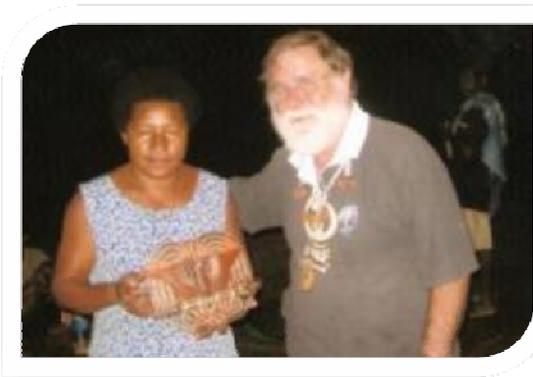


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REMARKABLE MEMBER OF TSSF

A Farewell With Gifts

During St Francis time 2008, Bishop Tony made his last visit to the Tertiaries in Popondetta as the Provincial Chaplain.

We feel that he is a Melanesian man, though he is not, because he is always wishing to be one of us. He had shared with me and many others saying, "I wish I could be 25 years old to work in PNG."

Good memories of being with Bishop Tony are treasured in the hearts of many Tertiaries in Popondetta, and in Dogura diocese.

We thank Bishop Tony for the wonderful service, he offered us for the last six years. We feel, missing him. Our love and prayers remain.

Harold Joinoba TSSF

Regional Minister, Popondetta Region.

THE WAY OF THE STIGMATA

I prayed to be like Jesus,
strong, and true, and kind.

I prayed to be like Jesus
with all my heart and mind.

I prayed to be like Jesus,
but saw the way to Christ
went by loss and total dying.

I balked: could I pay the price?

I wanted to be joyful,
on hopes that I'd be healed.
I saw the road to Jesus was
with suffering sealed.

I gaze at him up on the Cross;
I see that all is lost.
I pray for strength of body,
so I may live the cost.

*We commemorate the Stigmata on
September 17*



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General Conference and Chapter.

16 to 19 July
2009

Women's College, University of Sydney.

Following the Chapter Meeting, the General Conference commenced with the gathering of the community, led by The Rev'd Sally Buckley. What a rich gathering of experience in the service of Saint Francis. It was very humbling to be welcomed to country with an awareness of the Gattigal and Eroa peoples. Prior to Evening Prayer, two First Order brothers lead us in Bible Study.

Our first address on the Friday was given by Archbishop Philip Freier: "**Renewal (1):** What sort of world do we want for our children?" The liveliness of the discussion set the tone for the remainder of the Conference. After lunch, Bishop Garry Weatherill addressed the brothers and sister, on "**Renewal (2):** A view from the Bush". Again, this topic caught the imagination. At dinner Brother Daniel shared some interesting thoughts with us.

Saturday began with Community Obedience and Morning Prayer. During the morning prison chaplain Di Langham led an in-depth discussion on reconciliation.

The final address of the conference was given by Sarah Menassa, "Spirituality and Justice." After this, I think most of us felt that it was a pity that Justice is rarely joined with the Spirit.

During the afternoon there was time for sightseeing and relaxation. The campus has many fine buildings based on the English tradition of universities. I can best describe our fun evening as mad hatters on the loose! What a pleasure it was to be with our friends from PNG, Harold Joinoba and Anselm Rupusina. We greatly appreciated their gentleness in the Lord.

Finally, dear brother Ted (Minister Provincial of Australia PNG and East Asia TSSF) could not be with us, though many were able to speak to him by telephone. His presence was greatly missed during the Conference.

The Eucharist on the final day completed an excellent Conference.

On behalf of the Conference, I share our prayer with you all:

Through the Eye of the Needle.

