

There are two major enclosures with this Newsletter: (1) the Convocation announcement-reservation slip - papers for study and discussion; (2) "From the Chaplain's Desk".

### MINISTER GENERAL

Two Minister General's letters have been received from Br. Geoffrey, SSF; one from his time in Great Britain, and the other following his visit with the First and Second Orders in the American Province. Here are a few excerpts.

"I want to tell you about my time in the United Kingdom, but it is difficult to know where to begin. Actually, the U.K. is not very U. at present as with the tragic situation in Northern Ireland showing no sign of improvement; and with strong nationalist movements in Wales and Scotland winning a large measure of independent government for those countries, there is a tendency to divide into small groups. . . .

Since I was there last year, the European Province has divided into two Regions, but still remains one Province with one Chapter. However each Region has its Chapter as well. This has the advantage that more brothers are involved in the decision making, but it remains to be seen how the relation between the Regional Chapter and the Provincial Chapter will be worked, and what degree of duplication there will be. It is an interesting experimtn, and could set a pattern for other Provinces. . . .

In small Houses, it is essential that there be a strong prayer life. Experience has shown that where the prayer life is weak or falters, the life founders. . . . We may do other works as well, but unless we are clear about what we are, we will lose our way . . . . I feel that larger Friaries are weak in what may be called the middle-aged group. There are a number of elderly brothers who continue to bear the burden and heat of the day, and there are a number of novices and postulants. But there are very few junior professed or young life professed. These have mostly gone to start the various new houses. I feel it needs now a time of consolidation to build up the middle strength. . . . It is not for nothing that the "Second" is in the middle of the three Orders of our Society. So often they keep us on the rails. . . . I never cease to thank God for our Clares in England and America. And now they are preparing to make a new foundation in Australia. Do pray for them as they prepare for this great venture - their first foundation. The Sisters at Compton Durville have recently made two new foundations: at San Francisco and at Newcastle-under-Lyme.

My first visit in the American Province was to our newest household in Port of Spain, Trinidad. When I was there, the brothers were living at the Deanery. Of course it is all early days, but it is important that we should have a house as soon as possible which we can call home and which is a centre for our prayer and work. . . . The life at Little Portion Friary goes along steadily. There is a good

Minister General's Letter continued

quiet prayer life, and many groups stay at the Guest House and share in the life. Unfortunately, Luke has had to undertake the work of Novice Guardian as well as his duties as Provincial. I am sure he will give the novices a great deal, but it does impose a heavy load on Luke. . . . It is good to see the Franciscan life in California being consolidated. Since I was there last year, Robert has been elected Guardian and has the care of San Damiano Friary and the Bisho's Ranch at Healdsburg.

May God keep us all faithful to our calling - With my love and prayers, "

Geoffrey, SSF

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORT

A meeting of the Standing Committee was held on Saturday, January 18th from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the home of John Scott. For the first time, all the members were able to be present, including Marie Hayes from Arizona. The following appointments were announced by Br. Mark Francis: Warren Tanghe as Assistant Chaplain, David Burt as Convenor of the Boston Fellowship, and Keith Ackerman as Convenor of the Long Island Fellowship.

Several novices were recommended by the Standing Committee for profession, and the next step is to have the approval of the Chapter members.

A variety of meetings were mentioned; with much time devoted to plans for the Convocation in Racine, April 18-20th. John Scott was invited to represent the Third Order at the meeting of the First Order Chapter. Peter Funk and Helen Webb were elected members of the Board of Directors of the Society of Saint Francis, which includes both First and Third Orders. At Br. Geoffrey's suggestion, John Scott is sending a formal request for a meeting of the Third Order Interprovincial (international) Chapter.

Br. Mark Francis, Chaplain, spoke of many things, including reporting - it would be helpful if people were more specific and did not take the short-cut of simply checking items. He asks us to stress community, and sees signs of new groups or fellowships forming in several different sections of the country. He asks if any tertiaries might like to hear from others by mail - we could include their names in a Newsletter. He explained his thoughts about an ongoing Chaplain's notebook, to send especially to professed tertiaries. He mentioned his own heavy load of responsibilities, and feels frustrated when he is not able to do as much as he would like. He asks for a list of the Fellowship Convenors (@please let him know about yours, if you have not already).

continued

Standing Committee, continued

Some literature is in the process of being produced. Included are: a draft Book of Roots: Source Documents for the Living Tradition; the Looseleaf Manual (production delayed, but still hoped for this spring); and a rewriting of the first two letters to inquirers.

