

Sharing The Vision

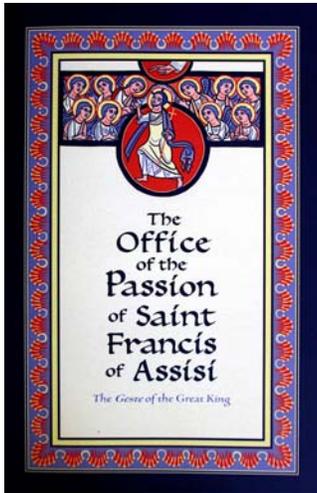
NAFRA Regional Executive Council Updates

by Jan Parker, National Secretary

Praying as Francis Prayed

“We should sing our prayer! Francis loved to sing!” When Rob Breen made this suggestion, I couldn’t have agreed more. We were at our March 2013 NEC meeting in St. Louis and Rob, Kent Ferris and I were brainstorming about the upcoming summer Confab. Yes, we should sing! And our prayer should be, as Rob stated passionately, *totally Franciscan*. What immediately came to my mind was a prayer written by St. Francis himself — *The Office of the Passion*..

I was introduced to the Office of the Passion a few years ago by a group of OFS brothers and sisters in Rolla, MO. How well I remember their prayer time! It was so joyful and ended with a strong, “So be it. So be it. Amen!” Afterwards, their minister turned to me and said, “We just don’t ever want to miss any of these delicious words!” This was my first knowledge of the “delicious words” of this office composed by our holy father Francis and sung by him seven times a day.



The book used in Rolla was a red hardcover entitled *The Geste of the Great King*. A later edition of this book has a more colorful cover and is called *The Office of the Passion of Saint Francis of Assisi*. No matter the title or edition, this little book is a treasure. One of its many wonderful features is an in-depth commentary that contains the literal translation, faithful to

Francis’ original prayers. This working text is a tool for understanding the spirituality of St. Francis, for example, how he uses certain phrases from Scripture to highlight what is most dear to his heart. Learning more about this little office helped me feel very close to Francis as I prayed it. What a gift to “pray as Francis prayed!”

We did, indeed, sing our prayer at the Confab, using the *Office the Passion*. and we will pray it again at our 2013 NAFRA Chapter; we will have books for every-

one to use and also available for purchase. This book and an accompanying CD are also available through Tau Publishing in Phoenix, Ariz. (602-625-6183).

National Commissions and Committees

Each September, in preparation for Chapter, our national Commissions and Committees submit reports summarizing their accomplishments and future goals. These reports are sent to the Regional Ministers and are available to any OFS member by request. Our Commissions and Committees are ultimately established to help us live the OFS Rule. They serve us all — nationally, regionally and locally — providing structures, resources and encouragement in their respective areas. The three national commissions, focus on Formation, Youth, and Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation. Our committees are varied and vital, and include Computer, Ecumenical/Interfaith, Fraternal Life and Joint Committee on Franciscan Unity. This year we are especially excited about four new committees set up to address national priorities: Task Force on Spiritual Assistance, Communications, Vocations, and Development. Aside from these groups, there are individuals appointed to serve in the areas of Archives, Historian, Minister of Vocations, Public Relations and *TAU-USA*. Praise God for the many individual brothers and sisters who commit hours of time and energy, often on a weekly basis, to help our Order grow and thrive! If you have a question about our Commissions and Committees, or would like to see any of their reports please contact me at jansfo@yahoo.com or call 636-734-9979.

National Executive Council Meetings are scheduled for Oct. 12-15, 2013, in Kansas City and February 6-9, 2014, in Portland, Ore.

Future dates to keep in mind:

2014 Summer Seminar on “Spiritual Assistance” - July 10-14 in Loretto, Penn.

2014 NAFRA Chapter – Oct. 21-26 in Lake Dallas, Texas.

An up-to-dated 2012 version of *Essential Documents of the Secular Franciscan Order* is now available from Smoky Valley Printing.