



The Province of Asia-Pacific NEWSLETTER

AUSTRALIA, HONG KONG, MALAYSIA
PAPUA NEW GUINEA, THAILAND & SRI LANKA

A d v e n t



E d i t i o n

PROVINCIAL MINISTER'S LETTER ADVENT 2015

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

I spent 11 days in PNG in September and I had decided it would be helpful to have Bronwyn come with me so that the two of us could assess the situation and together care for the tertiaries. This proved to be very helpful and effective.



The plan for our visit had been to stay with the first order brothers at Haruro but at the last minute, unbeknown to us, this arrangement had been changed by the tertiaries and instead we were based at Jean Isemba's home in a village close to Aghenambo on the road to Kokoda. This proved to be very good as we were so well cared for and a dozen or so tertiaries were able to stay there with us in Jean's large 'haus wind' and we lived together as a community for 5 days. Other nearby tertiaries also came through the days.

We then flew back to Port Moresby and on to Alotau in Milne Bay Province. While there, we were accommodated at the friary which is in Ukaka village several kilometres from town. As in Aghenambo we were warmly welcomed and cared for by local tertiaries who stayed nearby and along with Brother Clement SSF, we worshipped and shared food together over the 6 days we were there.

In both places it was such a privilege to share in the life of the village and the Church and Franciscan community.

One of the great advances in PNG in the last few years has been the availability of reasonably cheap phone calls on mobiles. This includes facility for texting which will prove very helpful. Email however is almost non-existent amongst tertiaries in both areas with only two in Popondetta area having access to it.

While communication between Australia and PNG may have its difficulties, communication between provinces in PNG is also not easy though the phones are helping.

Discovery at Alotau

I was so pleased to discover a lively group of tertiaries who had gathered at Alotau. I also discovered that they have continued to regard themselves as belonging to a separate Region from Popondetta, and that Anselm Rupusina had continued to exercise leadership. He was certainly weary but nevertheless kept on doing it while people expected it of him. I expressed our gratitude to Anselm for all he had done.

Elections

While at Aghenambo we had an election for a Regional Minister for Popondota Diocese. I am pleased to say there were two candidates including a woman, and after voting, John Douglas Hevari was elected.

We also had an election for Regional Minister for Dogura Diocese. Again there were two candidates and having handed out slips of paper on which people were to write the name of their preferred candidate, and after singing Veni Creator I asked voters to bring their votes forward and place them under the Bible on the table at the front. This was done and the outcome was the election of Michael Hirodidi.

From this Advent Newsletter onwards all Tertiaries who have email will receive it in electronic form only. (Any who want a paper copy as well will need to request one from the editor). In doing this we will save a considerable amount of money and a few trees! Those who do not have email will receive the Newsletter in paper form by post as usual.



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

Formation

I have appointed Randolph Peroko as Formation Guardian for Dogura Region. Randolph is an experienced and capable priest and I have confidence he will do all he can to enable formation for novices and also for the recently professed.

Teaching

While in both Regions where we were living in community we took the opportunity to have a session of teaching each morning on moments in the life of Francis and also on the Third Order itself.

Newsletter

I took batches of the latest Newsletter with us and was most interested to see how much the PNG tertiaries loved receiving it and read it avidly. While some may not be able to write English well, they can speak it and read it...

Renewals and Professions

In both Regions we had renewals for Novices and the Professed and in Alotau I was presented with 8 novices to be professed. Some of them had been novices for 6 years!

Visit of Provincial Minister to Milne Bay Province

I know that Colin Fidock had hoped to visit Dogura area with Tony Hall Matthews in 2012, but that plan had to be cancelled at the last minute. While Bishop Tony is warmly remembered as having visited Dogura area at least twice, and even though I have now found out that Keith Slater went there once in the 1990's, there is almost no memory of his visit except perhaps in the minds of some very elderly and isolated tertiaries who were unable to come to Alotau.

Such lack of memory of course is related not to amnesia, but to the fact that most tertiaries in the Region have joined us since that time.

They have felt neglected by the lack of Provincial Minister's visits and to a great degree some of the things I have had to remedy have been caused by this. I apologised to them for this oversight.

I believe that there should be a Provincial Minister's visit to PNG every two years and that both regions should be included on such a visit.

Contacts

Bronwyn and I worked thoroughly through the PNG address lists alongside local tertiaries and have what is now as up to date a list as we can have for PNG. The revised list has now been sent to you all. Some tertiaries have died, some enquirers had mistakenly been added as novices, some have disappeared and a number had been professed after election though listed as EP. For some departed tertiaries we have no date of death, so I have asked that they be added to day 31 without dates.

Relationship between tssf and SSF in PNG

The relationship between the tertiary community and SSF remains strong in PNG, and there is also a positive relationship between tssf and the Companions of SSF.

At Alotau, some Companions helped every day with the shopping and cooking and thus enabled our gathering.

Thanks

I would like to put on record my thanks to Harold Joinoba, who served 3 terms as Regional Minister for Popondetta. Harold

did a magnificent job in facilitating our visit especially to Popondetta Region. He was constantly looking out for us, and with Jean Isemba at whose home we were based, and along with Rita Semini they made sure our visit was safe, comfortable and useful.

Commitment ...Ours and theirs.

We have many very keen tertiaries in PNG who are an integral part of our Province and have much to teach us.

We must encourage them in their life and vocation and be open to receive from their lives of extreme simplicity.

+Godfrey tssf

Tribute to Helen Granowski as Provincial Chaplain

By: Sandra Jackson

At our October Chapter meeting in Canberra our much loved Provincial Chaplain, Helen Granowski, completed her second three-year term of office and handed over her mantle as it were to John Gibson, who had been elected to succeed her.



According to our manual, the Chaplain shall be a professed tertiary in holy orders, is responsible, together with the Provincial Minister, for the pastoral care of the Third Order, overseeing novice formation and receiving the reports of Regional Ministers.

Helen has carried out those responsibilities with great dedication and love, taking a keen interest in and travelling around the various Regions. She has led retreats, taught, encouraged, and mentored many people, sharing her store of wisdom and vision of Franciscan spirituality, as well as her knowledge as one of the longest professed tertiaries in our Province. Her caring ministry and friendship have been greatly appreciated by Regional ministers - especially those new to Chapter. The two Provincial Ministers with whom she has served for most of her two terms, Ted Witham and Colin Fidock, are both thankful for her wise counsel, guidance and understanding.

