



Pax et Bonum

**Secular Franciscan Order
Canadian National Fraternity**



Number 2

April 2009

National Minister's Message

I think contested elections for the national fraternity council would be a good idea at the upcoming May chapter. The electoral system for Franciscan fraternities is set up to encourage contests and contests also allow the Holy Spirit to work through the delegates. There is a nomination process and David Bouchard, the current international councillor, is nominations chair. There are forms for listing experience and fraternity memberships of candidates, and David can be reached at dacat2@shaw.ca.

I hope that local and regional councils and individual Franciscans are considering whom to nominate. I strongly suggest to all that they think about the right people to nominate. Those nominated may be members of national or regional councils. But you can nominate any permanently professed Secular Franciscan, and all Secular Franciscans can submit nominations. There will be calls for nominations at the chapter before the election starts, so nominations can occur right at the chapter.

And finally, delegates can write in the names of those they think best for the offices. That happens even if there is only one person nominated because there are no acclamations. The ballots are still distributed, marked, returned and counted. There are many opportunities to add new names to the pool of candidates. That gives the Holy Spirit plenty of opportunity to affect the delegates' votes.

I believe that Franciscans should bring forward candidates for rotation on the council and the permanent and continuous conversion of the order in our country. At any level of fraternity, if someone suggests that you should be nominated, think about it. Please do not reject it out of hand.

*Murdoch Macleod, ofs
National Minister*

Franciscan Spirituality

“Franciscan Spirituality” is that particular spirituality which evolved from St. Francis and the Franciscan family. It has its own unique emphasis which characterizes it as “Franciscan”. At the risk of gross over-simplification I suggest that the following are its major character traits. From these come all the lesser characteristics which so often give Franciscanism its charm. First, Franciscan spirituality is Christ-centered. Franciscan theology puts Christ at the centre of the universe, the cosmos and creation. Despite this exalted position, Jesus empties himself of all divine prerogatives and becomes a human to love us as one of us. This is the plan of God from the beginning. It is Divine love that brings God to earth – not human sin. Love occasioned the Incarnation not sin. Jesus and his incarnation is not “Plan B” after we had screwed up “Plan A” by sinning. Franciscan spirituality, then, is Christ-centered but it focuses primarily on the incarnate Jesus.

It is the humility and poverty of Jesus that is the focus of the Incarnation in Franciscan spirituality. The humility and poverty of the Incarnation is the pattern for Franciscan life, theology and its approach to all creation.

This downward movement of the incarnation is all summed up in one word: Minority. This term means “littleness” or being “lesser”. It is captured in the official name for the Friars which is: “Friars Minor”. The Friars are to be “Lesser Brothers” serving all in humility and poverty. Poverty is the external expression of minority while humility is the internal expression of it. This is to be the life of Secular Franciscans as well.

Secondly, along with minority, fraternity is essential to Franciscan life. Once again, it is reflected in the name of the Friars. “Friars” means “Brothers”. They are to be brothers to all including creation. This is why Francis referred the animals as “Brother” or “Sister”.

Being Christ-centered and focusing on Jesus' life on earth (the Incarnation), Franciscan spirituality takes as its example Jesus' fraternal life with his Disciples. I think it is significant that a local group of Secular Franciscans are called a "Fraternity".

The third emphasis of Franciscan spirituality is Penance. Penance is the fruit of Minority and Fraternity is the vehicle that continuously challenges us to see our minority before God. We must come to an understanding of our "littleness" before God before conversion can happen. And penance is on-going CONVERSION.

People often think that penance means being harsh on ourselves in order to, somehow, appease an angry God. But we shall never be good enough for God. We can never earn His love. God, however, is not asking for us to earn it. He freely offers His love to us. Conversion is not a "condition" put on God's love – IF you change then I'll love you. Rather, when we come to realize that God loves us even while we are sinners, we want to change our lives as a response to that love and can receive the "strength" to change. It is significant that Secular Franciscans are called "Brothers and Sisters of Penance". Lastly, the fruits of all this is the perfection of love (with a Franciscan emphasis on peace and joy). Love is our goal. But more specifically, it is to LOVE AS JESUS LOVES! This is what holiness is. To be a saint is not to go to church more often and to pray longer. This might come as a response to God's love, but holiness is, essentially, loving as Jesus loves. Jesus is our ultimate model of love. Pax et Bonum!

