

Up to Now

Newsletter of the St. Margaret of Cortona Region of the Secular Franciscan Order

Covering the District of Columbia, Maryland, Delaware, Virginia,
and portions of West Virginia and Pennsylvania



Fr. Philippus Philippus, OFMCap

Volume 12, Issue 3

Let us begin again, for up to now we have done nothing.

February 2009

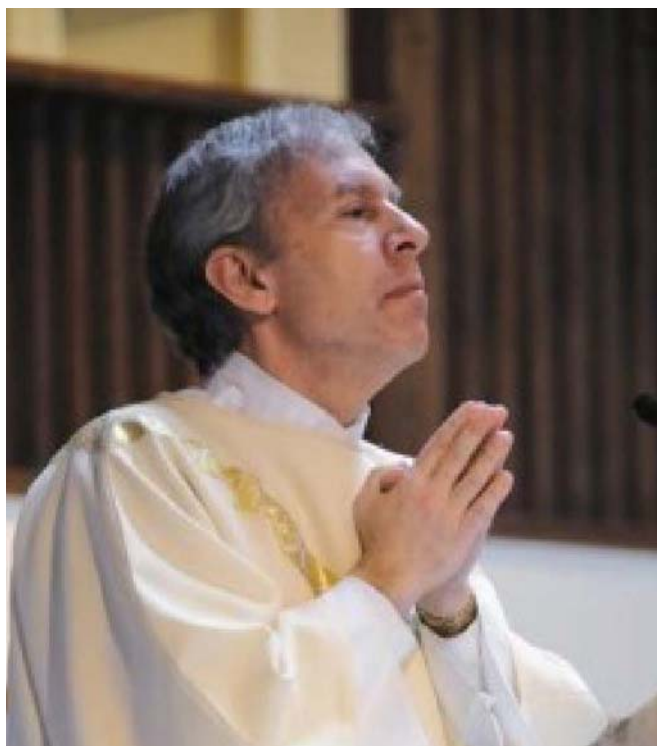


Photo by Katie Bahr, Arlington Catholic Herald, used courtesy Arlington Catholic Herald.

Deacon Tom Bello, sfo, Regional Minister of the St. Margaret of Cortona Region, participates in a diaconate installation at St. Thomas More Cathedral in Arlington, Va.

Deacon Bello Featured in Arlington Catholic Herald

Deacon Tom Bello, sfo, Regional Spiritual Director of the St. Margaret of Cortona Region, was featured in the February 18, 2009, issue of the *Arlington Catholic Herald*, the newsletter of the Arlington, Va., Diocese.

The article covers the many activities of Deacon Bello, many of which may be unknown to the members of the region.

To read the entire article, go to http://www.catholicherald.com/detail.html?sub_id=9395.

Regional Elections

Regional elections will be held at Priestfield Conference Center on March 28 as part of the annual regional meeting.

This is a very important election, as the a Minister will be chosen, as well as the Vice Minister, Secretary, Treasurer, Formation Minister and the three area councilors.

Brief bios of each candidate are presented on page 2.

Please keep the ministers of the region in your prayers as they participate in the election.



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Minister Mary Thuman	Formation Director Mary Lou Coffman Peggy Gregory Jenny Moreira	VA Area Councilor Claire Hoagland Jeanie McLees
Vice Minister Ann Amrhein Peggy Gregory Claire Hoagland	MD/PA Area Councilor Mary Simmons Teri Egan Michael Heuthner	
Secretary Teri Egan Claire Hoagland Maura Needhamm	DC Area Councilor Ann Corro Michael Heuthner Miguel Tirado	
Treasurer Patrick Martin		

Ann Amrhein (Vice Minister), Little Flower Fraternity, Baltimore, Md.

Mary Lou Coffman (Formation Minister), St. Francis of Assisi Fraternity, Triangle, Va.

Professed October 1998

Secular Order Experience

1996 – Became editor, Up to Now.

November 1998-Present –Formation Minister, St. Francis of Assisi Fraternity, Triangle, Va.

Additional Formation Experience

More than 30 years in adult religious formation.

Six years as consultant to formation directors at St. Mark's Episcopal Church, Washington, D.C.

Member of RCIA team, 1993-present.

Graduate, Education for Parish Service certificate program (four-year program)

Additional Ministry Service

Music Ministry, 1992-present (accompanist, Parish Masses; Children and Teen Choir accompanist)

Parish delegate Diocesan PEIR Committee (Parish Ecumenical and Inter-Religious Ministry)

Member, Sister Parish Committee for Franciscan parishes in Lima, Peru.

Ann Corro (DC Area Councilor), St. John the Beloved Fraternity, Alexandria, Va.