*Father, we would be people of your Kingdom.
We would pass through the eye of the needle.
In humility and simplicity, may we be small
enough.*

*In joy and peace, may we not mind the trials.
In daily love of Christ, holding the hands of
Francis, Clare and all our brothers and sisters,
may we make our way
with you, Father
all things are possible.*

A Tertiary, 2009

I would like us all to imagine that we were at the Conference and Francis sends us out to "**Go in peace to love serve the Lord, bringing the Third Order to all who will listen.**"

Pax et Bonum,

David Noble

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KEEP IT SIMPLE

A Journey to Novicing

By Jeanne Norris n/tssf

I sit at my desk, trying to think up an extraordinary line to start this article. Nothing springs to mind, only that it is the ordinary things in life that are the extraordinary.

Late last year, when my Parkinson's diagnosis changed to MSA (Multisystem Atrophy), I allowed terror and anxiety to rule my life. Day and night I focused on the negative, on what I could no longer do, wanting my old life back and fearing what the future may hold. I have missed church very much and spent a lot of time seeking God. In the intense blackness of some days, I decide God is not there for me, I have seen no sign, nor felt His presence...

- In writing this article (the first draft was complex, analytical) I decided to replace the complexity with simplicity, to rewrite from the heart. When I see someone smile, or my Labrador puts her head on my knee, there I see God, and feel safe and confident in the strength and beauty of simplicity. I am confident that when we ask for direction, it will come. When we trust, look, listen, and are prepared for a variety of answers – a dream, a person saying something that resonates, something written, or one's own gut feeling - we can recognise God.

Why did I undertake this search for GOD? My world had fallen apart and I saw faith as the only thing that could save me from drowning. I gradually discovered that I *could* see God, that I had been looking in the wrong places. What I needed to find was within me, and all around me. God is any kindness, gentleness or

goodness expressed by people; those intuitive thoughts that prompt you to ring someone, to do or not do something; any expression of compassion, love or laughter; my beautiful dogs living their lives in a totally unconditional way; and those people that turn up just at the right time – these are expressions of God. There are so many different faiths and denominations in the world whose base is the solid foundation of love. I learn from difference, believing there are many paths to the same destination, and many rooms in the one mansion.

When things are going well, it is much easier to have faith. Going to Mass is an enjoyable experience, but was my faith, my experience of God, real? Not really. I talked about it, and knew other people had found it, but in all honesty I had a concept that would not stand up under hardship. It is often said that if you choose God, everything will be fixed and life will fall into place - so not!! For me it has been gradual, a few steps forward, a few back; a process of surrender and discovery, of learning to rely on hope, and to trust the fact of God's existence, often without feeling it. It is also asking for healing and wanting my life back, but getting neither of these things when I ask. My answer is clear, do what you can, with what you have, where you are; trust that there is a purpose for all things and be assured that you are never alone. I discover it is hard work to walk the walk, but it is possible and the only way to make faith a reality. Faith has to become a habit, and that takes time. When panic sets in I learn to meet it with repetition of the twenty-third psalm, Glory Be, or Our Father; and let the destructive hold of fear float past without engaging with it, knowing I will soon find calm

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again. Dare to seek real faith with your heart and with simplicity.

The past fifty years have been fabulous, and I have been given the privilege of doing so many different things. Instead of longing for the person I was, I'm learning to accept me, just as I am now. I'm seeing that new doors open, that there will always be avenues of service. Slowly, I have stopped analysing and fighting, and am finding more moments of peace. I miss working so very much, I no longer have a licence to drive, some days my balance is not so good and my speech a bit slurry, but I am still the same me that I have always been. I had not found a real faith for myself because I was never still, but I now see I was scared to be still. What if I stopped and found nothing?

This has been the hardest, most confronting time of my life. I have visited the blackest places, but finally have an understanding of and belief in God. I have experienced much goodness. It has taken me a while to feel comfortable with having carers from the Shire, to use words like case manager, to go out with a walking stick or admit that I need help doing some things. Carers and medical staff are truly remarkable people doing remarkable work, here you truly see God in action. I have also discovered the healing powers of laughter. My circumstances broke me down - to listen, to be still, to allow people into my life, to understand humility, and to know that I must engage with and talk to God in order to grow. As I reinvent my life I live only this day, and find new avenues of creativity and service. I learn that for faith to grow it is just like any relationship, if you meet someone and never spend time with

them talking or doing things, you never get to know them any better. So it is with God.

