

Mutual Love Generating a Future



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FRANCISCAN FEDERATION
2009 Annual Report



FRANCISCAN FEDERATION

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Elizabeth Ruppert FSM, Region Five
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NATIONAL OFFICE

Ann Lyons FSSJ, Executive Director
Margaret Magee OSF, Associate Director



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whose donations made this printing possible.*

PRESIDENT'S REPORT *Diane Marie Collins OSF*

Doris Donnelley states that when we journey toward transformation we must **"Value those companions that accompany us on our pilgrimage . . . this non-hierarchical, classless, totally equal body of persons and cosmic creatures who are participants in the transformative process."** ("Pilgrims and Tourists: Conflicting Metaphors for the Christian Journey to God" Spirituality Today 44/1 [1992].) This year has been a revelation to me of the goodness of God alive in his people, you, who are part of this Franciscan Federation. This year we have journeyed together as pilgrims toward transformation. We are not there yet, but we are well on our way.

At the end of last year's conference there was renewed hope in the Federation and its future. The presence of the Holy Spirit was evident. Due to the hard work and effort of our past President, Linda Tan; Ann Lyons, Executive Director; Margaret Magee, Associate Director; Sue Ernster, Treasurer; the members of the National Board and the determination and faith of the membership, there was a newfound sense of trust and a desire to journey together as a Federation. The dynamics of transparency, persistence and working for the good of the whole continued this year. By working together, enhancing communication and building honest relationships, the members of the National Board were able to achieve their goals. I am reminded of these words from the Rule, **"As they announce peace with their lips, let them be careful to have it even more within their own hearts. No one should be roused to wrath or insult on their account, rather all should be moved to peace, goodwill, and mercy because of their gentleness."** (Chapter 9)

Ann Lyons completed her first year as Executive Director and continues to do an exceptional job carrying out her responsibilities. Both Ann and Margaret have been diligent and dedicated in their management of the National Office. Their dependence on God and their gentle Franciscan spirits continue to inspire us all. Sue Ernster and the finance committee skillfully met their role as good stewards of the Federation's finances. We still struggle in the area of finance but the outlook continues to improve. You, our member congregations have been very generous to the Federation. Thank you for sharing your treasure. Our region chairs have enhanced the life of the Federation in the regions and have assisted in determining the locations for the 2010 and 2011 Annual Federation Conferences (AFC). The Board was instrumental in helping to prepare materials to assist leadership in preparation for the Apostolic Visitation as well as in making decisions that will impact the future of the Federation. These women and their communities are a blessing to the Federation.

After the surprising news that the Federation does not have canonical status, further clarification was sought from Rome. After consultation with the members of the Implementation Task Force, Father Dan Ward, from the Legal Resource Center for Religious and others, the National Board decided that the practices of canonical federations is very different from the history and practice of the Franciscan Federation. The National Board voted to forego the pursuit of canonical status for the Federation and focus on the ongoing process of transforming the Federation.

The Transformation Task Force challenged us all to risk taking the plunge into transformation. The Implementation Task Force received the framework of a new structure for the Federation and continues to creatively shape this new structure in a way comparable to a potter working with clay. The Task Force is working to refine the elements through numerous meetings, conference calls and endless hours of thought and prayer. We are proud of their work and grateful for their commitment. The results of their efforts have been shared at intervals with you and more will be shared at the AFC in Cincinnati this summer.

The Prayer Book Committee overcame a few more hurdles and the prayer book has gone to press. A debt of gratitude is owed to all who have persevered as part of that committee. In addition to being a source of praise to God, the prayer book is also a tribute to their dedication. We are still in need of financial assistance for the final publication of the prayer book. Your congregations have been exceptionally generous. The National Board continues to work with Ann Lyons to bring this project to completion. A Board Committee is working on a process for distribution.

The Spirit and Life Committee and the Freeing the Fire Committee continue to support the ongoing efforts focused on the development of the new structures of the Federation. Their committees have been the sparks of light guiding us forward on this journey.

The By-laws Committee worked on formulating a proposed draft of the by-laws, formerly known as statutes, throughout this year. There have been and continue to be numerous clarifications and edits. The work of this committee is moving in tandem with the process of transformation.

I am grateful to all of you for whatever you may have done to lead the Federation to this place in its history. This has been a year of hope and new life. We have all grown in our appreciation for each other, our love for God who leads us, and our Franciscan heritage. Where we are headed is still not clear, but we go forward in faith. We need to continue to walk both in the footprints of those who have gone before us and dare to plot a path where none have gone. My prayer is that God will be with us as we continue to grow in mutual love, generating a future for this Franciscan Federation.

*Peace and joy,
Your sister, Diane Marie OSF*

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR *Ann Lyons FSSJ*

SERVANT LEADERSHIP

Our Franciscan charism speaks to us of Servant Leadership. This leadership demands that we be in continuous relationship with God and with one another. Our leadership must be one of service and mutuality. The Third Order Rule challenges all the brothers and sisters to take responsibility for leadership. Article 25 states: "Let them neither dominate nor seek power over one another, but let them willingly serve and obey 'one another with the mutual love which comes from each one's heart' (cf Ga 5:13)." We look at leadership to be all encompassing, built on a structure of trust—one that enables others to be themselves. This vision of mutuality is for proclaiming the gospel, building community and being of service. The ability to build these kinds of relationships requires a mutual trust, and a willingness to acknowledge that love is the bond that holds us in communion with God, with Francis and Clare and with one another.

FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY

Called to be servant leaders, the office staff filled with inner strength has sought to be enablers who remove all obstacles to our effective functioning as a Federation. One such obstacle faced over the past

year has been the need to pay back taxes dating to 2005, totaling over \$6,000.00. This issue came to our attention after last year's AFC in Denver. We are hopeful that this obstacle will soon be completely resolved. Due to various cutbacks in staff and expenditures we have been able to make all our monthly bills over the past year, operating mainly, on dues collected from congregational members. The next goal we have set is to begin paying back the various loans given to us in times of need by several congregations.

CORPORATION FILINGS

We have filed the necessary Annual Statement for a nonprofit corporation with the Pennsylvania Department of State. There had been no filing since the year 2000. It has been specified that the task of filing belongs to the Executive Director and will be addressed every year in March.

SHARING OUR CHARISM

Each of us is a carrier of the Franciscan charism. It is, therefore, imperative that all members have a strong sense of initiative and responsibility to the Federation. How we assess ourselves as a Federation will determine how we make known

our presence, our participation and our influence. It will also affect how we utilize our gifts, and how we approach leadership, collaboration and social involvement in our world.

Over the past year the Implementation Task Force (ITF) has worked diligently to give flesh to the new structural model presented by the Transformation Task Force at the AFC 2008. The ITF shared the progress of their work through regular Executive Summaries and has sought input consistently from the membership. Certainly, the widespread involvement of members in formulating the role and responsibilities of each of the Commissions: Commission of Elected Leaders, Commission of Regions and the Commission of Charism Services is a sign of the overriding sense of life, hope, purpose and movement that permeates the Federation. All of our efforts to empower others to share our vision by contributing their gifts so that we will grow together into a new sense of our identity as followers of Francis and Clare will be actualized at the AFC 2009 in Cincinnati.

NETWORKING IN MUTUAL LOVE

“They are to be servants of all (Rule, Article 27).” The servant model of leadership has implications for the Franciscan Federation as we broaden our commitments to a more global sense of equality, peace and justice. We must build affiliations with others within the Franciscan family. In light of our charism, we share a common responsibility for seeing, judging and acting with new eyes, new minds and new hearts in response to the signs of the times. We trust in our abilities to bring about projects and activities that reflect our commitment to devote our thoughts, energy and resources to the tasks of bringing about justice and making peace in the world. With this in mind, the Franciscan Federation Conference Resolution/ Action 2009 will focus on immigration and creation through effective networking on joint advocacy efforts both within the Franciscan family and with other related organizations.

As a federation we are committed to a continuous reweaving of the social fabric utilizing the giftedness and talents of all our members for building and rebuilding. We are committed to an ongoing process of conversion to rediscover the spirit of servant leadership in imitation of Jesus, Francis and Clare.

FRANCISCAN MORNING AND EVENING PRAISE

Enriched by the example of the caring Christ, the poor Francis and the contemplative Clare we are called to conversion, global challenge, communal commitment and prayer. Throughout his life, Francis faced the need to keep before himself the connection between prayer and action. This is a challenge we share with him in the 21st century. Hopefully, the *Franciscan Morning and Evening Praise* will lead us into the mystery of God that is at the heart of all that we do as Franciscans.

At long last, our *Franciscan Morning and Evening Praise* is nearing completion. We joyfully anticipate raising our voices in praise to our Creator as we hold this cherished book in our hands. Our hope and prayer is that the breath of God’s life giving, joy giving, peace giving Spirit rest on all who use this book.

We give special thanks to Sister Ellen Lamberjack who assumed the responsibility for the Prayer Book Project at a crucial time as well as all the Tiffin Franciscans Sisters who assisted Ellen with securing copyrights, editing and proofing. I am at a loss as to how to express my gratitude for all the Tiffin Franciscans have done to see this project to completion.

MUTUAL LOVE GENERATING A FUTURE

The power of Francis’ and Clare’s vision is measured by its capacity to sustain a flow of significant new meaning. We must realize that our renewal and re-visioning is not over. In fact, it may barely have begun. As we experience the completion of some hopes and goals we must learn to gather strength for the distance ahead. We cannot be reluctant leaders because we have an obligation to pursue our new vision with the same kind of commitment, courage, personal discipline and rigorous sacrifice with which Francis and Clare pursued their vision. We are a Federation not proud that we have been called but humbled that we can serve. Acknowledging our Franciscan heritage we as a Federation will shape our future through constancy, simplicity, solidarity, mutual love and a dynamic spirituality.

TREASURER'S REPORT *Susan Ernster FSPA*

The year 2008 was another year of transition. The Federation office downsized from 3 to 2 staff members and paid off many outstanding debts. We are now current on all of our bills. Many expenses were decreased by putting as much online or via the website as possible. In an effort to be the best stewards of our resources registration for the 2009 AFC was put online and confirmations were sent via e-mail.

To help decrease expenses, we ceased accepting credit cards. The office staff has picked up more work which had been outsourced such as some of the webpage design. An outside consultant is still used, but much of the background work is done by staff.