The proposed Tau Cross was further discussed, and it was requested that samples be obtained so that we can see what they would be like.

The Rev. Hendrik Koning presented a financial report. During discussion of finances, it was suggested that each person plan to contribute a percentage of his income (for instance, 1 per cent) rather than a specific number of dollars, and that everyone is expected to make a pledge to the Third Order, regardless of the amount.

The date of the next meeting was not set.

Helen Webb, Secretary

HELP WANTED

"Peace to you. This is a short item to query interest in retired or self-sufficient income persons in the Third Order who may have vocation to live in a home and provide love and guidance for young delinquent people.

We are starting from scratch. But there is interest and support of our district court and some hope for federal funding in the misdemeanor program. At any rate, such programs are needed, and I would be interested in talking with or corresponding with persons who may be willing to join in the effort in any way. Counselors, teachers, laborers, cooks - all will be needed.

In Christ Jesus, "

Robert

The Rev. Robert Dillon  
(417) 286-3375  
Cliff Springs Conference Center  
Diocese of West Missouri  
Rt. 2, Richland, MO 65556

FELLOWSHIPS

New York - Long Island, Keith Ackerman, Convenor Met during Epiphanytide with Br. Mark Francis at the Church of St. Mary the Virgin, in New York; and on Feb. 8 at the Mercer Seminary in Garden City. Fr. Murray Bodo's book, Francis, The Journey and the Dream was chosen for study and future discussion. Announcement was made of Emily Gardiner Neal's Healing Mission, April 8-10, St. James' Church, New York City.

## FELLOWSHIPS, continued

Boston - David Burt, Convenor; Michael Hollingshead, reporter. I am happy to report that we now have enough tertiaries in the Boston area for us to have formed a Fellowship and have monthly meetings. Our meetings have been held for the most part in one of the lounges of the Episcopal theological seminary in Cambridge, at which two of our members are enrolled as students. It was also here that we met with Brother Mark Francis, our new Chaplain, who came to visit us in early December. Our meeting with Br. Mark Francis was a truly wonderful experience for each one of us. And the memory of that visit continues to provide a source of inspiration and commitment in the hearts of us all.

In addition to the thoughtful contemplation on the significance of the Franciscan life of 'Care, Share, and Prayer', we have started to read aloud from the beginning of the Manual, followed by a discussion, which we have found to be an excellent way to help us focus in on some of the teachings and instructions of Saint Francis. It allows us to express opinions or seek clarification of things we may not fully understand or appreciate.

In addition to our monthly meetings, we are planning to hold a Retreat some time in March \*.

In conclusion, and through the memory of Our Blessed Saint Francis, may we send you all our prayers. May this year help us to grow in our love of Christ."

(ed. \*tentatively scheduled Mar. 7-9 at the Franciscan Friary, Rye Beach, New Hampshire, conducted by Br. Mark Francis)

Fayetteville, Ark., Carolyn Banks The Fellowship has met regularly and worked closely with local parishes, in hospitality as well as devotional programs and information on St. Francis and Franciscan life. Br. Jeremy, SSF conducted a Mission in November. The Fellowship plans a retreat in April. The Arkansas tertiaries ask you to remember them and their families in your prayers.

Philadelphia The Fellowship meets regularly and Eleanor Woodroffe has been appointed Convenor. They used The Franciscan magazine as a basis of discussion.

San Bernardino, Ken Cox reporter. The Fellowship continues to hold monthly meetings. Included on December 6 was a short homily on Saint Nicholas as it was his day. One feature is the reading of letters from other tertiaries (such as the one from Edith Docker, part of which is included in this Newsletter). One was even from a Swedish tertiary, Ingel Bondhehatz, who sent a snapshot taken of the tertiaries when they met in Whitsuntide 1973. Ingel says that Len and Gunhild Howard, an English couple living in Sweden are leaders in a home for children who come from disturbed families. Ingel's particular work at the moment, among other things, is her effort to operate a lending library for

## FELLOWSHIPS

San Bernardino, continued kids in the universities, and the books to be lent are mostly her own and some that her grandmother left her. She is a comparatively new convert to Christianity, and her one cause of unhappiness is that she can only talk to her sister and eldest daughter about her faith, even though she has children, grandchildren, brothers and sisters. As she said in her letter it makes it so hard for her to fulfill the first aim of the Third Order, namely "To make our Lord known and loved everywhere." "When I can't realize this among those nearest and dearest to me, how can I expect to do it among others?"

