



The Franciscan Times

A 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. •

Summer 2008

Report on Brazil Trip March 2008

Bill Breedlove and Anita Catron

Fellowship Training

We had an exceptional experience in Sao Paulo to do training with Christina Winnischofer who is undertaking the role of Assistant Fellowship Coordinator in Brazil. At Chapter Dessordi Leite and Christina were selected to do that task, but when Dessordi moved to San Francisco earlier this year to work on an M.Div degree at CDSF, it fell to Christina. She understands the tasks and, above all, knows almost everyone in the Brazilian Church (IEAB) since she was the Provincial Secretary under the last Primate, the Rt Rev Orlando Oliveira who, is also our Deputy Bishop Protector for Brazil. Therefore, she is also well-known by all, so contacting members will be easy for her.

Christina's task, as approved by Marla Asson, is to contact all the fellowship conveners to update our list of members, their status, addresses, telephone and cell phone numbers and listen to what members say that they need. It will be a project of several months since she also is studying for a Masters degree in Brazil.

Meeting Fellowship Members

In Campinas (State of Sao Paulo) we were delighted to learn that there is a growing fellowship. Sergio



*Dom Celso's
Street Eucharistic
ministry (rt) Rosana
Pacheco (Campinas)
and Abimael
Rodrigues (Santa
Maria/Rio) (lt)*

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Pacheco, the AFD for Brazil, not only is doing the AFD task but also growing his fellowship. There are about 9 members. We were pleased to meet 2 postulants, a husband and wife team, who told us their stories and why they thought TSSF was a good fit for them. They were very enthusiastic. We shared our stories as well. Others of the Campinas group are postulants and still others are professed. They meet for fellowship the second Sunday of the month.

In Porto Alegre (State of Rio Grande do Sul) we had the express privilege of professing Christina and Juliano Cavedon. Two others renewed their novice vows (Ana Lucia Machado and Paulo Bassotto) while Andrea Machado who would also have renewed was unable to get to the location due to a driving rainstorm and a babysitting situation. Marinez Bassotto is a postulant and wishes to continue as such for a while longer. Bill, however, encouraged her to take the plunge, after reviewing her credentials and interest. Dessordi, also part of this fellowship, was in San Francisco and will consider his profession request in due time. The spirit in this fellowship was certainly moving. They meet twice a month, do their studies and even have some form of spiritual direction, done by Dom Orlando.

The meeting in Rio was a special meeting



since they meet for fellowship generally on a different time of the month. The meeting we attended was mainly to introduce us and them, and get ready for the profession, novicings and reception of a postulant. We were happy that the members were able to give us some missing information, as Questionnaires, which both Bill and I consider important in the formation process. This piece gives us some crucial information about a person's history, both spiritual and biographical. Some other pieces are missing still, so we will work with folks there to facilitate that. The meeting included a delightful Brazilian meal—feijoada, the national dish akin to a stew.

The next event that day took place at Dom Celso's street Eucharistic ministry, a 20-minute walk through the city. Helpers wheeled the makeshift altar, speakers, etc. through the streets. As night approached, the Eucharist began. Within that framework we did the profession of Dom Celso, the novicings of Luciene (the bishop's wife), Erlei and Marcos (a former RC friar). There was even music and a choir. As the night wore on, I began to wonder why I didn't bring a flashlight with me to facilitate reading the service words! But we managed. Aline was received as a postulant. After the service proper we served sandwiches and local fruit juices to the street people. I had the privilege of helping and I must say it impacted me greatly. Then we dispersed and went "home" to the "Pink Hotel". Sergio and Rosana, who had come to be with us, stayed in the Cathedral's guest quarters across the street.

While I wouldn't consider our meeting in Curitiba (State of Parana) to be a fellowship meeting, there is one professed member there—Carmen Etel Gomes. Since she had never received her profession cross, Bill blessed one and presented it to her. She was very touched. We didn't know we were going to Curitiba until the day before we went! We were fortunate that the Rev Magda, not a Franciscan but a diocesan friend, gave us the go ahead. I have wanted to go there for a long time to meet Dom Naudal the Bishop, as I had heard he and his wife were sympathetic to San Francis' ministry. It was all delightful! We went to a "ponte missionario", smaller than a mission church, but with lots of spirit, where Magda goes twice a month—dusty roads and all—to do services. Then the bishop organized an impromptu gathering so we could get to know one another. I will be requesting funds for a new Franciscan Aid grant for a small project in this Diocese having to do with a bakery.

Sao Paulo has no fellowship at this time. Sao Paulo was the city where we went to the Easter Eucharist. The service in Portuguese also had some Japanese as part of it. That day the two congregations—Portuguese



(Above) Bill B, Anita, Cezar Alves, SSF (Sao Paulo)



(Rt.) Christina Winnischofer (on right) and Marinez Bassotto (Porto Alegre)



(Lt.) Erlei Salazar (Rio)

(Below) Ana Lucia Machado, Juliano Cavedon, Christina Winnischofer, Bill B (Porto Alegre)



Fellow Professions, Praising, a Bra



(Lt.) *Julio Angelo*
Panyagua (Rio)
 (Below) *Luciene Pobil*



(Above) (lf) *Marcos Nascimento (Rio)*, (rt) *Sergio Pacheco (Campinas)*, (Below) *Bishop Naudal, Anita C, Bill B, Carmen Gomes (Curitiba)*



Friendship,
 Preaching,
 and Fun in
 Brazil

and Japanese—merged so we were treated to some Japanese alleluias. After the service lunch was served in the parish hall. We again had an opportunity to interact with the Sao Paulo group. The Rev Cezar Alves is both the rector of Sao Joao Church as well as a First Order member of SSF.

PR and Bishops

On past trips we have been able to meet with the Primate (Dom Orlando at the time) to thank him for his help. This time the current Primate, Dom Mauricio, was not in Porto Alegre, the seat of the Provincial Church, as all the bishops were to meet at the House of Bishops the following week in Curitiba. This time it was not possible to meet with Dom Jubal, novice from Santa Maria, or Dom Filadelfo, suffragan from Recife and TSSF member, because the latter had just been elected to succeed Dom Celso in Rio, starting in June. Considering the fact that Brazil is as large as the US or larger, we didn't attempt to go to Belem, a city near the Amazon River where Bishop Saulo is. Although he is no longer a Franciscan, we consider it important to keep us the contacts, as we do with other Brazilians who dropped out. I keep in touch with most Brazilians we all know by email, sometimes by Skype.

