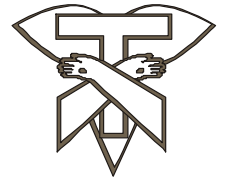


Good News Report

Secular Franciscan Order
Trillium Regional Fraternity



Number 51

Summer 2009



Minister's Letter Michel Guilmette, ofs

My Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

I'm sure that many of you know by now that Debbie Tessier has been elected as the new Minister for our National Fraternity. I am very happy for Debbie and wish her all the best in this new venture. I know that this will bless us all. Our region has done well under the love and leadership demonstrated by Debbie these last seven years of her ministry. With her new role as National Minister Debbie must now step down as Regional Minister. I have received with sadness her letter of resignation from this role in the Franciscan Family.

Debbie and I have discussed the changes that will be taking place in our Regional Fraternity. At our last Chapter of Elections for the Trillium Region I accepted the role of First Vice-Minister with the understanding that if for some reason the Minister could not complete her mandate that I would move into that role. Debbie, by our Constitution, cannot hold both the role of Regional and National Minister and by accepting the role of National Minister she must resign as Minister in the Regional Council. Debbie will however continue to work with our Regional Council in the role of Area Councillor for the Hamilton and St Catherine's dioceses. The voting members on the Council were unanimous in supporting her nomination. I look forward to continuing to work with Debbie her experience and great love for the Franciscan family will continue to be a blessing for us in her new role.

My dear fellow Franciscans, I have accepted the role of Minister for the Trillium Region. I ask for your prayers and support for the next couple of years as I try to serve you in that role. I look forward to working with all of you and I am confident that with the help of the Holy Spirit and the prayers of our Franciscan family that we will overcome any challenges that may come our way.

I believe my new role will be one of carrying on the work started by Debbie. The role of Area Councillor will expand with the addition of facilitating Chapters of Election for local Fraternities besides making Fraternal Visitations. I will work towards having the Area Councillors an elected position at our next Chapter of Elections for Trillium Region in the spring of 2011. Area Councillors have proven to be of great value for us at the Regional and Local Fraternity level. The Council will also work in helping Fraternities grow by working with youth and formation. I believe these are key to the future of the Franciscan Movement.

I ask for your continuing prayers for your Regional Council!

Peace and Goodness

Michel Guilmette, ofs

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 Newsletter Editor, Cathy Kruger, ofs at 782 Cope Road, Welland, ON L3B 5N7 905-732-7479 or ckruger@iaw.com E-mail is preferred. Please Note:** If you no longer wish to receive the newsletter, please let us know as above.



Spiritual Assistant's Letter. Fr. Peter Knaapen, OFM Conv.

I've been listening to a lecture series on St Francis. It is entitled **Francis of Assisi: A New Way of Being Christian** by Bill Short, OFM. There are 24 talks, 25 minutes in length. It is produced by *Now You Know Media*. All

the talks were good but one presentation I found very fascinating. It is entitled Journey into Egypt.

We know that Francis went to Egypt in 1219, seven years before his death.

The question is: Why did Francis go to Egypt? The explanation usually given is that he went to preach to the Saracens and to die as a martyr. Bill Short gives another explanation. It is based on new studies of the writing of Francis.

In Francis' day the Pope and Christians leaders would encourage people to join the Crusades. Their slogan was "pick up the cross" This meant to pick up the crusader cross – the Red Cross on their uniforms and shields. It was considered a great honour to battle against the Saracens. 'Saracens' was the name Christians gave to the Muslims. The other name they gave them was "enemy of the cross of Christ".

So when people hear the words pick up your cross and follow me – they immediately thought of the Crusades. Now Francis saw this verse in a different way. Francis believed that God was calling him and his followers to observe the Gospel by especially picking up the cross. "Anyone who wishes to follow me, must deny himself, pick up his cross and follow me"(Luke 9:23). For Francis this was not the red cross of the crusaders, the cross of violence but rather the Tau cross, the cross of penance and peace.

