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REGIONAL  
COUNCIL OF THE  
SECULAR FRANCISCAN ORDER

# THE LAVERNA VISION

YEAR OF TRANSFORMATION ❖ WINTER 2011 EDITION

## FORMATION TEAM MARKS 2011 AS YEAR OF TRANSFORMATION

BY JOANN BOSS, SFO

During the November 2010 council planning retreat, the LaVerna Regional Formation Team welcomed its newest appointed member, Lizanne Schulrud from St. Josaphat Fraternity in Milwaukee. Lizanne serves as local fraternity treasurer, and currently works as a member of the LaVerna Regional Nominating Committee. Along with fellow formation team members, Carol



Lizanne Schulrud, SFO

Bekkers, Lee Ann Niebuhr, and Pauline Riedl, we are pleased to have her join us.

## GOSPEL FOOTPRINTS FOR THE TRANSFORMATION JOURNEY

Building on the past two-year themes, information (2009) and formation (2010) respectively, our formation team focus for 2011 is transformation. The transformation journey from Inquirer, Candidate, and on to profession is daily conversion. But guess what ... our conversion does not stop there! Conversion never ends. We continually walk down new spiritual avenues of prayer, opportunity, and Secular Franciscan participation.



*“The virgin shall be with child and give birth to a son,  
and they shall call him Emmanuel  
a name which means God is with us”*

Matthew 1:23

## WHO ARE WE?

Like Francis and Clare, we desire that new life calling inside us, and we seek transformation by following gospel footprints. But what words would describe our community? We pray to be transformed to one another in profound ways, and we pray especially to know God in our daily service with others. With these tools of gospel knowledge, prayer, Franciscan service within us, who are we?

For our 2011 regional district gatherings, the formation team has planned a closer perspective of our Secular Franciscan identity, as noted in the August 2010 Monthly Dossier\* written by Emanuela De Nunzio, SFO International Council President. She writes, *“that the SFO Rule and General Constitution states the identity of the Secular Franciscan [and] is expressed in triple dimensions: personal (inner life), fraternal (co-responsibilities), and universal (the missions).”*

At each district gathering, Lizanne and I will present an overview on how to set up and continue a SFO transformation route from the three elements of identity, outlined in Emanuela De Nunzio’s article.

Please see page 8, 'Year of Transformation'

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The La Verna Region of the Secular Franciscan Order in the USA consists of Wisconsin and Upper Michigan. The area is divided into four districts: Southeast, Central, Fox Valley and Upper Michigan. *La Verna Vision* is a vehicle of communication with the LaVerna Region. It presents a forum for presenting information and insights that relate to the SFO Way of Life. Permission to copy materials printed in *LaVerna Vision* is freely given except where the copyright is specifically reserved to the author or artist. Please credit *LaVerna Vision* if you copy any of the articles. For further information about the La Verna Region and the Secular Franciscan Order, [www.lavernasecularfranciscans.com](http://www.lavernasecularfranciscans.com) or [www.lavanasecularfranciscan.org](http://www.lavanasecularfranciscan.org)

The *La Verna Vision* newsletter is published three times a year. Deadline for submitting articles are as follows:

Spring issue—March 1; Summer issue—July 1; Winter issue—November 1

*La Verna Vision* editors: Ed Boss, SFO, [ed-joann@execpc.com](mailto:ed-joann@execpc.com) (262) 250-9251; asst. editor, Bob Henning, SFO, [bmjhsfo@aol.com](mailto:bmjhsfo@aol.com)

# Reflections

Lester Bach OFM Cap - Regional Spiritual Assistant



## Spiritual Assistants

While La Verna region is blessed with our spiritual assistants, we have a few fraternities who are searching for people to be their spiritual assistants. As time goes by we will face this issue in greater numbers. I thought I'd share a few ideas on this topic.

The Conference of National Spiritual Assistants (CNSA) developed a program to train spiritual assistants. Its title is: *Franciscan Family Connections*. It was originally written in the 1990's and called *Life-Giving Union*. It was revised and re-named in 2007. This year *Franciscan Family Connections* has received another revision. Seven new chapters were added and a revision of the former chapters took place.

