

Franciscan Times

ADVENT, 1985



ADVENT

Dear Friends:

Last night, at the meeting of our Education for Ministry group, the man who was to plan the worship for the evening played a tape of the choir of Church of the Redeemer, Houston, singing "Prepare Ye the Way of the Lord." If you've seen Godspell, you remember this wonderful song which begins the play. Years ago, my son Dave had the part of John the Baptist in our community theatre's production of Godspell, and it was his voice that sang those first, haunting, clear notes out into the darkened theatre.

And so, my thoughts about the coming of Mary's Son were mixed up with thoughts of my own son, who lives far away, and of my other sons, one as far away as Peru, and another

who is far from me in more than one way. And of my daughters too, and my grandsons and new little granddaughter. Perhaps not the thoughts which the presenter of the tape had planned to arouse, and yet there they were in my mind, and in the prayer he invited us to pray.

It seems right that Advent is a family time. Advent is so many things. The Church asks us to think of Heaven, Hell, Death, and Judgment. The World directs, even forces, our thoughts to other things which I needn't enumerate. And we are caught in this dichotomy. To Church and World both, Advent is a time of preparation. As mother and father await the birth of a child, so we await the Birth of the Holy Child of Bethlehem. We wait, and as we wait, we occupy ourselves with the same sorts of things that expectant parents do: the practical things like cribs and diapers; the fun things like showers and gifts; the dreamy things, "...and she'll grow up to be a ballerina -- or a bicyclist." and the scary things too, which we hide under our laughter. And with all of these, we make our preparations and surround them with prayer that God will take them, feeble as they are, and somehow use them to prepare a place for Himself.

Prepare ye the Way of the Lord....

Joanne Maynard



Lois Keen is so faithful in sending news from the Minnesota Fellowship. I've been thinking a lot about Minnesota lately, because I've been reading Happy to Be Here by Garrison Keillor, whose home town, you surely know, is Lake Wobegon, MN. The Fellowship attended the Regional Convocation at the Franciscan Retreat Center in Prior Lake. And on October 5th they met at the Oratory of St. Mary in Afton to celebrate the Feast of St. Francis with Eucharist, renewal of vows, and lunch. The Rev. Allan Nyhus and Marsha Hunter attended the meeting. Lois Keen will continue as co-convenor, and will be joined by Judy Schmidt. On November 5, they met at the Episcopal Church Home. They plan a specific study for next Lenten season, and are thinking about some kind of community outreach which they could do as a group.

Volume 1 Issue 1 of the new newsletter of the Minnesota Fellowship, The Messenger, contained the sad news of the death of tertiary Diana Carpenter (1932-1985). Marie Webner wrote, in a letter to the Fellowship: "We shall all be praying for her peace in Christ and remembering her with affection...She is a valiant soul."



THE ARIZONA FELLOWSHIP met on August 3 and again on September 7 at St. Michael's, Coolidge. Johnathan Steinhart was professed on October 5 and Marnee Sell on November 9. Andrew Wilkes, newsletter editor, wrote: "I'm sure I speak for the whole Fellowship when I say we are proud to be able to accept these two fine Christian lives into our community."

Jim Cain of the Fellowship went to San Francisco for his first vacation in seven years. While there, he represented the Arizona Fellowship at Sr. Ann Driscoll's Junior Vows. Sr. Ann had spent the past several years either in the Arizona Fellowship or in the C.S.F. novitiate. She was co-convenor for Phoenix. Andrew is now an assistant Novice Director for men in the Third Order. The group is planning to study "Celebration of Discipline."



MILWAUKEE FELLOWSHIP started the Fall season with an extra special meeting. Br. Robert Hugh, Provincial Minister, was with them and they renewed their vows. That was on September 28, at All Saints Cathedral, where they were having a Michaelmas Faire, preceded by a medieval Mass. Br. Robert Hugh gave a meditation. Compline completed the special day. Br. Robert Hugh also preached at the Cathedral on the 26th.

Mary Lou Hall was professed in June at Nashotah House, and then she and her husband Allen, Nashotah graduate, left for Colorado.

On November 30, they met at Stephen and Sally Waller's home for Eucharist and lunch. They made an evaluation of their fellowship for the convenor's report to the Guardian. On December 7, Br. John George will lead a Quiet Day at the Church of the Ascension in Chicago, and the Fellowship is invited. Joan Powers writes the newsletter for this busy group.



THE GEORGIA FELLOWSHIP has a newsletter hand-colored by Jacqui Belcher, Convenor. This really adds a nice touch to the designs and illustrations. Their October newsletter contained two reflections written by Dorothy Adams and Fr. Luther Williams during Regional convocation at Camp Mike'll. Members were asked to reflect upon: their place within the Third Order, what they expect to

receive, and what they are prepared to give to the Order and to the Georgia Fellowship.

Their November newsletter carried several thoughts and illustrations about suffering. Prayers were asked for Marcus and Lillie, a young boy and a woman who have cancer. This thought from Jacqui: "I think it is not unintentional that the psalm "Domine, Deus" is followed by the psalm "Misericordias Domini" (Psalms 88 & 89). This, too continues the them of joy following pain, of transformation following suffering."