In our Victorian Region we have been grateful for Helen's liturgical ministry to us over many years at our regular meetings and especially at our Melbourne Conference in 2012. In all this she has shown a willingness to give of herself quite sacrificially, shown perhaps most clearly soon after her appointment as Provincial Chaplain in her courageous acceptance of an invitation to visit her sisters and brothers in PNG in August 2010 – a formidable undertaking for a woman almost seventy-seven! So dear Helen, a heartfelt thank you from all your sisters and brothers of TSSF and especially, little sister Sandra J.



Tribute to Reverend John Gibson

By: Graeme Dunn tssf



John Gibson is now in his 6th year as Regional Minister for the New South Wales B/ACT Region. He will relinquish this role on December 1 this year. One of the great joys for John in his ministry as Regional Minister has been to engage with enquirers and receive the annual renewal of the professed - novices and tertiaries, as well as the admission of novices and their profession as tertiaries.

Regular gatherings centred in Canberra, Goulburn, Bathurst and latterly Wagga Wagga all help to give expression to being 'in community' and the opportunities for worship, fellowship and sharing/learning. This encourages

us in our Franciscan walk and gives living expression to the Aims of our Order. There is growth in our coastal area and opportunities for them to come together.

John paid tribute to the area convenors for their great support and the way they encourage and gather together those in their own areas as well as the way everyone has contributed with their time and talents. Also vital have been the support of Chapter members. It has been a great joy to serve as Regional Minister when there is such enthusiasm and commitment. Whoever follows me as Regional Minister can be assured of my support and I feel confident by all members of our region

The regional newsletters that John has sent out have been an important means of communication keeping us informed of matters relating to our region including prayer support for our sick as well as news regarding our province.

At the recent Chapter Meeting in Canberra John was elected as Provincial Chaplain and endorsed at the General Chapter meeting. John takes over from Helen Granowski and expresses his personal thanks to Helen for her ministry as Provincial Chaplain.

John is looking forward to his new ministry as Provincial Chaplain. The duties are laid out in our Manual. The approach that John will be taking is to see how he can best carry out those duties. Initially he will seek the advice of Godfrey and Chapter members. By doing this John's hope is that the role of Provincial Chaplain will build on the past and further develop in ways which are helpful. Importantly though, as with all positions in the Third Order he sees it as a servant ministry.

As John walks a new road on his spiritual journey, may we all as members of the Third Order walk with him and pray that he will further develop the important work of Provincial Chaplain.

*"Go forth in peace, for you have followed the good road. Go forth without fear, for he who created you has made you holy, has always protected you, and loves you as a mother."
-St. Clare of Assisi*

24 December – Christmas Eve

A reading from 'The Major Legend of St Francis',

By: St Bonaventure

Taken from: "A Sense of the Divine"

It happened, three years prior to his death, that blessed Francis decided to celebrate at the town of Greccio the memory of the birth of the child Jesus with the greatest possible solemnity, in order to arouse devotion.

He had a manger prepared, hay carried in and an ox and an ass led to the spot. The brothers are summoned, the people arrive, the forest amplifies with their cries, and that venerable night is rendered brilliant and solemn by a multitude of bright lights and by resonant and harmonious hymns of praise.

The man of God stands before the manger, filled with piety, bathed in tears, and overcome with joy. A solemn Mass is celebrated over the manger, with Francis, a Levite of Christ, chanting the holy gospel. Then he preaches to the people standing around him about the birth of the poor King, whom, whenever he means to call him, he called in his tender love, the Babe of Bethlehem.

A certain virtuous and truthful knight, Sir John of Greccio, who had abandoned worldly, military activity out of love of Christ and had become an intimate friend of the man of God, claimed that he saw a beautiful little child asleep in that manger whom the blessed father Francis embraced in both his arms and seemed to wake it from sleep.

The hay from the crib was kept by the people and miraculously cured sick animals and drove away different kinds of pestilence. Thus God glorified his servant in every way and demonstrated the efficacy of his holy prayer by the evident signs of wonderful miracles.

The four Provincial Ministers - past and present - at the Conference



Front row: Val Tibbey, Colin Fidock,
Back row: Godfrey Fryar and Keith Slater

“For The Beauty Of The Earth”

By: John Rutter

For the beauty of the earth,
For the beauty of the skies,
For the love which from our birth
Over and around us lies;
over and around us lies:
Lord of all, to thee we raise
This our joyful hymn of praise.
For the beauty of each hour
Of the day and of the night,
Hill and vale, and tree and
flower, Sun and moon and stars of light:
Sun and moon and stars of light: Lord of all,
to thee we raise.

This our joyful hymn of praise.
For the joy of human love, Brother, sister, parent, child,
Friends on earth, and friends above,
For all gentle thoughts and mild: Lord of all, to thee we raise,
This our joyful hymn of praise.
For each perfect gift of thine, To our race so freely given,
Graces human and divine, Flow'rs of earth and buds of heav'n:
flow'rs of earth and buds of heav'n: Lord of all, to thee we raise
This our joyful hymn of praise, our hymn of praise.



Third Order Franciscan Conference

A report by John Gibson tssf

The conference was held at the Canberra Grammar School from the 1st October to 4th October, 2015 with the theme “Together in Creation”

The Welcome to Country by Allodial Elder, Guumaal Ngambri Mingku very much set the tone for our time together with his openness and sharing with us. We also appreciated the welcome to the diocese by Assistant Bishop Matt Brain.

We were greatly blessed with our keynote speakers. The Rev'd Dr Alan Cadwallader led us in the bible studies on Mark 4 and Mark 10:32-42. They were both scholarly, thought provoking and interspersed with questions to think about. Bishop Godfrey and Bronwyn Fryar spoke to us about their recent visit and experiences in Assisi; a place to which we are all emotionally linked.

Professor Matthew Colless in a very professional but relaxed manner gave us “The BIG Picture” with the latest research and insights into God’s unfolding creation and our part in it. He addressed three questions. What do we know? What don’t we know? And how do we know the stuff we know?

The Rev'd Canon Professor Scott Cowdell gave us “A Girardian Perspective on Creation: On Being Called into Being Beyond Rivalry, and What That Can Mean for Planet Earth.” Drawing on Rene Girard a French-American thinker, his theological interpreter James Alison and his own deep knowledge and insights. Scott touched on the Girardian take on the Genesis creation stories; Creation vs Redemption and concluded with a word about St Francis.