Its 19 chapters are used as a correspondence course. It is still called *Franciscan Family Connections* but it is the *2011 revised edition*. It will be available early in 2011 from Smokey Valley Printing - Box 189 - Lindsborg, KS 67456.

When a fraternity council searches for a spiritual assistant, one of the main qualities needed is knowledge of Franciscan spirituality and an awareness of the functioning of the SFO. Many people recommended may not have much knowledge of our Franciscan life. Even friars, sisters and secular Franciscans are not guaranteed to be totally knowledgeable about SFO Franciscan life.

1. When they are consulted, councils must be very careful in recommending individuals to be spiritual assistants. Men and women are both acceptable as possible candidates. Having a "nice" person, or someone with plenty of church knowledge but little Franciscan background, is not a good candidate. The training program would change that, but the individual needs to be willing to take the program.

2. Spiritual assistants may be; a) a Friar or a member of a Franciscan religious Order; b) a member of the clergy or other religious Orders; c) a Secular Franciscan who has been professed for at least five years. Candidates are invited to take the *Franciscan Family Connections* (Revised - 2011) course. This is especially true when they have little knowledge about SFO life. But the course is good for all candidates!

3. If the candidate is willing to take the program, it would be about 19 months before he/she is ready to serve as a spiritual assistant. But the wait is worth the time it takes to have a competent spiritual assistant. Councils must be honest with people they ask to become a spiritual assistant. Don't minimize nor magnify the role of a spiritual assistant.

4. Among many other things, the spiritual assistant is expected to attend three periods of fraternity life each month: a) The fraternity council meeting; b) The regular gathering of the fraternity; c) the initial formation sessions.

In each of these three sessions the SFO has expectations of the spiritual assistant. Good spiritual assistants recognize that they "assist" and do not run things. *Franciscan Family Connections* helps a new candidate for spiritual assistant to understand his/her role and how to function in fraternity life. The book informs the spiritual assistant candidate on a variety of requirements for being a spiritual assistant. Qualified SA's can make a big difference in the way a fraternity functions.

5. Once the council has selected, prayerfully and after interviewing the candidate, they recommend the person to the Provincial or Provincial Spiritual Assistant of the Province to which the fraternity is bonded. *Only this Provincial or Provincial Spiritual Assistant has the authority to appoint a spiritual assistant to the fraternity*. The term for an SA to a fraternity is 12 consecutive years.

6. The fraternity council needs to be *consulted*. But the one who appoints remains free, for good reasons, to choose another person as spiritual assistant. The council communicates information about the candidate when they make their recommendation to the Provincial or the Provincial Spiritual Assistant. The Provincial or Provincial Spiritual Assistant is the mentor. But he can delegate someone else for the task.

7. ***I would recommend*** that each fraternity council in La Verna region purchase a copy of the *revised Franciscan Family Connections* for their spiritual assistant. It is a good resource for them. The better the spiritual assistant, the better will be the growth of fraternity life.

I pray for you and your family at this blest time of year.

In the past few months, the SFO National and Regional Franciscan Family events have kept me moving: passing thru large airport terminals in Washington D.C., Milwaukee, and Phoenix; flagging down taxicabs to town and country gatherings, and driving my car to all points within Wisconsin. And within these regular and rewarding journeys of packing and unpacking, I managed to take-in lots of Franciscan Family information.

I want to mention some of our SFO mission programs, which are set up to work with and help people. Franciscan Action Network (FAN), Franciscans International (FI), National SFO Fraternity (NAFRA), Franciscan Family Apostolate (FFA), Amazon Relief Project (AP), Franciscan Mission Association (FMA), NAFRA – National Fraternity Justice Peace and Integrity of Creation (JPIC) -- all are part of who we are as Secular Franciscans living out our Rule.

Each of these programs carry a perspective of how we live out the gospel life, and it would be difficult to say which program is more important!

