

The Province of Asia-Pacific



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

NEWSLETTER

A d v e n t

E d i t i o n

FROM: THE PROVINCIAL MINISTER

Remembering – Who Jesus is –Hope incarnate

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

The season of Advent heralds the Hope of all hopes coming to dwell with us and in us. The week before Advent we passed through the magnificence of the last festival of the liturgical year, the Feast of Christ the King, when the Church remembers that Jesus has taken up again the absolute power of his everlasting Kingship.

Now, this Advent season draws us on to Christmas, the day Earth's humanity met with Heaven's Divinity. The Hope of all hopes made incarnate. We have entered the beginning of the Church's new year, when we reflect on Jesus' coming to earth 2000 years ago leaving his omnipotence, omniscience and omnipresence behind to enter our world of beauty and suffering; God as a human baby. We remember all the things that Jesus lived and died for have been to God's glory and for our rescue. Now we celebrate the Hope of all hopes, that like a light in the gloom, comes to shine the light of Christ into our hearts.

In the southern hemisphere, where Advent and Christmas are marked by long days of summer, we lean towards the light in growth and harvest and long summer sunsets splashed across the sky.

In the northern hemisphere, as people pass through the darkest season of the year and look towards the coming of the Christ light, we become aware that darkness is the place in which seeds germinate. What a blessing light is, giving hope in the darkness, giving direction and clarity.

As Francis shone light and hope in his life, we follow his example, wishing all creatures peace and good, showing them in practical ways what Christ's hope looks like.

I came across this beautiful summary of how we can reflect the light of Christ. From *'The Gentle Art of Blessings'* by Pierre Pradervand.

'On meeting and talking to people, bless them in their health, their work, their joy, their relationships to God, themselves, and others. Bless them in their abundance, their needs, bless them in

every conceivable way, for such blessings not only sow seeds of healing but one day will spring forth as flowers of joy in the waste places of our own lives.

Bless Jesus in his vitality and joy: for the material senses present but the inverted image of the ultimate splendour and perfection which only the inner eye beholds.

It is impossible to bless and to judge at the same time. So hold constantly as a deep, hallowed, intoned thought that desire to bless, for truly then shall you become a peacemaker, and one day you shall, everywhere, behold the very face of God in others around you.'

After such a strange, dark year may we see renewed Hope in Christ coming to us, unconditionally, totally, in so many ways bringing good for us and others with gifts not of gold, frankincense and myrrh, but of loving kindness, forgiveness, peace and good.

With every blessing of hope, peace and good,
Mandy , tssf



From a prayer poem by Madeleine L'Engle:
'Into the darkest hour'.

*'And in a time like this
how celebrate his birth
when all things fall apart?
Ah! Wonderful it is
with no room on the earth
the stable is our heart'.*



For the full poem; <https://coffeehousejunkie.net/2010/12/20/into-the-darkest-hour-2/>



By: Fr. Sieger Koder (Artist)

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

Tribute to Rt Reverend Godfrey Fryar

TSSF tribute and thanks to Godfrey Fryar for his leadership and wisdom as he completes his term as TSSF Provincial Minister for the Asia Pacific.

From: Reverend Mandy Wheatley

Provincial Minister Elect

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

It is a privilege and honour to begin my duties as the new Provincial Minister of our Third Order by giving profound thanks to Bishop Godfrey Fryar, acknowledging his faithfulness, love and care in the six years he has led us in the role of Provincial Minister.

In the Province of Asia Pacific, Godfrey has been both Bishop Protector and Provincial Minister, leading and caring for us with gracious guidance and gentle effectiveness. Since joining the Chapter of the Third Order as Regional Minister and then Provincial Chaplain, I have been blessed to be with Godfrey each year as he ably directed our annual meetings in Ormiston, at the 2018 Conference in Brisbane and in Melbourne at the Community of the Holy Name. His skills in diplomacy, encouragement and growth have led to the development of new and healthy Third Order communities in Sri Lanka and Korea. His term in office has also seen improved Regional management of Queensland A/North NSW, and Queensland B and Papua New Guinea which have been a blessing to many of our sisters and brothers.

