



The Province of Asia-Pacific

AUSTRALIA, HONG KONG, MALAYSIA, KOREA
PAPUA NEW GUINEA, SINGAPORE & SRI LANKA

NEWSLETTER

Easter

Edition

PROVINCIAL MINISTER LETTER FOR LENT/EASTER FRANCISCAN AID

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

Our Provincial Treasurer sent out our Annual Contribution form in January and I do hope most of you have now sent in your contributions. We rely on this as our sole annual income. This year for the first-time, new tertiaries in Sri Lanka and Korea, our Regions in Formation in Asia, will also be making their Annual Contributions in Rupees and Won.

Every year one of the optional choices we have is to support Franciscan Aid. This Tssf Charity operates out of the European Province for the benefit of poor people in need in all 5 Provinces. In reality most beneficiaries are in The Third World or developing countries in the Provinces of the Pacific, Africa, The Americas and Asia Pacific.

The aim of Franciscan Aid is to use the funds to try to alleviate poverty. The beneficiaries do not have to be Christian, for poverty strikes regardless of a person's religion. Franciscan Aid relies for funding on contributions from Tertiaries and friends, and all Trustees are professed Tertiaries, who meet regularly in London to consider funding ongoing projects and applications for new ones, all of which must be proposed and sponsored by a member of the First or Third Order.

The kind of projects we support include: financial help for families with AIDS in Zimbabwe; school equipment for children in Uganda; aid to women undergoing fistula surgery in Uganda; food, and books for hostel children in West Bengal; building wells in the Gobi Desert, Mongolia; playground equipment for children in Bethlehem and hearing aids for children at a special school in Palestine. In the past couple of years, we have supported projects suggested by Br Lionel in Sri Lanka.

Franciscan Aid is not one of the many large Aid organisations, but with its connection with Franciscans on the ground, we can make a difference to the lives of people in small ways that may not be within the scope or sight of others.

Any gifts to Franciscan Aid can be sent to our Provincial Account. When you transfer such money please email our Treasurer Jane Noller to advise her so that she can send you a receipt.



May the deep things of Lent and the Passion and the joy of Easter be your strength.
+Godfrey tssf



A Welcoming Community

Taken from: www.tssf.org.au

“The Order sets out, in the name of Christ, to break down barriers between people and to seek equality for all. We accept as our second aim the spreading of a spirit of love and harmony among all people. We are pledged to fight against the ignorance, pride and prejudice that breed injustice or partiality of any kind”. Principles Day 7.

“Members of the Third Order fight against all injustice, in the name of Christ in whom there can be neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for in him all are one. Our chief object is to reflect that openness to all which was characteristic of Jesus”. Principles Day 8.

The Third Order is an inclusive community where ALL who are called by God to follow Jesus in the Franciscan way are welcome to explore this vocation.

Visit us on the web at www.tssf.org.au

Francis' Prayer before the Crucifix

By: Reverend Mandy Wheatley

*Most High, glorious God,
enlighten the darkness of my heart;
Give me right faith, sure hope, and perfect charity.
Fill me with understanding and knowledge,
that I may fulfill your command.*

We live in times like no other. The fears, greed, despair and sense of meaninglessness that surrounds us seems to be growing stronger. This Easter our Christian celebrations in Australia will be different than ever before as the patterns of our lives fall apart. Many of us are still affected by the aftermath of the bushfires, drought and the closure of our churches. We all seem to be getting older and the things that once brought us meaning and purpose have changed or gone!

As Francis gazed on the San Damiano Crucifix, his life was also in crisis. He was deeply troubled by trying to find his true purpose. Things that normally would have guided him had become worthless, meaningless. Then the crucifix and the power of its presence in his life began to resonate within him until in his last years he received the wounds of the stigmata.

For Francis, it was the love of God, the self-offering and the surrender of control in the incarnation of Christ that was at the heart of the gospel. But for him the cross held no dark misery of the heart.

The body of Christ on the San Damiano Crucifix, who called him to rebuild the church was not bloody or twisted in anguish. Rather, it was luminous, as if it were already risen, radiating the fullness of God. Instead of a crown of thorns, there was a glorious halo. And Christ's body with outstretched arms appeared to be ascending to heaven. This image of a risen Jesus may have been the reason why Francis viewed suffering, poverty of spirit and death as a pathway of joy because in it he beheld the glory and transcendent beauty of God.

Just by saying the opening words of this prayer of adoration; "Most High, glorious God", our hearts seem to grow lighter. We feel as Francis did; swept up into the glorious presence of God! Adoration helps lighten the self-absorption and anxiety that darkens our hearts.

Once, while praying in a solitary place, Francis had a vision of Christ looking at him from the cross with such intense and burning love that "his soul melted." So we can imagine that every time Francis prayed before a crucifix, he experienced a similar outpouring of God's passionate love. It was this incarnate love that enabled Francis to respond with the same kind of total generosity.

The power of this love transformed his heart and mind with so much peace and good that it flowed out from his life to the world around him. The cross, therefore, was not a sign of sin and death, but a sign of the tremendous power of love shared by Franciscans through the centuries. Francis understood that love and suffering cannot be separated but, like the meaning of the word 'passion' itself, will always remain connected.

One of the ways to understand the marks of the crucifixion on the body of Francis is by his commitment to embody the Gospel, surrendering his life to Jesus and opening his heart to the love of God, he was transformed into that which he loved: Jesus. This Easter may we recognize the transformative power of God's incarnate love, the way it changes how we see the world, the way we treat one another, the way we care for creation, and the way we relate to our Creator.

Happy Easter!

Poverty

Taken from: "Footprints of St Francis Lenten Study"

By: Fr Terry Booth and Terry Gatfield, tssf

The doorway into the interior life of the soul and the discovery of the true-self had begun for St Francis. He had walked away from wealth and security, naked, and now embraced Lady Poverty. Although it had been an obvious action of the heart, as he was moved to compassion, there is another dimension that can easily be overlooked. It is what Niemier (2006) calls *poverty of being or ontological being*: namely that which defines essentially who I am. This was the kind of poverty Francis wanted above all to instil in his brothers, for without the embrace and integration of this truth, he believed that a life of material poverty had little or no foundation.

Iliia Delio (2004) a Franciscan sister and a Bonaventure scholar writes:

Poverty means radical dependence, recognising one's utter dependence on God. When I ask the question "who am I?" I begin a life of poverty because the answer is one of radical dependence. I am not the source of my own life: rather, I come from God and belonging to God. To be created by God is to enjoy a graced nature. However, because I am created out of nothing. I have a tendency towards nothingness. Simply by being human, therefore, I am poor because I am dependent on God for the very existence of my being.

Our daily reflection and prayer

Help me to see rightly my true poverty. Help me to let go of my self-made securities and indulgencies, and find my life secured deeply in you. I want to move to the place where I too have radical dependency on you Lord. Continue to give me a desire to reach out towards that end, the inner power to make it happen, and the grace to stay on the journey.

The Joy of Animals

Our dog, Ralf, who is a Cavoodle, had a reunion with his family recently.

There were about 6 or more dogs attending. Tails were wagging and friendly dogs sniffing and playing. This continued all morning.

