

MESSAGE FROM CHAPLAIN MARK FRANCIS

My dear brothers and sisters,

Well, those of you who were unable to attend the Convocation in Racine certainly missed an exciting experience. Over ten per cent of our total membership attended, from all parts of the United States and Canada.

Bishop Gaskell formally opened the Convocation with the Eucharist at 9:00 p.m. on Friday. I said a few kind words. Many were late because a storm hit the Chicago area - Will Drake was flying in from Canada, and was routed to Detroit and then back to Canada, finally arriving late Saturday morning. The hospitality committee should certainly get a stand-up cheer, for they not only took good care of us under these circumstances but they did it with a rare joy - truly Franciscan. In addition, we had a number of Roman Catholic Third Order members along with their Spiritual Director, Fr. Giles, OFM Cap. with us over the weekend and they added much to our fellowship.

And fellowship was the keynote! It was a time of sharing - making new friends and renewing old ones. The morning and evening meetings were only a point of reference to keep the fellowship and sharing moving, at a fantastic pace: morning, evening and night. Some reported they only got a few hours sleep. And the words of our Lord "and you shall become as little children" certainly seem appropriate. Yes, this is very true, for there were no age gaps - from Ruth Groves and Sarah Chamberlin, young at heart .. to the youngest, whoever that was.

These are Franciscan times, and the longing for fellowship and community was certainly satisfied. I can still hear the singing at the Eucharist and Offices, the laughter, the quiet moments of seriousness, and above all, the murmur of life that permeated the building in which we lived for that brief time. I sincerely hope some of the joy was carried back into our daily lives; and I am sure it has been.

After leaving Sunday afternoon, I spent the night at the Franciscan Monastery in Milwaukee as a guest of Fr. Giles, and I certainly enjoyed talking with the brothers there. Fr. Giles then took me on a brief tour of Milwaukee, Monday morning, and we both had a short visit with Bishop Gaskell. Bishop Gaskell has promised us an article on the value of Franciscanism in the Episcopate, and I hope this can be published in "The Little Chronicle" at a later date.

Mary Peters then picked me up at the Monastery and drove me to Nashotah House, where she was a student. I was at Nashotah until Wednesday, visiting and trying to share the Franciscan experience with the students and faculty. They are a great family, and I certainly look forward to a return visit. Then on Wednesday, Glen-Ann Jicha and a friend of hers picked me up and took me to supper at another friend of hers who is very interested in the Third Order. This was on the shore of Lake Zurich and this was also the first time this spring that they could eat outside - fun fun. Then on to Seabury-Western, arriving during a wind and rain storm.

From the Chaplain:

Mrs. Edwards welcomed me at Seabury-Western, and Dean Edwards got me settled in. This was another great experience, and again, many students responded to our Franciscan life style. Dean Edwards has asked for us to return for a longer period during the next school year, and he hopes other Communities can visit to give the students another perspective of the Church, and to bring another depth of spirituality to the campus. Then on Saturday, I spent the day in Chicago just sightseeing, returning to New York on Sunday very tired, but with a great sense of life and joy.

*****I would appreciate all the Convenors of the various fellowships sending to me a list of members as follows: (1) Third Order members, (2) Associates, (3) Friends (and their addresses). It is my hope, after my summer travels, to be in closer contact with our various fellowships, and, too, to list them in "The Little Chronicle" so that we can all pray for each other in community. This will also give those who are interested in the Third Order another contact with our Society.

There are a number of ways that we can also strengthen the overall fellowship of our Order. First: when you remember one of our members on his or her anniversary, drop that person a postal card to that effect. It means so much to know that you are being remembered. Also - if you travel to another city or state, and you know that there is a fellow tertiary close by; give him or her a call, just to say hello. No hospitality is necessary, but just a Christian greeting. We are a large and growing family, and these are just two ways out of many that we can use to strengthen our life together even though we are isolated by the vastness of our country.

This summer, I will be traveling most of the time in order to get to see as many of you as possible. This means that I will not be at my desk for about three months to keep up with the correspondence (but I have not kept up with it very well even when I was here most of the time). I will also be getting out to those areas that I will be visiting a note to that effect, if you have not already received it. So, please pray for me especially during this time, because traveling of this type is new to me.

Have a good and joyful summer.

