



Good News Report

Secular Franciscan Order
Trillium Regional Fraternity



Number 61

December 2011

MINISTER'S LETTER

Dear Friends in Christ,
St. Francis and St. Clare,

St. Francis by his example reminds us to become children in spirit and to so welcome baby Jesus into our lives. So many years ago we looked forward with great anticipation the arrival of our new sibling. All the talk about whom would he resemble, will this be a happy one, will he be friendly, or how we prepare for his needs. So we prepared little shirts decorated with good deeds collected daily during advent and we were so happy to present them to Him on Christmas day at the family's crèches.

These days with family and friends around the Christmas tree we reminisce of the tradition carried on by our elders in years past when the celebration of the Incarnation of Christ was uppermost in everyone's mind. We recall how despite circumstances of those early year of wars and wants and also in good times peace reigned for at least one day, on that blessed Christmas Day, in our hearts and throughout the earth.

At Christmas we sing joyfully to our newborn King not only to welcome Him anew into our lives but also to thank Him for all the graces he bestowed on us this past year. We thank Him for fourteen new professed Franciscans in our Region, for the renewal of five local and regional fraternity leadership and for those dedicated ofs friends who for the love of Him have carried the Franciscan Tau for years with joy and selfless dedication. We celebrate with the Lord our brother Deacon Kaz Chomko ofs whom God blessed with over 100 years of love and good health. We also come to our newborn king with our departed brothers and sisters of this year past to ask for His gracious blessing on them all.

May the baby Jesus bestow new graces on His Franciscan family in the years to come.

Merry Christmas and a blessed new year.
Les Alberti ofs



SPIRITUAL ASSISTANT

As we celebrate the great feast of Christmas it would be good for us to take some time to dwell on this great mystery. I like to do this by sharing with you Pope Benedict XVI message about the theology of Blessed John Duns Scotus, a distinguished Franciscan Theologian of the 13th century. He was beatified on March 20, 1993. The Servant of God, Pope John Paul II describing him as the "cantor of the incarnate Word and defender of the Immaculate Conception." This expression summarizes Duns Scotus' important contribution to the history of theology.

First of all (Scotus) meditated on the Mystery of the Incarnation and, unlike many Christian thinkers of the time, held that the Son of God would have been made man even if humanity had not sinned. In his *Reportata Parisiensa* he wrote: "To think that God would have renounced this work if Adam had not sinned would be completely irrational! I maintain, therefore, that the Fall was not the cause of Christ's predestination and that — even if no one had fallen, neither angel nor man — Christ in this hypothetical situation would have been predestined for the same fate nonetheless"

Such reasoning, perhaps a little surprising, arises from the fact that Duns Scotus considers the incarnation of the Son of God, which God the Father had foreseen from all eternity in his plan of love, to be the fulfillment of creation, making it possible for every creature in Christ and through Christ to be filled with grace and give praise and glory to God throughout eternity.

Duns Scotus, though aware that because of original sin Christ redeemed us with his passion, death and resurrection, makes it clear that the Incarnation is the greatest and most sublime work in the history of salvation — and that it is not conditioned by any contingent circumstance but is God's original idea for ultimately uniting all of creation with himself in the person and in the flesh of his son. A faithful disciple of St. Francis, Duns Scotus loved to reflect and preach on the mystery of Christ's saving passion, an expression of the immense love of God, who lavishly communicates forth from himself the rays of his goodness and



love. This love is revealed not only on Calvary but also in the holy Eucharist, to which Duns Scotus was deeply devoted and which he saw as the sacrament of Jesus' real presence and as the sacrament of unity and communion that leads us to love each other and to love God as the supreme good of all.

Dear brothers and sisters, this strongly "Christocentric" theological vision opens us to contemplation, wonder and gratitude: Christ is the centre of history and of the cosmos, it is he who gives meaning, dignity and value to our lives! As Pope Paul VI proclaimed in Manila, I too would like to cry out to the world: [Christ] "reveals the invisible God, he is the firstborn of all creation, the foundation of everything created. He is the Teacher of mankind, and its Redeemer. He was born, he died and he rose again for us. He is the centre of history and of the world; he is the one who knows us and who loves us; he is the companion and the friend of our life.... I could never finish speaking about him."

