

"Up To Now"



Newsletter for St. Margaret of Cortona Region, Secular Franciscan Order
Covering the District of Columbia, Maryland, Delaware, Virginia, and
portions of West Virginia and Pennsylvania

Volume 10, Issue 2

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

November 2006

"Thanksgiving" Reflections

From our Vice Minister

November is the month when we smell crisp autumn air and feast our eyes on spectacular leaves as they turn colors so brilliant that we can only marvel at God's grandeur. We turn our hearts heavenward as we thank God for creating such beauty. The days follow, and soon we find ourselves getting ready for Thanksgiving. In this month, it seems fitting to meditate on what our Rule says to us about giving thanks, especially for the Eucharist.

How do we instill in our SFO brothers and sisters a desire to become passionate about the Real Presence of Jesus in the Eucharist? What in our Rule tells us to be ever mindful of our Lord's presence, and how do we respond?

Articles 5 and 8 speak to us about Eucharist, which in Greek, translates to mean *thanksgiving*. Article 5 says, "The faith of St. Francis, who often said, 'I see nothing bodily of the Most High Son of God in this world except his most holy body and blood,' should be the inspiration and pattern of their Eucharistic life," and Article 8 exhorts us to participate in the sacramental life of the Church, most especially the Eucharist.

In our Rule, we see how God turns to us and shares His love with us. In the Eucharist, we experience our most intimate moments with Jesus, the Living God. It is the supreme act of humility for God to wish to be with us and become like us in Jesus. St. Bonaventure says that we turn to God, not because we are sinners, but in awe and adoration, through the example of Jesus.

Remember, our own Franciscan vocations are gifts from God. We didn't initiate them – God did! How fortunate and blessed we are to have heard and answered God's call. Let us thank and praise Jesus for our vocations, especially this month of November. Thanksgiving is upon us. Let us also be ever mindful of our greatest gift of all – the Eucharist – the most holy Body and Blood of our Lord, Jesus. Let us ponder the awesome mystery of the Eucharist – the Real Presence. We have much to thank Jesus for – most especially for his most Precious Body and Blood.

...Angela Gill

Recapping Our Retreat

What a fantastic weekend retreat we had at Priestfield this past October! More than 70 of us gathered to focus on our "Relationships...those with God, with Ourselves and with Others, Especially the Poor." Brother Kip Ledger, OFM Cap., served as our retreat master and provided us with much to reflect on. Following the first session Friday evening, Brother Kip and Father David Engo offered a meditation and Eucharistic adoration service that moved many to tears! It was the perfect beginning to the weekend which included several other inspiring talks, quiet time for reflection and private prayer, as well as the Sacrament of Reconciliation, and beautifully brisk weather for walking the trails and enjoying God's creation. Needless to say, the hospitality at Priestfield was outstanding and it was great to be in the company of those Franciscan brothers and sisters we don't see very often.

Mark your calendars now – the next regional retreat will be held **October 12-14, 2007** when Father Bart Karwacki, OFM Conv., will be our retreat master.

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Franciscan Archbishop Charles Chaput of Denver speaks in Harrisburg

The day before the feast of St. Francis of Assisi, at the Red Mass celebrated for the Harrisburg (PA) diocese to invoke the power of the Holy Spirit on judges, lawyers and lawmakers, guest homilist Archbishop Charles Chaput of Denver spoke of Francis' renewal of the church in terms of the Seraphic Father's frequent admonition to his brothers, "Up to now, we have done nothing; let us begin!"

Archbishop Chaput, a Capuchin friar, noted that during Francis' time, the church hierarchy was inclined to gloss over the Gospel, interpreting it in such a way as to make it easy to follow. Francis, however, insisted on *sine glossa*, without gloss, without watering down the example of Jesus. Archbishop Chaput said that the church is always reforming itself and always in need of reform. He called Francis the most single-minded, faithful, zealous, and humble reformer in church history and instructed the congregation that these are the marks of renewal in any age.

The archbishop firmly declared that defending the sanctity of human life and political correctness cannot go together. He stressed that the world needs holiness more than anything. Renewal will follow.

A poignant note was an opening intercessory prayer read by Bishop Kevin Rhoades, asking God's blessing on the Amish community, who had this same week suffered the horrific loss of daughters in a one-room school shooting. Archbishop Chaput noted that he had been in Denver during the Columbine shootings and had traveled to Harrisburg only to experience and share that region's sorrow. Both incidents, he said, are invitations for the faithful to turn to God, asking Him to do something, asking Him what we can do. He noted that the world is unjust, evil is strong and our

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Are You Living The Commissions?

Suggestions from the National Commission Chairpersons and their committee members are included in a list compiled by Mary and Anthony Mazotte, SFO. Some of these tips might work for you, your family or your fraternity.

