



The Major Themes of Catholic Social Teaching help to bring a rich treasure of wisdom about building a just society and living lives of holiness amidst the challenges of contemporary life.

At each of the three 2013 district gatherings, Jeff Gumz's power point presentations continue to spread and educate that same message. Jeff began his talk saying that Secular Franciscans are a bridge to Justice Peace and the Integrity of Creation (JPIC). His slides outlined seven teaching themes gathered from the U.S. Catholic bishops' statement *Sharing Catholic Social Teaching: Challenges and Directions*:

- 1. Life and Dignity of the Human Person** - Belief in the inherent dignity of the human person is the foundation of all Catholic social teaching.
- 2. Call to Family, Community, Participation** - The family is the central social institution that must be supported and strengthened, not undermined.
- 3. Rights and Responsibilities** - Protect human dignity and community.
- 4. Options for the Poor and Vulnerable** - Give special attention to those with special needs.
- 5. Dignity of Workers and Rights of Workers** - The economy must serve people, not the other way around.
- 6. Solidarity** - We are one human family. Our responsibilities cross national, racial, economic, ideological differences.
- 7. Care of God's Creation** - How we treat the environment is a measure of our stewardship, a sign of our respect for the Creator.

Jeff, who is a high school and a member of St. Ann's fraternity in Green Bay, said that Catholic social teaching could be summed in one word ...

"love." One of Jeff's presentation slides showed the colorful icon of St. Francis embracing the Sultan. Their 13th Century historical conversation models nonviolent direct action, and asks what we must do together for the common good.

Another slide theme was dignity of work and the rights of workers. This topic asks that Franciscan and Catholic teaching oppose collectivist and statist economic approaches. But it also rejects the notion that a free market automatically produces justice.

Jeff summed up his talk saying that Franciscans can serve the major themes of Catholic social teaching by praying, learning, and advocating for the common good of humanity and God's creation.



POPE FRANCIS' HUMOR AND SIMPLE WORDS WINS HEARTS

By electing the first pope from the New World, Pope Francis sends a strong message of change: that a scholar with a common touch may be the best

choice to inspire the faithful.

However, Pope Francis sends a strong



message of humor, too.

The pope recalled that when the image of Our Lady of Fatima visited Buenos Aires in 1992, while he was bishop, a big Mass was celebrated for the poor, during which he heard confessions. He recounted a conversation with "an old and very humble lady" who came to him towards the end of the Mass.

He had asked the woman, "Nonna, do you want to confess yourself?"

She replied, "Yes."

"But you haven't sinned," said the bishop to the elderly woman.

The lady said, "We've all sinned."

He then responded, "But maybe God won't forgive you."

"God forgives everyone," she told him.

The bishop questioned, "How do you know, madam?"

Please see Pope Francis' humor, page 5

Minister's Message



EASTER [OE *Eastre* .Goddess of Spring] The Christian festival celebrating the resurrection of Christ, the first Sunday after the first full moon on or after March 21, the first day of Spring.

Lent is a period of prayer, fasting and alms and a period of reconciliation and re-connecting our relation with God. God's son Jesus Christ, through his passion and death on the cross, like Moses, stood in the breach to re-establish our covenant relationship with his father. Easter is the day of Jesus' glorification, resurrection from the dead, our hope. RCIA members are newly received into the church. St. Francis is said by many to be one who most closely has followed in the footsteps of Jesus. Along the way he established an Order for Seculars 800 years ago. So we seculars, by-our rule, try to follow in St. Francis' footsteps as he tried to follow in Jesus' footstep - the Gospel Way of Life..

In our recent District gatherings, the Regional Executive Council tried to address your needs as expressed in annual reports and visitations. We presented information on OFS vocations, OFS training to become spiritual assistants, JPIC outreach, and breakout sessions: information for officers and members at large.

We presented each LaVerna fraternity minister with a *Family Chaplet*; a gift from the St. Thomas More fraternity in Houston, Texas, as a daily prayer for increased OFS vocations. The NAFRA prayer for vocations includes a plea "...*Help us to help others to recognize their vocation as a Secular Franciscan.*"

At the southeast district gathering, St. Clare fraternity was the perfect host and their members gifted us with used books laid out on a large display table. I picked up "Come and See" [cf John: 2].

