

# Knit Together

*in community and prayer*

**Newsletter for the Province of Asia-Pacific**

Third Order, Society of Saint Francis

[www.tssf.org.au](http://www.tssf.org.au)

**Lent / Easter 2024**

## Woored by Francis' example

**Mandy Wheatley**  
Provincial Minister

I am completing this article as I sit waiting for a plane connection in Hong Kong International Airport heading to Korea!

And so I send Lenten greetings to all our precious Third Order sisters and brothers in the Asia-Pacific Province and other Provinces around the world. Yes – this Newsletter makes its way to many places on other continents as we share the connection between our own stories of the things we do for the sake of making God's love and forgiveness known to all, in the light of the accounts of Francis and Clare that inspire us.

In January I visited our dear TSSF family members in Sri Lanka, who send you all love and greetings. Especially Dayalan Saminathan, brother of the newly life-professed Brother Michael SSF. In February I was in Kuching (Malaysia), Hong Kong, and Korea (where I will wake up tomorrow). All these Franciscan groups are a real part of the fruit from the incredibly faithful and often challenging work of Godfrey and Bronwyn Fryar with their broad team of Novice Counsellors. Over the past 15 years they have been quietly working hard in the background, preparing many of these tertiaries for their professions in their own cultural settings. It is easy to forget what a labour of love this is, until you are able to hear some of the tertiaries' own stories about how they have been woored by Francis' example of simplicity, humility and kindness shown through the ministries of more experienced Franciscans.

Did you know that in the developing South East Asia Region, some faithful members have been renewing their vows for over 35 years? Glenys McCarrick



*Visiting Dayalan and family in his village, Maduleke, near Kandy*

has kindly distributed certificates of commemoration for each of the following: John Davison, (45 years professed), Michael Buma Galami, (41 years), Lizbeth Gan (37 years), Susie Lai (37 years), Lily Lim, (37 years), Bradley Sangan, (28 years), Gerald Ng Wei Kong, (27 years). That is 252 years of collected wisdom about our order! How thankful we can be that they are still sharing their love of Christ with hundreds of people, following the footsteps of Francis in South-east Asia!

In March I will be visiting PNG, attempting to reach Popondetta and Kokoda with Fr Leonard and Barbra Jinga; Dogura with Michael Hirodidi; and Goroka with Gabriel Wauwe where an exciting new group is forming. Rita Simeni, Br Christopher John and I would appreciate your prayers for travelling mercies and discernment from 13th to 28th March.

I hope you enjoy the photos from Sri Lanka, Colombo and Kandy in this edition. There will be more with the next newsletter.

Let us spend a quiet moment on what Lent meant to St Francis and ask how we can apply his practice in our own circumstances. As with other saints in centuries past, Francis of Assisi observed multiple ‘Lenten’ or penitential periods during the year when he suspended his evangelical ministries and withdrew to the hermitages he established. There were some 20 hermitages around Italy; simple, austere places up in the hills and mountains, away from the towns and cities. Thomas of Celano, St. Francis’ first biographer, wrote: ‘In the clefts of the rock he would build his nest and in the hollow places of the wall his dwelling.’

These deep, intense periods of prayer transformed St. Francis. Thomas of Celano said that after praying, Francis was changed almost into another man – another Christ. At the end of the 40 days, Francis would leave his hermitage and go back down to the valley. Then he would dedicate himself to serving God’s people: the lepers, the community, the Church.

Few among us can spare 40 days several times a year for fasting and prayer; however, I hope St. Francis’ example guides and inspires us on our own Lenten and Easter journey.

This is the link to the article that inspired my thoughts about Francis and Lent this year: <http://tinyurl.com/4fcp3xn3>

God’s good blessings and peace to you,

Mandy, TSSF Provincial Minister (*more photos page 9 online*)



*Bishop Jeremy James and Brother Michael Saminathan at St Paul’s Colombo*

# Assisi to Spoleto

## Bishop Godfrey Fryar tssf

After many months of preparation, rising early three times a week to walk five to eight kilometres through the bushland hills near our home in Aspley, we set off in September, and undoubtedly the highlight of the journey was our Franciscan Pilgrimage from Assisi to Spoleto. It was a self-guided walk of 80 kilometres over the course of five days through the Umbrian countryside.