We paid a visit to the General Secretary of the Episcopal Church in Brazil Province, the Rev Canon Francisco de Assis. (Despite his name, he belongs to another Order, but is quite in tune with Franciscans). We spoke about, and apologized for, some of the misunderstanding of the prior year and agreed to go forward with our joint work. We also got updated on a Franciscan Aid project that I sponsored on the production of cooking and salad oil from the cultivation of nuts by native Brazilians. The FA money acted as seed money and the project was also subsidized by several other entities.

We had a special tour of the Seminary on the grounds of the Provincial Church complex by Mrs. Oliveira; met a former bishop who is now the Dean of the Seminary (Dom Luis Prado); and some members who were doing a financial audit. The Provincial Bookstore is located there as well as some guest lodging. The offices of the Meridional Diocese, of which Dom Orlando is bishop, is also located on the grounds.

It was a very fulfilling trip to get to know members better and to see how we could serve them better. Everywhere we went we were introduced kindly as "the Franciscans." People were happy to know us, and, of course, we felt the same. Bill and I feel that those members with specific TSSF responsibilities are very capable and in due time will lay the groundwork for greater

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Minister's Musings

Ken Norian

Now in my early 50s, I am at somewhat of a crossroads in my life. I wouldn't call it a mid life crisis... crisis is too strong a word – one that implies distress or disordered function. But, I am going through a period of change as I haven't experienced since I graduated from college.

For the past few decades, I've seen myself as a "young man" and a daddy to my children. Looking in the mirror the other day, I realize that I'm a bald middle age man with a gray beard. While I'll always be a father to my children (and maintain a close relationship with them) I'll never be their "daddy" again. We think of ourselves in various ways. For some, we define ourselves by what we do for employment – we're a priest, a nurse, a doctor, a social worker, etc. We may think of ourselves as parents, partners in a relationship, grandparents or a host of other relationships.

Hopefully, one of the identities that we have is as a Christian, perhaps Anglican/Episcopalian and.... Franciscan.

Over the past 10 or so years, I've seen one of my parents die; my best friend since childhood was killed in an accident; I've been divorced and remarried; my kids are now all taller than I am, and one of them is half a world away who I only see for a couple of weeks a year; my job situation has changed dramatically, my financial situation has changed and the church I attended for many years closed. These are just a few of the significant things that have caused me to be in the midst of this time of mid-life "crisis". So, what does all of this have to do with my Minister's Musings and, more specifically, to you...?



I've come to realize over the past few months that my "identity", the way I see myself is a Tertiary – a secular Franciscan in a community with my sisters and brothers. It has been nearly 25 years since I began this

journey. So much has changed, but this life as a Tertiary has been a remarkably stabilizing and consistent aspect in my life. The Offices, Community Obedience, my Rule, fellowship with brothers and sisters continue to reach into the deepest core of my being. Those of you who are in formation have such a rich spiritual path to look forward to. Those of you who are professed know that our formation never really ends.

As I sit here this evening, I am so grateful for our community of sisters and brothers in Christ and Francis. I encourage you all to persevere... and to rejoice in the little and big ways that God continues to bless us as individuals and as a community.

Ah, yes, back to my mid life crisis. No new cars or anything too crazy. I've lost 30 pounds with another 5 to go and... at 51 years old I am sporting a new tattoo with a Tau cross and dove of the Holy Spirit on it!!!

Calling All Photographers

Barb Chandler

Photographs either can be simple or profound, but most of all pleasing to the eye. They should cause one to stop and reflect on their faith and sense of spirituality. —Description of the group Franciscan Spirituality

If you have a digital camera, and believe photography is one of the ways you express your spirituality, we would like you to consider joining our computer-based group. Before you can post any of your photographs to *Franciscan Spirituality* you must be a member of a free web site called flickr. You can take a tour of flickr by going to <http://flickr.com/about/>

If you decide to join, *Franciscan Spirituality* is at <http://www.flickr.com/groups/saintfrancis/>

We look forward to your joining us.

The Community of St. Francis now has its revised edition of the CSF Office Book available.

The suggested donation is \$60 (which includes postage). If you are interested or would like more information, please contact us at csfsfo@aol.com or 415-824-0288 or St. Francis House, 3743 Cesar Chavez St., San Francisco CA 94110.

St. Anthony's Bookstore at the Provincial Convocation

St. Anthony's Bookstore was a great success at the Provincial Convocation and fortunately for those of us who could not attend the convocation we still have an opportunity to purchase some of the items that were ordered exclusively for the store. The T-shirts, mugs, mouse pads and pens have the "Dancing Francis" design and the tote bag has Francis and the whale designed for the convocation by Sister Pamela Clare.



Order Form: Please mail with payment to Ann Harris, TSSF, 3681 E. Curtis Drive, Sacramento, CA 95818

Item	Size/Color	Price	Quantity	Total
T-Shirts	M Grey/Burgundy	10.00		
	L	10.00		
	XL	10.00		
	XXL	12.00		
	XXXL	12.00		
Mouse pad	Teal	3.00		
	Blue	3.00		
Mug	Green (recycled currency)	4.00		
	Grey (recycled phone book)	4.00		
	Blue (recycled denim)	4.00		
Tote Bag	Blue - St. Francis and the whale	4.00		
Pen	Recycled paper barrel	1.00		
Shipping: Orders up to \$14.00 please add \$2.00 Orders \$14.00 to \$40.00 please add \$5.00 Orders over \$40.00 or overseas please contact Ann Harris for shipping costs.			Shipping Total	

Sea Bricks and St. Francis

Sea bricks are small pieces of brick that have been tumbled smooth by the waves and washed ashore. The bricks were once used as ballast in old sailing ships. David Gillette collects them and had some of these small pieces of brick available for everyone at the provincial convocation. This is the description that David wrote after listening to Brother Wayne and Brother Bill's presentation on the early documents of Francis:

I know that I look at the world from a different point of view than most, but I love St. Francis and started thinking about sea bricks. I figure that any bricks that I find local must be at least 200 years old. Then I realized that they have a history that started long before mine and would go on long after me. Then as I was listening to the Brothers it dawned on me that Francis has a history longer than the sea brick and with our help will have one that continues long after we have passed. I have collected some sea bricks so that any who would like may have one.

If you would like your own sea brick please contact David and Judith Gillette for shipping costs.

