



# The Franciscan Times

A NEWSLETTER HELPING MEMBERS OF THE THIRD ORDER OF THE SOCIETY OF ST. FRANCIS SHARE THEIR COMMON JOURNEY THROUGH NEWS FROM FELLOWSHIPS AND INDIVIDUALS, REVIEWS OF BOOKS AND TAPES, POETRY, STORIES, ESSAYS, REFLECTIONS, MEDITATIONS, GRAPHICS, AND WHATEVER THE HOLY SPIRIT MIGHT BLOW OUR WAY ■

Winter 2012

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## Who is John Brockmann, our new Minister Provincial?

During my 18 years professed with the Order, I have spent most of my time as the editor of the *Franciscan Times* (14 years). However, I have also served on two Provincial Convocation Teams (New Orleans and Santa Barbara), as Area Chaplain, Assistant Formation Director, Formation Counselor, Fellowship Convener, and as member of Chapter. Former Provincial Chaplain Marie Webner and I revised and redesigned the *Devotional Companion* in the 1990s. In my teaching travels, I have also enjoyed being the guest of TSSF members in Trinidad, Australia, and England.

In 2010, after 27 years as an English Professor at the University of Delaware (teaching Biblical and Classical literature and writing/rhetoric courses of all sorts) as well as being a part-time rector in the Diocese of Delaware, I took early retirement. I did this so that my wife and I along with our 11-year-old and 22-year-old sons could respond to my wife Sarah's call to be rector of an Episcopal parish in Rockland Massachusetts on the far outskirts of Boston that has a number of deaf congregants (Sarah has known American Sign Language for 20 years and finally is getting to express this talent.)

I received a call to near-by Norwood Massachusetts to be the part-time rector of Grace Episcopal Church. You've read of the Community Contemplative Orchard we planted this Spring to weave into the established Community Vegetable Garden and the town's ecu-

*(continued on page 2)*

*The Two Bearded-Bald Guys:  
John Brockmann, new Minister Provincial and Ken Norian,  
new Minister General*



## Goodbye Ken Norian, Minister Provincial of the Province of the Americas; Hello Ken Norian, Minister General of the Order

*(This is an introduction that Ken sent to all the other provinces.)*

Every six years three representatives from the five provinces of the Third Order, Society of Saint Francis gather for an Interprovincial Third Order Chapter. The 2011 IPTOC was held at Holy Cross Monastery in West Park, NY USA. We gathered together with the Interprovincial First Order Chapters of the First Order Sisters and Friars. We gathered together in our respective communities and together – celebrating our identity as sisters and brothers united in the Society of Saint Francis.

The Third Order was represented by Nolan Tobias (MP), Stewart Lane, and Cynthia O'Ehley from the African Province; Ken Norian (MP), Barbara Leonard and John Brockmann from the Province of the Americas; Salley Buckley (Assistant MP), Helen Granowski and Harold Joinoba from the Province of Australia, Papua

New Guinea and East Asia; John Hebenton (MP) and Bobbi Wilson from the Province of Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia with Melanesia; Joanna Coney (MP), Tom Keighley and Jackie Alexander from the European Province. Dorothy Brooker, our Minister General, led and facilitated the gathering.

In the course of our time together one of the points

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### Who is John Brockmann, our new Minister Provincial? (cont.)

menical food pantry housed at Grace Church. We will also be debuting the Stations of the Cross painted by London artist Chris Gollon this coming Holy Week (see Summer 2011 issue of the *Times*, and you can follow our parish at <http://graceepiscopalchurch.wordpress.com/>. If you travel through Boston, please come and visit.)

### Some Plans to Accomplish as Minister Provincial

In the 80's and 90's I got to travel on four continents by lecturing to computer professionals on how to communicate clearly with the rest of us. I was able to develop two books from these lectures, but, more importantly to my intellectual passions, I was able to use my travels to visit archives and libraries around the world to write books on the history of communicating technology (check out my name on Amazon.com, and help save my ten books from the glue factory). I would like to use my travels and our conversations at convocations to create two new projects for the Order.

(Project 1.) Pamela Redhead and I have been on a committee exploring ways of continuing formation for the professed, and, since I had written a number of history books, (Project 2) Chapter asked me to begin creating a history of our Order in the Province of the Americas. You saw the first beginnings of that project in the last issue of the *Times*. As Minister Provincial I would like to continue working on both these projects using my provincial travels to collect ideas on how to continue formation for the professed (e.g., integrating the experience of pilgrimage into the Order, see page 6 and 8), as well as bringing my tape recorder to capture the stories of our Order for our history book.

### My Hope is to Get to Be with All of You at Some Time, and to Share Stories

My hope is that I will travel to all the convocations eventually, the Provincial Convocation in 2013, and many other sorts of Third Order meetings. When I come, let's share stories. I love to tell stories, and I love a good story told. I love to concelebrate the Eucharist with my brothers and sisters, and, as a trained spiritual director, I would love to share retreats and pilgrimages with you.

### The Blessing I Borrowed from our Bishop Protector, Bishop Scruton

I have learned much from being with our Bishop Protector, and he passed on to me a blessing he had learned and which has become a hallmark of our parish and my ministry as a priest:

*May the Lord Jesus who loves with a broken heart, be your love forever more.*

*May the Lord Jesus who serves with wounded hands, help you serve others.*

*May the Lord Jesus who walks on wounded feet, walk with you to the end of the road.*

*Look for the face of the Lord Jesus in everyone you meet, and may everyone you meet see the face of the Lord Jesus in you.*

*Amen.*

### Goodbye Ken Norian, Hello Ken Norian (cont.)

of business was to elect a new Minister General. I am humbled and excited to serve our community in this role. The role of the Minister General is principally to ensure that the constitution of the Third Order is observed, to coordinate the interprovincial life of the order and to encourage a sense of worldwide community

I'm a lay person in my mid 50's who works for Thomson Reuters in the financial community in New York City, with an office in Times Square – a real challenge for someone with a Franciscan vocation! My undergraduate degree is in finance and I have an MBA. For 20 years I worked in nearly every aspect of radio broadcasting including off air and on air work. I have five kids between 21 and 24 years old including two biological, one adopted and two step children (after seeing them all go through adolescence not much can get me too stressed). I began my Franciscan journey in the mid 80's and was professed in the Province of the Americas in 1989. My identity as a Third Order Franciscan defines how I see myself and continues to challenge me to live into what God wants me to do.

While we, as Tertiaries around the world, are separated by physical and cultural differences we truly are one order – one community bound together by a common spirituality and a common rule. At IPTOC, and in random meetings with Tertiaries from other provinces over the past few months I have been profoundly struck by how much we really share in common. Amidst the minor differences in the formation processes in our respective provinces God has formed us into a community of people who share so much in common. As I pray the Community Obedience each day I remember all of you by name in the course of each month. May we all give thanks for our order, knit together in prayer glorifying God's name after the example of our father Francis winning others to God's love.

If you have internet access you can follow my news, views and random thoughts. You do not have to join Facebook to view this, though I encourage you do to so

in order to respond and interact:

[www.facebook.com/tssfministergeneral](http://www.facebook.com/tssfministergeneral)

My prayer and that of all the Minsters Provincial is that we may hold tightly to the passion and energy we have developed for our Franciscan vocation and our life as a worldwide order. May we help others catch hold of this vision for our community, our respective provinces, our church and the world.

## Minister Provincial 2011 Annual Report

*Ken Norian*

### Communications

We continue to grow into utilization of electronic communications while respecting those who do not have access to and/or are not fully comfortable with newer technologies. "Hot News" is distributed monthly electronically. Our website is used both as a way of attracting people to TSSF, as well as a repository of information and documents for Tertiaries. The "Franciscan Times" is a 20 – 25 page publication published approximately four times a year and distributed to all Tertiaries in the province, as well as being available on line. We experimented with a forum based discussion group and YahooGroup. We have settled on a listserve email discussion group hosted by [Justus.anglican.org](http://Justus.anglican.org). This has had modest success, and I hope that more members of TSSF will avail themselves of electronic methods of communication. OEF, while orders of magnitude smaller than TSSF, has orders of magnitude more interaction on their listserve. While appreciating that they don't have the opportunities for in-person fellowship that we do, I think that we should try to encourage electronic methods of communication.

### Local Gatherings/Convocations

There are six annual, regional convocations attracting between 20 and 40 Tertiaries. Every five years there is a Provincial Convocation that has historically had around 150 Tertiaries. Due to the timing of the USA General Convention, the next Provincial Convocation will be at a six-year interval, to be held in 2013.

There are approximately 48 fellowships that gather regularly: as frequently as once a month and as infrequently as several times a year where extended travel is required. We have some isolated Tertiaries, and encourage them to participate as able at regional convocations and through outreach efforts on the part of a member who ministers to them. Convocations can be challenging from a perspective of finances and "ownership." Province wide, attendance has decreased slightly; tertiaries should continue to be encouraged to attend.

### Formation

A Formation Director, 12 Assistant Formation Directors, and many Formation Counselors lead our formation program. The burden of work on the Formation Director has been considerable, and we are exploring ways to distribute the various tasks of the FD into two separate roles. In the past, there were two formation directors (one for women and one for men). Since we moved away from the male/female model, one person has taken on the role, and the workload has been very hard. As we gather here, there is a team of individuals working on process and roles. *(See page 23 for an introduction to Caroline Benjamin, our new Formation Director.)*

### Chaplaincy/Care of the Professed

We recognize that there is a need for ongoing formation and continue to pursue ways to accomplish this. We also recognize that there are some professed who fail to continue to stand on the three-legged stool of reporting annually, contributing annually, and renewing their vows annually. Through our area chaplains we seek to identify these individuals and work with them pastorally to help them discern if they still have a call to the TSSF community. Not infrequently, there is a relief that they no longer have to carry the guilt of being part of an Order while not participating in the life of the community. We should continue to encourage those who appear not to have an ongoing relationship with the Order to either seek release or rekindle their commitment to the community.

### Relationship with 1<sup>st</sup> Order Brothers & Sisters

The Minister Provincial or a delegate attends the First Order Brother's Chapter and First Order Sister's Chapter. The First Order Minister Provincials from the Brothers and Sisters, or a delegate, attend the Third Order Chapter. Additionally, we strive to have First Order representation at each of our Regional Convocations. There are typically many First Order Representatives at our Provincial Convocations. The First Order houses are welcoming to Tertiaries in their respective areas. In summary, we enjoy a wonderful relationship with other communities within the Society of Saint Francis.

### Relationship with non-Anglican Franciscans

We are blessed to enjoy a very close relationship with the Roman Catholic Secular Franciscan Order as well as the Order of Ecumenical Franciscans. TSSF attends both of their chapters, and they attend ours. We are also a part of the Joint Committee for Franciscan Unity, a joint effort of the above-mentioned orders. We gather several times a year in regional groups and every few years in a larger gathering of members of these orders.

*(continued on page 4)*

## Minister Provincial Annual Report (cont.)

### Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation

TSSF in the Americas is an active financial contributor to both Franciscans International as well as the Franciscan Action Network. The latter is a U.S.A. based organization committed to “Transforming the World in the Spirit of Francis and Clare”. Individual members of our community are actively involved in JPIC initiatives and share ideas and support via an email group.

