



the Franciscan Times

Lord, Make Me an Instrument of Thy Peace

A quarterly newsletter, whose purpose is helping members of The Third Order of the Society of St. Francis share a common journey through news from fellowships and individuals, reviews of books and tapes, poetry, and whatever the Holy Spirit might blow our way.

SUMMER, 1991

A FRESH START . . .

Greetings to our Franciscan sisters and brothers,

Welcome to a long-awaited issue of *The Franciscan Times*, compiled and edited by your new co-editors, Robert Durand and Rik Fitch.

For many of you, the transition time since the last issue (Pentecost/Trinity Season, 1990) has been long. We apologize, and we thank you for your patience and prayers. We also ask you to join us in extending sincere thanks and Franciscan bouquets to JOANNE MAYNARD for her marvelous ministry as previous editor.

For some of you, new to The Third Order since the last issue, we trust this issue will provide a glimmer of what your fellow tertiaries are about.

For all of you, we offer this issue with renewed purpose and intention to publish a regular quarterly publication based upon the mission statement which you will find in the masthead.

The editorial work for *The Franciscan Times* will take place in the middle of the Pacific Ocean on the Hawaiian island of Maui where . . .

Robert is office manager and an active parishioner at Good Shepherd Episcopal Church in the town of Wailuku and lives in a small condo close to a beautiful beach. Rik is director of Camp Pecusa, the Episcopal Church summer camp, and a professional artist. He lives (and attends St. John's Episcopal Church) in Kula, located at the 3,000-foot level on the slopes of Haleakala, Maui's 10,000-foot dormant volcano.

Both Robert and Rik began their Franciscan journeys in Vermont, where they served together on the staff of the diocesan summer camp and worked together on one of the Northeast Franciscan convocations. Both are now members of the Hawaii Fellowship (which meets monthly 90 miles away in Honolulu on the island of Oahu).

FUTURE TIMES

It is our intention to have regular features and columns which will be both informative and educational to members of the Third Order. We especially encourage submissions of news from fellowships and from isolated tertiaries. We must depend on you to be our reporters.

Please do share with us any writings, reviews of books or tapes, and artwork which might reflect and support our common Franciscan journey. And please feel free to send us your comments, ideas, and suggestions so that we may serve you more fully in future issues.

Our editorial address:

c/o Robert Durand TSSF
2124 Awihi Place, #215
Kihei, HI 96753

We humbly ask for your help and prayers on this project.

Pax et Bonum (. . . and Aloha!)

Robert Durand and Rik Fitch

THE CHAPLAIN'S JOURNAL

Mount Saint Francis, Indiana, was a place of joy over the last weekend in May. The Order of Ecumenical Franciscans held its Chapter there. I came as official representative of The Third Order, Society of St. Francis, but other TSSFers joined us from Pennsylvania, Louisville, and Cincinnati. With Father Murray Bodo of the Roman Order of Friars Minor as guest speaker, we constituted a microcosm of Western Christianity gathered to explore and celebrate the radical Gospel of Jesus Christ so dear to us all.



We met in openness and joy. There were opportunities for sharing our individual pilgrimages and for discussion of our vocations as Franciscans. There were also occasions, planned and unplanned, of fun and laughter. We represented churches as diverse as the Roman Catholic, the Baptist, the United Church of Christ, the Assembly of God, and the Episcopal Church, but the Holy Spirit wove us together into the oneness of family.

From the treasure of Father Murray's talks: Franciscans don't "ascend": they descend to the poorest and lowliest -- for in serving the lowliest the heights are found. Franciscans don't confront: they embrace -- for by embracing ugliness, meanness, disease, and evil, they bring God's grace where it is most needed.

The meeting at Mount Saint Francis was a small step toward accepting global challenge described for us by our Bishop Protector, George Hunt. By coming together with open hands and open hearts to explore what we have in common, we found blessing, unity, and strength in the love of God's heart.

Marie L. Webner, TSSF

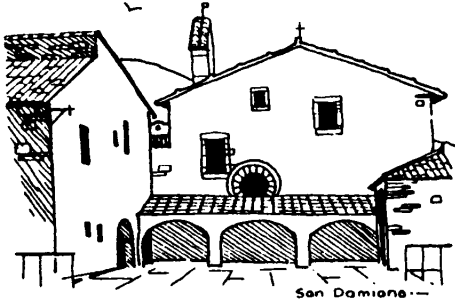
Deacon Marie L. Webner
Chaplain, American Province

A VISIT TO ASSISI

by John Metcalfe TSSF
Tampa Bay Fellowship

(NOTE: This is the final installment in my Niagara of impressions, written in July of 1989, after my visit to Assisi. Yours in Christ and St. Francis. J.M.)

The campsite of Assisi, like those all over Europe, is wrapped around a well-stocked store and "restauranti." The latter occupies the basement of the store and features a great open fireplace where a blazing wood fire is used to cook the spaghetti and to roast the chickens.



Returning to our camper for a good nap after a busy day, we arose after dark to make our way to the Restauranti for our spaghetti and chicken. We were transformed at the scene below us. Both the "major" and the "minor" forts of Assisi were ablaze with lights and banners against the pink and orange sky. My wife, whose girlhood was enlivened by fairy tales, gasped upon seeing the display: "Oh, just like a fairy story!"

