



The Canticle

JULY
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Voice of
The Community
of St. Francis,
Province of
The Americas

General Convention Special Issue

To Our Old Friends... and our New Ones,

This special issue of our newsletter is designed to be distributed at the 76th General Convention of the Episcopal Church in Anaheim, CA, July 2009. We are addressing ourselves to people interested in learning more about the Religious Life in the Episcopal Church, as it is lived out in the Franciscan tradition. We thought our old friends and regular subscribers would be interested in how we attempt to describe ourselves in four pages.



The Community of St. Francis (CSF) is a community of women who seek to live the Gospel life fervently in the Church and the world, after the example of St. Francis of Assisi. Francis was afire with the love of Christ which impelled him to live with an attitude of humble respect and love for all of creation. Inspired by his example, we strive to

find a contemporary urban expression of this inclusive spirituality in our daily life and ministry as CSF in the city of San Francisco, California. As Franciscan Sisters we are all drawn to Francis in his following in the footsteps of Jesus. We yearn for a deeper relationship with God. We seek justice and compassion for the poor and marginalized and we are concerned about the plight of Sister Earth.

CSF is part of the Society of St. Francis, a world-wide family of Franciscans in the Anglican Communion which includes Friars, Third Order members, Poor Clares and Associates. There are CSF Sisters in England, Wales, and Korea, as well as San Francisco

The Dalai Lama at Martin de Porres Soup Kitchen

On April 25 His Holiness the Dalai Lama spent the morning at Martins as the guest of honor at a special gathering of approximately 100 volunteers and guests. After helping serve several plates of pesto pasta, the Dalai Lama spoke about creating a home, being at home, feeling at home and shared that "You know, I'm homeless, too." He spoke about learning hospitality from his mother, who although poor, always welcomed friends, relatives, beggars and all who were less fortunate and fed them whatever she had in her kitchen. "I'm really happy for the opportunity to visit," he said. "Our lives depend on others. Me too. My life depends on others. You are still in human society, human community. Please feel happy and feel dignity."

In this photo Sr. Jean is shaking hands with the Dalai Lama while Barbara Collier, Director of Martin de Porres, looks on.



Inspired by Francis of Assisi



Our community was founded in England in 1905 and its first ministry was to the sick and the dying in the local parish, and to dock workers and their families. From the beginning, the community shared in the stresses and strains of the life of the poor, being continually faced with the challenge to live the Gospel in a particular time and place.

The Sisters came to the U.S. in 1974 and for thirty-five years, we have engaged in many types of ministry, but with special concern for the poor, the marginalized and the sick. We can be found in hospitals and nursing homes; among the homeless and those suffering from addictions; people with AIDS; teaching deacons and serving on diocesan commissions; providing spiritual direction and directing retreats. In all things we strive to be instruments of God's love after the example of Francis of Assisi.

Ministry in the church...



- * *Purple hair for Advent to educate the congregation about domestic violence;*
- * *Sacramental healing ministry;*
- * *Dressing the angels for the Christmas pageant.*

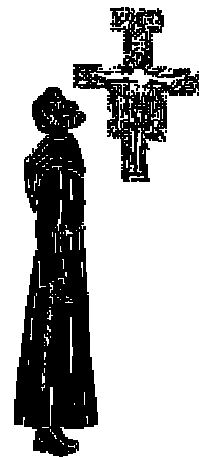
Ministry in the world...



- * *Massage for homeless people;*
- * *Hospital ministry;*
- * *Thanksgiving pies for guests at a soup kitchen;*
- * *Peace and justice advocacy.*

Through the vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience, we form a community which provides us with support in our life of prayer, study and work, and also creates a concrete context for the daily living out of our ideals as we strive through God's grace to love despite imperfections and failings. We live together in an ordinary city house and go out into the surrounding neighborhoods to minister. We share the work of house and garden. In everything we do, we recall Francis' openness to all of creation as brother and sister, as we live our life together in simplicity and joy.

For over 800 years Franciscans have been known for their active service to the poor, and certainly the needs which cry to us are very compelling. However, for us, as for St. Francis, this active service in the world begins and ends in prayer. We seek to deepen our relationship with God through a dialogue between the active life of preaching and serving and the life of prayer. This dialogue is aided by our round of daily offices, Eucharist, and times of corporate and private prayer.





*San Francisco,
California.
St. Francis House
and the garden.*

We welcome your participation!

Explore vowed membership

Entrance into religious life is a gradual process of mutual discernment between the aspirant and the community. An aspirant must be at least 21 years old, in good health and free from family, marital, and financial obligations. Women interested in exploring a Franciscan vocation are encouraged to write and to visit in order to get to know the sisters. In addition to individual visits, inquirers are invited to participate in "Consider Your Call," a week of discernment offered each summer. Aspirants who are accepted enter the community as postulants. After a postulancy of from three to 12 months, they become novices. The novitiate is normally three years, after which novices make First Profession of vows. Life Profession may come after a further three years. And this is just the beginning of a lifetime of contemplative action and continuous discernment of God's will in a sister's life in community.

Consider becoming an Associate

Associates are men and women from all walks of life who wish to share the mission and witness of the Society of St. Francis. Associates develop and follow a Rule of Life. They seek to exemplify the Franciscan values of humility, love and joy as they work to break down all barriers that segregate the human family and work to reflect that openness to all which was characteristic of Francis. Through prayer and gifts, Associates support the community. Secretary for Associates: Yvonne Hook, TSSF 717-993-3300 yvonnehook@hotmail.com www.ssf-associates.org

Join us in prayer

We joyfully share our silence and our liturgy at St. Francis House with guests, offering opportunities for individual retreats, home retreats, and welcoming guests to our weekday Eucharists.

Come for a visit

We welcome all who wish to share our worship, who need to talk, or want to "taste the flavor" of our life. We have facilities for short term guests who come to visit, experience our life, spend time in an urban retreat or enjoy rest and recreation in the city.

Contact Information

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*Becoming a novice (above)
Making Profession (below)*



THE COMMUNITY OF ST FRANCIS



FRANCISCAN
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CHURCH

General Convention

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