Remember the plea—**call**—that we made: (1) for fraternities that might be willing to reach out to the intellectually and developmentally disabled through *Works of Mercy* (2) those willing to be a part of the regional formation team and help with the reactivation of St. Peter fraternity in Beaver Dam, WI. (3) Those interested in training as a lay Spiritual Assistant. Let us know soon.

Vocation comes from the Latin *vocationi* —**call**. I remember at our last Chapter meeting Rhett Engelking instructed us on the first step of JPIC, 1:1. One-on-one we get to know each other—the first step—"how did you receive your **call** to become a Secular Franciscan." What a great experience. Ven. Solanus Casey describes *vocational happiness* as follows: "We should be grateful for and love the vocation to which God

has **called** us. This applies to every vocation, because after all, what a privilege it is to serve God even in the least capacity." We are **called** by name, Ps. 147:4.

What a joy it has been for me to be a part of the **call** of seven members of St. Katherine Drexel parish, Beaver Dam to re-activate the St. Peter fraternity there, and eight professed and several in initial formation, **called** to establish a new fraternity that meets at Cardinal Stritch University, Milwaukee.

My heart skips a beat when I think of the retirement of Pope Benedict XVI, who wrote so beautifully of God's love for us and who affirmed the Vatican II role of seculars in today's church; and the selection of Pope Francis, of the Jesuit Order, but one who lives humbly and loves the way of life of St. Francis of Assisi.

This is the Year of Faith. From the *Coming of Jesus Hour*, Jn:12,2 , through *Jesus Prayer*, Jn 17, His trial, crucifixion, death and resurrection, Jesus kept the faith. So let us keep the faith also as incrementally, Gods' Kingdom comes.

Easter - a new beginning.

Peace and Good

Jim Carlson, Regional Minister

Reflections

Regional Spiritual Assistant - Lester Bach OFM Cap
La Verna Region



THE FRANCISCAN FAMILY

Much of our literature and many of our conversations talk about the "Franciscan Family." It is normal to do so. But most of us do not have the same parents. We grew up in a different family. While living with family we picked up a lot of ways of doing things. We developed habits we thought were the best we could get. We used language in different ways besides communicating ideas. We learned how to show anger and how to push other people's "buttons," as we sometimes say. We learned ideas about religion. We recognized that there are people we refuse to deal with. Others were lazy or obsessed or strange or whatever. We learned a bit about money and what it can do and why it is important.

Add all the things we learned in school. Sometimes we were mere copy-cats. We accepted values because someone we liked was "cool" or "awesome" or something else, depending on the "in" word. We did some things because we thought they worked. Others we neglected because it took too long to accomplish. We learned good as well as foolish things. But we rarely up-graded the rooms of our mind and heart.

THEN - we bring all this "stuff" to the Secular Franciscan Order. We learn quickly that we might have to discard a lot of our "things." Prejudice is no longer a virtue. Being a "pain in the neck" is no longer acceptable. Dominating conversations seemed a good thing until we learned that listening is also a good thing. Having lots of money and getting more is the goal of a responsible person. Then we talk about stewardship and to be equally concerned about others who have less than we do. We cling to ideas we call "religion or faith" when they may simply have been some lines in the catechism that we memorized (with or without understanding what they meant!). They were never our beliefs - it was what "someone" said we had to learn.

Now you belong to the Franciscan Family. They have a lot of values and ideas about God and life with people that haven't been part of life to this point. We are asked to initiate a process of "conversion." We are expected not only to talk about loving everyone, but doing it - even loving enemies!. We discover that relationships are absolutely vital in Franciscan life - no matter what kind of folks we're talking about. Forgiveness and reconciliation are prime virtues in this Franciscan Family. Concern for one another and learning to share our internal thoughts, ideas, fears and dreams is no easy task. We're much too private for that!

Question: How are you doing in being a part of the Franciscan Family? How is "conversion" doing in your life?

Secular Franciscan spirit!

Here are a few quotes I discovered lately:

Some help for vocations?

I was drawn to examine and accept the Catholic faith because of the day-to-day lived witness of Catholic Christians who first loved me, then shared with me their story, their values, their beliefs; who first loved me, then invited me to share with them in community, prayer and mission. As a child I did not recognize evangelization at work in my life. I did recognize love, service, community, prayer and faith.

