

THE THIRD ORDER:

Australian Province Newsletter

Volume 6:3

Francistide 2005

Saint Francis died on the evening of 3 October 1226. Brother Elias of Cortona reports that at Francis' death "his appearance was one of great beauty gleaming with a dazzling whiteness and giving joy to all who looked upon him." Did he who had imitated Christ so closely in earthly life now come to resemble Him in the glory of the eternal life? Could it be that Francis had come to share in the very divinity of Christ?

The glory that enveloped Francis at his death is nothing less than the fulfillment of Christ's promise to sanctify His followers and draw them into more perfect union with Himself. As he lay dying, Francis told his brothers, "I have done what was mine to do, may Christ now teach you what you are to do." May we all aspire to the holiness of life with which Saint Francis served his Creator

Let us Pray: Heavenly Father, You gave Your servant Francis great love for each of Your creatures. Teach us to see Your design in all of creation.

We ask this in Jesus' Name. Amen.

From the Provincial Minister:

My dear Sisters and Brothers,

Greetings and Peace this Francistide.

I returned from England just over a week ago and thls weekend have taken a Retreat for the women in our parish. So much seems to have happened for me in the month that has passed and I feel very privileged to have experienced the Interprovincial meetings in Canterbury. We were 17 Tertiaries in all, 3 from each Province and our Minister General, Keith, who guided us all and chaired the meetings. Who, you may be saying, then made 17 ? This was Francisco Sales (Chico) from Brazil who represented 100 Franciscan Episcopalians who have been negotiating with the Province of the Americas to be included in the Third Order SSF for the past two and a half years. They were formally welcomed and admitted at the Eucharist on the 31st August. (See article in this Newsletter).

We were able to enjoy fellowship and worship with representatives of the First Order Brothers and Sisters who were holding their Chapter at the same time as ours at the Franciscan International Study Centre in Canterbury. Together we were able to participate in a

sharing of the services both in the chapel and Canterbury Cathedral, such as a candlelight vigil and the commissioning of the new Minister General of the Third Order, Rev.'d Dorothy Brooker of New Zealand. At a gathering of Tertiaries following the commissioning we were able to thank the Rt. Rev.'d Keith Slater for his wise leadership of the T.O. over the past 6 years, and wish Dorothy well as she begins her new work as Minister General of the TO worldwide. The International nature of our Order which was so evident at Canterbury, will be an inspiration to all those present for many years to come.

Other decisions taken at IPTOC include the personalising of the Principles which members of our Provincial Chapter have been trying out over the past 2 years and found to be helpful in that form. A decision was made that The Principles in this personalised form were to be circulated to all Tertiaries. You will receive these shortly and they are to replace those at present in our Manual. I will circulate to all Regional Ministers other matters of concern that were discussed at IPTOC so that all Tertiaries will be aware of the various discussions that took place, and your RM will inform you of these.

As we consider the life of St. Francis and his impact on the world of his time and our desire to follow in his footsteps I would encourage you to consider Francis' response to the Crusades of his day and we are able to discern a similar urgency in our present world situation. A statement from both the First Order and the Third Order was issued as follows :

"In the spirit of Francis expressed in Chapter 16 of the First Rule of 1221. **Those going among the Saracens**, we urge our brothers and sisters of all three Orders to commit ourselves to engage in the 'dialogue of life' with our Muslim brothers and sisters through meeting, study and prayer.

Such an engagement will need to recognise Francis' desire to be subject to every human creature for God's sake , so that we approach our Muslim sisters and brothers in a spirit of humility and openness. In this way we will be acting not in a spirit of aggression, nor with contempt for the beliefs of others, but rather sharing our own supreme treasure (The Principles Day 22)* See Day 8 Third Order Principles "

May every blessing of peace and all good be yours,

Your sister in Christ,

Val

19th September 2005

From the editor – How I began my journey.
I want to share with you, four quotations which have changed my life and which led me a rather tortuous journey of discovery.

These were the words used at my confirmation by the Archbishop of Sydney at St Jude's Church in Randwick many years ago (about 1954)

Ephesians

2:4-6

"But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus"

We are reminded here specifically of what God has done for us. And we are charged never to forget this!