Professed April 25, 1982

SFO positions held:

Fraternity minister 1987-2003

Mid-South Area Councilor for Holy Name Province 1988-1992

Regional minister 1993-2000

Regional Vice Minister 2000-03

Regional Secretary 2006-09

Fraternity Secretary 2003-09

I appreciate the universal nature of our SFO and have been privileged to participate in three levels of our governance — local, regional and national as St. Margaret of Cortona's representative. I even had the honor of hosting former Minister General Emmanuele De Nunzio for lunch and a meeting when she visited Washington, DC. It is a great privilege to be a Secular Franciscan and to participate in the councils at higher levels. We are truly a global organization, and encountering this reality by serving in the SFO organizational structure is a mind- and heart-expanding experience.

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Slate of Candidates (Continued)

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 Parish delegate Diocesan PEIR Committee (Parish Ecumenical and Inter-Religious Ministry)
 Member, Sister Parish Committee for Franciscan parishes in Lima, Peru.

It would be my great privilege to serve as Formation Minister for the St. Margaret of Cortona Region. It is my joy to attempt to follow Jesus in the footsteps of our Seraphic Father and to help others on their journey.

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Professed April 25, 1982

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 Mid-South Area Councilor for Holy Name Province 1988-1992
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Teri Egan (Secretary, MD/PA Area Councilor), St. Francis Fraternity, Washington, D.C.**Peggy Gregory (Vice Minister, Formation Minister), Holy Family Fraternity, Manassas, Va.**

Professed August 6, 1978

In 1998, I became the first Minister of Holy Family Emerging Fraternity, which was Canonically Established in August 2008. In addition to the position of Minister, I served as the fraternity's Secretary for three years, and now as Formation Director for the past four years.

To be nominated for any position on the Regional Council

is an honor, to be sure, but it's also very humbling — and a little frightening. I'm not sure that I have the qualifications and/or qualities that will be required. That means I'll be spending a lot of time on my knees (!), and that I will be relying heavily upon the prayers of my brothers and sisters for the grace to accomplish God's will.

Michael Heuther (DC Area Councilor), St. Michael's Fraternity, Baltimore, Md.

Professed September 1998

Teacher with the Baltimore County Public School System: teaching math and science at Sparrows Point High School in Edgemere, Maryland.

Teacher of sixth grade religious education (CCD) at Immaculate Heart of Mary Church of Towson, Md., for the past five years.

Adult leader with the Boy Scouts of America for nearly 40 years.

Private Tutor with Sylvan Learning Systems, Professional Tutoring Service and Tutorfind.

Experience with the Secular Franciscan Order:

Took on apostolates of ecology, youth and formation after profession.

Formation director of the Little Flower Fraternity from 2003 to 2006, and have worked on the formation team of the fraternity from the time of profession to the present.

Attended several area formation workshops as well as general meetings of the region within the last eight to nine years.

Attended the 1998 and 2001 Chapters of Mats.

Attended three regional retreats, the last being the most recent one in Priestfield.

Currently running for Vice Minister or for Formation Director (second time) of Little Flower Fraternity.

Claire Hoagland (Vice Minister, Secretary, VA Area Councilor), St. Francis of Assisi Fraternity, Triangle, Va.

Professed November 1, 1997

As a Secular Franciscan in the St. Francis Fraternity, I have held the offices of Treasurer and Minister. I have encouraged others in our fraternity to live out their Franciscan calling in whatever way they feel is best for them. I have worked with the homeless for many years and now volunteer with them. My current “paid job” is as a social work case manager at the Naval Health Clinic at Quantico Marine Corps Base. Doesn't sound like a

Slate of Candidates (Continued)

peacemaking type of Franciscan job but I have in many ways brought the spirit of St. Francis to my work. My office is decorated brightly and many have found it an "oasis" in the clinic and on the base. Most of the patients I work with were wounded in the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and they have issues they are dealing with from their combat experiences. I cannot go back and take them out of the war, but I can help them now as they readjust and get them the physical and emotional help they need now. I pray for my patients daily. I also provide support to the doctors and nurses in the clinic. I try to "live" as a Franciscan and share the Franciscan spirit by the way I act and by what I say to others I am working with and living with.

I look forward to helping on the Regional Council in any way that I can. I appreciate this opportunity to serve.

Patrick Martin (Treasurer), St. Anthony of Nagasaki Fraternity, Washington, D.C.

Professed September 22, 2007

Other volunteer positions:

- Member, executive committee, Global Solidarity Committee of the Archdiocese of Washington; Chair, Parish Programs subcommittee
- Member: Social Justice Committee, St. Peter's Church on Capitol Hill
- Member: Choir, St. Peter's Church on Capitol Hill
- Member: Papal Mass Choir for the 2008 Papal Visit to Washington

For 21 years, I was Assistant Dean for Budget and Technology with the School of Communication at American University. In 2006, I resigned that position so I could be part of the management team opening Don Bosco Cristo Rey High School in the Archdiocese of Washington, where I am now the Business Manager.

