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# FST NEWS IDINGS

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*of Peace and Every Good to You*

A Monthly Newsletter of the Franciscan School of Theology

Volume 1, Issue 5

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## BUILDING BRIDGES

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B E T W E E N E A S T A N D W E S T

Little did Kenan Osborne, O.F.M. (Professor Emeritus in Systematical Theology) realize the impact a leisurely visit to China would have on his life and work. During his 1990 sabbatical, Kenan took a holiday in Hong Kong and at his travel agent's recommendation, decided to make a side trip to mainland China, visiting Beijing, Xian, one of the earliest capitals, and Guilin. When he returned home, he began making plans to return: "I have to go again ... the culture, the history, the beauty." Kenan has frequented China almost every year since 1990, pursuing research and participating in conferences and lectures at several universities there. He has also visited Korea, Vietnam, Thailand, Singapore, and Taiwan.

Last summer, Kenan was invited to come and speak at the University of Beijing, one of the most prestigious universities in China. He was hosted by the Department of Anthropology, who asked him to present on "The Philosophy of Western Christian Religion." Then, he went on to the University of Sichuan in Chengdu, located in the Himalayas. Their program in Religious Studies has been in existence for 10 years and focuses

primarily on Taoism and Tibetan Buddhism. The University also recently created an Institute for Christian Studies. Kenan met with professors and students in both programs at the University of Sichuan in the hopes of setting up

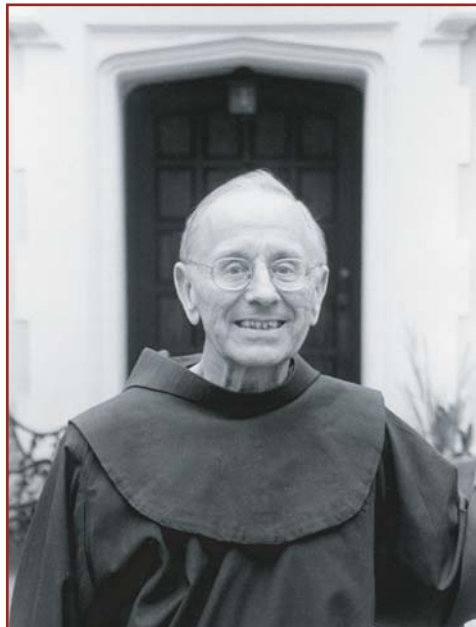


Photo by Art Martinez

a research exchange program between GTU and the University of Sichuan.

Through the exchange program, doctoral students and professors from the University of Sichuan would be able to come over to GTU, and professors and doctoral students from GTU, in turn, would be able to conduct research at the

University of Sichuan. Kenan has met with the GTU Dean about the program, receiving his support and approval. At the end of March, Kenan will be returning to the University of Sichuan to meet with their Dean and President. Following his visit, a professor from the University of Sichuan will be coming over to meet with the GTU Dean and President.

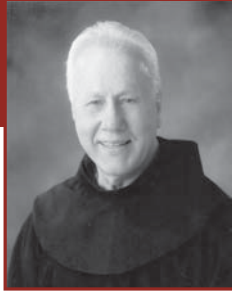
In addition to teaching, developing the research exchange program, and giving talks to parishes, universities, clergy, and religious communities, Kenan has recently completed two books. The first is *A Theology of Church from the Franciscan Theological Perspective* and was published by Orbis, January 2005. The second book addresses the issue of ordination and ministry within a global perspective. It belongs to a series of books on theology in global perspectives that is being edited by Peter Phan, a Vietnamese professor at Georgetown University. Kenan is also presently working on a major revision of his book, *The Theology and History of the Permanent Diaconate*, which he hopes to have completed by the end of January 2005.

