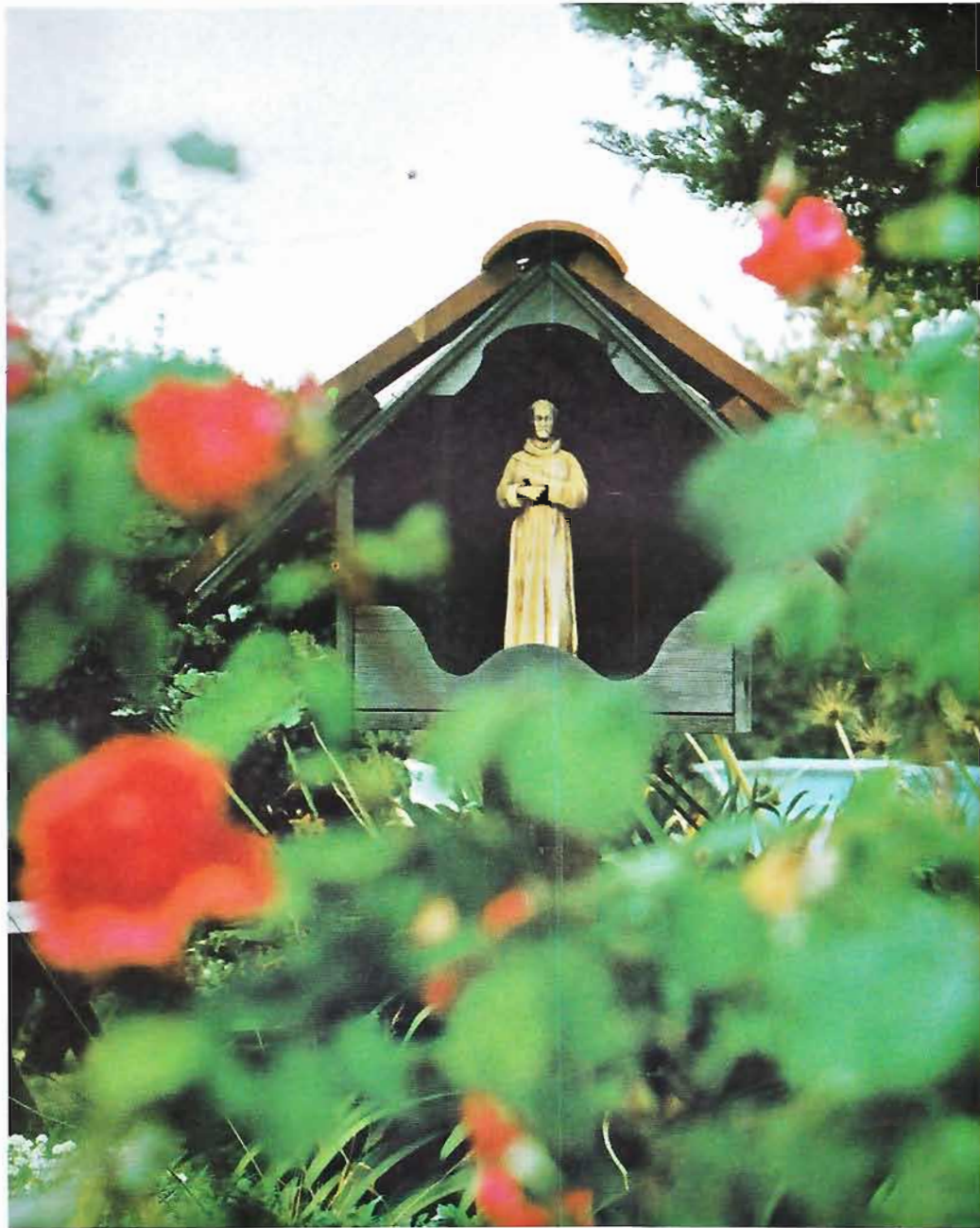


Franciscan Times



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In the Rose Garden



"Is it fitting to find Francis in a rose garden?" I pondered that first morning of Chapter as camera and I roamed the grounds after breakfast.

The more I pondered the question, the more fitting it seemed: for Francis rested in a garden in time of pain, and so we bring our hurts for healing, in a sense, along with our joys as we come to Franciscan gatherings.

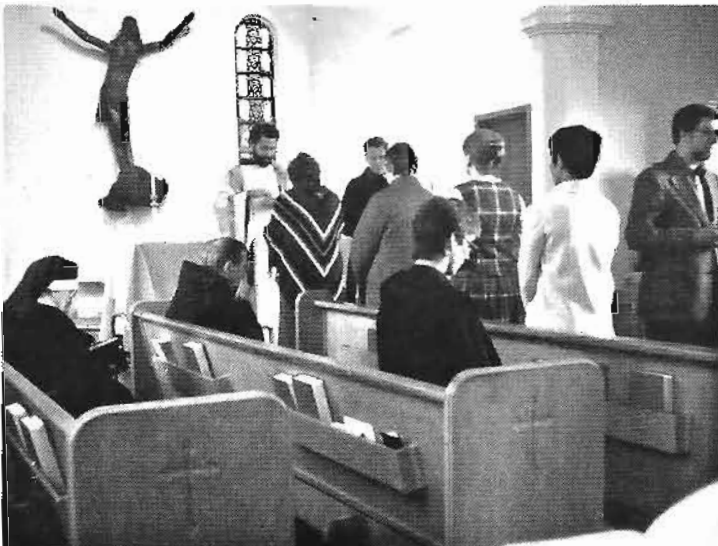
And roses have thorns: even among our closest Franciscan family members, disputes will arise. Perhaps

this only shows that we are human.

So Francis among the roses seems worth pondering, a symbol for the Chapter at Bishop's Ranch, 1980, and perhaps (what do you think?) for the upcoming Convocation and Chapter in Seattle. A rose garden is a place to ponder in the cool of the day. Chapter is, in addition to the business meetings, a time of love and acceptance enough for past hurts and fears to turn to joy; yet a time, since we are still human, for each insisting on his or her own way, before backing off and trying again to look at the other person's point of view.

