

THE THIRD ORDER:

Australian Province Newsletter

Volume 6:4

Advent 2005

The next issue of the Newsletter is due at Easter 2006. Please have all copy in the hands of the editor by Friday 31st March 2006. Postal address is PO Box 604 Bathurst, NSW, Australia, 2795. Email address is wgates@ix.net.au

My dear Brothers and Sisters,

It is with pleasure that I am able to announce the election of Ted Witham as the new Third Order Provincial Minister in our Australian Province. Ted is a priest and well known to many of you, especially those who are able to attend General Chapters. You will be well aware that he brings many gifts to his new position, especially in the area of music and creativity as well as education and pastoral skills. He is a Tertiary of long-standing, having been Professed in 1983. As our next General Chapter is being held in Perth in September 2006 there will be the opportunity for many more Tertiaries to meet Ted. Do hope you are all able to be there and are making bookings now as the W.A. planning gets under way.

We are now at that wonderful time of the year when the Jacarandas are in their beautiful purple bloom and herald the Advent Season and the joy of Christmas. The new Provincial Minister begins his term at an exciting time of the Church's year, a time of new beginnings.. My congratulations and very best wishes to Ted on behalf of us all, and I have assured him that he will be in our thoughts and prayers as he takes up this new position. May God continue to bless us all as we take up the challenge to follow Our Lord Jesus Christ in the footsteps of Francis and Clare.

Peace and all goodness,

Val

IPTOC 2005 - Canterbury, England.

Personal Reflections from IPTOC



IPTOC Delegates outside Canterbury Cathedral.

For me, personally, to be chosen to go as the third Australian delegate to IPTOC was a huge honour, and a very humbling and exciting experience.

Having virtually the whole weekend together and with a great deal of interaction with the First Order brothers and sisters, as a time of informal but intentional community building it was a wonderful way of coming to a deeper understanding of the issues each province faces and how each one has been able to translate and live the Franciscan charism in their own specific culture. All this before we even arrived at the formal business.

There are many memories which will remain precious to me from the 10 days we spent together. Here are some miscellaneous thoughts:

The worship

Our days began with Morning Prayer and Study in our houses. We used the SSF Office book and the Lectio Divina brought a deeper sense of bonding with those we were living with. The groups were generally a mix of First and Third Order from different provinces. In my own case I shared with a fellow Tertiary from New Zealand, a First Order sister from San Francesco and two FO sisters from England.

Daily Eucharist and Evening prayer were held in the Chapel at the Franciscan International Study Centre and each day was lead by a different Province and so we were blessed to experience the different nuances of each culture.

Other times of worship were held at Greyfriars - which included an impromptu singing of some Taize chants in memory of Br Roger who had been murdered the week before. This was a very moving experience, as was the visit to the shrine set up in his memory in one of the side chapels of the crypt in the Cathedral.

We also said Compline at Greyfriars on our last night which was also very special - sitting in that 6th century chapel which had been given to the original Franciscan brothers who had been sent to England by Francis himself was an awesome experience.

Then there were our experiences in the Cathedral. The Sunday Eucharist on the first Sunday was incredible. I pinched myself several times to make sure I was really there and not dreaming. Some of us arrived on the first bus load and were able to spend about half an hour in reflection before the service and listen to the visiting choir practise. The sound of their voices filling that great Cathedral was spine tingling. At one point I turned to Revd Masud ibn Seydullah the Provincial Minister of the Americas and said I couldn't believe I was here when one week ago I was celebrating the Eucharist in a little country church in outback Australia with two other people! He grinned and said, "Yes and I was in the Bronx!"

Two other profound worship experiences were connected with our time together and the Cathedral. One was a Candlelight Pilgrimage around Canterbury Cathedral which we undertook on the Wednesday evening, which several weeks later, I still find hard to put into words; and the other was our final Eucharist together and the Commissioning of Revd Dorothy Brooker as our new Minister General. This service took place in the crypt of the Cathedral and there gathered were not only all the members of IPTOC, but the First Order Brothers and Sisters and members of the local Third Order. It was a great joy for me to see David Overington who had travelled to Canterbury especially for it.

For me, this is a service which will remain with me the rest of my life because of the extreme honour of having been asked to be deacon of the Eucharist. I am still deeply moved by the experience of having been asked to serve in such a holy place.