But being a young teenage boy one soon forgets all of this, at least on the outside, and is carried away by the excitement of life. But later in my life this sure and solid foundation which had been provided to me served to help bring me back to the Church.

My studies at High School and at Sydney University brought me in contact with studies of philosophy and the Arts juxtaposed with the work of important scientists. I used to drink coffee in Manning House with people who were later to become well known. But I was deeply impressed by the terror I saw in the eyes of J. Robert Oppenheimer, the father of the Atomic Bomb when before the terrible events of Hiroshima he quoted the Bhagavad Gita

"I am become death, the shatterer of worlds" – these were the first words out of J. Robert Oppenheimer's mouth as he saw his handiwork, "Trinity" the result of the Manhattan Project blossom over the New Mexico desert, in 1945, at the dawn of the nuclear age. The full quotation is

If the radiance of a thousand suns Were to burst at once into the sky. That would be like the splendour of the Mighty one. I am become Death, The shatterer of Worlds.

These lines have stuck in my mind for many years and have served to remind me of the awesome responsibility we all have whenever we apply the knowledge of science. These words constantly remind me of the ethical and moral dimensions of our work, all of the time.

So, to this point in my life I remember the exhortation that God's love for us all is absolutely unconditional and secondly that despite the best efforts of man the absolute terror of nuclear war is firmly embedded in my mind, even though we have just remembered VJ day!

Looking back on my life I see now that God is constantly talking to each of us. In my case, with retrospective wisdom, I can see how he was talking to me in those early days but that I was simply not listening, but His unconditional love showed through. It was at this time that I met Canon Norman Byron, who it turned out had, when he was a bush brother, christened my wife at the Miandetta Hall, but that is another story. I began to help at the St Barnabas' Church fetes. At one of these I came to know Canon Norman much better and he virtually dragged me by the collar into the church and by showing me the church windows was able to recount the important

aspects of the Gospel story and so re-kindled the ideas that had been placed in my understanding so long ago. But still I did not go to church. And, still I helped at Barnabas' fetes.

But then the tragedy struck. Our son was killed in an accident in Queensland. We went there and following an inquest we brought him back to be buried in Bathurst. Canon Norman was a great comforter and healer and conducted the service.

Just after this time I was driving home from my place of work at the University when I felt the very strong desire to turn right instead of left (the direction of home) and to go to St Barnabas to pray for the repose of the soul of my son.

As I walked into the Church, the Wednesday evening communion service was being conducted by Fr Chris Freestone, and as I walked into the church he was beginning to pray for my son.

God called me loudly and clearly and this time I heard him and this time I responded. I have not ceased attending Church regularly since then!

So that is how God got me back into His fold.

An opportunity presented itself whereby we were provided access to large quantities of canned food from the local Edgells cannery which meant that in one year we were able to distribute some 16 tonnes of it in Bathurst and surrounding areas. We distributed it to many many needy people.

It was at this time that Fr John Clarkson entered into the story, his having heard of the food distribution we undertook. It was he who led me gently to an understanding of the ways of St Francis and his help to those on the edge of society.

In a conversation with him I expressed strongly a feeling of upset, a feeling almost of revenge about an incident which was serious at the time but which I cannot now remember. However, Fr John's admonition to me was to say to me 'Vengeance is mine saith the Lord', so the following quotation is one of great significance to me in my spiritual growth. Needless to say Fr John is my spiritual advisor.

Romans 12:19-21, where Paul writes, "Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave room for the wrath of God; for it is written,

"Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord." No, "if your enemies are hungry, feed them; if they are thirsty, give them something to drink; for by doing this you will heap burning coals on their heads." Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good." (NRSV)

There is no need to feel revenge or the need to avenge some act or to 'get your own back on someone' for the Lord promises us that he will take care of all of this.

It does not matter what people say or do to us we just need to accept it in the full knowledge that the Lord will handle this problem for us at the appropriate time. Remember, His love is unconditional.

I have had great difficulty trying to adhere to this teaching but of recent times I am hopefully beginning to master this weakness of anger which I have been known to express!