THE 1985 SOUTHWEST CONVOCATION

Reported by Andrew Wilkes



The Southwest Convocation was made available last year at Chapter to be a testing ground for some activities that could be used at various other convocations for the upbuilding of community. This whole effort turned out to be as natural as breathing because convocations have, from the time of Francis, been used to bring about better understanding of the greater Franciscan community. Towards this end we identified three areas of interest. We could play together, work together and pray together.

Prayer is something of which every Franciscan has intimate knowledge. We struggle with it day in and day out, trying to find sometime of peace and quiet in a busy, busy world. Is there any wonder that when we have the luxury of saying the daily offices together, a volcanic eruption of spiritual blessings come into being? The Southwest Convocation had times of joy, hilarity, peace and tenderness in our liturgical functions. All this --- founded on the bedrock of union with the Holy Spirit. All this because we made our private daily sacrifices.

Work is also no stranger to Franciscans. We have always earned our way through world, again, since Francis's time. First, on Saturday we had the benefit of Br. John Charles' work as he explained with a very thorough humility the place of Franciscan Joy in our lives. The next day Joachim Bakey, a priest and psychologist from New Mexico, gave us the shortened version of the Myers-Briggs personality index test. This led to all kinds of interesting insights into who we are as individuals and how those individuals interact together in community. Finally, on Sunday we postponed the Eucharist until late afternoon so we could break up into small groups and re-express the parables in the Gospel lesson in ways that were intimately relevant to our lives and spiritual journeys. Although this all qualifies as intellectual work, it didn't really seem like work. It was mostly joyful and very interesting. We didn't always each get what we wanted from these discussions; but, we certainly each got what we needed.

The play portion of our time together was spread throughout the Convocation. Two playful highpoints were the Serendipity evening, presided over by Marnee Sell and the inebreating presence of Br. John Charles. Our dear brother bishop is equally at home telling a humorous story as he is in theology or Holy Scripture. His material is good enough to be on the national lecture tour. It's just very difficult to determine if he should be at the Hungry Eye or Yale Divinity School. At the Serendipity evening, Marnee arranged for each of us to entertain the group with a song, skit, story or other original creation. It was all very original and an incredibly enjoyable evening.

The community life we enjoy as Franciscans is a wonderful thing. As we join that long line of Franciscans who have said yes to the urgings of the Holy Spirit, our community continues to exist. As long as we continue our private discipline we shall be able to live publically as messengers of the Most High Lord.

MUSTARD SEED FELLOWSHIP

After 'taking the summer off,' Upstate New York Tertiaries gathered at Graymoor Friary for Northeast Conference and then again at St. John's Episcopal Church, Ithaca, for a Eucharist in celebration of St. Francis Day, at which Dave Wilbur was noviced and Barb Wilbur and Kathy Eichwort renewed their vows. We were joined by the Roman Secular Franciscans of the Ithaca area for dessert, fellowship, and Evening Prayer.

The group brought out its first newsletter, with contributions by Seedlings Barb, Dave, Fae Malania, and Leonard Pratt, and Third Order officers Marie Webner, Bill Roberts, Gooch, and Dorothy Nakatsuji. Judging by the responses, it was very well received.

At a brief business meeting on October 4, the group reelected Barb as convener and discussed the annual report and the possibilities of moving meeting sites around the state, getting a Visitor to Visit, and holding a retreat during 1986.

We had the pleasure of having our Spiritual Advisor, Kathy, serve as Chaplain at Northeast Conference. Kathy has just stepped down as Director of Loaves and Fishes Food Ministry in Ithaca to devote more time to her family and three parishes.

Another Newsletter is due out in November and the next fellowship meeting is set for December 1, Advent Sunday, at 3:30 PM, at Thornfield Conference Center (just off NYS Route 92 one mile north of Cazenovia, NY).

ON RETREAT WITH JOHN CHARLES

Three Mustard Seedlings had the privilege this July of attending the Christ Church (Morristown, NY) Summer Retreat Weekends lead by the Right Reverend Brother John Charles, formerly Bishop of Polynesia and a member of the First Order operating out of Little Portion. Women's retreat was July 19-21 and was centered on teachings from the Epistle to the Ephesians; Men's the following weekend, on Galatians. Barb Wilbur and Marcia Shaw attended the first, and Dave Wilbur the second.

Peace be to Thee my Lord,
for Brother Fire
through whom Thou givest us
light in the darkness.



He is bright, and pleasant,
robust and strong -

I remember rushing, late for something. The driver in the car ahead of me was aggravating - going ten miles less than the speed limit, dawdling at the green light. As soon as the opportunity came, I impatiently honked, shot out from behind and zipped passed. Then I recognized the driver as someone I knew. "Oh, no!" I said aloud as if he could hear, "I'm sorry. I didn't know it was you."

My response was the same as those of the sheep and goats in the Matthew 25 story, for neither the righteous nor the unrighteous recognized Christ as one whom they had, or had not, fed, clothed, visited. Both groups appeared willing to serve Christ. The difference between them was that what the righteous would have been willing to do if they had known, they were willing to do even when they did not know.

