

January 2008

Apostolic Action Newsletter

Mother Cabrini Region of the Secular Franciscan Order



A Call to Action

Yesterday, I received a letter from Tom Monaghan, the founder of Domino's Pizza. Perhaps you did, too. It is a very good letter, and his cause is a worthy one. One paragraph bears repeating:

"... when you're in Church, and someone puts a big check in the collection basket in front of you, do you put your money back in your pocket? Of course not. What they give has nothing to do with how your contribution can help the Church. That is the bottom line, and an important one."

Our 2006-2007 regional census says there are 749 Secular Franciscans in Northern Illinois. The several of you who regularly call me are but a small fraction, and I appreciate you. But we cannot sit back and say, "Surely, with that many people in the region I do not have to do anything. Surely, enough of the others are acting to bring our Catholic values into the world so I need not go out of my way to do so."

We are asked to put something - even just a very little, according to our ability - into the collection basket at each meeting. This is part of the guidelines our fraternities follow. I am asking you to add another - that each and every one of us do something every month to bring Catholic Culture, to bring the teaching of the Magisterium, to our community. I am calling you to stop thinking that enough of the others are acting on our behalf. I want everyone to stand up for what we professed and be witnesses to the Truth. I want all of us to stand up and make the world a better place.

How? Write to your representatives. Help a Catholic organization. Join one of our fraternities' events. Talk to your neighbors about issues. Bring a friend to a fraternity meeting. Bring a friend to a fraternity event. I'm sure you can think of more to do.

What if you're one of the 136 shut ins? How about fasting and praying?

DO NOT go see this movie

shared by Pat Williams, SFO

There was a new children's movie out in December called "The Golden Compass". The movie has been described as "atheism for kids" and is based on the first book of a trilogy entitled "His Dark Materials" that was written by Phillip Pullman. Pullman is a militant atheist and secular humanist who despises C. S. Lewis and the "Chronicles of Narnia". His motivation for writing this trilogy was specifically to counteract Lewis' symbolisms of Christ that are portrayed in the Narnia series.

While "The Golden Compass" movie itself may seem mild and innocent, the books are a much different story. In the trilogy, a young streetwise girl becomes enmeshed in an epic struggle to ultimately defeat the oppressive forces of a senile God. Another character, an ex-nun, describes Christianity as "a very powerful and convincing mistake." In the final book, characters presenting Adam and Eve eventually kill God, who at times is called YAHWEH. Each book in the trilogy gets progressively worse regarding Pullman's hatred of Jesus Christ.

"The Golden Compass" is set to premier on December 7, during the Christmas season, and will probably be heavily advertised. Promoters hope that unsuspecting parents will take their children to see the movie, that they will enjoy the movie, and that the children will want the books for Christmas.

Please consider a boycott of the movie and the books. Also, pass this information along to everyone you know. This will help to educate parents, so that they will know the agenda of the movie.

If you didn't get the letter and want to know what Tom Monaghan is doing, check out <http://www.avemaria.edu>

SFO member receives award:

Daniel Willenborg, SFO, member of St. Anthony Fraternity (Joliet) received the Project Pride Award from the Joliet/Will County Project Pride. This is a non for profit which has as its mission, “*Promote a positive image of the Joliet/Will County and its people. Engage residents and organizations to make their neighborhoods better. Partner with anyone or organization working toward the same end.*” Mr. Willenborg received this award for his SFO Ecology work in Joliet and also for his work on ShareFest.

Catholic Alternative to Amnesty International

Following the decision by Amnesty International to expand its original remit as a charity focussing on the plight of prisoners of conscience around the world, to campaigning on abortion issues, thousands of Catholics and Christians of other denominations are withdrawing their support. Christians Against Torture (ACAT) offers one alternative.

“ACAT is a registered charity and a Body in Association with Churches Together in Britain and Ireland. It is affiliated to the International Federation Against Torture, based in Paris. It campaigns against torture, the threat of torture, disappearances and extra judicial executions. This is a narrower remit than Amnesty.

“It seems sad that Catholics who have been active in Amnesty and are committed to human rights should feel unable to continue with their campaigning. Their commitment is urgently needed in today’s world. ACAT would welcome inquiries from those interested in joining its campaign.

“For more information contact Eleanor Newland e-mail uk.acat@gmail.com” From Independent Catholic News

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your comments and suggestions are welcome!
The opinions expressed here are my own. I hope you will be encouraged to say a prayer, write a letter, volunteer to help and... make a difference!

Justice, Peace & the Integrity of Creation

The commissions are changing, and are yet the same. From the very beginning, the Franciscan Orders have been called to action. In the book *Social Ideals of St. Francis*¹ it is written, “As against the idleness of the townward drifting hundreds, Francis had room in his order for nobody except who was willing to work in one way or another. The emphasis appears in all his rules of life as well in his Testament.”² This emphasis can be found in every rule until the 1881 Rule, which emphasized interior life and personal sanctification. But our Rule, since 1978, has called us back to our roots, where action is fully part of our Franciscan charism.

We hear over and over, “Gospel to life, life to Gospel” but what does this mean? It means we are called to balance the interior and the exterior. We are to be doing as much public action as praying. And our Rule and Constitution bear this out.

So, what’s new? The name of the Apostolates are changing to make a seamless garment between the Franciscan Orders. By using the name ‘Peace, Justice, and Integrity of Creation’ the terminology will be the same across the Franciscan Orders. In order to be more visible, to create more good in the world, we will be working more closely with each other. The SFO will not be losing any of their apostolates: We’ll still talk about Work and Family especially as all the apostolates overlap in action. Each of us is but one small creature created by God. It is only in working together that we can get anything done.

In this New Year, more of the news about this will be made available. Pray for the process, practice your actions, and watch for news.

¹ Meyer, James, OFM *Social Ideals of St. Francis*. B Herder Book Co. St. Louis 1948 p. 38

² *Rule of I Order*, ch V, p. 9; *Testament*, p. 14