

The Holy Father Benedict XVI  
cordially imparts the requested apostolic blessing to

St. Bonaventure  
Secular Franciscan Fraternity

Detroit - Michigan

on the occasion of the 120<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of its Founding  
and its Re-dedication

and invokes an abundance of heavenly graces  
and the continued protection of the Blessed Virgin Mary

1887 / 2007

*Ex Aedibus Vaticanis, die 13.7.2007*

*Osman Fierate*

*Archiepiscopus*

*Electus in Synodo Apostolica*

# The Challenge for Today

by Donna Marie F. Kaminsky

from "Secular Franciscans: Bearers of Peace, Messengers of Joy" (*Spirituality Today*, Summer 1985, Vol. 37, pp. 120-129)

## The SFO Pauline Rule of 1978

The rule of Pope Paul VI enables the Secular Franciscan Order to conform more fully to Vatican II. Whereas the earlier Rules were prescriptive, the Pauline Rule is a spiritual, inspirational document. It begins with a prologue, an authentic letter of St. Francis, entitled "Exhortation to the Brothers and Sisters of Penance."

The Pauline Rule itself is divided into three chapters: Chapter One deals with the place of the Secular Franciscan Order in the Church and in the Franciscan Family; Chapter Three, "Life in Fraternity," outlines the organization and governance of fraternity life at various levels; and Chapter Two sets forth our Way of Life, situating it in the heart of the Gospel, in intimate union with Jesus Christ. Within the 16 paragraphs of this section emerge key Franciscan values and attitudes which have been part of Franciscan living for many centuries:

**A call to a penitential lifestyle**, in the true biblical sense of the word – of turning to Christ and the sustaining of that radical interior change daily by conforming thoughts and deeds to those of Christ (7);

**Affirmation of the Franciscan ideal of universal brotherhood, or family**, as Secular Franciscans "accept all people as a gift of the Lord and an image of Christ" (13) and "respect all creatures, animate and inanimate, which 'bear the imprint of the Most High'" (18);

**Dedication to justice** because Secular Franciscans are called to work with all people "to build a more fraternal and evangelical world so that the kingdom of God may be brought about more effectively" (4). A significant change in this Rule are the words: "Let them **individually and collectively** [emphasis added] be in the forefront of promoting justice by the testimony of their human lives and their courageous initiatives" (15);

**Dedication to being joyful peacemakers**: "Mindful that they are bearers of peace which must be built up unceasingly, they should seek out ways of unity and harmony through dialogue...as messengers of perfect joy in every circumstance, they should strive to bring joy and hope to others" (19).

**Pledge to serve the poor and oppressed**: "A sense of community will make them joyful and ready to place

themselves on an equal basis with all people, especially with the lowly for whom they shall strive to create conditions of life worthy of people redeemed by Christ" (13).

**Willingness to embrace a simple lifestyle after the manner of Christ and his Mother Mary**, "by simplifying their own material needs...mindful that they are stewards of the goods received for the benefit of God's children." An important aspect of this simplicity is the recognition that we are "pilgrims and strangers" who should strive to "purify our hearts from every tendency and yearning for possession and power" (11).

Secular Franciscans have rediscovered that their way of life is a gift and a call to share in the Franciscan charism, and that not everyone receives the same invitation. Consequently, formation programs now help candidates discern through a period of prayer, study, discussion, and ministry whether or not they are being called by God to embrace this Franciscan gospel life.

Another concern of Secular Franciscans since the new Rule is to extricate themselves from the model of religious life when explaining their own spirituality and to accept their secularity. Because a theology of the laity is still in its embryonic stages, so too, there is a certain awkwardness as they try to articulate their experience. A reflection of this new awareness is the identification of the stages of formation no longer as postulancy and novitiate but the inquiry phase and the candidacy phase.

At every level, the relationship between the friars and the Seculars is one of interdependence, co-responsibility, and vital reciprocity. Jurisdictions and authority previously maintained by the friars has now been returned to the Secular leaders. It is the Secular Minister who receives new members and accepts their profession. The friars provide very valuable spiritual assistance.

Secular Franciscans embrace the penitential gospel lifestyle modeled by Francis of Assisi. Francis challenged the false values of the 13<sup>th</sup> century by actively and courageously changing his own lifestyle, attitudes and values. He preached the Gospel with his life. He encountered the living and active person of Christ in his brothers and sisters. He loved so intensely that he is known as the Seraphic Lover. This is the challenge which Secular Franciscans take up today.

