



The Franciscan Connection

A Publication of The Third Order,
Society of St. Francis, Province of the Americas



Christmas 2018



From The Chaplain

“And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten Son from the Father,) full of grace and truth.” *John 1:14 KJV*

Where Incarnation And Resurrection Meet

The Joy of Christmas is God’s own gift to us. The Second Member of the Holy Trinity came down to fully share in our humanity. We know the Christ’s name is Jesus. Jesus came down to fully share in our humanity so that we will fully share in his divinity. This is where the Incarnation and the Resurrection of Jesus meet. Jesus became like us so that we will become as Christ to one another and to the world. Our full and complete sharing of the Divinity of Jesus will come in the resurrection. In the present, this deep Spiritual reality gives us hope.

Everything Is Possible

Jesus shared in our humanity so that we may be fully healed and restored and then live with God in God’s Glory. The Joy of welcoming the coming of Christ into our hearts and minds is like the hope of a newborn child. Everything is possible. Children are full of wonder and potential. They can also bring out simple wonder in us as we begin to see things through their eyes. This reminds me of Jesus’ teaching: We must welcome the kingdom of God as a little Child. Think of St Francis, who created a living Christmas creche with all the townspeople and children. People claimed that they could see the baby Jesus in the Manger. Welcome the news with wonder and awe that the God of all creation is loving and mindful of us. Be as the child who with great joy anticipates presents under the Christmas tree. God is about to do marvelous things right before our eyes, so watch and wait with joy. All Creation is moving towards God. Merry Christmas!

*Richard Simpson, Provincial Chaplain, TSSF
Province of the Americas*

"Christmas is doing a little something extra for someone." *Charles Schulz*



From The Minister Provincial

Universality

As Christ comes into the world again this Christmas (and daily in our hearts), we experience the rush of angel wings and the slow inhaling of the world before such majesty and such humility. That birth, so small in its trappings, moved out into universal meaning. I’d like to talk with you about that universality as far as the Third Order is concerned. Just for a moment.

The Young Franciscan Movement

In our recent meeting of all of the Ministers Provincial, each Minister spoke of his/her Province and some of the challenges there. Here are some of their concerns; I share them as a way for you to connect with our sisters and brothers around the world who are all “making Christ known and loved everywhere,” that Cosmic Ripple Effect of the Birth. In Africa, there is growth and health of the Order in Lesotho, while other areas are losing members. The MP for Africa, Dr. Michael Twum-Darko, is traveling around the continent to contact members. Travel is always problematic; distances are daunting. The Young Franciscan movement, however, is gaining interest and prayer is needed. Michael also asked for prayers for Zimbabwe and Botswana. It is hard to have a presence there because of political instability. All meetings of any kind are discouraged.

Communication Difficulties

Asia-Pacific has a large number of novices in Sri Lanka. Their counselors are in Australia. They use email and Skype. In South Korea, there is an emergence of interest in TSSF. The difficulty is that members are spread all over the country. So the CSF and SSF sisters and brothers are essential to formation there. There are great numbers of TSSF brothers and sisters in the Solomon Islands; much fewer are in Papua New Guinea and we experience problems in communication there, as many are without roads and electricity, etc.

Keep All This In Mind And In Prayer

Pacific Province just professed our first tertiary in China. They are taking a hard look at their Companions program; they say the Companions belong to all three Orders. And the European Province has experienced an infusion of peace and good will in its Chapter meetings that is welcomed by all. They are experiencing needs in regional leadership positions. A global nutshell, I know; but I thought you'd like to know! May Christmas Joy be yours, wherever you find yourself in this beautiful, needy world!

*Janet Fedders, Minister Provincial, TSSF
Province of the Americas*



Fellowship Focus

She Prayed Her Way Through

This is a poem written by my mother who was a concert pianist at one time, but then contracted MS (Multiple Sclerosis) and lost all of her coordination. She prayed her way through it all, surrounded by a husband and children who loved her, through a series of lovely poems all quite short, but dense. Her art form shifted from the piano, but the beauty of her deep love for us and those around her shone through her poetry.

Journey Of Intercession

She entered on an incredible journey of intercessory prayer over the last two decades of her life, praying for those whom Christ gave her to pray for. Often she would sense someone was in distress and she would pray until she had a release from the Holy Spirit. We discovered later of the turmoil those whom she prayed for were in when she began and that the moment of release was at the exact moment she was aware that she was finished.

Transformation Through Suffering

When my parents were in the Diocese of Maryland toward the end of her life, priests brought prayer requests to her. They said of her, "When Barbara Stube prays, God answers." How much we all learned from her about faithfulness and transformation through suffering and joyful restoration of that which is most essential to life, contemplation and love.

*Peter Stube, Fellowship Coordinator, TSSF
Province of the Americas*

Christmas Eve

In a night of mystery
A night filled with
the flutter of wings
the lowing of cattle
the bleating of sheep

A night filled with
Anxious urgency of shepherds
Concerned tenderness of a
Carpenter husband
The thrilled joy of a young mother
Then, a hush over all the earth
And a baby's cry

A cry that touches
Old hearts grown weary
with waiting

A cry angels wait
To greet with hosannas

A cry that brings
Heaven down
To earth.

By Barbara Hurrell Stube

"I will honor Christmas in my heart, and try to keep it all the year." Ebenezer Scrooge
From Charles Dickens' Novel A Christmas Carol

The Saints Wisdom Project



The Saints Wisdom Project

In this edition of *The Franciscan Connection* we are proud to share an article written by our dearly departed brother Stuart Schlegel. Stu was one of the biggest supporters of The Saints Wisdom Project (as well as the Emmaus Travelers Program). Right from the start, his was a voice of encouragement and his writing was one of the first pieces we received. Never one to skimp on details, Stu's article is also one of the most lengthy ones that came across our desks! We present it here in its entirety for your prayerful enjoyment. As you read and get to know more about this wonderful man, rejoice for all that he meant to those fortunate enough to have had him in their lives, and for how much he meant to his Franciscan community.

The Saints Wisdom Project Team



Franciscan Work I Can Still Do

~ A "Saints Wisdom Project" Article ~

(As An Older Tertiary With Health Issues)

I have been asked to describe the challenges, difficulties, and limitations that have come to me with the aging process, and the work I still can do as an elder member of the Order; I am happy to do so. As I write this, I am in my mid-eighties and live alone in my apartment. I have had a long, eventful life, blessed by a wonderful family, many friends, wonderful colleagues in two parallel careers, and several life-changing times of immersion in other cultures. I have taken great delight in my work, as well as in some passionate hobbies like reading philosophers and collecting quotes and jokes.