There really is no doubt that Bronwyn has been an enormous help to Godfrey in every aspect of the work and travel he has done on behalf of our community. Certainly in their lives and in the example of their Franciscan spirit they fulfill all the aims and principles of the Third Order as they share their humility, love and joy with everyone they meet.

I know that we all wish them well in exploring and pursuing other avenues of service as they step down from the responsibilities they have carried on our behalf and we send them both our love and prayers of blessing for the future.

From: Br Donald Campbell SSF

I am very grateful for the leadership of Bishop Godfrey as the Provincial of the Third Order.

It has brought a new level of co operation between the third and first orders in particular with the development of the Franciscan movement in Sri Lanka and Korea. Our Franciscan Community in Sri Lanka works together as one following a mission and vision to assist the tea estate workers and provide education for their children.

Having Bishop Godfrey located in Brisbane has meant we could easily discuss our various issues and developments for our mutual benefit and to support our life.

Thank you again for your time as Provincial.

From: Reverend Sally Buckley
(Assistant Provincial Minister)

I first met our esteemed retiring Provincial Minister, Godfrey Fryar, at the Provincial Conference and General Chapter, held in Perth, Western Australia, in the very hot January, of 1992. My memories include a lot of laughter, but also a trip to Cottesloe Beach by some of our "Eastern States" Tertiaries wished to dip their toes in the Indian Ocean as the sun sank below the horizon in the west.

During Bishop Godfrey's six year term, he has been able to build on the foundations laid by his predecessors in growing the Order in many of the Asian countries of our Province. There has particularly been growth in Sri Lanka, South Korea and in Hong Kong/China. He has been able to personally encourage Tertiaries by visiting in many of the other countries which make up our Province.

Bishop Godfrey has chaired Chapter meetings with integrity, efficiency, an easy good humour, and great wisdom.

For the last three years, since IPTOC in 2017, he has also held the role of Assistant Minister General, assisting the Revd John Heberton from New Zealand in his role.

I felt very honoured to be have been invited to take over from Sandra Jackson as Assistant Provincial Minister, for the second three-years of Bishop Godfrey's term as Provincial Minister.

Thank you, Bishop Godfrey, for your leadership and ministry to and with us over the last six years. The Order has been in very safe hands, and has benefited and grown numerically and spiritually during this time.

On behalf of Tertiaries around the Province, I wish you and Bronwyn every blessing for the future..

With love, peace and all good

From: The Ven John Gibson

What has Godfrey been and meant to us during his ministry to us as our Provincial Minister? Writing in Our December Newsletter in 2014 Godfrey said in part, "The Church is in so many ways a messy place, and yet it is where we as Franciscan Christians are meant to be. We need to remember that at times we can be as much a part of the mess as a leaven-like solution. Our calling is to be compassionate to the Church and also to be recipients of its compassion".

It has been a servant ministry which has been local and global. Locally, Godfrey and Chapter have worked in a collaborative manner for us; and I want to also acknowledge with thanks Bronwyn who has been a great support to Godfrey. Many of us individually have also benefitted by Godfrey's wise counsel. Globally, he has put much energy into helping the Order grow e.g. South Korea. The worldwide Order has also benefitted from Godfrey's time as Assistant Minister General.

For being with us in our messiness, helping us be leaven-like in seeking solutions; calling us to be compassionate and recipients of compassion thank you Godfrey.

From: Br Christopher John SSF – Minister General

Stroud. N.S.W.

It's hard to think of Bishop Godfrey (and of course Bronwyn) without their long-time association with the First Order brothers in Australia and elsewhere. Godfrey has done much to help us know that we are all part of the one family, under that rather large and at times slightly confusing umbrella called the Society of St Francis.

It's always been good to have a Third Order member present at our First Order chapters, and especially so when it's been Godfrey. He has brought to the relationship not only a long-term and deep knowledge of both Third and First Order, but also the grace of his episcopal Order. At times we need to hear a wider perspective, and he has brought that to us. Our issues can seem complicated, unwieldy, hard to resolve, and full of the deep entanglement of human emotion, but Godfrey's experience helps us see that "there's nothing new under the sun!" He's already seen it all in parish councils, synods and any number of pastoral encounters.