A friend of mine, a former medical missionary to India, tells that when he first arrived there, the surgeon orienting him said something to this effect: "The people you will see will be dirty, illiterate and ill-cared for. It will be easy to see yourself as superior to your patients. To maintain perspective, every time I am preparing for an operation I pray for help, consciously visualizing Jesus' being on the table."

"I didn't know it was you." I wonder how many times that sentence could be repeated as we go through life pretty much oblivious to persons in need. How differently would we operate our lives if we saw Jesus in the welfare mother, the mentally retarded child, the unemployed neighbor, the rest home resident, the refugee, the landless peasant?





LONG ISLAND FELLOWSHIP

Correspondent Janet Moore wrote on November 12, with news of their past two meetings.

Hurricane Gloria wasn't enough to prevent the hardy group from meeting on St. Francis Day at Christ Church, Port Jefferson. Janet says that, although many people did not have electricity at the time, the church did, and so they could enjoy their covered dish supper. (Can you imagine a covered dish supper at which there were no lights, so you couldn't see what you were eating? Now that would be a test of faith! A therapy group I was in tested faith by all of us shutting our eyes, holding hands, and following a leader,

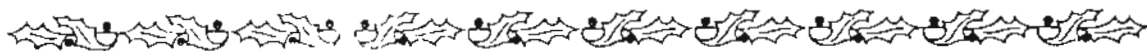
the only one who could see the way. I think the unseen covered dish supper would make a good follow-up, if one passed the first test!*) The meeting began with Eucharist celebrated by Fr. Bob Brandt, and ended with the group giving thanks to John Apmann for serving as convenor for the past two years, and congratulating their new convenor, Edward Medina.

They met again on November 7 at the home of Janet and her husband Frank. At that time, Ed presented the group with a "Spiritual Cake." It was topped by four columns representing the four aims of the Fellowship for the coming year: Prayer, Study, Mission, and Praise. Adorning the cake were different colored ribbons, and as each one pulled a ribbon, each found a Bible verse pertaining to these aims attached to it. Janet says it was a lovely meeting, well attended, and ending in everyone joining hands in prayer.

They were, at the time she wrote, looking forward to meeting again on December 4 at Ed's parish, St. Mark's, Medford. At this meeting, they will share their Franciscan walk with several members of the parish.

The new convenor lives and works at a group home for the mentally retarded as a house parent. He has worked at the home for three years, and says that it has provided a real challenge for him. The experience of community living has taught him a lot, he wrote in a letter addressed to his Fellowship.

*(This note is from the editor.JM)

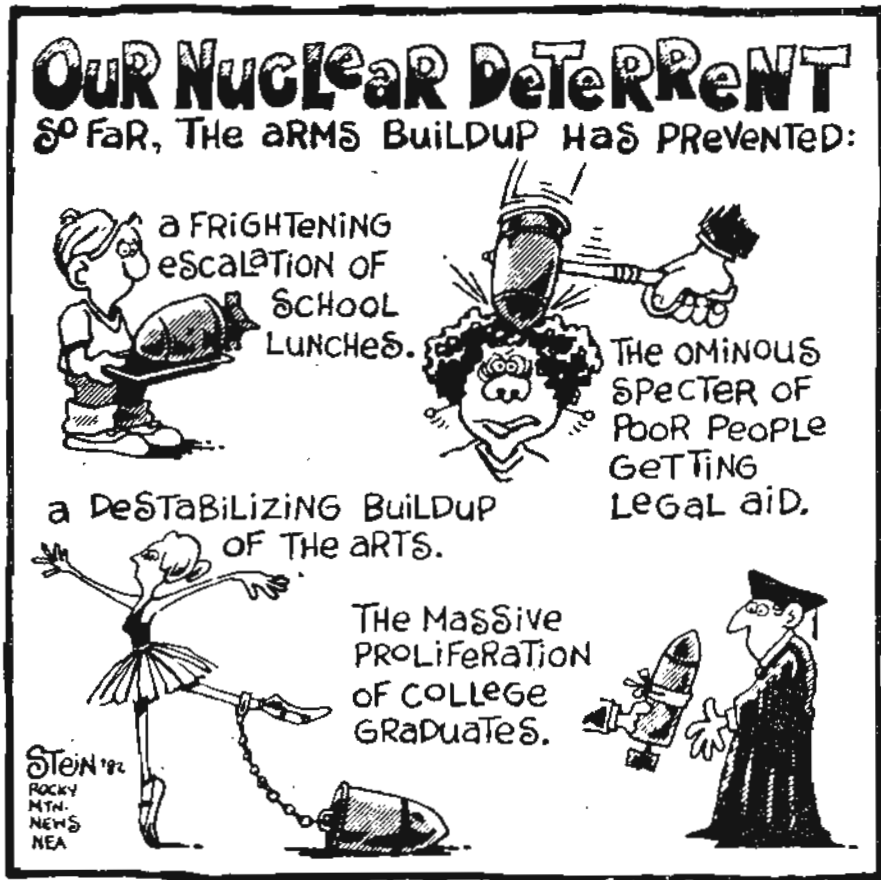


The newsletter of THE LILLIES OF THE FIELD FELLOWSHIP in Colorado is called Lily Patter and is edited by their convenor, Dearlie Moline. They held their first meeting of the fall on September 10 at St. Timothy's Church in Littleton. A round-table discussion on spiritual growth constituted the program.