The day we left Assisi we rose early and went down the empty streets to the Basilica of St Francis, arriving at 6.15am to be silent before his tomb in the lowest place of that wonderful building, before going up the stairs to the 'Lower Basilica' where we listened as many OFM brothers sang the morning office.

The first day included a visit to the Carcieri on Mount Subasio, where we particularly prayed for our SSF and LBF Brothers. We climbed the steep way and continued around the girth of the mountain so beloved by St Francis, through forests and on sometimes slippery paths, until we finally arrived in the small town of Spello in the late afternoon.

The walk from Spello to Bavagna was comparatively gentle as we made our way through mostly flat farmland. The following day we went up the mountain to Montefalco, a place of wonderful views of the Umbrian valley, and a VERY comfortable hotel!

Day 4 was a great challenge, as it was very hot, and there was very little shade as we made our way through farms and also, for a time, alongside fast traffic on a road.

It was a long day, and sometimes the instructions in our book were a bit ambiguous, but the appearance of an 'angel' who spoke no English – while our Italian was at best rudimentary – was a great encouragement, and somehow we worked out from her where to walk. Once more on the way, we climbed yet another mountainous rise through olive orchards (and some shade) to somewhat miraculously arrive in the village Poretta, with the help of another Italian 'angel', who appeared at a service station, where we must have looked bit confused, and offered to drive us the last four kilometres! By then, we didn't see it as 'cheating', but took it as pure grace!

Having gone that far, after a good sleep, we headed off on the final day to Spoleto, a very significant Franciscan town dominated by a mountain still covered with the original oak forest, at the top of which is a great cross that lights up every night, marking another place Francis often resorted to for prayer and silence, another Carcieri.

Any pilgrimage is both an outer journey and an inner one, and we keep reflecting not only on the experience of walking in the footsteps of Francis, but also on its meaning for us.



*Bronwyn and Godfrey Fryar about to set off from Assisi to Spoleto*

### **Faiths 4 Climate Justice Week of Action**

*3rd – 12th of May*

Join people of all faiths around Australia calling for a clear plan to move away from coal and gas. See page 12 (online only) and for more information go to [ARRCC.org.au](http://ARRCC.org.au).

From the drop-down menu click on Advocate-Week of Action.

Partners in this collaboration: Anglignreen; ARRCC; Greenfaith.

# Knit together in Korea

**Hyeran Helena Yang tssf**

Since the admission of seven novices on 22 February 2019 in Seoul Anglican Church Cathedral, TSSF in Korea has grown to a group of seven professed tertiaries and three novices by February 2024. Our growth may not look remarkable in quantity but we have gone through quite a meaningful journey, just as a newborn baby has to go through the cycle of standing up and collapsing until it can step forward and identify what to hold on to or pass.



*Celebration of the  
Transitus of St Francis  
at Gangchon Friary in  
2023*

After the first admission, formation of the seven novices was a challenge because no local TSSF novice counsellors were available. And geographical distance was also a challenge. So, two of us went the journey with Australian novice counsellors Bronwyn Fryar and Hilary Singleton. Two other novices met the First Order sisters Francis and Jemma to do their formation notes. Other novices did it as a group, meeting every two months at a place in Seoul. For this group formation gathering, the First Order Brothers, Lawrence and Stephen, joined with them every time to support their reflections and studies.

Apart from the bi-monthly group Formation Notes gathering, 3-4 novices also met on alternate months to offer an opportunity where people interested could learn more about St Francis and TSSF. This open gathering is on-going and is led by a professed tertiary and a novice.

When the time came for some novices to be elected for profession, we were looking forward to another big gathering like the first admission when we all met face-to-face with then Provincial Minister Godfrey Fryar and the Tertiary Bronwyn Fryar attending in person. But due to the Covid-19 pandemic the first profession in Korea had to be done by Zoom on 11 July 2021. New novices were also admitted by Zoom on the day. Thankfully, all the novice counsellors and the First Order Brothers and Sisters joined to celebrate the first profession of TSSF in Korea.

During the celebration of Transitus of St Francis in 2023 two more novices became professed tertiaries. We are thankful for the grace of

profession not only because of the renewed sense of community but also the opening of an opportunity for Korean tertiaries to serve as novice counsellors if we discern that we should do so. Currently there are a few tertiaries serving as novice counsellors and a few more are discerning.