The Big Picture

What I do now as Franciscan work is so clearly related to the overall arc of my life experience, that I had better begin by describing it. Looking back, I see two overarching and interrelated themes: first, how several specific experiences resulted in fundamental changes in how I have thought and tried to live ever since, and, second, how my two careers have illuminated and influenced each other — I am an Episcopal priest who is significantly influenced by cultural theory, and an anthropologist who takes seriously the role of religious commitment in human life.

Earlier Experiences Formed Who I Am Today

I was born in 1932 in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, the only child in a family of five: my parents, maternal grandparents and me. We moved to California in 1943, where from 1946 to 1950, I went to Harvard School, an Episcopal military and secondary boarding school in nearby North Hollywood. I was a Presbyterian when I arrived for the ninth grade, but was immediately attracted to the Anglo-Catholic worship in the chapel, and moved by the example of two priests, the chaplain and the headmaster. Both were men of learning, discipline, prayer, social conscience, and compassion, and in a short time I wanted — in a boyish sort of way — to be just like them. To this day their ideals remain central to my life. By my graduation in 1950, I had been confirmed into the Episcopal Church and determined to seek ordination as a priest; my admiration for the headmaster even led me to plan to then become a Holy Cross monk, as he had been for many years.

US Navy



Pomona College (California)

I went on to Pomona College in nearby Claremont, California after I graduated from Harvard in 1950, but stayed just a few months; at the end of the Christmas break, I enlisted in the Navy. The Korean War had begun, and for the next four years I served as an enlisted man, mostly in the Far East. I did not particularly like being in the Navy and especially abhorred chasing and attacking hostile submarines for months at a time and repeatedly bombarding the North Korean shore. On the other hand, there were some wonderfully positive times: I was awakened to social justice concerns by a group of gay friends in San Francisco and quasi-adopted by a Japanese family in Tokyo. I fell in love with Asia and the many places that the Navy took me — Japan, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Indochina, and the Philippines — and in ways I did not dream of at the time, those experiences set the course the rest of my life would take.



*(1951) USS New Jersey
Off The Coast Of Korea*

Undergraduate And Seminary Years

After being discharged in late 1954, I entered the University of California at Santa Barbara, where I could afford to study on my GI Bill money and could get to know Holy Cross monks at their nearby retreat house. It was at Santa Barbara that I developed a passionate hobby of reading philosophy. I transferred in 1956 to UCLA for my last semester to be particulate in their Honors program in history, and graduated in January, 1957.

Love And Service

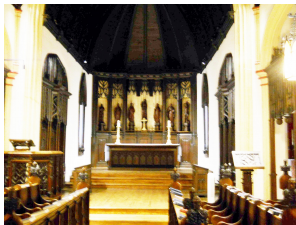
I was accepted for the Fall 1957 term at Nashotah House, our Episcopal seminary in rural Wisconsin, which attracted me because of its quasi-monastic atmosphere. However, since the term didn't begin until late October, I offered to spend the intervening months as a lay worker at a mission in Tadian,

a small village in the mountains of Northern Luzon in the Philippines. I enjoyed the beauty of that place, the people emerging from a headhunting past, and the extraordinarily loving parish priest, Eduardo Longid, who introduced himself as a Christian whose father had been a headhunter and mother had been a witch doctor. My time there was not only a great adventure for this American city boy, but, like my Navy years, it was another important time of personal growth and maturation. I learned in Tadian that Christianity was about love and service, not fancy liturgies.

I Wanted To Be Her Husband!

When I arrived at Nashotah in October, I quickly discovered that I intensely disliked the authoritarian clericalism that prevailed there and seemed incompatible with my sense of the priesthood, after what I had seen and learned in Tadian. But the monastic atmosphere was what I wanted, and I savored the Anglo-Catholic worship and disciplined routines. After a few weeks, I met a woman named Audrey, who lived in a nearby small rural village and — in a flash of self-knowledge — realized I didn't want to be a monk; I wanted to be her husband! Nashotah students were not allowed to marry at that time, and in many overt and subtle ways

Nashota House Chapel



Audrey was made to feel unwelcome. So, after just one semester, I transferred to the Church Divinity School of the Pacific in Berkeley, California, where I found the ethos more congenial and Audrey

was joyfully welcomed by the staff and students. We were married in the chapel the following summer.

Official Episcopal Ministries

Since I no longer planned to be a monk, Audrey and I applied for formal appointment as missionaries to the Philippines, where I had such a wonderful experience in Tadian. But, to make sure she would enjoy living in the frontier conditions there, we decided to spend our last summer before graduation in Chapantango, a small town on a desert plateau in the mountainous Mexican State of Hidalgo, where a seminary friend had offered to let us stay in a house he owned. Like the Philippines, Chapantango was remote and similarly rural and foreign. We both enjoyed our three months in Chapantango thoroughly, so we applied to be appointed official Episcopal missionaries to the Philippines for a three-year term, and were accepted.

Ordination

I was ordained deacon and we flew to our new home, where we were posted in the large and well established, but remote and isolated Mission of



Audrey's And My House

St. Francis of Assisi, Upi, in the hills of the southern island of Mindanao to assist the American priest in charge. I was ordained priest in January 1961, and when my boss decided to leave for the US a few weeks later, the bishop put me in charge and gave me the specific task of founding the area's first academic secondary school. Audrey and I had three happy years in Upi; mission life was good for us both, our two sons were born, and — for someone who was just twenty-seven years old and completely inexperienced — I had unusual opportunities and freedom to be creative.

Mass In The Teduray Language

In addition to my administrative duties at the Mission and school, I was pastor of the large Upi church of mostly homesteader Ilocano peasant farmers from Luzon, and spent half of each week hiking about the hills caring for seven of our more than fifty scattered satellite chapels in villages of Teduray, a native group that I came to greatly admire. I headed a team that translated the Mass into the Teduray language, and started a string of marketing and credit cooperatives to help Teduray farmers adjust to the economic dislocation they were experiencing from being forced into the unfamiliar Filipino cash economy when profligate loggers destroyed their rainforest home. The Mission flourished, St. Francis High School got off to a great start, and I enjoyed my Teduray and Ilocano parishioners, as well as the welcoming and friendly local Muslim political authorities.