It is an understatement to say that our times of worship together were profound experiences of being in the presence of God and frequently deeply moving.

But, we did more than pray and worship together!

Deep friendships were formed and as often happens, there is much fun and laughter, gentle teasing - it was the wrong time to be a sport loving Aussie ... first the cricket and then the rugby! The group from Aotearoa, New Zealand nearly adopted me as one of their own (due to my Kiwi ties) until it came to the rugby! But seriously, it was a great time to get snippets of the various and diverse cultures we all came from and how each one was living the Franciscan charism in that context and to also get some understanding of the issues each one faces in their daily lives.

This was particularly brought into play in the working group on Youth and Young adult vocations. Some wonderful ideas and a great deal of passion were generated but things which might have worked well and been a terrific drawcard in one province, would have battled to work in another. However, through working together we came up with a very workable document to bring back to the full meeting.

Two other issues particularly stand out for me. The first was the inclusion of The Order of St Francis from the Episcopal Anglican Church of Brazil into the Third Order as part of the Province of the Americas. So much hard work had been going on behind the scenes for so long by Tertiaries from the Province of the Americas along with members of the Order of St Francis. The presence of Revd Francisco Sales (Chico) at the meeting, the fact that the motion was passed with great acclaim and the formal inclusion of Brazil at the Eucharist on the Wednesday were all very moving and not a few tears were shed - tears of joy! There was a very real feeling of being present at an historical event.

The other issue was Fr John Quigley's address on Franciscans International. He outlined the pain, frustration and joy of FI's history, not only as a Non Governmental Organisation working at the United Nations in Geneva but also as an organisation which seeks to bring a unified Franciscan voice onto the world stage - and as he puts it, the first time in 800 years that Franciscans are working together! It has a three fold charter of working for Peace; care of Creation and care of the Poor. They have had a strong advocacy role in human rights including the care of the poor, the trafficking of persons and refugees. He admitted that their role in the other two areas had been quite weak so far but there is a sense now of working for peacemaking beginning at the grass roots level in various places and they are involved in the Environmental Conference which will take place next year. He said that as Franciscans, "we have a profound obligation to speak for the poor in forums everywhere. The train is moving and the world doesn't wait for us." While the Society as a whole in the Province of the Americas has been a member of FI for many years, it was a decision of IPTOC and IPFOC (the First Order Conference which included Sr Patricia of the Second Order as observer) to make sure all three Orders of the Society world wide are included as members.

So many memories, so much which could and probably should be written. If you would like to know more, please contact me and I will endeavour to give you more information.

Peace & all Good,

Sally Buckley tssf

Here is a little prayer sent by Merrill

Please forgive me if I am being repetitive, however I found this prayer attributed to Malcolm Spencer. My thanks to Barrie Cledsmith who was able to tell me that Malcolm Spencer was born in 1877 and was the author of various books mainly on economics and Christianity, published during the 1920s and 1930s. The prayer is very much the same as Martin Luther's prayer which I forwarded last month, however as we are nearing the penitential season of Advent I felt it was worth sharing.

Lord I believe in thee; help thou mine unbelief, I love thee, yet not with a perfect heart as I would.
I long for thee, yet not with my full strength.
I trust in thee, yet not with my whole mind.
Accept my faith, my love, my longing to know and serve thee, my trust in thy power to keep me.
What is cold do thou kindle.
What is lacking do thou make up.
I wait thy blessing.

In Christ
Merril

Four New Novices in Bathurst!



The new Novices are in the front row and from Left to Right they are Bob Shepherd, Rev'd Sharon Dyson, Pagan Richards, Rev'd Malcolm Halford. In the back row from Left to Right are The Rt Rev'd Richard Hurford, Bishop of Bathurst, Bill Gates tssf , Area Convenor and Fr John Clarkson, tssf, Regional Minister

In Bathurst there are seven professed members of the Third Order of Saint.Francis. They are Anglicans who believe that Saint.Francis' joyous and loving response to the call of Jesus and his Good News is an encouraging way in which they can walk a Christian journey through life. They have committed themselves to a rule of life and the fellowship of community life which gives buoyancy to their Christian vocation. On Thursday at Saintt.Barnabas, South Bathurst, Father John Clarkson the Regional Minister for about half of New South Wales admitted Bob Shepherd, Pagan Richards, The Revds Sharon Dyson and Malcolm Halford, the Rector of Cowra as novices of the Order to join Steve Howes and Marion Martin who are also novices. They have been inquirers for six months when they first give consideration to this step. They are novices for two years under the guidance of a Novice Counsellor, who on a regular basis share with them a series of notes on Franciscan Spirituality. Here in Bathurst we meet as a Group twice a month for prayer, study, fellowship and caring for the less fortunate especially in refuges in Bathurst.