As you know he is the Sub-Editor of the Order. He is always sitting close by my feet as I work with the Edition



Thank you to all who have contributed to this Edition.

Novice Counsellors Reflection Day

By: Bronwyn Fryar, tssf

The wisdom of years of novice counselling was “tapped into” at the Reflection morning held at St Francis College on Saturday February 15th, for novice Counsellors from the Qld B/NNSW region.

Our area meetings and regional gatherings begin by reflecting on the Principle for the day, as contained in the Community Obedience. For this group of long-standing tertiaries to speak together of ‘the heart of our prayer is the Eucharist’ was very profound : the hunger as people come forward, the quiet contemplative nature of weekday Eucharists, the presence of the kingdom of God in the midst of those gathered at that moment.

There were three sessions reflecting on :

What is formation?

The role of the Novice Counsellor

The process of Novice Counselling using Ted Witham’s notes as a guide for some of our discussions.

Keith lead us to think on the original stirring which lead each of us to become a tertiary.

For some it was the inspiration and story of St Francis himself, for others it was a desire to go deeper in faith in a more disciplined way, with a Rule of Life; for others it was the example of members of SSF, or tssf, that was the original stirring. Keith quoted from Ted’s training notes:

A person who is ‘formed’ takes on more and more the way of living demonstrated by the community and the beliefs that underpin its way of living.

Nicholas picked up this theme describing the role as one of ‘modelling’ the Franciscan life. Novice counselling is a privilege and a blessing. Being Franciscan and wearing our Profession Cross often offers opportunities to talk about Francis, and at times this is easier than presenting the church.

NC’s have a responsibility of discernment. Not all who begin the enquiry journey are necessarily called. A departure by novice or enquirer is not a ‘failure’ on the part of the Novice Counsellor. It has been part of the spiritual journey of discovery for the enquirer.

Bronwyn touched on the many different ways that the process now happens:

in other languages - Tamil, Mandarin, Korean

• by Skype, Zoom or Facetime

There is need to recognise :

• that each novice is unique and tailoring the process to these differences is vital. Some like to write responses and reports either in note form or as a longer piece, others prefer a conversation.

• Formation is lifelong and as we work through the Formation notes we continue to grow in living as Franciscans

• electronic forms would assist Quarterly and Annual reporting

NC’s spoke of their own experience of formation. For some it proceeded in a very orderly manner, for others it was less so !! There was further discussion on the history of tssf in this Province and the many changes.

The health of the order is absolutely dependent on the formation the Novice Counsellor has experienced and his/her role in the formation of others.

Above all it is the modelling by both the counsellor and the tssf community which is the heart of formation.

Saint Bernardine of Siena’ Story

Saint of the Day for May 20

Posted by: Franciscan Media

Most of the saints suffer great personal opposition, even persecution. Bernardine, by contrast, seems more like a human dynamo who simply took on the needs of the world.

He was the greatest preacher of his time, journeying across Italy, calming strife-torn cities, attacking the paganism he found rampant, attracting crowds of 30,000, following Saint Francis of Assisi’s admonition to preach about “vice and and virtue, punishment and glory.”

He had a keen intuition of the needs of the time, along with solid holiness and boundless energy and joy. He accomplished all this despite having a very weak and hoarse voice, miraculously improved later because of his devotion to Mary.

When he was 20, the plague was at its height in his hometown of Siena. Sometimes as many as 20 people died in one day at the hospital. He offered to run the hospital and, with the help of other young men, nursed patients there for four months. He escaped the plague, but was so exhausted that a fever confined him for several months. He spent another year caring for a beloved aunt whose parents had died when he was a child, and at her death began to fast and pray to know God’s will for him.

At 22, he entered the Franciscan Order and was ordained two years later. For almost a dozen years he lived in solitude and prayer, but his gifts ultimately caused him to be sent to preach. He always traveled on foot, sometimes speaking for hours in one place, then doing the same in another town.

The Christogram IHS is a monogram symbolizing **Jesus** Christ. From Greek it is an abbreviation of the name IHŌIŌŌ (**Jesus**). In Eastern Orthodox Church the Christogram is composed with letters X, P, I and X arranged into the cross.



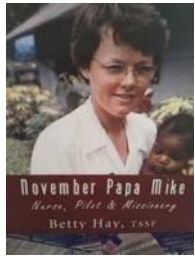
Especially known for his devotion to the Holy Name of Jesus, Bernardine devised a symbol—IHS, the first three letters of the name of Jesus in Greek—in Gothic letters on a blazing sun. This was to displace the superstitious symbols of the day, as well as the insignia of factions: for example, Guelphs and Ghibellines.

(The Ghibellines were thus the imperial party, while the Guelphs supported the Pope. Broadly speaking, Guelphs tended to come from wealthy mercantile families, whereas Ghibellines were predominantly those whose wealth was based on agricultural estates.) The devotion spread, and the symbol began to appear in churches, homes and public buildings. Opposition arose from those who thought it a dangerous innovation. Three attempts were made to have the pope take action against him, but Bernardine’s holiness, orthodoxy, and intelligence were evidence of his faithfulness.

General of the Friars of the Strict Observance, a branch of the Franciscan Order, Bernardine strongly emphasized scholarship and further study of theology and canon law. When he started there were 300 friars in the community; when he died there were 4,000. He returned to preaching the last two years of his life.

The life story of Betty Hay tssf

By: Sally Prickett
Denmark. WA



In 2008 a lovely couple joined our Anglican parish family and attended St. Leonard's church regularly in Denmark WA. Through their kindness, care and willingness to share whatever they had, it was obvious that they were truly people of God. They joined in parish life to the full and became well known in the community be it in the church, at the gym, and eventually through the publication of Betty's book "November

Papa Mike." My husband Chris and I very much enjoyed their company, their enthusiasm to share their faith journey and in particular Betty's commitment to the Third Order of the Society of St. Francis which was something we knew nothing about until then.

In 2012 Betty's health began to deteriorate and in conversation it became very apparent that she was very frustrated at not being able to complete a project she had started with family members to write her life story, in particular her experience as a missionary in Papua New Guinea. She and Bob had given many talks on the subject and had wonderful slides which augmented their presentations.

I had recently finished a project for a retired priest in Denmark and offered to help Betty to write her story. She was so excited at the prospect and so began 18 months of our intense work together. Her son Robert and daughter Alison had already put together some papers and after reading these we decided that I would visit Betty and Bob once a week for an hour with my iPad set to record and just talk. I would choose a particular period or subject that initially I had picked up from the papers, then later I'd try and get her to expand on something she had said during our conversations. At the end of our sessions Bob would lay on afternoon tea for us, always a pot of tea and cheese biscuits with a slice of cheese and a sliver of tomato on top, sometimes as a treat we would have an almond cake each instead. Yum.

I would go home and type up the conversations and gradually put things into date order and try to match up the many beautiful photos Bob had taken. Next time I visited them I would give them a draft of the last typed notes I'd done for them to edit and we would spend another hour or so just talking, building on what had gone before. So the book grew and grew and as it grew Betty said "golly gum drops we're nearly there"! Betty was so fortunate and really appreciated her life partner Bob, who was a civil engineer as well as a commercial pilot and he added greatly to their life together and to the book, reminding Betty of things and dates when perhaps her memory wasn't so sharp! Betty, Bob and I struggled to come up with a title and cover design. Titles like My Life Story, or Nursing in my Blood, etc. wouldn't really attract too many readers perhaps but then my husband Chris came up with the title.