Fr. Peter Knaapen OFM Conv.



TO ALL THE BROTHERS AND SISTERS OF THE SECULAR FRANCISCAN ORDER AND YOUFRA IN THE WORLD.

Dear Brothers and Sisters,
May the Lord give you peace! It gives us great joy to offer you warmest greeting from the whole chapter of the OFS, which met for the very first time in South America in Sao Paulo, Brazil.

From this place, we want to share with you the enthusiasm and spiritual energy that this chapter has given to each and everyone of us.

The order is growing! It is growing not only in numbers but also in awareness of its identity, of its proper place in the Family and the Church as well as in awareness of the work it must undertake in the world in continuing the mission of Francis.

The number of emerging fraternities is increasing in all parts of the world, especially in those

areas where the Church exists in very difficult conditions.

Once again, the chapter exhorts us to be generous and to get involved in accompanying these fraternities both spiritually as well as materially and to assist them in formation.

Franciscan Youth is growing stronger all over the world and is a witness to us of a profound commitment of Christian and human authenticity. We have received many great signs of hope and encouragement to help us understand how much we both need each other. We exhort you to love, get to know, and support YOUFRA.

We were forcibly and passionately challenged to discover and to live out our fundamental Christian vocation in our secular state by living radically as Francis did. Our mission is that of the Church: "To evangelize is the grace and vocation proper to the Church; it is at the core of her identity" (Evangelii Nutiandi 14) We are called to carry out this mission with courage, generosity and creativity.

While we were in Chapter, the Holy Father in his message, asked us "to confront with determination the evangelical challenges of this present moment, and to be builders of a civilization of love", "witnesses and instruments of the redemptive mission of the Church, announcing Christ both by word and their own example." It is a mission which is urgent and demanding.

We also seriously called ourselves to reflect on our engagement to build a more just and fraternal world, to become active witnesses and not just passive and distracted observers of the injustices and extreme material and spiritual poverty that a world without God imposes on a large part of humanity and creation.

We can no longer sit on the fence. The Church and the world is waiting for a courageous and effective response from us. The Church and the world has a need for Francis and for the Family of which we are the part that is the largest in number and the most deeply implicated in every place of the world.

There is still much to be done to create lines of stable and effective communication with all national fraternities and to fully develop a sense of belonging which is also attentive to the material necessities of the order. We need to be very much engaged in this way. The chapter reacted with responsibility and sensitivity to this issue. This is a great sign of consolation and hope.

We experienced moments of great fellowship with many religious brothers, our Spiritual Assistants

as well as several provincial Ministers from Brazil and Paraguay. We leave with an immense sense of gratitude towards our religious brothers for the affection they have for us and for the genuine, vital and reciprocal communion that was already strong but has now grow stronger. We felt supported and surrounded by the love of our brothers of all the First Order and TOR who, through their respective Ministers General and many Provincial Ministers, sent us messages of encouragement and expressions of warm fraternal communion.

At the Monastery of the Poor Clares at "HOPE FARM", which we visited to show our love for the Second Order and to celebrate the memory of St. Clare, we received prayerful, enthusiastic and loving support for the Chapter and for all the order. The Chapter took advantage of this special time of communion to present a preview of the message the Secular Franciscan Order will send to all the Poor Clares of the world marking the anniversary of the birth of their order.

From thousands of brothers and sisters in this wonderful country, we experienced a joyous welcome as well as a great and generous hospitality. The whole chapter was held under the maternal protection of Mary, Mother of God and our Mother, venerated here in this country as Our Lady of Aparecida. To her, our protectress and advocate, we entrust the whole Order that she might watch over us and lead us to the full realization of our vocation and mission.

We ask the Lord to give us "wisdom and insight" to welcome the conclusions of this General Chapter with great love as well as a determination to make them part of our lives and to implement them in a courageous manner .

