

THE THIRD ORDER:

Australian Province Newsletter

Vol. 8.2

Francistide 2008

From the Minister Provincial.

Dear sisters and brothers

Happy Saint Francis Day! I pray that the year ahead will nurture and inspire you on your Franciscan journey.

The coming year is a big one for us as Franciscans. **2009 will mark 800 years of the Franciscan movement.** Our Province will celebrate it in two ways. Firstly, with the wider Franciscan family of Australia we will welcome an inspiring speaker **Sister Ilia Delio OSF** as our guest in May.

Secondly, at our General Chapter and Conference in Sydney, we will launch the **history of our Province**, which Denis Woodbridge TSSF is preparing for us. In addition to being the 800th year of Franciscanism, **2009 is also the 50th birthday of our Province.** The Conference theme is Reconciliation, Environment, Peace, so we will be also inaugurating the Province's commission for Justice, Peace, and Integrity of Creation (JPIC).

So, some dates to mark in your diary or 2009 planner:

SISTER ILIA DELIO OSF

May 5-7 **Sydney** May 14-16 **Melbourne**
May 9-12 **Brisbane** May 18-19 **Perth**

Watch out for more details for each city.

GENERAL CHAPTER AND CONFERENCE

July 16 – 19:

Venue: New College, UNSW, Randwick.

What happened in the year 1209 that was so important? Francis went with brothers from Assisi to seek the Pope's permission to "preach penance". He had already placed himself under Bishop Guido's protection as a "brother of penance". Francis makes it clear what he means by a life of penance. The "first draft" of his Letter to All Christians, (in

our Source Documents at the back of our Manual), was written primarily to those who had chosen, like him, to live penitence.

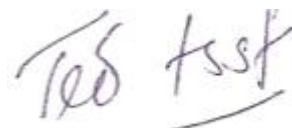
For Francis, the life of penitence meant Christian people should:

1. **Love God;**
2. **Love neighbour;**
3. **Put away as best we can those things that tempt us away from God;**
4. **Be fed by the sacraments of the church, especially Eucharist and Penance;**
5. **Bear the fruits that come from living this life.**

Now he asks Pope Innocent III for permission to encourage others to live his life, to preach. You and I are tertiaries partly because we have heard this preaching. The five things Francis asks us to do are kindergarten Christianity. They are basics of our faith. But though each may be simple to say, Francis challenges us to do them, *really* do them.

From this movement sprang the First Order (the Order of Friars Minor), the Second Order (the Poor Clares), and our Third Order, originally called The Brothers and Sisters of Penitence.

Between now and next Francistide, let us resolve to live more fully the life of penitence to which we are called: to more deeply love God, to more practically love our neighbour, to become more self-aware and so deal more vigorously with our sinfulness, to open ourselves to be nourished by the Bread and Wine and the assurance of God's forgiveness, and to rejoice in the growth in grace that comes from living this life.



Peace and joy,

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Welcome back:

Thank you to Archbishop Roger Herft of Perth who has agreed to continue as our Bishop Protector from April 2008.

Regional Minister NSW-A

Congratulations to **Esme Parker** who has been elected Regional Minister NSW-A, to replace Philip Thirlwell, who has resigned for family reasons. Please keep both in your prayers.

✠ *May they rest in peace and rise in glory.*

Thory Bonsey tssf (former Minister Provincial)
Joan Russell tssf

Rosy White (daughter of Susan and David White tssf)

We give thanks for their lives and ask God to surround their loved ones with His love.

*Congratulation to those **Elected to Profession** by Chapter 2008*

QLD B: Mary Birch, Gloria Malouf-Marsh,
Valma Paradies
NSW-A Michelle Blondel
NSW B: Robert Shepherd, Sharon Dyson
VIC/TAS: Allan Glenn, Joy Bartlett,
Malcolm Halford
SA: *Readmission* – Moira Somerton
WA: Glenda Spry
DOGURA Fr Faithful Arewa

A different type of Globalisation

By Helen Granoswki tssf. Regional Minister – Victoria/Tasmania

When I mentioned to a friend that I was going to a conference about globalisation, I had not even finished the sentence before she jumped in with cries of protest about multinationals, exploitation of the Third World and the diminishment of the planet.

So I had to explain. This was not about globalisation in the economic sense but quite the reverse. 'Globalisation for the Common Good Initiative' was founded by Oxford Economics don, Dr Kamran Mofid, who saw where Economics was leading and decided to reverse the trend. And so began a series of international conferences designed to draw together thinkers and people of

good will from all Faiths and nations to confront matters affecting global peace.