Likewise I've really appreciated the opportunity to be part of Third Order meetings and to know Godfrey's encouragement of our First Order contribution, sharing our experience as we work out together what it is to be Anglican Franciscans in this world today. We've also seen this partnership as the Third Order develops "beyond Australia" and both First and Third Order have been active collaborators together.

Godfrey finally has the opportunity to hang up the hat of provincial leadership, but he's not retiring! I know that he and Bronwyn will continue to offer hospitality, wise counsel and friendship and be part of the glue which holds us together, First and Third Orders.

Godfrey—With many thanks for your support and relationship with the First Order brothers. And wishing you all God's graces as you and Bronwyn ever flourish in your lives as Franciscans.

From: Roselind Ruwoldt - TSSF South Australia

As Bishop Godfrey is ending his term as Provincial Minister of Asia-Pacific we all thank him for his leadership. The first time I met with Bishop Godfrey, I had only just started my time as Regional Minister for South Australia and was rather nervous. Bishop Godfrey's calm manner put me at ease. There have been times when I have emailed him with my questions and difficulties. I have always been struck by his gentle, calm manner; I might even say quiet wisdom of dealing with all problems. I admire his chairing of Chapter, and his keeping us on line.

There is nothing I can say to show you how much his guidance has fueled my growth in the Third Order. I will always remain in his debt for encouraging me and lifting me up every step of the way, and I am sure this is so with other TSSF members.

From: David White

Provincial Communications Co-Ordinator

Over the last six years with Godfrey skilfully at the helm, the Province has been on an interesting journey. The TSSF presence in Korea has been re-established, and we have seen the emergence of the group in Sri Lanka. Once called the Australian Province, we are growing more into the reality of our Asia-Pacific name. It has been great privilege to work with Godfrey and to watch him herding the wild horses at chapter meetings. Corraling and taming us to make sure that the business is completed and wrapped up in the short time available. He has guided us with a balance of diplomacy and direction through some difficult issues so that we could arrive at a sound resolution.

Thank you, Godfrey, for your friendship and leadership. It has been great working with you, and I look forward to seeing what the future brings to you and Bronwyn, and to the Province as a whole. With my whole family now in WA, and the borders closed, I hope that we will have an opportunity to chat face to face again sometime soon.

From: Saroja Namadevan - Sri Lanka

My association with some members of the First Order of The Franciscans was in my pursuit of a more meaningful faith. This led me to be a Novice of the Third Order and the eventual introduction to Bishop Godfrey on his visit in 2018 visiting Churches in the Tea Plantation Areas, where I live and serve.

It was my good fortune, that at the tail end of my visit to Australia, I was invited from Melbourne to Brisbane to stay in the home of the Bishop Godfrey and Bronwyn Fryar (who was my Novice Counselor) for eight fruitful days. Their hospitality and kindness were beyond measure. During this time, I learnt many things about the ways of a Franciscan family unit and received much encouragement in my progress towards the Profession Stage.

My subsequent association with the Bishop, thanks to modern technology, made it possible for me to get to know a real Servant of God devoted to the Franciscan pattern of life. This became clearly evident in his concern for others, his absolute humility, and his prompt availability to all under his care. It must be recorded that the Bishop has been responsible for the entry of 10 Novices and 4 Professionals.

The Bishop's initiative in helping our fellow Franciscan, Thayalan, helped him enjoy a new lease of life. Also, today ten deserving children from tea plantations in my area receive education at Mowbray College, a leading Anglican Boarding School in Kandy, the Hill Capital.

May I pray, on this occasion of the Bishop's conclusion of his duties as the Asia Pacific Provincial Minister, that God will shower his blessings abundantly on him and sister Bronwyn, their children and grandchildren, that they may continue their work in the Kingdom in the true spirit of the Franciscans.

