

+ +

Chaplain's Message ... page 1.
"What now seems to be of major importance is to take stock of our Order and to consolidate our strength."

From the Guardian ... page 3.
"Changes in our personal habits and style may seem insignificant compared to the breadth and depth of the global problem; but what God may will to do with our changes and commitments may be far more than we can imagine."

Greetings from Chapter ... page 5.
"We send Francistide greetings, rejoicing in our common life and fellowship."

Report of Chapter meeting ... page 6.
"It was good to have tertiaries from all over the country, and to find out how much we have in common."

Role of the Fellowship ... page 9
From the San Francisco-Bay Area Fellowship

Personal Notes ... page 10 ... Letters page 12

Fellowship Notes ... page 11

Br. Geoffrey's Letter about SSF in Africa ... page 13.
"May God keep us all true to Him in these very grave times."

+ +

MESSAGE FROM BROTHER MARK FRANCIS, SSF

Well, being your new Chaplain seems to me something like a marriage - you have me for better or for worse - and, if I don't get the correspondence caught up, it may be for worse - everybody's writing!!!

From many of the letters I have been getting, indicating the life styles of our members, and their works of mercy, I have begun to wonder if the Third Order is not being called to a vast witness in our Church and world. Maybe this is as it should be, since the call to the First and Second Orders seems necessarily small due to the size of our Church and the particularity of this vocation.

But before we get into that area, let me tell you something about myself. I come from the South (you would never know by the way I talk - ha!) - Gastonia, North Carolina - an only child of very devout Presbyterians. There the major part of my life has been lived, given breaks for college and the Army. Actually, it was only about 17 years ago that I finally left home and began working in Washington, D.C., and this is also where I came into the Church. This has been

Chaplain's Message, continued

a peculiar route, for it started many years ago. Even though I was raised a Calvinist, as soon as I was able I became a Methodist. Now, the Methodist Church I joined in Gastonia was actually "higher" in liturgical form and ritual than the Episcopal. All through my life, the Church has played an important role, and it has not been until I have reached "middle age" that I have begun to see what has for so long intrigued me. After I was confirmed at Christ Church in Washington, D.C., my life began to change and develop new boundaries - some good, some bad - and I finally ended up in the Society of St. Francis. For some reason, becoming a Franciscan was the easiest move I ever made - not having made many, due to the anxiety about moves and changes - and the hardest to stay with - truly by the Grace of God. But here I am, some eleven and one-half years later, still a Franciscan; and now, your Chaplain.

Now back to where we left off at the beginning. With the amalgamation in 1967 of the English and American Franciscans, and as our new and larger Society took hold, the Third Order has taken a new order throughout our country. It is becoming an order! Br. Robert has done a fantastic job of bringing together even those isolated members, and laying the foundation for a unified Order.

It now seems to me that we are entering another period of growth - these are Franciscan times! What now seems to be of major importance is the time to take stock of our Order and to consolidate our strength -- yes, giving God the time and opportunity of bringing strength out of our weaknesses. To me, this means making our Fellowships stronger, and starting new ones - places where there can be honest sharing and support. For this to happen, we have to have courage and perseverance, making use of the grace God gives to each one of us. I think we have something to share with each other, the Church and the world.

However, we cannot lose sight of the fact that we are an order - there is a definite call to a particular vocation. And this vocation is no better than any other call of God - "who knows the ways of God?". In being an Order we are limited by its very structure: just as our Christian view of reality should limit (distinguish) Christians from the rest of the world - "in the world, not of it." Not everyone belongs - "many are called, but few are chosen" - more often than not, by their own choice! In this way, our Fellowships have to be limited so that we can get down to the "nitty gritty" work (worship) of supportive sharing, where hopefully the overflow of loving care will reach out, bringing others into our Order and Fellowships. Periodically we should have open meetings where interested Christians, and others, can see our lives and Fellowships in operation, share in the life as visitors, and thereby more readily make a choice as to whether this is their particular call. Also, there will always be those who have not been called to this particular vocation, but will be attracted by facets of our life, and we must prepare ourselves to be ever ready to help these souls find their way.