# MINISTER'S LETTER

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

*May our Lord's peace and all good be with you!*

This year our Fraternity has been energetically moving along in prayer, thanksgiving, faithfulness and joy. Now we are already into beautiful Fall - my favorite time of the year! The crisp cool Autumn air brings back memories of when my brother and I would frolic in the crunchy piles of golden, amber, red, yellow and brown leaves and then my dad would burn the leaves and we children would roast marshmallows in the fire. Happy memories!

I want to express my gratitude and that of our Council and Fraternity to **Ona Harris, Joe and Faye Boland, Raymond Morehead, Maxine Piaseczny, Stephen Haycox and Teresa Westbrook-Lienert** for all the work that went into planning and bringing about a successful Father Solanus Concert. Our thanks, too, for all those who helped them, bought tickets, sold tickets, and in any way supported this Fraternity-sponsored event. May the Lord reward you abundantly!

Even though our own 120<sup>th</sup> Jubilee celebration is over, our reasons to celebrate are far from over! This month we rejoice in the 150<sup>th</sup> Jubilee of our Capuchin Brothers – the first permanent establishment of the Capuchin Franciscan Order in North America at Mount Calvary, WI, in 1857. It was this first Capuchin foundation that grew into the Capuchin Province of St. Joseph, headquartered now in Detroit. In thanksgiving to God for the many blessings showered upon our SFO Fraternity and on all of metro-Detroit through the presence of our Capuchin Brothers, **the focal event of this month's Third Sunday Meeting will be a Mass of Thanksgiving.** I encourage everyone to attend!

Our spiritual assistant, **Br. Pat**, has been working very hard on the 150<sup>th</sup> Jubilee. As provincial archivist he has been involved in research to enhance the occasion. He has written a series, *This Day in Our History*, which you can find featured on the Capuchins' website at [www.thecapuchins.org](http://www.thecapuchins.org). Br. Pat will also be publishing a Sesquicentennial Catalog which will contain the photos of all the Capuchins from the beginning of the Province. Recently, an article appeared in the *Grosse Pointe News* [see August 16, 2007] about Br. Pat's ministry as archivist. He *really does work* up in the Archive office! (I am thankful to a fellow Brother Capuchin from the Monastery who gave me a copy of the article. He said, "Brother Pat is too humble and probably will not tell you about this." So, I do have *my sources* to receive such joyful news.)

Congratulations to the Capuchin Province of St. Joseph — "the Calvary Province" — for 150 years in the Lord's service! And a special congratulations to all of the Capuchin Friars of St. Bonaventure Monastery.

God bless you, dear ones!

Your sister in Francis and Clare,

Janet

Visit our website: <http://www.sfofbonaventure-detroit.org>

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ST. BONAVENTURE SECULAR FRANCISCANS ✕ DETROIT, MICHIGAN

# THE DOVERELLO



### **DECEASED MEMBERS**

None

### **DECEASED RELATIVES and FRIENDS**

Sister Mary, Mother of the Eucharist

Adele Kisielewski

Rudy Kocis

Vida Benvenuti

### **MEMBERS NEEDING PRAYERS**

Irma Barlage

Sophie Cisneros

Natalie Grabowski

Virgina Hale

James Heymes

Donna Marie Johnston

Tony Lienert

Joseph Marra

Sophie Martin

Dorothy Mataragas

Raymond Morehead

Bob and Dolores Peckham

Theresa Pfaendter

Maxine Piaseczny

Mary Saber

Joseph Wisk

### **OTHERS NEEDING PRAYERS**

Mother and Husband of SFO General Minister,  
Encarnación del Pozo

Joseph Allen

Shawn Atkinson

Robert Arczynski

Mary Ann Avery

David Barlage

Ellie Beck

Bonnie Black

Marirose Carillo

Marcella Carter and Claudia

Alice Caviani

Deven Damelio

Barbara Ertzbischoff

Beverly Falzone

Stefan Florescu

Fr. Mark Garrow

Rita Gerwolls and Family

Patricia Greenia

Angie Kay

Beverly Livingston

Estelle Meldrum

Jean Nozewski

Scott Phillips

Theresa Rabine

Angel Richard

Martha Richardson

Kathy Stewart

Tracy Stockton

Harold Walker

### **THOSE SERVING OUR COUNTRY**

Andrew Arcznski

Christopher Beattie

Francisco Biber

Tom Chmielarczyk

John Marra III

Joseph Marra, Jr.