So when Francis and some companions go to Egypt they were wearing the cross, their habit that was in the form of a cross. So why does he go to Egypt? He goes to meet the Sultan, the leader of the enemies of the Cross of Christ. We might say he goes to meet enemy number one. Francis goes to live out the command of Jesus that we are to love our enemies, to pray for those who persecute us.

We know that one of the pivotal points in Francis life was the encounter with the Leper. Francis despised lepers; we might even say he hated them. Yet Francis himself tells us that the Lord lead him to them. What was bitter for Francis became sweet. Francis was caught in a dilemma. How could he strive to live out the commandment to love his neighbour and yet despise the leper? God lead him to love and care for the leper.

The encounter with the Sultan was another important milestone in Francis spiritual journey. Francis goes to Egypt to meet his enemy. In Francis own writing he recalls that Jesus called his betrayer – a friend. And that Jesus prayed for those who put

him to death, asking the Father to forgive them. If Jesus did this then so must he. So Francis goes to Egypt to meet his enemy, to make his enemy his friend. Amazingly he does just that.

Peter Knaapen, OFM Conv.



**National Minister's
Letter**
Debbie Tessier, ofs



To the Trillium Regional Fraternity,
May God bless you with ongoing
spiritual renewal and increase!

The National Chapter was a blessed event! Fr. Peter Knaapen, Colleen MacAlister, Les Alberti and Silvana Rossi-Loughheed were there representing the Trillium Fraternity. The spirit of Francis-Formation-Youth-music brought as great gifts to the Chapter!

Fr. Armando Trujillo Cano, International Spiritual Assistant spoke to us of our Franciscan heritage and shared music with us, one piece in particular was a beautiful song to St. Elizabeth of Hungary. Bertha Richaud, the International Fraternal Visitor, graciously presided over the elections and also spoke of our sense of belonging to the Franciscan family. Thanks to both of them for their witness and insights.

There have been quite a few changes to the National Council. Murdoch Macleod, Françoise Malboeuf, David Bouchard and Lise Bélec are no longer serving on the council, although they are very active in their own regional fraternities. Deep appreciation goes out to them for their commitment and service to the Secular Franciscan Order. Françoise and David will be available as resource persons for Formation and Youth initiatives through the next three years.

New to the council are Merle Moses from Manitoba as Vice Minister to the Anglophones, Harvey Lévesques and Michèle Turgeon, husband and wife from New Brunswick who will serve as Treasurer and Secretary respectively; and Micheline Larocque, who has returned to the council as Formation Director after a term away from being National Secretary.

Gilles Métivier, former National Treasurer, will now serve the National Fraternity as

Francophone Vice Minister. Br. Gerry Clyne, OFM, our recently appointed National Spiritual Assistant, was present at the Chapter, bringing also his gift of music to the liturgies and socializing of the Chapter. We were truly blessed!

The Trillium Regional Council held its first meeting after the National Chapter and I was able to witness the installation of your new Regional Minister, Michel Guilmette. It is a great blessing to have people of such dedication on the Regional council. In gratitude and prayer we look to the blessings and gifts God brings to us through these Regional and National Servant Leaders in the Secular Franciscan Order.



Many thanks for the lovely gift of Jesus washing Peter's feet, and also the wonderful music CD's!

May we all continue as a fraternity of brothers and sisters of faith in one family of love in Christ! May God bless the National Fraternity of Canada abundantly!

Debbie Tessier, ofs



YOUTH NEWS

by Silvana Loughheed, ofs, Youth Coordinator

Greetings to All my Franciscan Brothers and Sisters!

Assisi Pilgrimage COUNT DOWN:

25 days left until July 30th!!! We are excited and full of anticipation of God's graces during and following our pilgrimage. We certainly have already experienced God's generosity through the many donations given by our local fraternities and our regional and national councils. These monies have paid for 3 flights, 3 registrations and my expenses. Thank you, merci, grazie, salamat obrigado, danke, and dziękuję!!!!

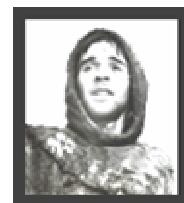
We are 10 pilgrims from Canada, six pilgrims and three friars from USA, In addition, one friar translator is coming from California and another is a friar from Ireland who is living and studying in Rome.