Some while after the first profession in Korea, among several tertiaries and novices a common desire was sensed to have a stronger Franciscan identity. Till then, the Transitus of St Francis was the only occasion when we met face-to-face. Furthermore, due to the pandemic, we were meeting only by Zoom for over two years. Whether in person or by Zoom, that wasn't sufficient to satisfy our desire to be knit together as a community.

We agreed to create a new regular gathering where we share what we do, what we pray for, and what agonies we hold in our daily life. We believed that would be the best way to learn and live the Franciscan way, which we agree was the right decision. Acknowledging our desire to be knit more strongly together with other tertiaries, sharing our prayer, study, and work, we opened the first evening Zoom gathering. So, it was one summer evening in 2022 that we started the gathering which is continuing now, with three to six people joining in every time.

Recently, this evening prayer gathering evolved a new thread of reflection. We wanted to read St Francis' life together and share our reflections during the evening prayer. So, from this February, the first Tuesday of the month is set up for sharing reflections on St Francis biographies. Our first pick is *Legend of the Three Companions*. Listening to different views on his early life vanities, waywardness, and conversion was so exciting and awakening. Everybody was so reflective and attentive. The liveliness and sincerity of our dialogue around the story of Francis' character stimulated our imagination and enriched our prayer. And of course this kind of dialogue leads us to know each other better and more deeply.

We praise God for the small but persistent development of TSSF over the past five years in Korea. Against all odds, we as a group have grown into a five year old child. We appreciate each of those who put in their efforts to serve the TSSF community in Korea.

Now that we're expecting the current Provincial Minister, Mandy Wheatley, in Korea from 22–27 February 2024, we are so excited and grateful. Her visit coincides with the 5th anniversary of the admission of a first novice group in Korea. We believe this visit over five days will greatly nurture our group to grow in body and spirit so that we are better prepared to respond in our own way to the urgency of justice and peace in the church, the society of Korea and beyond.



*Professions of Kyongok  
Monica Park (left) and  
Sungsoon Lucy Edward  
Lee at Gangchon Friary  
with the First Order  
Brothers in 2023*

# John Tyman tssf awarded OAM

**The Rev Dr John Tyman has been awarded an Order of Australia Medal. He comments:**



‘Joy in God’s creation has been a feature of my life since childhood, when I grew up in a village in England and spent much of my time exploring the fields and woodlands of the surrounding countryside. Though I knew of St. Francis and his love of the natural world I had no knowledge of or contact with the Third Order till 30 years ago, but my career path had led me to follow in Francis’ steps.

*The Rev’d Dr John Tyman tssf OAM*

As a professor of cultural geography I was led to focus on indigenous cultures and on the way their lives were interwoven with the wonders of the Creation. I was able to travel widely, collecting material I could use in my teaching and writing, and in the process my personal life was enriched by close and long-lasting relationships with families who shared their lives with me. In the process of so doing, my professional career was enriched by the many thousands of photographs and recordings I was able to collect and post on the World Wide Web for use in schools worldwide. Mine has been a rich and joyful ministry.’

**Madeleine Murray reported in *The Tweed Valley Weekly*:**

‘REV DR JOHN TYMAN of Holy Trinity Church Uki was made a Member of the Order of Australia ‘for service to cultural and religious education’ in this New Year’s honours list.

John Tyman is an extraordinary person who has worked with others to create several important landmark organisations such as Uki Refugee Project, and Friends of Wollumbin Landcare.

He is a man of great wisdom, knowledge, compassion and spiritual strength. Besides that, he is charming, original and entertaining.

“First a Pom, then a Canadian, now an Australian, I’ve had a long, rewarding, and at times even dangerous life,” John told *The Weekly*.

“I’ve been able, by the grace of God, to fellowship with people from many different cultures. And at home in Australia, I’ve known the joy of sharing my enthusiasms face to face with thousands of school children, and with millions worldwide via the internet.”

Employment as an academic geographer living with Inuit in Arctic Canada, involvement locally in bush regeneration, and being ordained an Anglican priest, are just some of strands woven into John’s rich and fascinating life.

Now 88 years old, the compassionate, courageous priest was inspired in his youth by a geography teacher to appreciate the diversity of world cultures.

Being conscripted into the British Army after World War II exposed him to the horrors of Belsen concentration camp, the remains of which he

saw in 1954. The lesson John gained then was the need to fight for justice worldwide.