Report on Brazil Trip March 2008 (cont.)

things to come. The weather was very hot everywhere and quite rainy (downpours) but we were treated warmly, the food was great, the music was spectacular and everything was bustling. Brazil's economy is quite good, with exports of food, agriculture and regional jets (Embrair) being among the leaders. The hospitality we encountered everywhere was exceptional. People went out of their way to help us get to the bank, to the airport or whatever we needed. Such gracious people! We managed to sidestep both yellow fever (in the interior of the country) and dengue fever (in Rio de Janeiro). A touching note: at the Pink House where we stayed in Rio, the owner was also a musician so he serenaded me in Portuguese just before I left. How much better does it get? We got home safely on March 31st.

Peace Protest

Joy Mazzola

My dear Sisters and Brothers,

A fellow member of the Peace Tree (a local peace group that holds vigils once a month to call for an end to war) asked if any of us in the group would like to go with him to DC to mark the fifth anniversary of the war in Iraq. I didn't pause much but just said yes. I felt very much called to witness. For me the question was – yes, be present, but why? To say what? To witness for whom? And so I went – without answers to my questions.

When Sam and I arrived in DC we went to McPherson Square to find out how the day was progressing and where we might join in. We learned there were about 30 protest actions going on throughout the city that day. We'd gotten a bit later start than we'd planned but

Joy at one Congressman's office with poster of the war dead from his district.



were both OK with where and when we were—no pre-conceived ideas about our mission. Since we couldn't catch up with the groups as we'd originally planned we decided to stick together and try to find the Vets for Peace group and see where the day (and Our Lord) took us. We set off walking to the Mall - it was overcast but not raining and a pleasant mid 60s. We both had raincoats on or with us.

We walked the full length of the Mall. Each time we checked we were just a bit behind the Vets' march. We were far enough behind that we never quite caught sight of them. Several people asked about Sam's peace sign.

One family asked us to join their family picture! It was interesting how engaged people were with us. So even without a larger group we were doing our bit. (It's really odd how God uses us even when we don't feel we're doing what we intended or what we signed up for.) When we arrived at the Capitol and still couldn't find the group we decided to go in to see our District Representative. We knew he wouldn't be there but thought we'd leave a message. We found his office, wrote our messages and left them with the aide. We had a nice chat with him before we left. Oh—we couldn't take Sam's sign into the building and left it behind a garbage container in front of the building. I didn't think it would be there when we got back, but Sam was right. It was right there waiting for us upon our return (a good 90 minutes later).

We then hopped the Metro and joined the waterboarding simulation demonstration in front of the White House in Lafayette Square. There was a visible police presence there: seven mounted police (beautiful horses) and a number of officers on foot. One woman tried to put yellow crime scene tape on the fence in front of the White House, and the police removed her. Not sure if she was arrested.

It had started to rain a bit. Then the group started walking along the sidewalk toward McPherson Square



(about eight blocks away) About two blocks away from the square our group moved into the street and joined a group of college students already there who were singing and dancing in the middle of the intersection in front of the square. I'd say there were at least 300 demonstrators.

Shortly after we arrived in the intersection it started to rain really hard. Again, there was a very large and visible police presence around the intersection but mostly along two sides. At one point there were at least ten squad cars in one street, several in another, a gaggle of about six officers on bikes and a number on foot. At one point a troop of about 40 policemen some with sticks formed up and marched in close formation approaching the demonstration along one side. An officer started addressing the group with a bullhorn and the students—at this point about 80 of them were sitting on the street in the middle of the intersection in a circle with arms linked. That seated group was surrounded by a milling group of mixed age persons—many with signs. A roar went up from the protesters and in an extraordinary show of restraint the police turned and left the intersection after a few minutes. A deafening cheer



went up from the kids. They saw victory.

I was very pleased at the restraint the DC police showed. No doubt they've had lots of practice with these demonstrations. And it was raining so hard I thought the police decided to let the rain melt the crowd away. Throughout this time cars were trying unsuccessfully to edge through the intersection. After the police moved back I noticed that they were beginning to redirect traffic to avoid the intersection completely. (removing the audience—I did that as a teacher!) Sam had brought along an old peace symbol flag - the white dove on a light blue field. He and I held it and walked around the intersection.

Several people's eyes lit up when they saw it. Shades of the Viet Nam protests. A number of people wanted to catch a picture of it. So, we added our bit. We also occasionally got involved in conversations with onlookers. Many were quite supportive.

Anyway, after the kids held the intersection for about an hour (or more) one of the organizers got on a bullhorn and congratulated everyone. She basically said that they'd proved their point and won a victory. Sam and I took the hint and found a nearby coffee shop to get a warm cuppa. While we were there we heard and saw a number of squad cars screech by. We heard later that 33 people were arrested (but Sam's guess is that it was more like all 80 that were sitting, arms linked). It seemed pretty clear that many of those kids wanted the experience of being arrested. And so the day was successful for all.

I will certainly be doing this again.

And then we were home after a long and towards the end hair-raising drive through untreated snowy roads. This little Franciscan was left pondering it all.

The thing that became clear to me is that though the student protest was the one event I thought I'd rather miss (it was listed as *Students Funk the War*) Not my style at all; not my tone. And yet, there we were and there we stayed.

I felt called to pray throughout our time there—for the students and for the police. We were certainly a calming presence—Sam and I.

We were neither angry nor agitated. Sam had brought along his sign and, since I've been home, I've felt called to make my own. So far I've got a large white peace sign on a blue field with one leg that says DREAM, the middle one says PRAY and the third ACT. Above the peace sign I'm going to write Justice and Peace in larger letters; because as I've experienced it, peace follows justice. There is no peace without justice. The other sign I'm making is the dove of peace with a branch in her beak and the words Create Peace.

Even though I have lots of ideas about the war, I feel called by the second aim of our Order to spread the spirit of love and harmony. And so I'll march for peace again and again. Wherever I'm called.

I do feel a little foolish. The message of peace doesn't quite fit into anything else. And that's OK. Perhaps we're not called to fit into our culture and times.

Blessings and peace,

Joy

Solomon Islands Musical Mission to Vulnerable Youth

Anthony Maelasi TSSF (reprinted from TAU, newsletter of the Province in Aotearoa, New Zealand and Melanesia)

The Area and Regional Chapters of the TSSF in Solomon Islands have endorsed a "Mission to the Needy" programme and mandated each Area and its members to identify and develop mission programmes that would be of help and assistance to those in need both physically and spiritually.