Finally, I am starting to emerge. Whilst in rehab for five weeks, not readily able to pop into Christ Church, I was searching for a path that was disciplined, yet simple and clear. Daphne Edwardson appeared and told me about the Society of St Francis. I knew this was the path I must take. I was noviced into the Third Order of the Society of St Francis on Tuesday, July 28, in a ceremony at my house, *Norris Manor*, Barkers Creek. I chose my house as the venue, not just because I am a bit wobbly, but because my dream is to live here always with my dogs; I felt the occasion would inject new life and positive energy into my home for the next part of life's journey. Please know that the kettle is always on at *Norris Manor* and you are always welcome at my table. And I thank you each for the prayers that have been said for me over the past few months.

I am a fairly private person, but felt it necessary to write this, and it is my hope that it may be of some help to someone in some way.



Anne Kotzé, Dorothy Brooker & David White at Chapter

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MINISTERS OF THE PROVINCES MEET IN W.A.



The five Provincial Ministers of the Third Order meeting in Western Australia last August gained a snapshot of the 3,100-strong Order world-wide. I enjoyed meeting up with the retiring African Minister, David Bertram, Anita Catron (representing Ken Norian of the Americas), John Heberton from Aoteora-New Zealand, and Joanna Coney from Europe.

Chaired by the Minister-General, Dorothy Brooker, the Ministers' meeting looked forward to continuing growth in places like Papua New Guinea and the Solomons and set parameters for new Provinces to emerge.

The Ministers reaffirmed the 2005 decision of the Inter-Provincial Third Order Chapter (IPTOC) not to re-write our Principles. Instead, it encouraged Provinces to develop commentaries and questions for reflection.

Joanna reported on changes to Franciscan Aid, including some clarifications of the criteria for new projects. She encouraged

Provinces to make applications for grants to help the poorest.

I was asked to develop a Facebook presence for the Third Order, which may communicate our message to a wider group and invite people to explore our websites.

The Ministers began planning for IPTOC 2011, which will take place in New York at the same time as the Joint First Order Chapters (FOC). This meeting is attended by the Minister and Chaplain and one other Tertiary from each Province.

The West Australian Tertiaries provided hospitality for the Ministers while in WA. In particular, George Harvey led us on a fascinating tour of Bunbury to visit the Cathedral, the Chapel of St Elizabeth of Hungary, and St Mark's in Picton, the oldest standing church in WA.

They also enjoyed a bush barbecue and a trip through the pretty Ferguson Valley, which culminated in the surprising Gnomesville.



The Ministers at Gnomesville

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JPIC – JUSTICE, PEACE AND THE INTEGRITY OF CREATION

Imagine a World .
. In harmony
Imagine a World .
. Where the
poor are
embraced
Imagine a World .
. Where you and
I can all be
brothers and
sisters
800 years ago
Francis
Imagined
such a world . . .



Our tssf Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation (JPIC) Commission was introduced at the tssf 2009 Conference in Sydney. It consists of a core of three Tertiaries: Colin Fidock (SA), Monica Dennison (NSW-A) and Glenys McCarrick (QLD-A) with input and advice from many more Brothers and Sisters throughout the Province.

The Franciscan Family is scattered throughout Australia, some as individuals, small groups and also larger institutions and Orders living in community. Each and every Franciscan has something to offer to the larger community of our heritage and works today.

The promotion and animation of JPIC is one element to which we are call. JPIC is our witness within the Church and society today.

The Franciscan spirituality is to live simply the Gospel values, with respect for all humanity and all of creation. This may be done with each other, with other religious organisations, within the Church and within society. Together we can influence each of these areas. Collaboration and solidarity is one way forward.