At the Restauranti, our stumbling Italian, questioning the gala display on the forts below, elicited the information that the illuminations were to celebrate the victories of the forces of Assisi over those of its neighboring city Foglia. Back in the 13th Century, if history is to be believed, that victory was one of the few granted to Assisi, whose forces were usually defeated by those of its larger neighbor city of Perugia.

In fact, St. Francis, in his youth, had been wounded while serving in the forces of Assisi in a war with Perugia. During his spiritual convalescence, he made the complete spiritual transformation that eventually made him one of the patron saints of Italy along with Catherine of Siena.

Some days later, as we came out of the Assisi Post Office, we ran into the English Priest whom we had previously met at the home of the Maryknoll nuns. He was about to post the schedule of services for our newly-arrived English Franciscans. They would be held in the Church of St. Gregory.

In company with a group of Anglican pilgrims, my wife and I were present at the first Eucharist at St. Gregory's, a tidy and well-kept, but little-used edifice. Its walls and altar were filled with the Papal decorations of its patron, none of which crashed to pieces at the prospect of an Anglican Eucharist in such a place.

There are so many churches in Italy that many are used only one or two days a year, on the occasion of patronal feasts. Some are well-kept, but many are in a state of disrepair.

In a later visit, we were directed to see a "weeping Virgin" being displayed in the Parish Church of St. Maria Maggiore, halfway up the street between the two Basilicas, in a small plaza and far less opulent than the great churches of Assisi.

The entire population of the area appeared to have crowded into the good-sized church. My wife and I joined a long line of people who slowly shuffled up to the Altar rail, behind which stood a statue of the Virgin, about 24 inches high. Each person, as they approached, dipped their fingers into a basin at the foot of the statue, into which a slow stream of tears fell from the eyes of the statue. Each person made the Sign of the Cross, genuflected, and left to join the praying congregation in the pews.

FIN

When Will Peace Come To The Holy Land?

By TERRY ROGERS

I went to Jerusalem the first week in March, just after the Gulf ceasefire, as part of a delegation sponsored by several U.S. peace groups. We took donated medicine to Israeli and Arab hospitals, met with many people, and gathered information on the effects of the war on the Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza, who were placed under a 24 hour curfew, with only two hour breaks every four to

seven days. They were prevented from going to work, from caring for crops and animals, and sometimes from receiving medical care. Not till several weeks after the war began were gas masks issued in the occupied territories, and then only to fewer than half the adults (none to children). It is difficult to convey what I saw and heard, and of course my experience is only one piece of a vast and complex situation. What I can do is share some stories, some images, some words that seemed especially important:

* Hikmat, the Palestinian woman in whose home I had stayed during my trip in 1989, telling me she has two sons in Kuwait, from whom she has heard nothing since Iraq's occupation last August.

* Hanan, a Palestinian professor of medieval literature, telling us that her young daughters' elementary school had been closed many times by the army. "I teach them at home but they are really behind

where they should be. What can it be like for children whose parents can't teach them?"

* An Israeli settler in Tekoa on the West Bank, showing us around the settlement pointing out bomb shelters with brightly painted animals and flowers on them, "so that the children won't be afraid to go in them."

* Jeremy, an American-born rabbi from Jerusalem, telling us how his organization, Clergy for Peace, organized a convoy of food to a refugee camp on the West bank during the blanket curfew.

* A Moroccan Jewish woman from Tel Aviv showing us the bomb damage to her apartment. "I can't get over the terror—I'm taking medicine because I can't sleep and I'm always fearful."

* Bishop Samir Kafity, the Anglican bishop of Jerusalem, himself a Palestinian, celebrating an early morning Eucharist at the cathedral, his face full of sorrow, praying for reconciliation

with intense and quiet concentration.

* A Palestinian psychologist from Gaza that we met on the plane, telling us that one of the programs he worked with was giving counseling to young men in Gaza who were permanently disabled and paralyzed by gunshot wounds. "The money for this program came from Europe, and it was cut off last fall because Palestinians did not support the coalition against Iraq."

* A physician at the Anglican Arab hospital in Gaza, showing us tear gas canisters that the Israeli army had fired into the hospital.

* Looking at a bullet hole in the kitchen window of a West Bank Palestinian family whose fourteen-year-old son had been killed two weeks earlier by an Israeli settler who fired into the house; the family serving us bitter coffee (the custom at a time of mourning).

* Jonathan, a Palestinian lawyer, saying, "there's so little due process for Palestinian prisoners that I am more of a social worker than a lawyer. One of my clients, a doctor, is in detention now. Ten days ago, he called and told me he was being summoned to military headquarters. I can't forgive myself for not telling him to wear long underwear, because the prison is cold."

* Adel, a Palestinian Christian from Ramallah, recently married to an American woman: "I go every week to request official permission for my wife to live here legally and permanently. So far they won't even accept my papers. Thousands of Soviet Jews can come here every month, yet I can't get permission for my own wife. So she is with me illegally and there is no security for us."

* Zahira, a Palestinian woman doing research on the effects of the war on children, telling us about a four-year-old Palestinian child. "During the war, children under curfew were afraid and angry. This child's father asked him to do something and he refused. The father said, 'Then I won't get you the gift I promised you.' The child said, 'After the war there will be no more stores and no more children, so I am not afraid of you.'"