November Papa Mike.....

November Papa Mike Nurse, Pilot & Missionary

That was it! Betty was thrilled and Bob thought it most appropriate, then Chris designed the cover page and we were ready to print.

They had decided that they would publish privately but left it to me to organise everything. Through friends I discovered that UniPrint, part of UWA would print the book for us which was another wonderful coincidence for Betty because on the 7th February 1950 she graduated from UWA having completed a 3 year nursing course and Dame Katherine Watt RRC came over from England to present their certificates. The staff at UniPrint were extremely helpful and seemed to be delighted at the connection also.

Before the book went to print, Betty took a turn for the worse and it was thought she may not survive to see the printed version so once again my dear husband put together such a good mock up that Betty thought it was the real thing. Fortunately, she came good and we were to hold the book launch in our garden under white canopies with a banner made of the front cover for Betty to sit in front of and sign copies. That didn't quite work out, because just as we finished erecting everything, a "willy-willy" came through and uprooted the canopies and dumped them on top of the chook run!!! Argh, what to do? Fortunately our house was quite large and we cleared all the furniture out of the kitchen/diner/snug and set up chairs and were able to seat 50 people. Betty's daughter Alison made a speech to which Betty responded, then Bob sat at a table selling the books and Betty sat in the lounge signing them. Afternoon tea followed of course!

Such a perfect ending to a most interesting project, leaving a lasting legacy of a truly blessed and faithful life. May they both rest in peace now in the lasting care of someone they knew they would meet.

Witnessing to Christ

Taken from: "Lent and Easter Wisdom from St Francis and St Clare of Assisi",
Compiled by: John V. Kruse

Listen, sons of the Lord and my brothers, *pay attention to my words. Incline the ear* of your heart and obey the voice of the Son of God. Observe His commands with your whole heart and fulfil His counsels with a perfect mind. *Give praise* to Him *because He is good; exalt Him by your deeds*; for this reason He has sent you into the whole world: that you may bear witness to His voice in word and deed and bring everyone to know that there *is no one who is all-powerful* except Him. Persevere *in discipline* and holy obedience and, with a good and firm purpose, fulfil what you have promised Him. The Lord God offers *Himself* to us as to His *children*.

St Francis of Assisi

"A Letter to the Entire Order," 116-117

Prayer Christ, through these past days of Lent and Easter, I have entered into the sorrows of death but have also risen to the joys of new life with you. Fill me with your Spirit so that I may remain faithful to you. Help me to share, through word and deed, what I have gained this Lent and Easter with all whom I encounter.



Funeral Holmily for Bishop Bevan Meredith, at st John's Cathedral, 30th January, 2020.

By: The Rt Reverend Godfrey Fryar

“That which is, already has been; that which is to be, already is; and God seeks out what has gone by.: Ecc.3.15.

Some of you may be familiar with the Netflix series “The Crown” which traces events in the life of Queen Elizabeth in the context of the times through which she has lived. It is a drama, not a documentary, but it does work around both known and likely events and the rest is sinterpretation. The series is quite compelling viewing for those who know the longer story, and equally compelling for those who are younger, who are amazed to discover the longer story of a very well-known woman, that they have only ever known as an old lady.

Bishop Bevan was born on August the 14th 1927, just 14 months after the Queen.

In our lives, we only begin to understand the meaning of events, and decisions we have made in our lives, in the long view, and humanly speaking the full meaning may only possible be known, when our lives have come to an end.

Bevan's years growing up, are a story passed on through his family. We have, from his late sister Marion Tung Yep, an account of his first years in Papua New Guinea, a country that came to define his life. In 1954 Bevan Meredith went to New Guinea, because there was need. The Mt Lamington Volcano had erupted, and thousands of Papuans and a group of Anglican Mission teachers were killed. Bevan was 24 years old, single and a trained teacher, who had been working at Slade School Warwick. He responded to the need and went to become a teacher at the Martyrs school near Popondetta. It was very basic, and one of his first tasks was to pitsaw timber and build his classroom!

He went as a teacher, not as a priest, but a particular conversation changed the direction of his life. He had travelled up into the Managlas region high up in the mountains. There he met an old man, as he was walking through the bush, who asked him a question: “Is the Bishop going to send us a priest? If he doesn't send us one soon, it will be too late.”

He was ordained for the Diocese of New Guinea as deacon in this Cathedral in 1961, being sent to St Thomas Toowong as curate, and was ordained priest the following year. In 1963, he returned to New Guinea, and in the fulfilment of the prophetic request of the old man he had met in the bush, he was appointed Priest in charge of the Managlas, where he served for 3 years till, he was appointed as an assistant Bishop in New Guinea. Bevan was consecrated Bishop here in this Cathedral, on February 26th, 1967. After serving 10 years as an Assistant to Bishop David Hand, he was elected as the first Bishop of New Guinea Island Diocese, and in 1990 he became Archbishop and Primate of the Province. He retired back here in Brisbane in 1995.

Marion Tung Yep wrote about an experience Bevan had as priest in charge of the Managlas. In isolated areas missionaries were regarded as part of the government as well as representing the Church.

As such Bevan was expected to implement government policy about the burial of the dead and particularly that bodies were buried immediately after death. Traditionally a body was wrapped in park and placed in a tree and the bones were later buried, much in the same way as in traditional Aboriginal communities here. When the burial of bones took place, the whole clan brought gifts for the soul's welfare in the next world, and these were buried with the bones.

The reading from John's Gospel this morning, was chosen by Bevan, as was the portion from Ecclesiastes. John in chapter 6, describes Jesus as the on ce and for all Bread, and as in all of the “I am” sayings, they do not so describe who Jesus is, as they describe what he does. He is the one who nourishes with bread that produces life, and those who come to him and believe, will find rest from the never-ending search for wisdom. Anyone who comes to him will be fed and nourished for this life, and for what is to come. This Bevan firmly believed.

The well-known reading from Ecclesiastes describes the seasons of life, as a predetermined pattern, that no one can understand or change, and that everything happens at the time fixed for it. On the face of it, the reading can seem problematic,

For the full version go to www.tssf.org.au



Matters of Faith

By: Bishop Jeremy Ashton

This was an article which was published recently in our local newspaper, the “Castlemaine Mail”, in its Matters of Faith column.

In the Book of Wisdom, we read “your wisdom God you have formed us to have dominion over all your creation, to be stewards of the world in holiness and righteousness and to administer justice with an upright heart”. The writer is picking up on the two accounts of creation in the Book of Genesis. In one the human is depicted as ruler and boss; in the other as carer and shepherd.

In the West we have tended to follow the first way in how we treat the environment. It is there for our use: we can do what we like with it. In PNG, I learnt that there the people belonged to the land and not the land to them and so they cared for it and all the flora and fauna. The same is true of the first people of this country. This is a much healthier attitude. If we had adopted it, fire would be our friend as it was for St Francis. We would only take what we needed and learn to dispose of our waste, and so lessen the need for landfill and reduce the pollution of waterways.