Dearlie reported that she is going into business, after years of being dependent on Social Security Disability and Charity. She writes, "After praying and considering carefully, I became aware that my 39 years of disability, plus my writing and speaking skills and medical knowledge provide the background to qualify me as a consultant on accessibility." The government will soon require that all public buildings be accessible to all, and she plans to assist in planning the changes needed as a consultant.

Dearlie also wrote a beautiful column called "Answered Prayers." A new self-propelled wheel chair now gives her new mobility and freedom. A telephone answering machine was found -- actually found where it had been thrown away! And her prayers for a cuddly kitten were also answered.

On October 28, they were all invited to a "Pot Providence" party at Sally Hicks's, with Br. Robert Hugh as a guest.



Lord, help us to be instruments of your Peace.

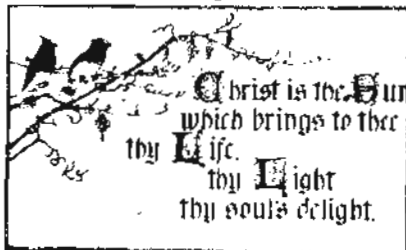
THE NEW UMBRIAN FELLOWSHIP

This active Fellowship, centered in San Francisco, held a Third Order Family meeting for Postulants, Novices, and Professed members, at Mary Ann Jackman's on September 6. Eucharist and potluck were followed by discussion on meditation, led by Chris Dettner. Kay Salinero is co-convenor, and Don Briggs was elected to serve with her. Kay was professed on September 8. Don Briggs is doing the newsletter, for which a collection is received at each meeting, to cover the 20 to 25 dollar cost of the publication.

The group holds their meetings at members' homes or parish churches, on a rotating basis. On September 29 they got together with the Episcopal Peace Fellowship to sponsor an address by Robert Aldridge titled "Militarism: Our Fatal Addiction -- The Arms Race is Already Killing." (Editor's note: Would you believe that I stuck that cartoon at the top of this page before I'd read the newsletter and discovered the topic of their meeting...? True.)

An open meeting was held on St. Francis Day at Dodie Walker's apartment, with dessert provided by the hostess and others bringing other supper fare. Professed members renewed their vows.

On December 22, members will participate in a Franciscan Pageant in Rossmore, depicting the Story of the Creche. The newsletter says: "...No talent required. Sing, dance, wear/carry an animal face, or just mingle with the crowd and sing when the mood hits you. Bah-humbugging will be considered a challenge."



SOUTHEASTERN THIRD ORDER CONVOCATION

The sixth annual Southeastern Third Order Convocation took place of 27-29 September at Camp Mikell in the hills of north Georgia. Twenty six persons of Franciscan persuasion; tertiaries and a few inquirers as well, spent the weekend in fellowship and song, daily offices and Eucharist, and in planning for the year to come.

Sr Cecilia, CSF, Provincial Minister for the Order, led us in a series of meditations on the theme of "God's Abundance," which theme seemed to receive an "Amen" throughout the weekend in the midst of the perfect weather, lovely setting, and exceptional food at Camp Mikell. Plans were made to convene again at Camp Mikell for the next two years in September.

The regional was a time of meditation and reflection, but mostly for sharing. Novice Heber Peacock gave an interesting slide presentation of his visit to Assisi in June of this year, and Stan McGraw of Atlanta gave a short seminar on healing, drawing from his work among the American Indians. David Nard provided music, with a little help from a friend or two. Tertiaries made their annual renewal of vows during the Saturday morning Eucharist.

All are filled with gratitude for the hard work of Dorothy Adams and Pete Brewer, who, among others, organized the event, for Sr Cecilia, who shared herself with us, and to God for his many gifts of abundance. See you all next year.

Davis

Davis Horner



May Christ illuminate
our hearts and minds
now at Christmas
and always



Santa Barbara Fellowship met on the Eve of the Feast of St. Francis, with Eucharist at St. Mary's Retreat House. Their newsletter says, "The sisters were very gracious to us, letting us include a Third Order Litany and the Ubi Carita in their service. We are very thankful for their presence in Santa Barbara and rejoice in their loving cooperation with us Franciscans."

The meeting continued at the Kelly's home, with supper and conversation about vocations and gifts. This time enabled members to get to know Lauren Sullivan, their newest member, better. Evening Prayer was read to close the meeting.

They next met on the Feast of St. Elizabeth of Hungary at Trinity Church. First they joined the congregation for Eucharist, and then adjourned to the Vlach's for supper. Newest member Lauren provided the program.

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What a thought!

"Some day, after we have mastered the winds, the waves, the tides, and gravity, we will harness for God the energies of love.

And then for the second time in the history of the world, humankind will have discovered fire."