*Br. Gerry Clyne O.F.M.
(National Spiritual Assistant)*

International Councillor

It was a pleasure to represent the National Fraternity of Canada at our recent General Chapter from Nov. 15-22, 2008 in Hungary. Meeting the Presidency Councillors and all the International Councillors representing their national fraternities made me aware that the of 400,000 members of SFO is truly a global family. We began each day with Morning Prayer and with a celebration of the Eucharist and concluded the day with evening prayer. The residence we stayed at was formerly a Jesuit retreat center, but is now run as a resort.

We gathered as a general assembly for the presentation of reports, for resolutions and for elections. The activities of the General Chapter are simultaneously translated into four languages.

We met in language groups to discuss articles of interest. It was my first experience to hear English spoken with so many different accents.

I was selected to be one of the moderators when the general assembly dealt with an issue in the English language. It was at this time that I had the opportunity to present a resolution asking for an exemption to the interpretation concerning SFO members who act as Spiritual Assistants in their own fraternities. The original interpretation of the Judicial Commission did not allow for this possibility. The assembly decided to maintain that position and did not accept our resolution. The Provincials of the First Order need to be informed of this interpretation in order to avoid confusion in the appointment of SFO Spiritual Assistants.

On day two of the Chapter, we went to St. Stephen's Basilica in Estergom, the hometown of St. Elizabeth, to celebrate the closing of the 800th centenary of her birth. On day four we made an excursion to Buda and Pest for a cultural experience. The local fraternity treated all the participants at the Chapter to a taste of Hungary. The service was fantastic, the food was good, and the wine was something you had to acquire a taste for, so to speak.

Each evening one of the language groups organized a presentation for the members of the Chapter. Even though we could not understand each other, there was a good amount of camaraderie among all the participants. I learned how to say good morning and good evening in four different languages over the five days. It was quite cold (- 7-10 C) while we were there. I was amazed that so many people were taking pictures of the snow and wearing their jackets and scarves during the sessions.

It was a pleasant moment for me while having a conversation with two other participants, our general minister came and leaned on my shoulder to join with us. This demonstrated for me the reality that we are part of a family regardless of whether we understand each other completely.

*David Bouchard, ofs
International Councillor*

Progression of the National Fraternity of Canada

1991 The 1991 National Chapter is held at the College Marie-Victorin, in Montreal. The opening session was co-presided by Réjean Perras, National Minister and our International Visitors, Mme Mimi Def, Fraternal Visitor and Fr. Kevin Schindler-McGraw, ofm Conv., Pastoral Visitor.

The session of elections was co-presided by our International Visitors. After the vote, the National Council executive consists of Doug Clorey, National Minister, Françoise Malboeuf, Vice-minister, Gary Legault, Secretary, Gertrude Jean-Pineault, Treasurer and André Bilodeau, Director of Formation.

Following the elections on Saturday, June 22nd, 1991, the resolutions were presented to the chapter members. Sunday morning, June 23rd, began with the voting on the resolutions. Of the 18 resolutions presented, 13 were adopted. They dealt with the National Statutes, the age required for final commitment, the contribution, only one International Councillor, Committees or commissions, Regionalization, National Newsletter, a more Franciscan and spiritual dimension in the next mandate, criteria for election to the Executive Council and special or expert counsellors to the National Council.

1992 At the March 21st and 22nd 1992 meeting, it was decided that National Fraternity of Canada executive should adopt the title of **National Council** as designated in Articles 49 and 65 of the General Constitutions.

The National Council will therefore consists of the National Minister, the Vice-Minister, the Secretary, the Treasurer, the Director of formation and the Spiritual Assistant. The group of people known in the past as the **National Council**, an assembly that is

not provided for in the General Constitutions, will henceforth be called the **National Conference**.