For a Fellowship to come to life, we must come to realize that we need each other, even though the reasons might not always be clear. Yes, we must come to

realize that we are powerless in ourselves, that what power we have is given to us, and that we can use this power in many ways, even to saying Mass backwards - that is: taking life, rather than giving life, as co-creators (and too, how many ways there are of taking life: We are lucky the physical life is taken quickly).

Today our world is facing many crises: political, economic, food, energy, ecological. All these have to do with the exercise of power - these are Franciscan times! We have no ultimate solutions; only Christ will finally solve these problems. But we can find the peace that He has promised us. Francis found it and we are called to this peace by following Francis, the poor man of Assisi. Poverty. Yes, we are in the world as an important part of creation - to exercise dominion. But we do not own the world - it is not our private property. It is God's! We do have a responsibility toward it as stewards of that which is owned by God. This is real poverty. It has nothing to do with that abject poverty greed has made, except putting ourselves on the line to correct it. There is no actual reason for such poverty, there is nothing good about it.

Yet in the midst of all this, there can be peace, a peace that passes understanding; when we give up our willful exercise of trying to be God, and let God be God; when we come to realize and accept our humanity! This seems to me more readily accomplished in an ongoing living community which is supportive to God's creation, by helping through the Holy Spirit, to bring a real perspective to life.

This is one of the major reasons for the Fellowship. And this is what I mean by consolidating our strength. Now, I would like to hear from you. This is your Order: So, what do you think?

Br. Mark Francis, SSF

+ +

FROM THE GUARDIAN

Grace, Peace, and Love, brothers and sisters!

The Newsletter including these greetings of mine tells you of the important decisions and discussion of the Chapter meeting at Little Portion in Saint Francistide. As Helen indicates, full minutes are available to all who are desirous. However, since some of the principal business was the final adoption of the Provincial Statutes, the International Constitution, and the approval of a trial form for admissions, these will be mailed to you in full, as the basis of a new Manual, around the first of February next year. What we intend to do is print all of these (photo-offset) on half pages (i.e., half of the standard 8 1/2 x 11 page) so that they can be hole-punched and kept in looseleaf form in a notebook of your choosing. This way two things are accomplished: they are in convenient size for frequent use; and they are easily corrected, deleted, added to, as the case may be.

(continued)

Guardian's Message, continued

Another important action of Chapter was making the officers of the Corporation (our legal body for receiving and dispensing funds) and Standing Committee members virtually the same. In the process, Hendrik Koning was appointed Bursar and will receive and dispense funds as directed by Chapter and Standing Committee. From now on, please send all Third Order contributions directly to him:

Third Order of St. Francis
The Rev. Hendrik Koning
405 Country Lane
Narberth, PA 19072

Please get your pledge card back to him, too. Remember, the Order can only function as such if each of us provides for its sustenance. However, that amount should not detract from our parish obligations, and our feeling of support for the First and Second Orders.

Few if any of us are unaware of the world food crisis which is upon us. Its roots may be manifold: drought, disease control, high oil prices, and consequently less fertilizer, increasing population, etc. Resolution of the problem is very complex economically, politically, technologically, etc. But no Franciscan can be unmindful of the great needs of vast numbers of the poor of this world, for whom Christ our Lord manifested the love and mercy of God.

We need only recall our own roots in modern times, the Christa Seva Sangha, founded only two generations ago with the express purpose of identifying with the world's poorest of the poor, the "untouchables" of the streets of the Indian sub-continent. Some are called, as is Mother Teresa of Calcutta, who is our own contemporary, to sell all and to give all. We are all called to make some response above and beyond that which the tithe requires. Where am I, where are you, in that 10% to 100% range? The answer is worked out and reworked, as it is reviewed again and again "with fear and trembling". Zaccheus vowed to give half his goods; Jesus' response was, "Today salvation has come to this house". St. Francis, lover of Lady Poverty, would have his brothers and the Clares make that 100% commitment of all that they had. Yet somewhere else, with good reason, there were people all along that possible range of response; and we of the Third Order are those who respond to His seeking of us, and find our place in that company - between 10 and 100%.