The facts of Chapter are already history. You read them in Helen's newsletter. Detailed notes are available from Helen, by asking. What I would show here is a subjective picture, like an artist's sketch in its placement of word and camera, to grasp for something essential the facts never quite touch.

Francis in the Rose Garden: a time for embracing, even for one such as I who at home doesn't care much for hugging; a time for standing with arms around one another, or holding hands, while listening, really listening, to



what another says. A time for thinking agape, sacrificial love, will finally be enough, beyond the strugglings other sorts of love produce. A time, too, for sharing hurts, or hints of hurts, that are too painful to surface in other circumstances. Each of us has some, hidden away; here, they surface and run off, leaving finally a clean wound that will heal.

Here, too, workaday problems slide away, while workaday joys become subject for mealtime laughter. Like the Magi, we all came bearing burdens, which at the healing service, or perhaps at



Frances Coulter, Barbara Kelly, John Filler and Lee Malloy talk as they shiver outside the chapel before Matins.

Glen-Ann Jicha, Dorothy Nakatsudi and Marie Webner ponder a question at counsellors' meeting.



Deane Kennedy finds a previously-isolated spot to practice his bagpipe chanter.



the Mass in which four novices were professed and most of us renewed our vows, God graciously accepted, leaving unmitigated joy.

"Everywhere I've ever been seems all right, because of this moment" I heard someone say during the Peace, at All Saints Day Mass.

And this Chapter was filled with



Cursillistas, who spontaneously arranged to have at least two of their number keep vigil in the chapel all through Chapter. Perhaps that is why Chapter went so smoothly and ended ahead of schedule.

Many images surface, some of which the camera missed: the friars' Halloween party, followed by a midnight profession because Anne Dresskell was not able to arrive in the morning to be professed with Frances Coulter, Machrina Johnson, Robert Moore and Carole Watson. And it was somehow Franciscan to have the Halloween party on All Hallows Night rather than the Eve.

Our new guardian Kale King has a habit of talking to one, with his forearms on one's shoulders and talking, kindly not frighteningly, nearly eyeball to eyeball.

Many of us required daily runs and/or walks; others freely sampled California wines at local vineyards. For one who had been no farther West than Omaha, even a trip to the Healdsburg drug

store for more film was an adventure.

Working together at counsellors' meeting and Chapter, eating together, praying together, being able to talk, even about prayer, too late at night, fall asleep to the sound of room mates' conversation, laughingly share crowded bathrooms, then face the thorns of finally having to say good-bye till next year: Franciscans in the Rose Garden.

PS

ALL HALLOWS

Elves' eyes,
ancient and young,
laughing and sad,
your delight in today's union,
the Communion of the Saints
enfleshed,
soon will dissolve into
the perfect joy
of a vocation in the world.
"Hugs are too far between,"
you said. I would amend that.
For all and each of us,
that is, for now, my prayer.

News from all over

Maynard booklet published

Forward Movement has just published a booklet by Novice Joanne Maynard, *The Burning Mushroom and other epiphanies*, which y'r editor heartily recommends. Joanne, among other things, edits the Diocese of Montana newspaper. If all goes well, we will have an article from her in the next *Franciscan Times*.

Chicago

The Chicago Chi Rho Fellowship met at St. Christopher's in Oak Park for a quiet day October 25. Eight people attended. Br. Robert led, discussing gifts, characteristics of love, and Br. Paul's last letters. It was a beautiful day, blessed by Br. Robert's example of what he teaches.

In November, the fellowship met at the Church of the Ascension for Eucharist celebrated by Fr. Rogers and discussion. Marilla Barghusen was professed, Glen-Ann Jicha renewed her vows, and Alonzo Pruitt renewed his novice vows. Many guests were present for the Eucharist and two of these, students at Gerrett Methodist Seminary, stayed for the meeting. Fr. Benet Fonck, the new spiritual assistant of the Roman Secular Franciscans, was our guest. Fr. Fonck is to reside in Rome for at least the next five years and he told us of his new duties and expectations. Nineteen people attended.

We now have nine professed, three novices and two postulants.

--Bea Evans

Philadelphia

On November 15, Br. John George, the East Coast visitor, attended the Philadelphia Fellowship meeting at Convenor Gretchen Wood's apartment. John George asked that we "just go around the room and introduce ourselves, but a little more, please, than just names." Three and a half hours later, the eleven persons present had gotten all around the circle and concluded with the Eucharist. What a remarkable sharing of the spiritual journey and witnessing to senses of vocation we had!

Katherine Watt was professed, Ken Arnold was noviced and plans were made for a January meeting at which Jon Widing should be professed and Rheta Weidenbacher noviced. The others present, some of whom had never met and several of whom were just beginning the Franciscan life, ranged in age from twenties to seventies.

I am taking on some counselling (from Ken) and look forward to a change of pace for me in the Third Order. --John Scott



Gooch and Fr. Rogers (one of the few priests who do not revert to Christian names at the Ranch) share cigarettes and views.

Lexington

The Lexington Fellowship met in November for Eucharist celebrated by Jack Stapleton, supper, a meeting, and the blessing of Peg Shull's new home by Bob Horine.

Homework before this meeting was to find a favorite story in the life of St. Francis, retell it, and tell why it is personally important. These included Brother Leo and perfect joy, and Francis' crusade which seemed to fulfil his youthful dream to be a perfect knight. We agreed that this was the most successful study we had had for some time, since everyone could find a place (s)he fitted into right now. We also had a "chapter of faults," to discuss how we can better keep our Rules. The party which followed lasted long enough to indicate that we are beginning to enjoy each other's company again.

We met next on January 4 at

Puget Sound

The Puget Sound Fellowship now has its own newsletter. Tell Warren Walker or Gloria Goller, co-convenors, if you would like to be added to the mailing list. It included news, announcements of meetings (including who's responsible for what, a good idea), prayer requests.

Puget Sound is already planning and happily anticipating their being hosts of the 1981 Convocation and Chapter November 9-15. In December, they had a gala Christmas party (no business meeting) for tertiaries and their spouses. A business meeting with Evening Prayer and refreshments was planned for January.

Muriel Adey is the new Area Chaplain, and plans to visit the Puget Sound area this Spring.