Canadian Pilgrims are from Midland, Grand Prairie Alberta, Toronto, and Kingston: Lisa

Theriault, Caitlynn Dawn Rainey, Sarah Christine Hudson, Silvana Loughheed, Nicole De Souza, Elena Gecaj, Rachel Nazareth, Ike Osuji, Elaine MacPherson and Claire Bouvier. A group going with Sr. Kim Rita from the Korean community in Toronto will meet us in Assisi. Please pray for us and continue to pray for youth at your fraternity meetings. We will take you, your families and special intentions to the tomb of St. Francis.

Preparation for Pilgrimage: Friar Michael Lorensen has asked us all to read Francis, The Journey and the Dream, and has sent us a video on Assisi. He has been wonderful!! I spoke to pilgrims twice through Skyping. I have spoken personally via the phone with five of the pilgrims. There is a deep well of Faith amongst them. Most are in their twenties. We have also been communicating via facebook and in the group that Friar Michael created called Youth Towards Assisi.

Promoting Youfra in Assisi with Canadian Pilgrims: David Bouchard SFO from Alberta, formerly on the national council, is helping with the creation of a Franciscan Youth card for distribution amongst Canadian pilgrims. The purpose is to promote the first national gathering of Youth with SFOs as mentors in Quebec, July 8-11th 2010. David has been in touch with the University in Trois Riviere re beds and a large room for activities. He also found out that the Sanctuaire Notre Dame du Cap has been an Oblate center since 1902 though it was set up originally by Blessed Frederic. It is a good place for us to gather. There is a local youth organization at the shrine that we could ask to help us in this plan.



Franciscan Youth Is God Calling You?

Visiting SFOs in PEI:

While attending an Ordination in PEI, I was delighted to meet St. Francis of Assisi Fraternity members and attend their regular meeting. Their generous hospitality was much appreciated! Thanks especially to Martha Gabriel, Minister and our hosts Ruth and Mike Cassidy.

The Eastern Region is hosting their first joint YOUTH/SFO Spiritual Conference. Please take note of their focus in preparing and inviting youth to attend:

1) Although they will "learn" from us (by way of exposure to the Franciscan Charism), one of the

primary objectives is for the members of the SFO to walk with these young people, honour where they are at in their spiritual journey and dialogue.”

2)”Ultimately the personal approach is best i.e. seek out an opportunity to speak to individuals one-on-one.”

3)”The essence of this joint spiritual conference is: our “being present to them” and together celebrating who they/we are individually and collectively.”

All of the above confirms much of what I have been trying to convey as important in building youth-friendly fraternities and parishes. Let us pray that the Holy Spirit would bless this first attempt at a joint youth-SFO conference. I had a real sense that our eastern friends wish to be collaborating with other regions and be informed of what is happening re youth.

Joint Formation/Youth Workshop:

In Belleville on Saturday September 12th, the feast of Holy Name of Mary, Holy Rosary Fraternity will host workshops on Formation and on Youth. Les Alberti and I will facilitate the day. It begins at 9:30am and ends at 1:00pm. Bring a bagged lunch. Refreshments and snacks provided. All are welcome. Come and See

Stations of the Cross DVD:

I gave all council members copies of our Youth Group’s production of the Stations. Please show and distribute to your fraternity Youth contacts and youth ministers. You may rip it onto your computers and burn more. The crib and the cross are the Franciscan focus. This shows what a powerful tool drama is and what youth are capable of when they use their gifts. It was presented to 2 high schools on Holy Thursday and one parish on Good Friday. When we plan a gathering with youth or youth and SFOs, drama and music are a must.

The Franciscan Mystery Players from the USA cannot come and present a play on the life of St. Francis so a few council members (Debbie, Colleen and I) are interested in creating our own play for Youth. Any ideas? Interested?