Jeannie McLees (VA Area Councilor), Sacred Heart Fraternity, Virginia Beach, Va.

Professed 1989

EDUCATION:

Bachelor of Science Degree in Interdisciplinary Studies, emphasis in Special Education.

Currently assistant teaching Reading Program to Special Education students and assisting Special Education Department Chairperson.

Homebound teacher as needed for Special needs students.

EXPERIENCE:

Minister Sacred Heart Fraternity two terms, Vice Minister, Formation Director, Secretary, hospitality committee.

Regional Councilor, Virginia/W. Virginia

Youth Councilor, Virginia/W. Virginia

Formation Team Member, Virginia/W. Virginia

ACTIVITIES/SERVICE

National Youth Commission, Youth Day gatherings in Denver, Pittsburgh, California, Buffalo, NY and Virginia Beach

Regional Retreat Day (s) Richmond Abbey, Virginia/W. Virginia Ministers, Formation Directors.

Regional Youth Day gatherings for Youth and family.

This also consisted of Ecology Day (s) for youth and family. Regional collection of needy items for young adults at Deep Run Lodge.

Regional gathering Virginia/W. Virginia Formation Directors, at Richmond Abbey and home of local fraternity member.

Day(s) of recollection at Poor Clare's, fraternity participated with neighboring fraternities, participated in local church activities, and Knights of Columbus annual St. Patrick's Day activities.

Jenny Moreira (Formation Minister), St. Conrad Fraternity, Annapolis, Md.

Professed May 8, 1979

I was appointed Formation Director for two terms and elected Formation Director for two more terms. I served as minister for one term and am now serving as vice-minister of St. Conrad Fraternity. I held Baltimore area formation directors meetings at my home and set up three "days of recollection" for those in formation in the Baltimore area.

Maura Needham (Secretary), Holy Family Fraternity, Manassas, Va.

Professed June 11, 2007

I am a Eucharistic Minister and currently on the leadership team of the Charismatic Prayer Group at Church of the Nativity. I was also part of the RCIA team for several years. Several years ago I co-organized an evening Bible study which is still going strong at Nativity.

I was editor of the fraternity's newsletter for two years.

*Slate of Candidates (Continued)***Mary Simmons (VA Area Councilor) Padre Pio of Pietrelcina Fraternity, Bel Air, Md.**

Professed March 23, 1986

Attended Little Flower Fraternity from 1986 – 1996

Served as Peace & Justice co-chair

Served on Formation Team, helping with ongoing formation, giving presentations at gatherings when asked

Helped found St. Padre Pio Fraternity; 1st Meeting March 19, 1996; canonically established November 22, 1999

Served as Acting Fraternity Minister of Padre Pio Fraternity for four years from 1996-2000; Fraternity Minister of Padre Pio Fraternity for six years from 2000-2006 (totaling 10 years Acting/Elected Minister)

Worked on Regional Formation Team in the Md/Pa/Del Area from 1996-2006, brainstorming, praying and serving as one of the presenters at area formation workshops and days of recollection for inquirers, candidates and newly professed.

Certified as a Spiritual Director by the Archdiocese of Baltimore, by Fr. Dale Picarelli, Director, after two-year program from 2002-2004

Presently serving as Md/Pa/Del Regional Councilor for three years; from 2006-2009, visiting area fraternities, presiding over elections, reporting back to the regional executive council and holding area ministers meetings three to four times a year.

I have enjoyed working with the Ministers in the Md/Pa/Del Area. The region helped me so much when I was working so hard to get St. Padre Pio Fraternity canonically established that I would like to give back to the region what they have done for me to help others. The regional executive council and the regional area ministers meetings were an invaluable aid to me, and God willing, I am willing to run again and to “Begin Again.”

Mary Thuman (Minister). Little Flower Fraternity, Baltimore, Md.

Professed October 30, 1987

My husband Bob and I are active members of St. Dominic’s Parish. We serve as Eucharistic Ministers to a local nursing home on a monthly basis. I also serve as a lector, parish council member and former chair of our Evangelization team. In the 1990s I chaired the RCIA team and Renew team in our parish. I am currently working as one of the chaplains at Good Samaritan

Hospital in Baltimore.

Some of my previous employment background includes Executive Assistant to past and present CEOs of Goodwill Industries of the Chesapeake (1990 – 1998) and Customer Advocate for Success for All Foundation (1998 – 2004).

SECULAR FRANCISCAN ORDER

In our fraternity I have served in several roles: secretary in the late 80s, formation director in the early 90s, vice minister in the late 90s and am now completing my sixth year as our fraternity minister. I have been working with Mary Simmons to plan the regional Day of Recollection on May 30.

If it is the Lord’s will, I will do my best to serve our region as its minister for the next three years.

Miguel Tirado (DC Area Councilor), Del Camino Fraternity, Washington, D.C.