Terry Andrews' for Evening Prayer (it being Sunday), discussion, and pot luck dinner. The topic this time was: a Bible story which spoke to a Franciscan point of view. Only four of us attended, apparently due to holidays and out-of-town meetings, but we (Terry, Bob Horine, Martin Lucas, PS) have known each other for years, and a great joy was Martin's growth following two years of painful pilgrimage, which he wanted to share with us.

With reference to the Chapter of Faults, we all noted that we haven't read the Principles for ages and really are not sure what or where they are. Have you similar problems? Or advise regarding a systematic approach to the Principles?

Our next meeting will be in February, at Martin's apartment, exact date not yet decided.

But thank you, whoever has been praying for the Lexington Fellowship. We seem to be alive again, and well.

--PS

Michael Williams rectors in CA

Michael Williams is now rector of a small parish in the California desert, St. John's, Indio. Indio, he writes, is known as the date capitol of the Western Hemisphere. He looks forward to meeting with the San Bernardino Fellowship from time to time, for he misses the time he spent with the Chi Rho Fellowship while he was at Seabury-Western. He is only a few miles from the Society of St. Paul Monastery in Palm Desert and enjoys visiting them as well as using their jacuzzi and swimming pool.

St. Bernardino

We were not hit by the fire, for which we are very grateful. There were about 300 homes along the foothills that were lost....

The St. Bernardino Fellowship met on Sunday, Dec. 14, at St. Francis Church in San Bernardino. Fr. Scheppling, our area chaplain, Fr. Woodfield, Sylvia Broadbent, Ruth Floyd and I were joined by Dorothy Clayburg, professed during our meeting, one novice, George Link, and two new postulants, Joshua Menees and Martha Haynes. Ted Conwell has moved to San Diego and will be able to get a fellowship started there with Sukie Miller. San Diego should be a good area for the development of another fellowship and Ted ought to be able to get one started.

We had received before our meeting a tape from our isolated tertiary, Jean Sullivan, a talk she gave to 600 people at an AA meeting in Nebraska. We all listened to the tape after our meal together and agreed that Jean has an effective witness in keeping with her being a tertiary. It is not easy to bare one's soul, so to speak, and to open the record of one's life to others. Jean is currently working with some young women who have the problem of alcoholism. Her talk was the centerpiece of our discussion. She had also mailed us pictures of herself and of the little dog who has been her companion over the past eight years. She has felt loved and cared for in her adoption by our fellowship and this shows the value of the various fellowships adopting isolated tertiaries.

We continue to meet about every six weeks, which seems ideal for the best turnout. Br. Kevin, who is on a two-year sabbatical from the English SSF and is serving in a Huntington Beach parish about

70 miles from here, is scheduled to visit the next meeting.

Br. Kevin is from Belfast, Ireland, and has volunteered to speak about life in Ireland.

--Ken Cox

San Francisco

The San Francisco Fellowship newsletter is publishing again. Rejoice!

The December newsletter announced a December meeting for Eucharist, pot luck supper and an Advent meditation by Br. Robert, with Lynn Bowdish hostess, noting that rides are available for folk who lack transportation, but only if they ask in advance.

An Epiphany party was scheduled for January 6 at Jean Jordan and Jim DuBois' home.

A gaudily beautiful flyer attached to the newsletter announced a Franciscan organ recital, Eucharist and reception to celebrate the New Year at Grace Cathedral.

Apparently Jean or Jim are the contact points if you want to be put on the mailing list.

John Dorman professed in Guyana

When Fr. John Dorman was professed in Kamarang, Upper Mazaruni, Guyana, he wrote, "there were no TSF in the congregation..., but that mattered little, beside the prayerful acceptance by the TSF Province, of my desire to bind myself within the society to live by Rule for a year in the footsteps of Francis.

"We have many causes for daily thanksgiving," he continued, "among them the hope that three, or even five others might be ready for profession in the next twelve or eighteen months, and that some of the brothers from Trinidad may visit one or two of the hinterland villages during Lent as part of a diocesan training program for lay evangelists."

Anne Dreskell in San Francisco

Anne Dreskell, who was professed at Chapter in November, has begun working with the elderly in San Francisco. Until she finds her own apartment, she will be living with the CSF sisters.

Central Florida

The Central Florida Fellowship held its first meeting on All Saints Day, with Professed Tertiaries David Catron and Claire Linzel, Novices Anita Catron and Kenneth Watts, Postulant Robert Cook and Inquirers Katherine Munday and Cecilia Kilpatrick there.

After Morning Prayer, they discussed the nature and goals of the Society of St. Francis, and the Third Order in particular.

The next meeting, in January, was planned to include a review of Seabury Press's forthcoming book on St. Francis by Fr. Cook, with the others' homework being to read or reread another book on Francis. Although the group has not yet established a regular schedule, they hope for a retreat during Lent. David Catron is temporary convener, until the group elects him or someone else.

Consider the Roving Reporter

Roving Reporter articles go a long way toward helping us learn about other tertiaries: who we are, what we like, which issues we care strongly about. Many of us can attend a Chapter or Convocation rarely, if ever, and only "meet" other tertiaries through FRANCISCAN TIMES.

So if you know a tertiary you

think should be interviewed, tell the Roving Reporter. And when she writes to you, respond. Otherwise, in other issues, as in this one, there will be no Roving Reporter column, and we all lose.

The Roving Reporter is Rosemond McFerran, 1518 Tulane Dr., Davis, CA 95616.



Our Hero

Have you heard? If not, hear and believe. St. Francis is now a comic book hero! Amid the garish illustrations generally associated with comic books, the story of Francis' life is presented amazingly accurately.

Produced by Marvel Comics, *Francis: Brother of the Universe* is distributed to the general audience by Marvel and by Paulist Press for the religious market. Bulk prices and a study guide (!) are available.

Opinion

I have good news and bad news in reaction to the October issue of FRANCISCAN TIMES.

The good news is that the appearance of the newsletter is much improved over earlier issues. I refer particularly to the column headings and the vignettes.

The bad news is in response to Mary Moberg, who wonders what Franciscans do besides praying for one another and going to pot lucks.