And during the past few hectic months of travel and attending SFO gatherings, my mind has been on overload with information about the many requests for each of these SFO mission programs. I cannot help but think of all the

people who are in honest need, and all those who receive need from our Franciscan brothers and sisters. Each of these SFO functions presents their own unique style and desire, and they help those living in substandard conditions we cannot imagine. For example, the Amazon Project provides caring for the “poorest of the poor” with shelter, clean water, food, clothing, health, education, to leper colonies in South America.

Much of our American standard of living we take for granted. However, I understand that some of us do not have proper health care – we do without some medications, or cannot afford to see the doctor, or do not have proper dental care. Some of us run out of money before the end of the month to buy supplies or wholesome food. We do have problems in the USA, but we are blessed with have safe homeless shelters, free clinics, and state or county Family and Human Service agencies for needed support.

But in the areas where the above ministries do their best work – the living conditions are far worse. Their outreach programs extend to people who have nowhere to go for help. These Franciscan and Catholic Relief programs may extend to natives who inhabit dirt floor huts pieced together with scrap boards and corrugated sheet metal. And where tropical rain runoff leaks into their small homes. There is little or no clean water for drinking or personal hygiene; they are forced to fetch water from infected streams polluted by animal and/or industrial waste. There is nowhere to gain food – no stores with multiple shelves of food.

I am troubled by all these reduced and poor living conditions, and I pray for answers – answers as to how I can help.

Many times, I have bought things not needed or important in my life. So, would my \$5.00 monthly donation really help a Franciscan mission program? Alone my few dollars would not make much of a difference. However, with many other \$5.00 donations, a collective amount would make a big difference.

I am asking that you join me in giving a small monthly amount to one of our Franciscan Groups in Action. It could be the cost spent for a cup of coffee and a hamburger. Together our donations will contribute to the lives of those who are less fortunate. Will we as a Franciscan Family respond to the call for help?

We can send a donation to Peter Bekkers, LaVerna Regional treasurer, with a check made out to SFO LaVerna Region and memo mark it as the “NAFRA Donors Fund.” Your donation will be used to help support the many outreach Franciscan support groups. For further reading information, please go to: [www.franciscanaction.org](http://www.franciscanaction.org). Thank you.



**Judy Stouffer, SFO**

## OUR ENVIRONMENT

### Nature's Bats Need Our Help!

In 2006, a previously unknown fungal disease began attacking bats in the United States. Since 2008, when states began tracking the spread of the disease, White Nose Fungus (WNF) has killed over a million bats as it has spread into fourteen states. The disease, which does not affect humans, attacks many of the cave-dwelling bat species. When it strikes, it destroys bat colonies rapidly -- in as little as a few months.

The speed at which WNF has spread is 'unprecedented,' according to Federal and State wildlife biologists. As it continues to decimate bat colonies, the consensus from Department of Natural Resource bat experts is that entire species of already endangered American bats may become extinct within the next year. Species of bats like the little brown bat and the big brown bat, which have previously had robust populations, are also severely threatened. Michigan and Wisconsin are working on emergency measures to declare even these formerly common bat species in imminent danger of total extinction within our states in the next two years.

One little brown bat alone can eat 400 mosquitoes an hour. If our bat populations disappear, we will lose the major predator God gave us against night-flying disease-carrying insects like mosquitoes. Bats also eat many other kinds of insects that attack our crops and our forests, and the predicted economic losses to farmers and the lumber industry are enormous if bats disappear.

### HOW CAN WE HELP?

Pray for the delivery of our bats from extinction! What could be more powerful than Franciscans united in asking St. Francis to intercede for our bats? There are also several other ways to become part of the battle to save our bats in both Michigan and Wisconsin.

If you live in Wisconsin, the DNR, along with several partners, has set up the Wisconsin Bat Monitoring Program (WBMP). Through the WBMP, you can get involved in many ways:

- If you know of large numbers of bats in caves, mines, barns, bridges, churches, schools, or other buildings, please contact Wisconsin Bat Program at (608-266-5216). You will receive instructions on how to report the colony. These colonies need to be reported so that they can be protected from human contact. Current research indicates that while humans can't get the disease, outdoor enthusiasts are unknowingly carrying WNF from site to site on their clothing and shoes, and spreading the disease.
- Use approved, non-lethal methods to exclude bats from your home.
- Build and install a bat house.

