



# Good News Report

Secular Franciscan Order  
Trillium Regional Fraternity



Number 63

July 2012

## MINISTER'S LETTER

Dear Brothers and Sisters in St. Francis and St. Clare

The Trillium Region has much to be thankful for this summer as we reflect on the events in the life of the Fraternities this past year and the many members who accepted new leadership roles in their local councils during recent elections. To every one of them we extend our heartfelt thanks and pledge our support and prayers in the years to come.

And of course we all celebrated with great joy the canonical establishment of the Mount Alverno Fraternity on June 24 of this year. Our collective congratulations go to them, their Minister and Council and to the St. Felix Fraternity who sponsored the emergence of the Mount Alverno Community over these past years.

The Franciscan Family Feast was a great success for which we thank Colleen MacAlister and her dedicated team whose individual and collective contributions this past year was instrumental in ensuring a wonderful outcome. According to some there may have been as many as 200 present at various times at the festivities.

We give thanks to the Lord also for the success of the Ministers conference in April that was well attended by Ministers from Sarnia to North Bay, Belleville, Niagara Falls area and points in between. This presented a wonderful opportunity to share in the celebration of the Eucharist and share our experiences, news from the National Fraternity and general information and observations from all Trillium Council members.

This past May a number of us were privileged to participate at the National Chapter of Elections and to elect an experienced and spirit filled National Fraternity. Debbie Tessier has been unanimously re-elected as our National Minister. Her team has been renewed with a number of new members.

We are thankful to the Lord for two of our members who are now part of the national working group, Marzio Apolloni, our Vice-Minister is member of the National Justine and Peace commission and Donna Dooling, our Regional Director of Formation,



is working with the English language group of Formation Directors for the next three years on both initial and on-going formation material.

Three English speaking Regional Ministers have formed a team under the leadership of Tom Wilkinson, newly elected Anglophone National Vice-Minister, to provide a forum for discussion of common issues such as the challenges of geography, linguistic differences and resources, impact of senior members of the Franciscan Family and the like.

Following an active six months in the life of the Trillium Region, we are looking forward to yet another season of activities, more visits and elections, and at last the canonical establishment of a number of our active fraternities.

May the good Lord give you a joyful time in which to celebrate with your own families during this wonderful California style summer.

Prayers and blessings,  
Les Alberti, ofs

## LISTENING AS SPIRITUAL HOSPITALITY



*To listen is very hard, because it asks of us so much interior stability that we no longer need to prove ourselves by speeches, arguments, statements, or declarations.*

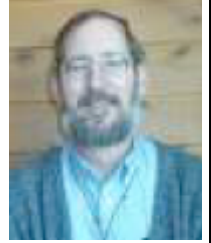
*True listeners no longer have an inner need to make their presence known. They are free to receive, to welcome, to accept. Listening is much more than allowing another to talk while waiting for a chance to respond. Listening is paying full attention to others and welcoming them into our very beings.*

*The beauty of listening is that, those who are listened to start feeling accepted, start taking their words more seriously and discovering their own true selves. Listening is a form of spiritual hospitality by which you invite strangers to become friends, to get to know their inner selves more fully, and even to dare to be silent with you.*

Henri J. M. Nouwen Society

## SPIRITUAL ASSISTANCE

*Fr. Peter Knaapen OFM Conv. shared the following reflection during the Regional Council's Lenten meeting. Because St. Francis practiced fasting in every season, revisiting this spiritual discipline is relevant for us year round.*



Lent should be more than a time of **FASTING**. It should also be a joyful season of **FEASTING**. Lent is a time to fast from certain things and feast on others. It is a season in which we should:

**FAST** from judging others; **FEAST** on the Christ indwelling them.  
**FAST** from emphasis on differences; **FEAST** on the unity of all life.  
**FAST** from apparent darkness; **FEAST** on the reality of light.  
**FAST** from thoughts of illness; **FEAST** on the healing power of God.

**FAST** from words that pollute; **FEAST** on phrases that purify.  
**FAST** from discontent; **FEAST** on gratitude.  
**FAST** from anger; **FEAST** on patience.  
**FAST** from pessimism; **FEAST** on optimism.

