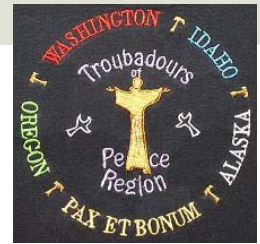


# Troubadours of Peace Region

## Secular Franciscan Order



### Part two in the series on Secular Franciscan gatherings: SHARING

#### Sharing

#### Special Interest Articles:

- Sharing,  
Friar John.
- RM message  
From  
Chapter.
- 3 Kings
- Formation
- Prayer/Liturgy

PRAYER (Spring 2010), SHARING (Fall 2010) and lastly SOCIAL (Spring 2011)

"The Lord appointed 72 messengers whom He sent out . . . in pairs, in every town He intended to visit, Go on your way." Upon their return, they gathered to SHARE the good news, their experiences, (Luke chapter 10). They were overwhelmed with whom they encountered.

St. Francis used the some example of sending out his brother friars, two by two, to areas local and also far and wide. They were to preach by example using few words. Upon returning they gathered in groups in order to relate their experiences. They SHARED the happenings.

We also as Franciscans are to "preach" the Lord's News to whomever we meet on our journey and then to relate and SHARE our stories when we come, when we gather together, A variety of experiences, small and great, maybe useful and helpful to others in our own fraternity.

*(Hymn) SONG OF THE BODY OF CHRIST. WE COME TO SHARE OUR STORY. WE COME TO BREAK BREAD.*

(True story) An earthquake in Ecuador, 1987. A long line of distributing food, rice, canned goods, little fruit. A young 12 year old girl waited patiently. The food was running low. The girl's attention was focused on three younger children across the street under the shade of a tree. When she came to receive her share of food, all that was left was a solitary banana. She smiled, took the gift, ran across the street, peeled the banana, and divided it into three equal parts, placing one section into each child's hand. She then sat down and licked the inside of the banana peel.

The face of God must have been pleased with a most vibrant smile.

So, what is it that we need to SHARE in our gatherings? We know we must begin with prayer, perhaps a few business affairs, followed by an amount of SHARING, and then the social.

All of us, all, have occasioned some experiences in our Franciscan life, these experiences need to be SHARED with our members. Incidents, happenings even of the smallest forms that are quite common must be counted as being important. We must learn to tell our story. Perhaps a few words, actions, or activities.

Each one counts in the eyes of God.

*(Hymn) WE ARE MANY PARTS, WE ARE ALL ONE BODY AND THE GIFTS WE HAVE WE ARE GIVEN TO SHARE.*

Yes, the 12 year old girl in the story related above was truly extraordinary. Such an incident may not happen to any of us. But what does count in the eyes of God, how do we relate, how do we live our human, our Christian, our Franciscan lives in the world around us.

Francis was always with Jesus: Jesus in his heart, Jesus in his mouth, Jesus in his ears, Jesus in his eyes, Jesus in his hands, he bore Jesus always in his whole body. ( 1 Celano 115)

Jesus Christ is our way, our truth, and our life. Help us to follow Christ faithfully and to show His way to others.

RM  
Message

Blessings all!

What should I mention that might be of service to you in your love for each other? It has been a long year, in which you have blessed me with the honor of serving each of you. As National Formation Director, I have attended several National Chapters, to offer reports and advice on formation and to offer the National Fraternity sessions for their “on-going” formation. This year was different since I also had the great honor of representing Troubadours of Peace as your Regional Minister.

A second blessing was hidden in the form of our National Visitation from representatives of our Minister General. Much was shared between us all, our goals and desires for our Order, building our sense of identity, our understanding that we are actually an ORDER, an Order of people professed to live by our form of Rule, and not just a church group with assorted members. The concerns expressed by many seemed to revolve around both our fraternal life and our pursuit of new vocations.

*“evaluate your  
Fraternal life?”*

Tibor Kauser, OFS our International Fraternal Visitor was most surprised that many of our fraternities across the USA gather only once a month and in many cases have no relationship with each other outside the once a month meetings. One of his observations expressed to us was in the form first of a question, How can you truly develop a rich Franciscan Fraternal life with so little time to build relationships, especially when many of our professed members gather more frequently with other parish organizations? This was followed up with a challenge to fully embrace Professed Franciscan life and to find ways to focus more time, energy and ultimately ourselves within the privileged place of Fraternity! Actually the challenge comes directly from our Rule – you know the way of life we all said YES too!!