From that mandate, Area 4 TSSF members in the Diocese of Hanuato'o, Sam Faga and Oscar Usumwara through observation and interviews identified an important area to help in addressing the growing social problems involving young people in the Makira/Ulawa Provincial capital Kira Kira and surrounding communities. From their findings, they have decided to run a training programme in the basics of music and how to play the guitar. A total of 8 boys from the different denominations

enrolled for the first training and it was run from 1 October-1 November 2007. Sessions were run every evening for 2 hours on Mondays, Thursdays and Saturdays. They include basic music theories and musical terms and practical sessions where the young people get a more hands-on experience in playing the guitar. Although there were not enough guitars for everybody, they

managed to get every student to have a go at learning to play and putting what they've learnt into practice.

Almost all of the students that enrolled for the training were street kids, out-of-church youths and were literally neglected by the community. Lack of employment opportunities have forced these young people to turn to drugs, alcohol, and to be involved in anti-social and destructive behaviours. The training programme was very informal, full of fun and laughter and patience. The main objectives were to help young people to stay out of unlawful activities, build their self-esteem and confidence to become useful members in their communities and to help build their interest and skills level in music, especially to see music as a potential means of

earning an income. After the 15 day programme, many of the youths expressed new confidence to further pursue their interest in music and do recordings one day and it has definitely helped them to see things more differently than where they've come from.

It was a good start for them in the sense that this was the mission: to change and impact lives and to be able to assist people to realize where they are and to move to a much better position in life. The emotional and psychological benefits this programme has had on the lives of these young people were immeasurable. A lot of the youths have even expressed confidence to help out in their Church and community activities. They have come to realize that the talents they have were God-given and the best place to begin with is to use it for His glory.

During my visit to the diocese where I met up with Sam and Oscar, we arranged to meet with some of the youths to hear their stories and experiences. We met at the First Order Friary of San Damiano at the heart of

Kira Kira and spent the evening encouraging the young people and

Sam Faga and Oscar Usumwara (standing) with some of the youth that attended the program



praying with them. A solemn sense of gratitude and peace was felt throughout the evening as they tried to come to terms with what this mission is all about; the

care, love and support shown throughout the program by the members of the order had won their hearts and minds. The relationships and friendships established were things that these young people would cherish for the rest of their lives.

It is a mission, an expression of Christ's care and demonstration of his love for the lost and outcasts in our society. I left the diocese a changed person within. The amount of time, prayers and patience in seeing this fulfilled, let alone the struggles and hardships faced by Sam and Oscar in seeking funds (without much success) and especially proper musical instruments needed for the training had taught me a big lesson; that when we set our priorities and heart right, God will

certainly show up. Despite the many difficulties and challenges experienced, for them it was truly Mission Possible. It is my prayer, and do make it your prayer today, that one day, God-willing, they would be able to get the much needed funds to purchase proper musical instruments to run their training programmes for the young people in Hanuato'o and to give them a new sense of purpose for their lives. They have made our Lord known and loved not so much through preaching but through the sound of music played in one accord with the Spirit of the one who has commissioned us to go and be his witnesses.

Tertiaries are Political

Nancy Adams, JPIC Network, Scotland (reprinted from Third Order News, January 2008, European Province)

I read with interest and not a little anguish the last edition of TONews where it was reported that:

"Tertiaries seem to be quite happy to engage with the 'integrity of creation' part (of JPIC), but get quite vocal when it comes to the Justice and Peace portion. Issues of Justice and Peace are often conceived as being political, and of course the Order as an entity does not do politics, but individuals within the Order do."

I am one of those individuals who 'does do politics', and I responded with a hearty 'YES!' when I heard Archbishop Desmond Tutu recently in a BBC radio interview describe his God as 'a political God' and went on to say:

"I still have yet to hear one single oppressed human come and say, 'Archbishop Tutu, you are being too political.' The people who have the luxury of saying religion and politics do not mix are almost exclusively people who are comfortably well off or are in fact benefiting from the injustice of the status quo which is being condemned as being unjust. God was not first met in a sanctuary... God was met when God performed a political act: the freeing of a slave people..."

For the first time in my life I experienced real personal oppression last year when I lived in Jerusalem for three months. I experienced on a very small scale the daily oppression endured by the 3 million Christian and Muslim Palestinians every day of their lives now as the 25 foot Segregation Wall separates them from their families, friends, jobs, hospitals, universities and places of worship. Every time I wanted to visit Bethlehem or any other city on the West Bank, I experienced attempts by the Israeli Defense Force to personally humiliate me and undermine my dignity as a human being. But the frequent inhuman treatment of Palestinians – Christian and Muslim – is far far worse, and when it is done in the presence of their children it is no wonder that young Palestinians today are angry about any potential

peace process.

While in Israel/Palestine I worked alongside Rabbis for Human Rights in Palestinian olive orchards; stood with Jewish, Muslim and Christian "Women in Black" against the Occupation; and visited Palestinian homes destined for demolition with the Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions. My personal experience made me feel solidarity with the collective Palestinian people living in oppression under occupation: they are being held hostage to the terrorist acts of a very tiny minority. It also made me feel sympathy and sadness for the nation Israel whose health and well being are being seriously challenged and undermined by its role as 'occupier'. It brought alive the reality of 'abuse of power' and the challenge of Jesus' way of 'non-violent resistance'. It made the words 'peace with justice and reconciliation' poignant in a way that nothing in my life had ever done. As a Christian, and as a Tertiary, I believe that promoting peace with justice throughout the world is not merely a 'political act' but more importantly, it is an act of humanity.

From Christine Titmus

In response to the note from Provincial Chapter in TONews, 'issues of justice and peace are often conceived as being political, and of course the Order as an entity does not do politics.'

How can a Christian body follow our Lord and *not* 'do politics'? How can we profess 'to love our neighbours as ourselves', then stand by in silence and apathy in the face of the societal systems and structures which ensure our neighbours' oppression?

The dictionary says that politics is 'the manner by which civil society is organised and governed (especially economically)'. If any in that society are violated, oppressed, treated unjustly, how can a Christian body's attempts to reveal or change that be outside it's calling?

The bulk of Christ's teaching in the gospels reflected a 'favour for the poor' and warned of the dangers of greed, pride, self-righteousness and hypocrisy. When we see these grounded in the organisation of society, then surely for Christian bodies to remain silent, is for us to ignore all that Christ asked of us?