JUFRA-Franciscan Youth in Mexico:

Doesn’t matter if you can read Spanish! Check out this amazing website, a worthy model for our own future creative Youth webpage. Google: *Juventud Franciscana en Mexico*

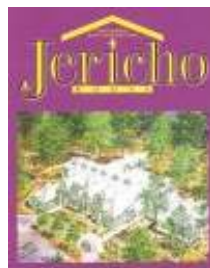
Follow Fr. Peter’s example and copy and enlarge the list of Franciscan websites that was

listed in our last newsletter. Post in a well frequented area where parish activities take place!!

May you and your families have a summer that is safe and peace-filled as you enjoy His Creation!!

Peace,

Silvana Loughheed, ofs



Jericho House

Submitted by Cathy Kruger

St. Mary of the Angels fraternity at their meeting in March, had an interesting presentation from Br. Bill Carrothers, cfc and Sr. Jacquie, cssf. They run the Jericho House programs that are mostly for youth.

We learned about the new facility to be built in Wainfleet, near Welland, and a very interesting profile on Edmund Rice, the founder of the Christian Brothers of whom Br. Bill is a member. Sr. Jacquie is a Franciscan belonging to the Felician Sisters congregation.

This beautiful facility, when completed, will be available for retreats.

For further information check out their website: www.jerichohouse.org

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**Letter from the Secular Franciscan
General Minister To The
Participating Brothers At The
Chapter Of The Mats**

Assisi, March 16, 2009

Dear Brothers,

On behalf of the entire Secular Franciscan Order, today more than ever, the Lord grant you Peace!

When this date was chosen together with the organizers, I did not realize that today the Church celebrates Saint Benedict Joseph Labre, pilgrim, and Franciscan tertiary (1748-1783). It is a pleasant coincidence for me because Benedict Joseph did not live the solitary life of the cloister but the solitude of the “ways of the Lord” doing and witnessing good with his life itself.

Each family prepares, convokes, participates and shares the joy of celebrations which permit themselves to be recognized in order to enhance their identity and unity. We now have one of these reasons for strengthening the ties of our Family and which fills us with joy and hope. We are pleased to represent the SFO in your Chapter and we sincerely thank you for your invitation to participate.

You have all seen the video that we presented, where the SFO exists: in 110 countries throughout the world. And how many we are: 431,000 members and about 49,000 young Franciscans. This implies a rapid development of the Secular Order during the last few years, and this requires the creativity, efforts and clear objectives necessary to enable the new realities to undertake the walk outlined for the SFO by the renewed Rule.

We have given you only a few of the many examples of its apostolic activity, its presence and its commitment in the Church and society (including politics), the meaning and concrete exercise of the mission of the SFO carried out by the young families.

Our history, like yours, is rather complex. The structural unity of the SFO is only 30 years old. During this time our greatest efforts have concentrated on the task of reunification and conferring stability to the SFO, as well as a strong sense of identity and belonging, after 5 centuries of fragmentation. Our reality is not only complex but variegated and thus, very rich in its diversity

Today we are actually re-discovering exactly who we are: the richness of our vocation; the full dimensions of our mission; the beauty of

our common charism. We are increasingly aware of having been called, like you, to carry out a formidable task, in reciprocal vital communion with you.

I would, therefore, like to explain to you how we, members of the SFO, perceive our belonging to the Franciscan Family and how we see its mission today.

Our Rule, approved by Paul VI, opens with a beautiful and strong statement: “The Franciscan family, as one among many spiritual families raised up by the Holy Spirit in the Church, unites all members of the people of God-- laity, religious, and priests-- who recognize that they are called to follow Christ in the footsteps of St. Francis of Assisi. In various ways and forms but in life-giving union with each other, they intend to make present the charism of their common Seraphic Father in the life and mission of the Church.

Our Rule (which in some way belongs to you as well) defines the Franciscan Family and the vital relationship which unites us. It offers a clear description of the reality of our family, of communion and vital physicality.

Christ, through Francis, sketched three orders for only one project: the apostolic mission to restore his House-Church. In organizing the three orders, St. Francis let himself be guided simply and solely by the Spirit of the Lord. And he welcomed this reality as it slowly flourished in his hands, without any pre-established project.