In Portland, we reject the life of a "foul-mouthed, foul-tempered old drunk"; in San Bernardino, we exclude our Roman Catholic brothers and sisters (who are in

and another...

There's nothing like a deadline to get me to sit down and put my thoughts on paper. And I do have some thoughts in response to Mary's questions in the last *Franciscan Times*.

Before I rush into any kind of activity, I like to ask what the world, or my little piece of it, really needs. And it seems to me that what our world needs most is the love of God expressed in concrete action. But there must be a solid foundation of experienced and shared love before we can minister effectively to others. And this is precisely the purpose of our life in community. In our prayers we are strengthening each other for service. Our meetings are a sign of unity in a dark, selfish world.

We can't measure the good we do others in touching their lives

communion with the see of Canterbury) from the Eucharist, while in Lexington, we dread one another's company.

Perhaps now the harmless activities of prayer, going to pot lucks and posting papers will look good to Mary, as she meditates on the consequences for Franciscans had the founded rejected the leper, discouraged inquirers and avoided fellowship with his brethren.

--David Catron

While I personally believe David is a little hard on us, I think the candor of his letter, as well as the comments which prompted it, speak well for our growth prospects as a Franciscan family. The purpose of this column is a continuing dialogue. What do YOU think? PS

with joy. And we'll never know how much God loves others through us. But we do know that all the good works in the world are useless without love. It is only as we grow in humility that we let God use us as instruments of his peace, and it is in community that this growing happens.

I do try to avoid getting up on my soapbox and preaching sermons, although several of our brothers and sisters can tell you that I'm not always terribly successful. I think you've brought up an important point. It's come up in our fellowship in a different context, and we've come to see ourselves as a support group rather than an action group.

I do hope we can get to know each other personally, Mary, and that this will be the beginning of a sharing rather than a terminal put-down which it wasn't intended to be. It's just that my style gets a bit pedantic when I get going.

--Jane Ellen Traugott

Meet our new Guardian

Born on a farm in northern Colorado, in 1924, I started out in the Congregational church. Not until 1939, upon entering high school, did I ever hear of the Episcopal Church. Three years later, as a high school senior, I began to attend at the Mission of the Transfiguration, Evergreen, CO, where the late editor of *Hymnal 1940* had been vicar. Nine months of 8 AM Masses and 11 AM Matins and weekly visits with the new young vicar brought me to the decision to make the change.

World War II intervened and at its end I resumed church life at St. Mark's, Casper, while attending college there. As chorister, acolyte, lay reader and sexton, I was drawn into the fellowship much as had happened in the first place. I considered the sacred ministry briefly, and rejected the idea, because, as I said, "The Church needs strong laymen not weak priests." It still does!

But after a year at Colorado College the good Lord, through his people in Grace Church, Colorado Springs, and St. Andrew's, Manitou Springs, challenged me to reconsider. Five priests and a bishop encouraged me to seek Holy Orders. A long-retired English bishop, "met" through correspondence, and himself a tertiary, prodded further with fatherly encouragement.

At Bexley Hall, then the divinity school of Kenyon College, Ohio, I developed an interest in associating with a religious community. None of the American Church associate groups were then appealing. In my senior year, an underclassman introduced me to the Society of St. Francis in Britain. Br. Charles, SSF, and Brother David, SSF, were the first with whom I corresponded. In 1953, in Wyoming, I corresponded with Br. Alan Jackson, SSF, then in southern Saskatchewan, received the English tertiaries' manual, wrote my first Rule of life and began living by it. When Br. Alan left the Society, I was left in limbo. The English bishop-tertiary, Walter Carey, died without knowing my interest.

Moving from the Wyoming mission field to the Boise, ID, cathedral, the hiatus continued except that I had begun to subscribe to the *Little Chronicle*, received the OSF mimeographed tertiary's manual, and begun to reconsider associating with the American Order. In a down-state Idaho mission, I absorbed the 1962 tertiary manual, but the "Credenda" required of tertiaries then kept me at arm's length.

A lovely lady appeared on the scene, Amory, and so marriage and a family took precedence with the birth of Lucy. Off to



Our new leader: Kale King

a small western Idaho parish we went and a year later I knew how badly I needed a strong discipline in spiritual life. First I was an Associate Priest, admitted by Fr. Joseph, OSF, but with a fortunate visit of Br. Stephen to our diocese I was led to test my vocation as a postulant. It was a tough discipline, and I fell short in every month's report, but I was often reminded that "rules are something to come back to, not abandon."

After our son Christopher's birth in 1967, it was Br. Michael Thomas, OSF, who presided at my novicing. Br. Paul had succeeded Fr. Joseph as Minister and he continued to encourage me. For my novicing under the old ritual, he suggested that I take the name Boniface because of the saint's missionary efforts. But how great it was to remember that Boniface was first Winfred; I had been confirmed in a mission once led by Fr. Winfred Douglas and was made lay reader by Bishop Winfred Douglas, of Wyoming. Coincidence?

Two years later, Br. Robert Hugh officiated at my profession. The next year, I was one of a number of tertiaries assembled at Little Portion to bring the American Third Order into line with the British counterpart. Somehow, I was elected as a member of Chapter, and re-elected three times, and *now* look what has happened! Guardian??? Only in obedience do I accept this role in the Third Order. In no way can I match the ability and the spiritual depth of my brothers and sisters in the Third Order. Our first guardian, John Scott, provided us with a solid basis for growth and development. With him, a fantastic corps of tertiaries have worked to bring us to this moment in Third Order history. That same enthusiasm continues and from it I take heart that what is accomplished in these next three years will be a tribute to their commitment to the Franciscan way of living in the world, not to anything of significance that I will do.

If you have read the two little volumes about Br. Douglas, SSF, and Br. Algy, SSF, founded and guardian of the English province, respectively, you may understand why I rejoice still to wear that very first profession cross as we were expected to do: out of sight. I wear the small Franciscan lapel emblem much as I do the clerical collar; not to "point with pride," but to provide a point of contact for someone in search of a reason for conversation at a depth greater than the weather or the latest sports scores. To wear either still bothers me because it is really not consistent with either our Lord's way or Francis'. The Third Order IS one of the world's "best-kept secrets;" so is the Christian faith. People came to Christ and to Francis because of the manner in which they lived and the conviction with which they spoke. In our weakness, I believe that we are joined together as Franciscan Christians in order to strengthen and encourage one another in the way we live the faith and speak in the presence of those who are still searching for "Peace and Good." Our manner and our conversation is of far greater value than our emblems and our uniforms.