After graduation from Oxford, John migrated to Canada for further study and was appointed a university lecturer, sharing his passion for geography with teachers in training. His prime focus was how people make use of the land, and this led to lengthy field trips to the Arctic, Africa and Asia where he lived with indigenous peoples, and made exhaustive records of their cultures.

Thousands of photographs, sound recordings and videos collected then have been posted on the web at [johntyman.com](http://johntyman.com) and are available for use worldwide.

In 1975 John relocated to Brisbane where he was offered a senior position at Brisbane CAE (now part of Griffith University). Later, opting for early retirement, he developed 'show and tell' programs and toured schools introducing children to ways people in different lands have adapted to their environment.

"I have been so lucky," he said. "My job was my hobby, and I enjoyed it all!"

With his wife Penny, John moved to the Tweed Valley in 1994. Taking up a bush block near Uki, they had much to learn, establishing Friends of Wollumbin Landcare to help city folk who were relocating gain the skills to care for the forest.

In those years, the Anglican Church in Uki had languished somewhat, and John made it his main place of ministry. He was subsequently ordained a priest, a voluntary unpaid position. The historic wooden church has flourished since then, with an active congregation integrated into the life of village.

Ten years ago, a sense of outrage at restrictive Australian refugee policies led John and others to establish Uki Refugee Project to welcome people seeking asylum, and to lobby for a fairer immigration process.

Since then hundreds of asylum seekers have visited Uki for Friendship Weekends.

"I hope the award of this medal will heighten public awareness of how our nation is enriched by people from different cultures," John said, in his characteristically generous way.

For more info go to [johntyman.com](http://johntyman.com)

*With thanks to Tweed Valley Weekly for permission to re-print this article.*



*Sheltering in an igloo*

## **Congratulations Bishop Godfrey!**

*Godfrey and Bronwyn celebrate the  
50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary  
of the Ordination of Godfrey as a Priest in  
the Church of God.*



# Reflections on water –

## Climate change and God’s creative providence

### Steve Charles tssf



Steve Charles

In this brief reflection on my journey to becoming a tertiary (from first meeting the Third Order in early 2019 to profession in April 2023), one focus comes to the fore, and that is the love and support of my fellow novices and tertiaries across the Western Australian TSSF community, reflecting loving Franciscan discipleship of Jesus.

I won’t mention individuals – there are too many to thank! I feel blessed to be part of this loving and ‘giving’ community, that shares highs and lows, focusses on the message of hope in the Gospels, promotes creation care, and genuinely looks out for all others by extending that love of God throughout each community they’re part of, be it church, work, or neighbourhood. True sisters and brothers in Christ!

As a scientist who works in research looking into the impacts of climate change on water availability across Australia and globally, I’ve spent a career looking at relationships between large-scale climate features (circulation patterns and the drivers of climate variability such as ENSO) and their impact ‘on the ground’, on regional scale rainfall patterns experienced by a catchment, farm, or town. I believe in a spirituality, theology and intellectual curiosity that are interwoven, everything in the natural world interlinked; as matter and energy are cycling through God’s creative providence on Earth, so the water runs, the clouds rain, and there are times of drought and flood.

Without becoming too theological (I’m not learned in these things!), I see ‘sin’ as anything that damages relationships, with God, Jesus, with those in and out of our circles, with the environment and the planet. I think Francis was the original eco-theologian, seeing these links, cycles, and interconnectedness and the damage our sin does to these relationships at all scales, individual, societal, and global. His hope was in Jesus, as is ours; the Kingdom come near is something we live to honour – caring for all His creation to make ourselves well again, with discipleship as the way to overcome all evils, internally and externally.

Oops... I hope this hasn’t become too much of a sermon; those who know me will know I value Franciscan joy, humour and not taking oneself (myself!) too seriously. Thank you for this opportunity to share a reflection as a scientist who sees God in all, across scales and time, as we commune to love God, knowing all will follow.



**Editor:** What is your story? Could you write for this page on care for creation in crisis? I suggest about 350 words plus a photo if possible (at least 1MB please). Thank you!