Saturday afternoon was given over to a visit to the Centre for Christianity & Culture where our host was the Director Bishop Stephen Pickard who spoke to us and gave us a guided walk. There was time to go to Floriade where we were greeted by Kym Le Riche.

The regional presentations showed the diversity of our Province and was a great opportunity in a relaxed and entertaining way to find out about the varied activities and approaches of our various regions.

Our worship together was central to all that we did and we were greatly blessed by our musicians coordinated by Gemma Dashwood. Our worship included a moving “Benedictus Service” led by The Rev'd Dr Sarah Bachelard. Sarah centred her homily on the “Canticle of the Sun” which invites us to recognise the promise for transforming our relationship with God’s good earth and with our own creatureliness. Sarah explored with us what this might mean. On Saturday evening we celebrated the Transitus of St Francis. The Sung Eucharist on St Francis’ Day with the novicing of James Ellis from Canberra and the renewal of vows was a fitting finale.

Prior to our Eucharist we had the General Chapter chaired by our Provincial Minister + Godfrey. This provided the opportunity for him to report to us on matters covering our Province and for us in turn to ask questions and make suggestions to be discussed by Chapter.

Daily Obedience

From: David White,
(Communications Officer)



Brothers and Sisters,
Gordon Hooker has updated the electronic versions of the Community Obedience to reflect the changes to the Prayer Cycle sent out yesterday. If you are using the html version (<http://tssf.org.au/communityobedience>), then simply refresh the cache in your browser, and the new version will be downloaded. If you are using the Android version, then go to <http://tssf.org.au/downloads> to download the latest version. You will need to uninstall the current version before installing the new package.

Isaiah 9:6 (KJV)

“For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.



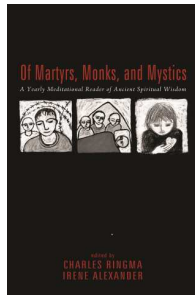
Of great value was our coming together *in community*. The opportunities for fellowship, chatting over meals, renewing old friendships and making new friends was just great.

The planning committee enjoyed the opportunity of welcoming you to Canberra. We also acknowledge all the staff of the Grammar School for their efforts in making our stay as comfortable as possible and for the facilities they made available to us.

“Of Martyrs, Monks and Mystics”

Latest Book Release

By: Charles Ringma, tssf
Review



“The early fathers and mothers of the Church have provided us with a well of wisdom that was fed by their openness to God, so much so that their words flowing from that relationship have almost the quality of scripture about them. Charles has lowered his bucket and raised up a gift, brimming full of the grace of God. It is such a treasure to have so much of the original texts accompanied by very brief reflections that invite us to do our own work of opening ourselves to the truth and wisdom of God.”

—Bishop Godfrey Fryar, Provincial Minister,
Franciscan Third Order Asia-Pacific



The Angelus

This poem was sent to me by Reverend Pirrial Cleft (Stroud)

By: Lesbia Harford, an Australian poet who died in 1925 (which explains the exclusive language):

*I am no mystic. All the ways of God are dark to me;
I know not if he lived or if he died in agony.*

*My every act has reference to man; some human need
of this one, or of that, or of myself inspires the deed.*

*But when I hear the Angelus I say a Latin prayer,
hoping the dim, incanted word may shine some way,
somewhere.*

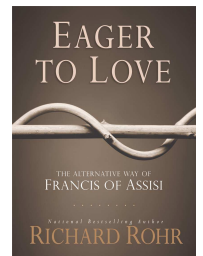
*Words and a will may work upon my mind till ethics
turn to that transcendent mystic love with which
the Seraphim burn.*

Book Review:

By: Gordon Hooker tssf

Eager to Love: The Alternative Way of Francis of Assisi

By: Richard Rohr



Believe it or not this book is the first book that Richard Rohr ofm has written on St. Francis and St. Clare of Assisi, and their legacy to Christianity and to other faith systems for that matter. I first purchased the kindle version as I prefer to read using my tablet, but I enjoyed this book so much I purchased the hard cover version of the book as well. I have proceeded to mark it up with pen and trusty high lighter. The first five chapters are a good introduction to contemplative prayer and the life of St. Francis and St. Clare. The remainder of the chapters including the appendices go into Franciscan spirituality and the thinking of Franciscan philosophers and theologians like St. Bonaventure, and Blessed John Dun Scotus, and how their thinking was a different way of looking at Christianity and message our Lord Jesus was sending us through his gospel and his death on the cross.

This is a book for those just starting their Franciscan journey and for those who have been on that journey for years. It looks beyond the early writings and aligns the message within this concept of contemplation and action. It teases out those difficult concepts that Scotus writes about in his “A Treatise on God as First Principle”, and St. Bonaventure’s “Vision Of God, Life, And Faith”. The book does get quite heavy in places, especially in the appendices, but for most part I found it easy to read and digest.

I believe it is a must read and the best way to approach it is to read through it quickly at first and to get a feeling for the overall message, and then start reading it slowly and with focus. You will find many places where you find yourself jotting down notes to remember and to reflect on.

Collect

God, you resist the proud and give grace to the humble: help us not to think proudly, but to serve you with the humility that pleases you, so we may walk in the steps of your servant Francis and receive the gift of your grace; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

*“While you are proclaiming peace with
your lips, be careful to have it even more
fully in your heart.”*

- St. Francis of Assisi



Peter Cannings, the Chair of Franciscan Aid, continues to inform and encourage. Having visited seven areas to make presentations and talk about the aims and work of the charity in 2014, he is now well on target for visiting a further twelve this year. He has already arranged to attend a number of area meetings in 2016, and would be pleased to hear from any Areas that have not yet invited him.

In addition, Peter has raised over £2,000 for Franciscan Aid by running the Reading Half Marathon in March of this year. In the same month, Colin Alexander raised a similar amount by making a sponsored parachute jump.

Meanwhile, individual areas are continuing to make generous donations, in the hope of supporting specific projects (such as the primary school at Guimbitayan in the Philippines, although they have agreed that any surplus funds should be diverted to other projects as appropriate.

It's good to have feedback

You might like to read this extract from a letter from "Homes to Grow", a children's home in Simon's Town, South Africa, supported by Franciscan Aid and the late Nolan Tobias:

'Our children are growing fast, and we are trying to get them into better schools. At present, they are in classes of about 50 children. One of our little girls has been accepted into a local Waldorf School, which gives us joy. Their education is going to be a growing financial responsibility, so you will see why we are doubly grateful for your donation. The children are flourishing physically, emotionally, intellectually and spiritually under the guidance of their loving foster mother. This is what we have been working and praying for, and it is rewarding to see.'