*The SFO Rule!*

If you find the spot or spots in our Rule that emphasize fraternity – email me your answers.

*Profession &  
Consecration!*

So why is it that Fraternity life is often our lowest priority and not the first? Why do we consider our fraternity meetings as less important than our individual ministries, you can only answer this for yourself, but I might hypothesize a bit. My thought is that we want to be in the fore-front of doing, much like Home Depot advertizes, ratchet up our doing dials!! If that is the case, we left out the most important step in Franciscan formation; we are about BEING, not about Doing!! Doing will flow naturally from our Franciscan lives, but our essence as an Order is to transform our selves (being) into living examples of Jesus, the Beloved Son and as Francis writes, our elder Brother.

*Priorities, where  
Are yours?*

Franciscan Life is first and foremost about being in loving relationships, especially with the brothers and sisters in our local fraternity, again this is part of the Rule we professed and consecrated ourselves and lives to. Heady stuff, CONSECRATED! I hope you will reflect on this as the foundation of our reality, both for our Fraternity/Order and for the Holy Church. If our fraternities are not that privileged place for the Gospel to thrive and flourish, and if we just can't wait to get there, not out of obligation, but out of pure desire to love life and share “our happenings and events,” then we need to take a good look at what we thought profession was all about and what is happening at our gatherings. Is our fraternity really gathering us in? If not then why not?

I will echo Tibor's challenge to meet more regularly (every week in many parts of the world) and for each SFO to work to make their fraternity that truly special place where we all can be

welcome and share love and family! Pace e bene *Fitz*

# Three kings and a child

**“Three kings and a child in the stable!** Poor master, how mad he is!”

*The First Miracle* is a short story by Azorin. Azorin (Jose Martinez Ruiz) was a Spanish novelist, playwright, essayist and literary critic born in 1873. The story takes place in Bethlehem: Year 1 of the Christian Era.

It is the story of an old man, a miser, with a large beard and sunken eyes. He wants to know everything his servants and farmhands did every moment and especially how they spent his money.

One night his shepherd doesn't arrive on time at the old man's house. Finally, the shepherd does arrive and the old man is angry, shouting at the shepherd. It is a very impatient, irritated, and angry old man. The shepherd says they was a man and a woman in the stable. The old man says he will go see for himself and will “throw those tramps out of his stable.”

What does the old man see in his stable? Azorin, the author, uses words “marvelous, amazing”, “this wonder” to describe the reaction of the old man to what he sees in the stable.

It is a different, changed man, who returns to his house. The old man is meek, silent, docile, absorbed. What is his secret?

He speaks into his wife's ear. She repeats “Three kings and a child!” His daughter says, “Poor father, he's mad!” The servants also think he is mad. The wife calls in a doctor. The doctor tells the old man's wife: “Your husband is mad, but it is a mild form of insanity. No danger at all. Nothing to worry about. Crazy of course, but gentle. No special treatment. We'll wait and see...”

Do people think we are crazy because we believe that in Bethlehem, year one, there was in a stable, a man, woman, child and three kings. Jesus the Christ Child, Mary, and Joseph and three wise kings in a stable.

William Short, O.F.M., reminds us that the heart of Franciscan theology is the incarnation. “The Franciscan tradition, with its emphasis on the incarnation, can provide an alternative view of spirituality, one firmly rooted in the ordinary events of human life,” Bill Short has written. He mentions that “though the centuries the incarnation has been an unending source of inspiration and admiration.”

How as Secular Franciscans do we show that the incarnation is a source of inspiration and admiration for us? And do we let our family, friends, and those we meet that God sent His beloved Son, Jesus, to be born in a humble stable because God loves us so much.

Christmas is about the birth of Jesus Christ. This time of the year for so many is the winter season, the holiday season, shop till you drop, buy, buy, and buy some more. Do people think we are mad, crazy because with our minds, heart we have seen a man, a woman, a child, and three kings in a stable.

“And the old man with the long beard sees the days go by without impatience, without irritation, without anger. He gives money to the poor and has kindly words for all.