### **CALL IN PRAYER REQUESTS TO:**

Jo Marie Nardi at 586-978-2335

# SFO Liturgical Calendar for October



- 3 ..... Bl. Anthony Chevrier (1826-1879) SFO, priest ..... *Opt. Memorial*  
 4 ..... Our Holy Father St. Francis (1182-1226), founder, deacon ..... Solemnity  
 5 ..... All Deceased of the Franciscan Order ..... (\*date may be moved)  
 6 ..... St. Mary Frances of the Five Wounds (1734-1791) SFO, virgin ..... Memorial  
 10 ..... Bl. Mary Angela Truszkowska (1825-1899) SFO, virgin, religious founder ..... *Opt. Memorial*  
 11 ..... Bl. John XXIII (1881-1963) SFO, pope ..... *Opt. Memorial*  
 20 ..... Bl. Contardo Ferrini (1859-1902) SFO, educator ..... *Opt. Memorial*  
 22 ..... St. Peter of Alcántara (1499-1562) I Order, reformer, priest (from Oct. 19) ..... *Opt. Memorial*  
 23 ..... St. John of Capestrano (1386-1456) I Order, priest ..... Memorial



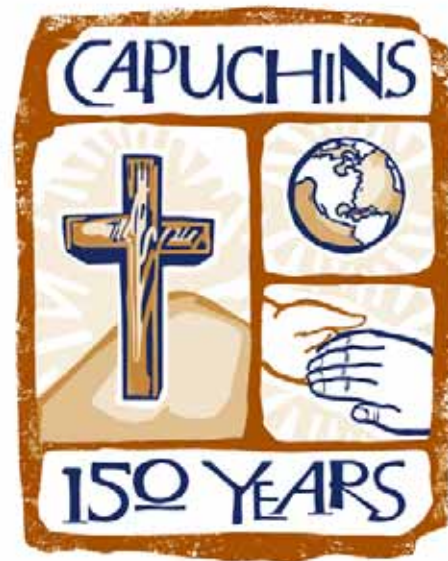
- |   |   |
|---|---|
| October 1:<br>Charles Kelley  | October 18:<br>Frank Liccardello                                  |
| October 4:<br>Debra McCann  | October 19:<br>Joseph Marra                                       |
| October 5:<br>Dorothy Leff  | October 20:<br>Thomas Ricard                                      |
| October 7:<br>Anthony Brodeur   | October 22:<br>Janet Bodell                                       |
| October 8:<br>Lawrencia Drobnicki                                       | October 24:<br>Anna May Jezak                                     |
| October 11:<br>Stephen Yuhase<br>Eugene Snyders                         | October 27:<br>Diane Raymond                                      |
| October 15:<br>Ralph Barnowsky<br>Dorothy Mataragas<br>Judith Vickerman | October 29:<br>Mary Ruth Minnick<br>Ralph Marson<br>Nancy Fanning |



## From the Friars' Choir

“Anyone who sees in his own occupation merely a means of earning money degrades it; but he who sees in it a service to mankind ennobles both his labor and himself.”

– A. Lawrence Lowell



*celebrating our  
American foundation*

**Our 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday Meeting in October  
will be a celebration of the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary  
of the first permanent Capuchin establishment  
in North America.**

**Mass of Thanksgiving at 11:00 AM  
followed by a Social**

# THE SECULAR FRANCISCAN ORDER

by Fr. Noel Muscat, OFM

The Franciscan Movement is an evangelical option which is open to persons from all walks of life. St. Francis is considered to be the founder of the First Order of friars, the Second Order of contemplative sisters, and the Third Order, made up of male and female religious (Third Order Regular) as well as seculars (Secular Franciscan Order).

The history of the origins of the Franciscan Movement shows that these three Orders **were born together**, and that they are a sign of Francis' unique understanding of the signs of his times. We shall give an overall view of the history of the Secular Franciscan Order and present its charism for today's world.

## THE ORDER OF PENITENTS

From the early centuries of Christianity, the Order of Penitents was the institutional medium of penitential practices which were either imposed by the Church or else were chosen freely as a way of evangelical perfection. The "Ordo Poenitentium" was quite popular in the Middle Ages. It was made up of various categories of penitents, such as oblates, hermits, recluses, pilgrims. The centuries immediately preceding St. Francis are marked with a particular tendency towards the penitential life, which was common in the great reforms of monastic and eremitical institutions. Let it suffice to mention St. Romuald (+ 1027), St. Peter Damiani (+ 1072), St. John Gualbert (+ 1073), the reform of Cluny, St. Bernard of Clairvaux (1091-1153).