**Due-date for next issue: 12<sup>th</sup> April** (earlier if possible)

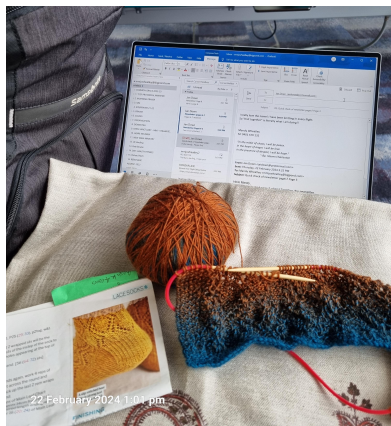
**Please send contributions to: [jeidown@protonmail.com](mailto:jeidown@protonmail.com)**



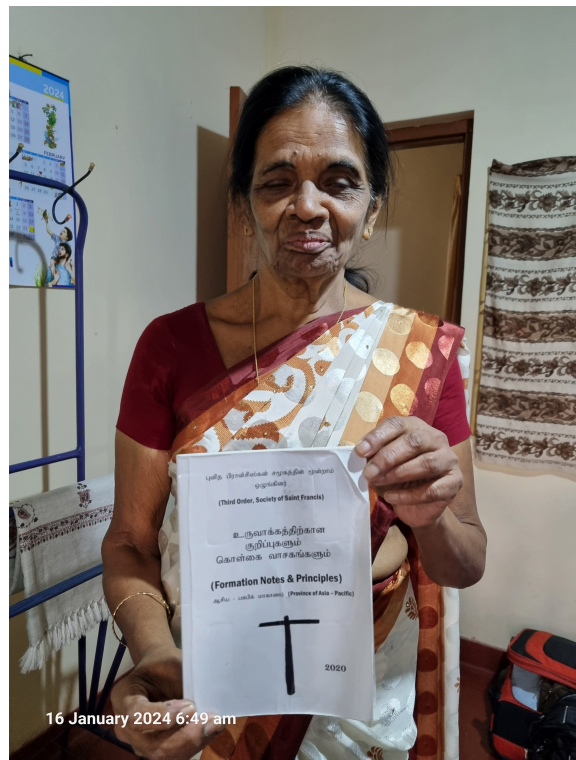
# In Sri Lanka



*Saroja Namadevan and Rachel Selvaraj at the home of Sanath Kumara Madagamgoda on the campus of the Peredenyia University of Kandy*



*Knit together – literally!  
Mandy keeps busy en route*



*Saroja Namadevan with her translation of our Formation Notes into Tamil*

## *A prayer by Simon Fong tssf, Hong Kong*

*A few words we would say  
Concern in a prayer  
That God's love is there.  
In case there's a trouble  
To solve that God's able  
And when needs are there  
For them God would care.*

# Not in a dark and dusty room

## Anne Wilson Provincial Archivist for TSSF

As the Provincial Archivist for the TSSF Asia-Pacific Province, I am grateful for your prayers for me and my work, along with your prayers for the Newsletter Editor, Jan Down and the Communications Coordinator, David White. Our positions are appointments from the Provincial Chapter and our responsibilities are described in the Provincial Constitution, (K10).



You may have wondered where exactly the Archives are, so I hope this short history will clear up any assumptions.

Archives are often thought to be all mysterious and secret, held in dark basements, full of old dusty books and files. A couple of notable TV detective series have, unfortunately, only confirmed that image. I grant that there is sometimes a mystique about Archives because their activities are usually hidden from view, rather than public-facing like libraries or museums. On the other hand, our work can also be dismissed as glorified filing. However, it is more accurate to think of archival collections as an essential part of every organisation, because they preserve the records of the organisation's decision-making and thus its accountability to its members. This is true from the highest levels of decision-making in a country to the small organisations that provide services to their communities. With a general lack of understanding and, often, under-resourcing, Archivists must become advocates for their collections.

The first advocate for the records of our province was the late Geoff Jordan, (QLD B), who held the position of Treasurer from 1994 to 2012. When he was appointed as Archivist by Chapter in 1996 the minutes record that Geoff expressed concern that the records which supported the history of the Third Order Province, (i.e. Australian Province at that time), needed to be collected.

The first meeting of the Third Order in the Pacific was in January 1970, but there are no records for the years between 1971, 1973-1977, so Geoff's vision and advocacy were well placed. Geoff is pictured with members of the 1996 Provincial Chapter below.

The challenge of a suitable central physical storage location was solved by purchasing a four-drawer filing cabinet to be stored at Geoff's house, with the National Archives as the expected final repository. (Ref: Provincial Chapter Minutes 1998-1999 5.1). Geoff's long service as Provincial Treasurer made the systematic collection of Chapter Minutes and photographs simple, but he continued to ask for historical material and newsletters from the Regional Ministers to be sent to him. The Archives and the role of Archivist was formalised by a Statute in the 1999 Provincial Chapter, (Minutes 6.1).