On behalf of all your brothers and sisters
of the Chapter,
Encarnación del Pozo, OFS
General Minister

Trillium Certificates

For Trillium Certificates to mark Professions, Anniversaries of Profession & Service Recognition for Spiritual Assistants, (usually 5 year milestones) please contact: **Clelia Malerba, ofs;** malerbac@yahoo.com
Please apply in good time if you wish to have them on the profession day or anniversary date.

FROM THE FORMATION CORNER



Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

In the Christmas Season we are reminded of God's love for us. We gaze upon the most holy crib, and can each, in our own way picture ourselves and family being there on that Most Holy Night. The peace, joy and humbleness of the Christ Child is ever so visual to us all. We see Jesus, Mary, Joseph, the shepherds, a lamb or two, a donkey and other animals, and the Magi who find the Messiah after following the star.

Ponder if you will: the shepherds - Christ became Our Shepherd; the lamb - Christ was the Lamb of God (the lamb symbolizes the sacrifice of Christ); the donkey - it is said that as a reward for the donkey using it's breath to warm Baby Jesus a cross was marked on it's back, (the donkey carried Jesus on His entry to Jerusalem).

Francis had this same vision, and brought it to life in a little town called Greccio, in the third year before his glorious death. He gathered his friars and neighbours to a crib using real animals and people. He brought this awesome event back to life, to enable others to see this love that Christ has for us all. He had a vision and made it a personal one for all of us. How awesome to be so uniquely in the family of Francis who presented this vision to the world.

I also look upon a Christmas tree and see all the beautiful lights - I see each one of us as one tiny light but gathered together and in harmony under the fellowship of St. Francis, shine forth the light of Christ to the world.

Over the past months, I have met many of you, in the Toronto, Windsor, London, Sarnia, and Tecumseh areas and to each of you I say thank you for your fellowship and welcome responses.

I held a formation meeting in October in the Toronto area, and will be planning another formation meeting in the spring in the West and North areas.

In the meantime, I pray that each of you have a peaceful, love-filled Christmas and a Happy and Holy New Year. May the Christ Child be with you and your families.

Peace and All Good,
Donna Dooling, ofs

VICE MINISTER

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

May the Lord give you Peace! Once again we celebrate the Birth of our Faith the hope of the Nations, the Joy of the World! We have good news to share! With Youth and Everyone! Since the last newsletter, I have been extremely busy! I am working every day for the San Damiano Foundation, doing the banking, promoting awareness as well as cooking in our soup kitchens with other volunteers! I love this work for it is a way to connect with Youth and share Jesus and our Franciscan Charism. I was even invited to UCB Canada to talk about this work and the first question the minister asked me was what, is a Secular Franciscan? I was able to share about our Charism! (note the SDF is a registered Charity with no government funding and no paid staff)

This Christmas, we are holding our 1st Christmas Dinner "Festival of Faith", inviting the whole community of Madoc and surrounding area! We have enough festivals of trees at Christmas so we opted to offer a Festival of "FAITH"! Hopefully all the churches will join us!

On Dec. 8th 2011, we celebrated our 15th Anniversary in the same location! We have fed literally 1000's of youth! In the Centre there is a large icon of St. Francis and one of St. Clare. One of the reporters was questioning our motives and our faith. I assured her that although we were a Christian Outreach, all people of all faiths were welcome to come in. I told her that I am a Roman Catholic and a Secular Franciscan. She had more questions? But then she said so really it doesn't matter what you are, as long as there is love?

I found myself saying "no **love is not enough**" you need "**faith**" and then I showed her the prayer of St. Francis. This is our code of conduct. If a person doubts, it leads to despair and darkness and sadness BUT if we replace doubt with faith, it brings hope, light and joy! We don't want people to become dependent on us but independent, confident and relying on and knowing there is someone much more powerful that loves us!! We as Franciscans have a wonderful charism to share!!