May our days go by the same way.

by Roger Yockey, SFO, Regional Vice Minister  
November 11, 2010

**Resolution on Immigration  
NAFRA Chapter**

We, the National Fraternity of the Secular Franciscan Order of the United States of America, are gathered for our annual meeting at the Franciscan Renewal Center in Scottsdale, Arizona from October 26 to 31, 2010. After study and consideration, the representatives of thirty national regions with over 14,000 members find intolerable some current harsh attitudes towards migration and deplore the fear and anxiety paralyzing our immigrant brothers and sisters.

As Franciscans, we intentionally chose to come to Arizona to stand in solidarity with the migrants in our midst.

Regardless of the result of the upcoming election, The National Fraternity of the Secular Franciscan Order wishes to express the following points:

- We endorse the United States Catholic Bishops' urgent call for Comprehensive Immigration Reform, including their strong support for the DREAM act.
- We support and encourage all the humanitarian efforts to assist immigrants who are struggling to survive.
- We pray for peace and harmony, and we always remember in prayer families who are being torn apart.

• • •  
**Announcing: Quinquennial XVIII**

**WHY FRANCIS? CLAIM THE GIFT**

July 3-8, 2012  
Holiday Inn Northshore  
Chicago, IL



### **Recommendation on Spiritual Assistance**

The National Fraternity of the Secular Franciscan Order in the United States, meeting on October 29, 2010, at Scottsdale, Arizona, aware of the lack of Franciscan friars to serve as Spiritual Assistants to fraternities, recommends as follows:

1. That all Regional Councils take the Family Connections classes or correspondence course, or at a minimum, read that text, in order to become more familiar with the functions of a Lay Spiritual Assistant, and
2. That all Regional Councils, as much as is possible, given geographic limitations, and in conjunction with their Provincial Spiritual Assistant, institute within their regions training programs for Lay Spiritual Assistants, and
3. During such time as a fully trained and certified Lay Spiritual Assistant is not assigned to a specific fraternity, that certified person work with an existing Spiritual Assistant as an intern, and assist the Formation Team with formation of that fraternity.

#### **National Prayer for Vocations to the Secular Franciscan Order**

O, Good and Gracious God,  
 God of mercy, compassion, generosity, and love,  
 As we live our lives today in the model of St. Francis,  
 choosing daily to live the Gospel life,  
 Help us to help others hear your call.  
 Help us to help others to recognize  
 their vocation as a Secular Franciscan  
 that You have already planted in their heart.  
 Help us, so that together we all may work  
 to bring the Gospel to life.

Amen!

Marian R. Crosby. SFO

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## NAFRA 2010 Peace Award

# NEWS

NATIONAL FRATERNITY  
SECULAR FRANCISCAN ORDER  
IN THE UNITED STATES

Media Contact:

Bob Stronach, SFO, 315-796-9468; Mary Stronach, SFO, 315-796-9284, [stonach@kateriregion.org](mailto:stonach@kateriregion.org)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Oct. 28, 2010

### **Friar to the Homeless Gets Special Birthday Gift: 2010 Peace Award**

**SCOTTSDALE, AZ** -- Brother David Buer, OFM, a Franciscan friar who has been working with the homeless and marginalized in **Tucson** and **Las Vegas**, received a special birthday gift on Oct. 26, a day after he turned 57 -- the National Peace Award from the Secular Franciscan Order.



Bishop Eduardo Alanis Nevares, the newly installed auxiliary bishop of Phoenix, presented the award during the order's national chapter, held Oct. 26-31 at the Franciscan Renewal Center in Scottsdale, AZ. Brother David's mother, Doris Buer, flew in from **Ballwin, MO** to join in the presentation.

"It's my experience that we can expect God's blessing when we bring these people -- the poor, the homeless, the migrants -- into our circle of love," Brother David told some 75 ministers, delegates and observers

representing 14,000 Secular Franciscans across the U.S.

He said he was humbled and honored to receive the same award that, in the past, also went to the likes of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and Mother Teresa of Calcutta.