Finally, as I age I am more aware of my own mortality and I am concerned that I may not have reconciled myself to those whom in my life I have wronged and that I certainly have not reconciled myself to God.

Matthew 24:36-44

"No one knows about that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. As it was in the days of Noah, so it will be at the coming of the Son of Man. For in the days before the flood, people were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, up to the day Noah entered the ark; and they knew nothing about what would happen until the flood came and took them all away. That is how it will be at the coming of the Son of Man. Two men will be in the field; one will be taken and the other left. Two women will be grinding with a hand mill; one will be taken and the other left. Therefore keep watch, because you do not know on what day your Lord will come. But understand this: If the owner of the house had known at what time of night the thief was coming, he would have kept watch and would not have let his house be broken into. So you also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him.

This set of verses has been working on me quietly now for the past twelve or so months, Have I reconciled myself with all of those to whom I have done wrong? I am working on

this as I do not know when my time will come and I have to cross that divide in the hands of the Lord. Am I ready – no not yet but I am trying. Having realized the problems associated with the human condition and now after some time having accepted them gladly I am now reconciled within myself to continue my work with the help of Saint Francis and the Lord in helping those who are on the edge of

society and in circumstances which need support.

And within all of this we try to spread the good and essential news of the Gospel.

I hope and pray that I will be allowed to continue with this great task for a long time to come.

A short note from Steve Howes

Happy Saint Ninian's Day (Friday 16th) to all Franciscans,
And what a missionary pioneer Ninian was!

He came by himself as a lone missionary to the Galloway district in south-west Scotland around the year 397. Through his witness enough of the southern Picts "abandoned the errors of idolatry ... and accepted the true Faith through the preaching of Bishop Ninian" (Bede p. 148) so that he could found a monastery and send out teams of evangelists.

With his monastery he broke with tradition. Instead of building it of timber he built it of stone and then whitewashed it so that this new Christian community became the most conspicuous object in the district and became known as the White House. (See Whithorn in an atlas of Scotland).

I can imagine his monastery as a place of energy and excitement as teams of evangelists would come back telling of life among the tribes people up in the mountains and how people turned from idols to serve the living God. Their evangelistic journeys "seem to have taken them not only among the savage Pictish tribes in the neighbourhood of the Roman Wall but also up the east coast of Scotland and even into Ireland where they paved the way for another of the great missionaries of the Church, S. Patrick."

(Moorman p.7)

BISHOP WILFRID (634 – 709)

As Australians we can imagine a drought in which no rain falls for three years. It is harder to imagine a famine so terrible that "frequently forty or fifty emaciated and starving people would go to a precipice, or to the edge of the sea, where they would join hands and leap over, to die by the fall or drowning." This suffering occurred not in Africa but near Chichester in England during the late seventh century and has been recorded for us by Bede.

When Wilfrid arrived in this region he first taught them how to fish. Even though fish were plentiful in the sea and rivers, these starving people had no knowledge of how to catch them so Bishop Wilfrid's men showed them how to use eel nets to catch fish. "By this good turn", Bede writes, "the bishop won the hearts of all, and the people began to listen more readily to his teaching, hoping to obtain heavenly blessings through the ministry of one to whom they already owed these material benefits."

S. Wilfrid's day occurs shortly, 12 October, and as Franciscans we can link Wilfrid's ministry to these South Saxons with the First Aim of the Order: "to make our Lord known and loved everywhere". Wilfrid is also an inspiring example of study as he knew the Psalms and the Four Gospels by heart! His greatness as a missionary pioneer was very evident.

However Wilfrid's faults were also very public. He told the Synod at Whitby that the godly Irish monks were stupid and obstinate. Moorman describes him as "proud, domineering, arrogant". Even so, God in His mercy was pleased to use Wilfrid. May his life and service encourage us when we become conscious of our own faults.

The Perth gathering:

BOB WILHELM
SPEAKER FOR TWO PERTH CONFERENCES IN 2006

The Third Order, Society of St Francis (Australian Province)
and
The Australian Association for Religious Education (Inc.)

Dr Robert Béla Wilhelm's central interest is the craft of the storyteller in the service of the church's education and liturgy. Since completing a Th.D. in the 60s, Bob Wilhelm has been a teacher of storytelling and the compiler of *The Great Lectionary Story Book*.