Our new Chaplain, Brother Mark Francis, is very direct. "We are going to have to modify and redirect our lives and our lifestyles as we face a world of hunger," is what he has been saying to many of us. If fasting has seemed negative and disconnected to many Episcopalians - merely the arbitrary command of God or the Church to be uncomfortable - we suddenly can see its positive side (even, if you will, to the point of self-interest!). To fast and take the proceeds and share with the poor and starving, is a wonderful opportunity God gives us today.

One may not be able to influence public policy on a grand scale, but each of us may make a decision about fasting and sharing. Some of you may have already responded to the call of Oxfam America for the observance of November 21 (Thursday before Thanksgiving Day) as a fast - with the savings going to provide skills and materials for farmers around the world - and to think and pray about our consumption as North Americans in relation to the needs of so many others. Changes in our personal habits and style may seem insignificant compared to the breadth and depth of the global problem; but what God may will to do with our changes and commitments may be far more than we can imagine. In any event, to take on fasting in this way will align us with the positive note of joy and thanksgiving in that what we no longer need or use ourselves will contribute in some way to the very real needs of others, and to justice and brotherhood for us all.

Remember to mark your calendar for the Convocation of the Third Order, for Racine, Wisconsin (the DeKoven Foundation) the third weekend of April 1975. More details will be available later .. after Advent and Christmas. "Hasten, O Lord, the coming of your Kingdom. Even so, Lord Jesus, come quickly!"

John M. Scott, Guardian

+ +

GREETINGS FROM CHAPTER St. Francistide 1974

We of the Third Order, American Province, are most cognizant of the fact that we have just written a new page in American Franciscan history, by consolidating the renewed aspects of our life and by adopting the significant documents and statutes which we have considered in this session.

The love and labor which have brought us to this point should be recognized and shared with our absent brothers and sisters. To that intent, we send our greetings and thanks for their faithfulness to Anna and Alvah Hoffman, and to the last of the original Trustees of the Corporation, Fergus Fulford. We commend and praise the work of Brother Robert, who retires as the most traveled Chaplain in our Province's history. We express our continuing appreciation of the reformation and renewal presided over by Brother Paul during his term as Minister (Chaplain). We owe much to his life and ministry. We are grateful for the untiring clerical labors of Helen Webb and for the legal assistance and advice tendered by Warren Tanghe. To Josephine Keer, we send our love and sympathy, rejoicing in the years of work and loyalty given us by the Keer sisters. We note with regret the absence of Marie Hayes, co-director of novices, praying for her good health and presence in the future.

To all our brothers and sisters in the other Orders, and in all the Provinces, we send Francistide greetings, rejoicing in our common life and fellowship.

Individual copies of the greeting were sent to those mentioned. A reply was received November 7th:

"Thank you so much for sending us that most interesting news concerning the work and growth of the Third Order in the American Province. It really is good to know how well Brother Robert has done in his work as Chaplain. A little news about how things are going in the English Province which I thought you might like to pass on is that we now have 140 novices, and over half of them are men, which is a very real change over the past. With all good wishes and prayers for many blessings on the future of the Third Order in America.

Yours Sincerely,

Brother Edward, SSF (Third Order Chaplain)
Brother Godfrey, SSF (Provincial Secretary)

SUMMARY OF CHAPTER MINUTES

Dear brothers and sisters,

Sorry to be so slow in telling you about the Chapter meeting on October 4 and 5 at Little Portion. It was quite an experience! All the Chapter members were there, except Kale King, whose Diocesan Convention was held at the same time, and Marie Hayes, who had already missed too much time from work because of illness.

Br. Mark Francis was ratified as Chaplain. He looks forward to the further strengthening of family ties within the Third Order, and hopes to travel to the West Coast and back next summer, and asks us to consider the question, "What is Franciscan spirituality?"

Muriel Adey and Marie Webner were present, and were appointed to fill the vacancies created when Peter Funk and Helen Webb were elected Novice Director and Secretary. Marie Hayes was also elected Novice Director. Warren Tanghe is the Chapter representative to the Standing Committee.

Rodney Cook, Leo Combes, Leonard Pratt, Barbara Kelly and Darlene Sipes were recommended for profession. A request for Release was granted to Jonathan Sams.