## Our International Fraternal and Pastoral Visitors



Tibor Kauser, OFS (CIOFS fraternal visitor)

Br. Amanuel Mesgun, OFMCap (CIOFS Pastoral Visitor)

### Excerpt from our Fraternal Visitor's report

#### 4. General observations, recommendations.

- The National Fraternity is a strong, living union of the local fraternities, guided and animated by the National Council and the NEC. We ask to keep this live spirituality and to live with the benefits of the great diversity of the fraternities and the individual members. The great variety of the languages, of the age of the members, of the cultural background is a good opportunity to develop the fraternal life.
- The fraternal spirit among the local fraternities is good, but we still recommend to strengthen it. Those fraternities, who have more in formation, in vocations, in spiritual or mental capacities, in financial resources, shall in a good fraternal spirit share these goods with the others. This is explicitly valid for the formation and the spiritual capacities.
- Formation is one of the Order's priorities. In this spirit we recommend to go ahead on the way that has been introduced. Particular attention is to be paid to the very actual problem of the formation of the spiritual assistants, both religious and secular. This needs a strong collaboration between the SFO and the first orders.
- For the transparency of the finances and also to increase the sense of belonging and the responsibility of the members, the nature of the fare share as "a contribution to something that is ours" is strongly recommended to be strengthened.
- We appreciate the deep, devoted prayer life of the individual members. This gives a strong spiritual background to the work and service of the National Council. On the other hand, we recommend to pay particular attention to those local fraternities, where the spirituality of the renewed SFO after the Vatican II has not been discovered yet, and to foster the profound formation also in this regard.

Finally, we say thanks again, to the whole National Council and the Spiritual Assistants, for their work for the sake of the National Fraternity. We felt the brotherhood, the good fraternal spirit. We have learned a lot from them, and we hope, that we could help them.



Memorial Service at the Guadalupe Shrine

Scenes from Chapter



Br David Buer OFM

Tom Bello, SFO  
National Minister



# Formation

Dear brothers and sisters,

Over the past few years, I have been blessed to serve the Order as the National Formation Director, and to work beside some of the finest formation folks in our Order. Since the General Chapter of the SFO in 2008, we have been working on developing a new “Forming the Formators” manual and National Workshop for formator training. This will come to fruition this coming May 12-15, 2011, but I am sure you are asking what does this new stuff mean for me??

Why now and what’s going on? Well since 2002, our International Presidency (CIOFS) has been tasked by the General Chapter of the SFO to improve the level of formation and develop methods to enhance both our understanding of ourselves as professed members of an Order, and our sense of belonging to that Order.

We make a profession that is equally as serious as our Friars and Sisters, it is not a second class vocation nor simply a membership, but a true consecration of ourselves and lives, putting ourselves at God’s disposal! Yes I said CONSECRATION! At the time of Profession, the local minister calls down the Holy Spirit on those being professed that they might be transformed to the service of God’s Kingdom; this “epiclesis” is the same type of prayer that our priests was when asking the Holy Spirit to transform the bread and wine into the body and blood of Jesus.

After years of traveling the world on visitations, the councilors of CIOFS, expressed through the words of our Minister General, seem to point to professions being granted just to keep people happy of as a reward for the long journey of formation, but not because we have discerned that the SFO is where this vocation is leading. I have heard of stories of wanting to profess folks with little or no desire to be in community (the local fraternity) or my our spirituality is leading me into a different path, or my spiritual director advises that the fraternity is not the right way for me. These types of situations reflect to me folks that are good and prayerful people, but not that they have a Franciscan Vocation!

We know God is not in the American slang, an “indian-giver” – once given a gift is not taken away and in this case, vocation, either as a Friar or Sister or Secular, the gift contains the GRACE to be faithful to the vocation which includes the Fraternity & Order. Sure there can be and hopefully is growth and transformation within this vocation, but it is still held within the nature of vocation. Those wanting to leave because “my prayer life” has changed, probably never had a true vocation to the SFO. Yes they may be filled with the Franciscan spirit and charism, but probably not in Professed Life!

The new formation was developed to provide more specific focus on those values and charisms that are uniquely contained in our Franciscan Vision and approach to God. We are one of many excellent spiritualities with the Church and the Church needs us, but it needs us as specifically and uniquely Franciscan!

Yes there will be changes in our formation in that within the new materials, both by the National Formation Commission and through the new works of our formation writers like Fr. Lester Bach, OFMCap. Subject areas once taken for granted will receive more attention as will vocation discernment & responsibilities of professed life, so yes we will need to add new areas to our formation process and our educators and spiritual assistants will need to collaborate more closely with the fraternity council and the formation process.