As a teacher of the story-telling craft, Bob teaches students to 'gist' the story so that each telling can be told with confidence from the heart. He believes that understanding the way stories should be told enhances the pulpit and classroom.

Bob Wilhelm sees a strong connection between storytelling and pilgrimage and takes groups on 'story-telling pilgrimages' so that the places associated with stories may come alive. In his travels, he has gathered a wide collection of folk tales and other stories particularly from the Middle East and from Native American sources.

He has linked many of these stories with the Common Lectionary used in worship in main-stream churches and allows the scripture passages and the stories to illuminate each other. This has grown into *The Great Lectionary Story Book*.

Bob resonates to the Franciscan story-telling tradition, and has led several pilgrimages to Assisi, where he happened to be this year when Pope John Paul II died and Pope Benedict XVI was elected.

He enjoys working ecumenically, but stands strongly within the 'Catholic with a big C' tradition. You can find more about Bob's ministry at
<http://www.storyfestministry.info>

AARE has invited him to provide plenary workshops at its Conference in the expectation that story-telling will enrich classroom teaching of RE for all ages.

The Third Order looks forward to exploring with Bob Wilhelm the spirituality of story-telling especially in its Franciscan forms.

It is not always possible to enjoy the presence of overseas visitors at our national Conferences, so the conjunction of the two Conferences in Perth in 2006 provides an opportunity that the organizers of the Conferences thought too good to pass up.

We plan for some of the sessions to be open to all Anglicans in WA and to the public generally.

Conference	Venue	Begins	Ends
Third Order SSF	Bel Eyre Motel, Redcliffe	27 September 2006	1 October 2006
AARE	The Esplanade Hotel, Fremantle	1 October 2006	4 October 2006

Bob Wilhelm's trip to Australia has been underwritten by the Anglican Diocese of Perth through the trust funds of the former General Board of Religious Education

The Anglican Franciscan Third Order meeting - Canterbury

The Anglican Franciscan Third Order meeting at the Franciscan International Study Centre in Canterbury, UK, grew by over a hundred members overnight. Its international Chapter voted enthusiastically for the inclusion of The Order of St Francis from the Episcopal Anglican Church of Brazil as part of its Province of the Americas.

The Brazilian Franciscans' provincial secretary, the Reverend Francisco Sales, was welcomed to the meeting, and the Brazilians were formally admitted to the Anglican Third Order at the liturgy on Wednesday 31 August.

The Third Order have elected Dorothy Brooker, a priest in Aotearoa / New Zealand, as their Minister General in succession to Keith Slater, Bishop of Grafton in Australia who has completed a six-year term. Dorothy is the first woman elected as its Minister General.

The meeting of Franciscans from the worldwide Franciscan family took place at the Centre from 25 August to 5 September. Brothers and Sisters of the First Order held their own Chapter meetings at the same time. Abbess Patricia of the Anglican Community of St Clare, part of the Society of St Francis and George Connor, Bishop of Dunedin in the Province of Aotearoa, New Zealand and Melanesia, Protector General of the three Franciscan Orders were present.

Speaking to all of them have been members of Roman Catholic Franciscan Orders: Fr Adam Bunnell of the Order of Friars Minor (OFM) Conventual spoke about the work and ministry of the Franciscan International Centre for Dialogue in Assisi of which he is the Director; Fr John Quigley OFM told the Chapters about the work of Franciscans International (FI) of which he is executive Director, a non-governmental organisation working at the United Nations in Geneva. Significantly, FI is the one body which brings together all branches of the worldwide Franciscan family. Sr Frances Teresa of the Order of St Clare led the Chapters' thinking on Holistic living in the Style of Francis and Clare. The Very Revd Jim Puglisi SA, vice president of the Association of Third Orders Regular, also shared in the gathering.

The Third Order numbers around three thousand members worldwide, some 2200 of them in its European Province alone. There are also Provinces of: the Americas, Australia, Aotearoa-New Zealand and Africa. The Order's members seek to live out their Christian discipleship in the inspiration of the way of St Francis and St Clare of Assisi.