In My Own Words - Thea Bowman FSPA - Page 26

Conversion

I think that cancer causes one to re-evaluate priorities. You begin to have some very different perceptions about what's important in life and what isn't important. Many things that I used to worry about, I realize don't matter any more. I find myself more patient and more tolerant of small things. I think I have a different sense of time. I think all of my relationships, including my relationship to God, are most important to me.

Ibid - Page 105

Poverty

Jonah slammed shut his schoolbooks, making a statement, "When I get older, I'm going to be rich," said the boy.

"Want less and you are already rich," said Jacob.

"You don't believe me, do you?"

"Confidence and doubt are equally contagious," said Jacob, putting down his cup of tea.

Jonah looked around the small room where the two of them sat. "Jacob, wouldn't you like to have more than what you have?"

"Over time," said Jacob, "we are richer for what we discover we don't need than for getting what we thought we wanted."

Jacob's Ladder - Noah benShea - Page 80



OUR ENVIRONMENT

Earth-friendly Roses For Gardens

By Judy Stouffer, OFS

This time of year I always look forward to seeing our gardens emerge from underneath their deep cover of snow. When the first tentative green begins to appear in our rose bushes, then I know spring is finally here. While roses have a special place in most gardens, the varieties developed in the last century were bred for beauty, with less or no attention paid to other traits. Because of that, modern roses are quite susceptible to disease. They've become one of the most highly pesticided plants grown in both the floral industry and in our yards. Thanks to Dr. Griffith Buck, however, any gardener can grow beautiful roses that shrug off diseases without being sprayed, and that survive even tough Wisconsin and Michigan winters without special winter protection.

The story of Buck roses began in 1949 when, as young professor of horticulture, Dr. Buck began breeding roses at Iowa State University. He sought to develop roses that were fragrant, winter-hardy, bloomed in flushes or continuously throughout the growing season, and were beautiful. However, because his research was done on a shoestring budget, Buck immediately ran into an enormous barrier for a rose grower: he had no money to purchase pesticides to spray his roses. So Dr. Buck made a radical break from other rose researchers of the time and added a new focus to his work: all his roses had to be naturally disease resistant.

Over the next 40 years, Dr. Buck hybridized almost 90 varieties of roses. His results are so exceptionally fine that the American Rose Society presents a Griffith Buck Shrub Trophy every year in his honor to new rose varieties that honor the characteristics of a Buck rose: they are winter hardy, fragrant, repeat bloom or bloom continuously over an entire growing season, and are so disease resistant that they grow and remain healthy without the use of any pesticides.

Dr. Buck passed away in 1991, but he left us a legacy of beautiful roses that are a wonderful choice for any garden. Buck roses come in colors ranging from white to pink to yellow to red and all the way down in color to deep wine. Some even have speckled or bi-color blooms. They grow on their own sturdy roots, unlike most modern roses which must be grafted onto wild rose roots, so Buck roses will grow back "true to form" even if over-pruned or nibbled to the ground by hungry rabbits. They are called Buck roses, but each variety also has its own name--Carefree Beauty, Enchanted Autumn, Aunt Honey, Prairie Sunrise and Silver Shadows are just a few examples of the varieties of Buck roses available.

Buck roses are also easy to grow. If you've never been able to grow roses successfully, these are the roses for you. I have Buck roses in our yard. They're never been sprayed, survived temperatures of twenty-five degrees below zero without any protection, came through eight weeks of summer drought where temperatures repeatedly ranged in the high nineties to even one-hundred degrees, and were eaten to the ground one winter by hungry bunnies. The only care they get is regular pruning, a shovel-full of compost in the spring, and deep watering once or twice a week if we're in a drought. They reward us every year with spectacular displays of blooms from June through November.

Next time you add a rose bush to your garden, or give a rose bush as a gift, do consider making it a Buck rose. "Buck roses" are an actual category for these fine roses that's used in the rose trade, so you can ask your local nursery or garden center for them by the general name of "Buck roses," and then see which specific varieties of Buck roses they carry.

(Copyright © 2013 Judy Stouffer, B.S., M.S., OFS. All Rights Reserved.)

She said, “If God didn’t forgive everything, the world wouldn’t exist.”

The Pope then looked up and told the crowd, with laughter in his voice, “I wanted to ask her, ‘Have you studied at the Gregorian (University)?’ because that is the knowledge that the Holy Spirit gives!”