It is important to remember that the three Orders are, therefore, on the same level and should recognize that they are spiritually inter-dependent and needy of reciprocal help. We know that St. Francis gave his three orders only one Rule: a more perfect observance of the Gospel, according to the respective conditions of life. We must re-discover ourselves.

The three Orders generated by Francis are, therefore, heirs of his mission and his charism and its accomplishment. The reason for being part of his spiritual Family is found in this mission, which requires the combined efforts of the religious of the First Order, of the “Penitents” of the Third Order (secular and regular) and the contemplative sacrifice of our sisters of the Second Order. We can accomplish the marvellous work that God has entrusted to Francis only if we are united.

We exist, therefore, as a member of only one body¹. We cannot live separately. Our life would be

impoverished and our mission for the Church and in the Church of Christ would be compromised.

But I would like to speak to you about the SFO today, of its reality, its hopes and its dreams.

The SFO is presently absorbed in an enormous task of complete, permanent and personalized formation, focused on the understanding of its identity, its sense of belonging, its secularity, which is one of the aspects which constitute and identify our Franciscan vocation. We are well aware of the fact that the future of the SFO depends on its formation.

**“Eiudem corporis Membra existentes”,
Urban IV, Bolla Spiritus Domini**

The secular Franciscans throughout the world are striving to constitute:

- a Franciscan fraternity with a clear and precise identity to help its members and to abolish any type of barrier and separation between spirituality and daily life, with its responsibilities;
- a more committed fraternity, in the spirit of the Vatican II and the Pauline Rule, where it is possible to live authentic Church experiences;
- a fraternity which is actively inserted in the Franciscan Family, where communion and vital reciprocity can be experimented, having the same status as the other members;??
- a fraternity which is at the same time a school of Christian perfection and social and civil commitment.

I would like to take this opportunity, when so many Superior majors of your respective orders are united, to thank you for your services of pastoral care and spiritual assistance to the local fraternities of the SFO erected within your jurisdiction. Please let me say that pastoral care and spiritual assistance to the SFO must stem, not so much from rules, but from the love and trust in ones vocation and from the desire to make it known, respecting the nature of the secular fraternity and giving priority to witnessing Franciscan life and, especially, in fraternal accompaniment.

Assisting the SFO today entails a fraternal service to which you are called: to help the secular Franciscans, by your closeness to each locally erected fraternity in your jurisdiction, to be

individuals that passionately live their faith in the Church and in society with the values and behaviour of Francis. But evidently no one can give what they do not have. Nevertheless, the SFO continues dreaming. It dreams of churches and parishes that are given to you which are authentically Franciscan, where the values and the needs of one's vocation and charism are lived and made known.

As I have already mentioned, the SFO is committed to formation, for which it needs confident support. It needs spiritual assistants who will actively collaborate, especially in the formation walk, in making our fraternities convincing and consistent with their vocation. It needs spiritual assistants who can help them to fully comprehend the mission that has to be accomplished. Assistants with the awareness that helping today's youth and adults to discover the true sense of life is indeed an extraordinary task. Please help my brothers and sisters who are striving to be individuals of faith, coherent and exemplary in their lives and courageous in their choices. Help us to be “witnesses”.

We must not forget the diverse living conditions of our fraternities in many parts of the world: Africa, Central America, Paraguay, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, India, Belarus.... Some of them live without any material means, but they seriously live their faith and their Christian and Franciscan vocation, a spiritual gift which we should all aspire.

I have met formators living in the most absolute poverty who have deeply moved me for the beauty of their dedication and moral strength, as well as the basic knowledge that they convey to those being formed. Can we actually sustain that in this poverty, which Francis chose for himself, we cannot be Franciscans today? That without thorough academic formation we cannot live the perfection of charity and the spirit of the “Letter of Francis to all the faithful”?