Pierre Teilhard de Chardin



* This, and other similar illustrations in this newsletter are from the card catalog of All Saints Convent Scriptorium, PO Box 3127, Catonsville, MD 21228. Wonderful cards for various occasions -- at affordable, Franciscan-type prices.



"FRUITS OF THE LOOM"

That's the name of the newsletter of the LAND OF THE SKY Franciscan Third Order Fellowship. They began their August meeting with Morning Prayer and a film strip from the monks of Weston Priory on the Celebration of Community. At the meeting, they evaluated their past year and planned the up-coming year. They agreed that they'd like to be more in touch with each other's journey, to be outreaching and visible, better organized with better prepared programs, and some long term or specific Fellowship project. They chose a metaphor for their Fellowship, "A Family of Weavers," and adopted this Statement of Purpose:

"By centering ourselves in Worship and Prayer, we provide enabling support for all the members of our family, and through togetherness become a visible, identifiable Community."

They agreed that their meetings should include: Daily Office, Eucharist, Music, and Intercessions. The Omnibus of Sources will be their foundation for study topics. The study topic for November was "Origins of the Third Order."

At their October meeting, David Nard reported on the recent Chapter he had attended. Davis Horner reported on a recent retreat he had made at St. Margaret's House in Maggie Valley. The topic was St. Francis, and several secular Third Order members expressed an interest in meeting with the Fellowship. Bishop Weinbauer visited their meeting and spoke to members about Wolfe Lake, a property which was given to the Diocese with the intent that it become "a holy place." He asked the Third Order to use and maintain it. They feel that it is possible that they can join their efforts with those of "Way in the Wilderness" in a ministry that will make Wolfe Lake meaningful to many people.

REST IN PEACE

Fr. Kale King, Area Chaplain, writes:

Helen (Mrs. Harold V.) Myers, for years the only tertiary in either the Diocese of the state of Idaho, died July 22nd, at her home, primarily as the result of a fall she suffered some years ago. Professed nearly forty years ago, she showed her area chaplain the scapular with which she was clothed as a novice. An ardent Churchman, whose husband served many years as rector of Nampa, Idaho, Helen kept to her Rule as she had received it. It was through the Myers' that the late Brother Stephen visited Idaho and recruited a new tertiary, now area chaplain. Hospitality, generosity, and simplicity marked her years as a tertiary. May she rest in peace.



IN thy journeys to and fro
 God direct thee;
 In thy happiness and pleasure
 God bless thee;
 In care, anxiety, or trouble
 God sustain thee;
 In peril and in danger
 God protect thee.

write here, for →

FRANCISCAN HERALD PRESS
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TO LISTEN IS TO HEAL
 by Albert J. Nimeth O.F.M.
 Hardbound — \$5.00

To LISTEN is to HEAL maintains that we can help heal ourselves if we listen to our unique worth, our bodies, our habits, our potentials. Nature, music, and humor help us heal ourselves. To help heal others we develop the art of listening.



THE VOICE OF THE TURTLE...

The Chi-Rho Fellowship, in the Chicago Area, met on September 14 at Church of the Ascension, beginning with Mass. Both Alice Young and Joan Weber made their professions at this meeting. Fr. Ralph Cockshoot presented the program on "the Stigmata". Bill Mahan, co-convenor of the Fellowship has been ill and is undergoing therapy and making improvement.

Laura Adamski, who has been in South Africa, flew home with her husband to be, Zane Zeeman and they were married on November 2. The Fellowship was invited. The couple will return to South Africa early next year as Mission Service Coordinators for African Enterprise.

Professed and novices renewed their vows on October 19 at the Mass, followed by lunch and meeting.

A Quiet Day was held on December 7, led by Brother John George. And their November 23 meeting featured a program on "Simplicity of Living" by Kay and Gerry Sevick. These two made their Novice vows in October. Glen Charlton will be going to the First Order after Easter to test his vocation.

BOOK REVIEW

Affirmative Aging: A Resource for Ministry Edited by the Episcopal Society for Ministry on Aging (ESMA) pp 178 (Study guide also available) Winston Press. \$9.50. paperback.

This is ESMA's first book, and it is the work of a distinguished group of ecumenical experts who deal sensitively and positively with most aspects of the subject. The spirituality which is sketched throughout has relevance to every age group; and the book, which would make an excellent parish of community study, constitutes a breakthrough in thinking about this special ministry.

Those who affirm and celebrate their own longevity will find much encouragement here. Those who live with, care for, or are related to the aged and the aging will find here sound pastoral insights coupled with practical Christian wisdom. The professional level of the writers is high and their suggestions are, therefore, worthy of serious attention by all who have a caring ministry and by leaders in denominations, parishes, and religious communities. I recommend this book highly.

+John-Charles, SSF

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There is no organized Fellowship in Montana, but Carole Phillips in Glasgow wrote me a letter near the end of summer. She said that after her renewal of vows, several parish members came up to her and wished her well. She is considering turning her large home into a "Poustinia" for travelers. Her son Tim is at college in Dickinson, ND.

