

EXCERPTS FROM THE MINISTER GENERAL'S LETTERS

In June 1975 Br. Geoffrey, S.S.F. took part in the Novice Conference at Hilfield Friary, England - the first time for seven years that such a conference had been held. The talks and discussions were of a high standard, and he found a wonderful sense of community, and joy in worship and prayer together. He visited Hooke, and the Sisters at Compton Durville, also the Clares at Freeland, and heard about the Sisters who have made the foundation at Stroud, Australia and of the tremendous welcome they received from the local people. His impression of the European Province is one of great vitality, with the creation of many small Houses. He notes the start of a ministry in Sweden. He reminds us of the severe economic crisis in the United Kingdom, and that the brothers have felt the effects of inflation, especially as they examine more carefully their use of money.

Later he visited the American Province, beginning in Trinidad. There he mentions that postulants had begun to arrive. He paints a beautiful picture: of drifting in a boat with the Brothers through the mangroves as the sun was setting to see the gathering of hundreds of Ibis to roost - a very moving experience. From there, he went on to the First Order Brothers' Chapter at Little Portion Friary, in November 1975. He says, "The most valuable part of the Chapter as I saw it was the opportunity to talk together and to understand each other, and to renew the family life of our Brotherhood." He speaks of Br. David, running the heavily-booked guest house, being Assistant Guardian of the Friary, and Warden of the Poor Clares, in addition to taking retreats and preaching of various sorts, together with book reviews and counseling. He found "a good group of novices and postulants coming along, some of whom are older men who have had responsible jobs, and to these we look for the future." Father Joseph, founder of the Order of Saint Francis, came to live at Little Portion. Br. Geoffrey visited the Brothers living at St. Mary's Mission House, New York City: Bede, Mark Charles and Mark Damian. Then he went to San Francisco in time for the Life Profession of Sister Joyce and Sister Ruth, of the Community of St. Francis.

The San Damiano Friary, in San Francisco, has had a number of changes of personnel, and hopes to settle down, now that John George has retired as Bishop's Chaplain and Joel transferred from the Bishop's Ranch. The Ranch had a very good year; and they were considering the possibility of one or two families who have asked to come and share a form of community life with the Brothers.

He mentions the Poor Clares at Maryhill, Mt. Sinai, New York, and the arrival of two postulants, saying they are "a hard working, happy little family, and do more for us than we can ever know."

He met several members of the Third Order, on both the East and West coasts; and expresses his gratitude to us for compiling the Book of Roots: source documents for the whole Society to study. He says, "It is difficult to give a real impression of this small Province in so short a letter, but I can only thank God for their courageous faith in continuing to look outwards in spite of all setbacks, and I am grateful for a very happy visit."

MEETINGS

The Third Order Chapter met Nov. 7-8, 1975. A Summary of business was mailed out generally, and detailed Minutes are available, on request to the Secretary. The next Chapter meeting is to be November 5-6, 1976. Please send suggestions for agenda to the Rev. John Scott, 4605 Larchwood Ave., Philadelphia, PA 19143.

IMPORTANT CHANGE OF ADDRESS --- Please send all checks, made out to Third Order, Society of St. Francis, to:

3.

The Rev. Hendrik Koning
St. Mary's Church
Hamilton Village
3601 Locust Walk
Philadelphia, PA 19104

MEETINGS (continued)

The Third Order Standing Committee met January 31, 1976 by means of a Conference Telephone Call. Recommended for profession by Chapter were: Russell Northway, Deane Kennedy, and Effie Hanes. In answer to a question, it was reaffirmed that in our Rule, "Daily Offices" means "Morning and Evening Prayer is the norm, using authorized liturgies of the Church: Book of Common Prayer or Authorized Trial Services." Regarding finances, enough pledges have now been received to cover our basic budget, and we look forward to assuming a larger share in the expenses of our Chaplain, Br. Mark Francis. It was recommended that financial support of the Third Order be made clear to postulants. Franciscan life in Trinidad and Mexico were mentioned, and plans were made to produce printed material in Spanish. The Lexington Fellowship's letter to all tertiaries, requesting that we try to be peacemakers in the issue of women's ordination, was noted. John Scott reported on his attendance at part of the meeting of the First Order Provincial Chapter Council. There is a perennial problem of wide needs and limited manpower.