We had to deal with the issue of back taxes amounting to about \$6,000 as well as penalties and interest to the IRS (Internal Revenue Service). The Sisters of St. Francis of Assisi in Milwaukee extended the Federation a loan to help pay some of our 2008 AFC expenses. We are in the process of paying back that loan. Many congregations have helped us get through these tough times by responding to the Executive Director's suggestion of donating money for the prayer book project. We received \$71,000 in contributions which enabled us to go to print. Thank you for your continued support and we promise to continue to be as transparent as possible. The successful sales of inventory items at the Denver AFC helped immensely. The AFC was a huge success in many ways. The overwhelming response of congregations offering to sponsor break-outs, meals and printing costs contributed significantly to our net income.

This decrease in expenses along with the prayer book contributions allowed us to have a net income this year of \$64,030 rather than a loss.

Two congregations donated their loans totaling \$4,000.00 to the Federation upon maturity. A portion, \$2,000.00, was earmarked for the prayer book; \$2,000.00 was placed in the general operating fund.

An actual inventory count was done and almost \$5,500.00 needed to be written off the books. This is due to items being given away and the failure to keep track of the inventory. A system is now in place for recording sales so that there is an accurate accounting of inventory at all times.

The Finance Committee has met several times via Skype. We are in the process of looking at dues for the upcoming year for both members and associate members.

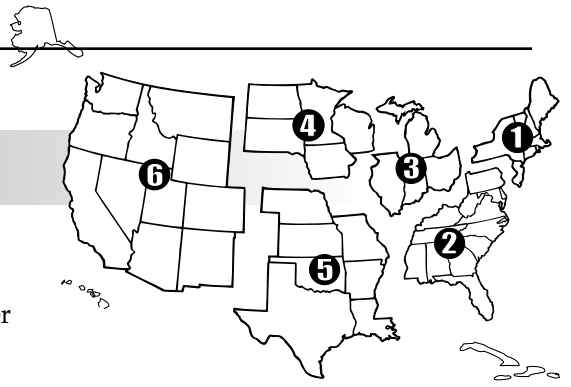
If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at sernster@fspa.org.

Peace and all good,
Sue Ernster FSPA

2008 Annual Financial Report of the Franciscan Federation

Statement of Financial Position as of

	DEC. 31 2008	DEC. 31 2007
ASSETS		
Cash and		
Checking/Savings	\$135,862	\$12,646
Trust Fund	118,291	169,973
Accounts Receivable	133	3,370
Prepaid Expenses		
and Inventory	68,203	81,499
Fixed Assets	8,532	9,271
Total Assets	\$ 331,021	\$ 276,759
LIABILITIES AND EQUITY		
Accounts Payable	\$1,465	\$ 27,866
Trust & Loan Fund	301,000	294,399
Deferred Revenues	\$150,546	139,200
Equity	(121,990)	(184,706)
Total Liabilities and Equity	\$ 331,021	\$ 276,759
INCOME		
Membership	\$107,379	\$111,898
Sales/Service	5,495	54,201
Conference	140,068	182,516
Programs	0	2,175
Gifts & Donations	81,572	14,813
Investment Income	8,523	16,060
Other	10,429	4,418
Total Income	\$ 353,466	\$386,081
USE OF INCOME		
Administration	\$39,746	\$ 63,653
Conference	109,002	155,524
Organizational Expense	4,555	25,189
Payroll Expense	133,823	174,145
Printing	(10,788)	70,541
Services/Programs	6,818	19,114
Other	6,280	14,139
Total Use of Income	\$ 289,436	\$ 539,088
Net Income (Loss)	\$ 64,030	(\$ 136,324)



FEDERATION REGION REPORTS

REGION ONE

Lorraine Campanelli OSF, Chair

Region 1 had an exciting year. Many programs, workshops and conferences were held throughout our Region. We are awestruck at how many lives have been touched through the Franciscan presence in our Region. Many individuals and communities have been finding creative ways of working on the resolutions from the past AFCs. Much focus has been placed on respecting Sister Water and embracing Immigration.

Our Fall Program, "Stranger to Pilgrimage: No Longer," was held at the Mt. St. Francis Spirituality Center in Ringwood, NJ. Members of the Steering Committee presented a day of pilgrimage. Various places in Assisi that were sacred to St. Francis and St. Clare were presented. In order to give a "pilgrimage" feel to the day, participants were asked to move their chairs as we journeyed through different parts of Assisi. It was a very meaningful and reflective day for all. During our Regional program, five people were awarded a lottery, which is the cost of the program. Also, the cost of five registration fees (\$150) was awarded to a ministry that works with the poor in Region 1. This year the Lottery was won by the Padre Pio Shelter in the Bronx.

Also during our Fall Program, a check was presented to the Felician Sisters of Lodi, NJ for their Matiri Mission in Kenya, Africa. The members of Region 1 presented them with a check for \$1,000.00, to be used to build two homes. Not only will these homes offer shelter, they will also collect rain water which will help the people who do not have running water.

For our Spring Program, we participated in the Franciscan Family Study Day which was sponsored by the Franciscan Friars at 31st St. in NYC. The Program, "Celebrating the 800th Anniversary of Pope Innocent III's approval of Francis of Assisi's proposal to live a Gospel Way of Life in 1209," was a day filled with many blessings. All members of the Franciscan Family were present. During the closing Liturgy, all Franciscans were invited to renew their profession. What a beautiful witness it was as so many stood in the congregation and proudly professed their commitment to a Gospel Way of Life.