- Volunteer time for acoustic surveys or bat house monitoring. The DNR provides all the training and all the equipment needed to interested volunteers for both. You can even take a one-time survey, basically a hike, using their special hand-held acoustic system that detects and records the high frequency calls bats make while they fly through the area you are in. You can email the Wisconsin bat wildlife biologist Dave Redell at [David.Redell@wisconsin.gov](mailto:David.Redell@wisconsin.gov) for more information, or contact him through the Wisconsin DNR.
- Contribute tax-deductible donations for immediate projects to save bats.
- Donate funds to sustain a long-term program to save bats.

For more information, see the Wisconsin DNR's WBMP website, <http://wiatri.net/inventory/bats/index.cfm>.

One final way we can help slow the spread of WNF is by staying out of bat habitats, especially abandoned mines, and cooperating with disinfection procedures before visiting tourist mines. Researchers believe that the WNF may have spread as quickly as it has because humans are unwittingly carrying it on their shoes and clothes away from infected sites and into previously disease-free areas.

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## BOOK REPORT By Pat Schoonover , SFO

### **A LAMP UNTO MY FEET**

By Fr. Thomas J. McInnis,  
Novel, 2007, pp. 76.

*"Let your word, Father, be a lamp for my feet and a light to my path, so that I may understand what you wish to teach me and follow the path your light marks out for me."* Psalm 119

This enjoyable book demonstrates many Franciscan values: family life, serving others, gospel to life-life to gospel, compassion, and a rich sense of community.

Arthur Leinen, "who had his share of rain and his moments in the sun," is the main character in the novel. Fr. McInnis writes about Arthur's long and difficult search to find a vocation. Arthur's character portrays that versatile importance of time and patience to accompany values and ideals on becoming a Christian.

For example, when Arthur worked at the Schoen Funeral Home in Milwaukee, he made visitation to the residences of the recently deceased. After the death, Arthur made it his mission to revisit the surviving family members three times per year for a two-year period. His service provided a genuine support for the bereaved.

Three basic rules made up Arthur's code of conduct: to serve and not be served, honesty, and understanding with compassion. He was addicted to alcohol, but with the support of his wife, Arthur entered Grandview Medical Center for rehab treatment.

A man of deep faith, Arthur looked upon prayer, meditation, and God's grace for assistance. While in alcohol rehab, he led prayer services and helped with gospel studies. Because of his leadership qualities, his Grandview Medical Center counselor encouraged Arthur to apply for a social director's position. He was hired and later became a staff counselor for the Center. The position was appealing because it gave Arthur the opportunity to fulfill his life's major goals.

Arthur was motivated by gospel values to serve others in time of need and healing. The lamp burned for Arthur to direct his feet, even when the light was sometimes dim.

*Lamp Unto My Feet* portrays Arthur Leinen's pivotal search for his true life's vocation. His exploration and journey make him generously serve the church, the community, and himself.

Pat Schoonover is a member of St. James Fraternity in Wausau. Fr. Thomas J. McInnis is a senior priest for the Diocese of La Crosse and resides in Galesville, WI.

## HELP WANTED - LA VERNA REGIONAL HISTORIAN

**Secular Franciscans interested in joining the Regional Executive Council positions:**

### **Archivist/Historian and Assistant Webmaster**

For recommended qualifications, please see job descriptions, "Regional Guidelines" at [www.lavernasecularfranciscans.org/](http://www.lavernasecularfranciscans.org/) or contact Vice Minister, Jim Carlson, 236 S. Elizabeth St., Whitewater, WI. 53190 or e-mail: [james.carlson@wicourts.gov](mailto:james.carlson@wicourts.gov) For those with the gifts, this is an exciting way to help the fraternity - please consider inquiring.