The penitential movement became very popular after the Gregorian Reform at the end of the 11<sup>th</sup> Century. It was a spontaneous movement, and was widespread among the laity. Its characteristic notes were an apostolic life expressed through poverty, popular preaching, penitential practices and acts of mercy towards outcasts, lepers, etc.

The spontaneous nature of the penitential movement was instrumental in its development, but was also an occasion for heretical tendencies. The official structure of the Church – the Papal Curia, the bishops, the monasteries –, was often disinterested in noticing the great evangelical upsurge coming from the laity. This lack of direc-

tion was one of the causes of the spreading of heresy. Such was the case of the Cathari [Cathars] in France and Italy, for example.

The need for genuine reform in the Church was providential in prompting the direct intervention of the pope in order to secure the orthodoxy of the lay penitential movements. From the beginning of the 12<sup>th</sup> Century, the popes were taking under their protection various groups or guilds who lived a penitential life. In 1195, when Francis of Assisi was still a teenager, a group of penitents known as the Umiliati was established in northern Italy. Innocent III approved their way of life or "Propositum" in 1201. In 1208, he approved the "Propositum" of the Poveri Cattolici [the Poor Catholics], and in 1210 that of the Poveri Lombardi [the Poor Lombards]. Note that this is the same year in which Innocent III orally approved the "Propositum vitae" of the Friars Minor.

## FRANCIS OF ASSISI AS A PENITENT

In his *Testament*, Francis states that the Lord called him to embark upon a life of penance. From the very beginning, Francis considered himself to be a penitent on the road to conversion. He became an oblate in the church of San Damiano (1 Cel 9). After renouncing his inheritance in front of Bishop Guido and his father, Pietro di Bernardone, Francis was clothed in the habit of a poor hermit (L3S 25, 27). The first name which the friars assumed was that of "viri poenitentiales de civitate Assisii oriundi" ("the penitents from the town of Assisi" L3S 37).

The original inspiration to live the Gospel was intimately linked with a penitential form of life, as these texts from the Franciscan Sources eloquently show:

Francis, therefore, the most valiant knight of Christ, went about the towns and villages announcing the kingdom of God, preaching peace, teaching salvation and penance unto the remission of sins... Men ran, and women too ran, clerics hurried, and religious hastened that they might see and hear the holy man of God who seemed

to all to be a man of another world (“*homo alterius saeculi*”)... Many of the people, both noble and ignoble, cleric and lay, impelled by divine inspiration, began to come to St. Francis, wanting to carry on the battle constantly under his discipline and under his leadership. All of these the holy man of God, like a plenteous river of heavenly grace, watered with streams of gifts; he enriched the field of their hearts with flowers of virtue, for he was an excellent craftsman; and, according to his plan, rule, and teaching, proclaimed before all, the Church is being renewed in both sexes, and the threefold army of those to be served is triumphing. To all he gave a norm of life, and he showed in truth the way of salvation in every walk of life (1 Cel 36-37).

(Francis) became an example to those who followed Christ perfectly. We have plenty of reason to be firmly convinced of this. First of all, there is the mission which he had received “to summon all men to mourn and lament, to shave their heads and wear sackcloth” (Is 22,12) “and mark the brows of those that weep and wail with a cross” (Ez 9,4), signing them with the cross of penance and clothing them in his own habit which was shaped like a cross (LegMaj, Prologue).

## **FRANCIS, FOUNDER OF THE ORDER OF PENITENTS**

We have already noted that the Third Order of Penitents was not a personal invention of St. Francis, but rather a personal initiative with the aim of grouping into a stable form of evangelical life the various groups of Penitents among the laity.

The Franciscan Sources are quite clear regarding the beginnings of the Order of Friars Minor and the Order of the Poor Ladies of San Damiano. The beginnings of the Order of Penitents instituted by Francis of Assisi are not so clear.