Your brother in Christ and Francis,

Mark Francis, SSF

Lee Malloy writes - The weekend in Racine was all blessing for me, and I came home so strengthened and renewed. It all touched me so deeply, and I thought that this might say it:

Mirrors

New eyes, yet old, meet in strangeness
with no strangeness,
and Love's embrace
of overflowing grace
answers heart-prayers
with pulsating sounds of sharing.
Binding one body
all in all -
the life-stream of Christ,
Body and Blood, mesh tissue with soul;
and hearts reach out and touch one another
with the Kiss of Peace.
And I can see no walls,
only uniqueness offered in praise of Our Father.
My song - prayers sing out birth -
all newness
For Francis, shining with the joy of Christ,
receives me,
surrounding me with God's love,
renewing, recreating, reflecting
in each of you.

FELLOWSHIPS

Boston Area - The February retreat at Rye Beach was well attended and greatly appreciated. There was an April meeting at EDS, and plans were announced for a May meeting. They are thinking about some kind of an all New England gathering soon.

Philadelphia - meeting scheduled for May 17th with a report on the Convocation.

Fayetteville Saturday, April 14th - Day of Silence at a cabin on a lake. Sunday, April 15th, St. Martin's Chapel was host. Local college students served as acolytes and musicians, using organ, harpsichord and oboe as accompaniment. The public was invited and there was standing room only. Supper followed, plus informal talks with those Franciscans who stayed. Monday, April 14th: Semi-annual service of admission and renewal for Associates and Tertiaries at St. Paul's Church. They are pleased by an increasing number of inquiries from the college community.

PERSONAL

Did you know that - the Rev. Fergus M. Fulford is now living in a retirement home: The Evergreens Home, Moorestown, New Jersey 08057. He might appreciate hearing from you.

continued

Mary Ann Peters wrote - On 26 April, 1975, I was ordained to the diaconate by the Rt. Rev. Charles Gaskell. After leaving Nashotah in May; she is working at Trinity Episcopal Church, Janesville, Wisconsin.

Those who were professed at the time of the Convocation on April 18th were:

Glen-Ann Jicha

Jean Jordan

Lee Malloy

Mrs. Marie Webner has moved; please note her new address - 3122 North Country Club Road, Tucson, Arizona 85716. Also, Mrs. Edward Webb has resigned from her position at the Church of St. Michael and All Angels, so please send all mail to her home address. How about you? Have you moved, or are you about to? The annual Third Order Directory will be coming out soon, so please let the Secretary know if you have a change.

Reminder - don't forget to send contributions to the Third Order of Saint Francis, c/o The Rev. Hendrik B. Koning, 405 Country Lane, Narberth, PA 19072.

FROM THE MINISTER GENERAL

Br. Geoffrey, SSF wrote from the Pacific, following the Provincial Chapter meeting there. Br. Bernard is to spend a fallow year, in Hong Kong and in England. Taking over from him as Guardian of Brookfield is Br. John Charles.

It was decided to withdraw from St. Francis College, and to pull out of Koke, and start a new work in Port Moresby. In the Solomons, a new house will be opened at Alangaula on Ugi Island.

The Sisters of St. Clare were on their way to start a house in the village of Stroud, in the Newcastle Diocese. They are the first enclosed Order to start in Australasia.

The Third Order is growing numerically, with provinces in several countries.

NEWS JUST RECEIVED

Dee Dobson writes, "The South Florida Fellowship met April 27th in Fort Lauderdale at Mary Nelson's. The Rev. Anthony Ross, a tertiary from England, who is the Chaplain on HMS Hermis, joined us. The Rev. Miguel Restrepo, an aspirant, also was with us for the meeting."

The Rev. John A. Filler writes, "I have changed places and gained an ecclesiastical title. I was ordained in February, here on the island of Hawaii, in a church whose history goes back to the very beginning of Anglican evangelism to the monarchy. It is very rewarding work; it can also be very lonely as the rural area is very isolated from most of the population centres of the island." His address is St. Augustine's Episcopal Church, Kapaau, Hawaii 96755.

My dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

This was a very exciting and very long summer. I was away from our house in New York City for about three months, and covered somewhere around 11,000 miles - most of it by bus.