San Francisco Bay Area New Umbrian Fellowship, Ron Smith, Convenor - sent a detailed report of monthly meetings and activities. (If you would like to see it, write Helen Webb.) They were active right thru the summer months, and plan to have more than one retreat during the year. Meetings are held in varying locations, to make it easier for distant members to attend, and are open to all who may be interested. At the January meeting, the Fellowship took on a monthly pledge of financial support to Orphanage St. Madeleine in Port-au-Prince, Haiti.

In a letter to John Scott, Ron Smith says, "The enclosed statement was drafted in an attempt to draw together the thoughts and attitudes of the tertiaries in this area as we have discussed the nature of a Fellowship. I think it is a reasonable expression of the general sentiment of the professed tertiaries here, but it should not be construed as a statement of the Fellowship."

### "Some Observations on the Nature of the Third Order Fellowship"

Most tertiaries want to believe that they are part of a religious order, and I share in this. But our Order is uniquely different from the First Order with which we tend to identify ourselves. We do not live in community. By not living in community it means that we all have varying family responsibilities, varying time commitments because of our occupations, varying incomes and financial responsibilities. The fellowship brings us together to share a sense of community, to worship together, to learn from each other, to grow together, and to share each other. This coming together is also a means of testing our vocation to love each other in a supernatural way, and in this sense it is an instrument of discipline. It can be, in a way, a crucifixion or a resurrection for each of us at different times. Because we are so varied in the ways of the world, it seems to me all the more important that we be together in the ways of the Spirit. And, insofar as we come together in this way, we will become in fact rather than in hope a religious community.

Ours, then, is a fragile community. We do not have the under-pinning of communal living. We have not left all else to embrace each other as brothers and sisters. We come from families, and we must go back to families and jobs and responsibilities, each unique to the individual tertiary. Even in matters of the Spirit, we do not have the cohesive experience of daily worship with each other. Because of the fragile nature of our community as a religious order, it seems to me most important that we acknowledge the essential spiritual nature of our fellowship. The implications of this spiritual nature of our fellowship are (as so much in Christianity seems to be) paradoxical: we should assure that this

Ron Smith statement, continued

spiritual element is carefully cradled, and at the same time be open to somewhat varied expressions of our faith in our diversity. This urges us to a more open communion with each other and a greater sense of harmony in the essential elements of our faith, because we have only our shared faith and Franciscan vision to cause us to adhere together as an Order.

For these reasons, I believe it is most important that we make every effort to come together in this way. And further, that we be reasonably certain that aspirants to this Order not only understand the nature of the community, but also find themselves drawn to it, and the community drawn to them. The Franciscan way, as manifested in the Third Order, is only one particular vision of the Christian message. By suggesting that the aspirant be drawn to the community, and the community be drawn to the aspirant, I do not mean to imply exclusiveness, but rather a potential for compatibility within this particular vision of the Christian message. The Third Order, as I see it, is a group of Christians drawn together, sharing a vocation to worship together, to grow together and to learn to trust and love each other and the world as our Lord and Francis would have us do."

SPECIAL OCCASIONS

Professions

Mary Mobert - October 6, 1974  
Leo Combes - November 17, 1974  
Rodney Cook - February 8, 1975

Ordinations to Priesthood

Kent Tarpley - December 21, 1974  
Keith Ackerman - December 21, 1974

Death

Mabel Laurence - September 6, 1974

Appointment

Warren Tanghe, Assistant Third Order Chaplain for New England

Additional Novices

Albert Connelly  
James Jones  
Martin Nelson  
Wilmer Rebola  
Don Schutte

## LETTERS

In response to Ken Cox's appeal in the last Newsletter, here is part of a letter:

"Dear Bro. Kenneth;

