

The Province of Asia-Pacific NEWSLETTER



AUSTRALIA, HONG KONG, MALAYSIA
PAPUA NEW GUINEA, THAILAND

Stigmata/Franciscan Edition



Dear brothers and sisters,
Greetings in our Lord Jesus Christ

I write to you on the Feast of the 'Stigmata of our blessed Brother Francis', who during his short but eventful life shone with the light of Christ as a perfect example for each of us to emulate.

Francis wrote: "Remember that when you leave this earth, you can take with you nothing you have received – only what you have given."

In his journey he remained focused upon the promise given to him in knowing that despite all his personal frailties God had called him to be a witness to all and to lead, minister and serve all who came to him.

"We have been called to heal wounds, to unite what has fallen apart, and to bring home those who have lost their way." There was never a moment that brother Francis questioned what he was called to do. "True progress quietly and persistently moves along without notice." We as sisters and brothers within our order are likewise not to hesitate or examine our worthiness when called to serve God and God's people in whatever task that he calls us to step up to and to give of our best.

We are called to be instruments of peace which for many of us at this moment in time seems to be difficult to grasp given the current injustice and horrors that the social media of this world seem eager to serve up to us all. We are called as Franciscans to endeavour to be prayerful, seeking justice and above all compassionate to all, even those who have caused us and others harm.

"Sanctify yourself and you will sanctify society."
"While you are proclaiming peace with your lips, be careful to have it even more fully in your heart." These quotations that I have used from the 'Little Flowers of Francis of Assisi', still bloom with truth and sincerity and vigour for each of us today, tomorrow and forever. Finally our dear brother gave in his simplicity what I believe to be most significant and inspirational message for each of us. "All the darkness in the world cannot extinguish the light of a single candle." May each of us, with God's grace be a light to the world.

In conclusion I would like to sincerely thank Bishop Godfrey Fryar for his time of support as our Bishop Protector.

I am happy to announce that the Rt Reverend Garry Weatherill, Bishop of Ballarat has accepted this position. I acknowledge on your behalf our thanks in his acceptance as Bishop Protector of our order.



Pax et Bonum
Colin tssf
[Provincial Minister]



Canticle of the Sun

As translated by Bill Barrett from the Umbrian text of the Assisi codex.

Most high, all powerful, all good Lord! All praise is yours, all glory, all honor, and all blessing. To you, alone, Most High, do they belong. No mortal lips are worthy to pronounce your name. Praise be to God.

Be praised, my Lord, through all your creatures, especially through my Lord Brother Sun, who brings the day; and you give light through him. And he is beautiful and radiant in all his splendor! Of you, Most High, he bears the likeness.

Be praised, my Lord, through Sister Moon and the stars; in the heavens you have made them, precious and beautiful.

Be praised, my Lord, through Brothers Wind and Air, and clouds and storms, and all the weather, through which you give your creatures sustenance.

Be praised, My Lord, through Sister Water; she is very useful, and humble, and precious, and pure.

Be praised, my Lord, through Brother Fire, through whom you brighten the night. He is beautiful and cheerful, and powerful and strong.

Be praised, my Lord, through our sister Mother Earth, who feeds us and rules us, and produces various fruits with colored flowers and herbs.

Be praised, my Lord, through those who forgive for love of you; through those who endure sickness and trial. Happy those who endure in peace, for by you, Most High, they will be crowned.

Be praised, my Lord, through our Sister Bodily Death, from whose embrace no living person can escape. Woe to those who die in mortal sin! Happy those she finds doing your most holy will. The second death can do no harm to them.

Praise and bless my Lord, and give thanks, and serve him with great humility. Amen.

Visit us on the web at www.tssf.org.au

MELBOURNE ARCHBISHOP TO LEAD AUSTRALIAN ANGLICAN CHURCH

By: Barney Swartz (Editor of Anglican Church Melbourne Newsletter)
www.anglican.org.au/.../



Sustaining a national presence and strengthening the church's contribution to rural communities are among the most important challenges facing the Anglican Church of Australia, believes the new leader, Archbishop Philip Freier. As Primate, Dr Freier assumes a leadership role in the Anglican Church of Australia's General Synod and its various bodies. Although some aspects of the Primacy carry constitutional authority, the role is not like that of the heads of other denominations. For example, the Primate does not have authority over other bishops in the Church. Rather, he is first amongst equals. Nevertheless, the Primate's position is one of considerable influence.

"I look forward to the opportunity of working with the church around the country. The church across its parishes, schools and service agencies makes a powerful contribution to Australian society," Dr Freier said.

Dr Freier was elected by a special synod of laymen, clergy and bishops from around the country, and takes over after the church's three-yearly parliament ends in Adelaide on Friday. Brisbane Archbishop Phillip Aspinall is stepping down after nine years. The church's general synod, or national parliament, opens in Adelaide on Monday.

Dr Freier, 59, has been Archbishop of the Melbourne diocese since December 2006. He was elected at a time of some division in the diocese, with one election synod failing to choose a candidate before his name was put up second time round. Since then, theological and churchmanship tensions have eased enormously in Melbourne, attributed in part to Dr Freier's calm nature, even-handedness, willingness to listen, and desire to engage as widely as possible. He set out to encourage Anglicans. He is also regarded as an able administrator who has worked to stabilise the diocesan balance sheet.

Raised in a working class suburb in Brisbane, where his father worked for Queensland Railways, Dr Freier attended Virginia primary school and Hendra high school. He did a science degree, gained education qualifications and asked to be posted to indigenous communities. In Far North Queensland he was profoundly influenced by Aboriginal Christians and underwent what he calls a conversion of identity to become a strong Christian within the Anglican tradition.