Pope Francis then extended his greetings to all the faithful and said he chose the name “Francis” to spiritually tie himself to Italy, from where his family originated.

“But Jesus has called us to form part of a new family of his Church, in this family of God, walking together on the path of the Gospel,” he said.

“Let’s not forget that God never gets tired of forgiving, so let’s never get tired of asking for forgiveness,” he added again.

‘SERIOUSLY, IT’S JORGE BERGOGLIO’

The son of a newspaper stand owner in Buenos Aires was shocked when the telephone rang and he heard Pope Francis on the other end. The pontiff was calling to cancel his newspaper subscription. At first, the young man thought it was a prank. “Seriously, it’s Jorge Bergoglio. I’m calling you from Rome,” the new pope said.



TWENTY THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT POPE FRANCIS

1. He’s from Buenos Aires, making him the first pope from Latin America.
2. That also makes him the first pope born outside of Europe in more than 1,000 years.
3. He’s the first Jesuit pope.
4. He is 76.
5. He chose the name Francis in honor of St. Francis of Assisi, a 13th-century monk known for his charity and kindness to animals.
6. Before his election, he was the archbishop of Buenos Aires.
7. He is known for leading a simple life, eschewing a mansion to live in a Spartan apartment.
8. He rode mass transit in Argentina, and chose to take a minivan with the other cardinals after he was elected pope rather than ride in a special sedan.

9. He cooks his own meals.
10. In his youth, he enjoyed dancing the tango with a girlfriend before discovering a “religious vocation.”
11. He trained as a chemist.
12. He is one of five children and his parents were from Italy.
13. He has been criticized for not speaking out against Argentina’s military dictatorship in the 1970s and 1980s.
14. He slammed other Latin American priests who objected to the baptizing of children born out of wedlock.
15. He was critical of Argentina’s decision to legalize same-sex marriage, calling it “a destructive attack on God’s plan.” He also opposes gay people’s adopting children.
16. In 2001, he washed the feet of 12 patients with AIDS at an Argentine hospice.
17. He speaks three languages: Spanish, Italian, and German.
18. He had a lung removed as a teenager, after an infection.
19. He is rumored to have been the runner-up in 2005, losing that papal election to Benedict XVI.
20. After being elected pope, he remained standing on the same level as the cardinal-electors rather than sitting in a throne.

PLEASE REMEMBER US IN YOUR WILL

We value our life as Secular Franciscans and wish to have our way of living the Gospels continue through future 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 Peter Bekkers, OFS, LaVerna Regional Treasurer, W6855 St. Mary's Dr., Greenville, WI 54942. Telephone number is (920) 757-9027 or email Peter at taxmannatp@gmail.com

Your Franciscan Way of Life and generosity will be remembered for years to come

International OFS

OFS National Fraternity of Mexico

Evangelization of brothers deprived of liberty

In 2002, Mrs. Maria Auxilio Hernández, along with a team of OFS brothers, started off a project of taking God's Word to the prisoners of the Centers for Social Rehabilitation (CERESO) every week. OFM friars also accompany them whenever there are professions and other special occasions or events. This project still continues taking place, so that several local Fraternities take upon themselves the responsibility of visiting a CERESO and the prison Topo Chico, where they established a Formation Team.



1. **Project's Coordination**—the OFS Fraternity of Cristo Rey visits Apodaca's CERESO; the Santa Cruz Fraternity likewise works with the CERESO of Cadereyta, and the Fraternity of Our Lady of Guadalupe visits the Penitentiary Penal de Topo Chico.
2. **Social Impact**—We note that the brothers who leave prison dedicate themselves to continue spreading the Word of God as they become members of the Prison Pastoral Ministry; another brother, who left prison, is now member of a parish where he serves as Sacristan; another became a member of an OFS fraternity; some others, because they have problems in their marriages, were unable to join the OFS. Yet, we see in them a conversion of life, since God touched their hearts, as we hear from those close to them.

One of the brothers said: "Thank God I am here, because out there I'd never had met the Lord." There are many other beautiful testimonies, and I myself, being a sister who worked with the initial group with Maria Auxilio, [I] am now looking forward to join a team to continue working with this wonderful apostolate.

3. **What we have learned**—through this service, we learned to love God and see the world in a different way.