The international Third Order Constitution and the Manual Revision ("The Rule of Life" and "A Way of Life") were ratified. The Provincial Statutes were accepted, with additions and corrections. We do not have a supply of a Tau Cross

Chapter Minutes Summary, continued

yet, to be given at profession, but the Standing Committee will work on it. Chapter approved a draft of an Order of Admissions for trial use, with the understanding that any significant changes require permission of the Chaplain. All these documents are to be reproduced on pages 5 1/2 by 8 1/2 so that each person can have them to put in a notebook.

It was recommended that the Tertiary Office be dropped from the Manual. Instead, tertiary gatherings are authorized to say the Office appropriate to the time of day of the meeting, with propers for the Feast of St. Francis, and the Blessing of St. Francis may be used after the Grace.

There has been talk about a Book of Roots to be shared by all three Orders of the Society. Warren Tanghe is to work on a draft of this. He will also plan a Devotional Booklet. There was a long discussion about the Daily Office in our Rule. The Chapter came up with the statement that "all tertiaries share a commitment to the Office. This is normally understood as including the use of the daily offices of Morning and Evening Prayer."

Someone brought up the question of possible Third Order communities, and the reply was: "The Third Order Chapter affirms and welcomes the possibility of Third Order communities and group living experiments, provided the Third Order is not encumbered legally or financially. Such communities should consult frequently with the Chaplain, bearing in mind their unofficial nature." However, no specific communities were mentioned.

We were reminded of the Third Order Convocation being held at the DeKoven Foundation, Racine, Wisconsin, on April 18, 19 and 20, 1975; and suggestions of themes, topics, and speakers were asked. John Scott will appoint a committee for it.

Br. Luke read this statement about the international Chapter of the Society of St. Francis:

"The Chapter of the Society of St. Francis is a consultative and coordinating body. Its functions are limited to those matters which are the concern of the Society as a whole, such as the principles, goals or vocation of the Society. It has no legislative function, but refers back to the Chapters of the three Orders. It shall consist of the members of the First Order Chapter, two sisters of the First Order, the Wardens of the Second Order, the members of the Third Order Interprovincial Chapter. It may be convened from time to time by the Minister General as need arises."

The Third Order Chapter, American Province, ratified the statement; but strongly recommended that the Chapter of the Society of St. Francis also be the body to elect the Minister General.

Chapter Minutes Summary, continued

A need was mentioned for a statement to be given to prospective spiritual directors outlining what is expected of them, including the fact that any Spiritual Director of a tertiary thereby accepts the Third Order Rule as being the basis of his direction.

The Corporation (Third Order of St. Francis, Incorporated) includes all professed tertiaries. Trustees of the Corporation elected October 5, 1974 were

John Scott, President and Treasurer

Peter Funk, Vice President

Helen Webb, Secretary

Marie Hayes

Warren Tanghe

Hendrik Koning was appointed Bursar, to receive and dispense funds at the direction of the Treasurer. You will note that the Trustees are members of the Standing Committee. This was done to avoid extra meetings, since the Corporation business is usually very brief. The Corporation exists only to fulfill legal requirements.

The replies received from Hank Koning's request for pledges for 1975 was disappointing; and the Guardian stressed that the pledge is a matter of rule, and should have a 100% reply from tertiaries, regardless of the amount a person can give at this time.

Br. Robert read a summary of the San Francisco-Bay Area Fellowship's thoughts on the Role of the Local Fellowship. (It is reprinted, for your consideration, in this Newsletter.)

There were greetings received from Sister Cecelia of the Community of St. Francis, from Kale King, and from Br. Geoffrey, SSF, Minister General. The Chapter sent out a general greeting (which is in this Newsletter).

There are some extra copies of the complete minutes of the Chapter meeting, if you would like one - just drop me a line. But I think I've covered most of the business. It was so good being with Brothers Mark Francis, Robert, Luke - and even Br. John Charles for a little while. It was good to have tertiaries from all over the country, and to find out how much we have in common.

I hope you will be able to get together with us at the Convocation in April. It will be a time of much spiritual renewal and refreshment, I am sure. Besides, we always have fun when we get together!

Cordially,

Helen

Mrs. Edward Webb, 4008 Buckingham Road, Baltimore, Md. 21207

WHAT DOES OUR LOCAL THIRD ORDER FELLOWSHIP MEAN TO ME?