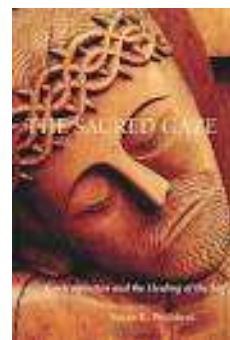
Elected bishop of the Northern Territory in 1999, Dr Freier led many services in indigenous languages.

Coming from one of the smallest dioceses (by number), with some 15 parishes, to one of the biggest, with more than 200 parishes and more than 400 clergy, Dr Freier spent a lot of time in his first few years travelling the diocese and conversing with Christians and non-Christians. He has championed women in ministry, and became only the second archbishop to promote a woman to bishop (Barbara Darling in 2008). He has led a series of high-profile breakfast conversations in Federation Square, discussing important social issues with some of the foremost experts of the day.

The Third Order congratulates Philip, our brother in Christ as he takes up his new role as Primate within our Anglican Communion.

The Sacred Gaze

By: Susan R. Pitchford tssf,
Contemplation and the Healing
of the Self, Liturgical Press 2014,
(Paperback 168 pages)
Reviewed by Ted Witham tssf
Available from \$16 approx. online.



Gaze: to look with love into the face of another. Gazing requires attention over time; and gazing brings the one who gazes closer to the other whose face is beheld.

As a tertiary, Susan Pitchford is the right person to introduce readers to gazing as "Contemplation and the Healing of the Self", as she describes gazing in the sub-title of this accessible and helpful book. Pitchford uses Saint Clare of Assisi as her springboard for the idea of gazing as prayer, in particular, Saint Clare's famous letter to Saint Agnes of Prague, where St Clare invites Agnes to gaze on Christ as a mirror.

Susan Pitchford first places this idea in her academic field of sociology to understand how a loving gaze can lead to the healing of self by correcting the images we have of ourselves.

We begin the journey by acknowledging that we are gazed at: God looks with love on our face. What God sees there, because God is love, is the self that is made whole, not the wounded and sinful self of which we are so conscious. When we discover this true self, we are set free to pray in true freedom. We then can gaze on the face of God.

Pitchford is conscious that this way of talking about prayer can easily be empty words. A useful chapter describes how different personalities can use their imaginations to engage in gazing: for some, this will be visual or verbal, for others auditory or kinaesthetic. All are ways to behold the face of God, to bring our attention to focus on God present with us. How to gaze with words or scenes from scripture or with clay or music is attractively detailed. These practical suggestions are a strength of *The Sacred Gaze*.

Like Sister Ilia Delio in her books on Franciscan prayer, Susan Pitchford traces a threefold movement of prayer: from attention to gazing to transformative action. As Pitchford writes, 'If our gazing at Christ doesn't cause us to turn a compassionate gaze at the world, and motivate us to compassionate action, then we need to check on whether it's really Christ we've been gazing at. If we know nothing else about Jesus, we can be certain at least of this; staying aloof from the needs of the world is not his style.' (page 138)

The Sacred Gaze begins in Franciscan prayer and sociological insight, but roams widely and useful across much of the literature of contemplative prayer. I enjoyed the insistence with which Pitchford connects this material with ordinary life. It is encouraging that ordinary people like me and you can set out on the journey of the sacred gaze, being held in love, discovering the true self, and acting in freedom with compassion for the world.



On His Sacred Stigmata

By: Bonaventure

Excerpt from:

“The Soul’s Journey into God.

The Tree of Life. The Life of St Francis”

Chapter Thirteen



1 The angelic man Francis had made it his habit never to relax in his pursuit of the good. Rather like the heavenly spirits on Jacob’s Ladder he either ascended to God or descended to his neighbour. For he had wisely learned so to divide the time given to him for merit that he expected part of that in working for his neighbour’s benefit and devoted the other part to the peaceful ecstasy of contemplation. Therefore when in his compassion he had worked for the salvation of others, he would then leave behind the restlessness of the crowds and seek out hidden places of quiet and solitude, where he could spend his time more freely with the Lord. He would cleanse himself of any dust that might have adhered to him from his involvement with men.

Two years before he gave his spirit back to heaven, after many and varied labours, he was led apart by divine providence to a high place which is called Mount La Verna. When according to his usual custom he had begun to fast there for forty days in honor of St Michael the Archangel. He experienced more abundantly than usual an overflow of the sweetness of heavenly contemplation. He burned with a stronger flame of heavenly desires, and he began to experience more fully the gifts of heavenly grace.

He was borne aloft not like one who out of curiosity searches into the supreme majesty only to be crushed by its glory. But like the faithful and prudent servant searching out God’s good pleasure, to which he desires with the greatest ardor to conform himself in every way.

2 Through divine inspiration he had learned that if he opened the book of the Gospel, Christ would reveal to him what God considered most acceptable in him and from him. After praying with much devotion, he took the book of the Gospels from the altar and had his companion, a holy man dedicated to God, open it three times in the name of the Holy Trinity. When all three times the book was opened the Lord’s passion always met his eyes, the man filled with God understood that just as he had imitated Christ in the actions of his life, so he should be conformed to him in the affliction and sorrow of his passion, before he would pass out of this world (John 13:1). And although his body was already weakened by the great austerity of his past life and his continual carrying of the Lord’s cross, he was in no way terrified but was inspired even more vigorously to endure martyrdom. His unquenchable fire of love for the good Jesus had been fanned into such a blaze of flames that many waters could not quench so powerful a love. (Cant. 8:6-7).



Eulogy for Mavis Matthews tssf

(30 March 1917 – 27 May 2014)

By: -The Revd Dr Timothy Gaden

(The Holy Trinity, Ararat)

(An abridged Version)



I only came to know Mavis towards the end of her life, after she had already been in Gorrin House, one of the local nursing homes, for many years.

It was only when I began to gather information and stories to write this eulogy that I learnt what a remarkable life she lived.