After leaving New York City the last of May, I spent around three weeks with my folks in the Carolinas - most of it at Myrtle Beach, S.C., and on June 21, I flew to Miami, Florida to begin my tour. Dee Dobson met me at the airport and gave me hospitality during my visit. On Sunday, after preaching at the Church of the Holy Cross we drove to Fort Lauderdale and Mary Nelson's for a Fellowship meeting and lunch, where a large number were gathered, both old and new. During my visit I had the opportunity of visiting with most of our tertiaries on a personal basis, which has helped me very much to get to know our family.

On Thursday, June 26, Dee drove me to Tampa for a long weekend with Jeanne Willis and the Fellowship there. On the way we stopped over for dinner with Claire and Ed Linzel in Sarasota and had a wonderful visit.

In Tampa, Jeanne and her family provided hospitality, and I must say here that all of the families I visited were absolutely marvelous, and were extremely supportive to our life style. On Friday, Jeanne's priest, Fr. Stadel, took me to lunch and visited; then we came back to a minor panic of a broken hot water heater - which was readily fixed with a great family effort. On Saturday I gave a Quiet Morning at St. Catherine's and after lunch we visited Busch Gardens, and Tom Luter treated us all to supper. On Sunday I preached several times at Saint Catherine's, and after church Bill Smith of Tarpon Springs took me out for dinner and talk. Sunday evening we were relaxing and decided to go out for ice cream and ran into Ann Walker who had been out of town with her priest at a Christian Education conference. Early Monday morning I left by bus on my way to New Orleans.

Emma Kuhne met me at the bus station on the afternoon of Wednesday, July 2, and we had a delightful afternoon together, along with her husband, Gordon, and various ones of their girls. After an early breakfast at The Pontchaitrain, I caught another bus to make my way to Fayetteville, Arkansas.

I arrived in Fayetteville on July 4, and things really were a big bang. This is our largest active Fellowship: 28 in the current listing, not including supporting spouses - and Carolyn Banks is doing a masterful job of being Convenor, with full support of her husband, Warren. The only thing is that she is working much too hard and we are trying to get things where they will not be as demanding.

Saturday was taken up with personal talks with various members, and ended with a huge picnic at the Hipps. Homemade ice cream and hot blackberry cobbler and all - no wonder the way I was fed during this tour I gained 25 pounds!! Sunday, July 6, I preached at St. Paul's, and in the evening celebrated a folk mass where over 50 attended. Also at the folk mass we received three Associates, two postulants to the Third Order and two novices. On Monday I met with Fr. Salmon, the Rector of St. Paul's, for a very fruitful discussion; then with a group for sermon discussion; catching the 2:45 bus to Tulsa. I must mention that due to the work of Carolyn, Father Salmon, and the Fellowship at St. Paul's, and their plans for a St. Francis Day celebration, Bishop Keller was to send a special photographer to take pictures of what an active and spiritually aware parish can do!

A number of hours later, Ralph Warmack met me at the Tulsa bus station and I had a very enjoyable overnight stay with him and Sally, both Associates. Then I was off bright and early, arriving in Oklahoma City around noon of July 8. Roberta Beisel and Fr. Riding, an English tertiary now in Oklahoma City, met me and we then went to lunch. (About this time I was becoming "out to lunch"!) Then we drove to Guthrie to pick up Effie Hanes for a Votive of St. Francis and pot luck supper that evening. For the meeting and pot luck supper we had three tertiaries and a number who are interested. So, we have sufficient members for a Fellowship in Oklahoma City. And as usual, the excitement of a growing spiritual life was manifested in those attending.

Then, the next morning off to bus my way to El Paso, where I missed Stephen Farlow. Then on to Tucson, where Marie Webner met me at the Trailways Station. I spent Saturday evening, July 12, with Marie and met the local college Chaplain and on Sunday I preached four times at St. Michael's, had luncheon with the Sisters at Tullier School, and after preaching at the 6:00 p.m. service, was met by Darlene Sipes and Fr. Dan Monson of St. Michael's, Coolidge. That evening, after a Chinese dinner, we drove to Coolidge where Darlene, Ed and family gave me hospitality. On Monday we had a special Votive of St. Francis and homily at 11:00 a.m. followed by a Mexican lunch, where around twelve interested persons attended, several taking time off from work. Then Darlene drove me to Phoenix to spend the night with Ruth and George Milhoan and a large and great family. Early Tuesday, I was off again to make a stopover in Yuma and a brief visit with Suki Miller. The evening of Tuesday, July 15, Suki took me to a meeting of The Strugglers, a local group from St. Paul's trying to grow in community and spiritual awareness, and there also I met Canon Crawford and his wife.