(Comments by various members of the San Francisco-Bay Area Fellowship, based on notes taken at their meeting by George Gray.)

...To be a member of a fellowship means to me to have a place to come back to from my own life in order to get priorities straight once again; a place to be oneself with no questions asked.

...A family that strengthens its members; honestly.

...A continuity.

...Like the Body of Christians through history - we feed off our unity - our fellowship has a bond, a charisma, a relationship.

...To be a member of this fellowship seems to be a vocation - distinct from that of an Associate.

...Our fellowship is such that because of its size it is possible to relate to the members on a personal level.

...Our meetings are not unlike an iceberg - a revelation of a deeper significance, carrying the ethos of Franciscan spirituality.

...The Third Order vocation changes one's whole viewpoint - coming to Fellowship meetings is like the icing on the cake - yet commitment to God cannot be seen apart from commitment to our brothers and sisters.

...Third Order membership is the center from which strength is gained for other dimensions of life; then in their turn these dimensions pour enrichment into the Fellowship.

...The Third Order Fellowship is not really parallel to the First Order community; for the friars, their community is at once the context of living out their vocation and the source of its enrichment. But for tertiaries, the contexts of living out their vocation are the seven days a week, twenty-four hours a day relationships of marriage, family, parish, neighborhood, work, etc. The Third Order is the catalyst, made explicit in the local fellowship, that brings all these together and makes them work.

...We all have too many commitments, and we have only so much time and energy. We try to slice the cake so as to fill all needs and feel that the more we give, the less remains. But when our Fellowship is a true giving and receiving of love, nourishing our daily lives and being nourished by them, then we are like the "widow's cruse" or a fountain that never runs dry; overflowing, the more we give the more there is to give.

Anna Keer, Treasurer of the Third Order of the Society of St. Francis, American Province, for several years, died on May 31, 1974. She was 75 years old. She had been a tertiary for over 30 years, and an Oblate of the Order for almost as many years. She received her instruction under the direction of Father Joseph, OSF. Her life was a dedication to Church work, and as a secular led almost a life as a religious. She was employed, and retired from the Prudential Life Insurance Company.

For many years when the First Order was in its infancy, she spent her summer vacations at Little Portion, canning for the Friary and making candles. She also did a great deal of mending. She spent the ten years that she was retired addressing 4000 envelopes for the Confraternity of the Blessed Sacrament every three months. In the 1940's when there was a gas shortage, she could not get to her own church in East Orange, so went to Cranford, New Jersey. Father Carthy, who was then at Trinity in Cranford, asked her and her sister to take charge of the Coffee Hour on Sunday mornings, and they did this for four or five years. Anna was secretary of our local Fellowship, St. Elizabeth and St. Louis, for five years.

Her whole life was dedicated to Church work, and the First, Second and Third Orders of the Society of St. Francis. She will be missed by many, but her good works will be remembered by many who knew her. She is survived by one sister, Josephine, who has been just as dedicated and worked along with her on all these projects. May God rest her soul.

Anna Hoffman

Bertha Chamberlain died on the Feast of St. Luke, October 18. There are no words better than the Epistle for that day to describe her last days. She had been in the hospital for six weeks and received excellent care for her poor painful body. What a joy it must be to her to be free of it. She was buried from her beloved St. Peter's by her two nephews and with the Missal Requiem she loved. Please pray for her.

Ruby Chamberlain

Br. Luke wrote from Little Portion Friary that "we received word that the Rev. Donald L. Davis from Barry House, Brant Lake, N.Y. died Sunday, Nov. 17th. He was born in 1917, went to E.T.S. and graduated in 1944. He was professed at Little Portion on Epiphany 1972. When he died, he was Priest-in-Charge of the Adirondack Missions."

GOOD NEWS

We are pleased to note the following professions.

Sylvia Acheson - May 29

Susan Jefferson - Jun. 12

Gage Colby - Sep. 11

Barbara Kelly - Oct. 28

Margaret Ibara - Aug. 15

Camilla Roswall - Aug. 4

Darlene Sipes - Nov. 3

There may have been others - will those people please write to the Secretary.

