

THE THIRD ORDER:

Australian Province Newsletter

Vol. 9.1

Easter tide 2008

Sing the joyful Easter cry,
sound it to the souls in prison,
shout our triumph to the sky:
sing Christ risen, sing Christ risen.

James Phillip McAuley, 1917-76

From the Minister Provincial

Dear brother or sister in Christ and St Francis,

Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia! It is a joy to greet you in the brightness of the Easter season. I hope you were able to celebrate our Lord's Resurrection appropriately with the Lord's family. Australian poet James McAuley's hymn sings the Easter spirit.



Townsville Tertiaries from Qld-A
in the Mission to Seafarers' Chapel

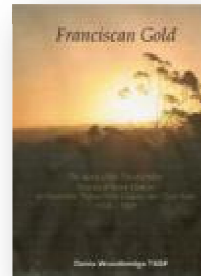
It was also a joy to meet some of you in Sydney last November, and in Queensland in February. Most of us, it seems, are able to meet in little groups of a dozen or so: an ideal size to grow in love and care for each other. We also need to keep in mind those in our Areas and Regions, who for whatever reason are unable to meet with other Tertiaries.

Details of **General Chapter and the Conference** in Sydney in July this year are printed in this newsletter. The planning group has chosen the theme "Through the Eye of a Needle." I do encourage you to consider attending. Opportunities for us to be together are precious.

History

Tertiary Denis Woodbridge has finished the text of **Franciscan Gold, the history of our first 50 years as a Province**, and the book will be launched at the Conference in Sydney. If you are not attending the Conference, you can order the book through our website (www.tssf.org.au/resources/) or from the Provincial Secretary, David White. *Franciscan Gold* is a fascinating read; our journey so far has led us in interesting places.

Please continue to pray for me: my health is not good at the moment. Please pray that my doctors will find suitable treatments.



Be assured of my prayers for you as we pray through the month together.

Blessings of peace, joy and love,

Ted tssf

Minister Provincial

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GENERAL CHAPTER AND CONFERENCE



by Greg Davidson

Registration from 2.00 p.m. Thursday 16 July 2009 to after lunch Sunday 19 July 2009.

Location:

Women's College, University of Sydney,
Carillon Avenue, Camperdown, New South
Wales.

Speakers:

Archbishop Philip Freier tssf (Diocese of
Melbourne) and **Bishop Garry Weatherill**
(Diocese of Willochra) will speak on renewal
in the church.

Brother Daniel Matthews SSF will speak at
the Conference Dinner on the experience of
chaplaincy to the recent Lambeth Conference.

Pastor Ray Minniecon, previously
from Crossroads Ministry, Redfern, will speak
on indigenous issues.

Sarah Menassa, Justice Peace and Integrity of
Creation, will speak on social justice, mainly in
relation to the Asia-Pacific region.

Our Provincial group for **Justice, Peace and
Integrity of Creation (JPIC)** will be launched.

Launch of **Franciscan Gold**, by Denis

Woodbridge tssf (the history of our Province)

Artwork by Ian Randall tssf)

**BOOKING FORM APPENDED TO THE
NEWSLETTER or contact Michael Giffin tssf,**
spanielbooks@hotmail.com



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The Transitus 2008 (Adelaide)

By Anne Kotzé (Regional Minister, South Australia)



After a gap in our relationship with the Roman Catholic Secular Franciscans in Adelaide we came together for a memorable evening on October 3 to celebrate the Transitus. We were warmly welcomed when we arrived at the Church of St Francis of Assisi, Newton, a big complex of church, Friary, church hall and many other facilities.

The five friars on the parish staff processed to the altar, followed by Seculars carrying a patched habit, which was laid at the transept with red tea-lights marking the places of Christ's five wounds which Francis received as Stigmata. The Transitus was re-enacted by the friars and members of the parish with clarity and dignity, and at certain points the whole congregation sang verses of the hymn, "All Creatures of our God and King."

After the service we went across to a parish hall where we graciously welcomed by Father

John Cooper said that Francis would have been pleased with the ecumenism which today is embodied in Assisi by peace-loving world religions meeting together.

Then a mediaeval meal was served where nothing was used which would not have been available in the Italy of 800 years ago. This meant no forks, tomatoes or potatoes! We started with a bean soup, and then had chicken, meat pies and green salads followed by biscotti and macaroons. The tables were lit with candles and festive with bottles of nuts, olives, figs and raisins as well as fresh grapes, apples and pears. What a feast!