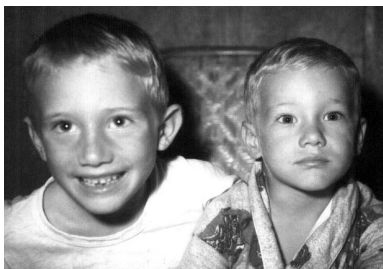
Sounding The Morning Gongs

A Different Kind Of Wisdom

Soon after we arrived in Upi, I sought the advice of a Manila anthropologist about how to create a high school that would be locally relevant and sensitive. We became friends, and he enlisted me to gather local data for a national socio-economic survey being conducted by his Institute of Philippine Culture. He also helped me understand a spiritist cult that sprang up among some of the mission's most loyal Ilocano peasant parishioners. During this time, I grew increasingly aware of how little I knew about the lives and hearts of the people I was ministering to, and wanted to learn their wisdom, rather than just teaching them what we Americans – from such an enormously different place and culture – took to be wisdom.

Back To Graduate School

Although Audrey and I had gone to Upi assuming we would spend the rest of our lives there, as the end of the three-year term approached, we discussed these feelings and agreed that an anthropology degree would allow me to relate differently to the area but not leave it entirely. I was admitted to the anthropology department of the University of Chicago for the Fall 1963 quarter and, with our two



little boys in hand, we moved to Chicago, where I did class work until the summer of 1965.

Len And Will Schlegel

Then, in January of 1966, after three months of specialized work in Philippine history and economics at the University of Michigan, we went back to Mindanao for two years of pre-doctoral field research. I decided to study Figel, a small community of about a hundred Teduray located deep in the nearby rainforest, a ten to fourteen-hour hike from the nearest road. My years there, among those people, affected me to my core.

The Teachings Of Jesus

The people of Figel were committed to an ethic of proactive and unconditional love, and they had no use for ranking, coercive power, violence, or competition, none of which they institutionalized into their social life. Living among them deepened my own commitment to a life of love, compassion, and simplicity, working for a more just and non-

violent world. Ironically, like the headhunting people of Tadian, it was animistic forest Teduray who made the teachings of Jesus concrete and real for me. The experience was transforming, another pivotal moment of my life. The cultural values I observed there have never left me.

Profound Impact

In the fifty years since I came to know the Teduray, I have published numerous essays and technical books on such topics as their elegant legal system, their complex subsistence practices, and a dictionary of their previously unstudied and unwritten language, as well as a popular, resolutely non-technical book, Wisdom from a Rainforest: The Spiritual Journey of an Anthropologist, aimed at introducing general readers to the beautiful Teduray understanding of the good life and how being among them had profoundly affected mine.

UCSC Professor

After I finished my dissertation and received my degree, the four of us moved to Santa Cruz, California in late 1968, where I joined the faculty of the University of California.

I remained there as professor of anthropology and Southeast Asian studies and fellow of Merrill College for twenty years. I loved UCSC in its early days; it was focused on good teaching as well as research, and placed a high value on close relations between students and faculty. I chaired the anthropology department for several years and for almost a decade also served as the principal academic assistant to the provost of my college. I taught courses on cultural anthropology theory, on the anthropology of law and religion, as well as on the peoples and cultures of the Philippines and Southeast Asia in general. I also designed and offered a popular course on the philosophical foundations of anthropology that drew on my long immersion in the history of philosophy. My research and writing focused primarily on Mindanao and the Teduray, but I also investigated such concerns of mine as why there is so much violence in our world, American cultural values, and our exceptionalist self-delusions.

Tragedy Strikes

In the early 1970s, war broke out in the southern Philippines, when the large Muslim population rebelled against the Christian-dominated government that had mistreated them for centuries.



Although not involved in the dispute, in 1971 many of the Teduray people of Figel were incidentally massacred. When I received a phone call from a Filipino friend informing me of the tragedy, I was devastated and no longer had the heart to continue research on the Teduray.

Indonesia

Just at that time, the Ford Foundation asked me to go to Indonesia to start a social science research training center at Syiah



Kuala University in *Syiah Kuala University* the province of Aceh to teach social science instructors from provincial universities how to do field research. I was to hire a staff, formulate the program, and then teach it. I took a two-year leave of absence from UCSC, 1973 and 1974, and those years in Aceh were marvelous for the four of us, although we found it challenging to live, work, and play in a place where virtually no English is spoken and the people are famous for being Indonesia's most devout and observant Muslims.

Nostalgic For My Own Tradition

Living there caused me to rethink my spiritual life. For many years my sense of commitment to organized religion had been gradually waning. I was going through a period of considerable anger at the Episcopal Church, because Episcopalians — at least the ones I knew — seemed to me insufficiently committed to the civil rights and peace movements. When I joined the UCSC faculty, I quietly dropped out of institutional church life entirely. I never lost my conviction that love and compassion were the forces that give life meaning, so I went right on performing acts of charity and thinking of them as Christian service and, for that matter, considering myself a Christian. However, hearing the Islamic call to prayer five times every day in Muslim Aceh had made me nostalgic for my own tradition.

St. Luke's Church

So, after returning home to Santa Cruz in early 1975, I began inching back into Episcopal Church life. I was no longer as critical; in fact I felt grateful that the people I had judged so harshly before would have me back. In 1979, I dismayed and upset my anti-religious colleagues at the university by resuming active priestly work. I volunteered to

help out at St. Luke's Church in Los Gatos, a short drive from the Santa Cruz campus. The parish elected me Rector in 1984, and I cut back to part time at the university. But, the parish grew rapidly, and, at the end of 1987, realizing that St. Luke's needed my full attention, I took early retirement from UCSC.

I Had To Retire

I was the Rector of St. Luke's from 1984 to 1992. The parish was liturgically conservative and billed itself as the Anglo-Catholic flagship of the diocese, but it was socially liberal; I was accustomed to high church worship, of course, but my thinking was less committed to many of the common Anglo-Catholic theological stances. It grew in numbers and enthusiasm, and in a few years we were able to hire our first full-time paid assistant priest. I loved my work there, and would have stayed much longer, but — although just fifty-nine-years-old — I had to retire in 1992. Our older son,

St. Luke's Church

Len was in a hospital bed in the living room of our home in the final stages of cancer (melanoma) and Audrey needed me to help with his full time care.