Other work Franciscan Aid Helps

- St Peters Chapel, South Sudan - www.undertreeschools.org/
 - Computers for a Community Centre slum in Rio de Janeiro
 - Re-forestation project in Solomon Islands –the trees are used for building and fuel so it is important they are replaced.
 - Playground equipment at the Peace and Reconciliation Centre in Bethlehem – this is the only such equipment in the whole of Bethlehem.
 - Water for Uganda
- Please pray for all the projects mentioned above and for the Trustees who have to decide how to respond to all requests.

Prayer for Peace for the members of the Abrahamic Faiths

(Jew, Muslim and Christian)
 By: Pax Christi. www.paxchristi.org.



O God, you are the source of life and peace,
 Praised be your name forever.
 We know it is you who turn
 Our minds to thoughts of peace.
 Hear our prayer in this time of crisis.

Prayer and Action for Australia's response to the Refugee Crisis

By: Angela Peverell tssf

How to respond effectively to the plight of Asylum Seekers currently in detention facilities (on and off-shore) has become of increasing concern to the NSW A Tertiaries. We are of course, not alone in our despair and are aligned with human rights agencies, religious organisations and the secular media, which is damning of the Australian Government's response to this crisis of humanity.

Our desire to be more actively involved in addressing this situation was sparked during 2015, following the call by Archbishop Philip Freier for Anglicans to contribute to a response by the church to Government.

In addition, we have heard of our sister Carol's (NSW A) firsthand experience working on Nauru and Manus and she has courageously shared her stories of the detainees she has worked with. Carol has also presented her findings at a UN forum with the support of Franciscans International.

During Chapter it was resolved that as individuals, Tertiaries can (should) contact our Local Members to express our despair and concern which many of us have done. Alternatively, there is the option to write via the Catholic organisation, CAPSA: <http://capsa.org.au/petition/>

With three-quarters of the 12,000 Syrian asylum seekers planned to be located in Western Sydney later this year, this will present a significant challenge for government and community services providers. This may be an opportunity for NSW A to get involved at the grass roots level.

We believe that if we can help new refugees to better integrate into our communities, we can make great strides in addressing community fears and send a strong message to our government that REFUGEES ARE WELCOME HERE!

Please pray with us. (See C of E Prayer for the Refugee Crisis below.)

The Church of England Prayer for the Refugee Crisis:

Heavenly Father, you are the source of all goodness, generosity and love.

We thank you for opening the hearts of many to those who are fleeing for their lives.

Help us now to open our arms in welcome, and reach out our hands in support. That the desperate may find new hope, and lives torn apart be restored.

We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ Your Son, Our Lord, who fled persecution at His birth and at His last triumphed over death.

Amen

Your power changes hearts
 Muslims, Christians and Jews remember,
 And profoundly affirm,
 That they are followers of the one God,
 Children of Abraham, brothers and sisters;
 Enemies begin to speak to one another;
 Those who were estranged join hands in friendship;
 Nations seek the way of peace together.
 Strengthen our resolve to give witness to these Truths by the way we live.
 Give to us:
 Understanding that puts an end to strife;
 Mercy that quenches hatred; and
 Forgiveness that overcomes vengeance.
 Empower all people to live in your law of love AMEN.

An Excerpt from the DVD of 'Francis and the Sultan' - A Model for Peacemaking documentary is perfect timing

By: Sr. Rose Pacatte |

Part one is a clear and accessible telling of the story of Francis' journey that concluded with a meeting with the sultan. Part two talks about the legacy of the encounter between Francis and the sultan, the misinterpretations of the encounter through stories and art, and the efforts of a Franciscan artist to render an authentic portrayal of that meeting and dispel the myths that have arisen over the centuries.

The goal of "Francis and the Sultan" is to articulate and demonstrate the essence of interreligious dialogue and encourage viewers to actively participate in dialogic action with people who believe differently because without dialogue, the alternative is hostility and worse. The way to do this is modeled on how Francis and the Sultan were with one another, by starting with the respect they most certainly had for those things that we today hold in common, such as belief in the one true God, the centrality of God's will in our lives, charity for the poor, and the desire for peace.

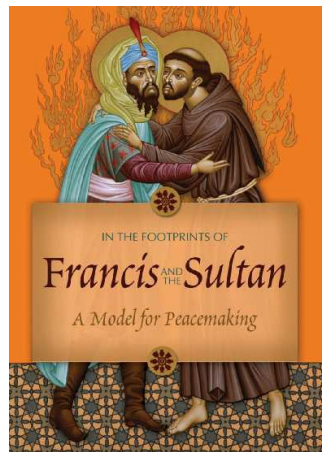
Experts and scholars include Franciscans Murray Bodo, Michael Cusato and Michael Calabria, as well as Fareed Munir, Imam Yahya Hendi and Archbishop Michael Fitzgerald. Warren is a specialist in interreligious dialogue and is involved in Muslim-Christian activities from a Franciscan perspective

The cover art for the DVD is by Franciscan iconographer Robert Lentz, who by his art wants to dispel the myths about the encounter between Francis and the sultan perpetrated first by Francis' biography of St. Bonaventure and then by art, beginning with the early Renaissance. Here, he shows Francis and the sultan as equals, where other depictions show Francis preaching and in a position of power. Part two of the film is a lesson in cultural and artistic analysis and the importance of questioning the images we often take for granted.

The thing that impressed me most about this film is its warmth, lucidity and gentle hope, and the dedication of Sr. Kathy Warren, who also narrates the film, to see this project through in these post-Sept. 11 years. And though more than a decade has passed since the attacks on the World Trade Center, the need for interreligious dialogue is stronger than ever.

Calabria, an Islamic scholar, says in the film, " 'The Story of Francis and the Sultan' gives us a new paradigm for encountering 'the other' and ultimately for embracing 'the other.' " " Why is this important? Because "the alternative is violent confrontation."

"In the Footprints of Francis and the Sultan: a Model for Peacemaking" is available from Franciscan Communications. It's a prophetic resource for our times.



"Finding Saint Francis" the Movie

For more information go to

<http://www.findingsaintfrancis.com>

SYNOPSIS ABOUT THE FILM

Peter, a young executive in his early thirties, arrives at a Franciscan Friary dressed in a city suit but looking as though he hasn't slept for several days. He is looking for sanctuary from a life which has become meaningless. He is greeted by Brother William, the guest master of the Friary.