Contact person: Emilia Garza de la Garza. E-mail: egvgza@gmail.com Phone: +52 1 81-34-93-16

YOUFRA INTERNATIONAL GATHERING 2013



"Go and make disciples of all peoples" (Matthew 28:19)

The YouFra International Gathering will take place in São João Del Rey, July 19-22, 2013. After the gathering, YouFra will join the celebration of World Youth Day (WYD) in Rio de Janeiro, July 23-28, 2013.

YouFra International Gathering brings together young people from Franciscan Youth from around the world to share and deepen the experiences that we have had with our fraternities since our last meeting in Madrid 2012. This gives an opportunity to participate and share the joy of being Christians together with all young people who will be present at World Youth Day in Brazil. For more information, click on to: www.rio2013.com/pt.



**The Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation Commission
and
The Franciscan Youth & Young Adult Commission
present**



The 2013 Franciscan Summer Confab*

Join us for a joint gathering of the national Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation (JPIC) Commission and the national Franciscan Youth & Young Adult Commission this summer! In order to spark some creativity and synergy, we are hosting a joint Franciscan Summer Confab of hearts, minds, bodies and souls to shape the vision and direction for the next phase of our Secular Franciscan journey. We will come together to share our past experiences, our wisdom, our dreams and vision for ushering forth the Gospel and Franciscan charism into the world. These two national commissions will meet jointly to integrate how we address justice, peace and care for creation with the mobilization and engagement of the next generation.

* **CONFABULATION:** Latin *confabulates* from *com-*+ *fabulari* to talk, from *fibula* story

When is it? The Franciscan Summer Confab on July 25-28, 2013 (Thursday, 5:00 pm through Sunday 11:00 am) at the National Shrine of Our Lady of the Snows Conference Center in Belleville, Illinois.

How much will it cost? This event, which includes food and overnight accommodations at the Shrine, will be \$275 for a double room, \$375 for a private room, *for those registering by May 1, 2013*, plus your transportation costs. Financial assistance may be available. Costs will increase by \$40 after the "May Day" deadline. A \$100 deposit is due at the time of registration.

How do I sign up? A complete registration and information packet can be found on the NAFRA website: www.nafra-sfo.org or can be obtained by contacting your Regional Minister. The deadline for early registration is May 1, 2013.

Franciscan Summer Confab's Franciscan Youth & Young Adult Track

What is it? This is a gathering of a small group of passionate Secular Franciscans and Franciscan-hearted young adults who will come together to help give vision to rebuild the new Franciscan Youth (YouFra) Movement in the United States. This is a time to discuss the needs and 2 challenges of Franciscan young adult ministry today, brainstorm strategies, and set goals for turning ideas into action.

Why should I go? I have been concerned about the needs of young adults and our Franciscan obligation to engage the next generation of Franciscans in the Gospel life. I feel God

has been nudging me to take on leadership, and I have some background in working with youth and young adults. I want to be part of history in helping rebuild a new YouFra Movement. I am good at big picture thinking, dreaming, and turning ideas into action.

Where can I get more information? I should contact Riobart (Rob) Breen, OFS, Chair of the National Franciscan Youth & Young Adult Commission at (Riobart.Breen@anamduan.org)

Franciscan Summer Confab's JPIC Track

What is it?

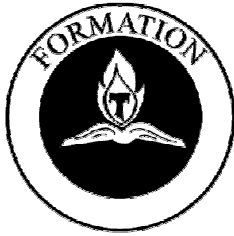
This is a gathering of a small group of passionate Secular Franciscans who have interest in and are committed to justice, peace and the integrity of creation locally or regionally, and are willing to contribute to our national effort.

Who should attend? I am a member of the national JPIC Commission OR I am involved in local or regional JPIC efforts OR I would like to get a new JPIC initiative started in my fraternity.

Why should I go? I have been concerned about the needs of peace, justice and integrity of Creation and our Franciscan obligations to be engaged. I also appreciate that there is great potential for our Order in connecting with youth and young adults by way of JPIC.

Where can I get more information? I should contact Kent Ferris, OFS, Chair of the National JPIC Commission at (kent@gmail.com)

Belonging to the OFS



Is it possible a formation student can encourage their Christian witness on Franciscans? Is it possible that they already live our Rule in the Spirit of the Beatitudes?