She was the eldest daughter of Grace and John Matthews, followed by her sisters Norma, Lulu and June. Her mother Grace was raised at the family farm at Rhymney but after marrying John they moved to Katanning in Western Australia, where they farmed and raised the four girls until Grace died before her time.

Being the eldest, Mavis looked after the four of them on the train journey back from Western Australia across the country to the farm at Rhymney and to their grandmother. She was very young at the time. Mavis worked for many years as a trained nurse in various hospitals and then specialised in Midwifery where she worked here in Ararat until her retirement in 1980. She was a regular and devout church goer. She was for many years secretary of the old Parish Council. Even after years of residing in Gorrin House, she still attended regular services and occasions at the church.

She expressed her spirituality, her life with God perhaps most fully as a member of the Third Order of the Society of St. Francis. You may not know that there is a Third Order. These people continue to live their normal lives but try to pattern their relationship with God and each other on the teachings and rule of St Francis. Mavis, being a Franciscan, made many friends, some of whom are here today. She loved attending their retreats and times away.

She is remembered by her nephews and nieces, her sister June and Neil’s children, as a second mother. Mavis, or “Aunty May” as the kids called her, looked after them, playing a big part in raising them. Neil and June, and the kids – Jenni, Rod, Ewan and Cath – lived in one house, while the aunts lived in the other house. So there were always ten people around – and Mavis loved and cared for them all.

Mavis loved gardening, and tending her favourite flowers and roses. She also enjoyed making home- made marmalade jam, being produce from the orange and lemon trees she planted. She had a special love for animals.

St Francis is reputed to have said, “Always remember to preach the gospel, and if necessary, use words”, that is, the most important thing is to express the Good News and your love of God in your life and actions. She faithfully reached the end of her long and active life, a life so distinguished by the love and care of others, in the hospital, on the farm and elsewhere, so marked by devout and daily conversations with God, so patterned by a delight in the presence of God in nature, that it speaks for itself. May she rest in peace, and rise in glory.

May God Himself, the God of Peace, sanctify you through and through.

May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The One who calls you is faithful and He will do it. Amen.

(1 Thessalonians 5: 23-24)



John Clarkson's 60th Anniversary of Diaconate

Fr John Clarkson celebrated at the 10am Service on Friday 13th June to mark 60 years since he was made a Deacon in the Church of God in St Alban's Abbey, St Albans UK. At the service he spoke about St Alban, a Roman Soldier who was converted to Christianity and was the first martyr in Britain when he refused to offer incense to the Roman gods. He then went on to explain that the role of a Deacon is to be a servant and that today the towel ministry which we celebrate on Maundy Thursday is really the ministry of all baptised and that we should be serving the poor, rejected and marginalised in our community.

He told the story of St Antony of Padua, (whose day we celebrated today) who became a Franciscan Friar after the martyrdom of Franciscan Brothers in Morocco in the early 13th century. As a member of the Third Order of St Francis, I live by a Rule of Life which, like a trellis for a rambling rose, upholds me in all my life. I live simply, prayerfully and try to serve those less fortunate than myself. He finished by reminding us that unbelievers are always watching us and that it is important not to live a double life. As Gandhi said I would become a Christian if Christians were more like Jesus Christ.

Transitus

NSW B/ACT Region
By: Rev John Gibson

A feature of our relationship with the Secular Franciscans is that we come together to celebrate the Transitus. On Friday 3rd October we will gather at the St Augustine's Church, Farrer A.C.T. This is the Croatian community church. The evening will conclude with a 'pot luck' dinner together.

Our Annual Retreat: Will take place from Friday 24th October to Sunday 26th October at the Gathering Place, Dickson A.C.T. Our retreat conductor will be our own Tertiary The Rev'd Dr Catherine Holt on the theme "Franciscan Spirituality Through the Medium Of Art." Thank You and Welcome: Our thanks to Trish Stoddart who has been our Area Fellowship Convenor and has ministered to us so well. We now welcome Kathy and Graeme Dunn to this ministry.

Run with Light Step

Excerpt From: "15 days of prayer
with St Clare of Assisi"
By: Marie-France Becker



To enter into relationship with St Clare is to enter into a race and to be carried by the momentum of a woman burning with love. What a paradox!

The cloister of St Damian - restrained of itself – opens to the infinite: Clare, pilgrim of an interior adventure, always again places herself on the road toward her Lord. Her Happiness? To chose to follow the same route as Jesus so as never to leave him. The loving kenosis of Christ captivates her to a Passover: a passage from a heavy and shackled step by a possessive self to a light race, brisk as a dance step, on the path of happiness. An astonishing exhortation of a sedentary to another sedentary!

By the way, the most perfect poverty, writes her biographer, *she was eager to perform to the Poor crucified, so that nothing transitory would separate the lover from the Beloved or would impede her way with the Lord (Cel 14).* Elsewhere, he notes with accuracy: *After leaving the world outside and enriching her mind within, she ran after Christ without being burdened with anything (Cel).* Clare encourages her friend to realize with determination and fidelity the proposal in life *in most high poverty.*

If the Son of God becomes the way, each instant offers the possibility of a new step that the stripping makes light. Lady Poverty espoused by Francis and Clare frees the heart in a race of which no obstacle can slow the momentum nor weigh down the step. She opens the road, narrow certainly but most rapid and decisive. Clare knows neither indifference nor half-heartedness, even less sadness or discouragement.

It is the spirit of the Lord who calls her and it is through divine inspiration (RegC12:1), that Clare and Agnes walk according to the way of the Son of God. From that time the path can only be blessed because God is the God of human happiness. His call does not make us dwarfed or grumpy, but upright and jubilant beings. Our race, far from being an apprehensive aspiration, becomes a confident relaxation and serene hope.