The next morning I left for San Bernardino, where Ken Cox met me at the bus station. Wednesday, Ken took me on a brief visit to several of the local rectors: Robert Larkin of Redlands and Robert Neily in San Bernardino, and also to visit a shut-in. That evening we had a Votive of St. Francis and Fellowship meeting with pot luck supper. After the meeting Roy Schipling took me for a visit to his home and parish in Hemet. During my visit with Roy and his wonderful wife, Marge, I was able to get a few days to myself, do some sightseeing (with picnic), visit Judy Haynes in Valley Center, and Helynn Hoffa in La Jolla, who has been selected as the San Diego area convener.

On Thursday, July 24, I made my way to San Francisco arriving late in the evening at the San Damiano Friary. Friday was my birthday. I took myself out to dinner, but was not able to put my whole self into it, because waiting for me was a letter from Br. Luke, our Provincial Minister, asking me when the tour was over to return to Little Portion, and take up the duties of house steward and book-keeper, teach formation classes to our novices and postulants, in addition to being Chaplain to the Third Order. So here I am now, writing to you; and if you are due a letter, please be patient. I just have not gotten all these things together as yet. On Saturday, July 26, I went to visit the brothers at the Ranch; and was also to visit with several of our sisters and women in the summer Christian Vocation program. Suki was there, and one of the young women from our Fayetteville, Arkansas Fellowship. Bishop Myers came for a visit late Sunday, and I was able to visit briefly with him. Br. John George drove me back to San Francisco on Monday afternoon.

Lynn Bowdish picked me up Tuesday, and we had a very nice meeting and lunch, returning to the Friary in time to get cleaned up to go to Ron and Judy Smith's for the Mass, pot luck supper and Fellowship meeting. There was a good crowd, and a very joyful one! On Wednesday I visited Jo LaValle, who had just gotten out of the hospital, and is praying about trying her vocation in the Third Order. That evening, Judith Robinson and Mary Ann Marchesi picked me up, and we had a

fun-filled visit and dinner. On Friday, I did get to visit a little more with the brothers in San Francisco - ha! Fr. Joseph is still holding on, and Br. Paul was getting over a cold. The rest were doing fine, helped by Sister Ruth in the care of Fr. Joseph.

On Saturday I was off again to Sacramento to visit with Deane Kennedy and his wonderful wife. I preached twice for Deane, and at the second service we had the God Unlimited group from Phoenix to play and sing - old friends of the brothers in San Francisco and Br. Bede. One of the group has since applied for membership in the Third Order. That afternoon we had a Fellowship meeting at Deane's home with around 10 present - so there is another growing group. After dinner at Deane's Warden's home that evening, I on Monday began to make my way to Portland.

I was met at the bus station on the afternoon of Tuesday, August 5, by Larry Mahon, who had kindly taken the afternoon off from work, since Pat was in the hospital. We drove to Phyllis King's home for a Fellowship meeting and tea. Believe it or not, we have 3 tertiaries in Portland and an Associate with others showing interest, so we are back on the map there - and I must say, all dedicated Christians. After the meeting, Larry and I visited Pat in the hospital and then got some sleep, because I was off again the next morning for Seattle.

Peggy and Michael Hoffman met me, again at the bus station, and gave me hospitality during my great visit. On Thursday, I met with Mary Watkins, who decided to withdraw at this time. Then on Friday I took the ferry to Victoria to visit Muriel Adey. I think that the boat trip to Victoria was the most beautiful part of the tour - there is just something about water the the snow-capped mountains nearly surrounding you at the same time. Muriel met the boat, and we went directly to the Faculty Club at the University as guests of Lionel, Muriel's husband. The Chaplain also joined us. We had a quiet evening with a great tour around Victoria. Saturday morning Muriel had arranged a morning Coffee with a number of people who are interested in our work and life style - and I would not be surprised to hear of things happening there, too. Lionel loaned me some slides of the area which I plan to show our brothers, and especially our Poor Clare Sisters soon. Then Saturday evening, back to Seattle. Sunday was another busy day preaching at All Saints, and then the Fellowship meeting (a huge meal) at Peggy and Michael's. Phyllis Chesterfield, as convener, was in charge, with several interested people. (I have already, by the way, heard from Phyllis regarding a special visitation and preachment in Seattle next year.)