While William is showing Peter where he is staying, a bell rings in the courtyard announcing that afternoon tea is available. When they re-enter the courtyard, Peter finds that it is full of young people with loads of film gear who are obviously about to set up for a new scene. William informs Peter that the film crew are spending a fortnight at the friary filming a modern version of 'The Life of St. Francis'.

The Director of the film is devastated that he has lost the leading actor playing the role of the young Francis but he persuades Peter to take the role. The story within the film covers the life of Francis from his birth in the latter part of the twelfth century to his death in the early part of the thirteenth century. It is full of colourful stories woven together to give us a rich portrait of a fascinating man known as the patron saint of the environment who has influenced the lives of countless people.

The film ends with a scene of an old Francis surrounded by people, lying on the ground, dying, in the same place that we first saw Peter at the beginning of the film. The last shot is of Peter standing alone remembering all the scenes he has seen and experienced over the past two weeks. It is a very different Peter who we see walking away from the Friary.



Sharing with the Franciscan Community



From left: Donald, Ben, Daniel, Nathan James, Sister Joyce, Alfred BoonKong, Bruce Paul, and James Andrew

FRIARY 50th Anniversary in Brisbane

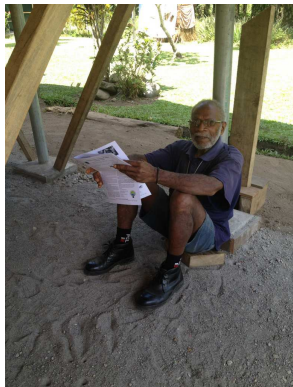
3rd October at
Old Friary
Centre for Christian Spirituality,
Brookfield

This celebration was shared by many familiar faces, with music and story telling.



Br Donald Campbell and Rev Illtyd Loveluck

Popondetta Tertiaries reading the TSSF Newsletter



Reginald Aura



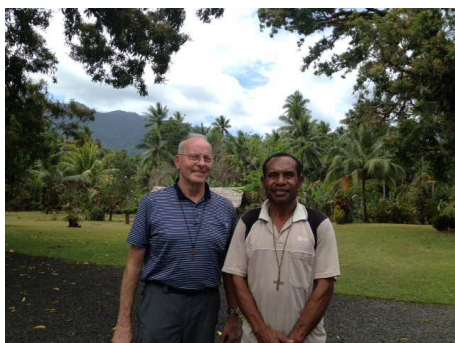
Rita Simeni



Daniel, Alan Haycroft Bruce Paul

Dogura Diocese

Godfrey Fryar with
the newly-elected
Regional Minister
of Dogura Diocese,
Michael Hirodidi



Louisa Aradina and John-Peter Wairanumo who are brother and sister and were professed on the same day at Ukaka, Dogura diocese.



From left: David Bertram (representing Africa), Godfrey Fryar(Asia Pacific), Tom Johnson (Americas), John Heberton, Averil Swanton (Europe), Pip Colgan, Ken Norian.

Meeting of the Provincial Ministers in Auckland

By John Heberton outgoing Provincial Minister Province of the Pacific.

Over the last week of June first week of July we hosted the Ministers meeting at Vaughan Park in Auckland. The Auckland Area organised a wonderful programme for the ministers that surrounded our business sessions. Thank you Rose Christie-French and Margaret Bedggood for co-ordinating the events, and Pip Colgan for organising the powhiri, Anne Moody for the dinner, Chris Barfoot for the bush / bird sanctuary (Tahuna Torea) walk and Terry Molloy for the Pacific Island dinner. All this allowed them to gain a sense of who we are, and the multi-cultural and Pacific setting in which we live. They all had a wonderful time and were grateful for all that was done. Thank you too to Pip for being such a fantastic secretary.

We did do some business. Some of the key things decided on were:

Rose Christie-French has been working on stories on Francis, and on behalf of the Ministers the Principles and Community Obedience in plain English. The ministers were very impressed, approved the wording of the Community Obedience alternative and commended for her work and dedication in producing both these for distribution and use to all five provinces.

It was also decided that IPTOC 2017 would have a focus on formation, both before and after profession and asks that each province agree that one of its three representatives at IPTOC 2017 be a person who has oversight of / responsibility for formation.

Em Colgan wondered if there was some way to encourage younger tertiaries (under 40) by having contact with others of their own age. They have decided on a way forward for this too.

A new video on the life of St Francis is being developed and will be ready for purchase very shortly. Details re purchase of the Francis DVD while be sent out by Averil when available to each Minister Provincial.

With my term coming to an end Ken invited Averil to take over from me as Assistant Minister General. Averil agreed with the proviso that she would not be putting her name forward for the position of Minister General at IPTOC 2017.

“May this Advent season be a time for bringing hope, transformation and fulfilment into the Advent of our lives.”

—Author Unknown

REPORT FROM CHAPTER

By: Bishop Godfrey Fryar

The Chapter of the Third Order met at Canberra Grammar School from September the 29th. It was followed by our Conference and General Chapter and Chapter then resumed briefly when the Conference concluded on St Francis Day.

Here are key points from the Chapter meeting.

- The Provincial Minister reported on the progress of inquirers in Sri Lanka some of whom will be noviced early in 2016. There are also inquirers in Korea at a very early stage. One inquirer from China has now been made a novice.
- Chapter warmly expressed its thanks to our Chaplain Helen Granowski who has completed her term of office.
- The new Formation Notes have been sent to all tertiaries in Australia and East Asia. In spite of the Provincial Minister's request for a donation of \$10.00 towards the cost of production and postage only so far 30 tertiaries have responded!
- \$2150 received from tertiaries for the Stroud Property Maintenance and Improvement Appeal and has been given to the SSF Association.
- A new statute with regard to what should be done should a Regional Minister fail to perform their duties was passed.
- Chapter affirmed the requirement that Area Convenors should be elected annually.
- Chapter affirmed that novices should not be rushed to profession simply because they have completed two years, but that Novice Counsellors and the Regional Minister should be assured that they have been properly formed before profession takes place. Preparation is not an academic exercise.
- It was affirmed that Tertiaries can only leave the Third Order after they have been released from their life long vows by chapter. Any who are released will continue to be prayed for by the community for twelve months after release, on Day 31 of our prayer cycle.