The Seventh Annual International Conference of GCG was held at Trinity College, University of Melbourne, June 30 - 3 July 2009, with the topic "From the Middle East to Asia Pacific: Arc of Conflict or Dialogue of Cultures and Religions?" It was organised and supported by a wide range of Universities and religious bodies, major players being La Trobe's Centre for Dialogue and the Victorian Multicultural Commission. There were 235 participants, including those from 15 overseas countries.

The opening address was delivered by Justice Michael Kirby on "People of the Book -

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Reconciling religious fundamentals with universal human rights." Justice Kirby asserted that the greatest gift of humans is the ability to love. Rational thought is only second. The basic metaphor for human rights is 'Human beings are made in the image of God'.

The following days were made up of keynote addresses and a wide selection of alternate sessions, sixty-one papers in all. Keynotes ranged from analyses of current world situations such as Prof Amin Saikal of ANU on "Afghanistan and Iraq: Between democracy and radical Islamism" and Dr Ali Khoshroo from Iran on "Secular religious dialogue and controversy" to presentations urging greater personal commitment to dialogue and understanding.

Dr Peter Carnley, former Anglican Primate of Australia, in "Ecumenism, other faiths and the peace of the world" asserted that Ecumenism is not an optional extra. Church unity is a necessary step towards the broader goal of human unity. Truth is essential for dialogue but it must be recognised that 'absolute truth is God's truth' and that there are diverse ways of understanding God's truth. The one essential ingredient for dialogue is humility.

A speaker of this type who excited me most was Rabbi Melissa Weintraub, Chairperson of 'Encounter' from the US. Her talk, entitled "Warriors, prophets, peacemakers and disciples", called us to action in countering religious hatred and violence. "'These' *and* 'those' are words of the dynamic and living God", she said. Giving examples of the work of 'Encounter' in Israel and the West Bank, she cited Bp Gene Robinson's call to "Wage reconciliation, not war". We must be exegetical warriors, battling for deeper meanings in our texts in line with the God whose nature is

steadfast love. We must be 'shomri shalom', guardians for peace.

Other notable speakers included Prof. James Haire (Charles Sturt Univ), Prof. Chaiwat Satha-Anand (Thammasat Univ, Bangkok) and Jeremy James (Co-Chair Aust National Dialogue of Christians, Muslims and Jews.)

A panel of particular interest to overseas participants was entitled "Showcase Victoria, Multicultural Policy in Action". Moderated by Bruce Meagher (Director of Strategy and Communication for SBS), panelists included representatives of various religious and community organisations in Victoria, including the Police and Department of Education.

To offset the largely masculine presence of participants and speakers, a special panel, "Women and the Interfaith Movement: Women's Issues, Women's Roles", allowed a variety of perspectives from Aboriginal to Zen to be shared.

During the proceedings, a book of Essays from the 6th Annual CGC Conference in Istanbul was launched and notice given of the 2009 Conference at Loyola University Chicago. Entitled "Globalization: the Challenge to America", the Conference will focus primarily on a critique of the role of the United States in the current dynamic of world affairs.

Perhaps the most lasting benefit of any such International Conference is the informal discussion over mingling and meals and the friendships and networking that results. Trinity College campus with the associated program of performances and excursions were ideal settings for the aims of the Founder and his Initiative to be experienced.

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PILGRIMAGE TO ASSISI

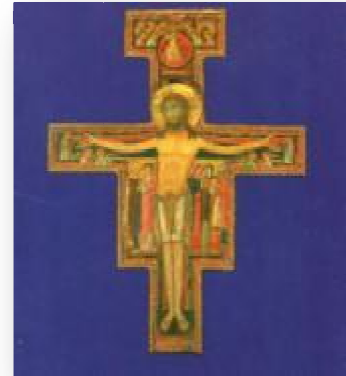
Denis Woodbridge tssf

Mission Travel in Melbourne makes arrangements for groups visiting holy places in Europe and the Middle East. Under their auspices fourteen of us set off in May for a pilgrimage to Assisi. In the group were four members of the Third Order SSF, including our leader, John Davis, the Vicar of St Peter's Eastern Hill, who over many years has acquired a wide knowledge of Francis and of the Franciscan holy places.