Then early Monday morning, off to Spokane. Elizabeth Marks met me at the bus station, and drove me to Betty and Roscoe Storer. That evening we had a meeting with an Associate, and it is planned that Spokane will, too, return to an active Fellowship status.

Then again off early Tuesday to Montana. Kale King and his lay reader met me in Missoula. Then we drove to the Diocesan camp on the western side of Flathead Lake, a few miles above Polson. There we were greeted by Canon Richer, who asked me to give a Quiet Day for the 70 or so senior high students, on Wednesday. While at the camp, I also had the opportunity to meet Bishop Gilliam and his wife, Kay. On Thursday we drove to Great Falls as guest of Father Del Achuff and his lovely wife, Louise, and son. Fr. John Fargher from Butte also joined us, and so we had an afternoon and morning of quiet and meditative discussion - it was very rewarding! Then after lunch on Friday, we set out for Glasgow, Kale's home. Saturday afternoon we drove to Scobey for the Eucharist, where I preached, and then back to Glasgow (200 miles round trip). Then early Sunday morning we had the Eucharist in Glasgow with sermon (me!) and then drove to Malta for the Sunday Eucharist. I was both celebrant and preacher there.

Monday morning a number of parishioners from Glasgow stopped by to talk, and the Roman clergy and Sisters came by for lunch and a visit. I must admit that I enjoyed the Southern cooking while at Kale's - his wife is from my part of the country! Kale and family then drove me to Williston, N.D. that afternoon to catch the bus back east to Chicago.

That was the only great mishap. Connections were to be only made on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday mornings. As I was a day late arriving in Chicago, I missed Dovey May Jones altogether. Kale could not reach her by phone, for some reason. Dovey May - next time for sure!!

Glen-Ann and Arthur Jicha met me at the bus station and gave me much hospitality while I was in the Chicago area. I must admit by this time it took a lot of patience, for I hardly knew where I was. The "out-to-lunch" had nearly gotten to the "all-out" stage. Saturday morning we drove out to Oak Forest Hospital to visit Margaret Suthern and her mother, celebrating there at the hospital. A number of our tertiaries were present. Then David Burgdorf drove me to his home for a visit. Of course we had to see his church - ha. Then around 5:00 P.M. we gathered, along with a sizeable group at Jim and Jean DuBois' for a a Votive of St. Francis, house blessing (Jim & Jean's Rector did that) and pot luck supper and meeting. I must say the Chicago area is very definitely active, and much seems to be forthcoming. On Sunday, Glen-Ann drove me to Ken Tarpley's church where I gave a homily (southern style, of course), and Vicky Graef came for me and drove me back to Palatine so I could preach at the 11:00 a.m. there. We finished Sunday off with the largest porterhouse steak I have ever seen, cooked to perfection by Arthur, and a huge garden salad by Glen-Ann. The finishing touch to the some 25 pounds I gained on this tour. On the way to catch the bus back to New York City, and after missing the train, I decided I had had it; and Glen-Ann drove me to the airport where I caught the first flight home.

Well that about rounds things up. So much more could be said, for just everywhere people are looking, seeking, knocking, and the Good News has to be preached. And we must never forget that as Franciscans we are trying to live the Gospel life - the life of good news, radiating joy. These are Franciscan times!!! I am now back at Little Portion Friary, so all mail should be addressed to me there.

During the tour I said I would like to visit each Fellowship for in-depth work, but that will have to be up to you. Because of my duties here at Little Portion the planning will be important. But I can generally plan to be away somewhere around 3 - not more than 4 weeks - out of eight, if possible, not to overlap months (bookkeeping, you know). Seattle and Montana have already begun their plans and, first come first served - ha. Oh yes, Chicago's in the works. Let me hear from you; and if you get this letter before you get my personal thank-you for all your kindness, please be patient. I am wearing so many different hats that I get confused.

God bless you; and with all my love in Christ and Francis -

Br. Mark Francis, SSF
Chaplain