- *From Sumatra, Indonesia* Our God put off his glory in coming down to earth; He took on human frailty through Christ the Saviour's birth. No place could be found for Him except a cattle stall. We give Him room within our hearts, the infant lord of all. (This song was written by the Batak people, translated into English and appears in The Australian Hymn Book no. 247)

The following item arrived a little too late for inclusion in the last newsletter.

A JOURNEY OF FAITH On Saturday the 7th May I celebrated my Golden Jubilee of Ordination in All Saints Cathedral Bathurst. It was a humbling but joyous experience which I shall always cherish. I owe a special thanks to the Bishop, the Dean and Bishop Beal who preached. Bishop Beal in his sermon said, "Poets can unlock the world for us and make it sing. A priest should attempt to do just that as well. To unlock the world and make it sing. You are a priest of the Great Shepherd and King and may you continue to unlock the world and the experience of life and make it sing." With a certain amount of trepidation but keen expectation, I continued my Celebrations in Britain. I arrived at Warminster in Wiltshire early in June to attend a celebration of 50 years as a Priest with some of my English contemporaries. Most of us had not seen each other since we were ordained. During the Eucharist we renewed our Ordination Vows, and the preacher reminded us that despite all the changes in the Church, Jesus' Call and Ministry is the same. He hoped that we found the Church still welcoming of our ministry in retirement. At 75 I was the youngest! Few of them had travelled far. I suggested they came to visit me and they looked at me queerly - much too far! Our Theological course was for three years at King's College, London followed by one year of Pastoralia at Warminster prior to Ordination. Two by two we would learn how to take services at neighbouring Churches. No cars in those days so we used our bicycles. For the three years in London I used to ride my bike from Westminster to the Strand where the College was situated. It was also a time when few Bishops would allow marriage of candidates before Ordination or during their curacy. We lived in Community for our last year in London and year at Warminster and I shall always be grateful for the disciplined Prayer Life I experienced which I believe has stood me in good stead throughout my ministry. A report was presented to us regarding a continuing ministry for retired priests. Entitled, "And that's not all - a priest for ever". it stated that the Church is not very good at emphasising that retirement from on going active ministry in a parish does not always mean that the retired priest wants to give up an active ministry. Many a priest, it is noted, finds it difficult to go from a busy parish to priestly inactivity. They need letting down gently and the Church, it is suggested, needs to take more seriously how to assist the clergy, "in how to step back into the chorus and not hold a star role." I was ordained in St. Albans Abbey on Trinity Sunday, 1955, where I knelt at the shrine of St. Alban, the first British Christian martyr. When the Romans occupied Britain, one of their cities was Verulamium, later named St. Albans. In the fourth century, Alban, a Roman soldier, was converted to Christianity but was later executed for his loyalty to Christ by shielding a priest. Such loyalty has always been an inspiration for me. I started off my ministry at a Company of Mission Priest Clergy House at Luton, just North of London, where two of us, as assistant priests, lived with the Rector in community. This experience was invaluable when I joined the Brotherhood of St. Barnabas in North Queensland in 1959 and also the Franciscan Tertiaries in 2002.

John Clarkson

ADVENT:

Last Thursday Evening, 24th November, the Bathurst Franciscans came together at Saint Barnabas' Church, South Bathurst for an evening of prayer and contemplation. We were led by The Reverend Canon Carla Archer, Obl OSB. Carla is a Canon of All Saints' Cathedral, Bathurst and is an Oblate of the Order of Saint Benedict. We were all deeply moved by the thoughts about Advent that were presented and I present here a brief summary of the thoughts about Advent that were presented by Carla.

Advent is not just a preparation for the coming of the Christ Child. Advent has a much more serious note, even uncomfortable for some in that it is also about death, judgement, heaven and hell, the need of history, the second coming and the new Jerusalem.

Advent is a penitential time but with all of these humanly difficult themes, the more difficult ones are often skimmed over leaving us with the more comfortable ones!