**FAST** from worry; **FEAST** on divine order.  
**FAST** from complaining; **FEAST** on appreciation.  
**FAST** from negatives; **FEAST** on affirmatives.  
**FAST** from unrelenting pressures; **FEAST** on unceasing prayer.

**FAST** from hostility; **FEAST** on non-resistance.  
**FAST** from bitterness; **FEAST** on forgiveness.  
**FAST** from self-concern; **FEAST** on compassion for others.  
**FAST** from personal anxiety; **FEAST** on eternal truth.

**FAST** from discouragement; **FEAST** on hope.  
**FAST** from facts that depress; **FEAST** on verities that uplift.  
**FAST** from lethargy; **FEAST** on enthusiasm.  
**FAST** from suspicion; **FEAST** on truth.

**FAST** from thoughts that weaken; **FEAST** on promises that inspire.  
**FAST** from shadows of sorrow; **FEAST** on the sunlight of serenity.  
**FAST** from idle gossip; **FEAST** on purposeful silence.  
**FAST** from problems that overwhelm; **FEAST** on prayer that undergirds.

## FRANCIS AND THE FASTING FRIAR

*Francis did his utmost to encourage the friars to lead austere lives, but he had no time for exaggerated self-denial which excluded tender compassion or was not tempered with discretion.*

*One night a friar who had fasted too long was tormented with hunger and could get no rest. Like a good shepherd, Francis realized how badly he was faring and called him. Then he put some bread before him and advised him gently to eat it, and began to eat himself first, to avoid embarrassing him. The friar over-*

*came his embarrassment and began to eat; he was overjoyed at seeing the saint's exquisite tact which enabled him to relieve his material needs and gave him such a wonderful example.*

*In the morning Francis called the whole community together and told them what had happened, taking the opportunity to tell them, "You should take an example from the charity involved, not from the fact that we indulged in food."*

(St. Bonaventure. Major Life of St Francis. V,7)

## FROM THE FORMATION CORNER

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

The summer season is again upon us!!! It is a time for reflection and family. As you go through these summer months take time to marvel at creation. Listen to all of creation; if you listen carefully you can hear the birds singing praises to the Lord, the leaves in the trees rustling their song, and the flowers showing the beauty of the world while dancing in the wind. God created all of this for us to enjoy and so that we can be ever present to Him, within us and surrounding us. I sincerely hope you spend time with family and visit our fraternal members who are alone and who, though they cannot attend your meetings, still pray for all of us.

A reminder of Franciscan feast days during summer: Aug. 2 - The Portiuncula, Aug. 11 - St. Clare, Aug. 25 - Louis IX (Patron of the Secular Franciscans,) and Sept. 17 - The Stigmata. You may also like to prepare for the celebration of the Transitus and the Feast of St. Francis on Oct. 3 & 4. All of these Feast Days may be an opportunity to get together for Mass and sharing.

I thank all of you that attended the Franciscan Fest in June. For those who could not make it, I thank you for your prayers!!! It was an awesome day and it was great to see all of you. It would not have been a success without you!!! I pray that all of you enjoy a peaceful, joyous, and Spirit-Filled summer.

Until September, God Bless and Keep all of you.  
Donna Dooling, ofs



## YOUTH COORDINATOR

Dear Franciscan Brothers and Sisters, as we ease our way into summer and try to drink in the beauty of God's creation, I cannot help but think of St. Francis singing and dancing outdoors!! If you attended the *Franciscan Fest* you saw St. Francis, St. Clare, St. Elizabeth of Hungary and St. Louis of France amongst the people: greeting us, feeding us, and reminding us of our roots. These our heavenly friends also drank in the beauty of the earth in their own surroundings. Thank you to Keegan, Nikola, Kendal and Paul for being open to role-playing our beloved Saints as we enjoyed a day of friendship, learning, fun and celebration of the Eucharist.

*"Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all the earth: sing forth the honour of His name; make His praise glorious."* And so we did throughout the feast day of St. John the Baptist. The Mass was a highlight for me because I believe that we manifested what we sang: we are summoned to prepare the way of the Lord, as one Body, with Christ as our light, in the power of the Spirit, with Mary as our model Franciscan to praise God and raise the Gospel! Thank you to Mark, Dan St. Pierre and his wife Laurie, Nikola, and Keegan for helping lead worship! *"Many the gifts, many the people..."*

Thank you to all who stopped at the Youfra table and picked up the YouFra formation booklet and the Franciscan Stations of the Cross DVD. I met a



delightful teen eager to present the DVD as a Lenten project to her high school: a wonderful tool for evangelizing her peers and teachers! Please contact me if you wish me to send you these materials.