Which brings me once more, to remind everyone that **June 24th 2012** will be our **1st Franciscan Family Fest!** Mark it on your calendars! This is our



chance to share with our family, our youth, and our friends an "**experience**" that could change their lives! I have been working with our steering committee about the Franciscan Family Fest!!

And we have a mission statement

"The Franciscan Family Fest, seeks to be a FAITH and FUN filled day, centered on our Franciscan Charism and values, inviting our fraternities, their families and friends to gather and share, re-evangelizing each other in the spirit of Francis and Clare."

In the very near future, I will send out our tentative agenda. This will give everyone some ideas of what to expect. **NOTE:** The venue will now be **Mount Alverno in Orangeville!** We are already looking at close to a hundred people and we have not heard from very many fraternities. Mount Alverno will be all ours for the event! Lots of room! You will receive a new poster with the agenda.

Jesus came and brought us love, forgiveness, faith and hope and light and joy! Even death holds nothing for us to fear! Emmanuel- God is with us! Let us use this time as an opportunity to bring Hope to a world that really needs it! Let us step out and trim our wicks!!

Young and old together, Priests, Deacons, Single people, Husbands, wives, children and teens grammas and grandpas!

You will also receive a form to be filled in that will help us shape the day!! May the Lord bless you and give you His peace as you share faith and light bringing hope!

Colleen MacAlister ofs

p.s. note it is the 800th celebration for St. Clare in 2012, let us learn from Clare this next year.



... for at the altar of the Blessed Virgin Mary, O Father, You mystically espoused Your Son to Your servant Clare, whom Blessed Francis had inspired with the desire of a higher life; You raised her to the summit of seraphic perfection, and chose her to become the mother of a family of virgins ... (Franciscan Preface, feast of St Clare)

YOUTH COORDINATOR

Dear Franciscan Brothers and Sister,

For my family, the season of Advent began with an experience and reminder of how the Crib and the Cross are forever entwined. Jesus was born to die. On the first Sunday of Advent, when the virtue of HOPE is highlighted, the doctors told us that my granddaughter Lauren would surely die before her second birthday-and so the grieving began.



Lauren Olivia Loughheed

Thank you for your continued prayers for our whole family.

St. Francis loved the Crib, the Cross and the Eucharist. Birth brings a mixed bag of emotions- excitement, invigorating, fear of the unknown, wondering at what is ahead, great expectancy and much, much hope for something new, something delightful.

What is our hope for the SFO and the birth of YouFra in our Trillium Region? People cannot consider something they do not know has been born. We need to plant seeds, here, there and everywhere. In this light I was asked to set up a display for the school board wide FAITH DAY. I was sandwiched between the young adults of CCO, who gladly took information on YouFra, and our Diocesan Youth Ministry Office, who also scooped up the YouFra pamphlets. I tried to speak to as many younger teachers as was possible. Witness! Are you spreading the word in your fraternity, in your parish, in your schools and in your families?

Lisa Theriault is seeing fruits of planting seeds in her high school. She has one student who is definitely discerning a Franciscan life. She is helping the young woman to discern the Secular family or the Poor Clares as her vocation. In addition she is promoting social justice by accompanying students to the Scott Mission in Toronto. People cannot consider something they do not know has been born.

Sylvia Elek has spoken with Deacon Bill Leterio from the University of Ontario in Oshawa. He wants to meet in the new year and will speak to the



Catholic Club on campus. People cannot consider something they do not know has been born.

I have contacted Jonathan, the new youth minister at St. Bonaventure after having read his great interest in St. Francis on facebook. I sent him the YouFra link from our Trillium webpage. People cannot consider something they do not know has been born.

I invite the Youth Commission to skype on Saturday Feb. 11th, 2012 at 1pm. Communication is key in developing strategies so that Young Adults will consider something they know has been born!!

LOVE was born on earth over 2000 years ago only to die a horrible death on the CROSS. Our PEACE is in knowing that Jesus kept His promises and sent us His Holy Spirit. He is with us always. Our JOY is in knowing He is alive, in each one of us, in Lauren, in His Word and in the Eucharist, from which we draw our strength.