Westerners thought of themselves as born to rule. When they explored Africa, America, the Pacific, they despised those they found as “lesser breeds without the law”, not bothering to learn what the law of that land might be. “Terra nullius” was a useful fiction for stealing land and exploiting its people. This continues today—think Israeli settlements in the West Bank, destruction of the Amazon in Brazil, incarceration rates of indigenous people here.

If we turn to family life, we find the same disdain by many men for “the other”. Violence against women, exploitation and cruelty of children, hatred and dehumanising of LGBTQ+ people, lack of respect for the aged.

The same is true of asylum seekers and refugees. “I will decide who comes to MY(*) country”. No thought for the needs of those fleeing persecution and climate disaster.

The current Government has set up a “budget surplus” as the essential part of its policy. Everything else must give way to it. It is like the Golden Calf that Aaron made for the Israelites to worship in the wilderness. It has no care for any person or thing. If it seems in danger (from helping bushfire victims for example), resources are taken away from foreign aid, from Newstart, from Medicare.

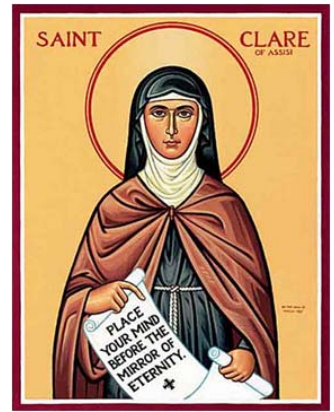
I suggest we listen to Jesus, the Good Shepherd, who showed by his example how to be good stewards, and be willing to give our lives for the benefit of others as fire fighters are doing now.

***Lord, help me to live this day,
quietly, easily. To lean upon Thy great
strength, trustfully, restfully. To wait for
the unfolding of Thy will, patiently,
serenely. To meet others, peacefully,
joyously. To face tomorrow, confidently,
courageously.***

Francis of Assisi

The Love of Clare Place your mind before the mirror of eternity!

Translation of Clare’s quote
from: [Francis and Clare:
Regis J. Armstrong](#)
(Translator)



Placing our *mind*, our mental consciousness, before the One who knows all – and being open to having that reflected back to us.

Place your soul in the brilliance of glory!

Placing the essence of us in the transfiguring light, the resurrection light, the first light...

Place your heart in the figure of the divine substance!

and through this – mind; soul; heart – the whole of us – we allow ourselves, through contemplation, to be transformed into the image of the Godhead – theosis; divinisation.

And transform your whole being into the image of the Godhead Itself through contemplation!

**So that you too may feel what His friends feel
as they taste the hidden sweetness which God Himself has
reserved from the beginning for those who love Him.**

Saint Clare of Assisi

(July 16, 1194 – August 11, 1253) This is such a neglected teaching in Western Christianity. Yet it is what God has prepared for each one of us from the beginning.

Taught to us here by St Clare of Assisi, so often overshadowed by her friend, Francis. It is also past time to recover this strong woman – and her teaching – and to live into that.

“Care for Creation, a Franciscan Spirituality of the Earth”

By: Ilia Delio, OSF; Keith Douglas Warner, OFM;
and Pamela Wood

This book expresses why I am a Franciscan novice. It was first published in 1999. It is a melding together of science, theology, spirituality and action. God created out of love. Creation is God incarnate, culminating in Christ. Creation is the first “book”. The Spirit breathes through all of creation. Humans are aware and have the freedom to choose, the freedom to sacrifice, the freedom to act out of love, the freedom to live in humility and poverty rather than exploitation and greed and selfishness. God is relational, God is Trinitarian, God relates to God’s creation. If I love God, I will love and relate all of God’s creation.

The science on climate change is accepted. We see its reality in the relentless drought and devastating bushfires we are currently experiencing. I want to raise my voice in solidarity with those who are calling on our Government to declare a climate emergency. But my voice is a squeak on its own. I am asking you, my brothers and sisters, can we act in solidarity in some way to join our voices with others in our communities?

The Last Supper

Excerpt from: "God of Love"

By: Mirabai Star

The Last Supper of Jesus Christ serves as the very embodiment of Table Fellowship. This dinner, of course, was a Passover Seder. The Passover Seder is a ritual feast that marks the beginning of the Jewish holiday of Passover. It is conducted throughout the world on the evening of the 14th day of Nisan in the Hebrew calendar.



Jesus and the disciples had joined thousands of devout Jews who would come to the Temple in Jerusalem every year to celebrate Pesach, the holy day that commemorates the miraculous escape of the Israelites from slavery in Egypt. It was during this sacred occasion that Christ initiated the tradition of the Eucharist, pouring the Passover wine and breaking the Passover matzo, also spelled matzah is the unleavened bread eaten during Passover. ... Also called the Bread of Affliction, this symbolizes the hardship of slavery and the Jewish people's hasty transition to freedom, as reminders of his undying love for all who hunger and thirst for the God of Love.

After the meal, Jesus rose from the Seder table, "laid aside his garments" and "girded himself with a towel" (John 13:4). He called for a basin of water and began to wash the disciples' feet. This gesture of tenderness and humility broke open the hearts of his companions, and became a living symbol of one of the highest commandments in Judaism: to love your neighbor as yourself. It was also a reminder to lay aside arrogance and entitlement and be willing to serve any and all beings.

Franciscan & Holy Days To Note - 2020

April	10	Good Friday
April	11	Brother Geoffrey SSF
May	16	Margaret of Cortona
May	20	Bernardine of Sienna
May	29	Jack Winslow
June	13	Anthony of Padua
July	15	Bonaventure
August	4	John Vianney, Cure D'Ars
August	10	The Transitus of St. Clare
August	11	Clare of Assisi
August	14	Maximilian Kolbe
August	15	Mary, the Mother of the Lord
August	25	Louis, King of France

'Readings and other material for worship and devotion are in the Manual - Section F'

Fr Sieger Koder – The Artist

Excerpt from: www.thinkingfaith.org-fr sieger koder

A much-admired and influential artist and Catholic priest died in Germany at the age of ninety years. Gemma Simmonds CJ pays tribute to Fr Sieger Köder, whose distinctive painting was an expression of his pastoral ministry and his commitment to the social gospel.

At the age of 41 he went to study theology in Tübingen and was ordained a priest in 1971. He combined his vocation as a parish priest with his work as an artist, producing numerous paintings, altarpieces and stained glass windows for churches within and outside Germany. He continued painting long into his retirement, decorating the St. James Pilgrim House in Hohenberg with a series of remarkable external murals and setting up eleven stations on the Franconian-Swabian Camino route to Santiago de Compostela.

His work shows the artistic influence of Chagall and is distinctive for its strong colours and robust, chunky figures. They express a distinctively earthy theological and spiritual interpretation of biblical and abstract themes, and a warm, inclusive ecclesiology, very much in line with that of Pope Francis. There is challenge, anger, humour and deep tenderness in his depictions of biblical scenes, and always an eye for the human response to God's communication. Köder's painting is the visual expression of a lifetime of preaching and of sacramental and pastoral ministry.