Good News, continued

On October 3, 1974, the Rev. Canon H. B. Liebler celebrated the 60th anniversary of his ordination to the priesthood. He began his ministry in Waukesha, Wisconsin; and after serving in New York City and Connecticut, he founded St. Christopher's Mission to the Navajo in Utah. In 1966 he "retired" to Oljato, near Monument Valley, Utah where in 1971 the Church of St. Mary of the Moonlight was completed by Navajo craftsmen. In June 1974 the Utah State Medical Association presented its "Award of Merit to Father Liebler for long and dedicated service devoted to providing improved health service to the Navajo community of Utah." As you may have noticed from the Third Order directory, Father Liebler is now, as far as we know, the oldest living tertiary in the American Province. (There is a fuller account of the anniversary celebration in the Newsletter file, which can be mailed to you if you wish.)

We offer congratulations to Martin Nelson, ordained to the diaconate June 21, 1974, and to David Cawthorne ordained to the diaconate Sep. 25, 1974.

Those who have become Third Order novices since August are: Christine Dorsaneo, Pat Mahon, Caroline Moran, David Sanders and Michael Williams.

"This is Nashotah" of Oct. 1974 included the following: "Robert P. Bollman and his wife, Charlene, became parents of a baby boy, Robert Pleasanton Francis-Leo Bollman, Jr. on September 2, 1974." The bulletin of St. Paul's Church, San Rafael, California of July 21 announced: "In joy and thanksgiving we celebrate the Holy Baptism of Brendon Yves Mobert, son of Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth C. Mobert, today." From Daytona Beach, Florida came word of the birth of Stephen Neill Kuhn, son of Dennis and Carol, born July 13th - along with a quotation from Charles Dickens, "I love these little people; and it is not a slight thing, when they, who are so fresh from God, love us." Carol and Douglas Pieper have a baby girl, Kristin Elizabeth, born October 11th.

FELLOWSHIP NEWS

In a letter from Sylvia Acheson of June 4th, she reported that in the Milwaukee, Nashotah House area, there were 8 tertiaries and one associate, with three other interested people. They will miss Keith Ackerman, who moved to Freeport, Long Island, since he was sort of a big brother to them. Except for Bishop Gaskell, he was until recently the only professed tertiary in their group. Fr. Jon Hanshew has moved to Green Bay, closer to them, and hopes to be able to meet with them occasionally. Sylvia was professed at a votive mass of St. Francis. Several Roman Catholic Tertiaries were present, including Fr. Giles, in charge of all Milwaukee area tertiaries, and she says they hope to have some kind of closer contact between the two groups.

New Umbrian Fellowship of San Francisco. Announcements were received of a special meeting Sep. 8th, and regular meetings Sep. 20th and Nov. 22nd. Also planned was the annual St. Franciside silent retreat at Bishop's Ranch from Friday, Oct. 4 to Sunday, Oct. 6, when plans were made for the profession of Mary Mobert.

In the Boston area, a meeting was called at the Episcopal Divinity School for October 9th, hoping to form a Fellowship. We'll be interested to see how it turned out.

The San Bernardino Fellowship met Wednesday, October 30th at the home of Ken Cox with six present. They talked about the Third Order Chapter meeting, and discussed Page 30 of "The Way of St. Francis" since the meeting date was the 30th. Ken says, "We had some discussion on the tendency of most of us to hold in our feelings of love and affection in dealing particularly with those outside our immediate families and friends." They will meet again in November to plan the annual visit to County General Hospital, to pass along Christmas messages to the patients there.

The Philadelphia Fellowship met Saturday, November 2nd at the home of Bob Morris, with Br. Mark Francis. The meeting opened with the Tertiary Office and the Eucharist was celebrated at noon. Eleanor Woodroffe was appointed Convenor. It was a time of sharing of thoughts and ideas. The next meeting is planned for February.

LETTERS

Ken Cox requests news from isolated tertiaries, letters telling what you are doing, special work, etc., for the Newsletter. Here are some - but what about some more for next time? Won't you write in? If you don't have any special news, how about some comments?