The love of Christ overwhelms us, says St Paul (2 Cor 5:14). Clare cannot put off today's step until tomorrow, neither can she stop on the road, because at every hour, at every time of the day, every day and continually, let all of us truly and humbly believe, hold in our heart and love, honour, adore, and serve the Lord (1 Reg23:11).

"What you hold, may you always hold, What you do, may you always do and never abandon. But with swift pace, light step, unswerving feet, so that even your steps stir up no dust, may you go forward securely, joyfully, and swiftly, on the path of prudent happiness, not believing anything that would dissuade you from this resolution or that would place a stumbling block for you on the way, so that you may offer your vows to the Most High in the pursuit of that perfection to which the Spirit of the Lord has called you." –

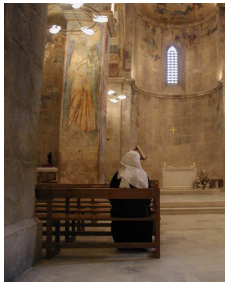
Second Letter to Agnes (11-14)

Pilgrimage into the heart of God

By: Reverend Nicholas Whereat

Five years ago I took long service leave and travelled with my wife and two of our children to Europe. Among other places we went to Taizé, Assisi and Iona. These were the three places I responded with when my wife said where do you want to go. On an earlier occasion we had been to Tewkesbury Abbey where I was born and baptised. (I wasn't born in the Abbey but just next door in the Curate's flat.)

Since then my wife and I have also travelled to Israel. Each of these holidays has had an element of "pilgrimage" to them. The place of my Baptism in the old Benedictine Abbey, the homes of Celtic, Franciscan and modern saints as well sites in Israel all have special meaning for me and no doubt many of us. I won't forget breaking bread at the Eucharist in the town believed to be Emmaus.



I was fortunate when I was completing my Spiritual Direction course to have time to reflect on pilgrimage and the work of Spiritual direction. Experiences of hospitality are a rich part of any journey. As a spiritual director we also provide hospitality to the directees and help them to notice the Lord walking with them on their journey. Most journeys include moments of feeling lost, confused or perhaps frightened. In spiritual direction the directees will experience these and many other feelings. As directors we get to point the directee to their destination or at least help them see that place albeit in the distance. On occasions we are forced to turn back from our journeys. Usually the longing to complete that journey never leaves us. With our directees we can sometimes encourage people to take up that journey again. May be this time, with better preparation, or more maturity, we enable them to complete the journey.

One of the powerful conclusions I have come to is that each day sees us in the Holy Land. No we are not in Israel nor any other "sacred" place. At home in our own city can be the Holy Land for us. It may require us to slow down to the pilgrim's pace, to saunter, to be able to recognize the holiness of our present location. I'm told the word saunter comes from the French "Sainte Terre" – Holy Land. One needs to remind oneself to slow down and to seek to be intentional for this to become a reality. So even if your days of travelling to far away countries have ended remember to practice the presence of God and to know that you are on Holy ground.

Recently this idea was given a new dimension. The Archbishop in his synod sermon suggested the steps to the heart of God go down. We step down into deeper layers of humility. In a way not only are we to walk on holy ground but in humility to choose to be the ground.

My wife, Sheila standing by the 'Universe' sculpture

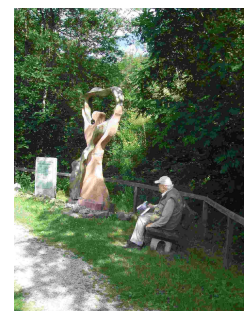
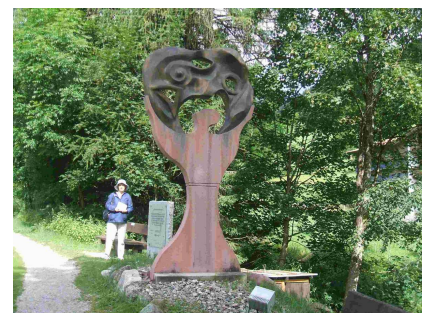
"A Path of Contemplation" in Austria

By: Michael Hobbs

Last month my wife Sheila and I visited Austria and stayed at a hotel in Niederau between Salzburg and Innsbruck. Quite by chance we discovered that there was a path of contemplation reflecting the song of praise to the Creator of the Universe by St Francis of Assisi named 'The Canticle of Brother Sun' in the valley going from Niederau to Oberau. We decided to walk the path as soon as we could. We set out from our hotel and just outside Niederau found the path well signposted. It was a beautiful day, the sun was shining, the birds singing, and the sound of a stream near to the trail. We soon came to the first sculpture entitled "To the Universe", and stopped and meditated, then walked a little further and came to "To the Sun", and stopping at each sculpture with seats at most of them we worked our way to the village of Oberau which took us about one and a half hours. After the Sun we went to The Moon and the Stars, The Wind and the Air, Water, Fire, the World with its seeds and fruits, Love, and finally Death. Each of the sculptures had been created by Hubert Flori and consist of moulded bronze parts. This path of meditation and contemplation was an experience we shall never forget, enriching our awareness of the good and the beautiful found in the world.

My wife is an associate of the Third Order and I am a tertiary.

Peace & goodwill,



Myself sitting by 'Wind and Air' sculpture

Web Based Community Obedience

By: Gordon Hooker

With the help of David White's son, Tim, we now have a version of the web based community obedience that I believe is a worldwide web and mobile application with features that truly make it a better offering than we had in my first attempt and my iPad and iPhone versions of the community obedience application.

What I love about the upgrades Tim has made to the application is that it can be used offline once you have connected to the internet and ran the web page (the caveat here is that the browser on your smart phone must be able to take advantage of the application cache it creates). The safari browser on iPhones and iPads does take advantage of the application cache). This means that once you have run the webpage on your iPhone you can go off the network and continue have the webpage work and it will update the collect, principles and intercessions for the date and time on your smartphone.