The media is another wonderful tool for evangelizing. Thanks to Michael Swan from the Catholic Register, Canadian Catholics are more aware of our Franciscan Family comprised of all ages. He reported on the reason for birthing YouFra. Young people are searching for what to do with their lives, just as Francis did before the San Damiano Cross. YouFra is a vocational approach because it is a path to discern God's calling through the spirituality of St. Francis and St. Clare. In accepting our call, we grow in confidence and are better able to embrace the mission to rebuild our Church, to evangelize, as did Francis.

I remember the stillness of the hermitage in Assisi: a perfect place for listening. I pray that my daughter Marlena, who will be in Assisi on the feast of St. Clare, will be enveloped by the beauty that inspired Francis and his brothers to lift their listening hearts in praise to our Creator.

May this summer give us rest, restore our energy and renew our strength so as to move forward in faith to the work that God has entrusted to us.

Peace,  
Silvana Lougheed, ofs

## TREASURER

To the Priests, Sisters, Brothers, Deacons, Ministers of the National and Regional Councils, Secular Franciscans, Youfra, guests and visitors who all attended the Franciscan Family Fest on Sunday June 24 a very warm thank you for filling the day with memories that we will share for years to come. So many travelled such long distances to ensure the success of the day and that is appreciated. They came from North Bay, from Welland, from London, and from Bellville - and places in between. So many friendships were rekindled, and new faces were seen.

It was especially wonderful to see the YouFra engaged in dance, working with the youngsters, making posters and banners, and dressing in the costumes of St. Francis, St. Clare, King Louis, and St. Elizabeth of Hungary: reaching out to the crowd. What a talented group of Franciscans we have in our midst. It was wonderful that you filled our hearts with your lovely music and voices.

There was much enthusiasm around the Rosary making, adoration, relics and Stations of the Cross. The Procession up to the Chapel was a wondrous sight. One could feel the presence of the Holy Spirit in the crowd.

The Mass began with joy-filled music and a prayer-filled congregation. The first reading ended with the words of the prophet Isaiah, *"I will give you as a light to the nations, that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth."* There were so many "lights" there in the Chapel.

It was an honour to be present for the Canonical Establishment of the Mount Alverno Fraternity, and we all wish them well as they continue to grow in numbers and love. As Brother David reminded us in



his homily on the feast of St. John the Baptist, St. Francis was christened Giovanni after St. John, but his father changed his name to Francesco.

Our first Franciscan Family Fest was truly amazing - from the second this little mustard seed of an idea to gather as many Franciscans together in an event was planted, to the actual event itself. Franciscans did what they do best and came together in love, faith and friendship and made that mustard seed grow into a wonderful celebration of our Franciscan Family.

From my heart with thanks,  
Catherine Payne, ofs

## VICE MINISTER

Dear Brothers and Sisters, where would we be without our faith? I would be lost. Life on this earth has its trials, but the Lord is always faithful to us even when we are too weak to have any faith left. He cannot disown us who are part of Himself! If we listen to Him and not to the words of the world, we will be filled with that perfect peace and joy that St. Francis spoke about.

A sister in another Fraternity called me one day, and shared with me her personal testimony of the power of God in her life and her mission. Her stories included miraculous physical healings as answer to prayer! It was wonderful to hear! People have suggested that we have more testimonials in our Newsletter, and I invite this dear sister and anyone else that has a story of faith to share to email it to me. I will incorporate the testimonial into my contributions to the Newsletter! Stories like these encourage us in our own faith and our own walk. We are called and chosen by the Lord as a Body; we are one Body in Christ, and our Franciscan Family is precious to our hearts!