If it is right for individuals in the Order to speak or act thus, how can it be wrong for their parent body to affirm this? We cannot have it both ways. Christian bodies either stand for love of neighbour or they don't. If speaking out 'politically' is the only way to bring about Christ's justice and mercy in a given setting, how can we justify shirking from that?

Long ago it seems the mainstream churches decided that public involvement in bringing about a merciful, just and compassionate society was outside their

mandate. It was considered a personal matter for individuals and their conscience. How different the world might be now if they had decided differently! By deeming it inappropriate to witness publicly within society's systems and structures (to 'do politics') I believe the church has absolved itself of a prime responsibility that Christ left us with: to reveal his justice, mercy and love to all the earth. In February 2006 I listened to Jim Wallis (Sojourners) and Steve Chalke, speaking at the launch of Jim's book *God's Politics*. Someone asked Steve if politics and Christianity could mix. He replied:

"Do Christianity and apathy mix?- to refuse to speak out for those who are caused to suffer by society's greed and exploitation, is to show apathy in the face of oppression. Is this Christian? For Christians who engage in politics are not compromising their faith, they are living it. In fact, for Christians NOT to engage politically is the biggest compromise. Our faith *requires* that we be politically involved."

If we are to love mercy and act justly, we cannot do so without living in a way that reveals and seeks to deliver that mercy and that justice. Isn't that what politics is about?

To ensure the warmth, clothing, safety, shelter, living wage, education, and human fellowship of each human being?

Consider this story. A multi-millionaire runs a filthy factory on a hill, which spews poisons down to the river below. He refuses to make it safer and cleaner because he doesn't want to reduce his huge profits. Thousands of people in the valleys are diseased and dying due to his actions. 'Good Christians' busy themselves constantly trying to alleviate their suffering, but think it 'too political' to deal with the cause upstream! Does the Order really believe that as a Christian body called to love those suffering people, it should not be a signatory to a challenge to the factory owner? I am not suggesting that TSSF launch full pelt into the public arena, merely that it *stop fearing to lend its name to actions that promote Christ's peace and justice.*

The Ballad of St Francis (sung to the tune of Botany Bay)

Chris Barfoot TSSF (reprinted from Tau, newsletter of the Province in Aotearoa, New Zealand and Melanesia)

Farewell to my home town Assisi,
I'm off to win glory in war,
With a shield and a sword and fine armour,

My father has paid for them all.
But the Lord took a hand as I journeyed,
He said to me "What is your plan?"

Whom do you think you are serving?
Is it master or is it a man?"

Come merrily follow St Francis,
And trust not in weapons of war,
Let's build up God's house to his glory,
And sing like the old troubadours.

I came home, they thought I was coward,
My strangeness began to offend,
No longer I sparkled at parties,
"Francis, have you got a new friend?"

I told them I had a fiancée,
"My bride all the stars will outshine,
Her name is my Lady of Poverty,
For her beauty I long and I pine."

Come merrily follow St Francis,
And find all your joy in the Lord,
Let's build up God's house to his glory,
And sing like the old troubadours

There's some one I dreaded and hated,
The leper who called out for alms,
His sores and his rags and deformity,
I slunk past in fear and alarm.

The Lord told that he was my brother
As he stank in his sores at the gate,
Now sudden I ran and I touched him,
And held him in loving embrace.

Come merrily follow St Francis,
Find treasure in sick and in poor,
Let's build up God's house to his glory,
And sing like the old troubadours

I wandered distraught from Assisi,
"Lord, show me the way I should go,"
I prayed in the caves and the churches,
Discovered San Damiano.

I heard a voice calling in sorrow,
"My house is all falling down,
Would you build it again for my glory,
So praise from its walls may resound."

Come merrily follow St Francis,
For his healing we pray and implore,
Let's build up God's house to his glory,
And sing like the old troubadours.

I danced and I sang in the ruins,
Then started at once on my task;
For stones I took cloth and I sold it,
My father was not even asked.

My father decided to sue me,
To claim in the court what I thieved,
But I stripped myself madly before him,
Laid money and clothes at his feet.

Come merrily follow St Francis,
For the Father gives riches galore,
Let's build up God's house to his glory,
And sing like the old troubadours.

The Lord in the Gospel now told me,
"I want you to heal and to preach,
There's nothing you need on your journey,
To all that you meet bring my peace."

Likes waves of the sea they all joined me;
We lived in an old donkey's shack;
But the farmer walked in with his donkey
And told us he wanted it back.

Come merrily follow St Francis,
Be simple and wish not for more,
Let's build up God's house to his glory,
And sing like the old troubadours

To grand Pope our Rule we presented,
With scarlet and gold were we ringed:
They said "you can't live with no money,
It's just an impossible thing."

But the Pope in a dream had a vision:
God showed him his wonderful plan
To hold up his church that was tottering
By using this shabby poor man.

Come merrily follow St Francis,
How great are the simple and poor,
Let's build up God's house to his glory,
And sing like the old troubadours.

The Franciscan Times
is a publication of The Third Order
Province of the Americas, Society of St. Francis.

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St. Francis of Assisi: A New Way of Being Christian: A New Audio Set

Reviewed by Barbara Leonard, Provincial Chaplain

The Provincial Convocation was blessed with presentations by Brother William Short, OFM. Brother Short has produced a set of 8 audio CDs, *St. Francis of Assisi: A New Way of Being Christian*. The 24 talks on 8 CDs are a treasure. Brother Short is a remarkable teacher with great depth of knowledge about the life of Francis and the times that followed his death. The content is highly engaging and inspiring. They are available from www. Now You Know Media.com or 1 800 955 3904. I plan to share my set with the MN fellowship. I believe the cost is about \$45.00.

Musings from a Minister Provincial

John Hebenton, Minister Provincial, Province in Aotearoa, New Zealand and Melanesia

Peace and all goodness be with you this Easter. I was reading Psalm 27 today and was drawn to verse 8 which in The Message reads "When my heart whispered "Seek God," my whole being replied "I'm seeking him!" That is what Lent is about, all our giving things up is about seeking God with our whole being. It is time to seek God anew, to be overwhelmed by God's love anew. May this Easter be a time for us all to seek God, and to be overwhelmed again.