Continued on next page

Formation continued:

Workshops are coming, first the National Workshop in May of 2011 where formation teams from all regions of the US will gather to begin the training process. Once completed and armed with the new CIOFS directed materials as well as some others developed by our own National Formation Commission, (NFC), they will return home to replicate the workshop for all of their local formation directors – here hopefully with the assistance of an NFC member.

We have traveled a long road, since our Rule received Papal approval in 1289 in the Papal Bull “*Supra Montem*” till our newest Rule of 1978 was confirmed by Pope Paul VI in his letter “*Seraphicus Patriarcha*.” We have shifted from autonomy to obedience and finally had our autonomy reaffirmed. We have gone from a membership idea to that and right so of fully professed. Now some 32 years later, we are on the verge of realizing our autonomy and while there are some who would prefer us to remain under obedience to our friar brothers, the vision of our Order enkindles the original founding ideals of St Francis. Our friar brothers have wholeheartedly supported us in journey, but now I think we must convince ourselves!

Too often everything else is more important than our responsibilities to live in and serve both fraternity and Order. We don’t shrink away from weekly parish meeting, K of C, Altar Society, Holy Name Society, personal ministries etc, but the thought of more frequent fraternity gatherings is just not acceptable. It would appear we have our priorities out of balance, or were unaware of what profession was really about. At the National level we, the Regional Ministers of the US, were challenged to go back to our regions and find ways to encourage greater life in our fraternities. Our CIOFS visitors shared with us firsthand how in many parts of the world, fraternities gather weekly, they are the center of people’s lives, not just an after thought. Fraternities and Seculars assist and support each other from within, serving our own Order first before looking outside.

These are just some of the concerns surfaced by CIOFS that have given rise to the formulation and updating of Formation throughout the SFO worldwide.

So how might these new topics fit? For that I will refer you to the following chart and also ask you to go back and reread or read for the first time the “Guidelines for Initial Formation” 1985. The chart is based on the directions given in the Guidelines and offer one (and only one) possibly way to incorporate the specific topics we are listing as foundational requirements for Initial Formation.

I apologize for the length of this column, but I felt it important to let you know so you can discuss formation in your local councils and fraternities.

Pace e bene

Bob Fitzsimmons, SFO  
National Formation Director

<p><b>Guidelines for Initial Formation</b>  <b>Approved October 1985</b>  <b>Ref: pp 25-35, 39</b></p> <p><b>Orientation -</b> Determine basic disposition to Franciscan Charism &amp; life in fraternity:</p> <p><b>Content:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Overview of life of Francis</li> <li>Branches of Franciscan Family</li> <li>The SFO</li> <li>Phases of Formation &amp; expectations</li> <li>Review Catholic Doctrine</li> </ul> <p><b>Inquiry -</b> 1<sup>st</sup> Phase of Initial Formation begins more in-depth process of identifying and discerning vocation</p> <p><b>Content</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Church &amp; Vatican 2</li> <li>Lay Spirituality</li> <li>Life of St Francis</li> <li>History of the SFO</li> <li>Structure of the SFO</li> <li>Ritual of the SFO</li> </ul> <p><b>Candidacy</b> – preparation to embrace vocation and make permanent Profession (consecrated life)</p> <p><b>Content:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pauline Rule &amp; Prologue</li> <li>Sacred Scripture</li> <li>Franciscan Spirituality <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Trinitarian &amp; Christo-centric</li> </ul> </li> <li>Franciscan Apostolic Life</li> <li>Ritual</li> </ul>	<p><b>Core Topics</b>  <b>Forming the Formators (CIOFS)</b></p> <p><b>Orientation</b> – more extensive understanding of Catholicism might require a year or so in an RCIA or other parish religious education program</p> <p><b>Content:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>The Franciscan Movement</i></li> <li>The Franciscan Family [C]</li> <li>The Creed [C]</li> <li>Ecclesiology of the Laity [C]</li> </ul> <p><b>Inquiry – suggest study of a bio of St Francis</b></p> <p><b>Content:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What is formation [C]</li> <li>Basic Christian Doctrine [C]</li> <li>Vocation &amp; discernment [C]</li> <li>Charism of founder &amp; mission in the Church [C]</li> <li>Nature of the SFO [C]</li> <li>Identity of a Secular Franciscan</li> <li><i>Optional Franciscan Movement 2</i></li> <li><i>Discuss insights from a bio of Francis</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Candidacy</b></p> <p><b>Content:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Our Rule (x3)</li> <li><i>JPIC (1or 2) (tbd)</i></li> <li><i>Conversion – penitential movement (tbd) [C]</i></li> <li>Francis approach to God [C]</li> <li>PROFESSION (1 or 2) [C]</li> <li>Franciscan Tradition &amp; Spirituality</li> <li>Fraternity [C]</li> <li>Francis &amp; Blessed Mother</li> <li>St. Clare</li> <li><i>History of SFO [C]</i></li> <li>GC &amp; Statutes (study guides)</li> </ul>
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# Memo for our Regional Secretary