### Associates

Responsibility for The Associates of SSF (known in other provinces as Companions) has moved back to the First Order Brothers after six years of administration by the Third Order.

### Bishop Protector

We are blessed with the wise counsel, active engagement, and deep spirituality of Bishop Gordon Scruton of the Diocese of Western Massachusetts. Bp Scruton has announced his intention to retire, but has expressed his willingness to continue to serve as our Bishop Protector.

### Blessings and Challenges

We have a vibrant group of Tertiaries that enjoy a real sense of community and who support each other in prayer, time and talent. Most Tertiaries have active ministries and the community of TSSF supports and encourages them in their life and activities. An ongoing challenge is one of time. Members of Chapter and scores of “other leaders” give selflessly to support the work and ministry of the community. Most have full-time jobs and families—in addition to being active in local parishes and other ministries. In addition to the hours spent late at night and on weekends, travel for those with a finite amount of vacation time is a particular concern. Personally, I have used former Ministers Provincial to represent me in some situations as it would be impossible for me to be present at all of the gatherings that present themselves.

We are continually looking at new models for certain roles, including Formation Director, to avoid a situation that might lead to burn-out.

We speak three languages in the province—English, Spanish, and Portuguese. There are obvious challenges involved there.

We have one region, Guyana, where there is incredible difficulty in communication. We endeavor to reach out through those who are “connected” in Georgetown, and recently had a Chapter member spend time there.

Brazil is an ongoing challenge: the sense of community

between the north and south of Brazil is tenuous; there is minimal connection to TSSF Province of the Americas; and no local leaders have arisen. However, there are active local fraternities/fellowships who clearly display a Franciscan charism with much zeal.

We’ve made several visits there, and have always invited a representative to Chapter. There has been nearly no contact in the past year. I confess to some level of burn-out on this matter since it has consumed a tremendous amount of time and energy over the past six years. The incoming Minister Provincial may have a fresh perspective. Clearly, the current situation is not sustainable—and has been languishing for nine years.

As I reflect on the succession of Ministers Provincial I am struck by the alternation between the lay and ordained orders. The Province of the Americas is quite unique in this diversity.

I also reflect on the situation that exists within a province when a Minister Provincial becomes Minister General, and the role of that person within their home province. The role of the Minister General is principally to ensure that the constitution of the Third Order is observed, to coordinate the interprovincial life of the order and to encourage a sense of worldwide community. This does not include getting involved with the ongoing details of the day-to-day functioning of any province. Dorothy Brooker shared with me the challenges presented to any region when the Minister General comes from that region, and how important it is to step back and allow the province from which they came to function within their provincial leadership. She saw her role as primarily interacting and communicating with the Ministers Provincial, and I see that continuing with me.

Having said that, “the Minister General may attend and may vote at any meeting of any Provincial Chapter,” and I very much look forward to continuing to attend in the future—and especially not having to do any pre-Chapter preparation or intensive in-Chapter coordination!!

This is my 15<sup>th</sup> year as an officer on Chapter, and this report marks my last of six as Minister Provincial of the Province of the Americas. When I look at pictures from 15 years ago my beard was brown, and I had hair. Since our next Minister Provincial is already bald and grey-bearded, that is something he will not have to deal with! It has been a blessing and an honor to be able to serve our TSSF community in the Province of the Americas. In the words of our Father Francis, “Lord I give back to You the family which until now You have entrusted to me”.



***Your Chapter and Visitors (2011)***

(From Left to right, front to back)

Bett Woods (Chapter Member), Sr. Jean (Visitor of the Community of St. Francis (CSF))

Bill Breedlove (New Asst. Formation Director), Caroline Benjamin (New Formation Director), Lynn Herne (Provincial Secretary), Marilyn Minncy (Chapter Member and Chair of 2013 Provincial Convocation), Pamela Redhead (Chapter Member and Assistant formation Director for Carribean)

John Brockmann (New Minister Provincial and Editor of the *Times*), Bishop Scruton (Bishop Protector), Patronalia Hanley-Brown (Chapter Member and Assistant Fellowship Coordinator for Carribean), Barbara Leonard (Provincial Chaplain), Dominic George (Chapter Member)

Ken Norian (New Minister General), Tom Johnson (Bursar), Cynthia Morse (Order of Ecumenical Franciscans (OEF) Representative), Bill Graham (Fellowship Coordinator), Frank Jones (Vocations Coordinator)

Ed Shirley (Roman Catholic Secular Franciscans Representative) and Fred Ball (Representative of the Newly Established Franciscans of Reconciliation of the Ecumenical Catholic Communion (OFR))

## The Spiritual Journey of Pilgrimage

*Rick Bellows (from Three Models of Spirituality)*

Most people naturally see the spiritual life as a journey. The goal of the journey is to come to God, and, in the meantime, to grow spiritually along the way. Temptations are hazards, or misleading signs. Sin is choosing to go in the wrong direction; repentance is turning back to God.

When church leaders were considering me for ordination, they asked me about my spiritual journey. I had difficulty responding because I had not yet learned to translate my spiritual experiences into journey-language. One goal of my sharing these models is to help us understand each other better, especially if we look at spirituality differently. Another goal is to remove harsh judgment. I wondered why I couldn't really tell my spiritual journey when I was asked by church leaders. My attempts to answer seemed shallow. What was wrong with me? Nothing, but I didn't understand this until I learned about the different models of spirituality.



*On a pilgrimage, youth from Massachusetts visit Navajo youth at Window Rock, Arizona*

The practice of going on pilgrimages—holy travel—helped me value the journey. We all know the difference between vacation and travel for work, but what is a pilgrimage? The destination and mode of travel may be the same, but pilgrimages involve two key spiritual ingredients: **intention**, and **reflection**.

- The **intention** on a pilgrimage is to be open to the experience, to change, and to God. The challenge is to be both fully present in the moment, and mindful or attentive along the way.
- This mindfulness allows one to reflect on the experience. Such **reflection** enhances the impact of the experience, provides the opportunity for learning and growth, and facilitates

the discovery of new directions and next steps. Reflections may be private (as in a journal), but often are enhanced by conversation with fellow pilgrims, mentors, or prayer with God.

Even though I generally do not experience spirituality as an outward journey, I find it refreshing to break out of the cocoon or come out of the shell. Consider some of the blessings I brought home from pilgrimages:

### **1996 UK—visited 8 cathedrals and the cell of Lady Julian of Norwich.**

After sitting with my wife and kids in the garden outside Lady Julian's cell, "All shall be well" sank in. Lady Julian received these words from Christ in a revelation when she was very ill. She survived her own grave illness and provided spiritual support through three epidemics of the plague during her lifetime. I felt such hopeful peace, all the more powerful because the Church of St. Julian, and Lady Julian's cell, had been completely rebuilt after being obliterated by the Nazi bombing of Norwich in WWII. I brought home a deep sense of trust, hope, and peace from this experience.

### **2004 UK Sites associated with early Celtic evangelists Columba, Aidan, Cuthbert, and their convert, Hilda, including Iona, Lindisfarne, Durham, and Whitby.**

All of these leaders were creative and strong, but very humble. People listened to them because of their



*Lindisfarne*

humility. They also knew how to be present to people and their need, to listen, and to be realistic. Cuthbert had an affinity for nature, which he understood much as St. Francis would six centuries later. I returned home with fresh sense of leadership that flows from a humble incarnational presence.

### **2004 Glacier National Park**

First visited Running Eagle Falls, where Running Eagle, a native American warrior, came on her vision quest. From there we continued on to back country



*Running Eagle Falls Glacier National Park*

sites of majestic remote beauty and bear danger. We were particularly struck by the beauty of the water flowing from the glaciers, distinguished by its beautiful color caused by dust ground by glaciers. I brought home a heart thankful for no bear encounters, amazement that I could hike more than expected, and questions about **minimizing** human impact upon the earth, especially the disappearing glaciers.

**2007 Canyon de Chelly and Navajoland and the Grand Canyon-with youth preparing for confirmation.**



*Canyon de Chelly Navajoland*

We stayed in Fort Defiance at an Episcopal mission. With Navajo youth from the church at the mission we did a service project shoveling up composted sheep manure to spread on the lawns. We spent time looking down into Canyon de Chelly, and somehow gained perspective about time and space. Both are much larger than we experience in our everyday lives, yet every

moment is sacred, and each place can host our very present God. This was reinforced at the Grand Canyon where we glimpsed layers of rock that span a billion years. I brought home a richer perspective about time and place.

**2008 White Mountains, New Hampshire Hut-to-hut hike with my wife.**

Hiking over so many mountains from one hut to the next was the hardest thing I ever did. It gave me a deeper sense of my inner resources given to me by God.

I could add my quarterly trips to Boston to see my doctor. It is relationship building, as my wife drives me. My doctor's visit also involves honest introspection so I can share how I am doing. I bring home a sense of reality, the support of love, and an ongoing sense of the presence of God. It surely is a pilgrimage if I intend it to be.

How are your vacations like pilgrimages? How about your business travel? What would it take for all your travels to be pilgrimages? What would the benefit be?



*The trail over Mts. Jefferson and Adams*

**Pilgrimage is one of the ideas we have gathered for a means of continuing formation for the professed. Rick here has explained his concept of pilgrimage. What's yours? How do you see pilgrimage as a way of continuing formation for the professed? Send in your ideas, articles, and pictures to the editor.**

**THE CELEBRATION OF A PROFESSION ANNIVERSARY<sup>1</sup>**

*The celebration of a significant Profession anniversary shall normally take place in the context of the Eucharist. The Minister Provincial or a representative shall officiate. A homily may be given. After the Ministry of the Word, following the gospel (homily), and Litany (and after any pledges or renewals, if any) the Officiant shall be seated in front of the altar facing the congregation.*

**Officiant:** My brother/sister, N, what do you desire?

**Brother/Sister N shall approach the Officiant, but still a ways off, shall say:** My brothers and sisters, xx years ago, in response to God's call, I professed my desire to serve our Lord Jesus Christ for the rest of my life, in company with my brothers and sisters, in the Third Order of the Society of Saint Francis. On this occasion I desire to celebrate my profession in the Order by giving thanks to God and my brothers and sisters for the blessings I have received in my profession, and for the ways God has worked in and through us.

**N may take the opportunity to briefly express specific thanks at this time, and then proceed:**

Therefore with joy and humility, I desire now to reaffirm my profession in the Third Order and ask for your prayers.

**The Officiant says:** In celebration of your xx years of profession, please come and reaffirm your vow and pledge before those who are gathered, and before me representing all your brothers and sisters in all the Orders of the Society of Saint Francis.

**N stands or kneels in front of the Officiant, and says** I, Brother/Sister N, having given myself to serve our Lord Jesus Christ in company with my brothers and sisters in the Third Order of the Society of Saint Francis, and having pledged to live according to the Rule of the Order, reaffirm my vow that I would seek to spread the knowledge and love of Christ, to strive for justice and peace by promoting the spirit of love and harmony, and to live joyfully a life of simplicity and humble service, after the example of Saint Francis.