--Kale Francis King, Priest

Chaplain's Corner

Imitation of St. Francis ?

Very few of us care to literally imitate St. Francis, for a variety of reasons. When we seem to be straying from the Franciscan way, there is sometimes a desire to drag out one of the original rules and reform things. Often, we satisfy ourselves that we are doing the work and witness of Francis when we confront the corrupt, the powerful, and the wealthy on the behalf of this world's poor. We think we manifest his love of creation when we hook up with some organization concerned for the environment. We think humility consists of humiliating and embarrassing those in authority.

Francis was not a socialist or even a social reformer. The evidence seems to suggest that he accepted the feudal theory of his day, but took the political vocabulary of his time and made it a paradigm of the Kingdom of God. His witness was personal and individual. This was its very charm, along with its totality and its intensity. Francis was poor because he thought it was holy, not because he hated the rich. When he confronted the infidel, there was no anger in the confrontation, merely a concern for souls and for the truth. Francis would never have countenanced a triumphalism of any sort, not even of the poor. It is not popular to say so, but he would not have rejoiced in the understandable but unlovely roar of sweet revenge as the Third World finds its way to a place in the sun.

The secret of the popularity of the Franciscan Movement remains the same. It gave the world the hope that each life could make a difference, provided it was turned around and pointed God-ward.

Quite rightly, we probably would not want to have the world view of St. Francis, nor his emotional or psychological make-up. But I do think it is possible for us to have his motivation. We must never let anger or self-righteousness be part of our humility. Manipulation, however it may discomfort this world's powerful, is not to be hidden under the brown habit's skirts. And if an old order is to pass away because of our response to a Franciscan call, let it be for no other standard than the one that was his when he prayed:

"My Lord, My God, My All."

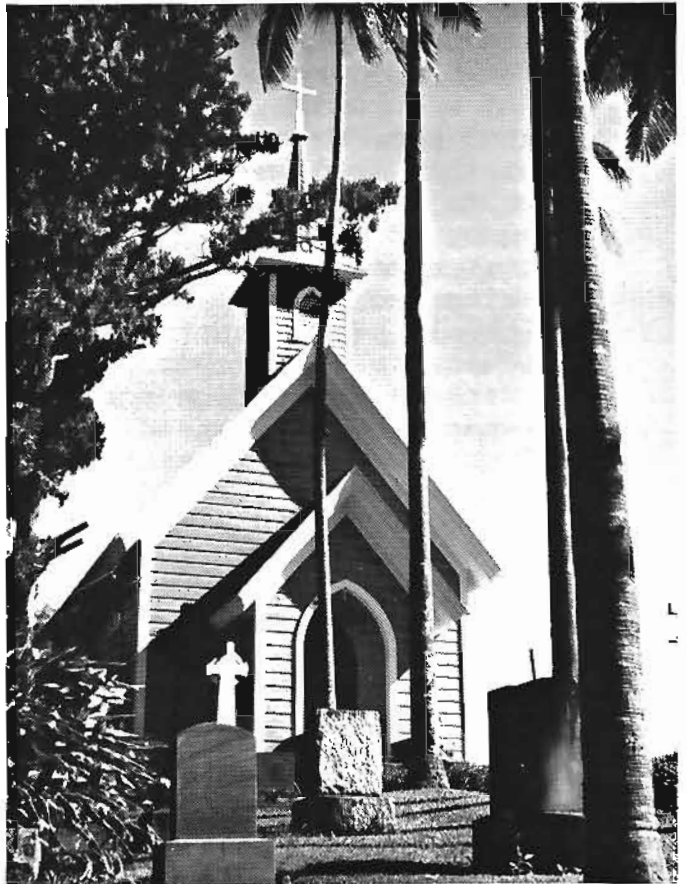
A priest recalls celebrating his first Eucharist

As I wait for the lay readers to vest so we can begin the service, I slowly prepare myself for the Eucharist. I know I have been called in my Baptism to love, to grow in love, and to share to share that love. Such a tall order!

I also remember well the first time I celebrated the Eucharist. Having been reared in the Episcopal Church, I came to that service with a case of nerves that bordered on hysteria. I was about to join the priests who through the centuries had done the same celebration as I would, and that was overwhelming. For in my mind and in my theology it is in this one sacrament that I am privileged to meet my Lord and Savior face to face.

Everything in the service was sort of a blur until I started the long Prayer of Consecration. Suddenly, I felt someone looking over my shoulder. I knew that was impossible, for the sanctuary in the church I serve is small and we have no acolytes. At "As our Savior Christ has taught us, we now pray," my mind went blank. For only a short time, which seemed forever, I had the overpowering urge to turn to this Someone, this being, who had watched over my shoulder throughout the prayer and say, "It is your service, you gave it to us; you break the bread." It was all I could do to finish the service. I know who was and is there. When I say the concluding Amen of the Eucharistic Prayer, I have given testimony to my entire faith, and to my life.

The lay readers are now ready, and with a little trembling in my knees, we go out to the sanctuary to meet face to face our Lord, Jesus.



St. Augustine's, Kolala, HI

John Filler

From the Novice Directors

Love One Another

I would like to share with you some thoughts on one of the primary aspects of our Third Order Rule, that part dealing with love. In *The Way of St. Francis*, there is a very helpful comment: "Jesus Christ is the perfect pattern of authentic love, for in his life and death we see a self-giving, complete and utterly free because it was deliberately chosen." Perhaps it was St. Paul who formulated this concept in Ch. 13 of I Corinthians, showing us that any of those good things we do for others is valueless unless it is done as an expression of love. What does this mean for us as we work out our commitment to our Lord as tertiaries?

If we compare ourselves to Jesus or to the saints who emulated him, we may feel overwhelmed, or wonder whether it is possible to live our lives on such a heroic scale. Some of our Lord's qualities, which seem attractive and have been a source of encouragement during times of insecurity about personal commitment, are mercy, compassion, his capacity for caring and his capacity for loving us. This assures us that with all of our shortcomings, our Lord understands how it is with us, and he loves us.