This is true with many formation students. Here is a fine example of a group of men and women who pray and worship together in a small Wisconsin town called Beaver Dam.

On February 23, 2013, members of the LaVerna Regional Council (REC) held interview sessions for seven persons whose earnest intention was to enter Phase 1 Orientation. Their interviews were held at St. Katharine Drexel Parish Center in Beaver Dam. They also expressed the future desire, upon their OFS profession, to help re-activate St. Peter's fraternity. Years earlier, the same fraternity deactivated because members were unable to hold council positions.

After the seven initial interviews, the formation team recommended to the REC that the following begin Orientation Phase 1 at St. Katharine Drexel parish. The students are: Mike Adsit, Susan Bashynski, Coletta Cody, Fr. Mike Erwin, Wanda North, and Janice Tischler. Jeanne Heft, OFS, who now lives in Beaver Dam, was a former member of the Rainbow

Fraternity of Sts. Francis and Clare, Madison. Jeanne professed in 1991, and will become part of the formation/reactivation process.

What is so heartening about this group at Beaver Dam is that all formation students are active St. Katharine Drexel church members, which include pastor, Fr. Mike Erwin (Milwaukee Archdiocese), and all are committed to help reactivate St. Peter's fraternity. The group began their Orientation Phase 1 on March 16.

Because of the Beaver Dam group's particular situation—REC fraternity sponsors them—servant/leaders will be needed to continue with their Inquiry and Candidacy. Here are three specific goals that the regional council asks from professed local fraternity members:

- To help us teach the Beaver Dam students with Inquiry or Candidacy
- To enrich and transform students into an OFS
- To discern the newly professed in re-activating St. Peter's Fraternity

Belonging to the Answer

In her paper titled *Belonging to the SFO*, the then Minister, Emanuela De Nunzio wrote about what happens when the present world goes from a "solid state" to a "liquid state." She wrote, *"In the liquid state there no longer exists a culture of learning, of accumulation, but a culture of withdrawal ... interpersonal relationships become superficial. There is no longer the willingness to committing the time to maintain stable, loving relationships."*

Some of De Nunzio's examples of "solid state" are when Secular Franciscans live their Rule, the gospel life, belonging to a fraternity that practices fidelity. However, her Belonging article carries a message not just for our external fraternal ministries, albeit JPIC, Work, Family, Working with the Youth, but also to internal fraternal support: helping family members inside OFS fraternities.

Emanuela wrote that Belonging requires us to witness Gospel life "as a means of promoting vocations and formation of new members." At a minimum, she said, the OFS must dedicate themselves to prayer, active collaboration and commitment to bring life to the fraternity, "particularly, when it comes to taking office or service." This sense of servant/leadership incorporates (professes) us into the Order, and transforms us into a living body of the Gospel life.

If you wish to bring a continuing fidelity to our REC formation team and help in Beaver Dam, then we would love to hear from you. I know of seven formation students who already belong to your answer.

Peace and all Good,

Ed

La Verna Regional Executive Council and Formation Team

Minister, Jim Carlson, OFS (262) 473-3130

james.carlson@wicourts.gov

Vice Minister, Jeff Gumz, OFS (920) 866-2005

jagumz@gmail.com

Secretary, Lizanne Schulrud, OFS

(414) 372-6593 schulrud@sbcglobal.net

Treasurer, Peter Bekkers, OFS (920) 757-9027

taxmannatp@gmail.com

Councilor, Kathy Sutliff, OFS (715) 369-3367

ksut517@charter.net

Councilor, Joanne Guzik, OFS (715) 362-4752

guzi@frontiernet.net

Councilor, Bob Henning, OFS (906) 346-6727

bmjhsfo@aol.com

Councilor, Ed Boss, OFS (262) 250-9251

ed-joann@att.net

Spiritual Assistant, Fr. Lester Bach, OFM Cap

(608) 222-6238 lbofmcap@aol.com

Formation Team

JoAnn Boss, OFS (262) 250-9251

ed-joann@att.net

The La Verna Region of the Secular Franciscan Order in the USA consists of Eastern ¾ of Wisconsin and Upper Michigan. The region geographical area is divided into four districts: Southeast, Central, Fox Valley and Upper Michigan. The La Verna Vision is a communication vehicle with the LaVerna Region, and presents a forum for information and insights that relate to the Secular Franciscan Order way of life.