Most famously he painted a fresco of the Last Supper for the German College in Rome, which trains future priests for his home country. The scene includes, sitting at the table of the Eucharist, a Jew, a beggar, a prostitute and a wounded African 'guest worker' in the

striped pyjamas of the Nazi Holocaust. One of the most distinctive motifs in Köder's biblical paintings is the reflection of the face of Christ. His depictions of the Washing of the Feet, the Samaritan Woman and the Last Supper show Christ's face reflected in the bowl of water, the well and the cup of wine, respectively. The picture of Veronica has the imprint of Christ's face on a cloth held above two starving black arms with a begging bowl, and Simon of Cyrene's face is a mirror image of that of the suffering Christ, with whom he is shown arm in arm. The message of the social gospel of the immediate post-conciliar period is never absent from his paintings.

"True progress quietly and persistently moves along without notice."

- St. Francis Of Assisi

A Study Week at Stroud, Province of the Pacific, October 2019

In October 2019, Blair Matheson, Minister Provincial of the Province of the Pacific, Aotearoa region, Pip Colgan, deputy Minister Provincial, Art Daniel, Provincial Secretary, Margaret Bedggood and Anne Moody, TSSF members, set off for Stroud, New South Wales for a week of study and reflection.

The background

The idea for such a visit started some years ago when Anne's spiritual director, Sister Maureen, CSF, recommended to her the Franciscan Spirituality course at the Franciscan Study Centre at the University of Kent, a course which had been attended by several SSF brothers. Margaret also became interested and visited the Centre while in the UK. It was thus that the suggestion was made some time later that a more reasonable option could be for the Brothers to offer a similar course, alternating between The Hermitage at Stroud and Vaughan Park Anglican Retreat Centre at Long Bay, Auckland, which could be available for TSSF members from both the Province of the Pacific and the Asia-Pacific Province. Although this idea has not yet been realised, in 2019 the Brothers took up the project and suggested that a small group of those who had shown earlier interest be offered a study period at Stroud, as a pilot for what might in the future be possible on a broader basis.

The Programme

Our group spent five days and four nights at The Hermitage. The Brothers had put a lot of work into preparing sets of studies for us, within a broader timetable. The first session in the morning was based around questions the Brothers had drawn together which were both challenging and inviting:

What does it mean for us to be intentional Franciscans in the world today?

What does it mean for us to engage in "Franciscan mission"?

Does Francis of Assisi's guidance for his brothers in the Early Rule [Regula nonbullata] of 1221 offer us guidance and focus/direction?

What have we to offer for the healing of violence in our contemporary world? In the face of the doom facing creation and humanity how do we embrace the work of love?

We had all been asked to read some relevant articles and books beforehand. Although none of us had found it easy to do all the reading, we managed to do some catching up there and to contribute to the discussion. In the second morning session we were introduced us to the Tree of Life and Bonaventure's way of looking at our spiritual journey.

In the afternoon, after a compulsory rest period (!), we TSSF members spent time alone together, reflecting on the morning's study and its implications for us in our vocation back in Aotearoa New Zealand.

The broader setting

But of course, it was not only the programme which defined our week together, because it all took place in a very particular Franciscan life and setting: our day revolved around worship in the Hermitage Chapel, earthed in the valley of light and trees, birds and animals (although we never did get to see that possibly illusory koala). And then there was traditional Friary hospitality, fun, conversation, laughter and feasting, especially as we were there for St. Francis-tide.

**Pentecost Edition Articles in by 15th May, 2020,
Thank you, Gloria**



There was a real sense of our being together as a group, in a particular space for a particular time, concentrated on this kaupapa, our mission as 21st century Franciscans.

For Reflection:

At Stroud we learnt the value of a longer period of deeper, specific led study in a Franciscan setting and how this might impact our lives individually and collectively as Third Order Franciscans. We all were transformed in one way or another by our stay there. The follow-up question and indeed now our obligation is to consider prayerfully how to expand our experience there, how to continue the discussion and share the insights gleaned there for future work for our Order here in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Some of the insights gained there include the challenge of setting aside more time to concentrate on the Franciscan way, the importance and relevance of our spiritual and contemplative being over the world's focus on the physical and material, linking our Franciscan way to actual practical outworking and involvement in issues of Justice, Peace and Creation preservation. These will form parts of our next National retreat and Convocation.

Our study and companionship there have also been a reminder of the universality of the Franciscan calling: we were in an environment which was physically strange to us but spiritually familiar; and we were absorbing the teachings of Bonaventure, which proved to be so relevant for our work today but are sourced in an alien culture six centuries distant from us. In a world so riven by nationalism and many manifestations of tribalism, in our work here in Aotearoa New Zealand we were reminded, we need to remember that the Franciscan message is a universal one, for all peoples and all creation, reflecting that basic Gospel vision of the kaleidoscopic possibilities of God.

Aroha nui, (much love with deep affection)
Anne, Art, Blair, Margaret and Pip

**Taken from: - St. Francis of Assisi,
The Little Flowers of St. Francis of Assisi**

And St. Francis added: "My dear and beloved Brother, the treasure of blessed poverty is so very precious and divine that we are not worthy to possess it in our vile bodies. For poverty is that heavenly virtue by which all earthy and transitory things are trodden under foot, and by which every obstacle is removed from the soul so that it may freely enter into union with the eternal Lord God. It is also the virtue which makes the soul, while still here on earth, converse with the angels in Heaven. It is she who accompanied Christ on the Cross, was buried with Christ in the Tomb, and with Christ was raised and ascended into Heaven, for even in this life she gives to souls who love her the ability to fly to Heaven, and she alone guards the armor of true humility and charity."

Franciscan Pioneers. 8th February 2020

By: Anne Wilson, tssf, (WA)

As I wrote this reflection I began to feel that to be a Franciscan is to be a pioneer, or at the very least to be inspired by that pioneering spirit, which encourages new ways of living out our Christian calling. We don't follow Francis because we have no calling of our own but to find our true, unique identity. At the risk of telling the tertiaries information with which they are familiar, I would like share some historical background.

In the Roman Catholic Church, Franciscan religious orders, including the Third order have continued since the time of St Francis in the early 13th century, but in England the dissolution of the monasteries in the mid 16th century, saw all religious orders banned and their property confiscated. Catholic Emancipation in 1829 prepared the way for the revival of Catholicism in England in the mid 19th century and with it a renewal of religious life in the Church of England and the establishment of Anglo/Catholic religious orders. The most enduring of a few small religious communities that experimented with the Franciscan models of community to serve the needs of the poor was the Society of Divine Compassion in Plaistowe, London, which was established in the late 19th century and was supported by a Third Order community. It continues its work among the poor as one of the communities of the Society of St Francis. Our speaker for the General Chapter Conference next year, Br Sam, continues the work there.

However, to discover the independent and pioneering spirit of the Third Order of the Society of St Francis, we need to look not to the Catholic Franciscans nor to the Plaistowe community but to India. Many people seeking spiritual inspiration and renewal have found inspiration in Indian culture and religious, particularly Hindu traditions.