Sadly, one of our former Steering Committee members died. Sr. Elizabeth Jean Roduit FSP died

on February 7th, 2009. Our prayers are with her community and family.

We welcomed new members to our Steering Committee: Sr. Elaine Sullivan FSP, Sr. Carol Woods SFMA and Sr. Elizabeth Lee SSM. We thank them for serving on the committee and welcome them.

At a Steering Committee meeting on May 16th, Sr. Pat Larkin OSF was elected chairperson and Sr. Pauline Sweeney SFP secretary. Sr. Mary Frances Mills OSF will continue to serve as treasurer. As my six-year term comes to an end, I want to thank all our members who have been so supportive of our work within the Region. I also would like to give a special thank you to a very special Steering Committee. The committee is such a strong presence and witness in the Region. We have shared good times and times that weren't as good. But through it all, we loved God and brought the love of Francis and Clare to the Region. I cannot thank the committee enough for all that they have done and continue to do.

We are looking forward to a new year filled with much change and many blessings and graces.

REGION TWO

Betty Kane OSF, Chair

Being a witness of this season of resurrection, of the beauties of Earth, is cause for rejoicing and yes, laughter! East coast rampant, extravagant, luxurious beauty! This reminds me of a comment Mary Beth Ingham made last year when she was here. "I love your green" was the statement she made a few times as she looked on the beauty. But, the humidity did her in! I suppose we can't have everything.

Yet, in Region Two, we have the mid-Atlantic and the south, the Caribbean and the Poconos, the World Series Champions and the Super Bowl Champions. Better than anything though, we have faithful membership and a dedicated, active steering committee. Who could ask for anything more? But God provides more. We welcome Sr. Patricia McAlpin OSF to our Region Two Steering Committee.

For our membership, the Pittsburgh contingent faithfully plans two programs a year and we publish

our newsletter, *The FrancisClarian*, twice a year. Having Nancy Celashi as our editor/publisher is a true blessing. Yes, she does live in Rome, Italy!

In May we will have our spring meeting in Aston, with a focus on immigration. It is during these meetings that the members decide on the articles that will be written and published for the newsletter as well as have the drawings for the registrations for the Franciscan programs offered at WTU, Tampa, and the AFC.

Having been responsible for AFC 2008, the Steering Committee of Region Two is relaxing and looking forward to enjoying AFC 2009. We are also looking forward to what the Spirit will bring as the Commissions form and take shape.

REGION THREE

Rose Marie Surwilo OSF, Chair

The AFC Resolution on Water had engaged many congregations in Region Three and the membership wanted more time to continue work on it. The building of wells or water systems in Third World countries was part of the agenda in some congregations and others who were not actively involved contributed financially to these projects. The consensus was that the water issue will not go away for a long time and efforts to address it would have to be ongoing. Personal efforts such as not buying bottled water and other conservation measures have certainly become part of many members' lifestyle.

The approach to the resolution on immigration focused on education and raising awareness of the issue. Several congregations sponsored days that resulted in a greater enthusiasm and subsequent plans to find ways that would concretely address the problem. Some congregations have invested personnel and finances in programs that directly help immigrants by establishing ESL programs and also programs that help immigrants with the legal aspects of becoming citizens. The Region Three steering committee is planning a Day on Immigration that will be facilitated by Tiffin Franciscan Sister Ellen Lamberjack on March 13, 2010 at the Franciscan Sisters of the Sacred Heart Motherhouse in Frankfort, Illinois.

Region Three has experienced some changes in its leadership. Sister Rose Marie Surwilo, a Joliet Franciscan will end her term as chair in July. Sister Marilyn Renninger, from Frankfort will serve for a year as we observe the changes that are occurring at the national level. Adjustments to job descriptions have

also been made and the steering committee is looking for someone who would be able to take over the organization of the membership registration.

Touchstones, our Region Three Newsletter, has gone hi-tech with many members now receiving it via email. Members who do not have access to computers are still receiving hard copies. This has saved the Region money on postage. Since the plans for a workshop on "federating" did not meet with enough interest, cancelling that also left money in our coffers. We were able to give "scholarships" to the AFC to four people instead of our usual two.

The restructuring for the Federation has made all of us wonder what the future will hold. Our faith in and loyalty to the mission and charism of our Franciscan Third Order Life fill us with hope that our re-birthing will bring renewed commitment and enthusiasm to us all.

REGION FOUR

Virginia Heldorfer OSF, Chair

Region IV Third Order members have been creative in implementing the Federation Immigration 2008 resolution with a focus on education, advocacy, and support for the Postville, IA people.

The region sponsored an "Immigrants: Pilgrim and Stranger" day, January 25, 2009 in Dubuque, IA, with Bill and Joanne Lange, Voces de la Frontera and Milwaukee sanctuary Movement Volunteers, along with Guadalupe and Ezucena, women from Mexico who shared their personal struggles stories of why and how they came to the US. NAFTA contributed to the complex Mexican economy's downfall which leads these women's lives into poverty. Thus they migrated toward hope, financial security and an opportunity to begin again. (www.franfed.org, Region IV Spring 09 Newsletter has a detailed story of their experiences.) They closed the day pleading that we do everything possible for immigration reform here in the US as well as pleading for US help to jump-start the economy in Mexico. Region IV will host a similar day at Silver Lake College, Manitowoc, WI in the fall of 2009.