Though some aspects of Advent may well be gloomy, Advent can also be a time when we should reflect on ourselves and face reality about our souls and our bodies.

At the end of time, the end of history we have the end of creation where we will be all made anew. Look at Mark 13: 24-37 who tells us of the great hope at the end of creation. Also Mark 14: 32-36 and Romans 5: 12-17. We cannot deny death. Bodily death is real but our God is the God of the living and we have the hope of glory beyond all measure that God has a place prepared for those who love him.

Judgement is reality therapy for ourselves. God looks for our cooperation in the process of accepting grace, as salvation is never thrust upon unwilling people by an irresistible God. We all have to accept that we are under the effect of sin by realizing that despite all of our achievements as human beings our history is a tale of wars, persecutions and exploitations. Sin is a state of chosen alienation from God. Sin denies our true human freedom as creatures who need to look to the creator as the source of life.

Deeds have consequences

We have freedom and God does not arbitrarily intervene to set aside consequences that flow from the exercise of that freedom. Look at Galatians 6: 7 and Romans 7: 21-23.

The wrath of God is real and so is God's steadfast love. The fire purifies but does not destroy.

Do not judge
Be Humble
Purgation is not destruction.

Part of our Advent hope is the belief that we have a destiny beyond death. Death is not the ultimate end. God is the ultimate end. The raising of Jesus changed the whole dynamic and brought into our realization the full life of heaven (not resuscitation) by resurrection.

Our pattern, our soul, will be resurrected into a new and different body, a new creation. In heaven we will be embodied in a new creation and a new time - it will be more than plucking harps on clouds for ever! Consider 2 Corinthians 5:7 and Revelation 21: 22-23.

Hell is a place where we deliberately turn away from God. Hell is where the search for truth is cut off.....

Our faith ultimately is in a God who cares for His Creation and cares for it always. In the resurrection of Christ we find our resurrection hope for that was the beginning of the new creation - an act of divine power and love: a completion of God's purposes.

Advent is a time to reflect on the last four things - eschatological events - death and judgement, heaven and hell.



Images depicting Resurrection, The Last Trumpet Call and the New Jerusalem



**JERUSALEM HERALD
CLASSIFIED ADS**

?POSITION VACANT

Shepherds. We require a team of reliable shepherds to work night shifts. Must be emotionally stable as the previous team quit after claiming that they "saw angels".
Apply at the flock on the hill near Bethlehem.

?Return thanks.

Joseph of Nazareth wishes to thank all the kind people of Bethlehem who helped his wife in the delivery of our baby boy, Jesus. Both mother and baby doing well

?Retirement Dinner.

A retirement dinner will be held for Anna, prophet of the Temple. For further details contact Simeon in the Temple.



*'PEACE ON EARTH'
in Sydney*

It happened at one of the traditional nine Lessons and Carols in St. Andrew's Cathedral years ago. It was packed with people standing around the walls and crowding around the entrances to hear. In the peaceful ambience of the candle light, "something dramatic and yet symbolic happened." The Dean at the time, Lance Shilton, was an eye-witness.

"While the Cathedral Choir was singing in the subdued light the familiar words 'Peace on earth and goodwill towards men', suddenly a man rushed down the crowded centre aisle with several people chasing him. For a while he hid amidst the congregation at the side of the Cathedral. Then he was chased across the Cathedral towards the offices. I found out later that he had come off the street into the crowd standing at the George Street door and picked someone's pocket. The police, who had been called, were able to retrieve the stolen wallet from him in the vestry. But the choir, unperturbed, continued to sing 'Peace on earth and goodwill to men'. This was symbolic. The Christian message and the beautiful music were in the context of the real world which had to be redeemed from its nastiness and sin. The meaning of the message of the Incarnation was being enacted before the eyes of all."

*from Lance Shilton, Speaking Out: A Life in Urban Mission
The Autobiography of Lance Shilton(Sydney, 1997) p.145f.*

Here is a list of the latest changes.

