizer - Secretary. Income for 1973 appears to be adequate to meet the budget. It was suggested that support for the Trinidad project be included in the 1974 budget, and that information about the budget be publicized in 1974.

Our supply of Manuals is very low; but because of proposed changes, it was decided not to print any more at this time. The possibility of a retreat was discussed, but with no definite plans. The next General Chapter, to be called a Convocation, was suggested for late April 1975 in the Chicago area. Warren Tanghe presented a draft of Provincial Statutes. They are to be studied, and discussed at the next meeting.

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Standing Committee, continued

At the November 6th meeting of the Standing Committee, the proposed Statutes were discussed, and will be circulated to Third Order members for their suggestions. The method of electing Chapter members and the Guardian was suggested to be by nominations in February, vote in May, and 3-year terms beginning in June. It is also suggested that tertiaries renew their profession each year on or near the Feast of St. Francis.

Br. Geoffrey, SSF, attended the meeting and presented his completed draft of Principles. We are also awaiting a draft of the Statement of Intent by Br. Michael, SSF. It is hoped that we can send copies of both these drafts to our membership. Br. Geoffrey pointed out the remarkable progress of the Third Order in Africa; and suggested we start work on revising our forms of profession, admission, etc. as part of our revised manual. A tentative budget for 1974 was worked out, to be mailed to everyone after the first of the year, with a request for support. The Guardian is to contact Little Portion Friary, requesting a date for a spring tertiary retreat.

NOTES

If you are interested in attending the proposed retreat at Little Portion, please write to Mrs. Edward Webb, 4008 Buckingham Road, Baltimore, Md. 21207.

Have you made your contribution to the Third Order for 1973? If not, it would be helpful at this time. Mail it to the Third Order of St. Francis, Little Portion, Box 8, Mt. Sinai, New York 11766.

As you may know, Peter Funk is rewriting his letters to postulants and novices. Extra sets are available of the first six, if you would like one. Write to Mrs. Edward Webb.

Elected to profession were: Judith Layo, and Robert and Ruth Manson. Also elected to profession were: Jean Sullivan and Margaret Hoffman. Those who became novices in September were: Deane Kennedy, John Walker, and Billy Hoover. Those in November were Lorne Montgomery, Kent Tarpley and Stephen Farlow. (We hope for news about women novices for the next Newsletter.) Added to the list of postulants was: William Graham, Jr., of 7411 Medrick Place, Philadelphia, PA 19153. Rick Lobs was released from vows. Miss Margaret Juny died September 7, 1973. Jack Castleman writes, "Miss Juny was a good servant of the Church and a loyal tertiary. Please, out of your charity, pray for the repose of her soul."

LETTERS (Excerpts)

From the Rev. Wenonah B. McGhee. "I wrote you right after the dedication of our lovely little Church of St. Francis-in-the-Valley on St. Francis Day, Oct. 4 last year. At that time, I told you our Vicar was very ill, and he died a month later without ever having seen the church he worked so hard for. Now we have a wonderful priest, Fr. Sydney Cowlin. I'm sure

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Letters, continued (from the Rev. Wenonah McGhee)

the Holy Spirit guided us in selecting him from among many applicants, for he is just the right person for us. I was under the delusion that I might sit back and take things easier when we got a Rector (We attained full parish status in February, 6 years from our beginning as a mission), but not so! Since we have a second service on Sundays now, at which I take my turn at assisting, and I also assist at Wed. A.M. Eucharist, and All Saints Day and high holy day celebrations, I'm spending more rather than less time! But so thankful that I am able to do it. Living situation here has changed so drastically since FHA sold its holdings -- the rents have gone up three times in the past year... so I am combining forces with a friend, and our rent will be a little less than our present combined rents, and a much more pleasant and stable situation." (8/16/73)