Perhaps a starting point in our intention to be loving and responsive to the needs of others is to remember that each of us (no exceptions) belongs to our Lord and that we are all important to him. We can remind ourselves of this as we start each new day, committing ourselves to our Lord's care, and asking for a measure of his patience and capacity to love others. The possibilities for fulfillment of our intention to love others are unlimited and sometimes our awareness of this can make us feel a little disorganized or hesitant to pursue some opportunity for service. One of our tendencies is to look beyond nearby opportunities. Every other person with whom we are normally in touch, a member of our own family, a fellow worker, a friend, the stranger we encounter on the street, a person we serve through our work, those with whom we have business dealings; all of these are opportunities for the expression of our love and acceptance as fellow creatures of our Lord. Of course, we cannot be all things to all people, but openness and a friendly smile can make us aware of where love is needed.

Our Lord did not respond to every request for healing, at least not in an obvious way. We operate within limits which fall short of our Lord's. We can do what we are enabled to do by his grace, but usually what we choose to do in our arrangement of priorities falls short of the capacity he has given us. Yet our Lord accepts our offering and continues to love us.

At a time in the life of the world in which so much stress is placed on force in the achievement of goals, let us opt for the very positive force of love. As our Lord taught us, let us love one another.

--Ken Cox

One hope of our calling

Signs and symbols sometimes come into such sharp focus that they cannot be ignored; at least that's been my experience. One of the aspects of religion I've been guilty of ignoring until lately is ecumenicism. As a convert, my attitude has been "I hope everybody will like my Church." Perhaps one of the fruits of a Franciscan calling has been to open my mind and heart to the other members of Christ's Body.

Some of you may not know that we have in our Formation program currently two United Church of Christ members, one of whom, in fact, is a minister. And at our most recent meeting of the Chicago Fellowship were two students from Garrett Biblical (Methodist graduate) School, who said they were "blown away" by the experience. They are busily writing up Rules of life and going to Mass at Seabury-Western across the street.

I agreed to proofread the *Franciscan Herald* (monthly magazine of the Roman Catholic Third Order) and when the first galleys arrived last month, I was reading through the obituaries when the name "St. M. Michael, PCR, Mt. Sinai, NY" popped off the page. That warmed my heart. Next, I read a feature article on politics and thought to myself, "I hope John Scott is a subscriber; he'd like this." Imagine my joy when on the separate page of titles and bylines there was "John M. Scott" -- sure enough, it's our John.

I knew one of my dear novices had moved to Paducah and had trouble finding a spiritual director until she located the director of nursing at a Roman Franciscan hospital. Of that relationship, much beauty was born. And I knew the concerned father of an enquirer had gone to the Roman friars in Chicago to get information about what his beloved son was "up to," to be reassured that there were indeed Anglican Tertiaries, it was all right, and to call Glen-Ann Jicha at the following phone number. But when Lee Malloy is invited to conduct retreats and quiet days at a Roman Franciscan convent in Minnesota and John Filler writes from Hawaii that the Roman Catholic Diocese and a Franciscan order of sisters have asked him to help them set up a Roman Third Order chapter, something is stirring. Love, and hope, are popping up all over.

Since many of us wear the Roman Third Order profession cross, it seemed appropriate to the Chicago Fellowship to present one of our Anglican profession crosses to Benet Fonck at our November meeting. He was deeply touched and took it with him to Rome as he left three days later to become spiritual director for the third order of the world. Are we learning at last that we can share, that we have much to give each other, that we can work and pray together in the spirit of Francis without being just alike? I hope so. It is one hope of our calling.

--Glen-Ann Jicha

Dark roads, angels and small voices

I think of the singing that went on the night Christ was born, and I imagine myself among the shepherds, sitting around a fire, wrapped in a blanket against a chilly night. As the night deepens, the fire dies slowly and an occasional head nods and then jerks back to wakefulness.

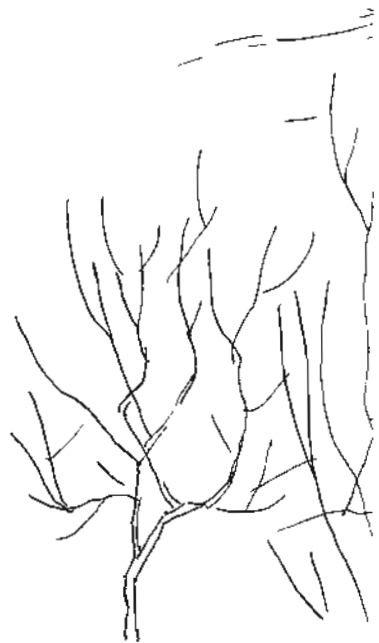
After awhile, I look at the stars, bright lights in the deep darkness of late night. I know the stars and I pass the time telling their names. Then I come to a star I don't remember, and yet it is a very bright one. It actually appears to be growing, pulsating, and I see that it is not one light but many, and as they grow--coming closer, it seems--all the shepherds are watching. I want to look away, or hide my face in the blanket, or run off, and yet I am fascinated with the lights. Now, I get goosebumps because I realize a sound has been growing and it's like nothing I ever heard before, like a voice, like many voices, and not so much talking as singing. The message I hear is not words but deep down in the center of myself, and in wonderful, unearthly music, I hear "Do not be afraid; I have good news for you...a messiah...."