**Those who are seated now stand. The Officiant says,** Let us pray,

**All together:** Creator Spirit, rekindle in N your gifts of grace, renew her/his life in Christ and bring to completion all that your calling has begun in her/him. Amen

**The Officiant blesses Brother/Sister N.**

May our blessed Lady pray for you.

May Saint Francis, who bore the marks of the Lord Jesus, pray for you.

May Saint Clare pray for you.

May all the saints of the three Orders pray for you.

May the holy angels befriend you and watch around you to protect you.

And I will pronounce upon you the blessing which our holy father, Francis, gave to Brother Leo, his companion:

The Lord bless you and watch over you,

the Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you,

the Lord look kindly on you and give you peace.

Brother/Sister N, the Lord bless you.

**And all present shall say:**

Amen.

**The Eucharist continues with the Peace.**

<sup>1</sup> Adopted from "Celebrating the Anniversary of a Profession," *The Daily Office SSF* (Mowbray 2010).

Our brother Rick Bellows offers the above rite as a way to nurture the continuing formation of the professed and is adopted from the 1st Order. What do you think of it? What changes, additions, or deletions do you think would make this worthy to include in our *Devotional Companion's* next edition.



***Michael and the Ice Princess: A Mystical Romance* (A Book Review by the Author)***Mary Mendenhall, Associate*

Opening with Evelyn Underhill's poem "The Lady Poverty", this lyrical novel adapts the teachings of the great mystics, including Francis and Clare, into story form. It especially addresses self-abandonment, spiritual power, and psychological freedom from the past.

Chapter epigraphs dating from the fourth century guide the reader along this mystical quest story, and the characters throughout paraphrase teachings from Teresa of Avila, John Bunyan, and George MacDonald.

An unpaid debt, a cursed king, a wife who dies in childbirth, a daughter is lost, and a kingdom crumbling leads to the chilling reminder *There is a power greater than yours*.

Sensing that all is not right with her world, the forgotten princess embarks on a journey of self-discovery, shrouded in mystery and aware of a coldness she cannot shake off... Thus begins the story of Michael, a wounded craftsman craving fulfillment. During his travels, he stumbles upon a cold and aloof stranger. But as he unravels her story he discovers that the Ice Princess is not a mere fairy-tale figure: She is a flesh-and-blood woman with a quest of her own.

Readers of the First Edition called the book 'a memorable tapestry of great power and beauty', 'a journey inward', and a 'sweet, magical story' to be read over again.

*Mary Mendenhall's fresh presentation of the enduring quest story is a fascinating literary journey through the world of sages of long ago who still have something to say to lost pilgrims—and modern souls. Encouraged to write by the late Henri Nouwen and author Elizabeth Sherrill, the author is a Franciscan Associate and Anglican laywoman, as well as a community and hospice nurse with overseas experience teaching spirituality, music, and drama. She lives in Washington State and has three grown sons.*

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

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**Where to Send Changes—**  
**For Name and address changes**  
**For Convocation Dates**  
**For Profession & Novicing Dates**  
**For Notification of Deaths**  
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**T S S F Publications**

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

*Order of Admission* (\$1)

*Spiritual Director Guide* (\$2.50)

*Statutes* (\$1)

*Devotional Companion* (\$4.50)

**Please Note:**

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

## Joy

Stewart Lane, African Province, Provincial Formation  
*Guardian*

Holy joy is an inner feeling of serene elation or peaceful excitement in which we feel as if our hearts are pressing upwards in our chests. It comes from the presence of the Holy Spirit. In the Eucharist when the priests say, "Lift up your hearts," they are urging us to become aware of the presence of the Holy Spirit so that our Eucharistic celebration may be full of holy joy—a real celebration.

As control, comfort, convenience and consumption conspire to constrict our channel to the Holy Spirit, the connection Francis made between total poverty and total joy is no mystery.

There is no single outward sign of holy joy. It can produce silence or tears, raucous laughter, singing or shouts, quiet smiles, a bubbly cheerfulness or even the altered consciousness the charismatics call "being slain in the Spirit." Sometimes it moves people to outstretch their arms or fall to their knees in adoration.

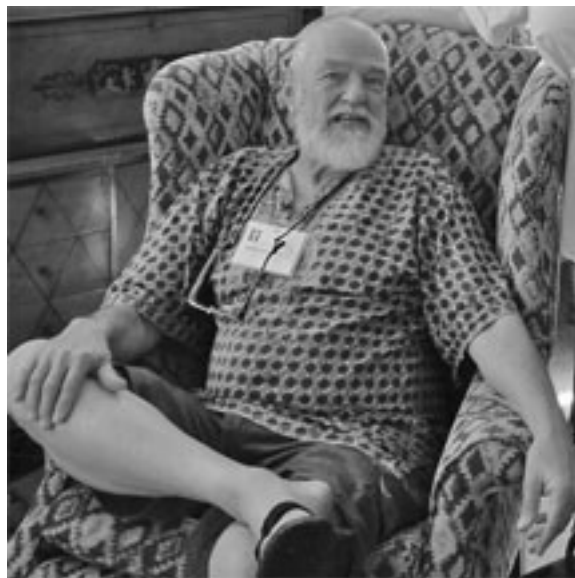
Holy joy can exist in the presence of negative emotions like grief, fear, or anguish or unpleasant conditions such as disease, exhaustion or pain, so to be joyful we do not have to pretend that everything is all right.

Bringing joy into negative feelings and conditions has the effect of soothing them and making our response to them more constructive, so that when Scripture says, "The joy of the Lord is our strength," it is talking about a practical reality.

The following story is one illustration of how holy joy works. When my wife was in a coma dying of malaria, keeping watch beside her bed, I heard an inner voice saying, "Trust me, this is my merciful provision." I was at that moment touched with a joy that sustained me first through the fear, then through the grief and the shock, staying with me for several days. It saved me from the mental paralysis or confusion that often accompanies the sudden death of someone loved. It saved me from bitterness against the hospital, which had bungled the diagnosis, and from anger at God for letting my wife die so young.

When my friends gathered at the house for the all night condolence vigil, as is the custom in Malawi, we sang our fellowship worship songs and I was able to lead with voice and guitar as I was used to doing, tearfully to be sure, but in peace. I was not happy, not even cheerful. Everything was most definitely not all right, but joy made everything better; it was, in truth, my strength and that experience of holy joy that has become for me an iconic proof of the reality of salvation.

MAY THE JOY OF CHRIST RISEN FROM THE DEAD  
BE YOUR STRENGTH!



Stewart Lane, African Province, Provincial Formation  
*Guardian*

***In our continuing efforts to create a history of our province, I have found in the archives the Annals of the Third Order Secular of the American Congregation of Franciscans composed by Father Joseph and covering from 1917 and on.***

***What I thought would be interesting to share is the following pastoral letter from Father Joseph from 1926. What can we learn from this letter?***

*John Brockmann, Minister Provincial*

A PASTORAL LETTER TO OUR THIRD ORDER.

PAX

The Franciscan Monastery, Merrill, Wisconsin.

Octave Day of St. Joseph,

April twenty-seventh,

1926

My dear Sons and Daughters of the Third Order:

One of the greatest of God's many blessings to our American Congregation of Franciscans is the growth of our Third Order. But this development makes it impossible for the Director, Father Joseph, to care for it in an adequate way. All our tertiaries have consequently suffered from the neglect inevitably occasioned by this circumstance.

With this in mind, for the past year Father Joseph, whenever he has had opportunity, has conferred with the priests of the Third Order regarding the development of an organization which would eliminate three weaknesses which we have all felt in our present organization, viz., 1. The lack of proper fostering of postulants and novices. 2. The lack of a spirit of fellowship among our tertiaries. 3. The impossibility of uniting our tertiaries for corporate devotion and good works.

A meeting of tertiaries in and about New York City was called in March for the purpose of a conference on this subject, and it was so well attended that the Father Director has been greatly encouraged at our tertiaries' interest in this matter, even though the original purpose of the meeting quite miscarried, due to the absence of the clergy through illness and the lateness of trains. The proposals contained in this pastoral letter, however, actually resulted from that meeting because the Father Director felt assured that our brothers and sisters of the Third Order really desire, and so will heartily support, a careful and thorough organization.

According to the Rule of the Third Order, the tertiaries are entirely under the care of the Father Director of the Third Order, who is appointed by the Father Minister of the Friars Minor from among the priests of the First, or the Third Orders, unless the Father Minister himself desires to serve in this capacity. In these first days of our Order, Father Joseph himself has been obliged to act as the Director of the Third Order. He wishes now, as far as possible, to delegate his authority to others.

He therefore calls attention to the following tentative organization of the Third Order, which is to be tried out for a year, i. e., until April 16, 1927, when we will have our reelections and reappointments. It is to be understood that each officer appointed at the present time is to hold his office for a year, unless change is made necessary by circumstances. At the expenditure of much time and correspondence, he has tried to bring into existence a workable organization that can begin to function at once.

#### I. THE ORGANIZATION IN GENERAL.

There will be three units of organization: The first will be the province, presided over by a Father Commissary, who acts for the Father Director; the second, the custodia, presided over by the Father Custos, who acts for the Father Commissary; and the third, the fellowship, which is to elect a secretary and any other necessary officers, and is to have a priest chaplain appointed by the Father Commissary.

#### II. THE PROVINCES.

The provinces of tertiaries should follow the boundaries

of the provinces of the First Order, but since the friars have no provinces, we must divide the tertiaries into provinces as best we can. Obviously, only two provinces are necessary at present, and the Alleghany Mountains will naturally serve as the division line between them.

#### III. THE CUSTODIAS.

A custodia is a regional organization within a province, but provinces cannot at the present time be systematically subdivided into custodias.

The purpose of the custodia is to band together as large a number of tertiaries as possible to incite them to good works and devotion. Custodias should be erected by the Father Director at the advice of the Father Commissary wherever there are a sufficient number of tertiaries in a local area.

Our first custodia will be the Custodia of New York City. At the present time, the tertiaries in Chicago, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and elsewhere, will not be attached to any custodia, but, of course, any one of our tertiaries is always welcome at any Third Order meeting held by any of our tertiaries anywhere in the world. I hope there can soon be custodias in Chicago, Cleveland, and Philadelphia.

#### IV. THE FELLOWSHIP.

The fellowship is to be the smallest group of organization within the province, and corresponds somewhat to the monastery or friary of the Order of St. Francis, just as the custodia corresponds to a custodia within a province, and the province corresponds to the ordinary provincial organization of the Order of St. Francis.

A fellowship must have at least three members, but it is never to be a parochial organization, though it may ask of the reverend clergy the boon of sometimes single parish churches for meetings. For every fellowship, the Father Commissary will appoint a priest as chaplain, who need not necessarily be a tertiary.

#### V. THE TERTIARIES AT LARGE.

Tertiaries not connected with a fellowship will be "tertiaries-at-large", within a custodia or province.

#### VI. THE CORPORATE LIFE OF THESE UNITS OF ORGANIZATION.

(a) The fellowships should undertake some corporate devotion every month, such as a Corporate Communion, the recitation of the Office publicly, or a conference about our ideals, life and Rule.