Chapter encouraged Regional Ministers to claim their expenses from the Treasurer so that chapter has a realistic understanding of regional costs. (Regional Ministers who do not wish to have the money are free to donate such reimbursement back to tssf.)

- The income and expenditure budget for 2016 with forward projections for 2017 and 2018 was passed. In 2016 we will have a deficit budget as we owe substantial sums of money to The Central Fund of the Third Order.
- As at chapter only 171 tertiaries of the 320 in Australia and East Asia had paid their 2015 subscriptions!
- The subscription rate for 2016 will be \$125.00 single and \$190.00 for a couple.
- Each Regional Minister reported to Chapter on the life of the order in their regions.
- Bishop Godfrey, The Provincial Minister, reported on his and Bronwyn's recent visit to tertiaries in Papua New Guinea. They visited both Popondetta and Dogura Regions. Renewals took place in both regions and a teaching programme over several days was offered. John Douglas Hervari was elected as Regional Minister for Popondetta Region and Michael Hirodidi for Dogura, which is now fully operational as a separate Region. Randolph Peroko was appointed by the Provincial Minister as Formation Guardian for Dogura Region. Chapter have budgeted for each new Regional Minister to attend chapter in Australia once in their three year term.
- A working group has been established to develop compliance guidelines for compliance with the 'Faithfulness in Service' code of conduct as it may apply to any members of TSSF.
- Chapter affirmed Bishop Godfrey's wish to reappoint Sandra Jackson as Assistant Provincial Minister for the next three years.
- After prayerful consideration of possible candidates, Chapter elected John Gibson as Chaplain for the next three years in succession to Helen Granowski.
- Wayne Philp was reappointed as Provincial Secretary for the next three years.
- Chapter wishes to appoint Peter Bruncker, John Blackmore, Colin Fidock and Rae Witham to join our team of Novice Counsellors. Hilary Bart, John Davies and Valerie Kaye are to retire and Patti Singleton is to have a break for a year.
- The following novices were elected to profession: Jacqueline Fewtrell, Fay Leutton, Peter Watson, and Diana Eagles from QLD B/Northern NSW, Suzanne Hayes from NSW A, and Tim Narrayay from NSW B/ACT.
- Peter Llewellyn who was released as a member of TSSF some years ago has asked to re-join the Order and Chapter has warmly responded to this request. He will spend 6 months being mentored before formally being recognised as a professed tertiary.
- Chapter reminds professed tertiaries that the profession cross is 'the habit' of members of the third order and only this cross should be worn when members are identifying as tertiaries. Tau novice crosses should not be worn by tertiaries after profession but may be handed back for the use of another novice.
- Receipts for subscriptions will only be provided if tertiaries tick the box on the subs form asking for a receipt.
- In response to the Primate's Call to Action for Refugees, tertiaries will be given information in the next Newsletter as to how to connect with community groups set up for this purpose in their area. Angela Peverell from NSW A will be the contact person.
- In response to a request from General Chapter, tertiaries are encouraged to become involved in local Reconciliation Action plans.

Shout to the Lord Because the Savior is Born!



Excerpt taken from: St Francis of

Assisi, "Vespers of the Lord's
birth, Antiphon, Holy Virgin Mary (Psalm XV)," 156-7*

Exult in God our Help!

Shout to the Lord God living and true with cries of
gladness! Because the Lord the Most High, the Awesome,
is the Great King over all the earth.

Because the Most Holy Father of heaven, our King
before all ages, sent His Beloved Son from on high, and
He was born of the Blessed Virgin Holy Mary.

He called to me: You are my Father

And I will place Him, my firstborn, as the Highest,
above all the kings of the earth.

On that day the Lord sent His mercy and at night His song.
This is the day the Lord has made let us rejoice and be glad
in it.

For the Most Holy Child has been given to us and
has been born for us on the way and placed in a manger
because he did not have a place in the inn.

Glory to the Lord God in the highest and peace on
earth to those of good will. Let the heavens rejoice and the
earth exult, let the sea and its fullness resound, let the fields
and all that is in them be joyful.

Sing a new song to the Lord, sing to the Lord all the
earth. because the Lord is great and worth of praise, He is
awesome beyond all gods.

Give to the Lord, you families of nations, give to the
Lord glory and praise, give to the Lord the glory due to His
name.

* * * * *

Dear Sisters and Brothers,



During this Advent Season, may we all
unite in prayer, love and peace for the world, as we await
the birth of our Saviour.

May we find it in our hearts to be generous of spirit, give us
reason to live in hope, that light will overrule darkness, liberate
our thoughts from fears and prejudices, and that we may never
feel alone.

This Edition shares articles from General Chapter and
the Franciscan Conference held in Canberra.

We also share our Faith journey, and this provides information
on a Regional and overseas level.

Your co-operation is proactive in providing
communication to our wider community.

I thank each one of you for providing information/articles,
photos, and your support in your readiness to assist me, this
year.

Please send submissions to gloria@radiantpathways.com.au

**The approximate date deadline for the Easter Edition is the
15th February, 2016.**

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

Wishing you all a Happy and Joyous Christmas.

Gloria

Just a handful of dirt

By: Stuart Hamilton (Kathy Dunn's brother-in-law)

A handful of dirt on a hill far away,
just a hand full of rocks and stones;

Can it tell the story from long ago
and why it has somber tones?

If you study it close you will see
on the rocks a stain of something dark.

And feel the presence of somebody
near yet somebody torn apart.

You close your hand and feel it grind
as the particles crunch and move.

And the sharp pieces bite and cut the skin
of the palm of your hand so smooth.

You begin to wonder of times now past
and a time of injustice and fear.

And you feel the hurt in that handful of dirt
and you find it will bring a tear.

For above this dirt there rose a cross
and a man was hung there to die.

And his blood ran down and darkened the ground
and the whole world wondered why.

And the earth it quaked on that terrible day
and darkness was all around.

As the blood of a man so just and true,
soaked into - - - holy ground.

Then you look at the dirt you hold in your hand
as the colour it stains your skin.

And you think, "do I have his blood on my hands",
and your feelings churn within.

You throw it down from where it came
and you try to clean the stain.

But no matter how much you rub and scratch
the colour still remains.

And you look at the ground at your handful of dirt
then you lift your eyes to the sky.

And remember the man and the reason he came
and the reason he had to die.

For the Son of Man and Son of God
gave his life so willingly.

And you know that His grace both given and shown
was intended for you and for me.