Editors:

The Society of St Francis, of which the First, Second and Third Orders are constituent parts, is a religious community within the Anglican Communion.

Contact Alan Williams, Third Order communications coordinator for Europe, on 07976 056886 in the first instance for clarification or further information

Web site: <http://orders.anglican.org/tssf/index.htm>

Website for Franciscan Angles.

http://www.franciscan.org.au/Franciscan_Angles_July_2005.html

Build my Church

Did you know that there is a shop selling computer games that has the slogan "Hallowed be thy Game"; that there is a redundant church which has been converted into a pub which offers Tarot readings; and that WH Smith sells more books on Witchcraft than on Christianity? One of our novices, Nigel Herriott, gave a talk at the January meeting of the Berkshire Area on the theme of "Build my Church" in which he presented a series of pictures, readings, poems and statistics, which included these and many other items. Nigel had taken a number of photographs of things that he had noticed over the last year which showed the effect of consumerism on spirituality and highlighted some of the challenges faced by the Church.

After the presentation, we broke into groups and worked on a number of questions suggested by Nigel, concluding the session by sharing our thoughts on these with the full group. Everyone agreed that they had found it interesting and thought provoking.

Nigel is happy to send his material to anyone who would like it (it is a very large Powerpoint presentation) and has made some short notes to help. He emphasises that the material is not intended to answer any questions or even to ask all the questions that need to be asked. However, he hopes that it will provide some background information that will help groups to think about the issues facing the Church. You can contact Nigel by email on nigel@herriott.net or call him on 0118 962 7189.

Hazel Berry, Area Minister Berkshire

Ecumenical notes

Being in Rome, together with a Methodist Pilgrimage, at the time of Pope John Paul's death was a momentous experience. We felt a heightened sense of unity and purpose, both within our own group and also with our other Christian

brothers and sisters, those living in the city, those crowding into it from all over and those others spread across the world.

The experience underlined for me the importance of engaging with each other ecumenically, not just "at the top" but amongst ourselves at the local level where we are, and not just on special occasions but all the time.

Our TSSF Ecumenical Team would like to hear from you of any Ecumenical activity you engage in as an Area or as a Local Group. It would also be useful to know which Local Groups are (like Bill's, Elizabeth's and mine) ecumenically composed and in what ways.

My personal experience is that a mixture of denominational backgrounds within the Local Group contributes greatly to the richness of our group experience.

Finally, we wonder if any non-Anglican Tertiaries would like to meet together at the York Chapter? Maybe we could gain from them some fresh insights about the Order and its aims? If any of you would like to meet in this way, please let me know on 0115 962 0072 by early September at the latest so that something can be arranged. Thank you.

Brenda Stephenson, Ecumenical Officer

The Website

The website now has an extended members area. This members area can be reached only by going to <http://orders.anglican.org/tssf/members/>

We also plan some further additions. Ken Seagers, TSSF Webmaster

Br Ramon wrote: *At San Damiano began a participation in the love and passion of Christ that was to lead him from the first flush of a new love to the profoundest mystical union with Christ's wounded love at La Verna. From that hour his heart was stricken and wounded with melting love and compassion for the passion of Christ, and for the rest of his life he carried in it the wounds of the Lord Jesus. This was clearly proved later when the stigmata of those same wounds were miraculously impressed upon his own holy body for all to see. (The Three Companions)*

In our meditations in this Francistide we could ask ourselves if God is wanting to say anything to us now. Where does he want us to repair his church? What does he want to teach us about suffering? We may want to take one figure in the icon (San Da, iamo Crucifix) and dwell on that – or we may want simply to look at the icon and be still before God.