* A doctor in Gaza whose fifteen-year-old son was in prison. When we told him that members of our group had demonstrated against the war and were grieved by what had happened he said, "I understand your feelings but I can't guarantee my son would understand them."

* A journalist in Gaza: "Why can't the world show the same sympathy for the many Palestinian homes demolished by the Israeli army as for the Tel Aviv homes destroyed by the Scud missiles?"... "When the war started, I forgot I was a Palestinian. Our suffering does not matter compared with the suffering of the Iraqi people. We know what it's like with bullets—what could it be like with bombs?"

* Matti, a retired Israeli army general, member of the peace movement: "The U.S. needs to continue its arms sales, because it's your country's biggest and most lucrative export. So there will be no real commitment to peace and stability in the Middle East."

* Michal, an Israeli journalist, who served eighteen months in prison after helping publish an anti-occupation newsletter early in the *intifada* (she was adopted by Amnesty International as a prisoner of conscience): "You have to understand, for a Palestinian in a refugee camp, Yitzhak Shamir is no more democratic than Saddam Hussein."

* A demonstration of Israeli women, part of a series of weekly vigils in Jerusalem and around Israel. The women dress entirely in black and stand silently for an hour holding signs against the occupation. Some of us joined the demonstration and, after a few minutes, a man came along with a basket of red roses and handed one to every woman in the demonstration.

* Faisal Hussein, a well-known Palestinian leader, "Can't you see how angry our people are at the double standard and hypocrisy in the West—how differently Kuwait's occupation by Iraq is treated in comparison with our occupation by Israel?"

* A Palestinian sociologist: "Recently in the Arab world there's growing poverty; anger and frustration toward non-democratic Arab governments; the experience of being humiliated by the West and by Israel. The burning of the oil fields of Kuwait is a major Arab symbol to the west: suicidal Arab desperation."

* And a final image that came to me after my return. On Holy Thursday, as I was praying during the foot-washing, what came to me was the image of George Bush and Saddam Hussein washing the feet of all the people who died during the war.

EDITOR'S NOTE

This article was printed in the June, 1991, issue of *The Catholic Worker*. The author is a life-professed tertiary from New York City and an elected member of Chapter for The Third Order of the Society of Saint Francis. We thank her for sharing this story with us.

A Tertiary Writes . . . From the Third World

EDITOR'S NOTE: The following story was written in August of 1990 for The Franciscan Times by the Rev. John Hodgins TSSF, a Canadian priest assigned to Costa Rica. We print it in this first issue since then, asking readers to remember that on April 22, 1991, a tragic earthquake of 7.5 Richter magnitude struck that region. We recently received a subsequent letter from John, which speaks for itself and is likewise printed here.

LIMON, COSTA RICA -- Dennis Joseph is a 24-year old Nicaraguan refugee from Bluefields on the Atlantic coast. Baptized in St. Mark's, Bluefields, Dennis is of Afro-Caribbean descent and has been living in Limon's black community for about five years.

Working eight hours a day, six days a week, for 1,800 colones (about \$20), he has been eeking out a living for himself but unable to send any money home to help his mother with five younger brothers and sisters.

About two years ago, Dennis went through a difficult time. As a result, he re-discovered the meaning of his baptismal commitment and committed himself to serving the Lord and His Church. He returned to the Episcopal Church and began to use his gifts with music, assisting with the choir at the parish church of San Marcos, and with the Spanish youth mass at San Jose Obrero Mission, and then in the poor barrio of Cristobal Colon, and now with the bi-lingual Eucharist at San Francisco Mission in Corales on Sunday afternoons.

Dennis lost his construction job and, like many refugees, had no benefits. Often at the end of a week's work, refugee workers are let go without pay for the week and have no legal recourse. It was then, in consultation with Fr. Wislon, the rector, that we at San Francisco Mission decided to see if we could find 10,000 colones a month to pay Dennis an honorarium for his music ministry and helping with pastoral work.

Dennis has now begun to take the course I am offering for lay leaders and those training for the diaconate. a keen student and well accepted by the community, Dennis is joyful in his service and, even on his meagre income, committed to working with the poor and visiting the sick.

In many ways, Dennis exemplifies the work of a deacon: he is humble and close to the people he is learning to interpret their needs to the Church. Full of joy, he beams as he sings and plays the guitar for the youth and various groups in the parish community and those in the mission churches.

He has also begun working with the two teachers at the mission school of San Jose Obrero, teaching the children songs one or two afternoons per week. On Mother's Day (August 15, the Feast of St. Mary the Virgin), we will celebrate a school mass with the children doing the readings, intercessions, and singing some songs that Dennis has taught them. (Mother's Day is a national holiday in Costa Rica.)

A Tertiary Writes . . . from the Third World

(continued)

After much prayer, Dennis is beginning to discern his vocation and is very much attracted to the model of St. Francis of Assisi, the deacon who worked with the marginalized of his day and, filled with joy and the vision of Christ in the faces of the poor, proclaimed his love of God's creation in song and action.

"Build my Church" Francis heard the voice of Christ say in the ruins of San Damiano Church just outside the walls of Assisi.