During the National council meeting, on June 18th and 19th 1992, Daniel Laliberté was elected as Canada's only International Councillor. Daniel Laliberté reported on International activities and made it clear that the intent of having an International Councillor was to simplify the communication between Rome and Canada.

Daniel opened the session on Regionalization with a prayer of reflexion. Doug Clorey present the salient points from the document "Terms of Reference for Regionalization"

It was agreed to embark on the task of **regionalization effective June 20th 1992** with a view to having the process completed within three years, that is, by June 20th 1995.

1993 The inaugural chapter of the **Trillium Regional Fraternity** was held in June 1993 after two years of concerted effort on the part of three SFO Provinces in Ontario. Doug Clorey, National Minister, accompanied by Fr. Clarence Laplante, ofm, National Spiritual Assistant, officially proclaimed the Trillium Regional Fraternity on **June 26th 1993**.

1994 The Christ the King Region in Western Canada became on **May 1st 1994**, the Regional Fraternity known as **Our Lady of the Angels Regional Fraternity**. It was officially proclaimed by Doug Clorey, National Minister, accompanied by Fr. Clarence Laplante, ofm, National Spiritual Assistant..

1996 On **June 2nd 1996**, the Blessed Fr. Frederic Region was officially proclaimed as the **Regional Fraternity of Eastern Canada** according to the 1991 General Constituions by Françoise Malboeuf, National Minister, accompanied by Fr. Clarence Laplante, ofm, National Spiritual Assistant.

1998 The Francophone Ontario Region held its Elective and Regionalization chapter. Bertrand Perreault, Francophone Vice-Minister, presides the session of elections, accompanied by r. Henrit Éthier, ofm, National Spiritual Assistant. The National Minister officially proclaimed the **Fraternité régionale De La Trinité** on **August 29th**



1998. This was the beginning of a series of chapters for the Francophone regions in establishing themselves as Regional Fraternities according to the 1991 General Constitutions.

The Quebec region has decided to split into two Regional Fraternities. The region located on the North shore of the St-Lawrence River is proclaimed as the **Fraternité régionale de Québec** on **September 12th 1998** by Françoise Malboeuf, National Minister, accompanied by Bertrand Perreault, Francophone Vice-Minister and Fr. Henri Éthier, ofm, National Spiritual Assistant.

The region located on the South shore of the St-Lawrence River is proclaimed as the **Fraternité régionale de Lévis** on **September 13th 1998** by Françoise Malboeuf, National Minister, accompanied by Bertrand Perreault, Francophone Vice-Minister and Fr. Henri Éthier, ofm, National Spiritual Assistant.

On **September 26th, 1998**, the region of Sherbrooke was proclaimed as the **Fraternité régionale de Sherbrooke** by Françoise Malboeuf, National Minister, accompanied by Fr. Clarence Laplante, ofm, National Spiritual Assistant's delegate and Gabrielle Picard-Dupré, National Treasurer.

On **October 31st 1998**, the region of Nicolet was proclaimed as the **Fraternité régionale de Nicolet** by Françoise Malboeuf, National Minister, accompanied by Bertrand Perreault, Francophone Vice-Minister and Fr. Henri Éthier, ofm, National Spiritual Assistant.

1999 On **April 17th 1999**, the regions of Montreal became one and were proclaimed as the **Fraternité régionale de Montréal** by Françoise Malboeuf, National Minister, accompanied by Bertrand Perreault, Francophone Vice-Minister and Fr. Clarence Laplante, ofm, National Spiritual Assistant's delegate.

On **May 1st 1999**, the region of Trois-Rivières was proclaimed as the **Fraternité régionale de Trois-Rivières** by Françoise Malboeuf, National Minister, accompanied by Bertrand Perreault, Francophone Vice-Minister and Fr. Clarence Laplante, ofm, National Spiritual Assistant's delegate.