Novicing

Robert Shepherd 44 Lambert St Bathurst NSW 2795 Tel: 02 6334 2142 20/10/05 NSW B
Rev'd Malcolm Halford PO Box 78 Cowra NSW 2794 Tel: 02 6342 1409 20/10/05 NSW B
Pagan Richards 2/183 Rocket St Bathurst NSW 2795 Tel: 02 6331 0261 20/10/05 NSW B
Rev'd Sharon Dyson 3 Burgess Place Bathurst NSW 2795 Tel: 02 6334 3936 20/10/05 NSW B

Telepone Number

John and Gillian Kaines Tel: 08 8365 0569

Email

Tony and Valerie Hall-Matthews tonyh_m@bigpond.net.au

And some more changes received on 4th December:

Addresses

Malcolm and Norma Jean Willsher 7/22 Oatley Turn DunCraig WA 6023 Tel: 08 9243 1785
Rodney and Winniefred Pawa c/- Anglican Church PO Box 806 Kimbe West Britain Province PNG

Phone Number

Elsie Clark mobile 0419 779 896

Novices

Janet Connolly 8 Elinga St Howrah Tasmania 7018 Tel:03 6247 6214
Christine OBrien 44 Fisher Parade Geebung Qld 4035

Withdrawn

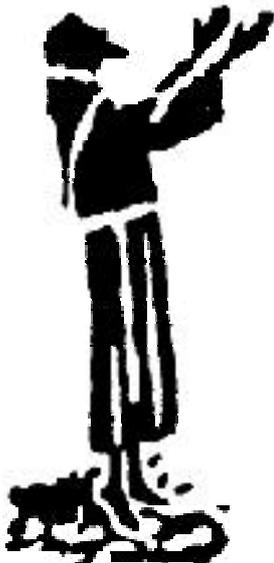
Dr David Bruhn and Robert Whalley
God Bless
Wendy

This has not yet been confirmed but the message received indicated the following:

Dear Wendy and Bill.

Just to let you know that David Mc Kelvie was professed on Sunday 2nd October 2005. David was elected convenor for 2005/6 but please check this with Val Tibbey as she has to OK any first year professed to hold office. Please include this information in next newsletter Bill.

Pax et Bonum. Flemming



GLORIOUS EVENTS: Confirmation, Monument dedication, Bible dedication and Ordination 17th - 19th June, 2005.

This is a note from DN Eliud Wavers, TSSF, PNG, of the Daga Anglican Church-Dogura Diocese

1. Confirmation: On June 17, Bishop, Rt Rev Tevita A Talanon, Bishop of Dogura Diocese confirmed over 200 candidates. The students, all from the Daga Deanery, which consisted of about nine outstations plus a few from Balaibo, in the South west of Daga, part of Central Province, which is soon to be one of our outstations. Daga Deanery consists of three Parish Districts; St Columba-Bonenao, St Peter's-Agupon and Christ the King-Agaun itself the head station. Here Bishop Tevita A Talanoa confirming all the students on Friday 17th June, which I organized and got them ready for confirmation



2. Later in the afternoon, after confirmation, the former Daga translator, Mr John and his wife, Moreen, both from America, who came in the 1960's and did the first Daga Bible translation and left in 1975 after PNG independence. Here Mr John and his wife Moreen are in front of the monument built in Kakaia Village, east of Christ the King Church, about 10Km away. The monument is built in honour of them, dedicated as NAVERU-ERUME MONUMENT, name given by Daga people at that time. Both were invited to witness the second version of the Daga Bible that was dedicated, and also their last visit. God bless them for their good work. May the Peace of the Lord be with them.



- 3 On the 18th June the Daga Bible dedication service began at 7.00 am at the front of SIL's house, our present SIL Mr Denial Josudason and his wife Weilei and son, Joshua, who were from Singapo and send by the SIL Department to do revision of the Daga Bible. By the will of God both couples continued the work of John and Moreen, and worked for ten years, withb the help of many selected Daga translation committees, and as a result of and fruit of the committed work, the procession led from their house, special honour and thanksgiving offered to God by Daga Mothers for his gifts to his servants to translate God's word in foreignh language to daga that God can now speak to Daga people in their own dialect. Four different groups of traditional dancers led to the oval for the open air services which was a charismatic type service without Holy Eucharist. One great and interesting thing was that the Holy Spirit worked in these groups in that the songs were of praise and worship[p and the choruses were all tuned to local tunes.



- 4 This picture shpws Eliud Wavere, tssf and Evangelist having the stole put in place during his Deaconing.

5. The next image shows the Prime Minister, Mr M. Somare, and Governor Tim Neville and their delegation on their arrival from Port Moresby on Saturday 18th June, 2005, the Bible dedication day.