Lately, I have been walking in the stillness of the night and have found it very comforting- for it is in the darkness that the light is most striking, most intense, most evident. I pray that as you celebrate LOVE with your families, Christ our Light be striking, intense and most evident in your homes.

Peace,
Silvana Rossi Loughheed ofs



Brother Sun in the night sky. Assisi 2009.

Who are we?

We are Franciscan Youth.

We are young.

**We feel attracted by St Francis of Assisi.
We try to share the experience of Christian life in Fraternity.**

We deepen our vocation within the context of the Secular Franciscan Order.

**We have our own specific organization,
YOUFRA.**

We are present in many countries.

TREASURER

In this season of Christmas, we Franciscans should feel a special love. We feel the love that St. Francis had for the Child of Bethlehem. St. Francis brought the Christ Jesus back to the hearts of those who had forgotten. He transformed Greccio into a new Bethlehem and rekindled the love for the Babe, Christ our Saviour. Pope John XXIII who was professed a Secular Franciscan on May 23, 1897 and an authentic image of the Good Shepherd declared, “Mankind is great, an immense family. This is proved by what we feel in our hearts at Christmas.” May this wonderful Spirit remain in our hearts all through the New Year.



In love,
Cathy Payne ofs

The Good News Report

is the official newsletter of the Secular Franciscan Order, Trillium Region. We aim to publish it in the middle to the end of **September, December, March & June.**

Any items you wish to include are warmly welcomed and will be published space permitting. Articles may be sent by the **8th of the month of publishing, to Deacon Maurice Prindiville, ofs, mprindiville@golden.net**

Note: If you no longer wish to receive the newsletter, please let us know as above.

THE FIRST CHRISTMAS CRÈCHE

“Now three years before his death it befell that he was minded, at the town of Greccio, to celebrate the memory of the Nativity of the Child Jesus, with all the added solemnity that he might, for the kindling of devotion.

That this might not seem an innovation, he sought and obtained license from the Supreme Pontiff, and then made ready a manger, and bade that hay, together with an ox and ass, be brought unto the spot. The friars were called together, the folk assembled, the wood echoed with their voices,

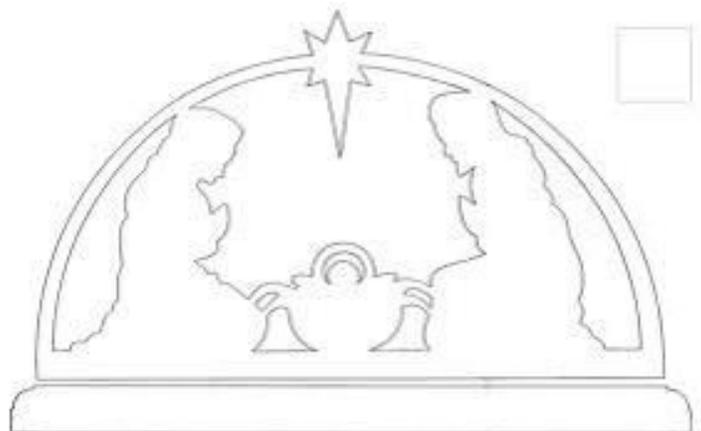
and that august night was made radiant and solemn with many bright lights, and with tuneful and sonorous praises.

The man of God, filled with tender love, stood before the manger, bathed in tears, and overflowing with joy. Solemn Masses were celebrated over the manger, Francis, the levite of Christ, chanting the Holy Gospel. Then he preached unto the folk standing around at the Birth of the King of poverty, calling Him, when he wished to name Him, the Child of Bethlehem, by reason of his tender love for Him.