Anglo/Catholic missionary priest, Fr Jack Winslow first went to India in the early 20th Century. In 1922 after learning much about Hindu religion and culture and the inequality that existed between Indian and English people, he began a Christian community, based on the model of a Hindu Ashram, where Indian and English Christians could live together as equals. He adopted Franciscan principles and a rule for the community known as Christa Seva Sanga, loosely translated as the Servants of Christ. However, in an effort to make the community more sustainable, another Anglo/Catholic missionary priest, Fr Algy Robertson wanted to give it a structure more like a religious order, on a Franciscan model, with three orders for celibate men and women and married couples. This led to split in 1932, but it is the principles that this group was founded on, known as Christa Prima Seva Sangha, that are the foundations for the Rule of Society of St Francis. While the orders are divided into celibate and non-celibate groups, there is no sense of hierarchy. But our unique identity is based not just on the Rule but in our equality. While we respect and are inspired by the First Order brothers and sisters and the Second Order sisters we are not a lesser order. We are recognised as an order in our right with a unique calling.

In the Second Aim of our Rule, "To spread the spirit of love and harmony", which is closely based on the Christa Prima Seva Sangha, we read that "the Order sets out, in the name of Christ, to break down barriers between people and to seek equality for all". Perhaps we don't see that as part of our calling at first but perhaps you might agree that it is certainly a major part of our formation.

We can now introduce the pioneer of the Third Order of the Society of St Francis in England. In 1930 Dorothy Swayne was living among and serving the poor in the East End of London and was exploring ways of living as a Franciscan. She shared her thoughts with Deaconess Carol Graham in the Christa Seva Sangah Ashram. In response Carol sent her a copy of the Manual and also put her in touch with Fr Jack Winslow who was visiting England. Jack Winslow in turn identified that Fr Algy, who had returned to England was the best person to organise Third Order. You can read the rather dramatic account in "Martha" a Life of Dorothy Swayne. They lived in simplicity and poverty, sharing all they had with each other to support the First order and serve disadvantaged communities. Since then where the First Order brothers and Second order sisters have become established, Third Order communities have grown up around them and developed into five Provinces around the world, African, Asia-Pacific, Americas, Europe and the Pacific. There must be many more stories of remarkable contacts, inspiration and wondering questions like Dorothy Swayne's that resulted in new communities being established.

Our province of Asia-Pacific began in the 1950s, not as a province, but once again with one person who was inspired by the Holy Spirit's calling to an intentional life of simplicity and service. At that time Australian Church of England missionaries were supporting the work of the Church in Papua New Guinea by providing education and medical services to the people who lived around the churches and missions. Betty Hay was a nurse and midwife, serving alongside her husband Bob, who was a pilot. At a crossroads in her life she met a female doctor from England who was a professed tertiary. She was encouraged to write to Br Geoffrey who had established the first friary in Port Moresby in 1959. Br Geoffrey helped her write her Personal Rule and from then on her novitiate in the Third Order was conducted entirely by post. With no other Franciscans nearby, in order to be professed Betty made two, two and half hour flights by DC3 with a baby on her lap. Betty's story is truly inspirational and when we feel that perhaps life is inconvenient and asking too much of us, we can remember that Betty went through all her Novitiate formation by letter with a Novice Mistress in England. Once professed she was almost immediately appointed the first Novice Counsellor to the emerging Third Order in Papua New Guinea and Australia. If you feel that at times you are not ready for whatever God calls you to, maybe you are just a pioneer. Betty's dedication to her call never wavered over 60 years. It was only in December last year that Betty met Sister Death, followed a month later by her devoted husband Bob.

Con't/over

Franciscan Pioneers Continued

The Third Order pioneers in Western Australia are Rae and Ted Witham who live in Busselton. Rae, had been to a workshop on the Franciscan Third Order and as a result travelled with Ted to Brisbane to find out more about it from the First Order brothers. After also conducting their novitiates entirely by post, they were both professed on first of October 1983. Ted and Rae were gradually joined by others and have continued to lead, encourage and inspire all of us who have come to know them. Ted served as the first Regional Minister in Western Australia from 1987 and later as Provincial Minister until 2011. Ted employs his considerable scholarship and spiritual insight to write and publish poetry, devotional books and contributions to larger published works. Rae served as Regional Minister from 2010-2013 but her enduring contribution is to the pastoral care and encouragement of everyone. Ted and Rae have both been Novice Counsellors who continue to inspire us all with their humility and their cheerful courage in the face of very difficult life circumstances. There are now 30 professed members in Western Australia and as of today there will be three novices. There are also a number of Enquirers who are bringing their own sense of call to our Order.

All of us vow to live in obedience to the Franciscan Rule and our own personal rule. As we learn from Hebrews 12.1 we are surrounded by a great cloud of witnesses and, in our community, we are inspired and encouraged by pioneers who have taken the first steps into an unknown future to follow Christ in the company of St Francis and St Clare.

Let us never allow ourselves to be complacent. From our own experiences we know that God is always ready to uproot our comfortable ideas and familiar ways of doing things. Franciscans are noted for their willingness to move, take journeys, try something different, respond to changing circumstances. Our value is in our pioneering spirit. You have been unsettled by God to follow Christ in the company of the little poor man Francis. Let me finish by asking some questions for you to reflect on;

Did it make any difference that others question your sanity or consider you with suspicion?

Do you feel like a pioneer in your own small sphere?

The Vacant Mind

By: Lizzie Bellhouse

No Title. Looking to the You Yangs. January 2020.
Inspiration drops from me like a robe loosened from shoulders drops to the floor. Nothing to hold on to; I drift in the air, in centuries long gone, more there. Words I utter like notes of music on paper that no-one plays. I cling to prayer, contours on the horizon. Jesus they tell me was rooted in place, time. Was it noise? Love? My ears are clogged with water and salt and love mingled with fear. Yet, sometimes the wind whistling in the air, a seabird, its call, a word spoken brings a smile and my hand reaches out and surprises me, beyond place, beyond time.

Reflections

THE COLOUR PURPLE

Living in the Seasons
By: Jan McIntyre



To my way of thinking, one of the things that people miss out on when they don't walk with God are the seasons of the church year. They have, is Australia Day (controversial), Easter (with hot cross buns appearing on 1 January), Anzac Day and a couple of others - and Christmas, which starts in October, according to the retail trade.

For me, the church year is full of colour, mystery, celebration and reflection. Even the "ordinary days" in the calendar are so valuable as they give space and tend to emphasise our other celebrations.

Most of all I love Advent and Lent.

Outside the world of the church, Advent is more or less an unknown season and yet it is such a potent time of preparation of the soul. And the colours.... purple, pink and white....and the music....all in readiness for the miracle of the birth of Christ.

And then there is Lent with its deep purple aura and pared-back simplicity.

To have forty days and nights to examine my life, my practices, my attitudes, my behaviour and the state of my relationship with God is a gift. What I discover about myself each year is always thought-provoking and sometimes repetitive; a little like my school report which always ended with "could do better".

It is such an opportunity to separate one's self to listen, examine, change and be.