By Provincial Chapter 2011, Geoff had foreseen the problem of

*Anne Wilson is also Acting Archivist for the Anglican Diocese of Perth; Convenor/Secretary for ASA WA Collection of Faith Traditions Special Interest Group; and Honorary Archivist for GFS – an Anglican Ministry.*

continued storage of paper records at his house and reported progress on the scanning of all the paper records and photographs.

My own journey towards being the Provincial Archivist had begun in 2010. I had been researching the parish archives for historical material which could be used for a 50-year anniversary timeline. I was very excited to be reading the original documents, and eventually asked the Diocesan Archivist; “Can you do this for a job?” “Well” she said, “I do!” She suggested my name to GFS Perth, to archive 120 years of their records. Bishop Kay Goldsworthy, then Chair of the GFS Executive accepted me on the proviso that I also did some study.

In the couple of years prior to this, after a serious bout of depression, I had reached the conclusion that I would have to leave school teaching and was wondering what else I could do. I was in my early fifties so the possibility of becoming an Archivist seemed exciting, but I worried that I might be too old. However, with the encouragement of (now) Archbishop Kay, the GFS members, the Diocesan Archivist, and my husband Ken, I got going, very slowly, until I completed my Graduate Diploma in Information Services, (Records and Archives), in 2014.

Geoff was in poor health and had been asking for someone to take over for a couple of years, so I felt ready to offer my services.

By this time the whole collection of paper documents and photographs had been digitised and the paper records destroyed. Hence the collection, apart from Ted Witham’s Provincial Minister correspondence, is entirely digital. Ted’s records will be digitised in due course.

The records were transferred to me by USB along with a box of tapes, booklets and a couple of books.

The Archives were initially downloaded to my personal computer, with a separate hard drive used as back up. Recently, I have upgraded the security of the collection by creating a duplicate of the collection on the TSSF website via Google Drive, with my thanks to David White for his assistance. Currently, access to the collection is only available through the Archivist but I can provide information on request. If you think you may have records that might fill the gaps in our collection, please email me at

annewilson@westnet.com.au.

So, the Archives of the TSSF Asia-Pacific Province are not in a dark, dusty room or filing cabinet, but in a digital archive which is accessible and secure. I welcome requests for information and can provide digital documents if necessary.



*The members of Chapter 1996, L-R: Colin Fidock, Val Tibbey, Geoff Jordan, David Overington, Keith Slater, Les Whereat, Ray Kendall, George Harvey, Vic Hall, Denis Woodbridge, Frances Turner.*

# Faiths 4 Climate Justice Week of Action

3rd – 12th May

**From ARRCC –  
Australian Religious  
Response to Climate  
Change:**

‘Across the world, we are seeing unprecedented climate impacts and climate fuelled storms, fires, droughts, and wars. Millions of people across the globe are being horribly affected. Here in Australia, we’re seeing more and more floods, bushfires and droughts.



*Flood waters in Gippsland, Victoria, 2021*

That’s why from the 3rd to the 12th of May people of all faiths around Australia will join publicly with others all over the world in a Faiths 4 Climate Justice Week of Action calling for a clear plan to get us out of this crisis and move boldly and rapidly away from coal and gas and towards a sustainable future.

## **In Australia**

We will be calling on the federal leaders of both major political parties to outline their plan to move away from coal and gas and towards clean energy, and to provide a date by which they will do so. We will also call for an end to public money going towards fossil fuel industries.

We will ask both leaders to support a proposed global treaty to phase out fossil fuels and to make a massive historic investment in clean energy that will create jobs in the process. And we will call on them to love our nearest neighbours by getting behind their calls for a fossil fuel free Pacific.’

For more information, go to [ARRCC.org.au](http://ARRCC.org.au). From the drop-down menu click on Advocate – Week of Action.

**Partners in this collaboration: Angligreen**

([www.anglicanchurchsq.org.au/angligreen](http://www.anglicanchurchsq.org.au/angligreen));

ARRCC ([www.arrcc.org.au](http://www.arrcc.org.au)); Greenfaith ([greenfaith.org/](http://greenfaith.org/))