FOLLOW-UP TO MEETINGS

John Scott writes, "I attended the First Order Chapter meeting on behalf of the Third Order, which met at the Bishop's Ranch, Healdsburg, California, the last week of January. Of particular interest to the Third Order is the interest in Trinidad in the Third Order as well as the First. The Brothers there will take responsibility for guiding potential tertiaries, and fit the Rule to the culture. At some later point, Brother Mark Francis hopes to make a visit there; and perhaps in the not-too-distant future a small province of its own will develop. On the way to the Chapter, I had the pleasure of meeting Carolyn Banks, other tertiaries and associates in Fayetteville, Arkansas. It is clear that a stimulating Fellowship comprising both tertiaries and associates can develop together. I hope to meet with members of the Lexington, Kentucky Fellowship in March when other business will take me to Berea. The growth of Fellowship life is very encouraging. While in San Francisco I had the opportunity to renew friendships with not a few tertiaries there; and back here in Philadelphia, we have added 6 new aspirants in the last couple of months."

Work is in progress on the Calendar and Devotions section of the Manual, and also on a Spanish translation of the Way and Rule, and the Way of St. Francis. The Third Order brochure has already been translated into Spanish; and is available from John Scott.

FROM THE FELLOWSHIPS

(Reminder:- Please send word in from your Fellowship, and include Helen Webb on your regular mailing list.)

Boston The Fellowship has been meeting regularly on a monthly basis, and plans are being made for a group to be on retreat at Little Portion when the Long Island-New York City Fellowship plans their Quiet Day.

Philadelphia Quarterly meetings are still being held, usually with a book review-discussion, in addition to Holy Eucharist, lunch and fellowship. There was an extra meeting in November, to be with Winifred Wood, a tertiary from overseas.

Washington, D.C. The Fellowship meets almost every month, on a Saturday, with Holy Eucharist, brunch, fellowship and study. At present, there are one professed tertiary, three novices, two postulants, and several interested friends. One special feature is an intercession list which is used by the members on a weekly basis.

Miami There was a meeting January 24th in Fort Lauderdale, and plans were made to meet bi-monthly. They want to investigate the possibility of a meeting with the Roman Catholic Third Order members in the area.

Chicago Glen-Ann Jicha writes: "The Chicago Area Fellowship has seen a year of amazing growth, not only in numbers but, we like to think, in spiritual strength as well. There are 5 professed, 3 novices, 2 postulants and 3 or 4 aspirants, as well as an Associate who is an aspirant to the First Order. We are as diverse a group as only the Lord could put together in terms of age, background, color, interests, etc., but we share something very special with which you are all familiar: commitment to our Lord as shown by our Father Francis. We now meet almost every month.

In December, we had a really fine Quiet Day together. Plans are now underway for a Lenten Retreat. We had marvelous visits with Bros. Mark Francis, Robert and Justus. If any of you are going through the Chicago area, please let us know so we can arrange to see you as well. In February, the Chicago Fraternity of the Little Sisters of Jesus will be with us for our usual format - Eucharist, Potluck and Meeting. We often send cards and notes to our Brothers and Sisters who cannot be with us, and we visit them when we can. We are beginning to have some music at our gatherings, as we have some accomplished musicians. And we have started a scrap-book of our various activities, which is fun for visiting Franciscans to leaf through, as well as our shut-ins.

Tucson-Coolidge At the December meeting, plans were made for the next six monthly meetings - discussing the book, "Holiness," by Earnest Larsen; a closed meeting in March for professed tertiaries to make reports; a retreat; and the profession of Suki Miller.