*(continued on page 12)*

PASTORAL LETTER TO OUR THIRD ORDER, 1926  
(cont.)

There shall also be regular meetings, in which to read and discuss matters connected with the Order, and to conduct any necessary business. Experience alone will teach us just how these matters can be arranged to the best advantage.

(b) There should also be a monthly meeting of the custodia for these purposes.

(c) At least a yearly meeting of the province should be held for the same purposes as the meetings of the fellowships and custodias, and more frequent meetings if possible.

#### VII. THE FURTHER ORGANIZATION.

With the consent of the Father Director, the Father Commissary should erect any further organizations necessary in his province.

The Father Custos should, with the consent of the Father Commissary, likewise develop such organizations in his custodia as are necessary.

#### VIII. THE APPOINTMENTS AND ELECTIONS.

The Father Commissary, who presides over the provinces as the representative of the Father Director, shall be appointed yearly, or oftener if necessary, by the Father Director. No one but a Franciscan Priest, either a Friar Minor or tertiary, shall be eligible for the office.

The office of Custos is best discharged by a Franciscan priest, but in case of necessity, a Franciscan brother is eligible for it. The Father or Brother Custos shall be appointed the Father Director with the consent of the Father Commissary.

#### IX. THE FATHER DIRECTOR.

For the present, all professed tertiaries and all postulants and novices who are priests, oblates or candidates will make their monthly reports as heretofore to the Director, Father Joseph. The other postulants and novices are to report to their respective novice masters or novice mistresses, according to their sex.

Father Joseph will also endeavor to act as (a) the overseer of the life and work of the Third Order, (b) visitor to the different Third Order regional groups and (c) counselor and assistant to the various officers in all matters where his services are requested or needed.

He wishes to reserve to himself the right to invest tertiaries with the habit at any time when in his opinion the convenience of the Order is served thereby.

#### X. THE FATHER COMMISSARY.

On the other hand, the Father Director now delegates to the Father Commissaries the authority to invest novices and to receive professions, both of the laity and of the priests-tertiary. When the Father Commissary is unable himself to officiate at the investiture or profession of a tertiary, he will have full authority to delegate some other priest, preferably a Franciscan, to act for him.

The tertiaries-at-large and the various fellowships of each province are to be directly under the Father Commissary. Consequently, the fellowships should communicate with him for advice and direction in any Third Order matter.

He may, of course, refer anything he thinks necessary to the Father Director.

All other provincial officers are likewise to work under the direction of the Father Commissary.

#### XI. THE INVESTITURES AND PROFESSIONS.

Hereafter, a postulant will be clothed on the recommendation of the novice master, or novice mistress, with the consent of the Father Director.

Likewise, a novice will be professed on the recommendation of the novice master, or novice mistress, with the consent of the Father Director.

#### XII. THE MASTER AND THE MISTRESS OF NOVICES.

It will be the duty of the master and the mistress of novices to see that each novice pursues a short course of reading along Franciscan lines before profession.

The novice master and novice mistress are to work immediately under the direction of the Father Director. All postulants and novices, except priests, oblates, and candidates for Holy Orders, will make their monthly reports to the master or the mistress of novices, according to their sex.

#### XIII. THE OTHER OFFICES GENERAL.

The Secretary General will send out notices from the Father Director to all the tertiaries, and keep such records of the whole Order as the Father Director may designate.

#### XIV. THE DISCRETORIUM GENERAL.

The Fathers Commissary, the Fathers Custodes, and the other officers-general of the Third Order will form the Discretorium General, under the direction of the Father Director for the handling of all problems that arise in the Third Order.

XV. THE OTHER OFFICERS PROVINCIAL.

The Secretary Provincial must notify each tertiary in the Province of each clothing, profession, death, or expulsion, and any other matter of general interest, and will communicate the same information to the Secretary Provincial of the other Provinces for dissemination in that Secretary's province.

The Director General:

The Reverend Father Joseph, O.S.F.,  
212 Pier St., Merrill, Wis.

The Secretary General:

Novice Joachim, T.S.F.,  
(Mr. Wilfred Stout, 410 Pusey Ave., Collingdale, Pa.)

The Almoner General:

Brother Louis, T.S.F.,  
(Mr. Ray Henry McLaughlin, 349 Sixth Ave., Long Island City, L.I., N.Y.)

The Novice Master of Clerics and Oblates:

The Father Director.  
The Reverend Father Joseph, O.S.F.

The Novice Master of Laymen:

The Reverend Brother Andrew, O.S.F.,  
212 Pier St., Merrill, Wis.

The Novice Mistress of Laywomen:

The Reverend Mother Mary Christine.,  
St. Elizabeth's House,  
5803 Linwood Ave., Cleveland, Ohio.

THE PROVINCE OF THE SACRED HEART.

(Western Province)

The Commissary Provincial:

Father Juniper Michael, T.S.F.,  
(The Reverend John A. Swinson, Tomahawk, Wis.)

The Secretary Provincial:

Sister Francesca Mary T.S.F.,  
(Mrs. Mae Radke, The Radke Hotel, Savanna, Ill.)

The Almoner Provincial:

Novice Giles, T.S.F.,  
(Mr. Philip Berton, 3307 Wisconsin Ave., Berwyn, Ill.)

The Roster of the Western Province  
Fellowships

- I. The Fellowship of Mary-Help at Cincinnati, Ohio
- II. The Fellowship of St. Francis at Merrill and Tomahawk Wisconsin
- III. The Fellowship of St. Bernadine at Savanna, Illinois
- IV. The Fellowship of St. Louis at Chicago, Illinois

The Province of the Sacred Wounds  
(Eastern Province)  
Fellowships

- I. The Fellowship of the Holy Name at New York, N. Y.
- II. The Fellowship of St. Joseph at Philadelphia, Pa
- III. The Fellowship of St. Anthony at Brooklyn, NY

...then is intermingled in the above all the names of the professed, novices and postulants which will be available later

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In conclusion, it seems wise to make some note of our future plans.

We hope to effect some kind of an organization of our postulants and candidates for Holy Orders within the Third Order, but this is a matter which can be taken up after the Order as a whole has been organized.

We have not mentioned the matter of a General Chapter of the Order, but we have spoken of our hope for a yearly meeting of the provinces, which would be a Provincial Chapter. As the Order grows, no doubt these things will be taken care of. Two years ago, no one could have believed that such a development as the present one was even possible.

At any rate, the provincial officers ought to be able to meet once a year at the Discretorium, or council of the province. Through correspondence, the Discretorium General ought to be able to settle any important matters that arise, and perhaps it may be possible to have a meeting of the Discretorium General.

(continued on page 14)

PASTORAL LETTER TO OUR THIRD ORDER, 1926  
(cont.)

We hope to issue a new *Tertiaries' Manual* within the next twelve months, also a copy of the little office of Our Lady, and another very beautiful office, which was composed by St. Francis himself, called "The Little Office of the Passion". When these have been published, we will permit our tertiaries to use them as their office.

We wish especially to commend to the whole Third Order an interesting adventure for God which is being undertaken by The Reverend Mother, P.C., assisted by some of our Tertiaries. The Reverend Mother is in residence at St. Elizabeth's House, in Cleveland, Ohio, and is attempting to develop there a Third Order Regular of Sisters who will do parish work, nursing and teaching. Novice Mary Elizabeth, T.S.F., is in residence with The Reverend Mother, and they expect one or two aspirants to join them soon.

May God bless you richly with every grace of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

Yours lovingly in Him,

J-w                      Father Joseph, O.S.F.

## Liberia Medical Mission Trip, 2011

*Kathryn Challoner*

Kathryn Challoner TSSF travels to Liberia every year on medical missions. She has worked at Phebe Hospital in Bong County and, for the last three years, at John Fitzgerald Kennedy (JFK) Hospital in Monrovia with HEARTT (a regional non-profit that assists volunteer physicians by providing free accommodation at the hospital and 2 meals/day.) The following excerpts from her emails will give you a flavor of her medical work in this country recovering from civil war.

### Day 4

It has been raining—monsoon like—and everything is wet. JFK Hospital is leaking! Every time I turn around in the ER, I am getting wet. You just put down buckets and carry on.

At night you hear the rain pounding on the roof – it's actually kind of cozy.

We are using the pulse oximeters non-stop that the Sisters (Community of the Transfiguration) purchased. Lots of pneumonia coupled with malaria. There are babies lying everywhere. I lost a wee 6 day old baby girl today; she arrived in respiratory arrest. The mother was heartbroken.

We are out of beds in the ER, and we are out of beds upstairs also.

There are so many requests for teaching, but since we are so short staffed, it is hard to pull everyone together. I am working with a wonderful Resident from NYU (thank heaven), and not running solo this year. I made contact with Dr. Benedict Kolee last night (the Librarian I assisted through Medical School) and gave him \$1,400.00 of the Sisters' money. He is flying to Ghana this weekend to get some desperately needed meds for the hospital that we cannot purchase in Liberia.

Tonight I had my culinary delight of corned beef hash and canned tomatoes mixed with a little green relish. See what you are missing? My glucose levels are great!

Compline and then I and the mosquitoes say good-night.

### DAY 7

The Internet keeps going down hence not as much chatter from me as you might expect!

The ER continues to be packed to the gills with very sick adults and babies. I lost a sweet little six-week-old baby girl yesterday. She was so small and fragile that I thought she was a newborn. She came in seizing and had been seizing over two hours (there is no ambulance transport here). She was febrile and hypoglycemic. I stopped the seizures and gave sugar IV and began antibiotics, but she arrested three hours later; I couldn't get her back. She was so small and tiny and sick I thought she could be HIV+ but she died and the mother ran out of the ER sobbing before I could confirm that suspicion (to possibly warn the mother about the need to seek treatment for herself and family and any future pregnancies).

I also ended up treating a lovely Baptist missionary who came here with his group. The group had done everything right in terms of health care! They had all their vaccinations, used DEET, slept under nets, took

*Donations to ER at JFK Hospital*



their malarone, drank only bottled water, and ate only cooked foods. They even purchased health evacuation insurance. They were on my plane so I had chatted with them. They all went to a rural village to teach teachers how to teach small children. By three days, they were all ill, but he was the worst with vomiting and diarrhea and high fever. They called their insurance who told them to go to a clinic where they were promptly referred to the SOS Children's Hospital



*Baby scale Bought for the ER*

which promptly advised them to go to "a hospital in Monrovia."

Desperate, someone suddenly remembered me from the plane, and they turned up at JFK. Fortunately I was able to get him into the VIP room (reserved for the president and relatives etc.) so he was at least semi-private with air-conditioning. I started hydration and antibiotics, but the only labs I could get kept coming back goofier and goofier (even though he was looking much better!). I advised the family to immediately evacuate to a major city where they could get additional lab results. The whole group evacuated to Paris last night. Thank heavens!

The trauma cases are difficult to manage right now. I have had several bad motorcycle accidents with open fractures and head injuries. The X-ray machine is in another totally separate block of the hospital (have to push the patients outside in the rain) and of course no CT scanners.