The Family Commission suggests:

- ✓ Bless your house and car.
- ✓ Support Right to Life with newborn baby diapers and new/used garments.

The Peace and Justice Commission suggests:

- ✓ Mediate between two people or two sides of a conflict.
- ✓ Write a letter or make a call to your congressperson about an issue you care about.

The Work Commission suggests:

- ✓ Help people complete job applications.
- ✓ Create/assist with support group for the unemployed.

The Ecology Commission suggests:

- ✓ Give surplus or expired drugs to your local pharmacy to destroy instead of flushing them; many drugs affect our lakes and streams and fish.
- ✓ Harvest rain that runs off the roof.

The Youth/Young Adult Commission suggests:

- ✓ Show mutual respect when meeting young people in restaurants and your work area.
- ✓ Finger paint with children and hang up their work. τ

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response can be anger or love, bitterness or conversion. We know that Francis chose an interior conversion which resulted in an exterior one extending far beyond himself.

Can we take to heart the bishop's final words, the words of Francis? "Up to now we have done nothing; let us begin!"

*...Martha Pavlick, SFO
St. Joseph Fraternity, York*



Members of St. Francis Fraternity in Washington, D.C., recently celebrated a Renewal of Professions at Capuchin College, honoring in a special way, those professed for 30, 40 and 50 years. *T*

WHY ME LORD?

Why me, Lord? What is the purpose of my life?
 Could it be to show that I care?
 Could it be perhaps that I need to share
 My life with other people, who are lonely and need
 someone to care.
 Could it be to show my love for you?
 That others may see what you've done for me.
 Could it be to show others that you care,
 And You're always there to share?
 Could it be to guide me, that I may guide others
 to you?
 But why me, Lord?
 There is so much that I don't know:
 I seem to stumble and wallow through,
 Except when I talk to you;
 Though I find that You are always there,
 to hear and listen to my every prayer.
 Help me to share with everyone the purpose of my
 life.
 And let them know what I have always found,
 That You are always there when we need someone
 to care.

...Regina Bankard Lovejoy. SFO
 St. Casimir Fraternity
 Reflective Thoughts

News from around the region...

- ◆ Congratulations to **Alicia Bourne, Nancy Briggs, Ron Briggs, Antonia Gaytan and Anne Haley** who were professed on October 11th as members of **St. Clare Emerging Fraternity** in Bethany, DE.
- ◆ Congratulations to **Christopher Cropper, Cecilia Therman, Nirvana Jolls, Lourdes Corso, John Corso, Alberto Gamez, and Mary Gamez**, who will be professed later this month as members of the **Mount St. Sepulchre Fraternity** in Washington, DC.
- ◆ **Our Lady of the Rosary Fraternity** in Hampton, VA recently held elections for **new council members**. Join us in congratulating:
Joan A. Buhler, Minister; **Denny Thiel**, Vice Minister; **Carol Folsom**, Secretary; **Glen Davis**, Treasurer; and **Carol Murphy**, Formation Director.
- ◆ Two members of **St. Francis Fraternity** in Washington, DC, are celebrating long-time profession anniversaries this year. **Verna Mize** has been professed for 47 years and **Margaret Stewart-Clomax** has been professed for 43 years. In addition, **Sister Patricia Kane, OSF**, spiritual assistant for **Padre Pio Fraternity** is celebrating her Golden Jubilee. *T*

"Praise be You, my Lord, through our Sister Bodily Death, from whom no living man can escape."

Please remember in your prayers those in our Franciscan family who have died: the parents of Father Jude Winkler, OFM, Conv.; Frank Paradise, SFO, St. Joseph, York; Bob Welland, SFO, St. Thomas More, Harrisburg. *T*



"The principle instrument for peace is prayer, which naturally is not only a cry to God, but also to man."

Benedict XVI, 6-28-06



Members of Padre Pio Fraternity recently presented Bill VandenEynden, Grand Knight with the Maryland Council #3417 Knights of Columbus, with a certificate of appreciation and picture of St. Padre Pio for the generous use of their hall for the fraternity gatherings. Mr. VandenEynden is seen here with his father, Clem VandenEynden, SFO, treasurer for the fraternity.

St. Elizabeth of Hungary Celebration

The Minister General of the SFO, Encarnación del Pozo, has announced that we will begin a two year celebration of the life of the Patroness of the SFO, St. Elizabeth of Hungary from November 17, 2006 - November 17, 2008. Her feast day is November 17. She died at the age of 24. In her short life, St. Elizabeth manifested such a great love for the poor and suffering that she has become the patroness of both the Catholic Charities and the Secular Franciscans. At the age of 14, she married Louis of Thuringia and became the mother of three children. After her husband's death in the Crusades just 6 years later, she was grief stricken. Under the direction of a Franciscan friar, she became a devoted advocate of the poor, providing bread to whomever came to her door. At the age of 21 she became a Secular Franciscan and worked hard to establish a hospital in honor of St. Francis. She died in 1231 and was canonized four years later. T

The Woods

My backyard woods, a joyful praying place.
 Bird choirs rejoicing while insects scurry.
 Thick canopy shadowing everything above the
 dead leaf carpet.
 Endless green brush strokes with touches of
 brown.
 Feeling God's love, living in security,
 Oblivious to the rest of the world.
 A daily escape from an empty house.
 My woods, a place to hide and yet be seen.