Professed 2002

In 2006 I was elected as Minister of the Secular Order Del Camino, and during that same year as Councilor in the Executive Regional Council. During the past few years I have tried giving myself totally to my fraternity and to work hard for them and helping in what has been possible in the Regional Council to this day.

Presently I am employed in an environment with children in the public school system in Montgomery County as a Bus Operator.

I pray that God may continue giving me the opportunity to work in my fraternity and with those my brothers and sisters that may need my help and to continue to live as a good Franciscan.

Fui elegido como para ministro el año 2006 y tambien en ese mismo año me eligieron como Bocal (councilor) en el Consejo Ejecutivo Regional (executive regional council) y así en estos años he tratado de dar todo a mi fraternidad y trabajar duro por ello y tambien ayudando en todo lo que he podido para el Consejo Regional hasta hoy día.

Actualmente tambien trabajo en un ambiente con niños para las escuelas publicas en el condado de Montgomery como operadpr de bus escolar, y solo le pido a Dios que me siga dando la oportunidad de seguir ayudando a mi fraternidad y o todos mis hermanos que me necesitan y seguir una vida como un buen franciscano.

Our Pilgrimage

On September 14, Ann Corro (St. John the Beloved), Mary Simmons (Padre Pio) and I (St. Francis, DC) left on a pilgrimage to Franciscan shrines in Italy. The trip was organized by the Padre Pio Foundation of America, so the primary emphasis was on him.

Upon arriving in Rome, we toured the four major churches, and we also attended the Papal audience on September 17th. The crowds were overwhelming, but the blessings on us and our families were certainly appreciated.

Then we began the long drive to San Giovanni Rotondo, across Italy, near the Adriatic. Because of the exposition of Padre Pio's body, it was a special trip. Tickets were needed. We had Mass in the huge hospital which he began. Doctors come from all over to volunteer there, and the patients also come from the general area.

We also went to the Campagna region, to Pietrelcina, the birthplace of Padre Pio. The town was small and peaceful, and we attended mass in the church where he had said mass

(St. Mary of the Angels). The visit to the Piana Romana, where he received the invisible stigmata, was very special. The sense of quiet and the smell of pine trees made me want to stay longer.

On another day, we drove to St. Michael's Cave, which was nearby. St. Michael, the Archangel appeared here, and John-Paul II visited it while Pope. Also, Father Francis visited it, but prayed for thirty days before entering. And Padre Pio sent penitents there to pray.

It was difficult to leave such a holy place. Even in our rooms at the Center of Padre Pio Spirituality, one had a sense of calm. There was a dedicated channel on TV where visitors can watch what is going on in the church, be it Mass, the Stations of the Cross, etc. Also, the meals there were the best of the trip, giving us a real sense of home-cooked Italian food.

(The photo was taken in one of the chapels there. For Mary, this was a trip she had been waiting to make for 30 years.)

Then we were off to Assisi, which Ann and I had both visited previously. It was great being back, and because our hotel was so close to the Basilica, I could look out the balcony and see the sun shining on it. I must say, though, that going to the lower town, St. Mary of the Angels, and visiting the church, seeing the Porciuncula, and the cell where Francis prayed, had a special meaning for me. It was here that he lived his converted life, I hated leaving.

The final jewel in the crown was the visit to the shrine of St. Anthony in Padua. This church is incredibly beautiful, and we were able to see the relic of his tongue... as he was known as such a great preacher. I wish we had had more time there too.

The remainder of the trip was a short visit to Venice (with Mass in the church where St. Lucy's uncorrupted body is) and to Florence. We did have a quick tour of Santa Croce church, which is run by the Conventuals. Michelangelo is buried here.

It's difficult to convey on paper what each of us experienced during this special time. But I think we all left with a deeper sense of spirituality and a gratitude to the Lord for bestowing on these special saints all the gifts that caused us to grow closer to Him.



Peace.

Teri Egan

St. Francis Fraternity, Washington, D.C.

From My Corner of the World

Anne Mulqueen, SFO

International Councilor, USA

Have you ever had so much to say that you didn't know where to begin? Well, I have. And so the Holy Spirit had to step in and lead me to an article that will set the tone and content of this column.

Michele Canone, OFS, a 30-year-old Italian man, wrote it. His reflection refers to the recent International Chapter in Hungary. He confesses to finding it difficult to imagine *men and women aged 50 to 60 so full of light and charged with energy*.¹ He admits that his experience at the Chapter changed his perception, and that **light, if it is real, cannot fade**.