Retirement

In Santa Cruz

Len died the following year at the age of thirty-one. It was a great sorrow for us, but the ordeal had also been a time of tender closeness for all of us. His drama having run its course, I now had no outside responsibilities and was still full of energy, so I continued to be active in my two careers — now able to do what I chose to do, when I chose to do it. On the scholarly side, I wrote several books and articles on the Teduray, while on the spiritual side, I was invited to preach somewhere almost every Sunday, led retreats and workshops in cultural sensitivity several times each year, and gave spiritual direction to a number of people.

Political Activism

Now that I had time to be active in socio-political community efforts, I volunteered in local Santa Cruz programs to feed the homeless, and worked to oppose the California death penalty in California and violence in general. In the late 1990s, I commuted to nearby Watsonville almost every day for two years to help the United Farm Workers effort to unionize the badly exploited Mexican strawberry

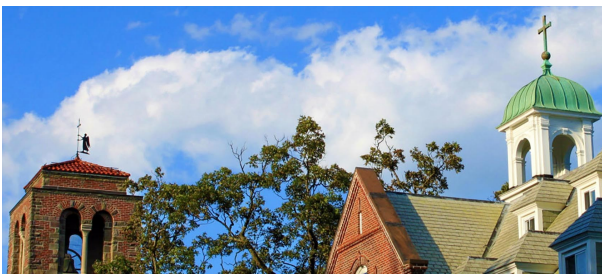
field workers. I frequently met with camposinos in their homes, where I heard endless horror stories about how they were treated: I joined them in all-night vigils of song and prayer, faced down the owners in their offices, picketed, and on occasion participated in other actions that we fully realized could land us in jail. On the whole, my retirement years have been extraordinarily blessed. But, in 1999, Audrey and I suffered another blow, when Will, our younger son, took his life in an alcoholic binge. In addition, about that same time, Audrey developed Alzheimer's disease, and I had to devote increasing time and energy to caring for her.



*Social
Activism*

The Journey Continues

In dealing with all these difficulties, I was helped by an increasing involvement with Franciscan spirituality and discipline. My spiritual evolution began soon after I entered the Navy, when I became an Associate of the Order of Holy Cross. For more than fifty years I faithfully struggled to observe their rule, which mostly consisted of prayer and sacramental practices. Even after dropping out of organized religion, I continued to follow some form of almost every aspect of the rule, praying daily as always and meditating in the Buddhist manner I had learned decades earlier. Therefore, when I resumed going to church, it seemed as though I had never strayed very far.



Holy Cross Monastery

I picked up again with OHC, but felt spiritually unhappy with them after Len developed cancer. There had never been much warmth or personal relationship between the monks and their associates, and when I tried to discuss this with the director of associates, he seemed utterly uninterested in the pain I was going through. So, I started looking

elsewhere for a more responsive and caring community with which to associate. A wise Benedictine monk and ex-abbot I knew suggested I check out becoming an associate of the Society of St. John the Evangelist or an oblate of the Roman Catholic Camaldolese Benedictines. I asked both groups to send me information.



*Camaldolese
Benedictine
Chapel*

The Third Order (Of The Society Of St. Francis)

But at that time, I knew a lovely, saintly man who taught religious studies at UCSC. He and his wife were English Roman Catholics and models of kindness and humility. I first learned from him about the Franciscan Third Order, when he said they were longtime professed members. Just a short time later, the wife of a clergy colleague of mine mentioned she was a member of our Episcopal branch. We talked about my negative feelings about Holy Cross, and she recommended I drive down to Santa Barbara to attend an upcoming Southern California regional convocation of Third Order people, where I could see it in action and meet some actual members. I did so and immediately sensed that I was among my kind of people; I liked their lack of pretension, their commitment to the poor and oppressed, and their devotion to Francis and Christ, all expressed in a simple and open way.

Work With The Homeless

One of the women I met there was an anthropologist, who like me had been chair of her department and suffered anti-religious antipathy from colleagues; she said that in the Franciscan way, she had found a path she could walk with humility and dedication as both a scholar and a person. Another described his work for the city of Los Angeles, seeking out homeless people under bridges to help them avoid AIDS, and a third was a retired businessman who had moved into a city-owned apartment house for the destitute, where he kept an eye on how each resident was doing, helped those with problems, and made sure they all had a proper celebration on their birthdays and other holidays. I was impressed, and felt less spiritually alone than I had for many, many years.



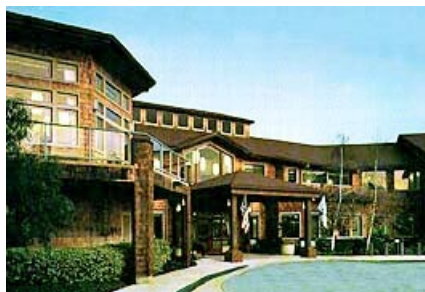
Discipline And Commitment

So, after half a century of being a Holy Cross associate, I decided to give the Franciscan way a try. The Third Order rule included all the prayer practices I had internalized and valued in the Holy Cross rule, but it also had as central to its life and mission the social justice, peace, and ecological concerns that I cared about so deeply. I began the process of formation in Franciscan spirituality, discipline and commitment in 1996, excited and somewhat amazed that the attraction to the religious life that began at Harvard School so long before had now led me to an order where, even as an older married man called to secular life, I had found a spiritual home. I was life-professed in 2000 and have been a tertiary for eighteen years. I quietly struggle to stay faithful to my spiritual practices, and feel they keep me sane and centered in my still busy and active life. In a real sense, they are now so completely part of who I am that I hardly think of them as following a rule; they are just what I do.

Dominican Oaks

In 2007, Audrey's Alzheimer's disease was progressing, and we moved into Dominican Oaks, a pleasant retirement community in Santa Cruz with just over two hundred residents, where she would be cared for if anything happened to me.

She grew increasingly sick and needy, and the last year of her life was a nightmare for us both. She decided she despised me and every day would scream



Dominican Oaks

and throw things at me, slam doors, and shout that she was sick to death of me and wanted a divorce. It was tough, but Audrey was the love of my life and I was grateful to be there for her when she was in such distress. I was able keep her at home until just a few weeks before she died in late 2011.

Profound Gratitude

Since then, my own health has become increasingly problematic, particularly the agonizing neuropathy in my feet. I had to give up driving a couple of years ago, and am now in a wheel chair, unable to tolerate the pain of walking. The condition is progressive and a constant companion, but I am delighted to wake up every morning for another day of life. I have settled into a pleasant daily routine, spending time with my little dog until her recent death — like Len from malignant melanoma — and with my many friends, my two delightful grandchildren whom I love, my books, and my memories of a long, fulfilling, and satisfying life. I have been many wonderful places and done lots of interesting things; I have had a lovely family and many great friends. I am a profoundly grateful man.