Although I will continue to improve and add features to the android version of community obedience I will not be supporting iPhone or iPad...

I am going to make use of the webpage version in future on my iPad and iPhone and have downloaded one of the free prayer list apps from iTunes to allow me to transfer my personal intercession lists and get rid of the iPhone community obedience off my phone.

Prayer notebook, and Prayer List are two good prayer lists which run on iPad and iPhone. Prayer List is free and Prayer Notebook has a lot more features such as iCloud sync and it costs about \$3 or \$4 to purchase.

Enjoy what Tim has done for us and I am taking this opportunity to say a big fat Franciscan thank you to Tim for the work he has done to help me take this to the next level.

Solitude and Silence

Excerpt from "Celebration of Discipline"

By: Richard Foster

Without silence there is no solitude. Though silence sometimes involves the absence of speech, it always involves the act of listening. Simply to refrain from talking, without a heart listening to God, is not silence. "A day filled with noise and voices can be a day of silence, if the noises become for us the echo of the presence of God, if the voices are, for us, messages and solicitations of God. When we speak of ourselves and are filled with ourselves, we leave silence behind. When we repeat the intimate words of God that he has left within us, our silence remains intact."

We must understand the connection between inner solitude and inner silence; they are inseparable. All the masters of the interior life speak of the two in the same breath. For example, *The Imitation of Christ*, which has been the unchallenged masterpiece of devotional literature for five hundred years, has a section titled "On the Love of Solitude and Silence." Dietrich Bonhoeffer makes the two an inseparable whole in *Life Together* as does Thomas Merton in *Thought in Solitude*.

Inward solitude has outward manifestations. There is the freedom to be alone, not in order to be away from people but in order to hear the divine Whisper better. Jesus lived in inward 'heart solitude.' He also frequently expressed outward solitude.

Silence is one of the deepest Disciplines of the Spirit simply because it puts the stopper on all self-justification. One of the fruits of silence is the freedom to let God be our justifier.

Two Journeys

By: David Masters

Homo Viator, Man the Wanderer, is an idea that has existed for a very long time. It is still, very much part of our life today. Life is a journey and it is the experiences of that journey that mould us into what we are. About two and a half years ago I was lucky enough to be able to walk the Camino Frances to Santiago. I returned, having travelled, "externally", some 800kms. A journey that ended physically in Santiago but which was only the beginning of a new "internal" journey.

With the best will in the world, family and friends cannot understand the experiences. To them, you have had an extended holiday, you have brought back some stories, some pictures and a weathered look. They take an interest for a time and then you can become a bore. The experiences you had on the road, with the people you met and, at least in my case, with God, have little meaning to them. But I felt the experiences were too important. I felt that the journey must continue. For me the answer was to become a Franciscan. The idea I had, initially came from my job as a chaplain with the Mission to Seafarers where a number of the chaplains are Franciscans.

I am now at the point of being professed. This "internal" journey has been a great continuation of the Camino. It has been as revealing as the "external" journey to Santiago. Each Study note has focused my way of "seeing" Christ, and it has altered my relationship with my church.

From this also have come introductions to some very interesting books. "The Way of the Pilgrim" by Gleb Pokrovsky is one. This is about a man who took to the road in Russia in the 19th century. He wanted to understand the deep meaning in 1 Thessalonians where Paul says "Pray without ceasing". He eventually understands this through his contacts with various Holy men. The immersion of oneself in the world as you travel. An immersion in God's creation and an interaction with people.

Another has been a biography of Julian of Norwich. Julian was a woman who became an anchorite in Norwich, in the 14th century. She spent more than twenty years working out the meanings of a series of visions she had of Christ's Passion. In reading this, you understand the "internal" pilgrimage we can travel in our head. At the opposite end of the spectrum is "The Book of Marjory Kempe". A story of an uneducated woman of the fourteenth century who made the "external" pilgrimages to Jerusalem, Rome and Santiago. You see again, the growth and struggles of someone with a great desire to understand her visions of Christ's Passion.

These two journeys, the "external" one and the "internal" one, have been a great gift, for which I am eternally grateful. I am looking forward with great joy to the next few years.

(Qld B) Area - Christmas Gathering

Held on Saturday 13th December, 2014

Venue: St Francis College, Milton Rd., Milton Qld.

Time: 9.30am

Eucharist - Bishop Godfrey Fryar

(The new Provincial Minister)

All welcome - Please bring a plate to share

Contact: Gloria Malouf-Marsh – (mob) 0412 400374

Email: gloria@radiantpathways.com.au

“Jesus, The Child We Worship”

By: Ted Witham

To help people prepare for Christmas this year, Ted Witham has written “Jesus the Child We Worship” a book of daily meditations for Advent. The meditations invite us – as adults – on a journey to God who chooses to come to us as a child. Each meditation has a section ‘Let us Play’ where we are invited to play either with the Arts, music, art, writing, clay, or with swings and see-saws to help us see more clearly the Christ-Child.

The E-Book is already available from Smashwords.com for \$US3.99 (search for ‘Ted Witham’), and the print book, a handsome paper-back of 108 pages, will be available from Ted in September for \$10 + postage or from St John’s Books in Fremantle. (<http://www.stjohnsbooks.com.au/>).

Email Ted (tedwitham1@gmail.com) or write to him at 139/502 Bussell Highway, Broadwater 6280 for more information or to order the book

* * * * *

The Franciscan God’s Wonderful Welcome

By: Sandra Beck

One Sunday morning I was a little late for church, having driven my lovely friends, Patricia Stoddart and her sister Margaret Dickson to the airport on their way to Papua New Guinea as GFS volunteer staff. On entering the church, I noticed that the person/s on door duty had joined the congregation. Thinking that other late arrivers might like to be welcomed, I sat near the door. Three quarters through the service, a man and an adult son came to the door. I welcomed them and tried to find what they wanted. Thy said they were Muslims who wanted to become Christian.