Dennis has heard a similar voice in the poor mission church of San Jose Obrero, on the margins of Limon, and along with some visiting students from New Jersey this past July (1990), he has helped to put a new ceiling on the run-down mission church and school and do some painting. But there is a great deal more to be done.

The most important thing for Dennis though, is the people and helping them to know, love and serve the Lord Jesus. Building the Church for Dennis means a lot: restoring the building, yes; but bringing hope to the poor, the sick and the depressed. He knows a lot about this from his own experience. He has a brother in prison due to his involvement in the drug world, into which Dennis was on the verge of falling as well. By God's grace, he was brought back to the life of Christ, and he visits the men in prison to share his faith and hope and works to change conditions for other young people attracted by fast money and drugs. His brother seems to be turning around too, and we are hopeful that he may be paroled and not have to serve his 20-year term in the terrible conditions of a third world prison. Please pray for Dennis, his family, and his ministry.



It is our hope in the parish to raise some money over the next year so that Dennis might be able to travel to Belize to visit Brother Desmond, the Franciscan Bishop of the Anglican Diocese there. He could learn more about the Society of St. Francis. and possibly test his vocation at some point.

As our partner church in Canada seems to discern the way ahead for the ministry of deacons in parishes, it is very instructive for us to see the gifts of service which God has given in people like Dennis: humility in serving those on the margins without bitterness, dedication to Christ and his Church, deep joy and peace in sharing in the Sacraments, a desire to know and understand sacred Scripture, and the teaching of the Church which points to the spiritual and physical liberation of those who are overlooked by society.

Pax et Bonum,
John Hodgins TSSF
(Mission Priest Appointee, Anglican Church of Canada)

A Tertiary Writes . . . from the Third World

(continued)

"RIGHT HERE!" . . . IN LIMON, COSTA RICA -- "HI Padre Gus. How are you?" My greeting and question on the morning Tuesday, April 23, had special import. Fr. Gus Campbell, a 75-year-old Limonense (native of Limon Province) and Episcopal priest, his wife Gertrude, my family and I had just been through a 7.5 scale earthquake which struck the Atlantic province of Limon on April 22 at 4 p.m. in the afternoon.

"Right Here!" replied Fr. Gus, using the familiar Afro-Caribbean response. At last I had a sense of the depth from which that common phrase sprang. "Right Here!" for people in Limon has always meant: surviving, O.K. but not great, alive and much more.

Two weeks later, we are still awakening in the night to the after tremors, some of which have reached 5 points. Our daughters have attended the wake and burial of their friends' 45-year-old aunt, with whom we passed the first night after the quake in a field near our houses, along with many neighbours. Three days later, her weakened heart failed as she tried to rest at night.

Without light, running water or phone, our first couple of days were like being on another planet with fixtures, but nothing working. Hauling water by hand, keeping candles ready (our flashlight was inoperable and batteries scarce), and checking on the state of parishioners, we tried to keep going and not think too far ahead.

Gertrude, Fr. Gus's wife, had lost her brother in the quake when a beam fell on him at the Limon railroad shop where he worked. Another church member was crushed when her house fell on her. Two hotels collapsed with remarkably few deaths, the quake being in the afternoon. The post office is badly damaged, and the 400-bed hospital is almost unusable. Others were still waiting to hear from family and friends in the 300 villages and towns cut off when roads and highways were severed by two-metre cracks and mountain roads covered by landslides.

Two weeks later, the digging out of bodies and locating of those who were far from home has just about ceased while the city and surrounding villages face the ongoing problems of getting food, potable water, and sustaining courage as the earth still continues to shake.

The COMITE POPULAR DE EMERGENCIA (Popular Emergency Committee) has swung into action uniting the efforts of churches, unions, and co-operatives in an attempt to provide water, food, and medical supplies to communities hardest hit and overlooked by spotty Government airdrops. Puerto Limon, where we live, is still struggling to get potable water, food is now available, thanks to airlifts by Nicaraguan, Venezuelan and United States planes. The main highway re-opened a few days ago to supply vehicles, but a major problem is supplying the outlying regions, including the indigenous communities of Talamanca and Chirripo.

Canadian aid through PWRDF (Anglican Church) along with relief and development agencies of other churches, unions, and co-ops, is being channeled through the COMITE POPULAR in San Jose to Limon.

A Tertiary Writes . . . from the Third World

(continued)

As life begins to take on a somewhat "normal" hue for us, despite the constant water problem -- affecting the schools here as well -- we are deeply concerned for the well-being of the Indian people in the interior. To the rest of the country, three weeks later, the earthquake here may be viewed somewhat dispassionately, but to the indigenous people, many of whom are sick and hungry and suffering from a lack of drinkable water, how we continue to respond to their needs will become a matter of life and death.



There is a deep concern on the part of many who are trying to respond to their needs that some of the relief reported in the national media just does not seem to have materialized. If it had all arrived and been distributed, we should not be discovering some of the dire situations about which we are now learning.

Surely, in a natural disaster such as this, playing politics should have no place in the gathering and distributing of the necessities of life to people who, through no fault of their own, have been devastatingly incapacitated in their ability to provide for themselves and their families.