Our party came together in Florence, where for four days we acted mainly as conventional tourists, having no encounter with our patron saint except for the hour some of us spent in the splendid church of Santa Croce, which was built on the spot where the first friars began their mission to the people of Florence. By now we were ready to become pilgrims in the true sense of the word, hoping that a full week in Assisi might work its magic. Those of you who in the past have been fortunate enough to have the time and the money to go on such a journey always testify to the power of Francis's own place to stir the spiritual imagination.

Our itinerary had been well planned, but in the event it did not include some of the best experiences that fortuitously awaited us. It turned out that the day we arrived in Assisi was the Feast of Corpus Christi, the Solemnity of our Lord's Body and Blood. Early in the evening (because of Summer Time it was still broad daylight) we attended Vespers in the Basilica of St Clare, where also we could gaze upon the actual crucifix from which the Lord spoke to St Francis, it having been moved there from

San Damiano. Later we went to San Rufino, the Cathedral of Assisi, for the celebratory Mass and veneration of the Blessed Sacrament. From there we were excited to join the immense crowd of townspeople and visitors and take our place in the colourful procession of the Blessed Sacrament down the hill to the Basilica of St Francis. This was traditional Catholic ceremony and devotion at its very best.



Each of our days in Assisi was set in the framework of our own Anglican and Franciscan times of prayer. The morning's program began with a Eucharist in the Anglican church of St Leonard, part of a medieval building with a medieval fresco of the Crucifixion scene on the wall behind the altar. Our host was Br Thomas Anthony SSF, the Anglican representative in Assisi, and it was a pleasure too to talk again with Br Daniel SSF, who was spending a few months at the Anglican centre. Then in the evening before dinner we came together in the hotel meeting room to say the Third Order office and to reflect on the events of the day. I should explain that our main hotel, the Hotel dei Priori, was perfectly situated, just off the central piazza of the town. Around this open space are public buildings and a variety of shops and restaurants; also the imposing two thousand year old Temple of

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Minerva which later became a church. A few of us had separate quarters, in the Alexander Hotel, close to the Chiesa Nuova and what was once the home of the Bernadone family.

I won't describe in detail all the places we visited; most of you know them from your own visits or from books about Francis. Our first objective was to return by day to the Basilica of St Francis, down that very steep hill. We were fortunate to have in our group David Steadman, whose professional career has been in the study of the various ages of European art and who is now a deacon in the Episcopal Church of the USA. Whenever we went into a church or a picture gallery David helped us to see in the frescoes and other paintings, the sculpture and the mosaics what we would never have discerned on our own – sotto voce, so as not to incur the wrath of the official guardians. At the Basilica we contemplated Giotto's famous frescoes in literally a new light when we made our third visit there on the Saturday night to hear a performance of Mozart's Requiem presented by the Symphony Orchestra and Choir of Modlinger in Austria. For the benefit of the audience the lighting in the Basilica was rather brighter than is usually allowed, so we saw details in the frescoes not apparent before!

During the week some of us tested our legs by making first the climb up to the Rocca Maggiore, the ancient fortress above the town, and then proceeding warily up and

down the rough-hewn stone staircases inside the fort. We all went to the Carceri and then to San Damiano to see the very small and simple rooms where Clare and her sisters lived and the little garden where Francis composed the first stanzas of the Canticle of the Creatures . From San Damiano we travelled along the road across the plain to the Portiuncula,

stopping briefly along the way at Rivo Torto and then at the chapel which marks the place where Francis embraced the leper. And so to St Mary of the Angels, to that grandiose Basilica, rather controversially built in the 16th century to protect the small church where Francis and the brothers used to pray.



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Tuesday brought another surprise. Some of us went by minibus to La Verna, the place of retreat given to Francis by Count Orlando (the only property the original brothers deemed it right actually to own), the place where Francis received the stigmata. Along the way were beautiful views of the Umbrian and Tuscan countryside, first of fields still a lush green after an apparently wet winter with patches of bright red provided by the omnipresent poppies and then there was the ascent into the wooded hills. Our trip took over two hours; how long and tiring must have been the journey of Francis and his companions? When we arrived at the summit we saw another group of pilgrims, not just any pilgrims, but by the profession crosses many were wearing identified as fellow members of the Third Order SSF. They explained that they had come from the north east of England and from the borderlands of England and Scotland. Graciously they invited us to accompany them on the tour of the site and with them to hear the commentary of their guide. We marvelled at the steepness of the place. Francis must have been more agile than we were in order to clamber down to the tiny caves and rough shelters we could see from above the rock face. And then another unforeseen thrill as our British soul mates invited us to join them for the Eucharist they had received permission to celebrate in the chapel adjoining the main church.