Kenan hopes to remain on the FST

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# From the President



Dear Alums and Friends,

There is a wonderfully winsome and warmly welcoming friar whose office is next door to mine. Every time he passes by my office he stops and greets me with a profound bow and says with genial mock-seriousness, "Greetings, Herr President," or with some other honorific title. Like me, he is short and packed with energy; but that is where the comparison stops, for his intellect and other accomplishments soar beyond mine. Our alums know the friar I am talking about. He is that eminent professor, engaging lecturer, prolific author, and prodigiously gifted person whom we know and love very deeply, who is an institution in himself; Fr. Kenan Osborne.

Kenan and the Franciscan School of Theology are interchangeable terms. Kenan has been teaching here since the beginning, in 1968, and was for a number of years FST's president and academic dean. His Franciscan, clerical, and lay progeny, all students, are about as numerous as the descendants promised by God to Abraham. To go through one of Kenan's classes on Christology is to experience a mind-clearing excursus on profound mysteries of faith where traditional beliefs couched in archaic language and cultural presuppositions are historically analyzed, critically assessed, and contemporarily reformed to deepen faith and open up a more expansive understanding of Jesus Christ. Kenan is not afraid to push the limits of language or the envelope, for that matter, to engage, to challenge, to have his students be "ready to give an explanation to anyone who asks [them] for a reason for [their] hope (2Pt 3:15)." And the explanation had better be good! Kenan has modeled this kind of mind and faith seeking understanding in his numerous publications. His books are legion. Now that he is 75, he is slowing down; he has only two books coming out this year! I told him last week, as I paid a neighborly visit to his scholarly enclave decorated with artifacts from around the world that I envied his ability to synthesize and write so clearly on the most complex theological issues.

In spite of this emeritus status, Kenan continues to teach a full load. Kenan is very much interested in the Far East. He has even lectures in China on theological issues. This semester he will be offering a unique course on Asian Christology, exploring an Eastern perspective on the mystery of Christ. At the same time, Kenan is on the core doctoral faculty of the Graduate Theological Union. Remarkably, he is always available to students. Retirement? Out of the question!

This year Kenan will celebrate 50 years as a priest. Next fall FST will sponsor a celebration to honor Kenan on a date yet to be announced. To give special meaning to that celebration and to preserve the incomparable legacy Kenan has left us with his teaching and writing, I would like to express my determination to complete the endowed Kenan B. Osborne Chair of Theology inaugurated over seven years ago by former president Fr. Bill Cieslak. At present there is \$332,000 in the endowment. We need a total of \$2 million to endow the Osborne Chair. At the appropriate time we will send out a special mailing to all alums, friends, and major donors for help in reaching this goal. This chair is only just and right to perpetuate the life's work of a friar priest who epitomizes the best of our Franciscan intellectual tradition which encompasses both research and teaching. Ad multos annos, most esteemed Kenan Osborne!

## Honor Roll

*On behalf of the faculty, students and staff, I want to express my sincerest thanks to all of you, our friends and benefactors who continue to show your support of our important ministry. Without your generosity we would not exist or continue to graduate full-time pastoral leaders for the Church.*

- Thank you W. J. Nicholson and family for your very generous gift in memory of Ruth Nicholson.
- I would also like to thank the following individuals for their giving to FST's Annual Fund:

Drs. John & Shelly Fichtenkort  
Ms. Susanne Sullivan  
Mr. Richard Capperella  
Dr. Mary Lyons  
Drs. Thomas & Susan Mitchell

- I would like to extend a very special thank you Gail Warden, FST Regent, for her generous gift to the Annual Fund and also hosting a social for potential FST donors at her home.
- Thank you to all of you at the Casa in Scottsdale, AZ for the warmth and generosity you extended to me and the Franciscan School.