When I walked the Camino all those years ago, it was very challenging that every day had only one focus – and that was God. Initially it was hard work; at times confusing, sometimes peaceful and satisfying.*

For me, Lent and Advent are like that in miniature. I try always to keep the spirit of the Camino but often the world encroaches; however Advent and Lent allow me to restore my soul.

**Mea culpa: the second focus at the end of the day was a refugio and a little bread, cheese and red wine ordered in excruciatingly*

Check out our new updated Website www.tssf.org.au

Coronavirus

By: Simon Fong

Coronavirus you are strong
Our researchers would not go wrong.
Research with Higher Hands leading.
Optimal outcome in praying
Now is the race who is quicker
All hope the virus moves slower
Vital to beating the virus
In most cheerful song sung by us
Resounding voice and a prayer –
Unbeaten virus is a loser
So if also Your will, hear us.
Amen

He is cradling the world

By: Clare White

Above the choking dust, skies either black with smoke and falling embers, or the blazing red of fire, frighteningly close, the heavenlies are still pure, clean and clear. The Southern Cross still guides the traveller; the Milky Way cradles our planet and the stars still sing as they follow their phases, and brother sun still emerges as a bridegroom from his chamber, splendid, radiant, to run strongly his life given race.

But, we, the earthbound can only gaze with weary, smarting eyes at the landscape of despair. As we contemplate, we see, almost unconsciously, a gaunt figure in ragged, corded robe. He moves lightly, silently, between the trees, stroking the blackened bark of a once – majestic eucalypt, and the crumbling frond of an ancient tree-fern. Gently, lovingly, he scoops up a fallen fairy wren, touching her next to his heart.

We watch mesmerised, as he kneels, hands outstretched on the dead earth; weeping and praying “Send forth your spirit and renew the face of the earth!” Rising to his calloused feet, scarred by the cold embers of once-happy hearths and grey from the clay of empty dams of lost livelihoods, he walks on, becoming one with the landscape.

Were we imagining? Was he a dream?

We look back to where we saw him first; We look again, there, where he knelt, wept and prayed – a fragile shoot of green.

Lenten Recipe Lebanese Chickpea Balila

Ingredients

- 1/4 cup olive oil
- 2 cloves garlic, crushed
- 1 teaspoon cumin
- 1/4 teaspoon salt (to taste)
- 2 cups cooked chickpeas (well cooked and soft)
- 1 cup organic, sodium free vegetable broth
- 4 tablespoons lemon juice (about one lemon)



My first year as a Franciscan Novice

By: Sue Ball

April 2020 will mark my first year as a Franciscan Novice. I really didn't have a pre-conceived idea of where this journey would take me or what it would be like but I have been surprised at the effect that following a discipline, as part of a wider religious lay community, has had on my spiritual, and consequently my everyday life.

I have always considered myself as a Christian, although my connection to both my inner spiritual life and to a local church community has waxed and waned over the years: I wouldn't describe myself as having been a 'consistent' Christian in the past. About nine years ago, I decided that I needed to become more committed and began a schedule of regular daily prayer plus spiritual reading. This reading has been and still is very varied: books of the Bible, books by theologians and general spiritual-type books.

I kept up this schedule of regular spiritual practices over the period leading to my becoming a Novice last year. Since then, I have continued with this discipline as part of my Novice preparation so it would appear that these aspects of my spiritual life haven't really changed much, but the effect of them certainly has. Whether it's because I report on my reading to my Novice Counsellor and Spiritual Adviser, leading me to reflect on it more than in the past; whether it's because I have discussed prayer with my Spiritual Adviser, rather than just thinking about it myself, whatever it is, the discipline of being a Novice has deepened my engagement with all aspects of my spiritual life and developed in me a much deeper awareness of this dimension in my daily living. Using the Prayer Cycle on a regular basis with the photos of other Franciscans enables me to feel a part of a wider community of faith. These changes in my spiritual outlook have had a flow - on effect into all other parts of my life and I feel now that I am much more of an active, striving Christian rather than the more passive, generally casual Christian that I was in the past.

The commitment to, and discipline of, being a Franciscan Novice has enriched my life in ways that I didn't anticipate when I first embarked on this journey. It has set me on a path which I will follow for the rest of my life.

- 1/4 cup parsley, chopped
- 1/4 cup toasted pine nuts (optional)

Directions

1. Heat olive oil in a medium skillet over medium heat. Cook garlic and cumin about two minutes, stirring constantly.
2. Add chickpeas and salt, cook 3 to 4 minutes. Flatten/crush about 1/3 of the chickpeas with a fork.
3. Add broth and lemon, bring to a boil, reduce heat and simmer about 7 to 10 minutes or until thickened. Top with parsley and pine nuts.

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Sayings of Jesus on the Cross

Taken from: Crucifixion, seen from the Cross

By: James Tissot, c. 1890.

The Sayings of Jesus on the Cross (sometimes called the Seven Last Words from the Cross) are seven expressions biblically attributed to Jesus during his crucifixion..

These seven sayings, being “last words”, may provide a way to understand what was ultimately important to this man who was dying on the cross.[4] The sparsity of sayings recorded in the biblical accounts suggests that Jesus remained relatively silent for the hours he hung there.[5]

The seven-sayings tradition is an example of the Christian approach to the construction of a Gospel harmony in which material from different Gospels is combined, producing an account that goes beyond each Gospel.[3][11] Several composers have set the sayings to music.

1.11. Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do

1.22. Today you will be with me in paradise

1.33. Woman, behold, thy son! Son, behold, thy mother!

1.44. My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?

1.55. I thirst

1.66. It is finished

1.77. Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit

John 19:30

Jesus said, “It is finished” (“Tetelestai” in Greek).[25]

This statement is traditionally called “The Word of Triumph” and is theologically interpreted as the announcement of the end of the earthly life of Jesus, in anticipation for the Resurrection.[13]

Adam Hamilton writes: “These last words are seen as a cry of victory. Jesus had now completed what he came to do. A plan was fulfilled; a salvation was made possible; a love shown.

He had taken our place. He had demonstrated both humanity’s brokenness and God’s love. He had offered himself fully to God as a sacrifice on behalf of humanity. As he died, it was finished. With these words, the noblest person who ever walked the face of this planet, God in the flesh, breathed his last.”[4]:p.112
The verse has also been translated as “It is consummated.”[26]
The utterance after consuming the beverage and immediately before death is mentioned, but not explicitly quoted, in Mark 15:37 and Matthew 27:50 (both of which state that he “cried out with a loud voice, and gave up the spirit”).