## Memo for our Regional Secretary

### *Our Sister Cold*

*As winter grips its icy hands  
Around the countryside,  
I marvel at the sights I see,  
That change the scenery!*

*The cold that creeps upon us all  
Brings a certain warmth inside,  
As we see the children with such glee,  
To slide, to tumble, to throw a snowball*

*So winter comes our sister cold,  
Our steps so slow and careful,  
I think I'd like to slide, to tumble, to throw....  
But know.....  
I'd better not - I'll wait for spring!*

*Marilyn Yockey, SFO*

*I want to thank all of you for doing a fine job of sending in your updates to the directory to me. This is a job that is never "done" as things are always changing, but the directory is as up-to-date as it can be thanks to each of you. I want to encourage you to keep sending me the changes as they occur. My e-mail is [mjyock@comcast.net](mailto:mjyock@comcast.net).*

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## National Minister's Christmas Message – Crib at Greccio



The holiday season is a time of sharing stories, and one of my favorite stories about St. Francis is the Christmas story at Greccio. What I did not know until I heard the wonderful lectures by Brother Bill Short OFM (*St. Francis of Assisi: A New Way of Being Christian*) was that this Christmas story came after a time of great hardship for St. Francis and dissension even among his brothers. This Christmas story thus has a special joy because of the suffering St. Francis had experienced before.

Thomas of Celano, who, Brother Short tells us, probably knew St. Francis personally, decided to conclude his *First Life* of St. Francis with the consoling Christmas story of Greccio (Chapter XXX, 84-86):

"St. Francis's highest intention, greatest desire, and supreme purpose was to observe the holy gospel in and through all things. He wanted to follow the doctrine and walk in the footsteps of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to do so perfectly, with all vigilance, all zeal, complete desire of the mind, complete fervor of the heart. He remembered Christ's words through constant meditation and recalled his actions through wise consideration. The humility of the incarnation and the love of the passion so occupied his memory that he scarcely wished to think of anything else. Hence what he did in the third year before the day of his glorious death, in the town called Greccio, on the birthday of our Lord Jesus Christ, should be reverently remembered."

Francis instructed a citizen of Greccio named John, "I want to do something that will recall the memory of that child who was born in Bethlehem, to see with bodily eyes the inconveniences of his infancy, how he lay in the manger, and how the ox and ass stood by."

"The day of joy drew near, the time of exultation approached. The brothers were called from their various places. With glad hearts, the men and women of that place prepared, according to their means, candles and torches to light up that night which has illuminated all the days and years with its glittering star. Finally the holy man of God arrived and, finding everything prepared, saw it and rejoiced.

"The manger is ready, hay is brought, the ox and ass are led in. Simplicity is honored there, poverty is exalted, humility is commended and a new Bethlehem, as it were, is made from Greccio. Night is illuminated like the day, delighting men and beasts. The people come and joyfully celebrate the new mystery. The forest resounds with voices and the rocks respond to their rejoicing. The brothers sing, discharging their debt of praise to the Lord, and the whole night echoes with jubilation. The holy man of God stands before the manger full of sighs, consumed by devotion and filled with a marvelous joy. The solemnities of the Mass are performed over the manger and the priest experiences a new consolation.

"The holy man of God wears a deacon's vestments, for he was indeed a deacon, and he sings the holy gospel with a sonorous voice. And his voice, a sweet voice, a vehement voice, a clear voice, a sonorous voice, invites all to the highest rewards. Then he preaches mellifluously to the people standing about, telling them about the birth of the poor king and the little city of Bethlehem. Often, too, when he wished to mention Jesus Christ, burning with love he called him 'the child of Bethlehem,' and speaking the word 'Bethlehem' or 'Jesus,' he licked his lips with his tongue, seeming to taste the sweetness of these words."