Particular Ministries (I Can Still Do)

With that as the background and context, here's what a physically challenged Franciscan in his mid-80s with abundant mobility and other health issues can still do: *I pray*. My days alone in my apartment do not feel oppressive or lonely, but like being on continual retreat, with all the time I could wish for to pray, meditate, and ponder the grace that God has lavished on me. *I keep my mind active and as sharp as possible*. As I have for so long, I read philosophers from East and West; I meet with groups to discuss the Teduray — a topic that never ceases to give me energy, pleasure, and satisfaction; and I give talks and teach courses to my fellow Dominican Oaks residents. But, mainly, I spend most of every day, when not in a doctor's office or examination room, writing books, essays, lectures and other talks.

I attempt to do whatever I do with a Franciscan consciousness. I can no longer engage in all the overt out-there-on-the scene activism I once could; indeed, I have not even been able to attend my parish for several years. I fret and pray about the grievous state of affairs in the US and the world, but my only possible activist responses are now limited to voting, signing petitions, sending checks to my favorite causes and charities, and pestering my friends in person, emails, Facebook posts, and op-eds about what is going on. I try do it all in a genuinely Franciscan way.

Other Practical Ministries

One I look for chances to offer spiritual presence and counseling to any friends and neighbors I can, and I interact by phone and email with numerous of my Third Order sisters and brothers on a variety of

topics of concern to them or me. Many are facing illnesses or losses; others are dismayed by our present world, and others by difficult family relationships.

Two I maintain some regular postal or electronic contacts that seem to me to be a ministry in themselves. For instance, I have been pen pals for several years with a TSSF brother in a mid western state prison, whom I have never met but with whom I have developed a significant friendship. I regularly exchange emails, phone conversations, and Facebook messages with people — not just nearby but also in the Philippines and Indonesia — about what is going on in our lives. I have always found the pastoral side of my priesthood to be its most rewarding aspect, and, although most of them are not overtly religious, these moments feel like a continuation of that.

Three A few years ago, I started a prayer request ministry in our province, which I continue to coordinate. When I read a number of people's requests for prayers in an issue of *TSSF Hot News*, it occurred to me that, having free time and a computer with email, I could offer to set up a roster of sisters and brothers willing to commit to praying for specific requests from members of the province. I publicized this new ministry with the blessing and help of our provincial officers and invited anyone in the province to send me their prayer requests, which I would put together into an email to the roster every Saturday morning. About eighty responded and are active participants.

Four Also, each time I receive a new *Hot News*, I invite everyone who is listed as new to our province to join our ministry as well as send me any prayer requests they may have. I also send them a little document I prepared for the guidance of people in the group and as an introduction to our work and policies, which I send them as well. I am gratified that so many who make requests tell me that have been helped by this simple idea.

Five I try to further the Kingdom in all I do and everything I write or say publicly; I seldom mention it in any way, but that goal is very real to me. Just last month I was asked to speak at the local Jewish temple, and did so on the topic: "Two Years with a Philippine Rainforest People that Transformed My Life." An unsaid theme of my lecture at the temple was that although the Teduray never heard of Jesus, they lived lives that were closer than I had ever seen

before or since to what we Christians call "the Kingdom of God." I am just now finishing preparation to publish a collection of my memoir-style writings, and almost every item in it refers to the huge influence on me that living in such a kingdom community in Figel had. We writers are commonly advised to "show" points, not "tell" them in words; I try to do the same in living my life and thereby embody the famous maxim of Francis to "preach the gospel at all times, when necessary use words."

Six Finally, like the Teduray, I try to scan my daily interactions for ways I can help others. I ask God every morning to allow me chances to be kind and helpful to the people in my life that day, and I finish every night with gratitude for the ones I was given.

Finally

All of these have been deeply sustaining and rewarding, and I see them as Franciscan work I can do even with my chronic pain and unrelenting mobility issues. They make me feel vitally alive and still able to give back to a world that has been so good to me. I enjoy the ministries I do; I feel good about serving my spiritual and day-to-day communities; and I am continually inspired by being still able to help others in so many ways.

My Suggestion To Other Aging TSSFers

A motto of mine that I invoke as a sort of mantra is: "Do the best you can with what you have left." I am convinced that we all (even those of us who are older and struggling with severe physical limitations) can find pleasing and rewarding Franciscan work to do. I urge you to root through your memory for whatever skills and talents your life has provided you, and build on those. Please do not spend any time or effort worrying about what you can't now do. You will soon discern that there is a lot you still can do.



Stuart A. Schlegel
1932-2018

A Well-Lived Life

Stuart A. Schlegel, TSSF
The New Umbrian Fellowship

"I heard the bells on Christmas Day. Their old, familiar carols play, and wild and sweet, the words repeat. Of peace on earth, good-will to men!" Henry Wadsworth Longfellow



The Emmaus Travelers Program

The number of people in the Emmaus Travelers Program continues to grow. The feedback we have been receiving tells a tale of a need for deep and lasting connections being truly met. It is with great excitement and satisfaction that these testimonies are shared with you. It has been our practice to not identify the Emmaus Traveler of the authors; however, in this edition we feel it is appropriate to make an exception. Enjoy. Please let us know how you ET connection is working for you. If you have any questions, kindly reach out to us.

The Emmaus Travelers Program Team

We Began To Share Our Lives

Almost a year ago, I was asked to be an Emmaus Traveler (ET). I had no idea really what that entailed, but I was willing to give it a try. It was something that could tie me to other Third Order Franciscans and that was something I wanted. One of the two contacts I was given was Stuart Schlegel. I looked in the directory and saw that Stu was a retired Priest and Professor. "O God, what would we have in common?" I thought. With a little nervousness, I made the first call to Stu. This changed me in a way that I did not expect. Stu, I could tell, loved the Lord and was keeping very busy. The call was quick and I told Stu, "I will call you in two weeks." My second call was much more lengthy and we began to share our lives. In the next call Stu shared with me that he had lost his wife and son and missed them greatly. He spoke to me of his living space and the many memories that he had there.