Officiating was Richard Brown tssf from Ballina. He had been with us for some weeks as locum but only the prior Sunday had I recognized his tssf status as he was wearing his profession cross. I told him that I was a Franciscan and explained that I had been praying for him for years, but in our parish we knew each other simply as Richard and Sandra.

Feeling confident of their reception, I led the two inquirers to the altar, last in the Eucharistic line. I explained their desire to Fr Richard who asked them a series of faith questions such as, ‘Do you accept Jesus Christ as Lord?’ I felt moved by this experience. Had someone else welcomed them, they may have been told, ‘The service is almost ended, come back next Sunday.’ Had Fr Richard not been officiating and had I not known him to be Franciscan, I may have felt more inhibited. After their blessing, I introduced the two men to the congregation.

Now I see God’s hand in the fact that, as our regular priest was brought up Greek Orthodox, he has a much greater understanding of Middle Eastern affairs than the next priest may have.

We now have a Buddhist inquirer worshipping at our church and I was blessed to lead him to the altar for a blessing. I also shared with him the meaning of prayer candles, and I explained to him how we can talk to God.

From: Rev Jeremy James

“Dear Brothers and Sisters in Francis and Clare,
THANK YOU SO MUCH for your generosity
in contributing towards my mitre for my
consecration which was on the feast of the
Transfiguration on 6 August.

May God’s richest blessings be yours
Jeremy”

“WORD into SILENCE”

From John Main OSB,
(New York: Paulist Press,
1981), pp. 37-39

The first step to personhood . . . is to allow ourselves to be loved. It was to facilitate this that the Holy Spirit was sent into the human heart, to touch it, to awaken it, to draw our minds into its redemptive light. The sending of the Spirit was a resurrection event and so continues as freshly today as it did “late that Sunday evening, “ as St John tells us, when the disciples were together behind locked doors and Jesus came and breathed on them and said, “Receive the Holy Spirit.”

Our natural lethargy and self-evasiveness, our reluctance to allow ourselves to be loved are, like the locked doors, no impediments to the Holy Spirit. The Spirit has been sent into the human heart, and it lives out the divine mystery there for as long as God sustains us in being. Even in the heart of the utterly evil man, were there such a person, the Holy Spirit would still be crying: “Abba Father,” without ceasing.

We begin with a dim awareness of the stirring of the Spirit in our heart, the presence of another by which we know ourselves. In awakening to its full reality, in listening to our heart, we awaken to the living proof of our faith justifying that first dim awareness, that first hope. And, as St Paul told the Romans: “This proof is the ground of hope. Such a hope is no mockery because God’s love has flooded our inmost heart through the Holy Spirit he has given us.”

The intoxication of Paul’s language is the intoxication of his personal awakening to the Reality of the Spirit, to the experience of the joy released, pressed down and flowing over, which Jesus preached and communicates through His Spirit. It is the intoxication of prayer.

BE AT PEACE

Do not look forward in fear to the changes in life; rather, look to them with full hope that as they arise, God, whose very own you are, will lead you safely through all things; and when you cannot stand it, God will carry you in His arms. Do not fear what may happen tomorrow; the same understanding Father who cares for you today will take care of you then and every day.

He will either shield you from suffering or will give you unflinching strength to bear it.

Be at peace, and put aside all anxious thoughts and imaginations.

-Saint Francis De Sales

Summary of the Minutes for the 2014 Provincial Chapter

Provincial Chapter convened and at the Campion Centre for Ignatian Spirituality, Kew, Melbourne, 7:20PM Fri 2 May 2014.

Present: Colin Fidock (Provincial Minister); Sandra Jackson (Assistant Provincial Minister); Revd Helen Granowski (Chaplain); David White (Communications); Revd Vic Hall (QLDA); Glenys McCarrick/Bronwyn Fryar (QLDB); Jill Gumbley (NSWA); Revd John Gibson (NSWB); Joy Bartlett (VIC/TAS); Joan Manners (SA); Sandie Oakes (WA); Revd Br Bruce Paul, SSF and Revd Wayne Philp (Secretary).

Apology: Geoff Jordan (Treasurer).

Provincial Minister's Report

Colin spoke of our responsibility to be aware of, and to act upon, that which God draws to our attention or lays in our path: matters of peace, justice, reconciliation and the environment. We are called to be instruments of prayer and works; with patience, joy and discernment. Our mission as Franciscans is to reach out to and affect change in this present time – but this must happen in God's timing.

Colin announced that he will conclude his office as Provincial Minister on Advent Sunday 2014. Chapter expressed great appreciation for Colin's skills, efforts and exercise of the gifts of the Holy Spirit over the past three years.

An important outcome of this Chapter was the change of the name for our Province to "The Province of Asia - Pacific".

Provincial Chaplain's Report

Helen's report related to pastoral care and the process for email distribution of Prayer Requests. It was decided that the Regional Ministers (RMs) should normally forward Prayer Requests to the Provincial Secretary and the Communications coordinator. The Assistant Provincial Minister may act independently.

Assistant Provincial Minister's Report

Sandra sought clarification of her role in regard to pastoral support. Chapter affirmed her emphasis on pastoral care in conjunction/support of the Chaplain and Provincial Minister.

Treasurer's Report

Unfortunately Geoff, was ill and unable to attend Chapter, so Glenys presented on his behalf and was thereafter appointed as the new Treasurer. Chapter acclaimed its appreciation of Geoff's service as Treasurer to the Province.

Annual subscriptions for individual members will be set at \$120 (\$30/quarter) with \$180 (\$45/quarter) for couples and families.

A \$5/member/yr levy will be introduced to cover additional costs associated with a smarter colour A3 format for our newsletter.