*O Lord Jesus Christ,
You raised up Francis to renew in your
Church the life of simplicity and evangelical
poverty, and imprinted on his flesh the marks
of Your wounds.*

*Pour out Your Spirit on us, that, following
You in the nakedness of the cross and
bearing Your wounds in our hearts, We may
at last attain to Your perfect likeness;
Who with the Father and the Holy Spirit,
live and reign, one God now and for ever.*

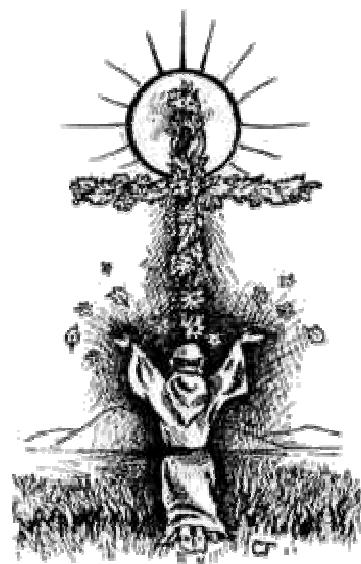
Amen

Source: Marc Picard OFM in: *The icon of the Christ of San Damiano*

A prayer written by an unknown prisoner in Ravensbruck Concentration Camp and left by the body of a dead child.....

.O Lord, remember not only the men and women of good will, but also

those of ill will. But do not remember all the suffering they have inflicted on us; remember the fruits we have bought, thanks to this suffering -- our comradeship, our loyalty, our humility, our courage our generosity, the greatness of heart which has grown out of all this, and when they come to judgement let all the fruits which we have borne be their forgiveness.



Changes notified by Wendy.

Novices

John Tyman	PO Box 1152 Murwillumbah	NSW 2484	QLD B	N 27/8/05
John Dendy	33 Squires Gardens Stratton Perth	WA 6056	WA	N 21/05/05
Karl Van Rees	14B Fluellen Way Hamilton Hill	WA 6163	WA	N 21/05/05
Glenda Spry	45 Currie Street Wanard	WA 6169	WA	N 21/05/05
Richard Osborne	26 Trade Winds Drive Safety Bay	WA 6169	WA	N 21/05/05

Readmitted as a Novice

David Bruhn 60 Grandview Grove Wendouree Victoria 3355 Vic-Tas N 3/08/05

Email Addresses

Pirrial Clift pirrial@exemail.com.au
Lex Nason inaxon@dodo.com.au
Graham Dorman dorman@bigpond.net.au
Peter Gregory gregory@netvigator.com

Telephone Number

Malcolm and Norma-Jean Willsher 08 9243 1785

And some earlier changes

New Novices

Karl Van Rees	14B Fluellen Way Hamilton Hill WA 6163	Tel: 08 94342487	N 21/5/05
John Dendy	33 Squires Gardens Stratton Perth WA 6056	Tel: 08 92507136	N 21/5/05
Glenda Spry	45 Currie Street Warnard WA 6169	Tel: 08 96937038	N 21/5/05
Richard Osborne	26 Trade Winds Drive Safety Bay WA 6169	Tel: 08 95275824	N 21/5/05

Change of Address

Eli and Bonita Kombega PO Box 681 Popondetta Oro Province PNG

Change of Email Address

Peter Gregory gregorys@netvigator.com

Latest Changes (3rd October)

Professions

John Silversides P 24.09/05

Therese Angert-Quilter P 24/09/05

Address

John Hawkins Unit 84, Glentworth House Cardinal Freeman Village, Ashfield NSW 2131 (same Tel: number)

A note regarding the next newsletter:

I would really like to ensure that this newsletter reflects the great diversity of views and opinions, activities and devotions in which we are all involved in our everyday lives. Each one of us has a number of items on which a few paragraphs could be written, or as a picture which conveys meaning.

I pray and hope that more contributions from Tertiaries might be forthcoming for Advent and the year 2006.

You can send your contribution to me either by email to wgates@ix.net.au or by post to Bill Gates, PO Box 604 Bathurst, NSW, Australia, 2795.

I have in the back of my mind that one of the forthcoming issues could have a Papua New Guinea theme as there are quite a few Brothers and Sisters in Christ in that country.

Pax et Bonum

Bill Gates, editor.

From ‘The Cord’, 2004

As you announce peace with your mouth, make sure that greater peace is within your hearts...may everyone be drawn to peace, kindness, and harmony through your gentleness. For we have been called in this: to heal the wounded, bind up the broken, and recall the erring. (Legend of the Three Companions)

In the coming seasons of Advent and Christmas may we ponder the meaning of this text.

Please support this Newsletter by sending in your contributions to the editor, regularly.