On **May 27th 1999**, the region of St-Jean-Longueuil-Valleyfield was proclaimed as the **Fraternité régionale de Saint-Jean-Longueuil-Valleyfield**, by Françoise Malboeuf, National Minister, accompanied by Bertrand Perreault, Francophone Vice-Minister and Fr. Henri Éthier, ofm, National Spiritual Assistant.

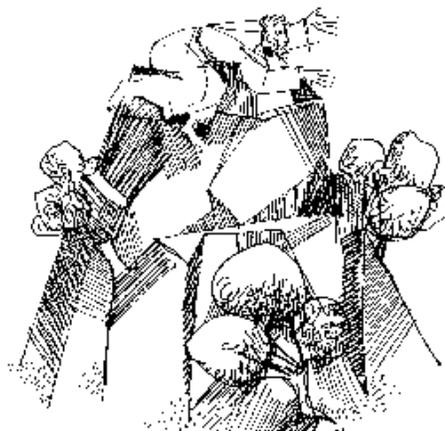
On **May 29th 1999**, the region of St-Hyacinthe was proclaimed as the **Fraternité régionale de Saint-Hyacinthe** by Françoise Malboeuf, National Minister, accompanied by Bertrand Perreault, Francophone Vice-Minister and Fr. Henri Éthier, ofm, National Spiritual Assistant.

On **June 12th 1999**, the region of Saguenay-Lac-St-Jean was proclaimed as the **Fraternité régionale du Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean** by Françoise Malboeuf, National Minister, accompanied by Bertrand Perreault, Francophone Vice-Minister and Fr. Marius Lessard, ofm, National Spiritual Assistant's delegate.

As of **September 1999**, all regions were organized according to the 1991 General Constitutions. A delay of only 4 years from our objective of June 1995.

What a beautiful task we have accomplished during the last 10 years. And we continue the work although our numbers are decreasing. The **Regional Fraternities of Québec and Lévis** regrouped into one Regional Fraternity on **September 7th, 2007**.

*Françoise Malboeuf, ofm
Francophone Vice-minister*



From the National Council

1. Nomination Committee

Please send your nominations for our National Council to David Bouchard at dacat2@shaw.ca as soon as possible. We need nominations for National Minister, National Vice-Minister (Francophone), National Vice Minister (Anglophone), National Treasurer, National Secretary, National Director of Formation, International Councillor and International Councillor Alternate. Nomination forms are available on our national website. You can also send them through Canada Post at #364 5140 62 St. Red Deer, Ab. T4N 6R1

2. Franciscan Youth

The National Council recently approved a four stage process to restore Franciscan Youth in Canada.

Stage #1 is a time of prayer to find leaders among the SFO to journey with possible members of a renewed YOUFRA.

Stage #2 is the formation of new members.

Stage #3 is the formation of regional YOUFRA fraternities.

Stage #4 The final stage is to organize a National identity of YOUFRA in Canada.

We ask every SFO in Canada to join in the prayer for Franciscan Youth:

A Prayer for Franciscan Youth

Creator God, You call us to proclaim your Gospel with our lives. Raise up leaders among us who are open to Your grace to introduce young Catholics to the spirituality of St. Francis and St. Clare through the formation of Franciscan Youth in Canada.

Inspire many Catholic youth to embrace your call to go from gospel to life and life to gospel. We ask St. Francis, St. Clare and all the Franciscan saints to pray with us that YOUFRA can be a way for our young people to deepen their love for You and for each other. We ask this prayer in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Amen

3. National Education Fund

Thanks to those who have made a contribution to our education fund. If each SFO in Canada would contribute \$10 each year for three years, we could begin to offer bursaries for ongoing formation of our members in the fourth year. Donations can be made through SFO Inc. by clearly indicating that the donation is for the Education fund and sending it to Réjean Perras: 110 – 405, ch. de Chambly, Longueuil, Qc J4H 3X9, (450) 651-3280, perrasrj@sympatico.ca.