One way we can seek God is through praying scripture, reading using a Lectio Divina, reading not to learn but to allow the words to soak into us. One of my practices over recent time has been to pray our daily readings in a similar way, to read them slowly, several times, to let them soak into me, to allow God to speak to me afresh as I read. I also sometimes change the words and make the readings into a prayer. For example

Day Six: might read

"May the primary aim for us as Tertiaries be to make you the Christ known. May this shape our lives and attitudes to reflect the obedience of those whom You chose to be with You and sent out as Your witnesses. Like them, by word and example, may we bear witness to You in our own immediate environment and pray and work for the fulfilment of Your command to make disciples of all nations."

So I invite you this Easter season and beyond to continue to seek God as a Franciscan, praying our Principles as we continue to grow in our understanding of our place as Franciscans in the mission of God.

A Rule of Life 101

Bett Wood

"You have a Rule of Life?" "What is that?" "Can just anyone have one?" "How do you start?" "Can you help me write one?" "Will you do a workshop about it for us?"

Well, yes, I suppose I could do that.

So we get a group of people together—ideally for a Quiet Day project, lasting much of the day, but sometimes only an hour is available, and I do the best I can.

Those sessions are never the same twice, because they are designed to fit "all sorts and conditions of persons". Everyone brings his or her own questions and needs and ideas to offer, and there is a great deal of interaction.

To begin with, none of the participants so far have wanted to join any Order—just want the discipline involved in the effort. So the categories are not the same as I am accustomed to. The first step for me is to come up with a number of categories that should be flexible enough to work for anyone. Studying the elements of our own Rule, I found a pattern beginning to emerge. What I eventually came up with was a re-categorization that made sense, to me, at least.

The first thing to emphasize for the group was that a Rule of Life is NOT the same thing as New Year's Resolutions. Haven't we all, at some time or other, made very grandiose resolutions that we cannot possibly keep? "I will save the world. I will end war. I will put an end to pollution. "

And the second week, when all that is done, I will - - - - -"

That's an example of a Rule that is too broad.

Conversely, it can be too narrow—"I will never wear wrinkled clothes. I will keep my house spotless at all times. I will never ever get annoyed with people. I will lose forty pounds before Easter."

These examples are totally unrealistic, and will lead only to frustration and a feeling of failure.

The categories I came up with are:

1. Time for God
2. Time for self
3. Time for family
4. Time for community
5. Time for the larger world.

Time for God is obvious and can include Holy Eucharist, Penitence, Meditation and Personal Prayer. It can also include taking time to be thankful for a rainbow, a flower, a kitten, a friend, whatever.

Time for self was a surprise to some, since they had always seen that as selfish and not useful. But it really is important, and includes many things some routine, some inspiring. Matters of health, hygiene, grooming, eating properly and getting enough sleep, exercising, working at enjoyable jobs, reading, personal growth, relaxation, travel, spending time with friends—all these things are important, and contribute to our abilities to love, to laugh, to help others—ah! do we begin to see some overlapping here?

Time for family. First, define family. It may be blood or legal kin, church family, those who share the same interests. Do your best to enjoy everyone who falls within that circle, even when they are being difficult. EVERYONE is difficult at times. Even Me.

Time for community. Here too, we need to define our

community. "Who is my neighbor?" And this category can include bringing things for the Food Pantry, giving someone a ride, smiling at a stranger, giving blood, voting—the possibilities are endless. And we all feel better when we help someone else. Remember, "inasmuch as you have done it to the least of these..."

By now everyone sees how much overlap there is in these categories.

And finally, Time for the larger world. Recycle. Donate to charity. give your excess clothing, books, anything you no longer need that someone else could use.. Conserve things: water, fuel, energy, food, learn more about the people in the world who are in desperate straits, and reflect on how incredibly rich we are by comparison. Ask "What can I do?"

The Rule should not be too strict nor too easy—it should fit YOUR life and needs, as well as your talents and abilities. Is it do-able? Are parts of it challenging? Are parts of it natural? It will want to be altered or updated from time to time. As circumstances change, we learn gradually that parts of it may not work, and some things become too easy and need strengthening.

If the time permits, send people off for maybe a half hour to work on writing their own rule. Then get together again and those who are comfortable with the idea can share what they have learned about themselves, and what differences they might be able to make in their lives.

Then there is ACCOUNTABILITY. It helps to discuss your progress with a friend you trust and respect. Discussion, or reporting on a regular basis is really helpful. And once you find the right person, keep that same person- - that's one way to keep ourselves honest!

Above all, remember that the examples I have given are just that, examples. You will find your own expressions. The important is to review it at least once a week. See how it is working for you. Notice the things that help and the things that don't quite fit. Make changes as needed and don't feel guilty about it. Guilt is not one of the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

To all you, my Franciscan brothers and sisters—this is NOT intended to replace our own Rule of Life. It is intended to answer questions from those who are not called to an Order, but who do feel the need of a specific Rule. I pray it may help to fulfill that need.

T S S F Publications

The Principles of the Third Order of the Society of Saint Francis for Daily Reading (\$2.50)

Order of Admission (\$1)

Spiritual Director Guide (\$2.50)

Statutes (\$1)

Devotional Companion (\$4.50)

Please Note:

The TSSF Directory is not to be used for solicitations of any kind that are unrelated to Third Order, Province of the Americas, issues.

Is There a God in Health Care? Toward a New Spirituality of Medicine

By William Haynes, Jr. and Geoffrey B. Kelly, The Haworth Pastoral Press

A review by Jonathan Steinhart, MD

Is there a God in health care? This is a good question for providers and patients, which is all of us, and particularly for those of us who are Christian and Third Order. The question implies a familiar dichotomy: science vs. religion, faith healing vs. technology. As a child, I watched on television, along with my parents, Oral Roberts "heal" people with a hand on their forehead and an incantation. This looked like all faith and miracle and no science. In many years of medical training, I laboriously studied the sciences, which underlie medicine and the technology, which makes it possible, and there was no mention of God or the role that religious faith may have in healing. Both these events and the divisions they implied were decades ago.

Fortunately, times have changed. There is now an ongoing dialogue between scientists and theologians, and medicine acknowledges that there is more to healing than drugs and surgery. Still, it is easy to compartmentalize our lives into the secular and spiritual. However, we in the Third Order are challenged by our rule to dissolve this barrier. Drs. Haynes and Kelly address issues of spirituality and medicine in their new book.

The authors' backgrounds are complementary. Dr. Haynes is a retired cardiologist and Third Order Franciscan and Dr. Kelly is an associate of the De La Salle Christian Brothers, university professor, and Bonhoeffer scholar. Their exploration of these issues is comprehensive.