One of the biggest worries voiced here now is that once the government repairs the road between Limon and San Jose, and goods for export and import are easily able to reach the Central Valley, Limon will be pretty much left to fend for itself -- as has often happened in the past. Sadly, the way we are seeing the scenario played out, this would seem to be a "prophecy" on its way to being fulfilled.

But the stalwart people of Limon are still "Right Here!"

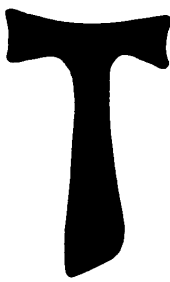
the Rev. John Hodgins TSSF
(Mission Priest Appointee, Anglican Church of Canada)
San Marcos Parish
Apartado "M"
7300 Puerto Limon
COSTA RICA

(EDITOR'S POSTSCRIPT: A hand-written note from John, dated 31 May, states, " Currently, we have no water service in Limon and amidst a diarrhea epidemic, we are doing what we can to improve the situation . . . Please pray for the people of Limon Province and efforts being made to help those most in need. The P.B.'s Fund has also been asked to assist. Those in Canada or the U.S. who would like to help can donate through their local parish, identifying Limon, Costa Rica, as the focus for aid. Pax et Bonum, John+ TSSF.)

The TAU-A Franciscan Cross

by

Ken E. Norian, TSSF



The first recorded reference to the TAU is from Ezekiel 9:4, "Go through the city of Jerusalem and put a TAU on the foreheads of those who grieve and lament over all the detestable things that are done in it." The TAU is the last letter of the Hebrew alphabet and looks very much like the letter "T".

At the Fourth Lateran Council, on November 11, 1215, Pope Innocent III made reference to the TAU and quoted the above verse in reference to the profaning of the Holy Places by the Saracens. It is widely accepted that St. Francis was present at the Fourth Lateran Council and that he heard the words of Pope Innocent III when he said, "The TAU has exactly the same form as the Cross on which our Lord was crucified on Calvary, and only those will be marked with this sign and will obtain mercy who have mortified their flesh and conformed their life to that of the Crucified Savior. From then on, the TAU became Francis' own coat of arms.

Francis used the TAU in his writings, painted in on the walls and doors of the places where he stayed, and used it as his only signature on his writings.

St. Bonaventure said, "This TAU symbol had all the veneration and all the devotion of the saint: he spoke of it often in order to recommend it, and he traced it on himself before beginning each of his actions."

Celano, another Franciscan historian writes, "Francis preferred the Tau above all other symbols: he utilized it as his only signature for his letters, and he painted the image of it on the walls of all the places in which he stayed."

In the famous blessing of Brother Leo, Francis wrote on parchment, "May the Lord bless you and keep you! May the Lord show His face to you and be merciful to you! May the Lord lift up His countenance upon you and give you peace! God bless you Brother Leo!" Francis sketched a head (of Brother Leo) and then drew the TAU over this portrait.

Due, no doubt, in large part to Francis' own affection for and devotion to the TAU, it has been a well recognized and accepted Franciscan symbol among Franciscans of various denominations and of all orders within those denominations for centuries. It remains so today. The TAU carries with it all of the symbolism of the Cross of Christ as well as Francis' ideal of life and dream for himself and his followers.

Sources:

Englebert, Omer, St. Francis of Assisi, Ann Arbor: Servant Books 1965
Miller, Tamela, SFO, "The Tau: A Franciscan Symbol"
Vorreux, Damien, Un Symbole Franciscain: Le Tau, Paris Editions Franciscaines, 1977

(EDITOR'S NOTE -- This issue of The Franciscan Times contains information gleaned from the latest newsletters and other communications found in the packet received by your new editors. The 1991 Directory lists 43 active fellowships, and we have news from eight here. If you are a Convenor of a Third Order Fellowship which has significant news items or stories to share with your brothers and sisters, please send it along to: Robert Durand, 2124 Awihl Place #215, Kihei, Maui, Hawaii 96753. Thank you!)

NEW UMBRIAN FELLOWSHIP

From the newsletter at Francistide, 1990, MARY ANN JACKMAN was scheduled to receive a Minister General's award at a dinner on Oct. 28 in Grace Cathedral House, San Francisco. . . . Fr. Murray Bodo OFM was to lead a Franciscan Spirituality retreat at San Damiano Center in Danville during January of 1991.

BROTHER SUN AND SISTER MOON FELLOWSHIP

From the newsletter of September, 1990: "Please notice that we have a new name. We are no longer the Dallas Fellowship. That particular name indicated that we were a Fellowship in Dallas. We are much more . . . We are a Fellowship of Franciscans from throughout North Texas. We were given permission to use the name."

LONG ISLAND FELLOWSHIP

From the "L.I.F. Line" of October, 1990: Convenor ALISON TRENHOLME writes that the Convenor's Handbook advises that "Convenors of a Third Order Fellowship are to make their presence known to the Bishop of the Diocese in which they meet." Accordingly, I have talked with Bishop Walker, and he expressed great interest in knowing more about us. He also invited the Fellowship to have a dinner meeting with him some time in the future. I'm to contact him again and make plans."