According to 2 Cel 38, a certain lady of Cortona came to the hermitage of Le Celle, and asked Francis to help her to live a life of penance in her married state. The

Legend of Perugia 34 mentions the spirit of penance and conversion of the inhabitants of Greccio. But it is in L3S 60 that we find an explicit reference to the Order of Penitents: “Not only men, but also women and unmarried virgins were fired by the brothers’ preaching, and, on their advice, entered the prescribed convents to do penance; and one of the brothers was appointed as their visitor and guide. Married men and women, being bound by the marriage vow, were advised by the friars to dedicate themselves to a life of penance in their own houses”. Julian of Speyer in his *Life of St. Francis*, 14, states: “The third (Order) is known as the Order of Penitents. This Order is not marked by a lesser perfection than the other two. It is open to all clerics and lay, virgins, ‘continentes’, married couples, and both men and women can join it for their own salvation.”

In the LegMaj IV,6, Bonaventure states: “Carried away by the force of his preaching, great numbers of people adopted the new rule of penance according to the form instituted by St. Francis which he called the Order of the Brothers of Penance.”

The Anonymous Legend of Perugia, 41, says that the Order of Penitents was approved by the Pope. This is a note which certainly cannot refer to the early years of the history of the Third Order.

According to the Fioretti, chapter 16, it was in the Umbrian Valley, near Cannara, that Francis gave a way of life to those lay persons who wanted to live the Gospel more radically. But this late source cannot be taken to refer to the founding of the Third Order.

Popular tradition has indicated a certain wealthy merchant from Poggibonsi, called Luchasio, together with his wife Buonadonna, as the first Franciscan Tertiaries. Luchasio died on 28 April 1260, and is even venerated as a “Blessed,” whose cult was approved by Pius VI. This tradition lacks historical foundation. We can only say that the Order of Penitents began to be known as such in 1221 with the “*Memoriale Propositi*”.

The form of life given to the Penitents by Francis of Assisi is now universally accepted as being included in the First Version of the Letter to the Faithful.

## THE EXHORTATION TO THE BROTHERS AND SISTERS OF PENANCE

Esser suggested that the beginnings of the Order of Penitents were quite similar to those of the Order of Friars Minor. The Earlier Rule of 1221, in the case of the First Order, was the result of a progressive elaboration of various chapters responding to the new issues which the Order faced in the period 1210-1221, that is, between the oral approval of the primitive “Propositum vitae” by Innocent III and the final draft of the “Regola non bullata.” In the case of the Order of Penitents, the First Version of the Letter to the Faithful represents the primitive nucleus of the way of life of the Penitents. The same Letter has a second version, which deals with the same themes in a more detailed way.

The key word of the Letter to the Faithful is “penance.” It is not important to know whether or not the Order of Penitents was officially instituted by Francis at some date before 1221. The document certainly comes before this date, and is a proof that Francis gave a way of life to lay persons who wanted to live the radical call of the Gospel adapted to their needs. The style of the Letter is that of an exhortation. The contents concern the barest essentials of the penitential life, namely, the commandment of love of God and neighbor, the rejection of sin, participation in the Eucharist and in the Sacrament of Penance, acts of mercy as a proof of a penitential life. All this is seen against the background of a Trinitarian spirituality, and of a discipleship of Christ in the threefold relationship of spouses, brothers and mothers. The reverse side of the picture is that of the person who does not embark upon a life of penance. Francis describes the death of this person in a very crude but realistic way. The style is simply that of a few words of exhortation to those brothers and sisters who wanted to live the evangelical “metanoia” in a more radical way. They form the core of the way of life of the Order of Penitents.

### THE “MEMORIALE PROPOSITI” (1221)

This date is universally accepted as the official beginning of the Third Order (see Chronicle of the XXIV Generals, in *Analecta Franciscana* III,27; Bartholomew of Pisa, Book of Conformities, in *Analecta Franciscana* IV,360-361). There is an English translation of the “Memoriale Propositi” in the *Omnibus of Sources*, pp. 165-175.

The “Memoriale Propositi” was written by Cardinal Hugolino, Protector of the Order of Friars Minor, and given to the Order of Penitents. It was orally approved in 1221 by Pope Honorius III, and marks the first legislative text of the Third Order of St. Francis. The Rule is presented as “the memorial of what is proposed for the Brothers and Sisters of Penance living in their own homes.” It is made up of eight chapters, dealing with (1) the daily life of the Penitents, regarding their dress, and prohibition to take part in public entertainment; (2) rules of abstinence; (3) rules of fasting; (4) prayer and the divine office; (5) sacramental practice, prohibition to carry arms and to avoid oaths; (6) the Eucharist and meeting of the fraternity once a month; (7) visiting the sick, burying the dead and offering prayers for them, obligation to make a last will, rules regarding the reception of new members in the fraternity; (8) the visitor and disciplinary rules, election of the officials of the fraternity.