From Will Drake in Hamilton, Ontario, Canada (Sep. 1974): Received your note the other day and I am pleased to say I am now settled in once again for a 12-month period. During the year I will be completing an M.A. degree in Social Policy. Courses will include such things as Economics for Social Policy, Social Policy Research, Analytic Methods for Management, and the like. It should prove to be a most interesting year, and I must say the change to the big city life again will take some adjustment. I will be returning to Yellowknife, Northwest Territories, in September 1975, hopeful to make a practical application of my studies. It will be pleasant to return to the serenity of the north.

From Muriel Adey of Victoria, B.C. (July 1974) My job with my wonderful doctor sort of dissolved from under me at the end of March. He was so over-worked he had to choose, and he chose to close his private practice and move into the transients' hostel. I stayed with him as a volunteer, however, we hope to have Government financing. Today we've begun record keeping according to Government requirement, but we've yet to actually receive the cash. After three months serving mostly people with no coverage, Dr. Joe's personal funds are completely gone and we really do hope the Government pays up soon. We now have Indians and transients and anyone without coverage or with multiple problems referred by social workers. Please keep us in your prayers.

From the Rev. Robert Samuelson, in June 1974, from Cuernavaca, Morelos, Mexico. My work in Cuernavaca is only temporary until the parish can find a priest. After that, I'll be moving to Mexico City where I'll be living at the Seminary. My work there will be under Bishop Jose Saucedo, Bishop of Central and South Mexico in whatever kind of work he wants to use me. I'll also be working for the Bishop of Dallas in trying to bring about a closer relationship between these two dioceses. The close physical relationship between Texas and Mexico certainly points to the need for better mutual understanding and Christian fellowship across the border. Mexico offers a tremendous opportunity to witness to the Franciscan life. The contrast between great wealth on the one hand and extreme poverty on the other is the picture of Mexican life. Worst of all, the wealthy Mexican, or American, does not seem to be overly concerned about the poor. Bishop Sergio Mendez Arceo of Cuernavaca is a notable exception, because of his real concern. The Episcopal Church here is too small to have any great influence; but then, when we consider the rapid spread of Christianity beginning with a little group of Twelve, we should have hope. I hope in time we can have more tertiaries here, and that eventually the First Order may establish a friary here. There is a great need.

BR. GEOFFREY - AFRICA

Br. Geoffrey, Minister General, sent one of his regular general letters to the Society as a whole, this one covering news from his recent visit to Africa. Here are some excerpts.

At FIWILA he was present for the grand celebration of the 50th anniversary of their founding. One present aim is to maintain Fiwila by those on the spot rather than relying on money from England. Last year the Brothers managed without any grant from England, though some help may be needed this year. There is a good little group of tertiaries, and several people interested. At DAR ES SALAAM the buildings are finally completed. They are also working toward financial independence, and are developing vegetable gardens. There are two thriving tertiary groups in RHODESIA. Prayers are asked for Basil, in what is called the "sharp point" where so many of the border clashes take place. The future for so many is totally insecure - a real chance to live the Franciscan life. In JOHANNESBURG, a tiny group of tertiaries is getting established. Br. Geoffrey preached at the Cathedral, and mentioned in his letter a crowd of votive lights before the names of all who are banned or under house arrest. In CAPETOWN there is interest in the Third Order, and two people are trying community life together in a poor house in one of the mixed areas of the city. Of DURBAN, he says it is important to get some of our literature translated into Zulu because of Zulu inquiries. At LESOTHO a little group of Franciscan-minded people has been meeting regularly since his last visit, and engaged in works helping those in need.

(continued)

Br. Geoffrey's Letter, continued

In conclusion Br. Geoffrey says, "Things are happening fast in Southern Africa. The change in Mozambique has dramatically changed the situation in Rhodesia and South Africa.

I notice a liberalising in South Africa and in quite a number of ways, apartheid is being breached. One can detect almost a sense of panic, certainly an over-reaction, on the part of the Government in its new defence regulations regarding conscription. The Roman Catholic Church, followed by the Anglicans and others, have come out strongly against the new legislation and are advising S. Africans to examine their consciences before taking part in a way on the borders in support of what they openly declare an unjust system of apartheid.

We need to pray very much for the people of Rhodesia and S. Africa and especially for our Tertiaries and friends, that God will give them strength to do all that their Christian discipleship demands of them.

May God keep us all true to Him in these very grave times.

With my love and prayers,

Geoffrey "