EAST TENNESSEE FELLOWSHIP

From "The Portiuncula Messenger" of November 1990: The October meeting was held in conjunction with the Land of the Sky Fellowship at Grace Church in Ashville, N.C. David Nard reported on events and news from Chapter.

LILIES OF THE FIELD FELLOWSHIP (Colorado)

From the "Lily Patter" of September, 1990: "Simplicity for a tertiary is not doing without goods and services that make life liveable. Rather, it is using your common sense in choosing those items which will be useful and beneficial, not just acquisitions for acquisition's sake."

HAWAII FELLOWSHIP

The Fellowship hosted its annual three-day Eastertide Retreat in April at the Spiritual Life Center on the University of Hawaii campus. The leader was Fr. Hal Weidner C.O., a member of The Oratory in Rock Hill, SC., and the theme was the Paschal Mystery. Meetings are the first Friday evening of each month, and tertiaries visiting the Islands are welcome! Call convenor BARBARA HUNT for information and directions.

SOUTHEAST FLORIDA FELLOWSHIP

From DIANE C. DARRAH: "We have had several meetings at the home of Dee Dobson . . . and we have a schedule to meet every two months on the third Sunday of the month at the same time (3:30 p.m.) and same place. We are in the process of reading and discussing "Pray All Ways" by Edward Hays.

FELLOWSHIP OF LA VERNA, T.S.S.F. (Cincinnati)

From the September newsletter: "We agreed that Creek House would become our regular fellowship place . . . and after checking schedules, we agreed to make our fellowship day the 4th Tuesday of the month at 7:30 p.m." The 1991 spring retreat was in March at Bethanna House of the Convent of the Transfiguration. Leader was Marie Webner, TSSF Provincial Chaplain.

LAND OF THE SKY FELLOWSHIP (North Carolina)

From "Fruits of the Loom" newsletter, July 1991: Each participant at the June meeting made a "pinch pot" as a meditation in clay. They will be kiln-fired and returned at the July meeting, at which Andrea Sheedy will discuss rainforests and ecology.

* * *

C O N V O C A T I O N N O T E S

(EDITOR'S NOTE: Regional Third Order Convocations are fertile ground for meetings and exchange of information among tertiaries, especially those who may be isolated all or much of the year. Advance information about them can be most helpful, as can news and stories from them. Convocation convenors can facilitate this information by sending articles or registration flyers to The Franciscan Times (address above). The following information was gleaned from fellowship newsletters.)

From a report by EVELYNN MACKIE, convenor of the Brother Sun and Sister Moon Fellowship, about The 6th Annual South Central Regional Convocation (April 27-29, 1990):

"The one thought that sticks with me was what Brother Donald said about Clare, that she wanted to be a Friar, but Francis insisted she be a nun, so she devoted her life to praying for the Friars. She was ahead of her time. Now women in the the First Order are serving Our Lord and Savior as Friars, and the harvest is certainly plentiful for this work, as witnessed in the fruit of their labors by founding a new house in Bethlehem, PA."

* * *

From "The Portiuncula Messenger" of East Tennessee: "The 1990 Southeastern Convocation was held at Ignatius House, Atlanta, in September. . . Leading the meditations, Br. Justus SSF challenged the group to let the love of Christ fill them to overflowing so that the spill-over would reach out to those who needed to know God's love for them. . . It was announced that the 1991 Convocation would be held the third weekend of September, again at Ignatius House."

* * *

The Western Regional Convocation made a difficult decision not to have the 1991 convocation at Bishop's Ranch, a place of much Franciscan affection. Instead, it will be held at San Damiano Retreat Center, Danville, CA, on the third weekend in August.

Volunteer Received As Novice

(Continued from Page 9)

Now, what does all that mean to my spiritual growth and well being? It makes me accountable to someone, to do the things I know I should do, anyway. It makes me study, pray, meditate and do a Daily Office. Although I had basically done all this for three years while in Africa, I did not have to report it to anyone if I sloughed off. I suffered my own failures and could perhaps rationalize them, too. No big deal. But now it is. I would feel I had not only let God down, but the Community — the Order — down, too. It happens much less often, now, I'll tell you!

The one facet I've had to work the most on is the same one that gave me the most trouble in Africa — it is Self-denial. To get myself out of God's way and let Him work through me. To stop trying to get God's stamp of approval for my wonderful plans, but to be still and listen while He tells me *His* plan. I guess this is the main area the Discipline has been helpful to me — to bring me daily into God's presence, to have a "Staff Meeting," if you will, but to let Him call the meeting to order.

God willing, I will now be a Novice for the next 2 — 2 1/2 years. This amounts to a time of probation as I more fully test this calling and God and the Order more fully test me. After that, final vows would be taken and renewed annually. They are final but are not "solemn" and hence not "absolute" as those taken by Brothers and Sisters within Convents normally are.

A Tertiary can be male or female, married or single, clergy or lay. A Tertiary is someone who lives and works in the world, but under a Franciscan Discipline. I have found that Discipline most strengthening, comforting — a steady rock in time of stress (and there have been a few times here!) It is the cord that gently draws me back to the source of my strength — my God — when I try to get in the driver's seat. I thank God for this blessed opportunity to grow.

Donna L. Fuller is the Volunteer For Mission on the Sisseton Mission.