Since I certainly am and have been for a long time an isolated Tertiary, I take my pen in hand (as it was customary to say in bygone generations) and will attempt to answer your request for communications from such as I. Time was when we had a large group in Los Angeles, but that was long ago when Fr. Joseph used to visit us fairly often. Then for a couple of years Fr. Harley Smith who \*\* was Rector at St. Nicholas in San Fernando Valley kept a group of us together. That was around 1953 to 1956 about which time Fr. Smith left St. Nicholas, and the group melted away. Mrs. Michael DiPietro of La Canada is the only member of that group whose name I still see in the 1974 list. . . . Since 1970 I have lived in a Retirement Home belonging to our brother Christians, the Baptists. It is very satisfactory because there are several different plans for living, and no attempt is made to turn us into Baptists. There is a Vesper service at 4 p.m. on Sundays at which (if we wish to attend) we sing Gospel hymns, quite a few out of our own hymnal, and listen to extemporaneous prayers and sermon by clergy from various religious groups. I must admit I have heard some that I thought very good and I feel that I bear some witness by attending, so I usually am there. . . . A year ago I had a second major operation, this time to insert a ball and socket joint in my right hip to replace a worn out cartilage which for along time I thought was arthritis. This kept me in a nursing hospital for about five months. I am very thankful to our Heavenly Father that I can now walk with greatly improved ease and comfort, which has made a great difference in my life. . . . A week ago, Christmas I, we had Bro. Isaac at St. James, and he told us about the three Franciscan Orders. If our Dean will continue to invite members to speak from time to time, perhaps we may yet have a group of Tertiaries here. . . . Yours in O.B.L. and St. Francis - Edith May Docker"

From Muriel Adey - The bit in the Newsletter was very helpful! Actually, the idea of funding us was approved in October and some of the money arrived during November. . . perhaps by next winter we will have proper heating. Two cuttings from our local paper may interest you. "Cool Aid" is the name given to what started as a transients hostel, and the "Free Clinic" was one night a week. That has developed into "us" as you know. The Commonwealth Award given to Cool Aid is a very great honour indeed. " (Write Helen Webb if you'd like more details.)

From Susan Miller (to John Scott) As I remember, in your letter you asked me what I am doing in Kalamazoo. Mainly I am searching and questioning what the Lord wants of me and where does He want me, doing what ??? Beyond that, I went to W.M.U. for a degree in Orientation and Mobility and did my internship at the Mich. Rehabilitation Center for the Blind in Ka'zoo. At the end of four months, they decided there was an opening and asked me to join the staff. So now I teach blind adults to travel with a cane. I ride a bicycle and tool leather for hobbies. . . . On 10 Feb., 3 tertiaries were at M.S.U. listening to Br. Robert, first a light supper, then a quiet evening followed by the novicing of Nadine (Gauranskas). Finally after all the people were gone, we three, plus a chaplain, had Br. Robert to ourselves. Mickie Ibara had never met him, and I had not met the other two

LETTERS, continued

(Susan Miller) tertiaries in this area. We enjoyed having him to ourselves and asked him many questions. . . At this point, I think the Lord is telling me it is time once again to move on. It is difficult at this point because I want to be sure it is the Lord pushing and that I settle where He wants me and doing what He wants me to do. It is also difficult because I've made more true friends here as I'm beginning to come out of my self-sufficient shell - being single, footloose and fancy-free, so to speak. There are many possibilities. Which one to take? Your sister in Christ, Susan Miller (commonly known as Suki)."

#### NOTES

\*\* Did you know that the Rev. Harley Smith celebrated the 60th anniversary of his ordination to the priesthood on September 4th. Br. Robert was there for the mass and banquet at St. Francis, of Encino, the parish he founded. The Bishop of Los Angeles was also present.

---We have on hand a supply of pamphlets sent from the European Province, which they are using for "The Day of Penitence", Friday, 21st March, 1975. If you would like any, write Helen Webb.

---Keep this address handy:

The Rev. Hendrik Koning  
405 Country Lane  
Narberth, Penna. 19072

Why? So that from time to time you can send checks, made payable to: Third Order Society of St. Francis. And, have you sent in a pledge? As you know, it is very hard to plan a budget when the amount of expected income is not known. We really should repay the First Order for so much time and expense they are carrying for our Chaplain, Br. Mark Francis. At the moment, we can only give them a token expression of our appreciation, but really we should be more realistic. Please give it some thought as you consider your financial support to the Third Order - it is more than just for paper and stamps.

---Another address - for report forms, etc. - Mrs. Edward Webb, 4008 Buckingham Road, Baltimore, Md. 21207. (That "etc." might be a news item or thought, to be shared with others through the Newsletter. And don't forget - if you would welcome letters from your Third Order brothers or sisters, let us know--and of course, your change of address. It is hard to keep up with you all, as you move.) No, we do not have any more copies of the Manual; and, yes, we are working on getting the new "looseleaf manual" to you as soon as possible.