Bay Area New Umbrian Fellowship Dates for activities to which all were invited included November 6-9, another event Nov. 9, Nov. 14, Nov. 22-23, Dec. 6, Dec. 8, Dec. 19! This included the monthly Fellowship meetings, a Cursillo, the institution of Bob Hasseries as Vicar of Saint Guthbert's, Oakland; a visit from Sister Joyce to share her experience when she visited the Poor Clares as they established their house in Australia, discussion of the growth of the Fellowship and plans to divide into smaller groups; a seminar on the subject of Icons, led by Fr. John Walsted, O.H.C.; confirmation of a tertiary's daughter; sharing in the occasion when Sister Joyce and Sister Ruth made their Life Vows.

Santa Clara In November, George Gray wrote to announce the establishment of this new Fellowship. He said the Fellowship of Santa Clara decided to keep a close and continuing relationship with the New Umbrian Fellowship, planning joint gatherings every quarter. Meanwhile, they plan to meet once each month. The group includes 4 tertiaries and four friends.

San Bernardino Although the group has dwindled because several tertiaries moved, Ken Cox wrote mentioning a good meeting in December.

The Third Order in Trinidad has really come into being due to the presence of the Brothers of the First Order, although there may have been isolated tertiaries for short periods. - At the moment, there is another priest, Fr. David Spencer, who is a tertiary novice. He, I, and Br. Dominic are trying to meet regularly at about a monthly interval, for a time of fellowship, learning and prayer. There are a few others, lay and clerical, who are also showing interest in the Third Order; and it is hoped that during this year we can enlarge our group. Most of those interested in the Franciscan life see a good bit of the Friars - they travel widely and are welcomed as preachers and missionaries in many parishes. Also, St. Anthony's House (the friary) is a warm and welcoming place and visitors go there in a constant stream.

Fr. Barry Coker, January 1976

MESSAGES FROM AND ABOUT INDIVIDUALS

We heartily welcome those tertiaries who have been professed since the last Newsletter:-

- Susan Miller, of Yuma, Arizona, professed on December 7th, wrote in a January note, "The weather is great: chilly at times, cool evenings, warm days, windy at times -- but the sunsets, well! they are the best on the cloudy days with a bit of a wind to kick up the dust - which is so much like life. It is so beautiful after having been through a tough period."

- Stephen Farlow of El Paso, Texas, was professed on January 4th in New Orleans, being accepted by Emma Kuhne.

- The Rev. Billy Hoover, of Los Gatos, California, was professed Feb. 11th by Br. Luke, S.S.F., following an invitation/announcement by the Fellowship of Santa Clara.

We pray for the repose of the souls of Miss Mary "Mollie" Clinton, who died January 19; and Dr. G. Alvah Hoffman, who died February 11.

Marie Hayes writes, "I have been deeply humbled by the number of people who have expressed concern over my resignation as Novice Director. I would appreciate it if you would note in the next Newsletter that I am now a Novice Counselor and will continue to work in that capacity."

Early in November, Judy Layo wrote requesting that we pray for her and her concern about her mother, Gladys Joan McCleave, who was seriously ill.

John Senette wrote, "I have some news: I have accepted the call of Grace Church, St. Francisville, LA, to become its Rector as of 1-1-76. Pax et Bonum."

"Just got to looking over your recent mailing, and want to thank you for the excerpts from our Message. This cannot help helping us. I was (here speaks the old grouch) a bit surprised that no mention was included of WHY we are so broke and what we want extra help for! As you may recall, we moved here from St. Christopher's at Bluff, the four of us being poor but not destitute -- I had the minimum pension from CPF, Br. Juniper had a min. from Social Security, Helen and Joan has each a bit coming in. But to do any work for the Navajo people required outside help, and our Messages were effective in bringing that in. BUT NOW we have a new Pastor, Fr. Kawano, and he has to have what the Diocese regards as minimal pay. That's why we're hollering for help! "

Fr. H. B. Liebler

Recently, my husband invited me to go with him to a lunch time lecture sponsored by the Classics Department. After it we were included in the lunch party, and I found myself sitting next to the lecturer's wife. She told me that they were in the middle of a world tour; they had recently been lecturing in Australia, were now here, and were going to California tomorrow then across the States, and back to Oxford, England, which is home base, in May.