Sisseton Volunteer Received As Franciscan Novice

By Donna Fuller

November 4, 1990, was a very special day at Gethsemane Episcopal Church, in Sisseton. It was there during the regular Sunday Eucharist that Father Ron Campbell received me as a Novice into The Third Order, Society of St. Francis. This was allowed by special permission of Reverend Carol Tookey, Formation Director, Farmington, New Mexico, because there is no Franciscan Fellowship near by.

Bishop Craig Anderson asked me to write an article about the occasion and what the Franciscan Discipline had meant to me in my own life and spiritual development. I must admit I have been dragging my feet because I did not know how to do this — what words to use — to avoid sounding like I had just joined the spiritual elite — which would be very un-true and very, very un-Franciscan.

Not until I read the article about the Deacon's Retreat and the fact that Bishop Anderson had charged *them* to develop and live under a Rule of Life, did I begin to see any light at the end of my tunnel of apprehension.

I have been interested in a religious community life for a least five years, having previously written the Order for application forms but not ever done anything with them. While I was in Africa, I had been in language school with a Friar Minor (Franciscan First Order Brother), and two years later, also at the school, I had met a woman Tertiary (Member of The Third Order. Tertiary means "three" or "third"). Those were the only Franciscans I had ever met, face to face, but there was an aura of peace and joy and gentleness about them you could not miss.

While I was in Africa, I was in correspondence with the Society of St. Margaret In New York. When I returned to the USA last fall, I spent a week on R&R with the Sisters there. Living, eating, worshiping with them, as well as visiting their women's shelter and their feeding mission for street people and others suffering poverty. I dis-

cerned that part of the life was right for me but not all of it. I believed I was supposed to live and work in the world, not within a convent.

I came to South Dakota and met Father Steve Smith, who gave me another Franciscan application form. I went home to Hawaii and met our new parish office manager — a Franciscan Tertiary (layman) of long standing. He had been the Chaplain in his home area in the east. I decided the Lord just might be trying to tell me something. I prayed about it a couple of months and discussed it with my spiritual director and my parish priest. With their blessings, I applied for admission and was accepted as a postulant in January, 1990, just before coming to South Dakota to live and work.

In the Third Order we write our own Rule of Life, stating precisely what we plan to do in our discipline, but we *must* include all nine points of the Franciscan Rule. These cover: Eucharist, Penance (including private confession), Personal Prayer, Self-denial, Retreat (at least once a year), Study, Simplicity (of your life style), Work and Obedience (including a Daily Office, having a spiritual director, attending fellowship meetings, as well as obeying the Order's Principles and Rule and The Statutes). Our Rule should fit us and our life and work, not Mother Teresa or St. Francis! But it should also make us work and stretch a little to keep it.

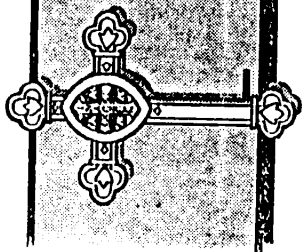
As a Postulant, I did all this for six months, reporting each month to my Formation Counselor as well as my Spiritual Director. At the end of that time I was told I was ready and could then apply for novicing. It took a month to get all the required letters of reference together before I could actually apply. Then it took nearly another month to get approval and another 2-3 weeks before we could find the time to fit the novicing service into our busy schedule. But we finally made it on November 4, 1990.

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SOUTH DAKOTA

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SOMETHING BORROWED . . .

(EDITOR'S NOTE: This article was taken from *Mundi Medicina*, the publication of the Confraternity of the Christian Life, Fall of 1990. It was submitted by Helen Webb TSSF.)

Let us take this opportunity to meditate on part of the Commentary of the C.C.L. Rule.

"The fundamental intention of the Rule is simplicity and adaptability to the needs and capacities of a great variety of people. For those who may find it hard, it is well to remember that the keeping of the Rule is something to strive for, but not to agonize over. For those with opportunities for greater attention to the Rule, there is scope for individual expansion."

We are all on a pilgrimage to our heavenly home. We need to remember that there are as many paths as there are pilgrims. At the present time we have all sorts and conditions of people following the C.C.L. Rule. We have ordained people and lay folk. The beauty of the Rule is that it has similar points of emphasis in common with the Rule of St. Benedict. It is like a large umbrella that many people in the household of God can fit under, with many and varied vocations out in the secular world. For those who have the time and the calling, the Rule can be broadened to fit their own individual needs and capacities. For those with a busy life, the Rule lays down the essentials of a life of prayer and service, which most of the time can be followed by the busiest person.

The Rule is a buoy to keep one afloat, and an anchor to keep one grounded in a life of prayer. Many people have written and said that the Rule was that which helped them through a rough period in their lives, and they thank God for the balance it gave to them in their life. But the Rule is also there to help us along in our daily lives when all is going well, and we easily turn towards God to pray.

The part of the commentary that I think is of utmost importance to busy C.C.L. members is this sentence: *It is well to remember that the keeping of the Rule is something to strive for, but not to agonize over.* The Rule is there as guide, not law. The Rule fulfills its purpose only so long as it enhances a member's life of prayer. Another way of saying this comes in the form of an old saying: "Pray as you can, not as you can't." If, when you go to your prayers, you pray as you can, guilt and anxiety are no longer there. There is nothing to agonize over, and prayer comes naturally and simply, because we can put ourselves in the presence of God with no fear of law, but with the love of Christ himself which comes through Grace.