Trusting In God

As we continued, over many calls and time, I could hear something was concerning Stu. He shared with me about his bladder tumors. We prayed over the phone that His will be done and Stu was very happy with that. A medical procedure was performed and we discussed what the doctor might say afterwards. I shared with Stu that he would be fine and the medical world does work miracles. Stu was at peace with whatever he would be told. As we all learn, when we get older, one thing leads to another. Stu shared that he might have to get another apartment. I told him, God will make sure he was where he

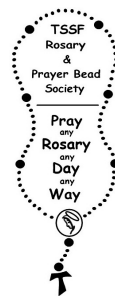
needed to be. When Stu called me next he said, "They can't find me another place." He was very happy to stay in his current apartment with all the memories. From my connection with Stu, I was strengthened in my belief that with God all things work out per His plan.

Stu Was One Great Human Being

During the time we shared as Emmaus Travelers, Stu had several medical issues arise which brought him great concern. These setbacks challenged him, but he shared his love of the Lord with all of his family and friends. As he wrestled with the reality that his body was failing, his faith was demonstrated by his continual encouragement of others and the peace that was present in his life. Stu was one great human being. As a closing note, I wish to say a word of thanks for the Emmaus Travelers Program which provided the opportunity for me to meet a Brother in Christ who made a great impact on me. Though he only recently passed, I am sure Stu has already established himself on the other side. I am very grateful to have made this friend. One day we will talk again. Stu, until that time, may you rest in the peace of the Lord. God bless you, my Brother. ~ Paul

*Paul Ledwitz, TSSF
Texas*

If you have not yet become an Emmaus Traveler and would like to do so, please contact the team at saintswisdom@yahoo.com or write [The Emmaus Travelers Program](#) P.O. Box 706, Mt. Sinai, NY 11766.
The Emmaus Travelers Program Team



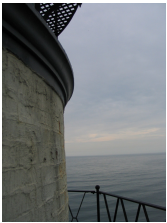
The TSSF Rosary And Prayer Bead Society

Christmas Greetings! Well friends, within the next few weeks you will be receiving your Rosary And Prayer Bead Society (RPBS) "Christmas Thank You Card" from Darlene and the team. This is a practice Darlene began years ago, and we all agreed that it must continue. However, instead of a handful of members to send the greeting to, over one hundred and forty-three cards will be mailed! Every week new people sign up to become members. The last two people to officially join the Society are both

Roman Catholic priests who not only love the Holy Rosary but emphatically support the work we are doing in this prayer ministry. Please let us know how you like your holiday card and send your rosary stories to The TSSF Rosary And Prayer Bead Society.

Contact Judith at serg1us@aol.com or Joy at joymazzola@me.com or saintswisdom@yahoo.com or write [The TSSF Rosary And Prayer Bead Society](#) P.O. Box 706, Mt. Sinai, NY 11766.

The TSSF Rosary And Prayer Bead Society Team



Barnabas Ministry Stories

Encouragement Happens Through Connection!

The past year has brought greater person to person contact and interaction between members of the Third Order. Our community has been strengthened and revitalized and the new energy is tangible. In this Barnabas section we include any ministry endeavors which encourage believers (especially non-traditional ministries). In a very gratifying way, we have been able to end the feeling of isolation that has been an area of concern for quite a large number of us over the years. A safety net has been installed and people are being vigilant to insure that no one gets overlooked, forgotten, or falls through the cracks. Praise God for this reality.

Meeting The Challenge

The truth is that in order to stay strong in one's Franciscan commitment, often it is necessary to find alternative ways of staying connected with brothers and sisters. With this in mind, we think it is relevant to share the story of how Stu Schlegel and some of his friends met this challenge during a time when there was no Emmaus Travelers Program.

The Emmaus Travelers Program Team

Fellowshipping And Me

An Explanation

When I first became an aspirant to join TSSF, the late Stu Schlegel took me under his wing and introduced me to the New Umbrian Fellowship as the geographically appropriate one. I had already moved to Monterey, which is one hundred-twenty miles from San Francisco (one-way) where the fellowship met. Back then, I was younger and

healthier and thought nothing of the long drive. I even started driving Stu back and forth from his home in Santa Cruz so he would not have to drive. Sometimes we went as far north as Santa Rosa when the Fellowship met up there. When Stu became housebound, I used to pick up the late Joan Kidd from her home in Halfmoon Bay, a practice which I continued until the drive started getting too much for me. Then the three of us met at a restaurant in Santa Cruz and were joined after a while by Cristine Mincheff from San Carlos. Though we all had good reasons for the shorter drive, we remained devoted members of the New Umbrian Fellowship and kept in close touch with the others in the group. I remember that the fellowship convenor at the time came down for a visit which we greatly appreciated.

Trying Something New

Finally, when I was no longer able to drive on the freeways, I perforce became an "isolated tertiary." Around the same time, Joan died leaving me isolated in Monterey, Stu housebound in Santa Cruz, and Cristine still mobile in San Carlos. We were a well established group of three yet still managed to stay close with the New Umbrian Fellowship. Cristine found a way for us to make free monthly conference calls, which we did for a while (inviting the northerly NU folks to join us, though there were no takers).

Initial Efforts

At this point the Order as a whole became interested in the plight of the "isolated tertiary" and solved the problem (for some of us at least) by going electronic. Cristine and I both joined the new Cloud Fellowship, but Stu was more comfortable with the phone connection we had already built, so until the time of his death, Cristine and I were on the phone connection one Sunday and the Cloud Fellowship the following Sunday every month. We have decided to maintain this arrangement. We both keep in touch with the San Francisco "New Umbrians" and remain a part of that Fellowship. We participate in the group's annual retreat in the redwoods when possible and expect to see most of them at Stu's memorial service. I believe that fellowship does not depend on physical proximity or modern electronic devices to flourish, but rather people's commitment to loving friendships.