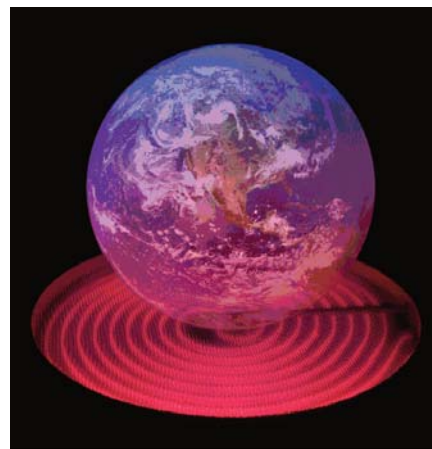
Michele's article speaks of **Communication**, one of the International Fraternity's priorities for the next six years. He says:

*Communication in the past meant to the Order little more than issuing a circular [letter], which informed everyone about important events. Today, communication is **action**, communicating means **living communion** and making this known so that others can live it. This is the greatest challenge. Training will be necessary in communication, which is the soul of sharing!*

And because the major part of my responsibilities in the SFO is to communicate, I will pay heed to Michele's insight and do my best, not only to inform you about major events and the directives of the International Fraternity, but also share my impressions and perceptions— my very self with you in fraternal communion.

In addition to information and reports of activity, from time to time I will share with you how the International Fraternity functions. It will help you put the information into perspective. And so in the spirit of communication and communion, let us begin.

In my opinion, the most dramatic and the important assertion came from Minister General Encarnación del Pozo during the State of the Order address. She told us to take charge of our identity as an Order and act on the conviction that we are equal partners in the



Franciscan Family, not just passive members. Encarnita (as our Minister General is affectionately known) exhorts us as follows:

I beg of you— the SFO must not and cannot trail behind... the other components of our family. The SFO has to reclaim... its place in these family events.... I do believe that the First Order, the Second Order and the Third Order Regular at all levels need the knowledge that we can offer, as people fully immersed in the ordinary circumstances and problems related to work, family, politics, education and science, including situations of extreme poverty and all kinds of misery.

If we are to assume our place at the table, we need to know our heritage. What more auspicious time than the 8th centenary of the birth of the Franciscan charism to reflect on our history. In 1209, Francis and his brothers presented themselves before Pope Innocent III and asked for recognition and approval of their Gospel way of life. Although the penitential movement predated 1209 and St. Francis was a penitent, 1209 marks the official birth of our charism. It is with joy and gratitude that we join the rest of the Franciscan family in celebrating this anniversary. If you have access to a computer, read a document called *Conference of the Franciscan Family, Living According to the Gospel*. It is an excellent formation resource

Continuing with the State of the Order address, Encarnita reported that in the Western World, particularly Europe, vocations are declining while in Latin America, Africa, Asia and Slavic nations, there is an astonishing growth in vocations. We can only wonder why. The United States numbers have remained approximately the same over the last few years. In my last report to

(1) I think I saw some brothers and sisters with light and energy who were older than 50 to 60, but I suppose when you're 30, it's difficult to imagine life beyond 60.

CIOFS, I reported 15,811 professed members, 1,208 candidates and 850 inquirers. It seems that during times of turmoil, people who gave little thought to spiritual matters in more secure times, turn to God for comfort. Perhaps Saint Paul’s assertion that *All things work together for good for those who know and love the Lord* will bear fruit in new vocations.

.... As you may remember, the theme of the General Chapter was Profession and a Sense of Belonging. Many of you helped me prepare for the Chapter by your responses to the circular letter that was distributed last year. During the Chapter there were major presentations on each of these topics. After each presentation, the language groups met to discuss them. Reflections questions were provided to stimulate discussion. At the bottom of this article I have included a few for your personal use. If you are interested in reading the presentations that were given, they are posted on the NAFRA website under Meetings and Resources [at http://www.nafra-sfo.org/meetings_and_resources.html].

Of the five priorities² established by the International Fraternity, formation was voted number one. **Great emphasis was placed on revitalizing the local fraternity where the life of the Order exists and vocations are developed.** The anniversary of the birth of the Franciscan movement challenges us to consciously recommit to the ideals of St. Francis and our Baptismal and Profession promises. After all, the risen Christ is in the midst of our fraternities and in the heart of each brother and sister. All of us know that

²Formation, Communication, Franciscan Youth, Presence in the World, and Emerging National Fraternities

What Are We Reading?

Elisabeth Leseur: Selected Writings. Edited, translated, and introduced by Janet K. Ruffing, RSM. [The Classics of Western Spirituality.] (New York and Mahwah, New Jersey: Paulist Press. 2005. Pp. xvi, 319.)

Although not a Secular Franciscan, Elisabeth Leseur’s life was a model of secular spirituality in the midst of an unspiritual world. Her writings illumine the practices and virtues available to a woman in a society of wealth and sophistication.

Her husband had moved away from his Catholic upbringing and had become a medical doctor and leader of the French anti-clerical atheistic movement. How-

every member of the fraternity is responsible for formation. It follows then that the challenge of formation is to remind each other that both gifts and responsibilities come with profession as a Secular Franciscan.

Witnessing to the good yet to come and obliged to acquire purity of heart because of the vocation they have embraced, they should set themselves free to love God and their brothers and sisters.
(Article 12—The Rule of the Secular Franciscan Order).