During the last decade the new course of the SFO received, even before the Vatican II, a generous and important prophetic stimulus from many religious. The memory of numerous General Ministers and Assistants follow us, their names remembered as a blessing and with infinite gratitude. Much of what we know today we owe to them and to a several courageous “tertiaries”; with their inexpressible love for the Franciscan Family and the Third Order, and their admirable prophetic commitment, they were able to persevere in their

project, despite numerous difficulties and prejudices (some of which still exist today), and impart strength and substance to the rebirth of the Secular Franciscan Order.

Let me say with sincere simplicity and satisfaction that, in all this, the SFO has accomplished, perhaps unknowingly, a special and irreplaceable mission: we have been effective catalysts of fraternity and unity in our Family. Thanks to the requirements of the collegial exercise of pastoral care and spiritual Assistance, we have prompted occasions of encounters, of dialogue and of fraternal knowledge, not only among ourselves but especially among you dear brothers and sisters of the First Order and the TOR, because by sharing our responsibilities you have given life to the Conference of the Assistants, true cenacle of fraternity and mutual affection, family experiences, foresights of a broader and vital communion. I, personally, have recently witnessed the first meeting of all the Superior Majors of a European Country, on the occasion of a fraternal and pastoral visit to the SFO, during which the Visitors had to meet with those responsible for exercising the "Altius Moderamen".

Brothers, please allow me to tell you what is expected and what we need from you: that you truly be not only the guarantors of spiritual assistance, but also brothers, street companions, that walk with us side by side, neither ahead nor behind. We need you to accompany us and flank us as educators throughout the entire growth of our vocation and in exercising the mission that we have been assigned, in the quick and sincere passage "from the Gospel to life and from life to the Gospel (R.4). We need that you are convinced and that you have a clear and updated vision of the SFO and the Youfra and of their position in the Church and in our Family. We need you "suitable and prepared" (R. 26) in order to offer assistance and pastoral care that is complete and adequate.

A sign of this family maturity could be that of realizing the project embarked on with a motion of our General Chapter in 2008: that, at the next World Youth Day, all the young people of our Family be united together before the Church and before our Holy Father. There will naturally be specific moments of formation for each group, but they could also have moments of formation as a young Family and to witness the spirituality we are

living, just as other associations and Church movements do.

This grace of origins that we are celebrating, is the corner stone on which the whole building of our Family leans on. Lets take advantage of it. Let us be alert so as not to lose this important historical opportunity to recuperate the significance of the Family of St. Francis of Assisi. We have to wake up and take action because there is much lethargy and negligence in our family.

This is the memorial that we are celebrating: the grace of a special charism which regards Francis and, in him, an entire Family an ecclesial project to be fully lived.

Thank you and the Lord bless you, bless us, and fill us with grace, maturity and the courage needed to recover the gift of the conversion of our origins.

Assisi, April 16, 2009

Encarnacon del Pozo

General Minister SFO

A Retrospective look at the **Good News Report**

The last edition of this newsletter was the 50th. We missed this landmark then, but hasten to make up for it with this brief look back in time.

*The first edition of the **Good News Report** was published in the winter of 1995 by the first Trillium Minister Richard Juneau, ofs. The TRF was established in 1993. With the exception of the summer edition of 1997, No. 8, which was edited by Sylvia Lauzon, ofs, Richard continued to do the newsletter until Jim Vasey, ofs, took over as editor in the fall of 1999 with No. 16, when he succeeded Richard as Minister.*

In the fall of 2002 with edition No. 26, Cathy Kruger, ofs, newly elected as Vice-minister to the TRF, took on the job of editor with much help for the first edition from Debbie Tessier, ofs. Cathy has continued in this role with Maurice Prindiville, ofs, coming on board to assist with e-mailing and extra articles especially ones with Peace & Justice issues.

The format of the newsletter has changed somewhat; going from 4 pages, to 2 and now 6-8 with more photos. We mail 285-300 letters 3-4 times a year. Maurice e-mails to about 200 Franciscans including points East and West in Canada and to Rome.

However, the heart of the newsletter is the richness of the articles sent in by many of the Trillium Council members and items from fraternities around the region. We hope all our readers get as much enjoyment out of this publication as we do, who send it out to you with "Peace, love and Joy"

Cathy & Maurice