The remarkable thing is that she just happened to mention that she had met Brother John Charles in Australia. When I responded that I knew him, she was overjoyed and said she had discussed with him the possibility of a vocation to the Third Order. I even had my address and intercession list with me and was able to give her contacts in the main centres they were going to visit across the States. I hope she did indeed contact some of you! And to think that I had gone very reluctantly to that lecture, only to please my husband!

A few days later, there was a young couple visiting Victoria from California who turned up at early Mass at the Cathedral, which I also attend on weekdays when I am in the city centre. Just by chance, during coffee and bun after Mass they asked if we had heard of SSF. Thank you, Michael Davis - it was good to meet you. Keep on just happening to ask wherever you go!

Muriel Adey

BUSY TIMES

For two weeks I'm at a training program for rural parsons and leader-types, meeting at Roanridge, outside Kansas City, Mo. And meanwhile, back at Glasgow, Amory fell down the basement stairs and ended up with a clean-break broken right leg. Br. Robert is due in Glasgow when I get back -- and a diocesan board of trustees meeting thrown in for good measure. All in a day's work. All, really, is just fine.

Kale King, January 1976

I got terribly busy all of a sudden with some things I had not been expecting. The Internado Director and his wife were both sick and St. Michael's is without a rector, so I had to take over there, too. Kind of a hectic Christmas-tide, but a lot of fun, too. You know, you don't mind the work when it means someone else is going to experience some joy because of it. The boys at the Internado had a good Christmas Party on the 19th - early because they leave to visit with families over the school holidays. They also broke three pinatas on Three Kings Day (Epiphany).

Sam Samuelson, in Mexico, January 1976

NOTES

With this Newsletter is being mailed a sheet to go with the TSF Directory, with additions and changes of address. After Easter, work will begin on the 1976 Directory, so please be sure your address is correct. Also, there has been a request for telephone numbers. If you would like yours included, please send it in to Helen Webb - don't forget the area code as well as local number. It is quite difficult to locate tertiaries in some of the larger phone books. Yet how nice it is to be able to say hello, when visiting around the country.

Once again - please take note of the new address for sending checks - to Third Order, Society of St. Francis, c/o The Rev. Hendrik Koning, St. Mary's Church, Hamilton Village, 3601 Locust Walk, Philadelphia, PA 19104.

PRINTED MATERIAL AVAILABLE

From: Society of St. Francis, Little Portion Friary
P.O. Box 399, Mt. Sinai, New York 11766

The Little Chronicle (monthly) \$1.00 annual subscription
The Franciscan (international quarterly) \$3.00
Letter to Third Order Aspirants (No. 1)
Brochures: (a limited supply is also available from the T.O. Secretary.)
- Franciscans May Be For You
- The Third Order
- If Your Heart Hurts (Associates)

From: The Poor Clares, Maryhill, Mt. Sinai, New York 11766
St. Clare's Monstrance (quarterly) \$1.00

From: Third Order Secretary - Mrs. Edward Webb
4008 Buckingham Road, Baltimore, Maryland 21207
Directory: Third Order Intercession and Address List (annual)
Purple book: The Way of St. Francis
Manual: Admissions, Constitution, Rule, Way of Life, Statutes
Book of Roots: Source documents
Peter Funk Letters: to postulants and novices (Numbers 2-22)
Chaplain's Study-Reflection series: Introduction, Numbers 1 and 2
Forms of Prayer for Franciscans (Diocese of Melanesia Press) pamphlet
Report Forms
(Note: Checks for voluntary donations for material should
be made out to Third Order, Society of St. Francis.)

From: Third Order Guardian - The Rev. John Scott
St. Mary's Church, Hamilton Village, 3601 Locust Walk
Philadelphia, PA 19104
Brochure on the Third Order, in Spanish
Letterhead and envelopes (for use by Counselors, etc.)

From: National Franciscan Communications Conference
1229 South Santee Street, Los Angeles, CA 90015
National Franciscan Directory (Roman Catholic and Episcopal)
(First, Second and Third Orders, and publications. \$2.00)