I will leave you by restating the opening line of this article. I have so much to say that I will have to save some topics for future articles.

With fraternal affection and in peace,
Your sister Anne

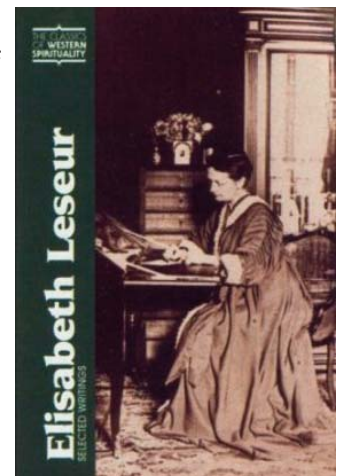
For Reflection:

Profession: Secularity represents the special mission brought forth by Profession into the SFO. Do you believe (understand) that you have been called, precisely by virtue of your own vocation, to work in the world for its sanctification? In general, does any resistance to acceptance of this way of consecration into the world still exist? How can we handle this resistance in a positive manner?

Sense of Belonging: Based on your experience, what are the symptoms of a fragile or missing sense of belonging to the SFO? In your opinion, what means can be implemented to improve or reinforce a sense of belonging for our brothers and sisters?

ever, the depth of her spirituality and the inspiration of her writings, which he read after her death of breast cancer, moved him to return to the Church and to become a Dominican priest.

The cause for the canonization of Elisabeth Leseur was begun in 1934; her current status is that of Servant of God.



What Are We Doing?

March for Life

Have any of you gone to the "Life March"?

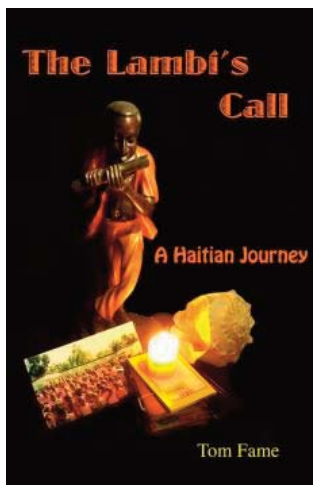
It was truly an inspiration. I feared that all the "hoop-la" of the inauguration would have brought a lesser crowd. It turned out to be a larger crowd than recent years. I've been going for 10 years since I moved here in '98, and it was one of the better managed. We did have to wait, as always, for two hours before the start; in cold and ice it's quite difficult. This time the sky was "Blessed Mother blue"(according to a nearby marcher) and, except for walking a couple of miles, the event was great.

The "Silent No More" group marched with identical signs that read "I regret my abortion." A couple of men held signs that read "I lost my fatherhood." (One looked like a Franciscan monk!) Some were crying and I must say, it was courageous of them.

My daughter Angela and others shouted out "God bless you."

--By Sadie Martins, SFO

Reprinted from *The Franciscan Sun-Herald*, St. John the Beloved Fraternity, Alexandria, VA



Mission in Haiti

Tom Fame, sfo, Companions of Francis and Clare, has written a book, *The Lamb's Call: A Haitian Journey*, about his experiences in Haiti during the past 12 years.

Tom has three schools, a feeding program, 1,000 students, and plans for a clean water project and a clinic in the future.

All proceeds from the book go to support the ministry in Haiti. For a review of the book, go to <http://www.roanoke.com/entertainment/books/wb/185046>.



Recycling News

Best Buy will now take televisions and monitors up to 32", computer CPU's and notebooks, small electronics, VCR and DVD players, phones, keyboards, mice and remotes. They charge \$10 for items with screens (TV's) but will instantly give out a \$10 Best Buy gift card in exchange for the fee. Up to two units per day will be accepted. For \$100, Best Buy will come to your home and remove up to two appliance units and/or TVs. Additional units cost \$20. They also accept gently used trade-ins for a Best Buy gift card at <https://www.bestbuytradein.com/bb/>.

joculatoures Domini, St. Thomas More Fraternity, Harrisburg, Penn

[Editor's Note: To find electronic recycling programs in any part of the country, as well as to learn about what to look for in a recycling program, go to the Web site sponsored by the Telecommunications Industry Association, TIA E-Cycling Central, at <http://www.eiae.org/>.]

On-Line Adoration

For online adoration, as well as daily Mass and Liturgy of the Hours, go to <http://www.savior.org/>. Savior.org's mission is that of increasing awareness and devotion to our Lord in the Most Blessed Sacrament. We also seek to bring the live image of His living Presence to the homebound, the workplace, and to remote areas around the world.