Permission to copy materials printed in LaVerna Vision is given freely 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, please go to the internet site: www.lavernasecularfranciscans.com.

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, OSF, ed-joann@att.net, and Bob Henning, OSF, bmjhsfo@aol.com

Book Review

Father Brown of the Church of Rome: Selected Mystery Stories by G. K. Chesterton, and edited by John Peterson, Ignatius Press, 1996



Throughout the book there are insightful explanations about religious matters. In one story, Father Brown clarifies the reasons why the others fell for a supernatural solution. He says, “You all swore you were hard-shelled materialists, and as a matter of fact, you were all unbalanced on the very edge of belief – of belief in almost anything. There are thousands balanced on it today; but it is a sharp, uncomfortable edge to sit on. You won’t rest until you believe in something.”

He goes on to explain that because of this principle that it would be a natural thing to hold supernatural beliefs. The thing is, according to Father Brown, it

doesn’t feel natural to only believe in natural things. In this case, it was a natural resolution to the mystery, and Father Brown is right again.

In addition to walking on eggshells in the priest’s presence, sometimes the people in the book are downright nasty about his Catholic faith. One of the characters in *The Resurrection of Father Brown*, in speaking of the natives of a country in South America, gives his opinion that “it was the deleterious influence of priests that had made them so miserably poor, and so hopelessly oppressed, that they were able to sit in the shade and smoke, and do nothing.”

In that same story, a man puts himself at serious These short story mysteries by G. K. Chesterton are a great read, with an underlying tone of religious seriousness. The stories simply exhibit the Roman Catholic affiliation of Chesterton’s detective.

A character in *The Miracle of Moon Crescent* is a police inspector. He insists that Father Brown should know up-front that he will not fall for what he calls “any miraculous stuff.” He calls himself a policeman who is consequently a practical man. He doesn’t mind “that

Please see Book Review, page 10

WORKING WITH THE SCRIPTURES (Jn. 20: 19- 31)

VINAL VAN BENTHEM, OFS

The disciples had the doors locked "...for fear of the Jews...". Strange, considering that the disciples were themselves Jews. Who were these "Jews" that they feared? Could it be that it was actually something inside themselves that they feared?

In 1933 Franklin D. Roosevelt said: "First of all, let me assert my firm belief that the only thing we have to fear is fear itself..." The disciples were paralyzed with fear, so much so that they locked the doors. But they could not lock out the fear that was in their hearts, the fear of what they had done, the fear of their own betrayal, their own cowardice, their own unbelief. They saw the evil that their fear had allowed to overtake them – the nameless, unreasoning, unjustified terror of fear itself – and their fear became their reality.

Isn't that what *we* do when *we're* afraid? Build walls and put up fences to keep out those things we fear? Launch satellites to track those things which frighten us? Make laws which, while meant to keep us safe, only serve to keep us even more isolated in our fear? Lock our doors, unwilling to believe that that which we fear is as close to us as our own hand, as deep within as our own heart?

Jesus knew that no war, no fence, no security system or weapon of mass destruction could take away the fear. He knew that for the disciples to find

peace outside themselves they must first find peace within. "Peace be with you," He said.

Then He asked what must have seemed to them an impossibility. "As the Father has sent me, so I send you." How could He send them to bring peace to others when they were too frightened to even unlock the door! His answer was simple. They must forgive – forgive themselves their own sins of cowardice and betrayal; forgive the sins of those against whom they had locked their doors. "[T]he only thing we have to fear is fear itself..." Of whom or what are we afraid? Can we forgive those we fear? Can we forgive ourselves?

FROM PAGE 9 – BOOK REVIEW

he intends to use no religion in determining the outcome of his case."

Oddly enough, it is not Father Brown, but the persons involved in the case that have determined that the happenings are of a supernatural nature. Again, contrary to popular opinion about clergy and religious people, it is Father Brown who holds out for an ingenious, but very natural solution. It's the truth that people of religion seek, and not necessarily the most overtly religious answer.

physical risk in order to satisfy his intellectual curiosity. Sometimes he would ignore his insatiable hunger for knowledge for reasons of proportion, but it generally was a constant with him. When Chesterton brings out personal characteristics like this, it reminds us

that the highest good is not human pride, but the will of God.