*- Fr. Mario DiCicco, OFM*



*FST Tidings is published monthly for the FST community of friends, faculty, students and alumni/ae. Readers are encouraged to send items of interest, photos or news to Angie Brown at FST, 1712 Euclid Ave., Berkeley, CA 94709. Our phone is (510) 848-5232 or (800) 793-1FST. You are also welcome to email items of interest directly to Angie Brown at: [abrown@fst.edu](mailto:abrown@fst.edu). Please write "FST Tidings" in the subject line of your message. Remember to notify us when you change your address. You may send change of address information to: [info@fst.edu](mailto:info@fst.edu) and please write "Address Change" in the subject line of your message.*

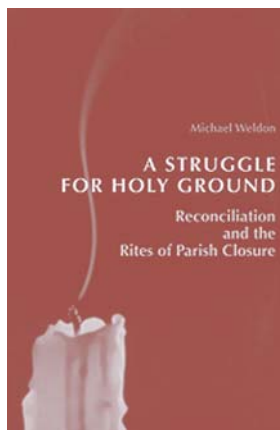
# Alumni/ae NEWS

**'00 Janet Mendoza-Stickmon**, recently published the book *Crushing Soft Rubies*. It is the memoir of Janet Mendoza-Stickmon a Filipino-African-American who is caught between the death of her parents and the desperate need to define herself not as an orphan, but as a strong woman who is willing to do whatever is necessary to ensure that her past does not become a barrier to her future. Janet, now a teacher and a married woman, leads us through the intense details of her story. From her childhood home being burned to the ground, the joys and conflicts with her Filipino family, seeking a connection to her African-American heritage, to the beautiful moment of her marriage, Janet navigates the rough waters of love, spirit, identity, and survival, maintaining a life filled with faith and wonder.



Janet is a teacher, writer, and spoken word artist whose work has influenced hundreds of adolescents and adults over the last ten years. She holds a Master's of the Arts Degree in Religion and Society from the Franciscan School in Berkeley and is now working on a Master's of the Arts Degree in Ethnic Studies at San Francisco State University. She currently lives in Oakland, CA with her husband, writer and performer, Shawn Taylor and teaches at a high school in Richmond, CA.

**'79 Michael Weldon, OFM**, after finishing the Doctor of Ministry program at Catholic Theological Union (2002) in Chicago, was approached by the Liturgical Press to publish his thesis project, *A Struggle for Holy Ground: Reconciliation and the Rites of Parish Closure* (released December 2004). The consolidation and closure of parishes across the United States has become a fact of contemporary Catholic life. Responding to such an event is often traumatic. How do lay leaders allow their parish to heal when an approved ritual format does not exist? Through the voice of experience and local diocesan offices,



Michael has created a guide to the reconciliation process and the rites of parish closures in *A Struggle for Holy Ground*.

Michael graduated from FST in 1979 with a Master of Divinity degree and went on to get his Master of Arts degree from the Graduate Theological Union in 1983. He currently serves on the faculty of the Sacred Heart School of Theology in Hales Corners, WI along with Fr. Raul Gomez, SDS (another FST alum) who is the Vice Rector. Michael says, "With some pride, we are taking the FST style of theological education into new venues."

**'88 Mary V. Heavey**, a member of St. Raymond's Parish in Dublin, passed away Saturday, January 22, 2005 after a long illness. She graduated from FST with an MTS degree. She is survived by her husband Tom.

## Building Bridges, continued from cover

faculty, even teaching on a part-time basis and continuing his writing endeavors. He affirms that, "it is a joy to be teaching at FST, where the spirit of St. Francis and the Gospel of our Lord are not just taught, but lived." Kenan's influence on FST has been great. Many persons across the country and the world have been touched by Kenan's dynamic and vibrant passion as he brings the Church's mission to life. ■