Good news, I have been able to purchase oxygen, and the pulse oximeters and baby scale I brought over are in constant use. Phebe Hospital also got money to help equip their ER and some pulse oximeters also. Thank you so much, you wonderful Community of the Transfiguration! There have been some small victories in this sad land.

*(continued on page 16)*



## 2012 Budget Narrative

*Tom Johnson, Bursar*

At this time each year, following Chapter, I try to provide in a narrative format a not-too-dry explanation of the annual budget that was approved by Chapter and

adopted by the Corporation.

The first entry in the budget is Income. Based on the continuing generosity of our members, and the belief that will continue, we have budgeted income of \$59,000 for the current fiscal year, an 8.5% increase over the actual receipts for the 2010-2011 fiscal year. The expenses are broken down into six categories as follows.

**Servants** – This category includes funding for the office of the Minister Provincial, the Chaplain, Assistant Chaplains and Area Chaplains, the Fellowship Coordinator, the Inquirer Correspondent, the Bursar, the Latinoamericano Ministry, and the cost of First Order Visitors' travel to area convocations. The total expense budgeted for this category is \$9,650 or 16.5% of the total expense budget.

**Formation** – The expenses incurred by the Formation Director, the Assistant Formation Directors and the Formation Counselors are budgeted at \$2,350 or 4% of the expense budget. These expenses include copying and printing, postage and some amount of travel.

**Outreach** – Twenty percent of our expense budget (\$11,700) is allocated to Outreach. This includes contributions from TSSF Province of the Americas to Franciscan Aid Fund, Franciscan Action Network, the work of the First Order brothers and sisters, Franciscans International, the National Association of Episcopal Religious Communities along with our support of the Third Order worldwide through the Third Order Central Fund.

**Communications** – Communicating with each other is critical in maintaining the integrity of our fellowship as Franciscans. It is likewise important to make efforts to open and expand communication with other Third Order groups. So, this section of the budget incurs the largest total expenditure of any category -- \$16,250 or 28% of total expenses. Included here are costs for the Franciscan Times, Brochures and Booklets, a minimal amount of advertising, the office of the Provincial Secretary, including the Hot News, some funding for the new Vocations office and both dues and travel expenses for the Joint Committee on Franciscan Unity in which we actively participate with the Secular Francis

*(continued on page 23)*

## Liberia Medical Mission (cont.)

I am back to my Liberian diet of Spam and instant soup! I remember it well!

### DAY 9

There is a lot of discussion about the up-coming elections in November. There are many columns being written in the newspapers exhorting the people to stay peaceful. One young man said to me, "We Liberians, we destroyed this country. This is our chance to show the world that we can be a democracy!" God bless him; the people here are so sick of war. However, the personal assistant to the Minister of Health who had me over to dinner said that the situation is still fragile. I was really thinking things were improving! The wild card is, of course, Charles Taylor. The judges at The Hague are STILL deliberating his case. There have been some political rallies on the streets, but I gather things will really kick off on Liberia's Independence Day.

Yesterday when I was working, someone stole my medical bag. Inside was my stethoscope, cell phone, camera, water, reference book etc. (thankfully, not my money or my passport). Kind of discouraging, though. My wonderful head nurse was very distressed and found me another stethoscope so I could keep working.

Four more little children were brought in seizing, hypoglycemic and comatose in the last two days. They haven't woken up. They have malaria, sepsis, and hypoglycemia. Besides IV quinine, antibiotics, and sugar I have had to put two on phenobarbital since diazepam isn't controlling the seizure activity. They are not breathing well, and the pulse oximeters are showing low oxygen saturations. They both need to be intubated, but I can't intubate (no pediatric ventilators and besides we are still having power blackouts). All our oxygen was in use on other babies, so I used the Sisters' funds to get another oxygen tank. There are no beds upstairs on pediatrics and, besides, they can't do any more upstairs than I am already doing.



Representatives  
of Phebe hospital  
(Lutheran-Episcopal)  
receiving donation

Another wee one died today; the grief of the Mom was heartbreaking. I also lost two adults; one died immediately and one died about 3 hours later.

It is pouring outside and the wind is blowing.....

*"For he knows how we are formed  
He remembers that we are dust  
Man's days are like those of grass  
like a flower of the field he blooms  
The wind sweeps over him and he is gone  
and his place knows him no more:" Ps 103 (in Liberia)*

### DAY 12

I am trying to get over the fact that apparently Liberia doesn't do HIV testing right now. I'm not kidding; I have been trying to get HIV tests since I arrived, and I am being told that there are no reagents and no strips. I have gone to the very TOP; this is vitally important (especially for pregnant moms and the children) but apparently Liberia is completely out except for a very small stock they are reserving for blood testing for transfusion.

Honestly - I felt like picking up the phone and calling Bill Clinton or Bill Gates except none of our phones in the ER work and my cell phone was stolen.

I had a wee one with a snakebite today. The dad had been all over Monrovia to two other hospitals and one other clinic and was frantic when he arrived. I carried the baby girl into the ER and purchased (with the Sisters' funds) the antivenin...

The other problem is that patients must pay before they are: 1) admitted; 2) discharged; 3) get X-Rays; 4) get lab tests; 5) or get certain medications. Only children under 5 get free care. This results in long stays in an ER that hasn't any room to spare. I have patients still in the ER for over 8 days. I am still waiting for essential labs and X-Rays. I used some of the Sisters' funds to get one poor post-partum mom and her baby finally discharged home. (The policy in Africa is that they hold you as ransom until you pay your bill in full.)

The people here are so warm and welcoming. "Hi Doc!" they say to me, "You are back again! How long can you stay?" What can you say to that? "As long as God wills."

### DAY 15

It's still raining; I "swam" from the Dorm to the hospital today. The mosquitoes and cockroaches are out in force. Why God made mosquitoes is beyond me. Plus there are a couple of demented bats flying around the Dorm. A very nice couple that just arrived



went out to dinner in sandals and came back in agony because fire ants had gotten to their ankles and feet.

The case that got to me today was a wee baby convulsing and foaming at the mouth who had been brought (seizing) through the rain for more than an hour on a MOTORBIKE.



The only time I give thanks that I am a diabetic is that I carry a Glucometer and strips with me at all times. I am using it constantly in the *Snakebite in a little girl. Donations bought the antivenom*

ER. That baby had no glucose left in his bloodstream—NONE.

The terrific news is that \$1,400.00 worth of free medications was delivered to the Pharmacy yesterday thanks to the generosity of the Sisters. Dr. Benedict Kolee had flown to Ghana to get everything (we couldn't purchase the items in Liberia). Several babies will be able to get chemotherapy for Burkett's lymphoma now and for retinoblastoma. They couldn't afford the medicine before. It felt so good, delivering all those medications.

Two of my comatose seizing babies are up this morning, bright eyed, slurping cereal and milk down their tummies. It was messy and wonderful.

## FINAL DAY

As the driver took me to the airport, we ran into an enormous convoy using both lanes of a two-lane highway. A very popular election candidate (George Weah) had flown in and was coming to Monrovia. The caravan went on forever—women and men wearing white shirts, piled in cars, in trucks, on top of cars and trucks, hanging off cars and trucks, waving palm branches. They were excited, but I was uneasy because some of the young men were—well—angry, for lack of a better word. They shouted at us and forced us off the road so that we were sitting on the edge of a drop to a murky swamp. Why were they so angry? I wondered—and for a moment I had a flashback to the war days when young men shouted at you while waving AK 47s

in your face.

Before I left for Liberia I was reading a book a friend had given me, *The Bottom Billion*, by Paul Collier (Professor of Economics and Director for the Study of African Economics at Oxford and former Director of Development Research at the World Bank). I am convinced that this book is a must read for anyone working in Africa. Collier talks about the four traps that keep countries "falling behind and falling apart" - 1) the conflict trap; 2) the having-natural-resources trap; 3) being landlocked-with-bad-neighbors trap; 4) the bad-government-in-a-small-country trap. Except for not being landlocked, Liberia has had three and a half of the four traps. Collier discusses the sobering reality that the experience of having been in a civil war roughly doubles the risk of another conflict. Only 50% of the countries who had been through a civil war managed to make it through the next decade without relapsing into another civil war. Low income countries face disproportionately high rates of relapse.

Collier argues that aid prior to reform is often useless and mostly benefits entrenched interests; what Collier calls the "survival of the fittest." Aid really only works if there is good governance, transparency, communication and accountability, or it will be diverted, ineffective and might even worsen the situation. Aid in the initial stages of reform must



*\$1400.00 of donated medicines delivered to hospital pharmacy*

have on-site project supervision and a high degree of scrutiny of how the money is spent (what he calls "independent service authorities"). At present, aid agencies are often hampered because the popular approach doesn't demand these conditions, and because of "focusing more on the 'We care' mission than demanding project supervision, reform, and governance conditionality to any aid provided."

*(continued on page 18)*

## Liberia Medical Mission (cont.)

The BEST promise, according to Collier, lies in “skilled technical professional assistance that is supply-driven (not demand driven).” “Reforms need skills and in the bottom billion these skills are usually lacking because the skilled people have already left the country. The major problem with capacity building, however, is that if there are no good prospects, these people then use their credentials as a passport out of the country.”

Sometimes you just come down to helping one person at a time with a recognition of the complexities of the problems facing all those who desire to give help and service to the suffering people of Africa .

Pray for the peace and people of Liberia.

## Joan Powers: Scituate Citizen of the Year—A Tribute to Our Sister

*Scituate Mariner, November 17, 2011*

In her kitchen, Joan Powers’ calendar is covered with pen. The writing in red marks the birthdays of family, friends, and people who are special to her and the black writing reminds her of the places to go and things to do. She needs this type of organization to keep track of her busy volunteer life. To name a few of her recent efforts, Powers has volunteered for Meals on Wheels, Council on Aging, St. Luke’s Church, the Scituate Town Library, Habitat for Humanity, Scituate Historical Society, Scituate Rotary Club, and the South Shore Elderly Services. It is her daily voluntary efforts around town and her all-around charitable disposition to do good for others that led to her selection as this year’s Scituate Citizen of the Year.

“Joan is one of those modest, unsung heroes, who is constantly giving to her community, which includes a wide circle of interests and friends,” Lisa Tompson, a member of the Scituate Rotary Club, wrote in her nomination, “I’m not much of a church-goer, but if it is possible to embody the word Christian in the sense of her kindness, thoughtfulness and generosity, it is Joan.”

Tompson was just one of several residents who took the time to write nominations for Powers. The nomination letters for Joan Powers rose to the top of the pile for the Citizen of the Year committee, which included four former Citizens of the Year, Joe Norton, Marynell Henry, Bob Drew and Dave Ball, and Mariner editor Nancy White.

For Powers, volunteering is something that’s been a part of her whole life. Her first memory was watching over her grandmother when she was sick, which took her to a career as a home health aide. She and her late

husband, the Rev. Frederick Powers, were involved in a number of church and community efforts.

For a period of time her husband was a prison chaplain and they would often have people from the prison over for dinner. With this kind of environment of continuously welcoming people in and helping those in need, it seems her innate generosity is embedded her lifestyle. Powers attributes her motives to do good for others to her spiritual beliefs.

“Our religion and our beliefs were always about helping the unfortunate, no matter where you are,” said Powers.