Green Bay, WI is active in promoting immigration awareness and education. This past year they had two major events in the area. The Franciscan Sisters of Christian Charity, the Sisters of St. Francis of the Holy Cross, and the Franciscan Friars of the Assumption BVM Province collaborated with other religious groups and the Diocese of Green Bay to create an

“Immigration Awareness Pilgrimage: A Journey of Hope” held on September 7th, 2008. Many people from various churches joined in the pilgrimage. The Sisters of St. Francis of the Holy Cross are a core member of JOSHUA, a united effort of local churches and religious groups to promote education and advocacy for justice in Green Bay, WI. They hosted a public forum in support of immigrant rights on January 22, 2009 at St. Willebrord Parish in Green Bay. Keynote speakers Bishop David Ricken and alderwoman C. Jeffreys spoke about the rights and dignity of immigrants.

The Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration, La Crosse, WI and the Dubuque Franciscans joined others in Postville, IA in July 2008 to protest cruel treatment and unfair labor practices at Agriprocessor, Inc., the meat packing company in Postville. The La Crosse Franciscans also held a prayer vigil at their Motherhouse in solidarity with the Postville people on May 12, 2009, the first anniversary of the massive raid. About thirty Dubuque Franciscans and Associates participated in the events at Postville that day.

The Dubuque Franciscans support two of their sisters, Carol Besch and Pat Farrell in their monthly presence as counselors for the Spanish speaking people detained in Postville.

The Franciscan Sisters of Mary have awarded Mary Jo Kahl FSM, Milwaukee, WI a \$2000 grant to help Somali Bantu refugees to obtain their Green Cards. If you participated in the opening prayer of the AFC 2007 in Minneapolis, you heard from one Somali Bantu family as they struggle to live in the U.S.

Sabbath House, a ministry of the Franciscan Sisters of Little Falls, MN hosted a Lenten series on immigration issues. Lois Knipp OSF, a Rochester Franciscan, led the initial presentation by inviting an immigrant family to share their experiences of leaving Mexico and living in Minnesota. Information on how to tract legislative movement on immigration was distributed to keep interest alive.

Angie Keil OSF, Tiffin Franciscan, joins others in prayer the first Thursday of each month in front of the Milwaukee ICE headquarters. Their congregation has been preparing their Motherhouse to be a sanctuary for immigrants when raids happen in the Tiffin area. Extensive training of employees, associates and sisters has been their focus this year. They also have a candidate for canonical membership who still does not have legal papers after four years of intense legal work. She will be doing her novitiate in Mexico and hopefully will return to the US on a religious visa in 2011 or 2012.

These are just a few, but powerful initiatives that are happening in Region IV concerning the immigration issue.

Our fall and spring Newsletter, posted at www.franfed.org and circulated among the steering committee members and motherhouses of the region, keeps us informed of other local happenings. Elections for regional co-chairs and nominees for Commission of Regions (COR) will be held in June.

Region IV Steering Committee members are: Judy Chiodo OSF, Rochester Franciscans, Lorraine DeVehbo OSF, Sisters of Our Lady of Perpetual Help, Mary Louise Dolezal OSF, Franciscan Sisters of St Paul, Rose Margaret Firkus SSJ-TOSF, Sisters of St Joseph Third Order of St Francis, Loretta Gaffney OSF, Franciscan Sisters of Christian Charity, Ginny Heldorfer OSF, Dubuque Franciscans, Kathleen Holland OSF, Clinton Franciscans, Mary Kabat OSF, Bay Settlement Franciscans, Mary Jo Kahl FSM, Franciscan Sisters of Mary, Ann Kelley OSF, Sisters of St. Francis of Assisi, Angie Keil OSF, Tiffin Franciscans, Kay Klackner OSF, Sisters of Christian Charity, Joanne Klinnert OSF, Little Falls Franciscans, Mary Beatrice Knipple CSSF, Felician Sisters Milwaukee, Karen Lueck FSPA, Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration, Jo Lambert SIM, Minnesota, Mary Anthony Menting SCSC, Sisters of Mercy of Holy Cross, Mary Jo Palma SSM, Sisters of Sorrowful Mother, Melanie Paradis OSF, Wheaton Franciscans, Marilyn Shea OSF, Clinton Franciscans, Phyllis Wirtz OSF, School Sisters of St. Francis, Milwaukee.

REGION FIVE

Elizabeth Ruppert FSM, Chair

As we look back at 2008's accomplishments for Region V, we were fortunate to engage Marya Grathwohl OSF, one of the post conference speakers for a day of reflection both in St. Louis, Missouri and in El Paso, Texas. Both days were titled *Contemplating Nature* and were successful.

In November we engaged Joanne Schatzlein OSF to bring the National Conference titled *Pilgrims and Strangers: Eyes Fixed on Christ* to the Region. This was very much appreciated for both those who attended the National Conference and for those who did not; however the number of attendees was less than usual since a record number had attended the AFC in Denver.

All Steering Committee meetings were done through email.

As we look forward to April 4th of 2009, André Cirino will be our guest speaker presenting *Gest of the Great King* (Office of the Passion).

In between times members of our region have been busy responding to Justice Issues and are looking forward to the changes in the Federation structure.