The “Memoriale Propositi” is built upon the notion of fraternity. The Penitents are truly Brothers and Sisters, bound together by mutual charity. The prohibition to carry arms was a courageous witness of evangelical peace in a quarrelsome society, and it certainly dealt a blow to the feudal regime and to the petty quarrels between rival comuni [towns] in the Italian peninsula. The acts of charity and mercy, including burial and assisting the sick and lepers, were aimed at eradicating poverty and misery. The spirit of sharing of resources and the obligation to make a last will were a defense against hatred and violence between rival families or even between individuals within the same family. The Penitents were often persecuted for their evangelical witness of peace. Gregory IX had to intervene on 30 March 1228 with the Bull “Detestanda,” in which he defended the Penitents’ right not to carry arms and to be free of military service. In this Bull, the Order of Penitents is called Third Order for the first time.

### THE RULE OF POPE NICHOLAS IV (1289)

The year 1289 marks the date when the Third Franciscan Order was given a new Rule by Pope Nicholas IV, who issued the Bull “Supra montem” in the town of Rieti. Nicholas IV had been the General Minister of the Order of Friars Minor. He was Girolamo da Ascoli Piceno, General Minister from 1274 to 1279.

The Rule of Nicholas IV does not add any new material to the “Memoriale Propositi” of 1221, but it gives a more legislative style to this document. Nicholas IV made use of the “Memoriale Propositi,” as well as of a Rule for Penitents written by a certain Friar Caro, a Minorite from the Friary of Santa Croce in Florence, who was also a visitor to the Franciscan and Dominican Penitents in 1284. For the first time in its long history, the Third Order was given a Rule included within a Papal Bull. The Rule is addressed to the Brothers and Sisters of the Order of Penitents.

We shall take a brief look at the contents of the Rule, with the aim of presenting the structure of the penitential life of the Franciscan Tertiaries during the late 13<sup>th</sup> Century. Let it suffice to note that this Rule had a long history, lasting until the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, and therefore it regulated the life of the Third Order for centuries.

The Rule has 20 chapters. The contents of the individual chapters are as follows:

1. The Order of Penitents, its catholicity and obedience to the Church.
2. The reception of novices. Obligation of reconciliation with one’s neighbor. A public profession binding the penitents to the observance of the divine commandments. Married women need permission of their husbands to join the Order.
3. The penitential clothing of the penitents.
4. Prohibition against taking part in public entertainment and feasts.
5. Penitential practices of fasting and abstinence, with insistence upon the Franciscan penitential seasons, but also with the evangelical liberty to eat whatever is placed before them. Pregnant penitents freed from obligation of fasting.
6. The reception of the Sacraments of Penance and the Eucharist on Christmas, Easter and Pentecost.
7. Prohibition against bearing arms and rendering military service.
8. The reciting of the canonical hours of the Divine Office, according to the Franciscan style. Participation in the liturgy in cathedral and parish churches.
9. Obligation to draw up one’s last will.
10. The Ministers’ role to ensure that the Brothers and Sisters give witness of peace.
11. Recourse to ecclesiastical authority to be defended against interference by civil authorities.
12. Prohibition against taking oaths without authorization of the Apostolic See.
13. The daily Eucharist. The monthly meeting of the fraternity, including the celebration of the Eucharist, the preaching of the Word of God, charity to poor and sick members of the fraternity.
14. Visiting the sick Brothers and Sisters once a week. A decent burial and prayers for the deceased members of the fraternity.
15. The role of the Minister of the fraternity.
16. The Visitor of the fraternity, a member of the Order of Friars Minor, with the power to correct the shortcomings of the fraternity and to expel those who rebel against obedience.
17. An exhortation to avoid the scandal of division in the fraternity.
18. The Ordinary or Visitor can dispense individual members of the fraternity from the ecclesiastical norms of abstinence.
19. The disciplinary measures to be taken in the case of disobedient members of the fraternity, including expulsion from the Order.
20. Conclusion. The obligatory nature of the Rule of the Brothers and Sisters of Penance.

## The Third Order from 1289 to the 20<sup>th</sup> century

The Rule of Nicholas IV had the aim of establishing an intimate and juridical relationship between the First Order and the Third Order. This process, beneficial as it may have been in the early years, subsequently led to an overdependence of the Third Order upon the First Order.