## PLEASE REMEMBER US IN YOUR WILL

We value our life as Secular Franciscans and wish to have our way of living the Gospels continued through generations. If you as an individual feel strongly about this, we ask you to remember the La Verna Regional Secular Franciscans in your will. Please advise your attorney to have the request read: "I give and bequeath the sum of \$\_\_\_\_\_ unto the La Verna Region of the Secular Franciscan Order for the purpose of furthering the ideals of the Secular Franciscan Order." Correspondence can be mailed to:

La Verna Regional Council  
c/o Ken Beattie, SFO Regional Minister  
512 Pioneer Road  
Sheboygan, WI 53081-8705

Your generosity will be remembered for years to come by those following the Franciscan Way of Life. Call Ken at (414) 380-3850/or email [beatiesfo@aol.com](mailto:beatiesfo@aol.com)

## Novena Prayer for Darfur for February 2011

Merciful Father, Prince of Peace, Spirit of Wisdom and Compassion, please look upon our brothers and sisters in Darfur. We pray:  
----For those who have been subjected to violence: women, children, young and old men, we ask for healing, consolation, and relief of further suffering.

*Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be*

----For those who have done violence, we ask for healing, forgiveness, and the grace of conversion.

*Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be*

----For those in authority throughout the world, we ask wisdom, creativity, compassion and courage in addressing this situation.

*Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be*

Lord Jesus, Your Sacred Heart burns for love of all Your people. Please place in our hearts that same love and inspire us to have the courage, wisdom and ingenuity to take what measures we can personally to relieve the suffering in Darfur. We pray this in the Name of Jesus, our Lord, through the intercession of the sorrowful and Immaculate Heart of Mary.

**Memorare:** Remember oh most gracious Virgin Mary that never was it known that anyone who fled to thy protection, implored thy help, or sought thy intercession was left unaided. Inspired by this confidence I fly unto thee, oh Virgin of Virgins, my mother. To thee do I come, before thee I stand, sinful and sorrowful. Oh mother of the Word Incarnate, despise not my petitions, but in thy mercy hear and answer me. Amen †

### LaVerna Regional Fraternity SFO

#### Application for financial assistance

FOR 2011 FRANCISCAN retreat fees

Applicant \_\_\_\_\_ Ph # (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_

Retreat Location \_\_\_\_\_

Retreat Date \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_

In order FOR YOU to qualify for financial assistance we need to have some information.

Number of people in Family living at home \_\_\_\_\_

TOTAL MONTHLY HOUSHOLD INCOME \$ \_\_\_\_\_

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:

SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

These GUIDELINES will help us to determine your qualifications for financial assistance:

	<u>Family size</u>	<u>Monthly income</u>
1		\$ 1,127.00
2		\$ 1,517.00
3		\$ 1,907.00
4		\$ 2,297.00
5		\$ 2,687.00
6		\$ 3,077.00
7		\$ 3,467.00
8		\$ 3,857.00
9		\$ 4,247.00
10		\$ 4,637.00

Return to: Peter Bekkers, SFO, W6855 St. Mary's Dr., Greenville, WI 54942, PHONE: (920) 757-9027

E-mail: taxmannatp@new.rr.com

**Note: If you cannot attend this retreat, please return the assistance money to "LaVerna Region SFO"**

Pauline has a special meditation, which will evoke your “being” as an instrument of peace. Lee Ann will ignite your spirit for a true mission within our church. And Carol will lead you through a self-visitation of your fraternal life. The team has designed each district meeting as a life gift, and a passageway for your journey to become gospel to life Franciscans.

\*Monthly Dossier – International CCIOF Ongoing Formation Project, *Sense of Belonging to the Secular Franciscan Order*, By Emanuela De Nunzio, Vol. 1 No. 8, 2010

## LAVERNA REGION SFOs INTRODUCE ST. FRANCIS TO YOUTH

Submitted by Dorothy J. Kollmann, SFO, St. Francis Fraternity, Escanaba, MI

On October 5th and 6th, three Secular Franciscans from the St. Francis Fraternity of Escanaba MI visited with the 5th thru 8th graders at Holy Name Central School in Escanaba. With joy and excitement, we went to introduce the students to St. Francis of Assisi.