Catholic coalition to unveil 'St. Francis Pledge' on climate change

WASHINGTON (CNS) -- During the Easter season, the Catholic Coalition on Climate Change plans to publicly unveil a "Catholic Climate Covenant," a new initiative to make U.S. Catholics more aware of what they can do to stem climate change and its effects. It will be unveiled with a public event on Earth Day, April 22. The covenant includes "The St. Francis Pledge to



Protect Creation and the Poor," modeled after St. Francis of Assisi, whose "Canticle of the Sun" praised God's creation in the form of, among other things, earth, water and creatures. The pledge is "a solemn commitment made by Catholic individuals, groups and institutions to honor God's creation and serve the poor," according to the pledge's preamble. The pledge asks Catholics to pray and reflect on the duty to care for God's creation and protect the poor and vulnerable; learn about and educate others on the causes and moral dimensions of climate change; assess "how each of us ... is contributing to climate change," both in terms of consumption and conservation; act "to change our choices and behaviors contributing to climate change"; and advocate for Catholic principles and priorities in discussions and decisions about climate change, especially their impact on the poor and vulnerable.

[For more information on the Catholic Coalition on Climate Change and the "Catholic Climate Covenant," go to <http://www.catholicsandclimatechange.org/index.html>.

Divine Mercy Sunday pilgrimage to Stockbridge Apr 17-19

There have been a number of requests for a Divine Mercy Sunday pilgrimage to Stockbridge, Mass., so here's a tentative 3-day pilgrimage.

The tentative schedule is to visit the Franciscan Friars of Atonement the first day and spend Saturday & Sunday at the Shrine!!!

Pilgrimage would include deluxe motor coach, two nights lodging , four meals , shrine



donations, daily Mass & prayer, pilgrimage escort and more. The price is not set, but will be in the \$375-400 area.

For more information, contact Ron Doub Area Sales Manager Wendt Touring PO Box 520 Williamsport, MD 21795 410.802.5365

Note from the Regional Minister

It has been brought to my attention today that there is a scam taking place now in various cities.

Several members of our sfo have been called either collect or directly by an individual(s) using different guises, all seeking money.

The ploy may also involve a bishop or priest either from Europe or other areas with an imminent arrival at a nearby airport.

The advice from NAFRA is to of course refuse, and hang up or simply state that you are aware of the scam and have alerted the proper authorities.

Above all, do not offer any money, help or give out any information. A simple reply might be: Thank you I am not interested and Good-bye!

Just want to be sure everyone in on notice, in case you are contacted. It is a pity that these individuals keep coming up with schemes to 'steal' from good people who may sincerely want to help!

Peace and all good,
Carolyn

Congratulations to Our Newly Elected

St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Fraternity, Westminster, Maryland

Minister: José Luis Barata, sfo
Vice Minister: Jean Crotty, sfo
Secretary: Jim O'Brien, sfo
Treasurer: Millie Sweitzer, sfo
Formation Minister : Amy Kulesa, sfo
Spiritual Assistant: Sr. Valenta Rusin, FSSJ

Del Camino Fraternity, Silver Spring, Maryland

Minister: Ottoniel (Otto) Perez, sfo
Vice Minister: Luz Collins, sfo

Secretary: Miguel Tirado Aguilon, sfo
Treasurer: Maria de Jesus Ullon, sfo
Formation Minister : Omar Campos, sfo

St. Clare Fraternity, Milford, Delaware

Minister: Katherine "Kate" Meire, sfo
Vice Minister: Judith "Judy" Bennett, sfo
Secretary: Jackie Boyd, sfo
Treasurer: Ronald E. Holland, sfo
Formation Lucille A. Diaco, sfo
Infirmarian: Florence Bianco, sfo

Micah Ministries, Fredericksburg, Virginia

Micah Ministries envisions a community where every person, business, agency, and official collaborates to ensure no person goes in need of housing, work, health care, and supportive relationships.

Micah Ecumenical Ministries is a Christ-centered response to the call of Micah 6:8 for neighbors in need. It does justice, loves kindness and walks humbly with God by:

- Building relationships
- Fostering mutual support
- Increasing access to work, housing, health care.

Micah Ministries and its many volunteers provide two apartments where homeless people who leave the hospital may stay in order to receive recovery or terminal care. This program is funded by the Mary Washington Hospital Community Service Fund and supported by a partnership with Hospice and Home Health. It aims to offer dignity to those with no home as they face death or try to recover from wounds and illnesses. It keeps them from repeat visits to the emergency room and helps them maximize free and reduced-care clinics throughout the area

In response to God's call to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God (Micah 6:8), the Micah Hospitality Center opened on April 14, 2005. Eight local churches — Shiloh Baptist Church, Fredericksburg United Methodist Church, St. George's Episcopal Church, Trinity Episcopal Church, Presbyterian Church of Fredericksburg, Tower of Deliverance Church, St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception Roman Catholic Church, and Fredericksburg Baptist Church — have joined Micah's network of governing churches. The churches provide funding, leadership, volunteer support, provisions for projects and assistance with events.