“The Mirror of the Cross”

From: “Clare of Assisi –
A Heart Full of Love”

By: Ilia Delio, OSF



Gazing on the mirror of the cross each day is not only an outward movement for Clare but a self-reflective one as well. For the mirror of the cross is not only the image of God but the image of our humanity as well. If we are unsure what it means to be the image of God, Clare reminds us that we are confronted by this image in the outstretched figure of Christ, nailed to a cross. The image of our humanity is shown to us in the disturbing reality of the Crucified.

Clare recognizes that the human person is a limited creature who, being created and contingent, is subject to all the difficulties of limitations, including the fragmentation of sin. However, humans also have the capacity to transcend themselves, to go beyond self out of concern or love for another. When we come to authentic personhood in the mirror of the cross, our image, we are on the path to contemplation and transformation in God. Clare helps Agnes to contemplate her own image by studying the figure of the Crucified. She writes:

Look at the border of this mirror, that is, the poverty of Him who was placed in a manger and wrapped in swaddling clothes.

O marvelous humility!

O astonishing poverty!

The King of angels,

The Lord of heaven and earth,

Is laid in a manger!

Then, at the surface of the mirror, consider the holy humility. The blessed poverty: the untold labors and burdens that He endured for the redemption of the whole human race. Then, in the depth of this same mirror, contemplate the ineffable charity that led Him to suffer on the wood of the Cross and to die there the most shameful kind of death.



Edmund Rice International

A summary prepared by Zora

“Not a single skeleton was left in the closet when it came to Australia’s second review at the 23rd session of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) on the 9th November 2015.

Due to the sheer volume of participants (more than half of the UN member states), each countries’ delegate was only given a 65 second opportunity to address Australia’s human rights regime and put forward their recommendations.

Whilst several human rights issues were brought up during the review, unsurprisingly, the overwhelmingly large proportion of those recommendations related to asylum seekers. In fact, almost half of the recommendations made to Australia make reference to asylum seeker policies and offshore detention. These included calls either to immediately close offshore detention seekers, to remove children from detention, to stop boat turn-backs, and to assess issues of non-refoulement.

While Australia’s delegation seemed shy to accept such recommendations, Edmund Rice International, along with Franciscans International, FMSI, Destination Justice and ACRATH, saw these recommendations as grand success. After submitting a joint report of the United Nations as part of Australia’s UPR process, not only did more than half of the member states speak to issues outlined in our report, but ten out of the twelve countries our NGO coalition lobbied directly put forward recommendations paralleling our concerns - an 83% success rate. The coalition was particularly pleased that the United States make reference to closure of Indigenous rural communities in Western Australia, an issue specific to our report and lobbying efforts.

Given that Australia’s treatment of asylum seekers received undeniable global attention, the whole world will be watching to see how the State responds to this session’s recommendation. Let’s hope it’s one in the *right* direction.”



Mughli (Lebanese Rice Pudding)

Meghli, (pronounced MUUUGGGGLLLLYYY) is a traditional Lebanese pudding. It is made with rice flour

and spiced with anise, caraway and cinnamon and garnished with shredded coconut and various nuts -almonds, pistachos, and walnuts This sweet dish is basic and grounding.

Meghli means “boiled” in Arabic, which is a fitting name since there is boiling needed to cook the rice flour. This delicacy is served during a Christmas birth or birth of a newborn in the family. It is said that this brown pudding is symbolic of the fertile rich soil, and the nuts on top are like seeds that will sprout and grow on this soil – a perfect symbol for birth.

This recipe is a customary treat for the Christmas Season. It is also served at Christmas to observe the birth of Christ.

As this recipe is very sweet, it can be modified to suit requirements.

Ingredients:

- 1 cup of brown rice flour or (white rice)
- 8 cups of cold water
- 1 tablespoon ground cinnamon
- ½ tablespoon ground caraway
- 2 cups coconut sugar or (white sugar)
- for decoration: blanched almonds, pistachios, walnuts, shredded coconut, pine nuts and raisins

Preparation:

- In a pot, place the 8 cups of cold water, rice flour, sugar and spice mix. Put on high heat, mix and keep stirring until it boils.
- When it starts boiling, reduce to medium heat and continue stirring until the mixture thickens, about 15-20 minutes. Don’t stop mixing otherwise the contents will fall to the bottom and stick.
- Pour directly in small individual bowls and allow to cool at room temperature. Allow it to fully set so that the mixture firms up.
- Garnish with some shredded coconut, raisins and a medley of nuts.

Franciscan Conference Photo 1st-4th October, 2015, Canberra



Our Twilight Zone

“Jesus the Child We Worship”

By: Rev Ted Witham

From: Daily Meditations for Advent 2014

22nd December, Page 94

Ephesians 4:32-5:2

Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ has forgiven you. Therefore, be imitators of God, as beloved children, and live in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God. (NRSV)

Compared to most animals, we human beings do not have a strong sense of smell. On the other hand, the Bible imagines God enjoying fragrant aromas.

There was a special altar in the Temple just for incense. Away from the Temple, Psalm 141 sees prayer as a substitute for the incense, which was preferable. In the *Song of Solomon* myrrh and frankincense form part of the beloved's beauty (*Song 4:6*).

The wise men bring frankincense as a gift for the Christ-child, knowing that he would appreciate its fragrant aroma, and, as wise men knowing the hidden meanings of things, they bring diplomatic gifts of frankincense and myrrh to express the beauty and love of a divine king.

Gather together Paul's words from his letter to the Ephesians from the end of chapter 4 to the beginning of chapter 5 as you would gather Boronia flowers to make a sweet-smelling sheaf and savour aroma of these words by reading them through several times.

“There is a twilight zone in our hearts that we ourselves cannot see. Even when we know quite a lot about ourselves-our gifts and weaknesses, our ambitions and aspirations, our motives and our drives-large parts of ourselves remain in the shadow of consciousness. This is a very good thing. We will always remain partially hidden to ourselves. Other people, especially those who love us, can often see our twilight zones better than we ourselves can. The way we are seen and understood by others is different from the way we see and understand ourselves. We will never fully know the significance of our presence in the lives of our friends. That's a grace, a grace that calls us not only to humility, but to a deep trust in those who love us. It is the twilight zones of our hearts where true friendships are born.”

- Henri J.M. Nouwen

The Christ-child grew up and loved us, and gave himself for us as a fragrant offering to God, a new kind of sacrifice. He invites us to imitate him and allow our lives also to become a fragrant offering to God. We may do this by our kindness to one another, by our tender-heartedness, but our willingness to forgive.