That place of helping the unfortunate became Scituate in 1989. Scituate was where her husband’s parents were from and where they would visit in summer, but, to be closer to her husband’s parents, they decided to move into town. Around that same time her husband suffered a severe head injury. He was unable to go out much during the day and so it was then that Powers sought out volunteer opportunities in town.

Though Powers is involved in many organizations in town she spends much of her time with Meals on Wheels, an organization that provides meals for elderly people. Powers often helps with the packaging of the meals, or with the administrative work when asked, but her main job is delivering meals to residents in Scituate. Her favorite part is getting to know the different people she visits.

“You really get to know a person when you go in and spend some time with them. With Meals on Wheels you end up meeting some really interesting people,” said Powers. She said some people she’s helped in the past have been veterans, former prisoners of war or people who just have amazing stories to tell and she loves to listen. While her main purpose is to deliver the meals, she said her visits could often serve a second purpose.

“Sometimes we’re the only ones to visit them all day so it also allows us to be able to check up on them.”

The people she meets are the other real motivation behind her volunteer work. When she gets asked to join an effort or help someone out, she typically jumps at the chance because of the opportunity to meet new people, on both ends.

“If you want to meet great people then you want to be a volunteer,” said Powers. “You meet other great volunteers, but also you get to know the people who you are taking care of and they are really interesting, too.”

For others who know her, Powers is among those great volunteers.

"She is the most amazing senior citizen I know," wrote Janet Schmitz in her Citizen of the Year nomination. She describes Powers a "tireless volunteer of time and energy."

"At Meals on Wheels, she runs the meal site in Scituate when no paid employee is available, and (delivers) any and every route when other drivers do not show up - not to mention driving miles of her own as a volunteer," Schmitt wrote. Powers dedicated herself to these volunteer efforts, all while serving as caregiver for her husband, who passed away this summer.

"She is just plain amazing, kind, helpful, selfless and humble," Schmitz wrote.

When Powers is not out doing deliveries, checking on people, helping out friends, or volunteering on a board in town, Powers helps knit prayer shawls. She considers it her down time to get together in the small group and knit for someone who is going through a loss, dealing with a sickness, or just who needs something to comfort them.

"The shawl is mainly to let (someone) know that people are praying for them," said Powers.

It seems her religious beliefs are woven through Powers' ambitions to continue volunteering and giving to others.

"We are big believers in Jesus and the idea that we're his instruments. I think that is the main thing that really motivates me," said Powers. She said almost 50 years ago she took the Third Order of St Francis vow, which she said is a commitment to help the less fortunate for life.

Powers sat at her kitchen table where a picture of her husband is framed. On the walls and on her refrigerator were pictures of family, friends and close ones and things she's collected over the years from her five daughters and 17 grandchildren. In her home there is an emphasis on the people she loves and lending a hand to help others is what she



Joan Powers

loves to do.

"It's what keeps me going," said Powers. "When you know you have helped even just one person, even if that means just calling someone who needs a call, it makes your day to know you were able to help them."

## The Fruit of Silence

*Mother Teresa*

The fruit of silence is prayer.

The fruit of prayer is faith.

The fruit of faith is love.

The fruit of love is service.

The fruit of service is peace."

## Blessing of the Animals in Reverse

*Julie Goodin*

Little did I know that the Jack Russell terrier puppy the breeder wanted me to have, sight unseen, would turn out to be such a blessing to so many people. The day after I brought her home I took her to the retirement center that was now 'home' to a dear friend, an avid dog lover. It was going to be a short visit on a Sunday morning. Liza was just eight weeks old.

My friend wanted to go to the chapel service so I walked with her puppy in arms, planning to leave after Elaine was safely seated in her usual spot. As I turned to leave the chaplain was coming in the door, "You are going to stay for the service, aren't you?" said she. "Uhhh, I can't, I have the puppy," said I. She insisted that the puppy was welcome.

Four years have raced by, and the 'puppy' is still working her magic. Liza has seen many friends come and go in her four years as the Sunday morning pet therapy dog, but there was one very special person, a gentleman in a wheelchair who, for some reason, Liza just simply adored. She rode to and from his room in his lap; he called her his little princess.

One Sunday we were there and all seemed well, but the following day I received the sad news that he had died. Two years have passed by, and Liza still tries to pull me into the room he occupied. For months she would watch the entrance to the chapel as people came in. We all knew she was waiting for her favorite person to return. My friend Elaine has also passed away, but Liza and I carry on bringing smiles to faces that are often sad and lonely.

Linda the chaplain does a special blessing for Liza on the Sunday closest to October 4<sup>th</sup>, and the whole group sings 'happy birthday' to her on the Sunday closest to June 27<sup>th</sup>. Liza sleeps through the sermons, as do many of the residents, but Linda is one of the best preachers I have ever heard. So when October rolls around and we think of Brother Francis and his relationship with the animal world, and our churches participate in the special service of The Blessing of the Animals, we should also pause and thank God for the many ways our animals are a blessing to us.

## The Organic Prayer Project

Joyce Wilding

The Organic Prayer Project provides the impetus for “an outward and visible sign” through the development of The Farm @ St. Mary’s Sewanee by way of weaving the Benedictine practice of *ora et labora* (prayer and work) into and through the creation of a prayer garden, trellised blackberry, raspberry and grape vines, a blueberry field and strawberry fields, a southern heirloom apple orchard as well as a sheep and alpaca farm.

The project aims to nurture both the soil and spirit through reverence for the environment and sacramental space while honoring the beauty bestowed upon The Mountain and seeking to heighten spiritual awareness through a direct connection with the soil as a sacramental way of life and Christian vocation. Through the work of our hands we seek to sow and share the seeds of contemplation in the *terroir* of The Mountain. Our message is summed up in the epigram of Faith-Farm-Food.

Cultivating both the soil and energy (communion and community) around the land and natural contemplative environment, the project will embody the ethos of the spiritual/religious, eco/environmental, and intellectual/literary ethos of The Mountain as a whole. As an affiliate program of the Center For Religion and the Environment it will work with St. Mary’s Sewanee, the Sisters of St. Mary, The University and The School of Theology on various levels to honor and recognize the sacredness inherent in nature, making nature sacred through organic and prayerful practices of land stewardship.



## Franciscans and the Environment

Stewart Lane, African Province, Provincial Formation  
*Guardian*

There are three overwhelming reasons why Tertiary Franciscans should be dynamically working to stop human beings from doing further damage to God’s created world through greed and overconsumption:

- The deep love Francis, our role model, had for all nature.
- Our central aim to live in the prosperous poverty we call “simplicity” as we try to follow Jesus in the Franciscan way.

- Our dedication to loving others.

We as Franciscans should be dedicated to the protection of God’s creation simply because God loves it and Francis loved it. There are many practical reasons for being so, but the practical reasons are secondary to the primary calling of God to be stewards of what He made.

Moreover, if everyone lived in “simplicity” as we consider ideal, there would be no environmental crisis. The world could easily sustain our world population without damage to other living things if all rich people would give up their luxuries and excessive consumption. If everyone lived in “simplicity” there would be destitution [that is “extreme poverty”] and starvation only in extraordinary situations like drought. Our ideal, which is the solution to the problem, in fact, the only solution so we are specially called by God to proclaim it.

Not only will damage to the created world cause suffering on a huge scale, the accumulation of wealth and the keeping of it by individuals requires slavery, exploitation, duplicity, theft and violence. The rich are rich because of inadequate love for other humans. Our love for others and our love for creation are inseparable.

So at the very heart of our Franciscan way is the calling to work for the preservation of the natural world – out of love for both it and other people. In the African Province, we have a wide variety of lifestyles. Some of our members are living in “simplicity” and so live lives that mostly do not do damage to the environment.

It is true that in densely populated areas, people living in simplicity are using more wood than is growing, and need to do whatever can be done to make sure that a tree is planted for every one they burn, as using less firewood is not possible if they are to eat. But in most other ways of life they are exemplary, particularly in lack of waste. Among people living in simplicity everything is used until there is no use left in it.

Franciscans living in simplicity should be proud of that, and not ashamed of it, as many are. They should embrace it joyfully instead of regarding it as something to be escaped.

But, if we are to save the natural world, it is the rich who will have to work hardest at it. And so far, they are not. The changes that are mostly proposed, like recycling some materials, growing one’s own vegetables, and using power-saving light bulbs are good, but not nearly enough. For the rich, a major decrease in consumption will be necessary.

For anyone, a major decrease in consumption is painful

and even frightening. To achieve it, we will have to change the way we think. One change that is necessary is our false assumption that people living in "simplicity" are less happy than the rich. Happiness can be achieved by lowering expectations. People of previous centuries simply did not have the expectations the modern rich have, and so lived happily with less. The same is true of many people living in simplicity today.

Many of the things rich people think of as necessities are not necessities at all. To bring this home, make a list of things that you have and use regularly and would find it difficult to do without and then tick the ones Solomon in all his riches didn't have. Or alternatively, if you're elderly, tick off those you didn't have when young and lived happily without.

The rich, who if we think globally, includes at least half of us, need first of all to redefine their necessities. Each person's situation is different, so I can only identify some questions the rich should ask themselves.

"For any journey, can I walk? If I can't walk can I bicycle? If I can't bicycle, can I use public ground transport? Must I go by car? Is it essential that I fly? "

"Do I absolutely have to have a bath or shower more often than once a week? (Only once a week or less was considered necessary for previous generations of rich people.) Must I change my clothes once a day or will once a week do as it used to? Do I need to change sheets more often than every two weeks? (In previous generations sheets were often turned over after the first week.)

What clothing or other belongings must I replace before they are worn out? Are patches really disreputable? Do I throw away things that could be repaired? Do I have machines doing work that I could do with muscle power? What do I throw away that could be reused?

Do I buy imported food when local food would do? (The global transport of food stuffs is a major cause of environmental damage.)

What items of consumption: space, power, fuel, water, resources of all sorts, could I consume less of? What luxuries have I falsely come to regard as necessities? Must I use water-borne sanitation, for instance, and if so, do I have to flush as often as I do?

Decreasing one's luxury is definitely an activity in which no pain means no gain. If we do only the easy things, we will all face suffering eventually, so we owe it to ourselves as well as to others to take strong measures now.

## Join in the Worldwide Meditation

*Bonnie B. Barnidge*

The Fifth Annual Global Meditation, *A Winter Feast for the Soul*, will be held from January 15 to February 23, 2012. It offers participants the opportunity to join in devoting 40 days to spiritual practice, 40 minutes each day. People of many faiths, including Christians, have recommended this ecumenical venture. Thousands of people around the world have committed themselves to this daily focus. Detailed information can be obtained from the website [www.winterfeastforthesoul.com](http://www.winterfeastforthesoul.com). Participants may officially join at the website and/or find instructions on classic ways of meditating. If classic meditation is not your style, you may participate with your own style of prayer, contemplating sacred texts, and/or practicing the expressive arts, such as painting or journaling. If desired, the 40-minute daily practice may be split into different times of the day and/or different spiritual categories. For example 20 minutes of the daily Christian Office, such as Matins, in the morning and 20 minutes of focused spiritual reading in the evening. What could be a better move toward peace than global prayer/meditation? Is this a step needed to move toward "peace on earth"?