4. International Visitors

We welcome Fr. Amando Trujillo, General Assistant and Bertha Richaud, representing our General Minister, to our National Elective Chapter from May 7-10

*David Bouchard, ofs
International Councillor*

International Council, Elected November 2008



Rear row l-r: General Assistant: Fr. Martín Pablo Bitzer, OFMConv; Presidency Councillor: Tibor Kauser, OFS; Presidency Councillor: Benedetto Lino, OFS,
General Assistant: Fr. Amando Trujillo-Cano, TOR
Front row l-r: Presidency Councillor: M. Consuelo de Núñez, OFS (Chelito); General Assistant: Fr. Ivan Matić, OFM; Presidency Councillor: Maria Aparecida Crepaldi, OFS;
General Vice-Minister: Doug Clorey, OFS; General Minister: Encarnación del Pozo, OFS; Franciscan Youth Councillor: Ana Fruk, OFS; Presidency Councillor: Mag. Ewald Kreuzer, OFS; Presidency Councillor: Michèle Altmeyer, OFS; Presidency Councillor: Lucy A. Almirañez, OFS; and, General Assistant: Fr. Irudaya Samy, OFMCap



National Chapter of Elections 2009

Manoir d'Youville

485, Boul. d'Youville,
Île Bernard, Châteauguay, QC
Tel. : (450) 692-8291

Theme : A History to Love

May 7-10, 2009

*Pray to the Holy Spirit for the candidates
running for the new council!*

An Instrument of Peace

We all love to recite and sing the prayer of Saint Francis for peace. In fact, it is part of my daily prayer without much thought of moving this prayer any further than being mindful of my responsibility to remove hindrances of peace in my daily encounters. This was my comfort zone and I was content to stay at this point. Recently, I was challenged by circumstances in my life which caused me to reach deep within me for a new realm of peace; a peace beyond my understanding. At this point, I was forced to define what peace meant to me and how closely that peace relates to the image of peace shown to us by Saint Francis.

I defined peace as a set of values developed from the experiences in my heart and not from my head. In other words, my logic or rationale could not be depended upon solely to define what peace is for me. In a more practical term, I reflected on the question: if peace is to be established and reign in my life specifically, at home, workplaces, communities, and even in my church, should peace be on my terms, or would I benefit when peace is

reached. Through prayer and reflection, I moved firstly to embrace the spiritual dimension in the pursuit of peace followed by whatever practical proposals for peace that was available to me. This process allowed me to pray in words and in song the peace pray of Saint Francis with greater understanding.

The practical solution for peace can be discussed, negotiated and finalized. However, the spiritual dimension for peace is not easily understood; it is abstract, sometimes unexplainable and could be contrary to good logic. This is because the peace prayer of Saint Francis presents a calm that comes from embracing and respecting the law of love expected of us by our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Any violation of the good order Jesus gave us results in discord and a breakdown in relationships, all of which separate us from the peace Christ intended for each one of us.

I pondered why the peace prayer of Saint Francis became widespread throughout the world by Franciscans and by others who are not Franciscans. I do not have an answer to my quest but I suspect that there is a need deep within each human being from the time of creation to eagerly yearn for peace for his or her existence. I believe that it is God, having the nature of peace is seeking to reside within us and finding a home in our hearts.

If ever you wish to pursue God's peace, I would suggest the image of peace as given to us by Saint Francis is an excellent model and a good place to start. Our journey for peace may challenge our understanding and our good logic. This being the case, we may find it necessary to pursue God's peace in order to begin to address many of our challenges in this world. For example: the reign of peace in the work of social justice, freedom for all, generosity towards our sisters and brothers in need, and the like. Can we see ourselves as instruments of this dimension of peace in our lives?

May God's peace reign in our hearts and in all our relationships.

*Garnet Moses, ofs
National Anglophone Vice-Minister*

Published annually by:

Secular Franciscan Order / National Fraternity of Canada
**For more information contact the National Fraternity of
Canada information@ofsnational.ca
Murdoch Macleod Minister
7205 4th Street N.E., Unit 20 Calgary, Alberta T2K 5S3**