Sarah (ofm JPIC Animator) and Adriane Dyt fmm met recently to consider ways in which the Franciscan values of justice, peace and the integrity of creation can be promoted more fruitfully and widespread by engaging the Franciscan family. A collaborative effort amongst the Franciscan family seems the way to go, allowing for each group's particular human and material resources, availability and differing levels of energy around this topic. Small and large efforts can assist in all that we do.

To facilitate us in this work of collaboration I invite you to provide details of the members of your community who are responsible for this part of your charism. This is to promote links and collaboration from all parts of the Franciscan Family and share our resources and gifts. Hopefully in this new year we will be able to gather to discuss common issues, to support each other in the area of Franciscan JPIC and to communicate JPIC matters within the Franciscan Family.

Glenys McCarrick. tssf

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From the Minister Provincial.

My dear sisters and brothers,

I guess I am a cradle Christian. I drifted away from the faith in my teens, then, thanks to the determined evangelism of one friend Ron Hu, I re-committed my life to God in my 21st year. Being a Christian has been an important part of my identity since then.

But there is one way in which I am still a cradle Christian. There is a sense in which I am always beginning to learn what God requires of me, and how I am to respond to God.

A book by French Catholic writer Jean-François Six had a big influence on me at theological College. Mgr Six taught me not only a great deal about meditation, but also that I am always a "beginner at prayer".

Of course it is important that we have a sense of journey, and that we strive to grow in our faith, but it is also vital to keep the humility that acknowledges that however far we have come in our journey, there is a long way to go before we attain to the maturity in Christ to which he calls us. In this life, at least, we never get off our L-plates!

This sense of always being a *beginner* fits well with our Franciscan spirituality. Our value of simplicity concerns not only our lifestyle but also our prayer-style! Franciscans are sceptical of methods, whether methods of prayer or evangelism or Christian living. We go back to Francis' instruction to the brothers to say the 'Our Father' and a simple Office.

I invite you to ask yourself what your prayer-life is founded on. When you are travelling, when you are sick, when your house is full of people, when all conspires to stop your usual prayers, what do you do to keep praying?

How you answer this question may re-assure you of the importance of always *beginning again* in prayer.

For me, I have found the Community Obedience a rock-solid base for my praying. When all else fails, the 'Obedience' keeps me going, and keeps me conscious of my "L-plates".

On a personal note, I was so disappointed to have been too unwell to attend General Chapter in Sydney. I would have loved to have caught up with many of you there. I thank Helen and Sally who deputised for me in the meetings.

The severe gastritis seems to be getting better, and I hope to be fit to travel in the next months.

**Peace and joy,
Ted Witham tssf**

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Profession

- Car carrying Tertiaris over the most kilometers ever.
- Car carrying Tertiaris over the most extreme conditions ever.
- Dirtiest car ever to carry Tertiaris.

+Tony's Anglican
Subaru Forester

**Fifth Order
SSF**

**2009
Chapter**



IF THE HAT FITS....
The Minister-General and
the new Provincial Chaplain

CHANGES IN CHAPTER

During General Chapter, Bishop **Tony Hall-Matthew's** faithful car **Bertie** was professed as a "Fifth Order" member of the Society of St Francis in honour of the countless km's Bertie had carried Tony around Australia during Tony's 6 years as Chaplain.

Chapter elected **Helen Granowski** as Provincial Chaplain. Helen is a priest of the Diocese of Melbourne, and was previously Principal in Anglican girls' schools, and a science teacher. Helen has a keen interest in music, rings church bells and sings with a community choir. She is also committed to ecumenism and interfaith relations.

John Davis was elected as the new Regional Minister of Victoria/Tasmania. Fr John is Vicar of St Peter's Eastern Hill in central Melbourne. He has visited Assisi several times and led a pilgrimage there last year. He is the author of the 2003 book *The Gift of St Francis*