Speaking of family! Our first Franciscan Family Fest was a great success! I want to thank everyone that helped in any way!! Especially the rest of the steering committee: Brother Alan Gaebel ofm cap, Cathy Payne ofs, and Donna Dooling ofs! Thanks to my husband, and Cathy's husband, and Franz and his relatives, and the young men that came just to help! You were like angels!! It was a joy to meet new youth that were excited to be around people of faith and excited to consider forming Franciscan Youth Groups! The crafts! Gudrun,



the Rosary making was a hit! Marzio, the collage was amazing! The Market Guests! The fraternity displays and Banners! All the workshops, the dance, the music, the Rosary, the Stations, the Mass, the food, the Homily, but most wonderfully, the presence of our brothers and sisters! I have to thank all of you. (If I have missed anyone, know that you are not missed in my heart!)

It took each and every one of us to make this day successful. Thanks to the Mount Alverno staff for being such great hosts! It was great to see old friends and to make new ones and to meet families!!

Special thanks to our National Minister, Debbie Tessier of, for taking coming and sharing the end of our day, and to Kendal Freeman (the YouFra representative to National) for coming and sharing her gifts of dance. Thanks to Silvana for her great music and for the wonderful idea to have St. Elizabeth and St. Clare with us as well as St. Francis and St. Louis!!

There were some great ideas on the feedback sheets, which will help in planning future events. Overall, you rated the day rated 10 + ! The feedback that I have suggests we do this again!

I was very touched when we all renewed our commitments as Secular Franciscans and the Procession began. Afterwards, a sister came to me with tears telling me how significant this was for her at this point in time in her life. The Lord has perfect timing for all things!

The world needs to hear stories of faith and to see love in action, today more than ever! So the Lord arranged that a reporter would be present!! (Actually I believe he was invited by the Mount Alverno fraternity.) There was a great article in the July 1-8, 2012 edition of The Catholic Register about the canonical establishment of the Mount Alverno fraternity, and a report on the Franciscan Family Fest as well! There is a great picture of the group with our BANNER for 2012! For more information and detail and pictures, including an article about Youth and YouFra, go to the website: [www.catholicregister.org](http://www.catholicregister.org) and do a search.

God bless everyone with Peace and Mercy! Remember if you would like to share a little testimonial please email me at [colleenmacalister@yahoo.ca](mailto:colleenmacalister@yahoo.ca)

Peace and All Good  
Colleen MacAlister, ofs

## PRAYER TO ST. PIO OF PIETRELCINA

Pope John Paul II recited this prayer on the occasion of the canonization of Padre Pio, June 16, 2002



*Teach us, we pray, humility of heart,  
so that we may be counted  
among the little ones of the Gospel  
to whom the Father promised to reveal  
the mysteries of His Kingdom.  
Help us to pray without ceasing,  
certain that God knows what we need  
even before we ask Him.  
Obtain for us the eyes of faith  
that will help us recognize  
in the poor and suffering, the very face of Jesus.  
Sustain us in the hour of trouble and trial  
and, if we fall,  
let us experience the joy  
of the sacrament of forgiveness.  
Grant us your tender devotion to Mary,  
mother of Jesus and our Mother.  
Accompany us on our earthly pilgrimage  
toward the blessed Homeland,  
where we, too,  
hope to arrive to contemplate forever  
the Glory of the Father,  
the Son, and the Holy Spirit.  
Amen*

## FRANCISCAN HOSPITALITY

Our welcoming of the poor who live among us is based upon the example of both Jesus and Francis. In our words and our actions we are challenged to treat all with respect and dignity, responding to the needs of our poor brothers and sisters, the destitute and the outcasts among us, finding a home among them. This is what we are called to do. This is what the world community can expect of us.

*Blessed are those who have no joy or delight except in the most holy words and works of the Lord and who uses them to lead others to the love of God in joy and gladness.* Admonition 20

*Anyone who comes to the brothers (or sisters): friend or enemy, thief or robber, is to be received with kindness. And wherever the brothers (or sisters) are and anywhere they meet other brothers (or sisters), they are to greet one another wholeheartedly and lovingly, and honor one another without grumbling. And they are to be careful not to look outwardly sad, like gloomy hypocrites, but they are to show themselves as happy in the Lord, and cheerful and truly gracious.* Rule of 1221- Chapter VII

*In exchange for their service work, they may accept anything necessary for their own temporary needs and for that of their sisters or brothers. Let them accept it humbly as is expected of those who are servants of God and followers of the most holy poverty. Whatever they may have over and above their needs, they are to give to the poor. Let them never want to be over others. Instead they should be servants and subjects to every human creature for God's sake.* TOR Rule 19