The next day there was another excursion, to Perugia, which like so many Italian towns and cities was built on the top of a hill. The particular Franciscan connection was that this was where Francis was imprisoned for a year when as a young man he was

captured in the war between Perugia and Assisi. The actual place of his imprisonment is not known, but we could imagine how harsh it must have been from our looking at the dungeons that still exist well below the level of the city above. As frequently in Italy, the Cathedral in Perugia was closed for lunch, but we were not too upset. We had just spent an enthralling hour or so in the Galleria, which has on display a superb collection of the religious art of Umbria from the 13th to the 17th centuries. Again we profited greatly by the explanations given by David Steadman.



On return to Assisi we had time to visit the house of the American Sisters of the Atonement, where some of you may have stopped on previous visits. Fr John spoke warmly of their hospitality and he can give advice to anyone who in the future would like to book a place in their house. Thus ended our pilgrimage. On our bus trip towards Rome we did have a short stay in Orvieto, to see its famed Gothic Cathedral. Four days in the Eternal City were ahead of us, with the chance to see some of the splendours of ancient, medieval and Renaissance Rome, but in the main we were back to being ordinary tourists.

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The Hymn of Saint Francis

Praise to Most High for sun so warm,
for moon and stars so bright;
praise to Most High for all that form,
the universe of light!

Praise to Most High for sparkling dawn,
for sunset splashed with gold;
praise to Most High for rich red soils,
and surf majestic rolled.

Praise to Most High for rain and wind,
for making new things grow;
praise to Most High for Mother Earth,
and safe through death to go.

Praise to Most High for Jesus Christ,
His present power to heal;
praise to Most High that he was raised
and still his love falls real.

Praise to Most High for those we love,
and who are kind to us;
the gift of love we least deserve
is your sure sign to us.

Praise to Most High who shows the way:

love, joy, humility;
praise to Most High himself the
gift,
our kindly Trinity.

Can be sung to tunes with 8686metre
e.g. "Nativity"

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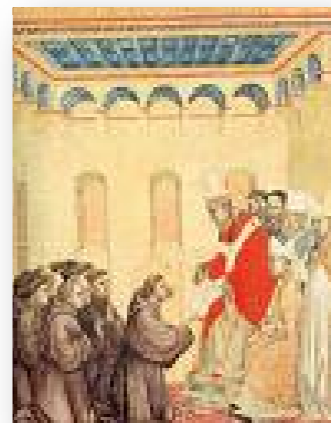
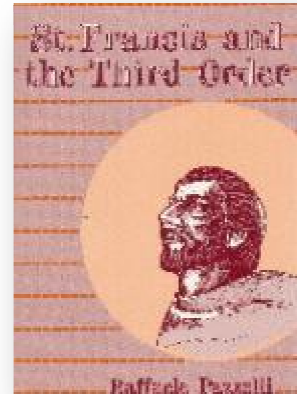
Special Book for 2009

Raffaele Pazzelli 1989 *St Francis and the Third Order*, Chicago, Ill.: Franciscan Herald Press.

Fr Raffaele, a Third Order Regular priest in the Roman Catholic Church, tells the story of the penitential movement in 12th and early 13th Century Italy, and St Francis' involvement in it.

This is the book that shows Francis asking the Pope for permission to "preach penance" in 2009.

The book is difficult to obtain. However, a copy belonging to the Province is circulating among the Regional Ministers. Ask to see it, and perhaps you, or someone else in your Region, will give a study day on it.



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Sister Ilia Delio



Visit to Australia May 2009

Sister Ilia has four topics for public lectures:

- (1) Christian life in an evolutionary world; and,
- (2) Living in a sacramental world.
- (3) Living the gospel life for vowed sisters and brothers.
- (4) Franciscan Prayer

Ilia Delio, OSF, is professor and chair of Spirituality Studies at Washington Theological Union where she also directs the Franciscan Center. She is reputed to be an excellent presenter. She is the author of *The Humility of God: A Franciscan Perspective*, and *Franciscan Prayer*, and *Clare of Assisi*, and most recently of *Care for Creation: A Franciscan Spirituality of the Earth* (2008).



Christ in Evolution

Sister Ilia's Itinerary (subject to change)

Wednesday May 6	FSA Conference
Thursday May 7	Baulkham Hills Sydney
Sunday May 9	Brisbane
May 11- 12	Brisbane
Thursday May 14	Melbourne
May 15 – 16	Yarra Theological Union, Melbourne
May 18	Perth
May 19	St George's Cathedral, Perth



Happy Feast Day!

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