Again, in this story, it is others come to the conclusion that the main event is a miracle, but Father Brown insists on the truth, on the reality of the situation. And it was a good thing he did, because the whole incident was planned by those who wanted to dupe people, including Father Brown, into declaring a miracle, and then show it up to be a sham. Great spiritual harm would have been accomplished by this scheme.

Father Brown is a highly down-to-earth man, but of course, the deeper reality is also strongly present in his thought. When Father Brown hints that the solution to the problem in *The Man with Two Beards* would contradict what people actually saw happened, another

character in the story takes him to task for that. The character insists "that they saw something happen with their very own eyes." But the priest counters that he has seen many actions with his own eyes that he did not believe in. But as Father Brown explains, it often happens that people can be deceived by what they see with their eyes.



And in the last story, *The Insoluble Problem*, Father Brown's knowledge of the Catholic faith helps him solve the mystery. He gleans from the images of piety in the house where he is conducts his investigation that Catholics lived or had lived there, and draws conclusions from the state of these remnants of Catholic prayer and worship.

LaVerna Regional Fraternity OFS
APPLICATION FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE
FOR 2013 FRANCISCAN RETREAT FEES

APPLICANT _____ PH # (____) _____ - _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP _____ / ____ / _____

FRATERNITY: _____ PROFESSION DATE: ____ / ____ / ____

RETREAT LOCATION _____

RETREAT DATE ____ / ____ / ____ FEE \$ _____

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:

FAMILY SIZE	MONTHLY INCOME
1	\$ 1,490.00
2	\$ 2,004.00
3	\$ 2,518.00
4	\$ 3,032.00
5	\$ 3,547.00
6	\$ 4,061.00
7	\$ 4,575.00
8	\$ 5,089.00
9	\$ 5,604.00
10	\$ 6,119.00

RETURN TO: PETER BEKKERS, OFS, W6855 ST. MARYS DR., GREENVILLE, WI 54942
PHONE: (920) 757-9027 E-MAIL: TAXMANNATP@GMAIL.COM

NOTE: IF FOR SOME REASON YOU CANNOT ATTEND THIS RETREAT, PLEASE RETURN THE ASSISTANCE MONEY TO "LAVERNA REGION OFS"

LAVERNA REGION
SECULAR FRANCISCAN ORDER
236 ELIZABETH STREET
WHITEWATER, WI 53190

NON PROFIT ORG
US POSTAGE
PAID
GREEN BAY, WI
PERMIT 460

Calendar of Events: Spring/Summer 2013

May 18 – LaVerna Regional council meeting, Green Bay. 9 a.m. – 3 p.m.

June 14-15 – Family Retreat—“*Let the Little Children Come to Me*” – presented by Fr. Tom Zelinski, OFM, Mary Yessa and other families. Jesus invited children to come to Him. We invite you to bring your children, and the child within yourself, to come to a Family Retreat. With prayer, games, and even a truckload of sand, we will celebrate the love of God for us as His children. St. Anthony Spirituality Center, Marathon, WI. Phone: 715-443-2236; E-Mail: info@sarcenter.com; Web-Site: www.sarcenter.com

June 28 - 30 – LaVerna Region Chapter and NAFRA Visitation, St. Anthony Spirituality Center, Marathon.

July 5 – 7 –“the Secular Franciscan Order – USA, *Finding Our History: An Interactive Theater Presentation of the History of the Secular Franciscan Order in the United States 1917-2007,*” presented by William Wicks, OFS – Historian of our Order and Former National Minister; Jim Wesley, OFS – Editor, TAU-USA; Cindy Wesley, OF, Minister, Bl. Juniper Serra Region (Northern CA), at Saint Francis University, Loretto, PA.

July 25 - 28 – The 2013 Franciscan Summer Confab, a gathering of a small group of passionate Secular Franciscans who have interest in and are committed to justice, peace and the integrity of creation and Franciscan-hearted young adults to help give vision to rebuild the new Franciscan Youth (YouFra) Movement in the United States locally or regionally, and are willing to contribute to our national effort. At the National Shrine of Our Lady of the Snows Conference Center in Belleville, Illinois. (Thursday, 5:00 pm through Sunday 11:00 am).

August 4, 2013 – Our Lady of the Angels of the Portiuncula celebration. Join St. Paschal Baylon fraternity members at 1 p.m. as they gather for prayer in the Portiuncula chapel in Burlington, WI.