Continued on next page

We all know that St. Francis had a great devotion to the Passion of Christ, but let us not forget that St. Francis also had a great devotion to the Child Jesus. In this Holy Christmas Season, let us renew our devotion to the Holy Infant.

Let us pray: "Holy Infant Jesus, shine upon us Your innocent love. Help us to seek no greater joy in this life than that of serving You. Impress upon our hearts the virtues of Your holy childhood: the innocence, the simplicity, the total trust in God our Father. You are the source of all life and of all holiness. Help us to be holy and innocent in life and in love."

Let us renew our resolve to protect all human life, especially all our children, born and unborn.

May all the love, peace and joy of this Holy Christmas Season be yours now and throughout all the Holy New Year 2010.

Peace and Love, the greatest Good,

Tom

## THE CHRISTMAS AT GRECCIO

"The beautiful Mother is bending  
 Low where her Baby lies  
 Helpless and frail, for her tending;  
 But she knows the glorious eyes.

"The Mother smiles and rejoices  
 While the Baby laughs in the hay;  
 She listens to heavenly voices:  
 'The child shall be King, one day.'

"O dear little Christ in the manger,  
 Let me make merry with Thee.  
 O King, in my hour of danger,  
 Wilt Thou be strong for me?"

—Adapted from the Latin of Jacopone da Todi,  
*Thirteenth Century.*

## Franciscan Action Network Advent of Franciscan Values: Resources for Advent 2010

[http://www.franciscanaction.org/advent\\_2010](http://www.franciscanaction.org/advent_2010)

As the world prepares to celebrate the birth of God-with-us, Advent offers Franciscans and Franciscan-hearted persons a special opportunity to reflect on Francis and Clare's devotion to the mystery of the Incarnation. From his living nativity scene to his devotion to Christ's presence in all of creation, Francis witnessed to God's embrace of humanity, the Creator taking on created nature. In the midst of what can be a frenzied time of year, FAN invites us to reflect on eight Franciscan values identified by Fr. Tom Nairn, OFM. As we recommit to welcoming Christ into every aspect of our lives, let us welcome each of these values into our prayer. May we find inspiration in the myriad ways that the Incarnate Word speaks to us of these values throughout each day of this season, that we might proclaim in word and deed the advent of Franciscan values in our midst!



### **First Sunday of Advent:**

[Care of Creation & Dignity of the Human Person](#)

[Care of Creation Homily for Advent](#), Fr. Larry Janezic, OFM

### **Second Sunday of Advent:**

[Consistent Ethic of Life & Respect for the Poor and Vulnerable](#)

### **Third Sunday of Advent:**

Heralds of Peace and Reconciliation & Right Relationship of Justice

### **Fourth Sunday of Advent:**

Demanding Change and Conversion & Agents of Change

[Franciscan Values Guiding FAN](#)

## National Prayer for Vocations to the Secular Franciscan Order

O, Good and Gracious God,  
 God of mercy, compassion, generosity, and love,  
 As we live our lives today in the model of St. Francis,  
     choosing daily to live the Gospel life,  
 Help us to help others hear your call.  
 Help us to help others to recognize  
     their vocation as a Secular Franciscan  
     that You have already planted in their heart.  
 Help us, so that together we all may work  
 to bring the Gospel to life.

Amen!

Marian R. Crosby, SFO

### HELP WANTED!

We are seeking someone to accept the position of Region Newsletter Editor.

Computer skills needed – there are only 2 editions per year and they are distributed to the local fraternity ministers through email

Please contact Bob Fitzsimmons – 509-582-7606 or [rlfztsfo@verizon.net](mailto:rlfztsfo@verizon.net)



### **ON-GOING FORMATION from CIOFS** **ONGOING FORMATION PROJECT**

#### **English**

<http://www.ciofs.org/ratio/2010/ENPGM.htm>

#### **Spanish**

<http://www.ciofs.org/ratio/2010/ESPGM.htm>

This offering from CIOFS is the initial year of on-going formation. It is exploring the richness and depth of our call to the SFO and are profession response in accepting that vocation.