REGION SIX

Agnes Kaszamareck OSF, Chair

“**Change**” is a six letter word that has influenced 2008 in many ways. Change was the key word for our political system, financial markets and Franciscan Federation Region Six. At the close of AFC 2008 in Denver, Colorado, Region Six Steering Committee began our own “**Change.**”

Over the past ten plus years, Region Six hosted AFCs Spirit and Life Workshops, Secular Franciscan Prayer Experiences and local gatherings of Franciscans. The Denver AFC 2008 was the last gathering of the Steering Committee members.

I continued on as the Chair for the 2008/2009 National Board.

“**Change**” began when the Steering Committee members had to evaluate ministry requirements, congregation commitments and life transitions. The length of service on the Committee was 11 years to 2 years. Each member gave their love, support and energy to make Region Six a great witness of Franciscan Joy.

I am grateful to the Franciscan Congregations that gave representatives to serve on the Steering Committee. Whether a task was small or enormous their support was always with us. **Thank You!!!**

“**Change**” from the Franciscan Federation has given our Region Six a forward movement into a new future. Kathy Wood OSF California was our representative for the Commission of Regions reporting to the Implementation Task Force.

The presence of Francis and Clare within Region Six was evident by the dedication of Franciscans who want to proclaim Peace and Love to all.

We will continue this Franciscan journey in witnessing JOY to our world.

Franciscan Federation Conference Resolutions/Actions

Immigration and Creation: Networking in Mutual Love (2009)

Statements of Resolution:

Be it resolved that the members of the Franciscan Federation focus on immigration and creation through effective networking on joint advocacy efforts both within the Franciscan family and with other related organizations.

Background:

Through our mutual love we can generate a positive and hopeful future. When Franciscans attend to collaborating within the family we are enabled to speak with one voice. By networking with other organizations we will deepen our understanding and broaden our Franciscan influence to make the world a better place.

As a Franciscan Federation, members have been actively involved in the care of immigrants and creation for the past three years. With this collective

experience and accountability reporting, we are enabled to move ahead with the connections necessary to create a critical mass that would benefit these issues. Concerns around the environment and immigration are priorities for many local, state and national governments. Due to this direction, a number of organizations will be focusing on these agendas.

Rationale:

Franciscans are being called to respond to the needs of our times through the organizations available to us. There are two major Franciscans organizations that would benefit from joint networking efforts of the AFC. The Franciscan Action Network, which is comprised of all 3 branches of the family, focuses on the policies of the United States and their impact locally, nationally and internationally. Franciscans International represents one million Franciscans

world wide and has achieved ECOSOC status at the United Nations. This means that FI can formally speak and provide viable input for reports to the UN. Both organizations rank immigration and the environment as top priorities.

There are a myriad of other organizations for networking on these issues, such as the Leadership Conference of Women Religious (LCWR), the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), Catholic Relief Services, (CRS), NETWORK, and Sierra Club, to name a few of the immigration and environment groups, where Franciscans have valuable connections. Since we have established a pattern for actions and accountability, now is the time to focus and record our collaboration with others.

Call to Respond:

Let us as members of the Federation work together to find ways to network around issues related to care of creation and immigration so:

- That the members join in the prayerful action in related organizations by sharing prayer resources, remembrances at intercessions at liturgy or on special days, etc.
- That the members become more educated about ways to become involved in specific advocacy through newsletters, internet searches, e-mail alerts, etc.
- That the members are encouraged to determine which organizations are most appropriate for their active collaboration and where feasible, contribute financially to the development of these organizations.
- That the members join in effective advocacy efforts to promote comprehensive immigration reform:

Putting a special emphasis on ending the Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) raids on factories by networking with organizations and small groups who are also working to end the raids.

In partnership with the United States Catholic Bishops we highlight in our communities and beyond awareness, education and prevention of the crime of trafficking.

- That members promote respectful stewarding of Earth's resources by taking the St. Francis Pledge To Care for Creation and the Poor; and for those

who have already taken the pledge to renew their commitment to pray, learn, assess, act, and advocate together for climate change as it impacts the poor and the vulnerable.

- That the members invite and/or host meetings in collaboration with other organizations.
- That members, communities and region chairs keep records of their activities in order to make them known to the entire Federation at the subsequent Annual Federation Conference.

Origin of Proposal:

Region Chairs: Sr. Lorraine Campanelli OSF, Sisters of St. Francis of the Neumann Communities (Region 1); Sr. Betty Kane OSF, Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia (Region 2); Sr. Rose Marie Surwilo OSF, Sisters of St. Francis of Mary Immaculate, Joliet (Region 3); Sr. Virginia Heldorfer OSF, Dubuque Franciscans (Region 4); Sr. Elizabeth Ruppert FSM, Franciscan Sisters of Mary (Region 5); Sr. Agnes Kaczmarek OSF, Sisters of St. Francis of the Neumann Communities (Region 6).

JPIC Coordinators: Sr. Jean Amore SMIC, JPIC Contact St. Bonaventure Parish Paterson, N.J., with Holy Name Province, Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception; Sr. Sharon Havelak OSF, JPIC Coordinator, Sisters of St. Francis of Sylvania, OH; Sr. Jeanine Heath CSSF, Chicago Felician Franciscan Justice and Peace Chairperson, Sr. Maureen Irvin OSF, Justice and Peace Coordinator, Hospital Sisters of St. Francis, Springfield, IL.; Sr. Mary Kuhlman OSF, JPIC Coordinator, Sisters of St. Francis Tiffin, OH; Sr. Christine Martin OSF, Peace and Justice Coordinator, Sisters of St. Francis of Savannah, MO; Sr. Marge Wissman OSF, JPIC Coordinator, Franciscan Sisters of Oldenburg, IN, Irene Senn, JPIC Coordinator, Sisters of St. Francis of Assisi, Katie Varatta, JPIC Coordinator, Sisters of St. Joseph Third Order of St. Francis.