Shelter 2008–2009

Two-room tents and zero degree sleeping bags are distributed to homeless individuals November through February. Micah collects donations to buy these items from a manufacturer each year.

On nights when the temperature is expected to drop below 32° the homeless come to the Micah Center at 8:30 p.m., where they receive a hot meal and a new

pair of socks. They are then transported by bus to the Bragg Hill Community Center where they sleep on cots in the gym.

Every day between the hours of 9:30 a.m. and 11:30 a.m. the homeless can come to the Micah Center and receive a hot breakfast, a shower and a change of clothes.

Newcomer Welcome Ministry

In 2007, through the help of the Sunshine Lady Foundation, Micah purchased a home to assist the resettlement of refugee families in the Fredericksburg area. Refugees flee their home country due to war and violent political circumstances, taking refuge in camps set up in peaceful neighboring countries. Each year the United Nations removes individuals from the camps and resettles them in countries throughout the world. The United States takes its share, and some are brought to Fredericksburg. So far, more than 200 individuals have come to Planning District 16 from war-torn parts of Iraq and Africa.

Cultural and language differences often pose challenges to the success of these families, making the support of case workers and community organizations essential. They receive just four months of state and federal financial support before they must be supporting themselves in their own apartment with jobs and driver's licenses.

Today, Micah volunteers serve over a dozen refugee families with ESL Classes, in home tutoring, employment search, transportation for shopping and medical appointments, and managing the home.

The Micah ministries empower community organizations to adopt incoming refugee families in partnership with the Catholic Diocese of Arlington's Office of Migration and Refugee Services.

If you would like your church or community group to start an action team or you have an hour to volunteer, contact: Sarah Bush, the Micah Church and Community liaison at (540) 479-4116 x14. Micah will provide you with the appropriate information.



Franciscan Saints , Blesseds and Feasts

(click on the name to go to a Web link)

February

19 [St. Conrad of Piacenza](#)

March

2 [St. Agnes of Prague](#)

9 [St. Frances of Rome](#)

24 [Bl. Didacus Joseph of Cadiz](#)



St. Agnes of Prague

April

3 [St. Benedict the Black](#)

16 [St. Bernadette Soubirous](#)

17 [St. Benedict Joseph Labre](#)

21 [St. Conrad of Parzham](#)

23 [Bl. Giles of Assisi](#)

24 [St. Fidelis of Sigmaringen](#)

28 [Bl. Luchesius](#)

May

9 [St. Catherine of Bologna](#)

11 [St. Ignatius of Laconi](#)

16 [St. Margaret of Cortona](#)



St. Margaret of Cortona

St. Margaret of Cortona Transitional Residences

Catholic Charities of Arlington Virginia has opened a transitional housing facility in Woodbridge, Va., dedicated to St. Margaret of Cortona.

St. Margaret of Cortona Transitional Residences serves homeless families with the time and support they need to reestablish independence after they have exited an emergency shelter. Participating families are provided with low-income housing and varying levels of assistance during the precarious 12 to 24 months following their departure from an emergency shelter. St. Margaret of Cortona staff and volunteers offer a wealth of Life Skills and Financial Literacy classes, employment training, and personal case management to residents.

St. Margaret of Cortona was a homeless single mother. For more information go to http://www.cdda.net/programs_housing.php.

Around the Region

Received as Candidates

Bonita Cote, St. Clare Fraternity, Milford, Del., January 8, 2009

Tana Dale, St. Thomas More Fraternity, Harrisburg, Penn. January 21, 2009

Eric Failing, , St. Thomas More Fraternity, Harrisburg, Penn. January 21, 2009

Richard Fairfax, , St. Thomas More Fraternity, Harrisburg, Penn. January 21, 2009

Fred Fischer, St. Thomas More Fraternity, Harrisburg, Penn. January 21, 2009

Marianne Fischer, St. Thomas More Fraternity, Harrisburg, Penn. January 21, 2009

Joyce Frierott, St. Joseph Fraternity, York, Penn., February 20, 2009

Maureen Gorman, St. Clare Fraternity, Milford, Del., January 8, 2009

Maury Robb, St. Clare Fraternity, Milford, Del., January 8, 2009

Doris Tippet, St. Clare Fraternity, Milford, Del., January 8, 2009

Newly Professed

Carmelina Adinolfi, St. Joseph Fraternity, York, Penn., March 20, 2009

John Fay, St. Joseph Fraternity, York, Penn., March 20, 2009

Losses in the Family

Barbara Bogdanowicz, St. Casimir Fraternity, Baltimore, Md., professed October, 4, 1967; died December 14, 2008. Served as fraternity treasurer.

Rita Dorn, St. Francis of Assisi Fraternity, Triangle, Va., professed November 3, 2001; born, November 21, 1920; died December 7, 2008.

Genevieve E. Strosser, St. John the Beloved Apostle, Alexandria, Va., born January 31, 1910; died February 24, 2009.