The Communications coordinator and the Treasurer were asked to review current expenses in order to achieve a more accurate budget forecast. RMs were asked to consider teleconferencing to reduce travel costs. It was agreed that provision be made within future budgets to cover the travel expenses to the triennial General Chapter for the RMs of Singapore, Malaysia & PNG.

General Provincial Matters

Chapter received a report from the First Order Province of the Divine Compassion. There is a need for a new Bishop Protector before Eastertide 2015. Br Bruce-Paul raised the practical matter of health and support issues related to the older (and increasingly infirmed) members of the First Order. How best can the TSSF support the SSF and their work in these times?

Anne Wilson was confirmed as the Provincial Archivist. Anne requested that old photographs/documents be forwarded to her.

A cache of resource materials will be established on the website for general access (and tertiary associates). RMs were asked to send David a set of email contacts for their Regional Associates.

Corporate email addresses should be used whenever possible in all provincial/chapter/regional email correspondence.

Chapter will develop a TSSF 'in case of death' and ID card.

David's revised format for the annual Prayer Diary was accepted.

Chapter endorsed the work of Franciscans International and confirmed our ongoing support given its restructure.

Chapter affirmed its responsibility to actively investigate a way forward in support and maintenance of the Old Monastery at Stroud and its development in consultation with the SSF Association Inc., the "Friends of the Monastery – Stroud" and the First Order Brothers. Chapter agreed that an option and opportunity to make donations toward the support, maintenance and development of the Old Monastery will be included on the annual subscription form. Sandra was asked to address the next meeting of the SSF Association Inc. to facilitate the draft of recommendations as to how our inter-relationships might best proceed.

On Formation...

Chapter affirmed that there should be at least a quarterly meeting during Novice Formation or, where face to face meetings are not possible, the best other communication that is available. Chapter authorised the new 2014 Formation Notes for use by Novices and Novice Counsellors over the two years of Novice Formation and the first year of Profession. The Communications officer will control the printing and distribution of Formation Kits to new novices such that a printed copy of the notes will be sent to the appointed counsellor. Additional prints (only to be made by RMs) may be downloaded from the website onto A4 paper. Photocopies should not be made (so as to preserve the quality of printing).

At any time, a committee (Helen, Ted Witham, Glenys, Bronwyn and David) is authorised to make small changes to the Formation Notes and to submit those changes for endorsement at the next meeting of Chapter. Printed copies of the Formation Notes should be sent to the Minister General, the Provincial Ministers and Guardians (where known) of the other Provinces, for their adaptation of the materials in their context. Chapter recorded a "vote of thanks" to Ted for his outstanding work and effort.

On the Province of Asia -Pacific...

Sri Lanka has 5 persons (supported by Br Lionel) seeking to join the TSSF. The Bishop of Colombo is very keen to proceed under the guidance of our Provincial Chapter. Also, an individual from China has requested the opportunity to join our order. A similar request has been received from India.

Over/

Chapter agreed that our province should move ahead in new countries as Novice Counsellors become available. Where there are no counsellors, we may encourage individuals to become Associates of the SSF or possibly seek to employ communications technology, as available. The Provincial Minister will discern and take action as opportunities present.

To be inclusive of the wider international engagement in our Province, Chapter has adopted the new title of "The Province of Asia - Pacific". Official documentation and letterhead will now include our new name (Asia – Pacific) followed (after a grammatical colon) by all the nations in our Province (in alphabetical order).

Regional Matters

All Regional Reports were presented and questions answered by the RMs. Please contact your RM for details.

NSWB has been renamed NSWB/ACT.

The new RM for QLDB is Bronwyn Fryar.

Thanks was accorded to Glenys McCarrick for her past services in this role.

Harold Joinoba's appointment and extension as RM of Popondetta/Dogura will end in August 2015. The newly elected RM of PNG will be invited to attend the 2015 Chapter and Conference.

The Dinghy Project has been financially placed in abeyance until cost expense and acquittal issues can be addressed and resolved.

Next Chapter and General Conference

Provincial Chapter will reconvene 29 September – 1 October 2015, followed by a General Conference 1-4 October at the Red Hill Campus of Canberra Boys Grammar School - Canberra. Cost per head is likely to be about \$200. The theme will be "Harmony".

Revd John Gibson is the convenor.

This Provincial Chapter at Kew was concluded with prayer and closed at 1510 Sun 04 May 2014.



The Appointment of a new Protector General

The Rt. Rev. Jon Bruno

All of the provinces of the First Order, the Second Order sisters

and the provinces of the Third Order have now ratified the election of The Rt. Rev. Jon Bruno, the Bishop of Los Angeles and Bishop Protector of the First Order Brothers in the Province of the Americas, as Protector General. He will take up the role of Protector General on 8 November, 2014, which is when Archbishop Roger Herft, the current Bishop Protector General, retires as Protector of the Province of the Divine Compassion. Bishop Jon has been elected Protector General by the representatives to the First Order Chapters (FOC), for a three year term. In doing so, the Society has suspended a constitutional requirement for a six year term so that in three year's time, at the next FOC, the next Protector General can be elected by the usual process.

Please remember both bishops in your prayers. We are very grateful to them both for their generosity in supporting us in these roles.

Peace and all good.

Maureen CSF and Nicholas Alan SSF
General Secretaries to the First Order

The Two Franciscans -



Different yet the same

By: Simon Fong

Writing from Hong Kong, I am happy to report that in September 2014, we were glad to welcome our First Order Brother Bruce Paul. Brother Bruce Paul was on his way to Korea visiting brothers there. He stopped over in Hong Kong for a few days. On 2 September, he was with the three Hong Kong tertiaries at Eucharist where there were both Renewals and Admission of a novice from Canada. On 3 September, Brother Bruce Paul was taken to visit the Franciscan House of the Catholic Church. Brother William, ofm, welcomed Brother Bruce Paul, ssf. Two different Franciscans yet they are under the same spiritual father - St Francis of Assisi. The meeting was cordial. Brother William helped in explaining to Brother Bruce Paul what the Catholic Franciscans do in Hong Kong. There was a tour of Franciscan House led by Brother William.