Our Episcopal Franciscan Third Order "commended this to the attention of everyone in the Order." May we and others continue or begin this year.

## Special Alert to All Associates

*Brother Richard Jonathan, SSF*

We are excited to announce that the Brothers and Sisters of the First Order have assumed responsibility for the Associates of the Society of Saint Francis. Brother Richard Jonathan will be the lead person, while a couple of the Sisters will assist him in various areas.

PLEASE NOTE: All communications – including your contributions – are now to be sent to:

Society of Saint Francis  
Attention: Brother Richard Jonathan  
Little Portion Friary  
P.O. Box 399  
Mt. Sinai, NY 11766

Peace and blessings on each of you as you continue to walk with us in the spirit of St. Francis.

## Recently Discovered Art on Francis Book: *Arthur Boyd and Saint Francis of Assisi* by Margaret Pont (2004).

John Brockmann

When it came time to give a gift to Ken Norian as he moved from Minister Provincial to Minister General, we gave this wonderful book of Australian art all about Francis.

In the summer of 1964, Arthur Boyd and his family travelled to Italy, visiting the towns of Gubbio and Assisi. In the autumn of the same year, Boyd produced pastel images of the *Wolf of Gubbio*.

Here's how Amazon describes the book:

*Arthur Boyd (1920-1999) produced numerous artworks based on the life and legends of St Francis of Assisi. The original works were produced to accompany a reprint of a 1936 biography of the saint by art historian Tom Boase in the 1960s. Boyd produced both a set of 25 lithographs and versions in color pastels. In the 1970s he produced 20 tapestries based on the pastels. This volume examines each of the artworks in detail, and each is reproduced (the pastels and tapestries in full color). Also includes discussion of the significance of St Francis in Italy and key Italian artistic renderings of the saint.*

The book is gorgeous as you can see by the accompanying lithograph of Francis cutting the hair of Clare. It is, however, very expensive. Perhaps, you may be able to convince your local library to purchase it.



## Invite A Friend To Your TSSF Fellowship

Frank Jones, Vocations Coordinator

Do you feel intimidated and nervous when you try to invite someone to church or to a fellowship meeting? Most of us have an aversion, of some type, to the action of personal evangelism; we break out in drops of sweat and tremble uncontrollably before we even say a word. This seems to be a very common occurrence. We are told, by Christ, to be evangelists and to tell the story of the Gospels to all who will listen. Many of us feel inadequate about our training in understanding our religious faith and are quite reluctant to expose ourselves to the questions that our recipient might ask us. Do we have good news to impart? Is the story to

the benefit of the recipient? Have you ever seen a person, who tells the story, torn limb from limb? Most of our fears are made in our imaginations and have no truth in fact. So what do we do about this stumbling block that we have personally created? First of all we should try not to see the person we are talking with as an object with no knowledge or intelligence. We are speaking with people who have understanding and may have a great deal of exposure to the Christian Religion. So what help is there for us to overcome our fears? The first action that comes to mind is to pray about your encounter. Are you meeting the prospect somewhere other than your or their home? Before you meet ask the Holy Spirit to be with your efforts and to guide your responses to any questions you may encounter. If you are meeting in the person's home ask the Holy Spirit to take charge of the interview and before you enter the house place your hand on the doorpost of the entrance and ask a blessing on the house.

Another help you have is to aid the prospective enquirer be part of the meeting by asking to start the visit with a prayer. Very few people will object to this beginning and they have an opportunity to be involved in the whole event. What sort of conversation should we present? For one thing we are not going to hit them with the Bible or try to exert pressure by force. We will simply tell them that their participation with the Third Order will enhance their Christian life if that is God's call for them. Then they would have a more joyful relationship with Christ and will feel more fulfilled in themselves. The impact of their involvement in TSSF would be a life-altering experience.

I am encouraging all Tertiaries to bring a guest to the

first fellowship meeting of the New Year. Join with the Magi and bring a gift to Christ at Epiphany. And what about you, what benefits will you have from all this effort? How will this action be of help in your spiritual development? There are several ways that you will be affected. The first is the fact that we promised, in our profession vows, to “make Christ known to all the world.” And as reported in the Gospel according to Matthew (28:19) *therefore go and make disciples of all nations.....And surely I am with you always, to the end of the age.*

God’s blessing on your efforts and may our Order expand and prosper to the glory of God.

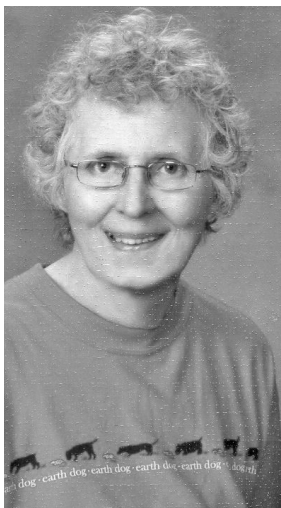
**What On Earth Are You Doing?**

*Julie Goodin*

I have found myself asking this question of my mischievous Jack Russell terriers on finding a roll of bathroom tissue dissected and spread throughout the house or finding a crater-sized excavation in the yard. Needless to say I get no explanation from the culprits. I love the story of the young lady from Europe who came to the USA to be nanny for a family with a pair of inquisitive twin boys. To her consternation she caught them taking apart a valuable mantel clock to see what made it chime; in her state of panic her English went a bit awry; with arms akimbo and in her sternest voice she asked, “What are you doing on earth? “

As Franciscans should we be asking ourselves this same question? Phrased either way it calls for some soul-searching. I often have cause to ask myself, “What on earth am I doing?” Am I spending too much time on Facebook, watching television or chatting on the phone. None of these activities are bad in themselves but are they leaving too little time for prayer, too little time to listen for God’s quiet whisper. Is God’s still small voice crowded out by busyness?

So what am I doing on earth? Am I following Jesus emulating our brother Francis, am I making a positive difference in the lives of everyone I meet, am I treating the earth with love and respect by reducing my ecological footprint? I could do better. I often have feet of clay, but every day is a new day, and we all are allowed to make U-turns and do-overs. Forgiveness flows from the Father in a never-ending stream.



We would all do well if, in our daily examen, we asked ourselves this question, what on earth are we doing and what are we doing on earth?

I am off once again to fill in the latest terrier excavation and tell them they are forgiven and this time I will refrain from asking what on earth they are doing.

*Julie Goodin*

**From the Bursar (cont.)**

can Order (Roman Catholic) and the Order of Ecumenical Franciscans.

**Meetings** – This section of the budget, totaling \$13,250 or 22.5% of the total, covers primarily the annual costs of Chapter. It includes travel expenses for members of Chapter and First Order Visitors to attend the annual meeting, as well as the cost of accommodations and meals at Little Portion Friary. In order to minimize the expense in this category, the Standing Committee for the last few years has conducted its business by telephone conference call rather than gathering together in person.

**Miscellaneous** -- Of course, there must always be a miscellaneous category. This includes the cost of Directors and Liability insurance, any bank charges that are incurred and an amount appropriated by Chapter each year as an escrow for Provincial Convocation costs. This category amounts to \$5,500 or 9.5% of the total budget.

Each one of us who pledges and contributes during the course of the year helps make possible the expenditures outlined above which keep our Order vital and growing.

**Thank you!**

**Bursar for US**

Tom Johnson  
214 Leafwood Way  
Folsom, CA 95630  
tjohnsonret@gmail.com

**Bursar for Caribbean**

Jacqueline Richards  
Lot 23, Blue Range Ave.  
Blue Range, Diego Martin, Trinidad,  
West Indies

**Bursar for Canada**

Gordon Arthur  
211-221 Seventh Street  
New Westminster, BC V3M 3K2 Canada  
Gordon@ecumenist.org

jackieapex@yahoo.com

**Meet Your New Formation Director: Caroline Benjamin**

As the new Formation Director for the Province, I want to tell you about myself briefly. Many of you already know me from convocations, formation counseling, and as an area chaplain. Before Lynn Herne was Provincial Secretary, I was the Provincial Secretary for 10 years serving with Ministers Provincial Alden, Anita, Masud, and Ken.

I’ve been professed 21 years and have been in the Heart of Texas Fellowship even longer. I was a Professor of Biology at Texas State University for 30 years, and my doctorate from Indiana University dates back to 1968.



My late husband, Jerry, and I have two grown sons, Peter and Michael (wife, Nikki), now 42 and 40, and a granddaughter (Sara (18) in Florida).

There have always been welcome guests in our household in the Hill Country of Texas, dogs, cats, and assorted other animals, but sometimes there has also been unwanted guests such as scorpions and fire ants. So be warned if you come to visit!

*Caroline Benjamin*

## New Postulant Received in Puerto Rico

Ashley Steinhart

On the Fourth of July, Jonathan and Ashley Steinhart, members of the Los Pequeños fellowship, Diocese of Spokane, traveled to Aibonito, Puerto Rico, to visit the Rev James Snodgrass and Patty Parsley, PhD, directors of Centro Espiritu Santo, a retreat center of the Diocese of Puerto Rico. Though not expressly Franciscan, Centro promotes Franciscan values such as sustainability and reflective retreats.

The Diocese of Puerto Rico has an active Third Order fellowship led by convener Father Luis Guillermo Rivera. On a previous visit, Jonathan attended a Third Order Fellowship meeting hosted by Centro and met Father Luis. This time Jonathan was able to meet with a new Postulant, Father Ivan R. Buxeda, of Vega Alta.

Jonathan was recently assigned as Father Ivan's Postulant counselor. Though they had communicated by phone and email before, they had never met in person. The Third Order is very fortunate to have Father Ivan as a postulant for he is a busy man. He is bilingual, holds a PhD from the University of Puerto Rico, is a member of the National Guard, and was recently ordained as a priest in the Diocese of Puerto Rico. Father Ivan traveled to Centro, and, in the context of Evening Prayer, overlooking the beautiful mountains which surround Aibonito, Ashley and Jonathan Steinhart received Father Buxeda into our Order as a new postulant. This short office is called "The Welcoming and Receiving of a Postulant into TSSF" or in Spanish "Acogida y Recepcion de un Postulante". It was a joyful time as you can see in the picture. We welcome Father Ivan into the Third Order and pray for him and other members of the Third Order Fellowship in Puerto Rico.



Father Ivan, Ashley Steinhart, and Jonathan Steinhart

## The Wild Goose Festival (June 2011)

Francesca Wigle

*The Wild Goose is a Celtic metaphor for the Holy Spirit. We are followers of Jesus creating a festival of justice, spirituality, music and the arts. The festival is rooted in the Christian tradition, and therefore open to all regardless of belief, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, denomination or religious affiliation.*

*In adopting the image of the Wild Goose we recognize that in the current climate of religious, social and political cynicism, embracing the creative and open nature of our faith is perhaps our greatest asset for re-building and strengthening our relationships with each other, with our enemies, with our stories, our texts, and the earth. In that spirit, in a festive setting, and in the context of meaningful, respectful, and sustained relationships, we invite you to create with us!*

When I read the above description of what the Wild Goose Festival was about, I felt blessed to be able to join my priest, Judith Liro, to take the spirit of St. Hildegard's and our Franciscan Order to this wondrous event. Being part of a gathering of individuals longing for a new way to join together to celebrate justice, spirituality, music and the arts was absolutely amazing.