We hope to keep our relationship active between our local RC Seculars and ourselves in the future and encourage a reaching out in a similar way in all our Regions.

The Death of Saint Francis
by Domenico Ghirlandaio

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LOSING BOLTIE

Boltie

Born	1917
Professed tssf	1974
Born to Eternal Life	2009



This week we lost Boltie...

I should say here that Boltie has always known to where and to Whom she was going...

We give thanks that Saturday was a Community day as Valda called early to take her to Dawn.

She had been planning her trip to the Sydney tssf Conference at 10pm the night before and during the night woke with leg pain but, typically of Boltie, didn't want to disturb anyone. The tssf Community at Toowoomba prayed for her immediately and were soon joined by the Australian and wider tssf Community, the SSA Sisters and all the Franciscan Communities in Australia.

As the days progressed and we realised that the time had come for Boltie to meet her Lord, we give thanks for Valda who sat with her each night until family arrived and then comforted them. We give thanks for Fr Richard and St Bart's Community who shared her life so lovingly these last few years and farewelled her so beautifully.

As expected St Bart's was packed to overflowing on Boltie's Day. Valda had held some seats with her family which was a huge blessing as many tssf including a few elder Tertiaries; Brother William and the SSF Brothers; and Mother Eunice and the SSA Community made the trip to farewell their Sister.

Once we were seated we felt so at peace and so at home. This was not to be an everyday funeral. This was a great celebration of a wonderful friend and magnificent worker for her Lord.

The service began with Valda placing a San Damiano Crucifix on Boltie's coffin as one of the Christian Symbols. Fr Richard stood, welcomed us, asked us to thank God for the life of Boltie and then picked up his guitar and lead the congregation in a loud, joyous rendition of *Sing a song of Celebration*. Some of the words include:

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*And oh, we will look on His face;
We'll go to a much better place.
Dance with all your might,
Lift up your hands and clap for joy:
The time's drawing near
when He will appear.*

*Sing aloud
for the time of rejoicing is near.*

...and Sing loudly we did; I'm sure people in the next street were singing along with us. Boltie's rainbow flag was waving, hands were clapping and such a beautiful noise was rising from that little church on her big day. Such Joy... Such Love...

Fr Norman's Eulogy started with an apology that not everyone's reflections on her life could fit into his small dialogue but he hoped that he would capture the essence of Boltie. He spoke lovingly and reverently of a very strong woman who always worked hard for her family and her God. Such adversity forged a grand Woman of God. One who sets the benchmark for many Franciscans to follow.

The Liturgical Dance respectfully honoured her and her role in its ministry. The Readings and Readers reflected Boltie's way of life. As well as being a reading, 2 Timothy 4:7 was also on her Order of Service cover.

The next Hymn, though sung quieter than the first, was an appropriate reminder from Boltie to her family and us Franciscans that in seeking God we can "Come as you are".

*Come as you are
that's how I want you.
Come as you are;
feel quite at home,
close to my heart,
loved and forgiven.
Come as you are:
why stand alone?*

Iltyd, who had given Boltie her last Communion on Wednesday and had kept in touch with Boltie her since her Morris House days, was asked to read the Gospel. His holy Welsh voice resounded across the church. Fr Richard showed his love and respect for Boltie in the most touching Homily that I have ever heard. The genuine care of St Barts to Boltie was shown in this priest's face as several times he had to take deep breaths to lovingly finish his dialogue.

The prayers for Boltie and her family continued as we joined with angels and archangels, with Boltie and all God's faithful after singing Francis' hymn of "Make me a Channel of your Peace".

After entrusting our sister Boltie to the mercy of God, the Franciscan Tertiaries, Friars and SSA Sisters as well as the 'Plethora' of Priests attending formed a Guard of Honour to farewell their Sister and Dear friend after the resounding strands of "To God be the Glory".

Cleone has spoken to Fr Richard and the Tertiaries will be presenting a San Damiano Crucifix to St Bart's for their new Chapel. Boltie was such a part of their prayer life that he felt a Franciscan presence would reflect her work. The Friars will be interring her ashes at St Phillip's.

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Celebrating Boltie's life

A FRANCISCAN CONFERENCE

Interpreting St Francis in a multi-religious society: from the Middle Ages to the present (20/11/2009-21/11/2009)

A conference celebrating the 800th anniversary of the founding of the Franciscan movement.