From Mrs. J. E. (Rebecca) Parkin (9/5/73) "I'll be in Oxford (England) till early September next year. There are some thirty members of the Third Order in the Oxford area. Mr. Funk put me in touch with the English T.O. Secretary, Dorothy Burlingham, who in turn alerted the Oxford convener. I was invited to their area meeting and met some very fine people, four of whom live close by. For any American members of the S.S.F. visiting Oxford to whom I can be helpful, my Oxford phone is ... (see next note) (9/15/73) I do want to let you know that by the time this reaches you, I shall have moved to the following address: Hewell Barn, Common Road, Beckley, Oxon, England (telephone: Stanton St. John 207). The "barn" is actually a cottage, converted from an old stone barn, with a little garden in the very small and very quiet village of Beckley, which is just on the outskirts of Oxford. With the housing shortage what it is in England, I felt lucky to have got even a small flat on noisy Banbury Road; but a dream cottage in the quiet countryside near Oxford was unexpected good fortune. The T.O. group in and near Oxford is observing St. Francis with a house Eucharist followed by supper. It's an active, good-sized group, and I feel lucky to be part of it during my sabbatical year here."

From the Rev. Canon Kale King (from some time ago, but still a brief look at conditions as he found them) 22 May 1973, Monrovia, Liberia, West Africa. He speaks of "natural differences and complications created by a nation of over a million, of a number of tribes and dialects, with the leadership predominantly from the 300 thousand or so who trace their ancestry to the United States. Though 125 years old, it is an 'emerging nation'. If ever there was a place to exhibit Franciscan Christianity, it is here. The Italy of the 13th century is evident. Affluence surrounded by poverty. No real Liberian middle-class. Foreign domination of commerce. Unemployment is rampant; wages and salaries low. People heavily dependent on others for work, for food and lodging. Vagrancy, 'voluntary' and 'involuntary', at every crossroad. Begging is a way of life, to the extent one finds himself 'protecting' himself by avoiding or ignoring people because everyone seems to be 'putting the touch on' someone for something - money, a favor, a ride, whatever. If I had it to give, I could hand out at least \$10 a day. And how to judge what's best to do? At times, one's suspicion is that the 'dole' is so ingrained that no one knows differently, be he country boy, city beggar or governmental figure. It's maddening and frustrating and disheartening, because no one seems to care; it's a shrug of the shoulders and 'What to do?'"

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31 August 1973. "Just before Transfiguration Day, Bishop Browne's third consecration anniversary, he took his clergy to Bolahun, the former OHC mission in Northwest Liberia, for a retreat led by Fr. Lee Stevens, OHC, and instructions in the practice of Holy Penance. I came 'down from the Mount' thoroughly grateful for the experience. For the moment, we're visiting Amory's parents, and the children have begun school (in North Carolina). Shalom - Pax - Paz - Wodewodi-Khotso. Peace. "

Matagami. Jump-off point for James Bay Power Project - Anno Domini 1973
(by the Rev. Hugo Muller)

Move over, Indian,
You are primitive, backward and uncivilized
You have committed the unpardonable sin:

You have left your land as it was
in all its untamed beauty,
you have not developed it.

You had your chance

-what did you people ever contribute to this country,
-what did you make of it, huh?

Now we will take over:

for we are civilized and technologically sophisticated
and progress and development can't be stopped

-imagine, you do not even have words for these terms...!

We are coming:

and we shall strangle the rivers,
and we are going to choke the creeks

and we shall slash the trees

and burn the slash,

and we shall drown the land

and we will kill the game

and rip the rocks apart with explosives

and carve our initials on the land:

in roads and railways and hydro lines,

-kill, baby, kill,

burn, baby, burn,

flood, baby, flood

for we are civilized and you are backward!

But wasn't it the Lord Who planted a Garden

and it was the son of Cain, his brother's murderer

who built the city, right?

The cities we want to build

with ghettos and inner-city problems and traffic congestion

and wandering suburbs laid out in neat monotony

where men play golf on weekends

and wives are always bored

with drug addicts and crime and violence

and poverty screaming in hideous dissonance with police sirens

where one cannot walk alone at night

for we are civilized.