They examine familiar issues such as prayer and heal-

ing. Should doctors pray with and for their patients? Dr. Haynes became a strong believer in this practice over the years and when appropriate prayed with and for his patients. He says, "Indeed by praying with their patients, doctors can help God become a consoling presence for them in their suffering."

They look at the role of health care in terminal illness. It is in this sphere that theology and medicine can enhance each other's effort. Health care providers can now do much to relieve physical suffering, but only by addressing the emotional issues and the spiritual concerns which may underlie them can they fully treat the needs of many of their patients. The issues of forgiveness and reconciliation are often critical to a patient and his or her family at this time and care givers such as chaplains, social workers, and therapists can assist medical personnel in addressing these concerns

Using Jesus as the model healer, they have an excellent chapter on "Listening from the Heart in Health Care." They believe that some of the charm and maybe therapeutic power of Jesus is that he took the time and effort to listen to people who often were not heard in their society. The key to being a good listener is avoiding judgments based on preconceived attitudes and stereotypes. The joy that comes through medicine is the trust that develops between the caregiver and the person who has come for help. This only comes through active and unhurried listening, something that is important for us in the health care professions to realize as the increased workload, paperwork, and abundance of technology decrease our face-to-face time with patients.

In a chapter called, "Healing Services: Miracles, Cures, and Hope" they look at the role of contemporary healing ministry. Sometimes a well-known religious healer such as Father DiOrio, with whom Dr. Kelly had a personal experience, fills this role. His daughter had a brain tumor and her condition remarkably improved and stabilized after an encounter with Father DiOrio at a communion service. They point out that Father DiOrio always makes it clear that he is not the healer but a conduit for the healing love of Jesus, the Divine physician, and that Father DiOrio always counsels those who come to him to continue their medical treatments. Though less dramatic, both authors are strong supporters of the healing ministries in the church and its outreach ministries.

The authors briefly address contemporary social factors that affect health care: lack of universal health coverage in this country, a predilection for advanced weaponry and violence to solve problems, an environment with a diminishing water supply and replete with toxins. These problems go far beyond the reach of individual health care providers and the institutions with which

they work. They believe we must foster in our lives and our churches a spirituality that respects the environment, advocates for the poor, and seeks justice and mercy first to address global problems. Is not this what we are all about as Third Order Franciscans?

So where is God in health care? Drs. Kelly and Haynes lead us to believe that He is to be encountered on many fronts: in a physician's office, in a healing service, in intercessory prayer for the sick, in advocating for greater health care access, in the laboratory and the operating room. They do not suggest that "faith, prayer, and a spiritual relationship with God" are to be substituted for capable health caregivers using modern medicine. They believe that God acts in health care through the spiritual life of health care providers, through the healing ministries in and out of the church, and through God-given advances in modern medicine and technological breakthroughs.

Over the years my parents become supports of Oral Roberts and lived their final years in University Village, a retirement center in the shadow of the tall towers that once housed his medical school. They also inspired and help put a son through medical school. The frontiers of medicine and theology are continually expanding and merging, and I recommend this book to readers who are interested in new insights in this emerging dialogue.

Dr. Steinhart is a member of the Four Corners Fellowship in New Mexico and an obgyn physician practicing on the Navajo reservation with the Indian Health Service.

RIP: Fr. Robert Woodfield

David Burgdorf

This is a short appreciation of our brother, Fr. Robert Woodfield, whose Resurrection Mass was celebrated at All Saints Church, Long Beach CA on 5 January 2008. At age 87, Fr. Woodfield (as we in the Fellowship always called him) was in his 59th year as an active priest, the 58th year of marriage to his wonderful wife Donna, and the 40th year of his profession in the Third Order. He was the senior member of the San Bernardino Fellowship and beloved by all its members. If you didn't know him, you really missed something! Fr. Woodfield was a lover of Christ & Francis and of all things Catholic in the Church, in fact, to be sure that the true faith was taught at his funeral, Fr. Woodfield asked that the Most Rev. Joseph Sartoris, a retired bishop in the Los Angeles Archdiocese, would preach, as indeed he gloriously did. Bishop Sartoris and Fr. Woodfield had served in retirement as chaplains at Long Beach VA Hospital and had become very good friends.

Fr. Woodfield started his faith journey as a Methodist. He attended Syracuse University, ostensibly a Methodist school in those days. He attended Garrett Theological Seminary (Methodist) in Evanston IL, but "crossed over" (the street) to Seabury and was ordained in the Episcopal Diocese of Minnesota in 1948. After serving parishes in MN, PA, TX, AL, he came to CA in 1965 and worked in various ministries until his retirement- well, it would be hard to say when his retirement took place, since he loved to preside at the Eucharist and did so whenever he could. When the parish he had served and mentored for years decided to leave the Episcopal Church and partner with a bishop outside the USA, Fr. Woodfield assured his bishop that he wasn't leaving the Episcopal Church, but that, at his age, he really preferred not to look for another parish. It is in that parish's columbarium that his remains lie. It was as if church squabbles hardly registered on his spiritual radar and that the place near the altar where he presided was where he wanted to be.

As with many on a faith journey, real depth and wisdom emerge when the ego is hollowed of its power and control by adversity. So it was with Fr. Woodfield. The last 3-4 years of his life, from any outsider's view, seemed like nothing but a nightmare of strokes, surgeries and hospitalizations. Many would become embittered from the blows. Fr. Woodfield, however, stayed the course, saying Mass when he could and opening more and more to the love of his family, his parish, his TSSF fellowship and friends. In weakness during that time, he gave all he was capable of and renewed his spirit and stood his ground by following his rule of life. The San Bernardino Fellowship had one of its meetings every year at the home of Donna and Robert Woodfield in Seal Beach. Living in an area near LA surrounded by freeways, the Woodfields were too infirm to risk anything but surface roads, so the fellowship went to them, always to be received with generous hospitality and, of course, Eucharist at an improvised altar: always the Eucharist. In that one thing alone, Fr. Woodfield taught us a dimension of Franciscanism which it would be hard to miss when we were with him- love for Christ in the Eucharist. For that, not to mention all his other gifts and graces, we can all say "Thanks be to God."

May he rest in peace and rise in glory.

When individuals and/or local TSSF fellowships create websites that reference TSSF, it should be clearly indicated that the site is not an official site of the Third Order, Society of St. Francis in the Americas. Additionally, a link should be included to www.tssf.org.