On October 4th, St Francis Feast day, the school held a Blessing of Animals. The students eagerly shared their delight in having all different kinds of animals come for the blessing. That opened the way to tell of the life of St Francis. His family, childhood, adolescence, manhood, and then in his illness how he turned to God. As Francis recovered, he wanted to pray, sing, compose prayers and to live a simple life. He wanted to be poor and to help poor people, homeless people, and hungry people. Francis' way of life attracted many followers. In time, with St.

Clare he set up an order for Nuns, for Priests and finally for us secular Franciscans, whom we were representing.

Jean Simon SFO told of how she became interested in St. Francis. She was attracted to Francis' great desire to live a simple life. She studied for three years in the Franciscan Formation Program and then professed.

Jan Tolfa, SFO, former formation director, told of her trip to Assisi. She saw the buildings and the countryside. She walked, prayed, and received the Sacraments where Francis did. This experience drew her to pray, study, and to become a Secular Franciscan. Jan showed the youth a tabletop model of the San Damiano Cross, and encouraged them to study and pray with the large San Damiano Cross in their school Multi-Purpose Room.

Dorothy Kollmann, SFO concluded the sessions by encouraging the students to learn more about Francis and to observe how they were doing some of the same things he did for the Lord.

The students collect canned goods to feed the hungry; they raise money to help in recovery efforts from natural disasters; they send money to the missions; they visit the elderly in nursing homes, and they serve the disabled. So, our youth, like Francis, live out the Gospel in their lives.

It was a joy and a privilege to be with the students. By their reverence in Chapel and their attention to our sharing, they ministered to us.

On Tuesday, we had sixty 5th and 6th graders, and Wednesday we met with forty 7th and 8th graders.

## National News—Franciscan Action Network (FAN)



The C4C Franciscan Care for Creation program is the Franciscan Action Network's adult formation program to prepare communities to put faith into action by addressing important ecological issues.

St. Francis and St. Clare of Assisi inspired a vision and a living tradition that can help us to respond to our ecological vocation. The C4C process intends to inform, inspire, challenge, and invite participants

to an active response.

This adult formation program is designed as a mini-series of six (6) sessions. A facilitator leads these sessions with a small group of adult learners. Each session lasts from 2-3 hours and includes prayer, stories, visuals, readings, and discussion.

The C4C process provides learners with an introduction to a Franciscan perspective on relationships in Creation, an overview of pressing Creation a description of a Franciscan For more information on the internet contact: [creation@franciscanaction.org](mailto:creation@franciscanaction.org).

## Regional News

### LA VERNA REGIONAL 2011 COUNCIL ELECTIONS

The La Verna Regional council elections will be held during the 2011 Chapter at St. Anthony Retreat Center in Marathon, WI, June 24 - 26. A council nomination write-in form is included below.

Are you being called to submit your name for a council position? Please read Joanne Guzik's short article on page 10 about her Franciscan discernment titled, *Coming of Age in Your Vocation?* Joanne's testimony will inspire you to step-up your SFO commitment from the local fraternity level to the regional level.

If you, or someone you know, is hearing the call as well, please fill-out and submit the enclosed nomination form. With 18 Regional Fraternities and over 500 LaVerna Region SFO members, I am confident we will have many qualified and willing nominees!

#### NOMINATION FORM

##### Person Submitting Nomination(s):

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Fraternity \_\_\_\_\_ Phone and/or  
email \_\_\_\_\_

##### Nominee for Regional Minister:

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Fraternity \_\_\_\_\_ Phone and/or  
email \_\_\_\_\_

##### Nominee for Regional Vice Minister:

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Fraternity \_\_\_\_\_ Phone and/or  
email \_\_\_\_\_

##### Nominee for Regional Treasurer:

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Fraternity \_\_\_\_\_ Phone and/or  
email \_\_\_\_\_

##### Nominee for Regional Secretary:

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Fraternity \_\_\_\_\_ Phone and/or  
email \_\_\_\_\_

##### Nominee for District Councilor (circle one: Southeast Central Fox Valley Upper Peninsula):

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Fraternity \_\_\_\_\_ Phone and/or  
email \_\_\_\_\_