Kate de la Fuente, TSSF

New Umbrian, Cloud, And Phone Fellowships

**"Then pealed the bells more loud and deep:
God is not dead, nor doth He sleep!"**

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

Ministry Highlight #1

Sparks Of God's Love

Stu has been such an inspiring friend. Every visit was a joy. He never was down, and always was positive. That was a gift to all around him. And of course it came from his deep abiding love of God and His creation. I never felt stupid discussing theology, the Bible, or even Christianity with him. I always felt as if he was a guide into deeper understanding and more rigorous examination. When I read Wisdom From a Rainforest I was captivated by the uniqueness of the experience that he shared in the book. It seems to me as if Stu found a spark in each new person he met and each new idea he encountered. These sparks came together as the light of God's love. For me, he is the embodiment of the phrase, "It is in giving that we receive." It was a gift to know him and a blessing that he is with God. My guide is not gone, but holding my hand more closely than ever.
Cristine Mincheff, TSSF
New Umbrian, Cloud, And Phone Fellowships

Ministry Highlight #2

About Stu

The pain and the sickness have come to an end
And with them the life of my gallant friend.
How can I say what I feel about Stu?
The first Franciscan that ever I knew.
He was learned and wise and he followed his Rule
And was my first teacher in "Saint Francis School."
When several years later I'd finished Formation
Stu did my Profession with great jubilation.
He was steadfastly loving in subsequent years
And the thought of his passing would
drown me in tears
Except for his jokes – beyond counting and funny—
With which he made even my darkest day sunny.
For the joy of St. Francis was broadcast by Stu –
And for that gift, my old friend,
I shall always thank you!
Kate de la Fuente, TSSF
New Umbrian, Cloud, And Phone Fellowships

**"Nothing more was said; but from that day there slowly crept into the family more respect for grandma, more forbearance with her infirmities, more interest in her little stories, and many a pleasant gossip did the old lady enjoy with the children as they gathered round her fire, solitary so long."
*Louisa May Alcott (From An Old-Fashioned Girl)***

Send your Barnabas Ministry submissions to saintswisdom@yahoo.com or write [Barnabas Ministry](mailto:BarnabasMinistry) P.O. Box 706, Mt. Sinai, NY 11766.
TFC



"In the long, long trip of growing . . . There are stops along the way. It's an important moment when we need to stop, reflect, and receive. In our competitive world, that might be called a waste of time. I've learned that those times can be the preamble to periods of enormous growth. Recently, I declared a day to be alone with myself. I took a long drive and played some music. When I got to the mountains, I read and prayed and listened and slept. In fact, I can't remember having a calmer sleep in a long, long time. The next day I went back to work and did more than I usually get done in three days."

Fred Rogers



I'm Just Saying . . .

Reflections On Justice

What is Justice? The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America contains the phrase, with liberty and justice for all. What does that mean? For some, this seems to apply only to the powerful and wealthy. Often justice is depicted as a goddess holding a sword and scales and blindfolded to indicate impartiality. In today's world, too often, that is not the case. Sometimes Lady Justice peeks out the side of her blindfold and puts her thumb on the scales.

Humanity Is Flawed

Most people believe justice means fairness. But what is fair to one person may not be fair to another. Laws are supposed to be enacted to provide fairness to everyone, no matter his or her economic status.

Because humanity is flawed, it turned out that persons who crafted and judged according to those laws were wealthy and powerful: kings, potentates and dictators; the poor and oppressed lacked input into making or administering those laws.

Resident Aliens

Richard Rohr, Franciscan priest and author of many books on spirituality, writes, "Most of the people who have ever lived on this planet have been oppressed and poor. But their history was seldom written except in the Bible and recent books." Holy Scriptures in the Old Testament and in the Gospels contain numerous references about how poor persons should be treated, including aliens. Leviticus 19:18 says, "You shall not take vengeance or bear a grudge against any of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself." And further, verse 19:34 says, "The alien who resides with you shall be to you as the citizen among you; you shall love the alien as yourself for you were aliens in the land of Egypt: I am the Lord your God."

Selective Use Of The Bible

Unquestionably, unjust laws have existed, for instance: laws meant to enslave or to impoverish. Today, many laws are written specifically to benefit special interests, the wealthy and powerful. Lord Acton's famous quote in 1887, "Power tends to corrupt, and absolute power corrupts absolutely," has been amply demonstrated in the enactment of unfair laws. Often the Bible was selectively used to justify slavery and other unjust laws. Poor people have often been left with the short end of the stick. Granted, most of us support laws that protect us from crime and those who commit crime. We want to be safe in our neighborhoods and communities. We want to protect our families and the "things" we have accumulated, our way of life.

Someone Has To Pay The Piper

Most of the industrial world has succumbed to the notion that acquisitiveness provides a path to happiness. We are an acquisitive society. But it comes with a price: exploiting natural resources, polluting our air and waterways, seas and oceans, over-foresting our timber, over-fishing our seas, and our increasing dependence on, and pursuit of wealth. We simply consume too much of the world's resources at the expense of the poor and destitute. And the enormous effort to acquire things takes a tremendous personal toll: anxiety, frustration, anger, heart attacks and strokes, bankruptcy, divorce, drug addiction, self-centeredness, and suicide. And over-consuming ensures the poor stay poor.

As Franciscans

A better way exists. Richard Rohr posits that adopting a simpler way of life, eschewing waste and luxury, and sharing our resources could help restore the current unjust imbalance. We ought to ask ourselves, "What do we really need?" Most people I know have far too much "stuff." I do, too. By living a life of simplicity without waste or luxury, we could eliminate much of the inequalities and inequities of today's world. It might even lead to justice and peace; personal peace and peace among nations of the world. Day Eleven (part two of the Third Aim) of our Third Order Principles, expresses succinctly how as Franciscans we ought to address the challenge of injustice and poverty in our world: Although we possess property and earn money to support ourselves and our families, we show ourselves true followers of Christ and Saint Francis by our readiness to live simply and to share with others. We recognize that some of our members may be called to a literal following of Saint Francis in a life of extreme simplicity. All of us, however, accept that we avoid luxury and waste, and regard our possessions as being held in trust for God. I'm Just Saying . . .

Gary Davis, TSSF

Troubadours Of The Susquehanna Fellowship

"Then the Grinch thought of something he hadn't before! What if Christmas, he thought, doesn't come from a store. What if Christmas, perhaps, means a little bit more!"

Dr. Seuss (From How the Grinch Stole Christmas)

UPCOMING

A Dramatic Transitus Service And Feast Day Of St. Francis Gathering!

**2019 (October 3-5) Thursday Through Saturday
Come And Celebrate Our Father Francis
at this unique Franciscan Experience!**

Deeper Connection Desired

This happening has been in the planning stage for nearly a year. It was born from discussions among a number of tertiaries about a common feeling of somehow "coming up short," in terms of having sufficient space for deeper fellowship when we have our meetings, convocations, retreats, and such. No matter how wonderful they are, it seems that there is never enough time for us to fully engage in conversations on a personal level. We connect yes, but it often leaves us wishing there was a bit more time to explore these interactions.

This special event is being planned with enough open space to foster new relationships, as well as to strengthen old ones!



Expectations Running High!