FIRES IN AUSTRALIA

*By: Rt Rev Richard Bott Moderator United Church of Canada
Sent to me by Ann Ellis*

We pray for gentle rain and no wind;
We pray for cooling skies and water in abundance;
We pray for the burning land,
We pray for the four legged, and the winged
For the koala and the kangaroo
and all of their neighbours;
We pray for the people, who are trapped,
for the people who have lost homes,
for the fire fighters and the first responders,
for the exhausted and the tapped out’
We pray for Australia,
from east, to south, to west, to north, and all places in between.
In this world of change and changing climate, God,
We ask that you would help us
to help those who are in immediate danger;
may we use what we have to help and to heal
then call us to repent of all the ways
we continue to make this world
a place of death rather than life.
Help us, O God, because we don’t seem able to do it on our own.
In Christ’s name, on the wings of the Holy Spirit.
Amen

The Society of St Francis

Taken from: Society of Saint Francis - Wikipedia
en.wikipedia.org > wiki > Society_of_Saint_Francis

The main manifestation of the Franciscan life within the Anglican Communion is the Society of St Francis. It is fully recognised as part of the Anglican Communion and has around 3,000 members in its constituent orders. The society is made up of several distinct orders: the brothers of the First Order (Society of St Francis, SSF); the sisters of the First Order (Community of St Francis, CSF); the Sisters of the Second Order (Community of St Clare, OSC); the brothers and sisters of the Third Order (Third Order of St Francis, TSSF).[5]

Francis of Assisi and Clare of Assisi, the founders of the Franciscan movement, produced separate rules for three parallel orders - the First Order were to be mendicant friars, embracing poverty as a gift from God and living community life in the world by serving the poor. The Second Order were to be a parallel community of sisters living a more enclosed life of prayer and contemplation. The Third Order was to consist of brothers and sisters not living in community, nor under full monastic vows, but nevertheless taking simple promises and following a rule of life in the world. These three orders still co-exist as parts of the Franciscan family in Anglicanism as well as in other Christian denominations. Francis also wrote a rule for those wishing to follow the contemplative life (in the style of the Second Order), but living alone as Christian hermits.

The Society of St. Francis includes an order of tertiaries, people who have taken promises and are followers of a version of the Franciscan Rule but do not live together in community. This Third Order (T.S.S.F.) was founded in 1950. The T.S.S.F. consists of men and women, lay and ordained, married and single. It is divided into five provinces: Africa, Australia, New Zealand, Europe, and the Americas.

Sister Clare

Taken from: "God's Fool"
By: Julien Green

Clare's parents knew nothing about her secret comings and goings of their daughter. She was nearing eighteen, they had been looking for a husband for her. This couldn't go on, so she decided to leave her father's house.

On March 18, 1212, Palm Sunday, Clare went to mass with her parents for the last time. She would run away that night, thwarting their plans forever their plans and hopes. There could be no question of saying good-bye to them, and that idea troubled her so much that she neglected to take one of the palm fronds being distributed at the altar. So Bishop Guido came down the steps, personally carried a frond down to her, and placed it in her hand. It symbolized the church's approval of Clare's vocation. The Bishop, who had been informed by Francis, knew all about Clare's proposed flight.

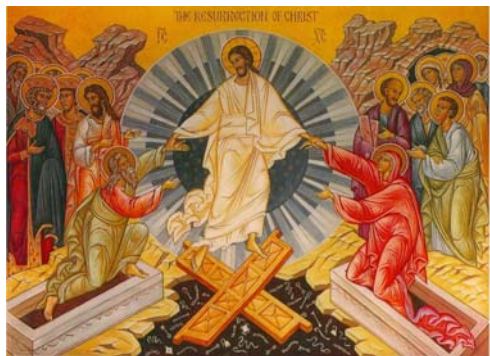
At dawn, in the deepest silence, Clare and her cousin Pacifica, who also wanted to become a nun, left by a jib door, which served as a door of the dead, never used except to give passage to coffins. Perhaps Clare and Pacifica saw themselves as already dead to the world, called to new life. They made it to St Mary of the Angels, where Francis was waiting for them. It was the hour of Matins and pitch black outside. The postulants were welcomed by the light of the candles held by the brothers who came out to meet them, while the woods of la Portiuncula resounded with hymns of joy. Francis knew how to summon up all the poetry needed for the first steps towards paradise taken by these brides of Christ. On his own authority, he gave them both the tonsure. Then they took off their rich clothes and exchange them for the coarse Franciscan frock.



The Resurrection

Luke 24:1-12 ESV

1. But on the first day of the week, at early dawn, they went to the tomb, taking the spices they had prepared. 2. And they found the stone rolled away from the tomb, 3. but when they went in they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. 4. While they were perplexed about this, behold, two men stood by them in dazzling apparel. 5. And as they were frightened and bowed their faces to the ground, the men said to them, "Why do you seek the living among the dead? 6. He is not here, but has risen. Remember how he told you, while he was still in Galilee, 7. that the Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men and be crucified and on the third day rise." 8. And they remembered his words, 9. and returning from the tomb they told all these things to the eleven and to all the rest. 10. Now it was Mary Magdalene and Joanna and Mary the mother of James and the other women with them who told these things to the apostles, 11. but these words seemed to them an idle tale, and they did not believe them. 12. But Peter rose and ran to the tomb; stooping and looking in, he saw the linen cloths by themselves; and he went home marveling at what had happened.



TSSF Asia-Pacific Province

GENERAL CHAPTER CONFERENCE

Seeing the World Differently: Francis and Clare in the 21st Century

The Esplanade Hotel

FREMANTLE

22 – 25 JULY 2021

Greetings from the West!

We can report that planning for the 2021 General Chapter Conference is on track. We are planning a stimulating programme that will challenge us, while providing many opportunities for strengthening our bonds and learning from each other. We will continue to plan for the conference but we can't know at this point how the COVID 19 pandemic will play out over the next year and how the conference will be affected. Therefore, we are holding back on promoting registrations for the time being.



Speaker: We are delighted that Brother Sam SSF, European Province, has accepted our invitation to be our key speaker. He will lead us in discussions which will help us to focus on what Francis and Clare can teach us in the 21st Century: Peace, the Environment, Contemplative Prayer and Future Action. The biography of Br Sam is on the 2021 Chapter Conference Registration page on the TSSF website. Click on “Guest Speaker” for the link or go to <https://tssf.org.au/brother-sam-tssf/>

Spiritual Food: The programme will include opportunities to join together in prayer throughout each day and include two bible studies which will be led by Rev. Dr Gregory Seach, Warden of Wollaston Theological College. Previously Gregory was Dean of Clare College in Cambridge, Fellow of Clare College and Director of Studies in Theology and Religious Studies

Location: We hope to entice you travel all the way to WA by holding the conference at one of our most attractive venue. Fremantle is an historic and vibrant maritime city, which attracts visitors from around Australia and the world. There will be opportunities for exploring Fremantle and Perth attractions during the conference but you might consider coming early or staying a little longer to make the most of the journey.

Go to VisitFremantle site for tourist information. <https://www.visitfremantle.com.au/>

Accommodation: The Esplanade Hotel has given us a very competitive deal and is providing everything we need for overnight accommodation and conference rooms. However, you are free to make private arrangements for accommodation.

Meals. We are offering a variety of meal options, from two catered meals in the hotel to “find your own” at the iconic Fremantle Markets or Fisherman’s Wharf. On the final night, our after-dinner speaker will be the Rev Dr John Shepherd. As Dean of St George’s Cathedral from 1990-2014 John earned a reputation as an influential and well-respected member of the Perth Diocese. Most recently he was appointed Director of the Anglican Centre, Rome, and Personal Representative of the Archbishop of Canterbury to the Pope and the Holy See 2019.

Registration. There is a Registration page on the tssf.org.au website with all the information you need to know for now. <https://tssf.org.au/welcome/2021-chapter-conference/>