**Please mail this form to:** Lizanne Schulrud, 2471 N. Gordon Pl., Milwaukee, WI 53212  
**Questions about job duties, eligibility, etc.:** [schulrud@sbcglobal.net](mailto:schulrud@sbcglobal.net) or call: (414) 372-6593  
**Nomination submission deadline:** February 20, 2011

## COMING OF AGE IN YOUR VOCATION?

By Joanne Guzik, SFO

La Verna Regional Nomination Committee member

I see my Secular Franciscan vocation parallel to my life on earth. My growth in Franciscanism has alternated from bounding leaps to barely moving. For far too long, I remained cautious not to invest too much into SFO activities and neglect my family, job and other responsibilities. As I approached late middle age, I slowly realize that the Lord has been patiently waiting for me to hear His calls to my local fraternity.

I felt Him clearly open my mind and heart to a desire to serve as local Minister of St. John Neumann Fraternity in Rhinelander. In fact, before our local fraternity elections, my prayers led me to say "yes," even prior to nomination announcements.

That "yes" led to more growth in my vocation: local fraternity ministers become part of the Regional Council. At my first Chapter gathering at St. Anthony's Retreat Center in June 2010, I heard His increasingly familiar Voice asking to help with the council nomination process for the La Verna Chapter in June 2011.

I pray that our faithful La Verna members will ask our loving Father to bless our Region with candidates. Candidates with zealous hearts, who will lead us toward an ever-deepening growth in our Secular Franciscan commitments.

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## Living Franciscan Spirituality in a Polarized World

Presented by Fr. Dan Crosby, OFM Cap

Reported By Marion Schroers, SFO, St. James Fraternity, Wausau

Are you rooted? That was the question asked during the Franciscan Living retreat at the St. Anthony Retreat Center, Marathon, WI, October 15-17. Fr. Dan Crosby presented his talk titled, *Living Franciscan in a Polarized World* to approximately 80 people attending the weekend retreat.

Rooted comes from the Latin word "radix." Radical and rebel come from "radix." Jesus and Francis were rooted in their belief in the Gospel Life, and they did not always fit in. They were at times radical.

### We live in an "either/or" world

Just as good parents need to balance their family living with teenagers between rules and freedom, so we need to balance our own spirituality in an "either/or" world. To succeed we need to be rooted, and listen to what our inner voice is telling us.

To do this we receive support by (1) our love and faith in God, (2) remembering what others have done (3) prayer (4) patience (5) support groups (6) self-awareness and (7) honest communications in our "either/or" world. We need to listen to those little urges from God and know what we are rooted in. We listen to the Spirit, because the Gospel is always within us. We must listen for it.

Francis was not a "yes" man, but lived in obedience to God and the Gospel. Francis reached out to the leper. We need to reach out to the "lepers" of our inner self, and know that everyone is our brother and sister, since the Lord inspires us all. Francis was totally catholic, in an anti-clerical age, aware that God works in all people. We are called to be rooted, and to stay in the truth, Gospel Truth. We cannot bypass tensions. Tensions do not go away. Doing a balancing act in an "either/or" world is how we stay rooted. We have many strong, strange voices around confusing us from softer spiritual voices.

### How Francis lived rooted in Christ

Francis used five P's to help keep it all together:

**Passionate** love for Christ crucified (Love, Faith, Trust)

Remember others have done it

Keep looking at the Cross-(it is God and human – both ends)

Jesus is stretched on the cross (beyond what he wants to be)

**Prayers** and purity of heart will help us have strength **Penance** changes our mind, heart and attitude.

**Poverty** in Franciscan and Gospel sense. What are we holding on to? What are we defensive about?

**People** – see joy in others. Francis said I love the brothers as much as I can; half of them are opposed to me.

**La Verna Regional Fraternity**  
**SFO OPERATING BUDGET**  
 FOR CALENDAR ENDING  
 DECEMBER 31, 2011

**2011  
Budget  
Approved  
6/26/2010**

**REVENUE:**

DONATIONS -----	1,500.00
INTEREST INCOME & CASH BK BONUS-----	310.00
INTEREST ENDOWMENT FUND -----	888.50
SPECIAL MEMORIALS -----	1,000.00
CHAPTER -----	650.00
FAIR SHARE -----442 @ 50-----	22,100.00
MISC INCOME -----	1,000.00
<b>TOTAL REVENUE -----</b>	<b>27,448.50</b>