Franciscan & Holy Days To Note

September 17	STIGMATA OF FRANCIS
October 3	Transitus
October 4	FRANCIS OF ASSISI
October 11	All Franciscan Saints
November 1	All Souls day
November 2	All Saints Day
November 8	John Duns Scotus
November 16	St Agnes of Assisi
November 19	Elizabeth of Hungary
November 23	Fr Algy SSF
December 1	Requiem for all departed Franciscans
December 8	Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary
December 25	THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD

'Readings and other material for worship and devotion are in the Manual - Section F'

Preparing for Advent

The preparation of Advent is a time of waiting and hope. The definition is a coming or arrival.

The Advent liturgy resounds with the longing cries of the Hebrew prophets, the voice of Jesus, and John the Baptist's preaching that the Lord is near. Advent is a time of solemn preparation for the Feast of Christmas - the dawn of new light in the world and fulfilment of hope with the birth of Jesus.

This is a time of preparation through prayer and sacrifice, penance, anticipation, reflection, spiritual conversion and promise. It is also a time to think of those less fortunate than we are, and to find it in our hearts to be generous in spirit and alms.

Weekly Themes in Advent

Week One - Candle of Hope – Isaiah 9:2

O Come, O Come Emmanuel and ransom captive Israel. That mourns in lonely exile here. Before the Son of God appear, rejoice, Rejoice! Emmanuel. Shall come to thee O Israel.

Week Two - Candle of Peace – Isaiah 9:6-7

It came upon a midnight clear - that glorious song of old. From angels bending near the earth to touch their harps of gold. Peace on the earth, good will to men, from heaven's all gracious king. The world in solemn stillness lay to hear the angels sing.

Week Three - Candle of Joy – Luke 2:8-11

Joy to the world, the Lord is come. Let earth receive her king. Let every heart prepare him room. And heaven and nature sing. And heaven and heaven and nature sing.

Week Four - Candle of Love – John 3:16

Love came down at Christmas, love all lovely, love divine. Love was born at Christmas. Star and angel gave the sign.

Advent: Prayer of Creative Waiting

By: Jane Deren, PhD

-www.educationforjustice.org

Christ, we await your coming,
And we respond to your invitation
To journey to the holy mountain,
Where there is "no harm or ruin,"
And where the lion can lie down with the lamb.
Help us to be like John the Baptist
So we may recognize and announce
your love to a world in darkness.
Spark our creativity so we may
Create the way to your peace and justice,
Working with our sisters and brothers
To open new vistas, to promote new ways
Of being in community and in communion.
May the wings of the Holy Spirit
Open softly within us, gracing us
With inspiration so our waiting itself
Becomes the place of a new creation. Amen



TOGETHER IN CREATION

Third Order Conference and General Chapter
1st to 4th October, 2015.

Venue: Canberra Grammar School, Red Hill, Canberra ACT.

Speakers: Include Professor Matthew Colless, Director of the Research School & Astrophysics at the Australian Centre for Christianity and Culture, Canberra and Assistant Bishop in the diocese.

Professor Scott Cowdell, adjunct research Professor of Theology at Charles Sturt University Canberra Campus and canon Theologian in the diocese.

\$60 deposit (non refundable) by 1/11/2014 Deposit directly at any branch of Bendigo Bank into BSB 633-000 A/c Name TSSF 2015. A/C branch: Canberra. Please include your name on bank deposit form for identification. Alternatively, cheques or money orders (with A/C name) can be sent directly to Patricia Stoddart tssf, 54 Gardiner Street, Downer.ACT. 2602. Receipts will be sent via email, fax, or post if email/fax not available.

Application Form

Name/s

Address.....

Phone.....

Email.....

No of people attending.....

Deposit due 1st Nov - 2014 - Live In & Live Out \$60

1st Instalment due 1st Feb - 2015 – Live In \$120. Live Out \$60.

2nd Instalment due 1st May – 2015 – Live In 120. Live Out \$60

3rd Instalment due 1Aug – 2015 – Live In 120. Live - Out \$60.

Total payment Live in \$420 or Live Out \$240 may be paid at any time and early payment would be most helpful.

Cheque/Money Order enclosed \$

Special dietary requirements or other special needs.....

Spouses, Associates, Companions and Friends are most welcome to attend.

For those attending a 'one off' session the charges are: Including morning/afternoon tea \$10 or including lunch \$20 or including evening meal \$30

Please refer to the Pentecost Edition of our Newsletter for earlier information.

Enquiries to John Gibson tssf Email:

john.gibson@grapevine.com.au or

Phone (02) 61612321



Dear Sisters and Brothers,

This Edition focuses on the Stigmata of St Francis and the discernment of God's creation. Finding the time to reflect the silence in our lives, allowing the time for God to speak to us and appreciating the Sacred Gaze of St Clare's teachings - all contribute to deepening our faith journey as Franciscans. The summary of the Provincial Chapter minutes connects us all to the wider global community. Our Province has a new name now - **The Province of Asia-Pacific**.

As the Advent-Epiphany Edition will be later than usual this year, I have included an article on Advent.

I would like to thank those who contributed to the Newsletter. Please continue to do so as this is your means of communication with community.

The requirements are 300-400 words on Word, unformatted. Please share your articles for possible inclusions.

The deadline for the Advent/Epiphany Edition is around 20th December, 2014. I look forward to hearing from you.

Blessings,

Gloria (*Editor*)