The Third Order entered into a period of crisis during the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> Centuries. Innocent XI, with the Bull “*Ecclesiae catholicae*” of 28 June 1689, commented and adapted the Rule of 1289 to the times. Although the document defends the autonomy of the Third Order, it still gives broad powers to the Visitor.

Gradually, the Third Order was losing sight of its own identity. During the 17<sup>th</sup> Century it described itself in ambiguous terms: institute, religion, confraternity, company, college, seraphic institute, tertiary institution, fraternity of devotees! There were also problems related to the juridical status of the Tertiaries who were considered as a kind of middle way between the “*regulares*” (religious) and the “*saeculares*” (seculars).

During the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, the Third Order of St. Francis began a process of renewal. This was partly the result of social reform, in the aftermath of the French Revolution and with the onset of the Industrial Revolution. Pope Leo XIII, famous for the “*Rerum novarum*” and social reform in a Christian context, took to heart the renewal of the Franciscan Third Order. In his encyclical letter “*Auspicato*” (1882), he announced that he wanted to give a new orientation to the Third Order of St. Francis. In a letter written to Fr. Bernardino dal Vago da Portogruaro, General Minister of the Order of Friars Minor, the pope expressed his ardent wish to renew the Third Order in its genuine Franciscan spirit, in order to help him in his efforts at social reform. He even gave the Third Order a new Rule, with the Bull “*Misericors Dei Filius*” (1883).

Pope Pius X, who was himself a member of the Third Order, wrote the letter “*Tertium Franciscanum Ordinem*” (8 September 1912), in which he asked the Friars of the First Order to assume the spiritual care of the Third Order with the aim of promoting genuine social reform. This document, however, had the misfortune of making the Third Order depend excessively upon the First Or-

der. Again, the exact identity of the Third Order was being questioned. This process led to a growing awareness of the need for a more autonomous nature to be given to the Third Order of St. Francis. Luckily this process was realized in the aftermath of Vatican Council II.

## THE RULE OF PAUL VI AND THE SECULAR FRANCISCAN ORDER

During the International Congress of the Third Order in 1950, many voiced the need for an updating of the Rule of Leo XIII. They were of the opinion that it lacked the evangelical impetus which should be at the roots of Franciscan legislation. In 1957, the Third Order was given new General Constitutions, with the aim of renewing the contents of the Rule and giving the Order a spiritual, social and apostolic orientation.

Vatican Council II was the turning point for radical reform in the Third Order. In 1966, work was begun on a new Rule for the Third Order of St. Francis. The process was a long one. Various commissions worked upon new proposals. At long last, on 24 June 1978, Paul VI formally approved the new Rule of the Secular Franciscan Order with the Apostolic Letter “*Seraphicus Patriarca*.”

The new Rule proposed a new name for the Third Order of St. Francis: Secular Franciscan Order (SFO). Its structure includes a prologue, in which we find the Exhortation of St. Francis to the Brothers and Sisters of Penance. In this way the Rule of the SFO goes to the roots of the evangelical and penitential life of Secular Franciscans.

The Rule of the SFO is made up of three chapters. We shall briefly present the structure of the Rule with the aim of noting the characteristic elements of the charism of the SFO in the world today.

### Chapter I - The Secular Franciscan Order

1. The SFO as an expression of the charism of St. Francis in the Church.
2. Definition of the SFO as a family of Catholic fraternities living the Gospel in the style of St. Francis.
3. Brief note about the legislative history of the SFO.

## Chapter II - The Way of Life of Secular Franciscans

4. The life of the Gospel.
5. Christ present in the Brothers and Sisters, in Scriptures, in the Church, and in the Liturgy. The grace of Baptism.
6. Union with the pastors of the Church. Creative apostolic vocation.
7. Penitential dimension of the Franciscan life. Conversion and sacrament of reconciliation.
8. Life of prayer, in the sacraments, the Eucharist, the Liturgy of the Hours.
9. Devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary.
10. The evangelical counsel of obedience.
11. The evangelical counsel of poverty and humility. Itinerant nature of the Franciscan life.
12. The evangelical counsel of chastity in the secular state.
13. Spirit of fraternal love and respect towards all persons.
14. Social commitment to the world in a spirit of evangelical service.
15. Promotion of justice, in the sphere of social life.
16. Value of work as a service to the community.
17. Peace and respect of life. Witness of genuine love between married Secular Franciscans.
18. Love and respect for all creatures.
19. Commitment to work for peace, through dialogue and forgiveness. Encounter with “sister death” in a true spirit of faith.