Offices: Franciscan Federation, Washington, D.C., Franciscan Action Network, Washington, D.C., and Franciscans International in New York.

Contact:

Sr. Sheila Kinsey OSF, JPIC Leader
Wheaton Franciscans
26W171 Roosevelt Road, Box 667
Wheaton, Illinois 60187-0667
Phone: 630.909.6635 Fax: 630.462.7148
E-mail skinsey@wheatonfranciscan.org

COMMITTEE REPORTS



THE IMPLEMENTATION TASK FORCE (ITF)

Members: Jeanne Bessette OSF (Joliet, IL), Beatrice Eichten OSF (Little Falls, MN), Janet Gardner OSF (Whitehall, PA), Marlene Kline OSF (Neumann Communities), Giles Schinelli TOR (St. Paul, MN), and Candice Tucci OSF (Stella Niagara, NY). Having Ann Lyons FSSJ (Executive Director) at all our meetings and Diane Marie Collins OSF (President) and Ramona Miller OSF (Board Liaison) at several of our meetings facilitated our work greatly.

Building Blocks

After an organizing meeting following the July 2008 Annual Federation Conference (AFC), the ITF met in four focused and very productive meetings. Our task was to put together the building blocks that would make the transformation structure actual and viable. We started with basic definitions: criteria for membership in the Federation, on each commission and for the National Board; voting powers in each commission; and the task of each commission. Liaisons were assigned to each commission to assist their coordinating committees in their work.

Commissions

We realized that each commission has different dynamics and cultures. We provided basic information and asked those who volunteered to serve on the commission's Coordinating Committee to address its membership issues and to provide a nomination/election procedure for its Executive Committee and two National Board members.

National Board

The National Board consists of two elected members from each commission, serving staggered terms to provide greater consistency. The Board appoints the Treasurer. The Executive Director serves in an ex officio capacity. We identified key qualities needed by the Board members and communicated that to the commissions for consideration during their nomination processes.

Standing Committees

After consultation with the Freeing the Fire Committee and the Spirit and Life Committee, we recommended to the National Board that these standing committees be recognized for their fine work and that they be disbanded to allow the newly structured National Board to appoint a new committee to assist the Federation in providing tools and resources for carrying out its mission of promoting the Third Order Regular charism.

Bylaws

A big task was the revision of the bylaws to reflect the new structure of the Federation. The bylaws subcommittee, composed of Tom Grady TOR, Lorraine Campanelli OSF and Janet Gardner OSF, amended the existing bylaws for our consideration. The bylaws establish the Commission of Elected Leaders (CEL) as holding the reserve powers usually held by the Members of a corporation. After further revision, a draft of proposed Provisional Bylaws has been presented to the membership for review via an electronic survey. They will be discussed at the AFC by everyone, with final approval of the proposed Provisional Bylaws being the responsibility of the CEL.

Canonical Status

After careful consideration, we recommended to the National Board that they communicate to the members that we have never had canonical status and that the federation will not pursue it, given the canonical rules concerning federations.

AFC Sessions

We have grown in our own understanding of the model because of the issues we struggled with through the process of our meetings. We will be sharing that experience and the refinements in our presentation to you at the AFC. A good portion of the 2009 AFC is allotted to our presentation of our work and to the Commissions' nomination and election process.

Thank you for the opportunity to work with this exciting process. We look forward to working with the National Board and the Commissions during the coming year as the new structure is initiated.

SPIRIT AND LIFE

The Spirit of change and transition has been prevalent throughout the Franciscan Federation and continues to move us forward into new ways of thinking and perceiving, working and gathering together. The members of the Spirit and Life committee have been very conscious of and open to the new that is evolving.

The work of Spirit and Life has been evident from the inception of the Federation though it has experienced many transformations in name:

1965-81: Research Committee

1981-91: Rule and Life Committee

1991-present: Spirit and Life Committee

Throughout the changes in name, the committee has always been dedicated to focusing and promoting Franciscan scholarship and to the research of the Third Order Regular charism with the particular focus on our Rule and Life.

The members of the current committee met throughout this year by conference call and in person, often in discussion of the need to clarify the role of Spirit and Life in the time of transition and change, while expressing the great desire to participate and serve the Federation in the ongoing work of transformation. These discussions raised some important questions:

- How does Spirit and Life engage with the newly developing Commissions?

- Are there new ways that Spirit and Life can function, grow, and expand as the Federation continues to transform?
- Spirit and Life functions to support the charism; through this transition into the new structure should Spirit and Life continue as a standing committee?

Spirit and Life is critical for the mission of the Federation. After much discernment and reflection, the committee made a recommendation that Spirit and Life be incorporated into the new Federation structure in a different way, not necessarily as a standing committee. The committee members felt that relinquishing the current identity and function of Spirit and Life as a standing committee could provide the opportunity for something new to emerge in this transformative moment of the Federation.

Further recommendations of current projects and committee responsibility were included in the committee report to the National Board. Committee members expressed gratitude to have been invited to serve the Federation and acknowledged the willingness to be of service in the future.