In this Advent time, a circle is complete. The beloved Child has offered his life as a sacrifice, a fragrant aroma, for us. We are beloved children too, as we imitate his self-giving.

The journey we travel

By: David Masters

I have been Professed now for almost a year and I was reviewing my Rule recently. One of the points that has come out of this came the realisation that our own plans for where we might want to go aren't necessarily the directions that God has planned for us.

We humans usually like to plan out the journey we want to take in our lives. I thought I was going to take a certain study path related to Franciscanism and hopefully another pilgrimage to Santiago or to Assisi. I had it all planned out in my mind! I knew the topics I wanted to study, and I was looking forward to carrying all this out with Humility, Love and Joy!

I may be wrong but I suspect that many of us feel we have a certain amount of control of the path of our lives. However, my life is having to take a different path to the one I thought I was to travel. God seems to have other work for me!

This year, my wife has become chronically ill with heart problems combined with severe arthritis in one foot and also her hip. Now this article is not about our problems. It is about the direction that God has planned for us at some point in our lives. When these problems occur we can pray to God for help, but sometimes the help that (always) comes isn't the help we expected!

Being a carer for someone, as I am sure many of you will know, is not always easy. Re-adjustment to lives can be accompanied, at times, with worry, lack of sleep and I found on my own part, sometimes some resentment. Now, obviously, if one has taken on the commitments related to becoming a Franciscan, the idea of service to other people is foundational, so something of a conflict can develop in in oneself when it is realised that this resentment is surfacing.

Recently, my Spiritual Advisor, a very wise Benedictine nun, suggested a book by Wilfred Stinissen, "Abandoning ourselves to the God who loves us". He says, at one point "A problem that many people have today is that they no longer recognise God's will in everything that happens. They no longer believe in a Providence that allows all that takes place, to work for the good of those that love God (Rom 8:28)" We all have a tendency to think that God should give us what we think we want. Anything else that doesn't fit to our way can't be from God. What we have to realise is that our plan is not necessarily God's plan. We have to learn to completely trust in God's plan. Charles de Foucauld understood it in his prayer of abandonment. "Father, I abandon myself into your hands, do with me what you will. Whatever you may do, I thank you; I am ready for all, I accept all. Let only your will be done in me, and in all your creatures – I wish no more than this, O Lord."

So my study and travel plans have changed direction, I am learning (slowly!) to see God's plan in the issues surrounding me, and with it has come, I hope, a little more Humility, Love and Joy in my day to day life.



Old B Northern NSW Retreat

Evans Head October 26-28 2015

By: Sandra Beck

Present at this retreat were Br Howard from the Little Brothers of St Francis, Richard Brown, Hilary & Paul Singleton, John Tyman, Camelia Flanagan, Mary Birch, Jenny Priest, Michael & Sheila Hobbs, Lilo Szlavek, Pamela Ayscough, Val Butler, Alan Bentley, Dawn Punter and Sandra Beck. The venue was beautiful St John's Evans Head, and we could not have found a more accommodating spot. Everything was to hand and it was only a short walk from the beautiful Evans River or the Bowlo Club (Evans Head Bowling Club) where many of us stayed in comfortable cabins, providing our own breakfasts and dinners.

Ladies from the parish, which does not presently have an incumbent (if I were priested, I should hurry to live and worship there) kept us generously supplied with an overabundance of wicked delights for lunch morning and afternoon tea. We celebrated three Eucharists, each with different celebrants, morning and evening prayer as appropriate. The theme of the retreat was the Desert Fathers and themes of the addresses were Introduction to the Desert Fathers, Reflection on scripture, Bearers of the Gospels, and Discernment. Due to the fact that I tend to go into a reverie at retreat I may not have this quite right. The topics are of vital interest to me, and Brother Howard presented them in a simple, easily understandable way which aroused our interest. His Franciscan spirituality was an inspiration. He provided a wide range of books on the topic and also had honey and jams from the Hermitage for sale. He presented each of us with a package containing Bush Telegraphs (the Newspaper of the Hermitage), writing cards and envelopes and prayer cards prepared for and about the Brothers.

What was different about this retreat to me? In the past I have not only been desperate for silence but I have somewhat resented those who could not keep silent, yet at this retreat I chatted away in a way which I hope did not disturb others. I was stimulated. The country seaside atmosphere was very different to the city atmosphere to which I am habituated.

In summary I don't know if it was the venue, the leader the topic, the participants, the Northern New South Welsh-ness of it, or all the above, but for me at least it was a novel and deeply appreciated experience. Thank you Br Howard and thank you all concerned.

Franciscan & Holy Days To Note

2015

December	1	Requiem for all departed Franciscans
December	8	Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary
December	25	THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD

2016

February	10	Ash Wednesday
March	25	Good Friday
March	27	Easter Sunday
May	16	Margaret of Cortona
May	20	Bernardine of Sienna

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



Third Order Society of Saint Francis - Asia-Pacific Province 2016 Subscription Invoice and Donation Form

Greetings Brothers & Sisters tssf,

Your annual subscription to Third Order - Asia-Pacific Province for the year 2016 is due on 1st January 2016 and Chapter asks that it **be paid by 31st March 2016**. If you haven't paid for 2015 please do so by 31st December.

Payment for 2016 can be divided into instalments, if it helps spread the burden for you.

If you require a receipt, please tick the box and fill in the details below. A self-addressed envelope is appreciated.

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of any change in your contact details.

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• An extra gift to the Third Order - to help cover the running costs of our Order Insurances, Provincial Minister's Travel, Regional Ministers' Travel, Chapter, Travel to IPTOC, Tithe to World – wide Central Fund, Tithe to SSF, Communication: Manual, Prayer Cycle & Address Book, Newsletter, Website.		\$
• Gift to the First Order SSF Brothers (for their daily bread)		\$
• Care and development of the SSF Brother's Hermitage & the Old Monastery at Stroud		\$
• Donation to African Travel Fund (all Provinces must contribute a set amount to this fund)		\$
• Donation to Franciscan Aid (all Provinces must contribute a set amount to this fund)		\$
• Donation to "Regions in Formation" Fund – PNG, Asia, Sri Lanka		\$
• Donation to Franciscan International / JPIC - in Asia Pacific Region		\$
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NB – If for any reason you are unable to meet this obligation, please contact your Regional Minister

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WITH THANKS,

Glenys McCarrick tssf

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