*And, raising his eyes toward his disciples, he said: Blessed are you who are poor, for the kingdom of God is yours. Blessed are you who are now hungry, for you will be satisfied, Blessed are you who are*

*now weeping, for you will laugh. Blessed are you when people hate you, and when they exclude and insult you.....Rejoice and leap for joy on that day: Behold, your reward will be great in heaven. For their ancestors treated the prophets in the same way.* Luke 6:20 -23

Hospitality and care for the poor mark us as followers of Francis. In addition to the well known story of the leper, there are numerous times when we find Francis seeking out those who were poor or were considered outcasts - and sharing hospitality with them. It is as though those on the margins led Francis to the mystery of the cross. The poor enabled him to move beyond himself to be open to

the "other". This allowed him to move forward in leaps and bounds on his own journey and to surmount the barriers that separate the clean from the unclean, the desirable from the undesirable, and the haves from the have-nots. Once he responded to the poor and outcasts,

everything was changed for him. For us, too, encountering the impoverished, walking for a while in the world of the marginalized and being with the have-nots of our world is a necessary step on the journey of discipleship. Like Francis, our vision will be shaped by such encounters forever, and we will never be the same again.

### Reflection Questions:

1. What changes in my life do I need to make in order for me to really reach out and become a person of hospitality for others?
2. Who are the "poor" that I encounter in my day to day living?
2. What practical way of direct service to the poor can I become involve with and commit myself to doing?

(<http://www.osfdbq.org/>)

(Sisters of St. Francis. Dubuque, IA)



# Memories of the Franciscan Family Fest



# Local Fraternity Bulletin Board

## 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 8<sup>th</sup> of the month of publishing, to Deacon Maurice Prindiville, ofs, [mprindiville@golden.net](mailto:mprindiville@golden.net)

## OBITUARIES

### Mary Queen of Peace & Mary Mother of God Fraternity, Walkerton

Monica Maria Grubb, ofs, March 26, 1917 - May 27, 2012. *"Merciful Father we return to you the gift you gave us in her life among us and in her service of your people."*

### St. Angela Merici Fraternity, Oshawa

Geraldine (Gerry) Towie, ofs went to be with our Lord on May 30, 2012. She held the position of Formation Minister, and brought much joy to the fraternity with her presence.

### St Elizabeth of Hungary Fraternity, St. Catharines

John Holla, ofs passed away peacefully at his home in St. Catharines on Monday, June 18, 2012. John was a native of The Netherlands where he was born, March 25, 1927.

## CANONICAL ESTABLISHMENT

(Excerpted from an article by Michael Swan, as published in The Catholic Register, Wednesday, June 27, 2012)

*CALEDON, ONT. - There's no such thing as Catholicism for the few. Catholic means universal, and Secular Franciscans declared their intention to take their message out to the known universe as they inaugurated a new fraternity at the first ever Franciscan Family Fest at Mt. Alverno Retreat Centre June 24.*

*Deacon Michael Robertson is one of the founders of the new group of lay Franciscans. He describes it as "a new option to offer people who might want to take their spiritual life beyond the norm."*

*Robertson has been nursing the dream of a Secular Franciscan fraternity based at the retreat centre since 2003. On the Feast of St. John the Baptist the Mt. Alverno Fraternity became the 14th fraternity to be canonically established in the archdiocese of Toronto.*

*The 17 members of the new fraternity had 260 Franciscan friends along to help inaugurate their new group. Secular Franciscans from all over southern Ontario were gathered to celebrate Franciscan traditions and spirituality at Franciscan Family Fest.*

*"We're real Franciscans living the Gospel," said the fraternity's minister Janet McKay. "It means something to the Church because the values of St. Francis are held up in quite high esteem."*

*As an emerging fraternity over the last five years, the Mt. Alverno Secular Franciscans have supported the Kami Foundation in Haiti, Canadian Food for Children, AIDS work in Malawi and their local chapter of St. Vincent de Paul. But as a canonically established fraternity the members are ready to take on a more focussed apostolic mission.*

## 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](mailto:malerbac@yahoo.com)

Please apply in good time if you wish to have them on the profession day or anniversary date.