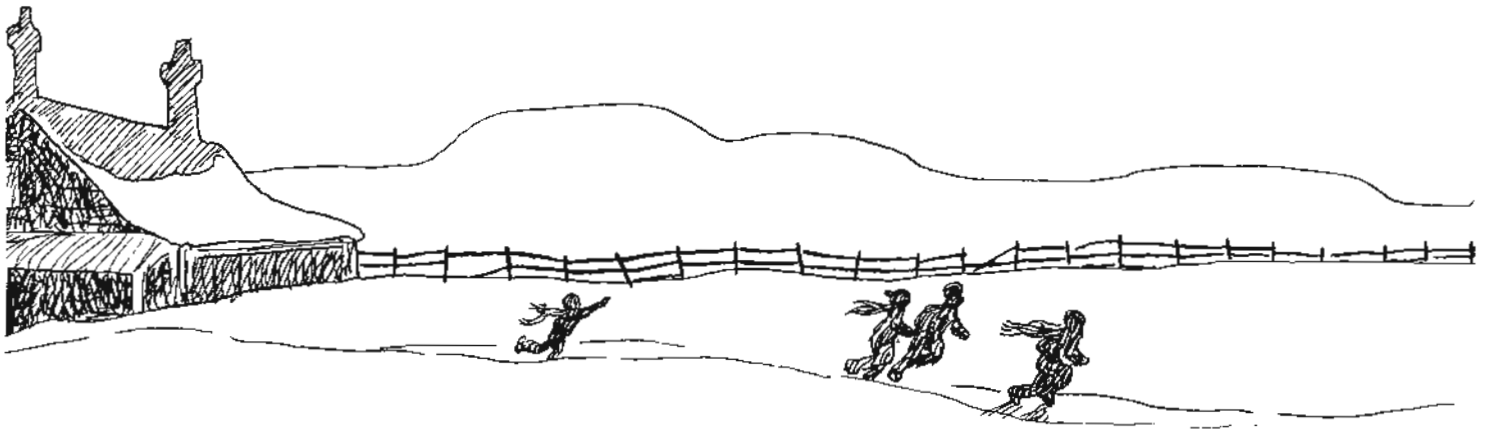
Then the lights are gone and we know we have seen angels and heard them singing in our hearts and for a long time we say nothing to each other because we don't know what to say and at first I want to talk about sheep because I understand sheep and I don't know about angels and deliverers and I'm afraid of those things and I want to go back to the fire and the drowsiness of late night with other shepherds, but I know I won't be able to, that what happened tonight--the lights, the singing, the things they said--will be with me, haunt me, waking and sleeping, for all my life.

A fanciful account, perhaps, but I reckon an encounter with angels in the nighttime countryside is a rather soul-rattling experience.

Dylan Thomas, in *A Child's Christmas in Wales*, tells another story: A group of child carollers stumbled, frightened, up a dark driveway in the night, planning to sing, but each with a stone in hand, just in case. As they began, "a small, dry voice, like the voice of someone who has not spoken for a long time, joined our singing.... And when we stopped running we were outside our house."

Those boys who went to the old house at the end of the road: I can't help seeing that incident allegorically. They make an expedition into an unknown area; it's interestingly scary because it is unknown, and yet they do not really expect to meet any boogie men; if they did, they wouldn't go. So here they are in front of the house,





brave little soldiers, probably feeling proud of themselves. They begin to sing, that small, dry voice joins them, and they run away as fast as they can.

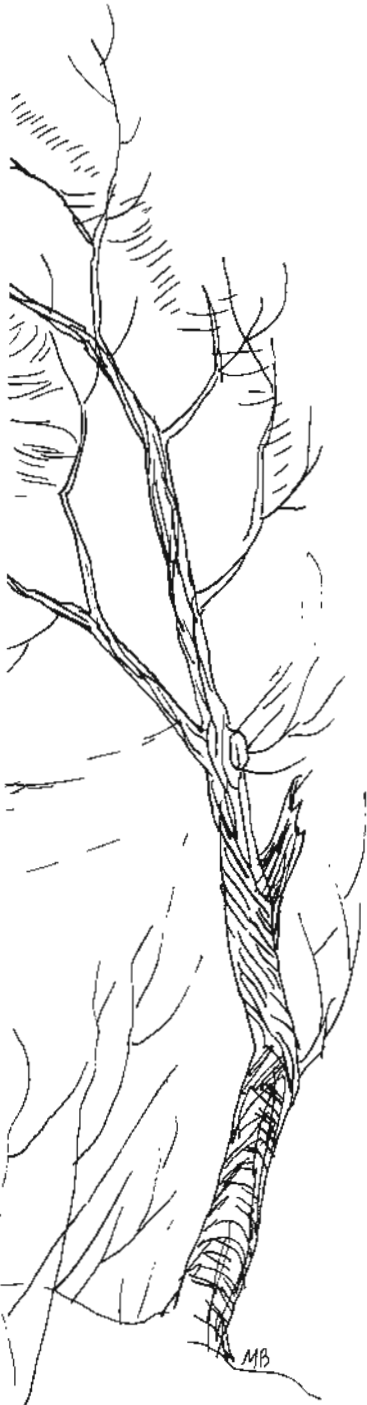
I see so many Christians in our time doing the same sort of thing. In reading books of theology or devotional books, in taking part in study groups, in attending and teaching classes in religion, but particularly in praying, and in celebrating the mysteries, the sacraments, we come down the road a certain piece toward an unknown place. Sometimes, it's deliciously mysterious and spooky, but we really don't expect to meet anyone like God there. If we did, we might not go. We stand together in our little groups and we sing about angels and deliverers and highest heaven, and if there comes a voice from beyond the door we have kept carefully closed, we don't stop running until we get home.

That song we sing before the door: Who is it that we hear joining in it with us? Is it angels, giving us Good News about life? Is it God, telling us about himself, telling us that he is Love that won't let us die? Is it a person we've kept locked up for years, whose voice is dry and small because it hasn't been allowed to sing? Is it the person we're *supposed* to be but are *afraid* to be, the immortal child of God who is hidden in every one of us until we allow the Lord to release him?

It's all these: the angels, God himself, ourselves. And it's the Communion of Saints, and the song about angels and deliverers and highest heaven is our song. I don't mean only that we sing it. I mean it's *about* us. When the angels sang to the shepherds of the birth of Christ, they sang about *our* birth also, in him, and as frightening as that supernatural event is, let us take courage from God who in his Son shares it with us, and lets us be born.

Bob Horine

Extract from sermon preached Christmas, 1980
Church of St. Michael the Archangel, Lexington, VT



From the Library



There have been some questions about the library. To answer these: largely, it consists of books from my personal collection. These are available by writing to me, Pat Mahon, 1990 S.E. Mulberry Ave., Portland, OR 97214. Other tertiaries have sent me lists of books they are willing to loan. When I refer to these in a column, I will designate who to write for them. These books are available to all members of the Third Order, from the time they first begin postulancy. If you have any other questions or suggestions, please write to me.

