



The Minister's Message

Bearers of Peace (The Peace Award)

By Tom Bello, SFO
National Minister

On behalf of the NAFRA Peace Award Committee

"Mindful that they are bearers of peace which must be built up unceasingly, they should seek out ways of unity and fraternal harmony through dialogue, trusting in the presence of the divine seed in everyone and in the transforming power of love and pardon" (SFO Rule 19).

My brothers and sisters, your NAFRA Peace Award Committee is making three requests to you:

First, we would like each fraternity in the United States, locally, regionally and nationally, to pray and work with renewed Spirit from our Risen Lord Jesus Christ for Peace: Peace in our hearts, Peace in our families, Peace in our Church, Peace in our fraternities, Peace in our world, all for the glory of God. Please pray and work for that Peace that only our Lord Jesus can bring!

Second, we would like each fraternity in the United States, locally and regionally, to consider giving some Peace Recognition to a worthy recipient of its own choosing. This Peace Recognition may be a letter from the Minister of the fraternity thanking this individual for working for Peace in the fraternity, in the parish, in the community. You might invite this person to break bread together in Peace at a local restaurant. You might write an article in your fraternity or regional newsletter or send this article to TAU-USA. Anything you might do to recognize those who work for Peace furthers our Lord's message of Peace.

Third, we would like each fraternity in the United States, locally and regionally, to consider making a nomination to us, the NAFRA Peace Award Committee for a recipient to receive the 2010 NAFRA Peace Award at the NAFRA Gathering in Arizona in October 2010.

You might click on or insert into your Web browser the following eight-and-a-half-minute YouTube discussion that I offered at NAFRA 2009 to explain the NAFRA Peace

Award:

<http://www.youtube.com/secularfranciscans>.

We would prefer that fraternities, local or regional, make these nominations, but nominations by individual Secular Franciscans will be accepted. Nominations may be submitted in hard copy or email to any of the members of the Committee: La Verna Regional Minister and former Chair of the Peace Award Committee Ken Beattie

(beatiesfo@aol.com); National Secretary Jan Parker (jansfo@yahoo.com); former Mother Cabrini Regional Minister and current FAN Area Commissioner Stephanie Sormane (stefsfo@sbcglobal.net); or to me directly (Tom Bello, SFO/ 1710 Chesterbrook Vale Ct./McLean, VA 22101-3244 or (tbellosfo@gmail.com).

Our firm deadline is July 1, 2010. Please act NOW.

A nomination is not complicated or time-consuming. It needs only three parts: one, the name of the possible recipient; two, reasons why this person should be considered; three, the name of the person or group making the nomination.

As you will be able to read in the Guidelines and discern from the full list below of the past Peace Award recipients, each fraternity has great freedom of choice in their nomination for the NAFRA Peace Award.

Here are the Guidelines:

"A nominee should have made significant efforts in the generally defined area of Peace. Current activities would carry more weight than past activity; that is, a nominee exhibiting current Peace activity will have more weight over a nominee who displayed activity a few years ago. In order to prevent any scandal, the nominee should be of known good moral character.

As this is a National award, nominees who reside in the United States or U.S. Territories would have more weight than nominees from other parts of the world. Nominees need not be Franciscan or Catholic. Nominees should not be political, nor carry an agenda."

A list of past recipients includes Ralph Bunche (1954); Archbishop Richard J. Cushing (1957); Rev. Martin L. King, Jr. (1963); Mother Teresa of Calcutta (1974); Archbishop Helder Camara (1975); Archbishop Joseph L. Bernadin (1976); Anwar Sadat (1980); Pope John Paul II (1986); James Flickinger, sfo (2000); Dr. Anthony Lazzara, sfo (2007); Marie Dennis, sfo (2008); Don Ryder, sfo (2009).

As you can see, Egyptian President Anwar Sadat, for one example, was neither American, Catholic nor Franciscan. However, since 2000, the NAFRA Peace Award has gone to an SFO residing in the United States.

If your fraternity has made a nomination before that was not recognized, please consider making that nomination again.

With many worthy Peacemakers in the world, one nomination may not be enough to bring proper and deserved recognition.

Let us pray: "Lord Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace, please bless our small efforts to be bearers of Your Peace, the Peace which the world cannot give."

Thanks for all you do to pray and work for Peace. Let us always pray for one another.