A MORNING PRAYER

We give thanks
for this life which is such a surprise to us,
and for this new day which is full of discovery,
and for a new chance to become
and be born anew.

We are born into this life to consume, but
let us consume gently,
and let us taste and slowly sip,
and allow

this life around us to become part of us.
Life is a gift, and we are its grace.

Amen.

--Rik Fitch

MEDITATION ON MICAH 6:6-8

("The Gate")

And again, the Kingdom of God is like a gateway, a large portal to the Promised Land. Beyond the gate is a land blest with abundance, where the sick are healed and all the captives freed. This door is set in a wall so high that no eye can judge its dimensions. It has no hinges, no even a keyhole. The only way to open this gate is to murmur the password.

At a time when the world was full of famine and war and disease, as it is now, a great crowd of people stood at the gate, hoping to pass through to the other side. An old scientist, very learned, whispered, "E equals MC squared," and a wise philosopher said, "I think: therefore, I am." The gate did not open.

A king shouted, "POWER!" while a rich man recounted all the words he knew about wealth. A poet stood nearby, thumbing through his thesaurus, muttering. A beautiful woman stroked the door and spoke of sensuous pleasures.

One by one, they came to the gate, hoping to entice it to open. One traveler from afar even tried "open, sesame!" to no avail. The gate remained firmly shut.

However, it did open four times. Once it opened for an old Jew with numbers tattooed on his arm: he said, prayerfully, "justice." Again it opened for a young woman whose face had been disfigured from birth and her body stunted: she murmured, "kindness and mercy." The third time, it opened for an aging courtesan who had rejoiced in every vice, but had recently repented. Wearing rags and tatters, she wept and said, "humility."

The last time, it opened for a young boy who simply walked up to the gate and said, "Love."

-- Dixie Anne Mosier-Greene (10/17/90)

(EDITOR'S NOTE: Dixie Anne is a novice tertiary from Oklahoma.)

REMEMBER!

**The Basics are available from the Secretary,
Jacqui Belcher, at: 2220 E. Victory Drive, #24
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suggested prices are:

Devotional Companion . . .	\$.4.00
Way of St. Francis	\$.2.50
Source Book	\$.2.50
Directory	\$.3.00
Statutes	\$.1.00
Order/Admission	\$.1.00



Basics

THE SWAN

Poet, man of genius, and those by men acclaimed great
Remember this:
There is no thought, emotion, or deep sentiment
That is your own.

You say you suffer with the woe of all humanity;
And that may be;
But your pain can be allayed,
You are not the swan, dumb-stricken until death.
What pang of yours
Is like the silent suffering of those imprisoned thus?

Mercy weeps that she is by you slighted;
And her great gift
Hugged with vain-glory into your breast.
God gave you tongues
That you might serve the rest.

-- Nina L. Andrews

(EDITOR'S NOTE: The preceding is from a manuscript folder of writings by Nina which date back into the 1930s. "The Swan" was "put into modern English during the 1940s" according to a handwritten notation. Nina is a professed tertiary, residing in a nursing home in Bristol, CT, and she told me, before I left Vermont in 1989, that she loved to have visitors. - R.D.)

WALKING TO CHURCH

It is dark,
The ground is dry and rough.
Desert.
Alone.
But life persists here,
As You give it.
Overhead, Your vast sky -
Mystery and beauty.
And Life is near.
The unseen path
Leads to You.
You are walking with me.
- KDL

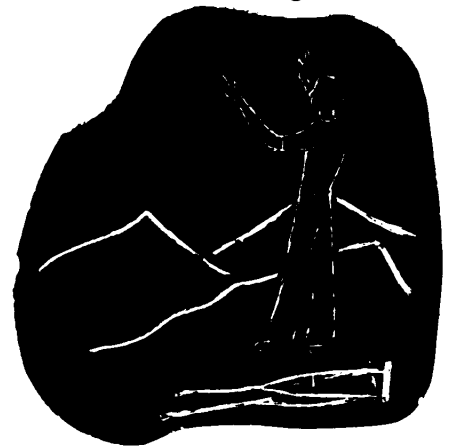
GOD EITHER WAY

Alone,
I can listen to You.
Be present to You.

With others,
I can be present to someone,
Give You.
- KDL

(EDITOR'S NOTE: KDL is Kirby D. Lewis, a professed tertiary living in Texas.)

Praise be to Thee, my Lord,



for all who endure weakness
and tribulation.

BE AT PEACE

Do not look forward in fear to the changes of life; rather look to them with full hope as they arise. God, whose very own you are, will deliver you out of them.

He has kept you hitherto, and He will lead you safely through all things; and when you cannot stand it, God will bury you in His arms.

Do not fear what may happen tomorrow; the same everlasting Father who cares for you today will take care of you then and every day.

He will either shield you from suffering or will give you unfailing strength to bear it.

Be at peace and put aside all anxious thought and imaginations.

-- St. Francis

(From The Anglican Digest and submitted by BETTY SWINEHART TSSF)

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the Franciscan Times

Lord, Make Me an Instrument of Thy Peace