These are now available from Pat Mahon:

St. Francis of Assisi, a biography, by Omer Englebort, 616 pp., hardbound. Englebort says truly in his introduction, "There is no saint about whom so much has been written as St. Francis of Assisi." Yet one never tires of reading new approaches to his life. This book is prose that reads like poetry. The author begins with the background of the world Francis was born into and his early life, then goes on to his conversion, his work, the gathering of the early brothers, the establishment of the three orders, the founding of the first Franciscan school for training preachers, Christmas at Greccio, the stigmata, the Canticle of Brother Sun, and his testament and death. After a total of 21 chapters on the life of Francis, there are eight appendices, including three on the homes and family life, and brief biographies of several of his companions. Following the notes, the book

concludes with a 112-page research bibliography.

The Words of St. Francis, by James Meyer, OFM, 359pp, paper. Here are the words of Francis' conversations and writings, grouped in twelve categories. It includes 314 quotations with an explanation of the circumstances surrounding each one. This book does not attempt to be biographical but groups the saying by subject matter. It is food for a great deal of thought.

The Third Order for Our Times, by Auspicius van Corstanje, OFM, 127 pp., paper. This is a set of fifteen essays on Franciscan subjects by the National Director of the Third Order Secular of St. Francis in Holland. After the essays, there is a story of Francis' death which is designed for two readers and might be interesting to perform at a fellowship meeting.

There are two volumes of the Anchor Bible ready to be lent. *To the Hebrews*, translated with introduction and commentary by George Wesley Buchanan, 282 pp, hardbound; *The Wisdom of Solomon*, translated with introduction and commentary by David Winston, 395 pp, hardbound.

The Gnostic Gospels, by Elaine Pagels, 182 pp, hardbound. "A startling account of the meaning of Jesus and the origin of Christianity based on gnostic gospels and other secret texts, written almost 2,000 years ago; recently

discovered near Nag Hammadi in Upper Egypt." The 52 papyrus texts were discovered in 1945, but were not made public for many years. Dr. Pagels has chaired the Department of Religion at Bernard College since 1979. She helped translate these texts, and this is her third book on the subject.

Setting Men Free, by Bruce Larson, 150pp., paper. Subtitled, "How to Help Other People," this book tells us how to lead others to Christ. Part I explains the five relevant arts: Living, Conversation, Introduction, Christ-

ian Strategy, and Communication. Part II explains the five relevant gifts: Humility, Freedom, Dialogue, Love and Fellowship. At the end, there is a twenty-five page group study guide. Well worth reading for anyone wishing to be led more deeply into the lay ministry.

The Call to Holiness, by Martin Parsons, 95 pp., paper. The subtitle, "Spirituality in a Secular Age," states the main theme of this book. Our striving for holiness must not be an escape from the realities of this life. The fruits of our spiritual lives must be shared.

Marie Webner's father died during the Christmas season, at age 94. Please remember Marie and her family in your prayers.

Following his death, Marie wrote this poem, which somehow, to some degree, makes the loss our gain:

GIFT

I kneel to touch
The broken fragments at my feet,
Remembering the perfect oval
Of multi-hued and sparkling glass
That was your gift to me, Lord.
See how they glisten in the sun
When I cast them in the wind!
Forgive the misting of my eyes,
Lord,
The regret for beauty's loss.
Accept the surrender of my will
Which perceives the breaking
and the loss
As Love's exigencies.

Line drawings by Melissa Baber. A musician, artist and parishoner at St. Michael's, Lexington, Melissa is not (alas for us) a tertiary.

Franciscan Times, a magazine expansion of *Franciscan Times newsletter*, is published by the Third Order of Society of St. Francis (Episcopal), American Province, at Topeka, KS. Ruth Groves handles the mailing, but send address changes to Helen Webb, secretary, 4008 Buckingham Rd, Baltimore, MD 21207. Address articles, photographs, art, letters and comments to Peg Shull, 803 Melrose Ave., Lexington, KY 40502. Phone 606-266-2329 (new address and phone number). N.B. We can now use prints from color negatives if you send us the negative as well as the print. While we make every effort to return your photos and negatives, we can not guarantee that they will not be lost or damaged. A newsletter is also published by the Third Order at irregular intervals. For further information, write to Helen Webb.

While there is no charge for *Franciscan Times*, we have already exhausted the 1981 budget with this first issue and will greatly appreciate donations toward the second issue. Remember that both begging and responding generously are historically Franciscan.

Bless the Lord

The *Proposed Book of Common Prayer* uses the phrase, "Let us bless the Lord." Also, Psalm 103 begins "Bless the Lord, O my soul...." instead of the "Praise the Lord..." to which we are accustomed. This presents a problem if one uses the definitions of "bless" found in many dictionaries.

The eighth edition of *Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary* is some help over the older editions. Along with the usual, "hallow or consecrate...invoke divine care for...confer prosperity or happiness upon...", it also includes, "praise, glorify...to speak gratefully of."

Webster's Third New International Dictionary is of little more help. It gives the additional definitions of "guard, protect, keep preserve..., favor, endow."

But the same "praise, glorify..." are still the only clues to the Prayer Book usage.

The Oxford English Dictionary, however, goes a step further. In giving the history of the word, it explains not only the more common definition, "The etymological meaning was thus, 'to mark (or affect in some way) with blood (or sacrifice); to consecrate.'" But it goes on to explain, "But the sense-development of the word was greatly influenced by its having been chosen at the English conversion to render the Latin *benedicere* and Greek $\epsilon\beta\lambda\omicron\upsilon\gamma\epsilon\iota\nu$, which started from a primitive sense of 'speak well of or to, eulogize, praise, but were themselves influenced by being chosen to translate Hebrew שׁוּבַח , primarily 'to bend,' hence, 'to bend the knee, worship, praise, bless God, invoke blessings on, bless as a deity.'"

Hence, there is indeed a sense in which we can "Bless the Lord."

--Pat Mahon