Two other tertiaries in Montana met for the first time at an event called "The Bishop's Bash." It was a retirement banquet for Bishop Jackson Gilliam of Montana. Joanne Maynard is his secretary, so she (I) was helping affix name tags and sell tickets, and so met Carl Andrews, chaplain at Malmstrom Air Force Base in Great Falls. We both wished that there were opportunities to get together as a Fellowship -- there are 5 of us -- but such opportunities do not arise.

ISOLATED TERTIARIES stay in contact, thanks to a Round-Robin letter begun by Kathy Tripses. Kathy was professed on August 21 at St. Anne's by the Fields, Ankeny. Plenty of brothers and sisters in Christ were there, although there are no tertiaries nearby. Her spiritual director received her vows and preached. And her new priest celebrated the Eucharist.

Some time ago, Kathy put a notice in the *Franciscan Times*, asking other isolated tertiaries to write to her, if they would like to keep on contact via a Round-Robin letter. Four people are now involved in this long-distance Fellowship. And anyone else who would like to be included would be most welcome. You may write to Kathy at 3076 NW 83rd Pl., Ankeny, IA 50021.



Fr. William Morley, Spiritual Director
Kathy Clare Tripses, newly professed;
The Rev. Margaret Wilcox, pastor of St.
Anne's by the Fields.



POEM

Most blessed mother,
My light, my sweetness, my hope
Let me be as you
Let me carry Christ inside me,
under my heart
Let me bring him to birth
that he may touch others
through me
Let me follow him on all his dusty
paths
that I may learn from him
Let me watch him die
O God -- I would die in his place
Let me hold him in my arms once more
when they take him down.
Let me live to be old -- if it be
God's will
and gather the children around me
in a circle at my feet
So I may tell stories of Him.
Holy Mary, mother of our Lord
Pray always for me

Amen

Kathy Clare Tripses

We adore Him
in the gentleness
of His coming.



In the beauty
of His
holiness

In the power of
His presence.

The Friendly Beasts

The Blessing of the Animals has been a tradition in many churches, in observance of St. Francis' Day, October 4th.

"The Time of the Spirit", an anthology of Christian writings compiled by an Anglican priest, a Roman Catholic layman and an Orthodox Bishop, contains these interesting brief excerpts from the writings noted, about animals and Christianity.

Abba Paul said, 'If a man acquires purity, all things are subject to him, as they were to Adam in paradise, before he transgressed the commandment.'

THE SAYINGS OF
THE DESERT FATHERS

A place for animals in the age to come?

There will be little dogs, with golden hair, shining like precious stones.

MARTIN LUTHER



Dear Fellow Franciscans

I wish to share my joy and in truth humility at my profession into the 3rd Order on the feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Mother.

Although I am a VERY isolated tertiary there were several close friends at the Eucharistic service. My husband, the priest at St Johns, Bandon, Ore. had a simple yet beautiful service. I thought of the three Orders and prayed hard I'd measure up to this holy calling.

My 8½ yr old daughter added the final Blessing to the evening by helping to acolyte and putting the Franciscan cross around my neck. So together we three, each in our own way try our best to serve God and His people.

So brothers and sisters wherever you are I bid you love & peace. Pray for me as I do for you.

Yours in Christ and Francis

Charlanne Van Beveren TSF 3

BOOK BRIEF: Fasting Rediscovered: A Guide to Health and Wholeness of Your Body and Spirit by Thomas Ryan (Paulist Press, NJ. 160 pages \$5.59)

I have been rebuked and restored by this extraordinarily sensible and practical book. In language which all can understand and with a sensitivity which meets us in our actual circumstances, Fr Ryan recalls us to the imperatives of the Gospel. This is a book for the whole person. No false spirituality which despises the flesh lurks in these pages. Prayer, fasting, and almsgiving are interpreted for our age. Problems and questions are squarely faced. This is one of the most sensible books I have ever read. It is also one of the most effective.



CHRISTMAS GIFT

Light was born in the soft folds of amber hay... Quiet and luminous, the Eyes were filled with beckoning Promise... Your promise and mine, the Gift of the ages echoing through time and space from that long ago night... The cradle of humanity's soul was rocked with gentle hope for the new Beginning... Sweet Light and Gentle Master, may we, humanity, return Your Gift of Love to You.

Charlanne Van Beveren

Merry Christmas to all.

FROM CARTA FRANCISCANA -- Caracas, Venezuela:

NOTICIAS DE TODAS LAS PARTES

EL HERMANO DESMOND TUTU, Obispo de Sud-Africa, quien es miembro de nuestra Tercera Orden Franciscana, acaba de iniciar una huelga de hambre en protesta contra las medidas represivas del gobierno racista de Africa del Sur, las cuales se han venido recrudeciendo en los últimos meses. El hermano Tutu recibió este año el Premio Nobel de la Paz por su lucha contra la política del "apartheid".



The most recent newsletter of the LAND OF THE SKY FELLOWSHIP (see page 8) says that Br. Dunstan, David Nard, Dee Dobson, and her husband visited Wolfe Lake. Br. Dunstan is excited about the many possibilities, and may approach the First Order brothers for support in founding a hermitage there.

Davis Horner became a novice at their November meeting, and Betty Bell renewed her vows. The group watched the film, "Brother Sun and Sister Moon."