The festival took place out in the countryside in North Carolina. There was a main stage, a place for storytelling and performance, a place for talks, a coffee barn, a geodesic dome made of tree limbs, a peace garden, a social justice gazebo, and an outdoor film screen.

Choosing which wondrous event to attend was challenging! Among the presenters, Father Richard Rohr, OFM from the *Center for Action and Contemplation*, Jim Wallis of *Sojourners*, Vincent Harding (associate of the late Dr. Martin Luther King), Phyllis Tickle, Paul Knitter, John Dear of *Fellowship of Reconciliation*, Abdullah Antepli, Brian McClaren, Mark Scandrette, Rabbi Or Rose, Rebecca Stevens (founder of Magdalene/Thistle Farms), June Keener Wink (wife of theologian Walter Wink), musicians David Lamotte, Jennifer Knapp, and Michelle Shocked...and the list goes on.

There was a spirit of camaraderie and openness at each event. I met some amazing people, and the time there truly inspired me. Parents brought their children, and there was a large area for the kids to gather together to play, create, and share stories. There were folks of all ages. Most people camped out. One of my favorite experiences was meeting a young Baptist lady who had a big tattoo of St. Francis on her arm!

As the weekend continued, I began to feel (and continue to feel), **HOPE** for a world where we can all get along, share our thoughts, work together for peace and justice for everyone, worship together, let music fill our



souls, and find ways to take care of our beloved planet. Judith came back to Austin with a real sense of awe for Becca Stevens, who started the non-profit, *Magdalene/Thistle Farms*, for women who have survived prostitution, addiction and incarceration. Becca has visited nine cities and women's prisons as part of the *Find Your Way Home Prison Tour*. The tour has been based on two principles: love is the most powerful source for social change, and women can begin to create their own communities of healing wherever they are. They make natural bath and body products that are as good for the earth as they are for the body.

This was the first Wild Goose Festival in the United States. Those who were able to attend would agree with me that Wild Goose Festival is going to grow into the largest, best run, most dynamic religious happening in the U.S.



Francesca Wigle

### Getting to Know the Franciscan Action Network (FAN)

Francesca Wigle

Jesus spoke to Francis from the cross. "Go and repair my house; as you see it is falling into ruin."

#### FAN's Mission Statement

Inspired by the Gospel of Jesus, and the example of Saints Francis and Clare, the Franciscan Action Network (FAN) is a collective Franciscan voice working to transform U.S. public policy related to peacemaking, care for creation, poverty, and human rights.

Franciscans are respected because we are in relationship with the people. We know their stories and listen to their joys and fears. We walk with them in their journey. We carry the deep insight of all of creation as brother and sister. FAN's work builds on these lasting relationships. We are animating a chorus of voices by developing and strengthening relationships among Franciscans, and all who are drawn to the Franciscan message of integral social transformation.

#### What does membership in FAN provide?

Opportunities to:

- Participate in transformative actions for social change
- Participate in FAN-sponsored events
- Build relationships with other Franciscans around the country
- Resources, training and support to improve the ef-

fectiveness of formation, education, action, and advocacy

Regular and timely updates of the status of FAN efforts

Access to the discussion section of FAN's website: [www.franciscanaction.org](http://www.franciscanaction.org)

Opportunities to offer substantive direction to FAN's ongoing efforts.

TSSF is an Institutional Member of FAN. Check out the FAN website and discern if you are called to be an individual member of FAN. Francesca Wigle, TSSF, is our order's Action Commissioner for FAN. She represents all the Franciscans in the world who are not Catholic.

Please email her at [fwigle@gmail.com](mailto:fwigle@gmail.com) if you have any questions about FAN.

Francesca Wigle and Dianne Aid are forming a TSSF Action Team.

We will be working with FAN in the areas of Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation. Please join us so that we can get our TSSF Action Team going! Email us at [fwigle@gmail.com](mailto:fwigle@gmail.com) or [sanmate921@yahoo.com](mailto:sanmate921@yahoo.com). This is a very exciting opportunity! Now is the time!

### Canticle Campus Online Offerings

Francesca Wigle

Chris Hickman, SFO, and myself are pleased to announce that Canticle Campus will be offering two classes beginning January 15, 2012. The ten week classes will be based on two books by Sr. Ilia Delio, OSF:

*Clare of Assisi, A Heart Full of Love* "Although this is a small book on the spirituality of a medieval woman from a glorious past, it is also a book about Christian life today. Clare's decisive emphasis on the person of Jesus Christ is an emphasis on the human person as well, what we are and what we are called to be." (from the Introduction)

*Franciscan Prayer* "By examining Saint Francis' doctrine of prayer through the twin lens of Saints Clare and Bonaventure, this book provides us with a long overdue spiritual and theological synthesis which will be treasured by all who love the Franciscan tradition. A significant contribution, beautifully presented." Lawrence S. Cunningham (published by St. Anthony Messenger Press)

To learn more about Canticle Campus, go to <http://www.canticlecampus.org/>.

For information or to register, just drop us an email at: [fwigle@gmail.com](mailto:fwigle@gmail.com) or [hickmcm@hotmail.com](mailto:hickmcm@hotmail.com).

All are invited and there is no cost to take the class.

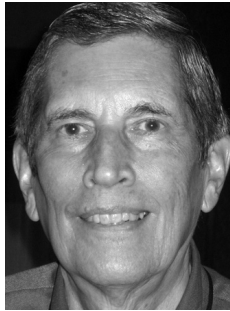
## Newest Headshots for Our Next Directory



Carolyn Banks



Barbara Baungarten



Anthony Cobb



Janet Fedders



Larry Harrelson

Many of these were taken at the Northeast Convocation. Could you take some pictures at your next convocation????



Diana Finch



Victoria Logue



Verlah Kosloske



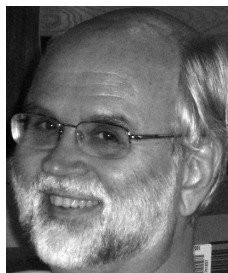
Colin Miller



Phillip Muniz



Anne Osborne



Rick Pearce



Marcia Shaw



Brenda Stewart



Walter Szymanski



Janet Wakefield

## Sister Death

Larry Harrelson

*"Praised be you, my Lord, for our Sister, Bodily Death, from whom no one living can escape."*

For some months, I have been thinking more about death. You might say I was forced to. I recently concluded a five-year tenure as chaplain for a local veterans organization with over 300 members. My volunteer duties included not only public prayers at meetings, visitation of hospitalized members and those in nursing homes, but also writing sympathy notes to families of departed members. To identify those who have died, I read obituaries in the daily newspaper that serves our metropolitan area.

In the beginning, I read only obituaries of departed organizational members. At first it was duty. Then it became interesting; so much so that I began to read most of the obituaries in the newspaper. I discovered lives of interesting people—getting a peek into their personalities, passions, accomplishments, challenges, joys, sorrows, loves, gifts, strengths, weaknesses, and unique life experiences. Interestingly, the obituaries began to encourage me in my own life journey.

I was inspired by the courage displayed in these life summaries: overcoming childhood poverty, getting an education, surviving war, moving geographically and vocationally, marrying or not, having children or not, losing a spouse to death or divorce, sometimes re-marriage, moving geographically and professionally, recreational activities and civic duties, adjusting to health challenges, loss of loved ones, and so on. I was uplifted by the varied accomplishments, special joys and friendships, hobbies, civic service, courage in the face of life's many challenges, and expressions of affection for family members and close friends.

As I read the obituaries, I especially appreciated personal anecdotes revealing the person. Here are a few examples. "The sweet Irish girl had a knack for writing and seemed destined for a career in journalism, but her compassion and desire to help others led her into the nursing field." "He worked as a grocery man during the Great Depression. This experience and prior experience in an orphanage were foundation blocks upon which he built a life of duty and responsibility." "You always knew when Cathie was around. Her joy and laughter could be felt and heard." "He was a man that could see into the heart of a situation and used that to give wise counsel to any who asked." "He said many times, 'I want to live life at the side of the road and be a friend to all mankind' and that he did." "Carolyn was a very caring, giving and loving person always ready to give a helping hand to whomever had need. A devout Christian with deep beliefs and faith as told by her license plate 'HDN4HVN,' she will be missed."

The obituaries also caused me to look at my own path of life with new eyes and gratitude. I realized how I have been abundantly blessed during my sixty-seven years on "this fragile earth, our island home." Although my parents had limited education (mother, eighth grade; father, third grade), I was greatly loved, formed in integrity, assimilated faith, and learned respect for others.

My zeal for learning came from my father who repeatedly told me to "go as far as you can in school." My father knew the difficulties of not having a good education. His mother died in his childbirth, and dad consequently was passed from family member to family member when he was young boy. He had to quit school after the third grade, because the family members taking care of him at the time lived too far out in the country for him to attend school (no school buses then!). Dad was proud that he later learned to read and could do some basic mathematics, such as calculating rafters for a house. Unlike some with limited education, my father realized his lack and wanted me to succeed. He often said to me, "Go as far as you can in school, son."

I became a voracious reader and was an honor graduate of my high school. Then I found a way to continue my education at college by alternating work and study, which was interrupted by three years of Army duty during the Vietnam War. I must have taken dad's recommendation to heart about going as far as I could in school, for over the years, not only did I graduate from college but I also earned two master's degrees and a Doctor of Ministry.

My spirituality is the result of grace surely, and a major tool of grace was my family's faith. My Baptist and Pentecostal foundational church experiences as a young person provided a firm foundation in the experiential reality and near presence of God. After Army duty and my first stint in graduate school, my wife and I became Episcopalians. We became active in the church, and the rector encouraged me to explore the possibility of a calling to ordained ministry. Seminary followed, and in my career, I was privileged to serve churches in three dioceses and had a rewarding part-time ministry as an Army Reserve / Army National Guard chaplain.

In life's trajectory, I was fortunate to have been born into a loving family of faith. I continue to be blessed with a loving and supportive family.

Reading obituaries regularly has reminded me of the old existentialist saying, "Death is the key to authentic existence." Having undergone several surgeries and doing my part to support pharmaceutical companies, I am more mindful of Sister Death. But faith says more: "We have this treasure in clay jars, so that it may be made clear that this extraordinary power belongs to God and does not come from us." (2 Cor. 4:7, NRSV). The Episcopal Burial Office is realistic about both our mortality and resurrection: "All of us go down to the dust; yet even at the grave we make our song: Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia." I join Brother Francis in singing his Canticle: "Praised be You, my Lord, for our Sister, Bodily Death, from whom no one living can escape." And in his Prayer: "It is in dying that we are born to eternal life."

## RIP: H. Robert Ripson

Professed for 31 years, died August 11, 2011. For many years he served in the Diocese of Pennsylvania. He is survived by wife Bernice, four children, 6 grandchildren and 4 great-grandchildren.

**Third Order of the Society of St. Francis  
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