The nearby woods, a stark and dismal place.
 Dove choirs mourning while faceless bodies
 brood.
 Shadows of filthy blankets and worn tarps draped
 above the cold damp earth.
 Dignity robbed people sit in dirty gloom.
 Outcasts questioning God, living in fear,
 No place in self-righteous society.
 Daily, their humanity slowly dies.
 Their woods, a place to hide and remain unseen.

...Judith Ryerse, SFO
 St. Francis of Assisi, Triangle, VA



Important Dates Mark your calendars!

- Nov. 11 Annual Regional Meeting 9:30 a.m. @ Our Lady of Lourdes, Arlington, VA
- Nov. 17 Feast of St. Elizabeth of Hungary, Patroness of the Third Order.
- Nov. 29 Feast of All Saints of the Seraphic Order
- Dec. 25 Christmas Day – Merry Christmas!
2007
- Jan. 25 Deadline for submissions for the next issue of "Up To Now"
- Feb. 15 "Up To Now" to be posted on the regional website.
- July 3-8 Quinquennial in Steubenville, OH
- Oct. 12-14 Regional Retreat @ Priestfield

We're growing already!

Good day, my brothers and sisters,

My thanks to each of you for your support and prayers as together we revived our regional newsletter. It has been an interesting and exciting endeavor. There have been so many positive comments and I truly feel that the Holy Spirit has been hovering over my shoulder as I write, cut, paste, type and edit.

It has been my joy to receive many newsletters from your fraternities, as well as submissions of poetry, prayers, reflections and photographs. As you can see, in just one quarter, the size of the newsletter has grown considerably and there is much to learn about your brothers and sisters in St. Margaret of Cortona Region.

If you have submitted something and it hasn't been included in this issue, know that I am making a file for future issues and will be using as much as I can to provide a balanced and interesting newsletter that will draw you a little closer to those other fraternities that you so seldom are in contact with.

I am most anxious to hear from any of you who want to share information with me. It doesn't have to be in a newsletter. Tell me about the activities your fraternity is involved in, how you live the Gospel message in your parish, in the workplace, in your community or in your home. Send me a photograph from a profession, a retreat or some other activity. We are all on the same path and can benefit from your successes and your stories.

I ask that you keep your submissions brief and concise so that we can include information from many of our fraternities. As you send your newsletters, it would be helpful if you could highlight any information in the newsletter that you think is particularly important, so that I don't overlook it.

And I ask you, finally, to continue to pray to the Holy Spirit for guidance and wisdom as I prepare for each issue.

May you have a most holy and blessed Christmas and a truly happy and healthy New Year.

Peace and all good,
Sharon

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Our New NAFRA Leaders

Please pray for our new **National Executive Council** members for the Secular Franciscan Order:

Patrick Mendes - National Minister
Deacon Tom Bello - National Vice-Minister
Sarah Mulholland - National Secretary
Dennis Ross - National Treasurer
Pat Brandwein-Ball - Councilor
Mike Carsten - Councilor
Clare McCluggage - Councilor
Anne Mulqueen - International Councilor

Patrick Mendes has been a regional minister in the Chicago area, Mother Cabrini Region. He recently retired as parish coordinator of ministries at St. Colette Parish in Rolling Meadows, Illinois, and is currently serving as vice president of the board of directors for two Franciscan retirement communities.

Tom Bello is no stranger to anyone in our region. Tom is a teacher to adult immigrants and refugees in Fairfax County, Virginia. He was ordained to the Permanent Diaconate in 1987 and serves at St. James Church in Falls Church, Virginia. He has held numerous Franciscan leadership positions, including local minister, regional councilor and regional minister.

Sarah Mulholland is also well known to those of us in St. Margaret of Cortona region. Sarah recently retired her position with the American Psychological Association in DC and, along with her husband Dan, moved to Bend, Oregon. She has held numerous leadership positions including local minister and formation director and former co-chair of the National Peace and Justice Commission.

Dennis Ross, a retired high school math teacher and junior high assistant principal, begins his second term. He has held numerous leadership roles, including local minister, regional minister and regional treasurer for St. Maximilian Kolbe Region.