Martha Casselberry wrote to Helen Webb from Mexico:

"...We did spend large blocks of time away from San Miguel last year. We enjoyed traveling in Mexico and also made a tip to the Northwest, Idaho, to visit our family. My father died that year in the mid-west and my mom was with us for a while. This year we have been enjoying staying put...Bill paints each day and I'm enjoying my music groups and studying Spanish.

I was professed in March here in San Miguel in our chapel. I was fortunate that Fr. Gary Sturen was visiting from Chico, CA and is a postulant in the Order, so there was a representative of the Order. Some day I would love to join with other Third Order people in a service.

Our program for feeding hungry children and old people continues smoothly. We now have two kitchens and feed 80 to 120 each day. It's been operating for close to a year now and we can see the results in the health of the children."

Nuclear Holocaust and Christian Hope: A Book for Christian Peacemakers. Ronald J. Sider and Richard K. Taylor. (Paulist Press \$6.95)

If you want to wrestle with the serious issues which the prospect of nuclear war raises, this is an excellent way of doing so. The grim possibility we face is exposed without disguise. The biblical and theological perspectives are examined. The practical steps possible for Christian peacemakers are set forth. Whether we agree with these or not, the problems raised are those which need to be faced. An alternative to present policies is powerfully advocated. There are valuable appendices and lists of resources.

Br. John-Charles SSF



THE SONG OF THE ANGELS
upon the night
Jesus Christ was born
of the Virgin Mary !

"Glory to God in the highest, and peace on earth to men of good will."

or

"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth, peace, good will towards men."

They are both true statements. God's will towards mankind is good! We know this is true because Jesus said, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

Likewise it is true that there is peace on earth to men of good will; but there is no peace on earth to men of evil will; unless they repent, and become men of good will.

Peace and Joy
On Christmas!
Glory to God !!
in the highest !!!
Hallelujah !

Nona Andrews

(Printed in Trinity Messenger, a couple of years ago.)

When I was 48, God started refinishing me. My paint and varnish are coming off -- all that buildup.

I told my first spiritual director that's what was happening and he said, "Are we down to bare wood yet?"

"No," I said. Five years later, I'm still peeling.

I'm just beginning to see how many layers there are.

Color upon color, gloss upon gloss. Each layer hurts as it comes off.

Sometimes a couple of layers come off together -- and that hurts more.

I don't want to let go of some colors and I hang on -- it dangles in curly strips til it dries up.

I have helpers with the stripping and sanding.

They rub and scrub along with me -- and dig in the corners I can't reach.

Sometimes they go away -- and then God and I work alone -- until someone else comes to help.

Once in a while, I get a glimpse of bare wood,

Like a single puzzle piece, waiting to be fitted to its partners.

When it all comes off, what will there be? Will we see Christ's face?

I hope so, but I'm still scared.

Kathy Clare Tripses



Let us serve Him with deep humility...

FROM HELEN WEBB:

I've found something to share with our family: Issue 29 of Discipleship Journal. (P.O. Box 1113, Dover, NJ 07801. Single issue, \$2.95. Year's subscription, 6 issues for \$12.)

This issue is entitled Joy, the elusive fruit, and has a section of five short articles on Joy. There are other titles too, such as "Abiding in Christ," "Marrying Service and Solitude: when your commitments get out of hand," and "Maintaining your guard in a sexy world."

This magazine is put out by The Navigators, an interdenominational Christian group. Although they have fundamentalist tendencies, the articles in "Discipleship Journal" are usually thought-provoking and practical, as well as offering mini-Bible studies with many of the articles.

--oo00oo--

This anonymous poem is borrowed from Caritas, the magazine of the Third Order Anglican Franciscans in Eastern Canada:

YET SHALL HE WALK

Whosoever, on the Nativity
Of the young Lord Jesus,
In the great snows
Shall fare forth, bearing

A succulent bone for the lost and lamenting hound,
A wisp of hay for the shivering horse,
A cloak of warm raiment for the wayfarer,
A bundle of faggots for the twittering crone,
A flagon of red wine for him whose marrow withers,

A garland of bright berries for one in chains,
Gay songs of lute and harp for huddled birds
who thought that song was dead,
A divers sweetmeats for such babes faces as peer
from lonely windows,

To him shall be given in return
Gifts of such astonishment of heart
As shall rival the hues of the peacock
And the harmonies of heaven,
So that though he live to that great age
When a man should go stooping and querulous
Because of the nothing that is left in him,

Yet shall he walk
Upright and remembering,
As one whose heart shines
Like a great Star in his breast.



All creatures
that on earth
do dwell,
Sing to the Lord
with cheerful voice ~

REMEMBER: Other members of the Third Order, Society of St. Francis, would like to know what's going on with you, whether you are a member of a Fellowship or an isolated member. You're invited to send your news/thoughts/poetry to: Joanne Maynard, 2020 Hauser Blvd., Helena, MT 59601.