This event, with its focus on "Connection" among TSSFers is the first of its kind and it is expected to draw tertiaries from around the country. There is a very detailed information packet being created. There will be an innovative schedule centered on these two holy dates which will maximize the time allotted for fellowship, discussion, and the interaction between Franciscans.



The Picture On The Right Is A Portion Of An Icon Written By Mary Louise Maroney, TSSF



Where?

The gathering will be held in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, just outside the city (four miles from the Lancaster train station). The venue is The Spiritual Center at St. Thomas Episcopal Church, 301 St. Thomas Road, Lancaster, Pennsylvania. Attendees will stay off campus and orchestrate their own accommodations (however, we will provide all the needed details).

Contact saintswisdom@yahoo.com and ask for information about The Transitus Service And Feast Day Gathering!

UPCOMING

*A Special Southwest Convocation
2019 (October 4-6) Friday Through Sunday*

The St. John's Hand-Illuminated Bible

The Milagro Fellowship continues to develop plans for this wonderful Southwest Convocation with the larger TSSF family, centered around this Bible. The volumes will be on loan to TSSF during the retreat and will be available to pray with, learn from, and touch.

A detailed flyer is being prepared by the Milagro Fellowship which will be made available soon. For now, please check out the websites below and watch for updates here in *The Franciscan Connection*. For immediate questions, please contact Cece Evola, at thetwowhos@gmail.com.

The Bosque Center www.bosquecenter.org
The St. John's Bible www.saintjohnsbible.org



The Power Of "Thanks!"

Thanksgiving has come and gone, and most of us have remembered, at least for a little while, to be grateful to God for the many blessings in our lives. But sometimes our gratitude goes right to the ultimate source, without touching on the 'middlemen' who acted as conduits for those blessings! This Advent season, I'm going to try and be intentional about actually saying (not just thinking) "Thank you" to as many people as I can possibly think of who make my life better in some way. Not just my husband, but also the teller at the bank who is always so friendly, and the guy who drives the trash truck, and the bookkeeper who writes my paycheck, and the person who makes coffee after church on Sunday mornings.

You Too!

I encourage you to do the same thing! And what if, rather than just saying "Thanks," we took a minute and wrote it down and put it in an envelope? You know how good it feels to get an actual thank-you note, whether in the mail or just left on your desk; why not spread that good feeling around? Grab a stack of paper and plain envelopes, or use up some pretty note cards that have been lurking around in your desk, and start thinking of people to thank. Even just two sentences and your signature will make someone's day!

thegratefulnessfairy@gmail.com

Janet Strickler, TSSF





Poetry Pocket

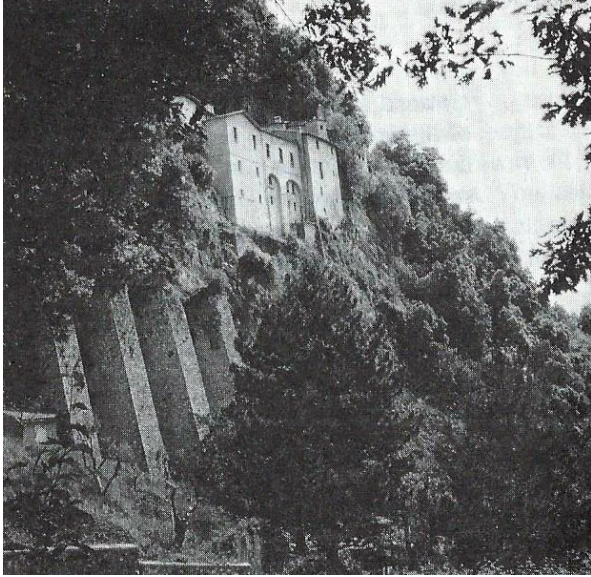


Photo: Murray Bodo, OFM

Greccio

"Greccio is a small mountain hermitage in the Rieti Valley between Assisi and Rome. The cliff on which it stands was made available to the Friars by John Vellita. On the eve of December 25, 1223, Francis and the brothers and many lay people from the nearby farms celebrated Christ's birth with real animals in a cave on this mountain. The infant Jesus appeared in Francis' arms to all those watching. Thus the tradition of the Christmas crib as we know it today began."

Christmas Eve

all is quiet
torches line the path
pilgrims come to do homage
snow falls to the ground
carols rise to fill the air
and oxen stand aside

as cave and spirit
bear a son

The description entitled "Greccio" and the poem "Christmas Eve" both appear in the book *A Pilgrim In Assisi* by Susan Saint Sing, published by St. Anthony's Messenger Press, Cincinnati, Ohio, 1981. Used with permission from the author. The photo of Greccio taken by Murray Bodo, OFM and is from the same book, also used with permission.

Christmas On Pleasant Street

December snow falling wet
upon the red and gray bricks
of Pleasant Street Friary.
I reach again for you
who send this snow,
and I remember Greccio
where you fell from above.
My eyes turn heavenward
and I am freed again
from this horizontal world.
Like Greccio, poetry looks up
where you dwell and
brings you to earth again.
You rise above the earth
and fall again each Christmas
and we see your infant body
and touch the smooth side of love.
The Word becomes flesh
and flesh opens into spirit
and God becomes man.

"Christmas On Pleasant Street" is from Murray Bodo's book *Letters From Pleasant Street*, published by St. Anthony's Messenger Press, Cincinnati, Ohio, 1981. Used with permission from the author.



Final Words

Merry Christmas

Thank you to all of our friends and family who have supported the development of *The Franciscan Connection*. We have received many encouraging notes and calls and we are truly blessed. It is evident that the Holy Spirit has given birth to this new publication. With the addition of *TFC* and the creation of *The Rhythm And The Beads Newsletter* (RAB), combined with the long standing *Franciscan Times*. tertiaries now have a much broader sense of feeling connected with others in the Order. And for this we are grateful.

Remember, "Stay connected!" *TFC*

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The Franciscan Connection

A Publication of The Third Order,
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Province of the Americas

Christmas 2018

Come On In!

~ Thoughts From Our PC, MP, And FC

Ongoing Ministry

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- ~ The Emmaus Travelers Program [ETP] *Update & Testimonies*
- ~ The TSSF Rosary And Prayer Bead Society [RPBS]

Articles

- ~ Franciscan Work I Can Still Do By Stuart Schlegel, TSSF
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- ~ Christmas Eve By Susan Saint Sing
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- ~ Final Words



The
Franciscan
Connection

Phyllis