Anne Mulqueen, as you all know, has served at all fraternity levels (local, regional and national), and was an International Formation Workshop Lecturer in Rome this year. Anne has also served as lay representative to the Archdiocesan Regional Council, as a coordinator of parish Small Church Communities, a Bible Studies instructor, a spirituality writer for the local newsletter, and has conducted numerous workshops and seminars for the SFO.

Please keep all of the newly elected officers in your prayers as they begin this new phase of service. T

Novena for Darfur

A Message from our Regional Minister

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

This is an extremely important message concerning the genocide ongoing in Darfur.

At our NAFRA meeting last week, there was great concern for the people in Darfur, Africa and what we can and what we should be doing to help. Clare McCluggage, our newly elected National Councilor has sent us a suggestion for Secular Franciscans in the U.S. Not only are we sending \$1,000.00 to CRS to be used for Darfur, but Clare has created a Year-Long Novena to be prayed for that impoverished country.

She divided the upcoming year, 2007, assigning 2 months for each Region to pray together. St. Margaret of Cortona has been assigned the 2nd week of the months of January & July. As you read her timetable, all the regions of NAFRA are involved.

This is a very powerful way for us to do something. There are many possible ways to implement this within individual fraternities, and that will be up to each fraternity, so please plan to discuss this at your next few council meetings, as January will soon be here.

...Carolyn Protin

"As agreed at the recent NAFRA meeting, the SFO in the United States would like to institute a "perpetual" novena for at least one year on behalf of the people of Darfur. Every day for the next year, members of the SFO will be praying the novena prayer. For this to happen, I am proposing that 5 Regional fraternities be assigned to cover each month. To make sure we cover the entire month, there will be four to five "waves" of the novena, each starting on Sunday. People are assigned to these waves by Region again, as noted below. For example, the first Sunday of December, members of St. Elizabeth of Hungary Region will begin praying the novena; the second Sunday of the month Lady Poverty will begin the novena. In this way the people of Darfur will be held in prayer by the SFO for the entire year.

In the event there are only 4 Sundays in the month, the fifth Region can pray week 1, or choose another week. Individuals may start and end their novena on other days if necessary, or do a different week. If you want to continue to pray before or after your week/month you can certainly do that! You are also encouraged to share the novena with people in your parish, youth groups, or other organizations to which you belong.

A novena allows us to hold a particular concern before God in a special way. The name "novena" comes from the Latin for "nine". Traditionally we pray a novena every day for nine days, and the prayer is usually a bit longer than a brief intercession. This allows us to give more of ourselves to our prayer for the concern we are bringing before God. "

For more information on the situation in Darfur
go to the website, <http://www.savedarfur.org/content>

	Dec/June	Jan/July	Feb/Aug	Mar/Sept	Apr/Oct	May/Nov
Week 1	St. Elizabeth of Hungary	Bl Kateri Tekakwitha	Fr Solanus	The Tau Cross	Our Lady of the Angels	St. Katharine Drexel
Week 2	Lady Poverty	St. Margaret of Cortona	Brothers and Sisters of St. Francis	Five Franciscan Martyrs	St. Maximilian Kolbe	Holy Trinity
Week 3	Divine Mercy	Our Lady of Indiana	La Verna	Mother Cabrini	Franciscans of the Prairie	St. Clare
Week 4	St Joan of Arc	Queen of Peace	Juan de Padilla	Los Tres Companeros/Three Companions	Our Lady of the Rockies	Santa Maria de las Montanas
Week 5 or Week 1*	Our Lady of Guadalupe	Troubadours of Peace	Bl. Junipero Serra	St. Francis	St. Thomas More	Ohana O Ke Aneunue

Novena Prayer for Darfur

Merciful Father, Prince of Peace, Spirit of Wisdom and Compassion, please look upon our brothers and sisters in Darfur. We humbly pray:

- For those who have been subjected to violence: women, children, young and old men, we ask for healing, consolation, and relief of further suffering.
 - o *Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be...*
- For those who have done violence, we ask for healing, forgiveness, and the grace of conversion.
 - o *Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be...*
- For those in authority throughout the world, we ask wisdom, creativity, compassion and courage in addressing this situation.
 - o *Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be...*

Lord Jesus, Your Sacred Heart burns for love of all your people. Please place in our hearts that same love and inspire us to have the courage, wisdom and ingenuity to take what measures we can personally to relieve the suffering in Darfur. We pray this in the Name of Jesus, our Lord, through the intercession of the sorrowful and Immaculate Heart of Mary.

Memorare: Remember, O Most Gracious Virgin Mary, that never was it known, that anyone who fled to thy protection, implored thy help or sought thy intercession was left unaided. Inspired with this confidence, I fly unto thee, oh Virgin of Virgins, my mother. To thee do I come, before thee I stand, sinful and sorrowful. Oh mother of the Word Incarnate, despise not my petitions, but in thy mercy, hear and answer me. Amen.