MESSAGE FROM THE ST. LAWRENCE SEAWAY

(Marcia Shaw, of Norwich, NY, made a retreat at a Roman Catholic seminary on the St. Lawrence Seaway. Retreatants had access to the dock area, and it was there that Marcia had some insight into her own situation and the Lord's hand in her life. She has given permission for these meditations to be printed here.)

The following reflection resulted from my thinking about the Seaway and how this could be compared to my life and our Christian journey.

This particular area is well known as the Thousand Island area. Just a few miles upstream from where I am sitting, there are over 1,000 islands of different sizes throughout the St. Lawrence River. In this particular area, the water level differs greatly and there are many rock shoals. The Seaway shipping channel winds around through the islands. As a ship enters these waters, a Seaway guide comes aboard to pilot the ship through the islands; the captain of the ship is not allowed to progress alone unguided.

From where I sit on the river bank, one would never guess what the westbound sailors have ahead of them between this spot in the river and the open waters of Lake Ontario. This area is one of the most breathtaking sights of natural beauty, and yet is one of extreme danger to the ship, if the captain is left to his own navigational skills.

Isn't this the way it is with one's life? The Lord knows the beginning and the end, but He also knows the in betweens. It is only as He guides my life's "ship" in, around, and through the obstacles I face that I can be assured of a safe journey. The Lord knows those things I must go through on my journey of life, whether they be dryness or trial, sickness or sorrow -- or peace, joy, and contentment. I praise God that I have a pilot who will guide this "ship," and I rest in the assurance of His ability.

"Jesus Savior, pilot me, over life's tempestuous sea..."

THE MESSAGES FROM "WATER"

Friday afternoon, the water was very choppy. It is then that the water cleanses itself as it surges against the rocks, when the wind blows it into shore. So too, the Wind of the Holy Spirit blows our lives against the rock; bumps of life; thus cleansing us from sins of self-sufficiency, as we become more dependent upon Him.

Saturday early morning was the dawn of a beautiful day. The sun was shining, the sky was azure blue, the water rippled in to shore, and fishermen were starting up their boats for a day of recreation and relaxation. The early morning atmosphere was one of expectancy, as dawn was breaking.

Isn't this how our life is -- one of busyness with daily involvements in which we are called to participate? The Lord creates for us an atmosphere of blue skies and Sun-shine. He wants only the best of conditions for His children. As I enter this next day of retreat, I await my Father's gifts of me through Br. John's teachings. I praise God for the dawn of a new day to love and serve Him.

Sunday morning the water has changed again. This time there is a stillness in the air. The water is like glass. I am reminded of the kind of water Peter must have experienced as he walked toward the Lord.

My life here is peaceful, but we go forward from this place "walking on the waters" of life's given situations. As with Peter, we do not walk on this water alone, but with our eyes upon Jesus. I leave with the prayer: "Lord, help we always to keep my eyes focused upon you."

TINSEL

I collect penguins. I have a special shelf where I keep my collection. A jumping-jack penguin from Austria. An old green penguin from China. An odd penguin from Mexico.

What a strange creature a penguin is! The name means "white head" in Welsh, I've been told. But their heads are black. Their bodies aren't designed for walking, yet they may walk 125 miles from their nests to the sea for food! To me, the penguin is a symbol of survival against seemingly overwhelming odds.

When my son found an article about penguins in his science book, he brought it home to me. What I found out makes me think that the penguin is as good a Christian symbol as a pelican, dove, or eagle.

The article told about a study that had been made to find out how the male penguins could survive, standing on their nests in the cold all winter, and then walking 125 miles to the sea for food. They figured that the penguins would use up 55 pounds of fat, standing on their nests without food. The largest penguins only had 33 pounds of fat to begin with. How did they do it?

The scientists discovered that the male penguins huddle close together and keep each other warm, so that they use only about 22 pounds of fat during their winter fast. When a storm comes, they gather together and patiently wait until it is over. Isn't that the way with Christians? Bearing one another's burdens is vital to Christian survival. By staying close together, we survive the cold winters of our lives. How about a penguin in a stained glass window?

From the Forward booklet, "The Burning Mushroom"
-- Joanne Maynard

One Sunday afternoon in late January, as I was dusting my living room floor, a piece of Christmas tinsel, which had been hiding under the couch, got stuck on my dust mop. There it lay, among the dog hairs and bits of popcorn, sparkling and shining in the low winter sunshine.

I thought how this was a better symbol of the meaning of Christmas than the tinsel had been when it was hanging on the tree: how Christ, the light of the world, the light that lightens every man who comes into the world, came to live among the dust and dog hairs of our ordinary life.

There are many translations of those verses in John about the coming of the Light. One says, "... and the darkness has not overcome it." Another says, "... and the darkness has not understood it." We, of the dusty, doggy world have not understood the light and brightness of Christ... but neither have we been able to overcome him with our lack of understanding.

He is here still, in the midst of the dust and dog hairs of the world's sin, of our sadness and burdens, and our willfulness -- and among the bits of popcorn, the light, silly, circus-y ways we either waste our time or celebrate our life. He shines. He sparkles. He reflects and Is the Light. And to us, he gives the power to become like the Light ourselves. You've seen dust motes in a sunbeam, haven't you?

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