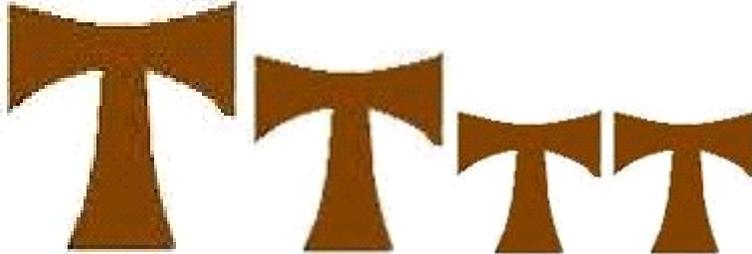
A certain knight, valorous and true, Messer Giovanni di Greccio, who for the love of Christ had left the secular army and was bound by closest friendship unto the man of God, declared that he beheld a little Child right fair to see, sleeping in that manger, who seemed to be awakened from sleep when the blessed Father Francis embraced Him in both arms.

This vision of the devout knight is rendered worthy of belief, not alone through the holiness of him that beheld it, but is also confirmed by the truth that it set forth, and withal proven by the miracles that followed it. For the example of Francis, if meditated upon by the world, must needs stir up sluggish hearts unto the faith of Christ; for even the hay that was taken from the manger by the folk proved a marvellous remedy for sick beasts, and a preventative against divers other plagues, God magnifying by all means His servant, and making manifest by clear and miraculous portents the efficacy of his holy prayers.”

*taken from St. Bonaventure's
Major Life of St. Francis of Assisi,
chapter 10, n.7*



Franciscan Family Fest



**You and your family are invited
to the 1st Franciscan “Family” Fest
Sunday, June 24th 2012
at Mount Alverno Retreat Centre
Caledon Ontario.**

More details will follow shortly! Keep this date booked!

Faith and Fun for the whole family!

*Everyone’s attendance will help make this a memorable day! Please come and bring your fraternity and your families and friends!
REGISTRATION and DETAILS will be sent to Fraternities early 2012. NOTE: This is an indoor/outdoor event and there is no
registration fee! Donations towards the costs are appreciated.*

PAX et BONUM

Local Fraternity Bulletin Board

PROFESSION

Sacred Heart Fraternity in Guelph is very pleased to announce the profession of Steven Briant on June 9, 2011 at the Church of our Lady with Father Peter Knaapen officiating.



New Council, for St. Felix of Cantalice Fraternity. L-r: Bro. Alan Gaebel, ofm, cap, Teodora LaMadrid, Gerry Elises, Iluminada Aguilar, Jacqueline Bobak, Mario Segá, ofs - Formation



Sacred Heart Fraternity in Guelph collects toothbrushes, toothpaste, towels, washcloths, combs, razors, underwear, hats, mitts, scarves and soap throughout the year. Several members of the fraternity also sew tote bags from fabric and at their December meeting members of the fraternity packed the totes with a variety of the items collected. The bags are then sent to the Drop-in Center in Guelph where Sister Christine assures they are received by the homeless as Christmas gifts. After they unpack their bag they can then reuse it throughout the year, a gift that lasts!! Here are some of the members of the fraternity who this year packed 26 bags and enjoyed some fellowship afterwards.

ELECTIONS

St Peter Fraternity - Woodbridge - Nov. 13, 2011

Tony Tarantini ofs	Minister
Rosanna Zeppieri ofs	Vice-Minister
Anna Palombi ofs	Secretary
Cathy Basso ofs	Treasurer
Rose Tarantini ofs	Formation Director

St. Anthony of Padua Fraternity - Sarnia - Nov. 22, 2011.

Patricia Daamen ofs	Minister
Allana Myslawchuk ofs	Vice Minister
Bill Clayton ofs	Secretary
Kay Williams ofs	Treasurer
Jim Vasey ofs	Formation Director

St. Francis Fraternity - Burlington - Nov. 13, 2011

Rosanne Creery ofs	Minister
Bert Cambre ofs	Vice Minister
Dona Gajasinghe ofs	Secretary
Gary Smith ofs	Treasurer
Mark Rozario ofs	Formation Director

St. Felix of Cantalice - Oct. 28, 2011

Teodora LaMadrid ofs	Minister
Gerry Ellises ofs	Vice-Minister
Jackie Bobak ofs	Secretary
Iluminada (Dolly) Aguilera ofs	Treasurer
Mario Segá ofs	Formation Director