From the Bursar

Ann Harris

We are half way through our fiscal year (October 1st –September 30th). So far this year is very solid financially for the Order. My brothers and sisters have been following through with their pledges, and we will cover all of our expenses for the year.

We have two big expenses coming up:

- T Our provincial contribution to the worldwide order through the Central Fund and the African Travel Fund.
- T Chapter travel and accommodation for 2008. We have continued to keep travel expenses to minimum with the use of conference calls and email.

There should not be a problem covering these expenses as the balance in our current account as of April 30th is \$24,388.

Other financial highlights:

- T The funds authorized by Chapter to start a library in Trinidad have been spent and the books arrived safely.
- T We received an anonymous donation that allowed us to send a small selection of books to Guyana.
- T Terry Rogers and Ken Norian arranged for solar lanterns to be sent to Guyana as well as a shipment of vestments.
- T We have received a memorial gift in memory of Marguerite Witzig that is designated for scholarship to the next Provincial Convocation.
- T There are still T Shirts, mugs and mouse pads available. Please email or write to me if you are interested.

The Associates fund is building slowly and has been sufficient to cover all of the Associate expenses to date. If you are an Associate please send your donation to the address below.

If you have any questions or concerns please contact me. Peace and joy to all my sisters and brothers!

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Provincial Convocation 2012

No, that isn't a typo – 2012!

It is time to start planning for our next Provincial Convocation. At the moment we are gathering input and researching possible locations. As part of this process we invite you to share your ideas and concerns with us.

These are the issues that we are addressing:

- If you did not attend the last Provincial Convocation in Boston what held you back?
 - Expenses?
 - Location?
 - Time of year?
- If you did attend:
 - What were the high points?
 - The low points?
- Thinking ahead to 2012 we are considering whether to look at another college setting, a hotel, or a retreat center with hotel style accommodations.
 - Would dorm style accommodations be all right for you
 - Would you prefer hotel style accommodations?
 - Do you need handicap accessible rooms?
- Do you have concerns about meals?
 - Dietary restrictions?
 - Preference for cafeteria or served meals?
- How important is it to have the convocation in an area that is attractive for an extended vacation?
 - Would you like to bring your family?

We are also gathering preliminary ideas for the program, but we are focusing on the location and accommodations for our report to Chapter this year. So please share your thoughts with us, and if you would like to volunteer to continue to be part of the planning process, that would be great!

Your input is needed – 2012 will be here before we know it! Please send this form and your response to:

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Where it all began in 1917—the church in Merrill Wisconsin where the Third Order started in the Americas.

RIP: Mark Auer, TSSF

Emmett Jarrett

I first met Mark Auer in Boston in the fall of 1981, when I had just become vicar of St. John's, Bowdoin Street. Without so much as a "by your leave," Mark announced that his father, Canon Rugby Auer, was going to baptize his son Michael at St. John's on the following Saturday afternoon. For some reason I didn't object and our long friendship began. Mark became the chair of St. John's social action committee, overseeing the Thursday night supper and outreach to the homeless in downtown Boston.

But Mark was also a raging alcoholic and suffered from post-traumatic stress syndrome arising from his service in Vietnam. After spending a night on the couch in the Mission House, he let me take him to the VA Hospital, where he was admitted, and spent nearly two months getting sane and sober. When his marriage broke up, Mark drifted away from St. John's, but not before he took Anne and our infant son Nathaniel for a ride in his taxi to help calm the baby. We stayed in touch after I left Boston in 1987.

Mark was a "preacher's kid," and like so many had a love-hate relationship with the Church. He was admitted to the Episcopal Divinity School in Cambridge for seminary training in 2000, a year after Anne and I came to New London, Conn., to establish St. Francis House. Mark's seminary dorm room was next to our friend Ed Rodman's office, and they shared cigarette smoking and a passion for Gospel justice during his years there. He majored in Bible study at seminary, and thus was prepared to lead that portion of the St. Francis House Radical Discipleship course when he came to live here.

Shortly before he graduated from EDS in 2004, Mark suffered a lung collapse, and two-thirds of one of his lungs was removed in surgery that saved his life. It also put an end to his ambition to become a hospital chaplain. Ed Rodman sent Mark to St. Francis House to join us on August 1 of that year. Mark lived in the studio apartment on the first floor of Victory House and undertook to organize our finances as well as participate in the social ministry of the House. He used his banking skills (from an earlier time in his life) to help launch F.R.E.S.H. New London, and the Homeless Hospitality Center.

He also became a special friend and confidante to our daughter Sarah, also a "preacher's kid." They have a lot in common. In some ways, it seems Mark was able in these years to have a relationship with our children that he had not been able to form with his own children. His daughter Catie, however, corresponded with him while he was here, and was planning a visit this

summer. Many of his past relationships were beginning to heal in the last four years of life.

Perhaps the crown of his life was his formation as a Franciscan. Mark was attracted to the Anglican Third Order not by the example of Francis but by the Brother Juniper Fellowship, the group of Tertiaries in New England who meet occasionally at St. Francis House. The most unpretentious group of people you can imagine, the Junipers are well named for our patron, one of Francis's first brothers and a man of such simplicity that his fellow friars often thought him stupid. Mark's prayer life deepened during his period of formation, and when he went for his final hospital stay in June, the provincial chapter elected him to profession three months before the usual novitiate was up. With his sister Amy, St. Francis House community members, fellow Franciscans and other friends, Mark was professed on June 28 in Lawrence and Memorial Hospital. He came home six days later and on July 10 he died. He was twelve days a professed Tertiary, but he is now a Franciscan for eternity.

What made the difference for Mark? He had a hard life, and his maturation as a human being was costly to him and his family and friends. He knew at first hand what Dorothy Day, founder of the Catholic Worker and with Francis one of our models for life together, called "the long loneliness." He himself attributed his spiritual growth to the accountability he experienced while living in community. Dorothy put it this way:

We cannot love God unless we love each other, and to love we must know each other.: We know Him in the breaking of bread, and we know each other in the breaking of bread, and we are not alone any more. Heaven is a banquet and life is a banquet, too, even with a crust, where there is companionship.

We have all known the long loneliness and we have learned that the only solution is love and that love comes with community.

It all happened while we sat there talking, and it is still going on.

Dear God, please welcome Mark to your banquet table. May he rest in peace and rise in glory. Amen.



The Franciscan Times

Send in your contributions for the Fall issue by October 1

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