## Chapter III - The Life of the Fraternity

20. Local, regional, national and international fraternities. Way of life contained in the Rule and General Constitutions.
21. The fraternity council and the Minister of the fraternity.
22. Canonical establishment of the local fraternity.
23. Process of acceptance of new members in the SFO. Rite of initiation, initial formation, profession of the Rule.
24. Meetings with other Franciscan groups, especially with young people. Prayers for deceased members of the SFO.
25. Economic administration of the fraternity.
26. The role of the Spiritual Assistant of the fraternity who, preferably, is a member of the First Order of St. Francis. The pastoral visitation and the fraternal visitation.





1939: Demolition of neighborhood houses to make room for the Third Order Hall

## **Formation Reflections for October 2007**

Prologue: Exhortation of Saint Francis to the Brothers and Sisters in Penance

Chapter 1: Concerning Those Who Do Penance

**All who love the Lord with their whole heart, with their whole soul and mind, with all their strength (see Mark 12:30), and love their neighbors as themselves (see Matthew 22:39) and hate their bodies with their vices and sins, and receive the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, and produce worthy fruits of penance.**

Chapter 2: Concerning Those Who Do Not Do Penance

**But all those men and women who are not doing penance and do not receive the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ and live in vices and sin and yield to evil concupiscence and to the wicked desires of the flesh, and do not observe what they have promised to the Lord, and are slaves to the world, in their bodies, by carnal desires and the anxieties and cares of this life (see John 8:41).**

Discussion Questions:

1. How does it “feel” to be in the family of God?
2. What does it mean to “have nothing in this world”?
3. What are your “feelings” on penance?

**Orientation begins in October  
3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday at Noon**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Meeting Room of the Solanus Casey Center**

**Know anyone who would be a good Secular Franciscan?  
Invite them!**

# OCTOBER 2007

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3 TRANSITUS 7:00 PM	4 ST. FRANCIS  Thursday Meeting: 1 PM	5	6
7  27 <sup>th</sup> Sunday Ord. Time Pss. Wk. 3	8	9	10	11	12	13
14  28 <sup>th</sup> Sunday Ord. Time Pss. Wk. 4	15	16  St. Joan of Arc: 1 PM	17  SFO Council: 6:30 PM	18  St. Alfred's: 7 PM  EMB Board: 10 AM	19	20
21  29 <sup>th</sup> Sunday Ord. Time Pss. Wk. 1 3rd Sunday: Capuchins' 150 <sup>th</sup> Jubilee. MASS: 11:00 AM	22  <b>CHRISTIAN SERVICE:</b> Service Center 9 am - Noon	23	24	25  <b>CHRISTIAN SERVICE:</b> Conner Kitchen 4 pm - 6 pm	26  Bl. Luchesio: 7:30 PM  Interfaith Meeting: 7 PM	27
28  30 <sup>th</sup> Sunday Ord. Time Pss. Wk. 2	29	30	31  <b>CHRISTIAN SERVICE:</b> Meldrum Kitchen 10:30 am - 1 pm			

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# FAX ET PHONUM

**Minister**

Janet Bodell

**Vice Minister**

Ona Harris

**Treasurer**

Eugene Snyders

**Secretary**

Patricia Meldrum

**Formation**

John Bodell

**Councillors:**

- Clara Falzone
- Caroline Florescu
- Gary Johnson
- Frank Kraimer
- Maryann Kummer
- Maxine Piaseczny

**Spiritual Assistant:**

Br. Patrick McSherry

**APPOINTMENTS**

**Infirmarians:**

- Jo Marie Nardi
- Sylvia Stanik3

**Continuing Formation:**

Maryann Kummer

**Christian Service:**

Frank Kraimer

**Ecology:**

Clara Falzone

**Work:**

Gary Johnson

**Family:**

Rocco Cesaro

**Peace and Justice:**

- Jo Marie Nardi
- Maxine Piaseczny

**Eucharistic Mission Band (EMB):**

Caroline Florescu

**MEETING CONTACTS**

(for Locations and Times of Meetings)

**Fr. Solanus Cell:**

Faye Boland

**St. Joan of Arc Satellite:**

Frank Liccardello

**Thursday Meeting:**

Raymond Morehead

**Third Sunday:**

Maryann Kummer

**St. Alfred Cell:**

Gertrude Beatty

**Bl. Luchesio Cell:**

Rocco Cesaro

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Deadline for articles is 3:30 PM  
of the 3rd Sunday of each month.



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