**EXPENSES:**

STIPENDS -----	2,450.00
RENT INCLUDING EQUIPMENT -----	50.00
MATERIALS & SUPPLIES -----	650.00
EDUCATION/TRAINING -----	1,000.00
MEETING ROOM & FACILITIES -----	500.00
OFFICE SUPPLIES -----	150.00
DONATIONS -----	250.00
ADMINISTRATIVE EXP -----	900.00
NEWSLETTER -----	1,707.72
TRAVEL EXP -----	8,998.28
FAIR SHARE TO NAFRA ----- 442 @ 12 --	5,304.00
ANNUAL CHAPTER EXP -----	3,650.00
VISITATION / ELECTION -----	850.00
RETREAT SUBSIDY -----	888.50
MISCELLANEOUS EXPENSE -----	100.00
<b>TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS -----</b>	<b>27,448.50</b>
<b>GAIN OR (LOSS) FOR PERIOD -----</b>	<b>0.00</b>

PETER J. BEKKERS, SFO,   TREASURER

11/6/2010

**Local Fraternity—SFO pilgrimage to Holy Hill Basilica**

On Saturday October 16, SFOs from three local fraternities made a pilgrimage to the Holy Hill Basilica in Hartford, WI. There were 29 pilgrims on the journey. Fraternity members from St. Joseph (Appleton), Sacred Heart (OshKosh), and St. Francis Xavier (Menasha) pooled together their talents and resources to enjoy a much anticipated spiritual experience. A chartered bus picked up members at each town location and then they traveled on to the Basilica. Don Derozier, SFO from Sacred Heart Fraternity, recited the Crown Rosary in the bus on the way to the National Shrine of Mary. The group attended 11 a.m. Mass in the shrine basilica and later enjoyed a buffet lunch in the Holy Hill Café. There was time in the morning and afternoon for private devotion, walking, and outdoor Stations of the Cross.

LA VERNA REGION  
SECULAR FRANCISCAN ORDER  
512 PIONEER ROAD  
SHEBOYGAN, WI 53081

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## Calendar of Events: Winter-Spring 2011

- February La Verna Region Election Nominations Closed
- February 19 LaVerna Regional Executive Council mtg. at St. Mary of the Angel's Friary, Green Bay, 9:30 a.m. – 3 p.m.
- April 2 Central Wisconsin District Gathering— held at Holy Family Church, Woodruff, WI. Our Lady of the Universe Fraternity will host the meeting. 9 a.m. – 3 p.m. Registration begins at 8:30 a.m.
- April 9 Fox Valley District Gathering— held at St. Joseph's Catholic Church, Holly Hall, 404 W. Lawrence St., Appleton, WI. 9 a.m. – 3 p.m. Registration begins at 8:30 a.m.
- Southeast District Gathering: meeting date & location to be announced later.
- April 30 LaVerna Regional Executive Council mtg. at St. Mary of the Angel's Friary, Green Bay, 9:30 a.m. – 3 p.m.
- April-May LaVerna Regional Elections Nominees resumes distributed to voting members
- May 12-15 *Forming the Formatters*, NAFRA formation workshop, at The Shrine of Our Lady of the Snows, Belleville, IL. For further events and updates, go to: [www.nafraformation.org](http://www.nafraformation.org)
- June 24-26 LaVerna Regional Chapter of Elections, St. Anthony Retreat Center, Marathon, WI
- June 23-26 *Aspects of Fraternity Life*, presented by guest speakers Fr. Lester Bach, OFM Cap and Mary Bittner, SFO NAFRA Councilor. At St. Francis University, 117 Evergreen Dr., P.O. Box 600, Loretto, PA 15940  
Phone: (814) 472-3000.
- July 3-8, **2012** *Why Francis? Claim the Gift!* The 18th Quinquennial of the Secular Franciscan Order held at the North Shore Skokie Holiday Inn, Chicago, IL