FREEING THE FIRE

During 2008 and the first half of 2009, the Freeing the Fire Committee worked to understand its role in the transformed Franciscan Federation. Committee members want to know that the ideas of Freeing the Fire will continue to energize the Federation and its members. We believe that the committee has been a catalyst to engage community membership in conversations about our shared future. This has happened through workshops around the country, during AFC breakouts and presentations, and by contacting communities for names of people who share common interests.

The Freeing the Fire Committee believes that the work of the Federating Subcommittee was complete with the sending of the results of a survey to the Congregational leaders and with the lists of persons interested in common themes available for use. As a result the Subcommittee was disbanded.

The Transformation Task Force and the Implementation Task Force gave Freeing the Fire different ideas about the future:

- Include Freeing the Fire in the Commission on Charism Services
- Make one committee from Freeing the Fire and Spirit and Life
- Dissolve Freeing the Fire and Spirit and Life – leaving the new board free to form its own committees.

The committee planned for each of these possibilities. With the decision made to dissolve both committees, Freeing the Fire committee members encourage the commissions and the board to continue the task of encouraging our Franciscan communities to work together to **Free the Fire** for future generations.

We ask the new board to **Imagine the Possibilities:**

- ... **reaching through and beyond our individual charisms to embrace our Common Third Order Rule and Life;**
- ... **incarnating collectively the goodness and love present in all God's creation**
- ... **igniting our passion to effect systemic change in our world.**

We suggest that this can happen by continuing to ignite:

- The Flame of the Gospel**
- The Flame of our Franciscan Evangelical Identity**
- The Flame of our Global Community**
- The Flame of our Ecclesial Relationships.**

We on the Freeing the Fire Committee value the experience. We have learned much through our work and have great enthusiasm for the future.

FRANCISCAN MORNING AND EVENING PRAISE TASK GROUP

After many years of being in process, most of the aspects of preparing *Franciscan Morning and Evening Praise* for printing were completed in 2008. The Task Group which had been meeting regularly by conference call had their last meeting on June 23, 2008. The team of five Sisters of Tiffin, Ohio put

the final editing touches on the text portions of the prayer book in July 2008 — or so they thought! With the directive coming from the Vatican that the title “Yahweh” should not be used in liturgical prayer, permission was given by Sister Nancy Schreck, an author of *Psalms Anew*, to change the word “Yahweh” to “God” in most places throughout the book.

The music section of the book was the last to be completed. Obtaining copyright permissions to reprint some of the 171 hymns used in the book took a very long time. A music software program had to be found, and learned, to prepare some of the music for inclusion in the book.

Finally, indices, an ordo, and the Rule of the Third Order Regular were added to make the prayer book more user-friendly. Included with each prayer book will be an insert for use for the Canticle of Zechariah, the Canticle of Mary, the doxologies, and the chant tones.

The idea for a Franciscan book of prayer was introduced to the national board of the Federation in the year 2000. Nine years, not nine months (!), later Third Order Regular Franciscans and friends who gave of their time, talent, and treasure so that *Franciscan Morning and Evening Praise* could become a reality will welcome the book whose time has come.

We acknowledge those who served as Task Group members during the past year: Ellen Lamberjack OSF, Project Chair; Karen Marie Lanigan OSF; Stephanie McReynolds OSF; Mary Frances Seeley OSF; Virginia Welsh OSF; Ann Lyons FSSJ, liaison with the National Board. Final proofreading and editing of the book was done by Ellen Lamberjack OSF; Annette Langenderfer OSF; Antonia Rode OSF; Maureen Studer OSF; and Virginia Welsh OSF. A debt of gratitude is owed to Mark Levans, owner, and Deirdre Bakies, senior graphic designer, of M.L. Advertising & Design, LLC, Tiffin, Ohio for their professional expertise in preparing the book for publication. By their regularly conferring with Otto Mezei and Lou Nasto of Courier Companies, Inc., the book was ready to be printed in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Tribute to

DIANE MARIE COLLINS OSF

Franciscan Federation President

2008 – 2009

*“Write down the vision clearly upon the tablets,
so that one can read it readily.
For the vision still has its time, presses on to fulfillment,
and will not disappoint.”*

Habakkuk 2:2

During this past year of her Presidency, Diane Marie Collins has been called to be an effective instrument in our struggle to internalize the vision of the Franciscan Federation brought forth by the Transformation Task Force. She has brought the membership face to face with the implications of our commitment worked out by the Implementation Task Force for bringing forth new life. Filled with hope that we are moving forward in anxious yet joyful anticipation of what God has planned for the Franciscan Federation, Diane Marie has exhibited responsible leadership.

We take this opportunity to thank you for your:

- Capacity for openness
- Generosity in service
- Sense of responsibility
- Engagement in mutual exchange
- Ability to see hope in moments of darkness
 - Valuing collaboration
- Desire to bring the Gospel to the issues of our age through effective action

We remember Francis and Clare and all our Franciscan sisters and brothers who have gone before us and we ask that they remember you as you continue to walk this path of

“Mutual Love Generating a Future.”



FRANCISCAN FEDERATION

PO Box 29080 • Washington, DC 20017

202-529-2334 • Fax: 202-529-7016

Email: Franfed@aol.com • Web Site: www.Franfed.org

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