Presented by the Yarra Theological Union, Melbourne College of Divinity and the Centre for Studies in Religion and Theology, Monash University. Guest speakers Jacques Dalarun and Michael Cusato ofm. For further details visit: <http>



The beautiful interior of the Sisters' Chapel of St Margaret at the Society of the Sacred Advent, Brisbane. The Religious Life Advisory Council met here in February. Ted Witham represented the Third Order, which continues to have observer status on the Council. Bishop Godfrey Fryar tssf is its Chair.

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The Devil's Beatitudes

Blessed are those who are too tired, busy or disorganised to meet with fellow Christians on Sundays each week. Their hearts are not in it.

Blessed are those who enjoy noticing the mannerisms of Clergy and choir. Their hearts are not in it.

Blessed are those Christians who wait to be asked and expect to be thanked. I can use them.

Blessed are the touchy.

With a bit of luck they may even stop going to Church.

They are my missionaries.

Blessed are those who claim to love God at the same time as hating other people. They are mine forever

Blessed are the trouble-makers. They shall be called my Children.

Blessed are those who have no time to pray. They are easy prey for me.

Blessed are you when you read this and think it is about other people and

not about yourself.

Contributed

From the WA Region Newsletter

Edna Mary, our beloved in Christ and St Francis, went to Our Lord on the Feast day of St Francis. Many thoughts have been expressed about her loving nature, caring heart and straight-faced humour. Hers is the reward, ours the loss. Our compassion, condolences and love are for Anna Marie and the whole of Edna Mary's wonderful family. We thank them for sharing some of their personal memories with us. Pax et bonum.

EDNA MARY DALE, R.I.P.

A Personal Tribute

By Ian MacPherson, tssf

How blessed we all have been to have known Edna Mary, and to have counted her among our friends in our Franciscan Community! We all will have treasured memories of her. Please let me share some of mine. Edna Mary was a great correspondent. She told me once, that she

was a member of an international pen-friends club, and that she exchanged letters with people all over the world. I exchanged a few with her, writing the last one in the few days between our recent Convocation and her stroke. She had been delighted to learn of my friendship with Molly, a fellow widowed person, and I had promised to send her a photo. I'm glad that I wrote so soon after Convocation.

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It was at Convocation too, that I learned that she had recently been on a trip to the U.K. - unaccompanied - to see her sister. Isn't the good Lord's timing wonderful, that she had been able to fit that in? Hers had truly been a life fulfilled.

And wasn't it remarkable, that she had her own Transitus on St Francis's Feast Day? No accident there, I'm sure. I recall a newspaper article in February, 2000 reporting a significant spike in the number of deaths the previous month, which had been the first month of the new millennium. A lot of elderly people had apparently been "hanging on" to see the new millennium in, and I'm confident that a similar process was involved here, even though Edna Mary had been unconscious at the time. Truly, we are wondrously and fearfully made.

I was really inspired by her funeral service which, our brother Canon George Harvey told me, she had planned in meticulous detail. This was so typical of her, wasn't it? It was the first funeral I had attended, which was according to the Anglo-Catholic Rite. Never before in a funeral have I witnessed such a forthright affirmation of our place in the Communion of Saints, into which she has now entered in a fuller dimension. Inevitably, as the funeral party retired from the Chapel at St Boniface Cathedral and George recited the Nunc Dimittis, I experienced a "grief spike" at the recollection of my own dear wife

Judi's passing seven years ago, where I recited it over her as I anointed her for a peaceful passing, less than twenty-four hours before she left us. Special features of Edna Mary's funeral which particularly touched me included a little toddler great-granddaughter waving goodbye to her at the graveside at the conclusion of the committal ceremony. No doubt her Mum will remind her that she did that, in years to come. And then there was the avuncular Roman Catholic priest, also a Franciscan, attending the funeral, who on learning that I, a Uniting Church minister, was a Franciscan too, spontaneously gave me a big bear hug. A lot of acceptance there, which I appreciated.

A tail-piece: In the vestry after the service, our brother, The Revd Bob Collings pointed out the painting by Frank Pash of the Transfiguration, contextualised into an Australian environment, set in our distinctive Aussie bush landscape and Our Lord, with Moses and Elijah, Peter, James and John all depicted as Aussie rural types. There are some truths about our Christian faith, in all of its glorious relevance to us today, which are far more effectively conveyed by the artists than by mere wordsmiths like me.

For that, and for the life of our dear sister Edna Mary, to God be the praise!