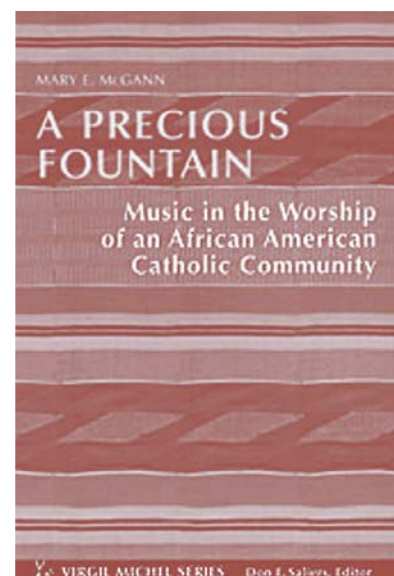
-Monica Lowy



**The Los Angeles Religious Educational Congress, "Awake to Grace", February 18-20, 2005.** If you live in the Los Angeles area, drop by and visit us at our booth. The Congress is a great way for you to find out more about the Franciscan School of Theology as well as meet representatives from the school. We would love to see you.

***A Precious Fountain: Music in the Worship of an African American Catholic Community***, By Mary E. McGann, RSCJ Assistant Professor of Liturgy and Music was released December 2004. FST will celebrate the release of Mary's book on February 17, 2005. We will begin with Morning Prayer in the African American Style at 9:40 a.m. with refreshments immediately following. There will also be presentations and a book signing from 10:50 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

For more information on Mary's book or if you would like to attend the celebration please contact Angie Brown at the Franciscan School. (510) 848-5232.





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 Saturday, April 16, 2005

Inauguration of  
 Fr. Mario DiCicco  
 as the  
 Sixth President  
 and Rector of the  
 FRANCISCAN SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

Symposium celebrating the  
 Franciscan Intellectual Tradition  
 in the morning  
 Convocation in the afternoon.  
 Reception following

The Franciscan School of Theology  
 invites you to join the  
**PILGRIMAGE to FRANCISCAN ITALY**

**June 1 - June 11, 2005**

*When we travel as pilgrims,  
 we go not for recreation,  
 but for re-creation*

On this pilgrimage, lead by **Bill Short, OFM** and **Ramona Miller, OSF**, you will learn the meaning of the Franciscan holy places you visit and will be lead in prayer at each one. The enjoyment of these beautiful places, along with the Italian culture, countryside, and cuisine will create memories for a lifetime.

**For more information please contact:**  
 Franciscan Pilgrimage Programs  
 9230 Highland Park Avenue  
 PO Box 321490  
 Franklin, WI 53132  
 tel. (414) 427-0570; fax (414) 427-0590

*Holy Land Pilgrimage*

**May 29 - June 9 & September 17-28, 2005**

Led by  
**Fr. Mario DiCicco, OFM**  
 President & Rector of the Franciscan School of Theology

*Enrich your faith, deepen your knowledge of Holy Scripture and increase your love for Jesus the Lord on this journey that has faith as its motive and goal, reflecting the pilgrimage of one's life toward God.*

*Some may be concerned by the turmoil in the Holy Land and wonder about the safety of pilgrims. All situations are monitored and every precaution is taken to avoid danger. Fr. Mario has been going to the Holy Land with pilgrims for years. It is safe.*

**Land & Air from Chicago: \$2,595.  
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**\$320 Single Supplement. \$200 Tips & Taxes**

*For more information and a brochure please contact:*  
**Angie Brown**  
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 1712 Euclid Avenue, Berkeley, CA 94709  
 Phone: (510) 848-5232 Fax: (510) 549-9466  
 Email: [MarioD@aol.com](mailto:MarioD@aol.com)

**All proceeds benefit FST**

**FST EVENTS**

*Saturday, February 26, 2005*  
 FST will honor Fr. Joseph Chinnici OFM as he retires as Academic Dean with a Vespers Service at the Pacific School of Religion and Reception following at FST. For more information or if you would like to attend contact Joyce McConeghey at (510)848-5232 x 41 or [jmcccon@fst.edu](mailto:jmcccon@fst.edu).

*March 21-25, 2005*  
 Spring Break. FST administrative offices will be open.

*Thursday, March 24, 2004*  
 Holy Thursday. The FST offices will close at noon.

*Friday, March 25, 2005*  
 FST will be closed for Easter until Tuesday, March 29, 2005.