A Pure Intention, Patient Faith

From: John Blakemore {Provincial Secretary}

I first met Godfrey in the chaos of the arrival lounge at Newcastle Airport. Having no previous contact save some e-mails. Julie and I searched through Queensland arrivals, waving our A4 cartoon of the “dancing Francis” hoping this familiar icon might attract the attention of the man we’d never met. Francis did the trick and after handshakes (remember them?) all round, we headed off for the short drive to Stroud and the Old Monastery, site for the 2015 silent retreat for seventeen tertiaries from the Sydney, Newcastle and Tamworth fellowships.

The theme of the retreat was **Meeting Points**. *Reflections on events in the life of St Francis and our Franciscan vocations*. After going into silence, Godfrey began the weekend’s task of guiding us through chosen points in the life of Francis while offering each of us the opportunity to hold the mirror of our vocation up to Francis and reflect in silence and in worship the image reflected back to us. A time for stripping away and simplifying in moments of deep silence.

Silence was broken with a boisterous and hearty Sunday lunch and when I next looked for Godfrey he was being whisked off to the airport with hearty thanks, goodbye and many blessings from his Franciscan sisters and brothers.

I had no further face to face contact with Godfrey until the Conference and General Chapter in Brisbane. There I got to know him as not only the spiritual leader we knew at Stroud but as a welcoming host, an organizer, a decision maker while also as a team member as well as a team leader. I found the conference vibrant and alive as brother Francis and the Holy Spirit provided a powerful energy that played out in multiple moments of grace and shared learning. As Godfrey and other members of Chapter headed off for their meeting, we said our farewells not knowing the place and time of our next meeting.

As it turned out, it was only a short while and I received a phone call from Godfrey.

“Would you consider taking on the role and task of Provincial Secretary?”

“I have a rule. I need to sleep on it for 24 hours and I’ll give you an answer.”

And that I did. I was honestly not attracted to the position. It had been ten years since I left regular employment and many, many years since the end of my work as a professional stage manager. I knew that it would take some effort to regain lost organisational skills but I kept returning to Day 24 in the prayer cycle”....when asked to undertake work which we feel unworthy or incapable.....” I called Godfrey back the following day and accepted the job.

Working with Godfrey has been a pleasure. He listens, he includes, he seeks the input of others. For me, a Tertiary of some thirty years but a “Johnny-come-lately to the Province of the Asia-Pacific, I have felt welcomed and valued by a man who has many other colleagues to turn to. I enjoy his leadership style, simple and succinct with no need to belabor his point, just because he sits in the Provincial Minister’s seat. I also stand in some awe of his work in the outreach of the province to our sisters and brothers in Korea, Sri Lanka as well as continued work in PNG.

Finally, I must thank him for his willing guidance in the process of selecting a new Provincial Minister. While the nomination process was straight forward and without question, there were matters that only a person with his pastoral skills and experience in the role could have handled as straightforward and sensitively as he did.

From: Sandra Jackson

I first met Godfrey Fryar at Stroud in 2014. Colin Fidock, our then Provincial Minister, had asked me to represent our Third Order at a meeting of the SSFA. In the days before Prayer Cycle photographs, all I knew of Godfrey, the tertiary chairing this meeting, was the name of the brother I prayed for each month on his Prayer Day in our Community Obedience. Little did I imagine that at the end of that year he would be our new Provincial and I his Assistant, but that meeting was a good introduction to the gifts of the man who has led us so ably for the past six years. The meeting was chaired with sensitivity and good humour but with a gentle discipline and focus on priorities that ensured that it was productive and allowed all present to contribute - a very positive experience. These qualities marked too the residential Chapter meetings that Godfrey chaired so skilfully, encouraging, inspiring and helping to provide us with lived experience of being knit together in a community in which the three notes of our Order were very much in evidence.

As an Order, we have been doubly blessed in having Godfrey as our Provincial Minister because so much of his work has been shared with Bronwyn, especially in fostering the growth of new Regions in formation, with their visits to PNG, Sri Lanka and Korea, as well as their online mentoring of the Portiuncula Fellowship of the Hong Kong Region. Godfrey’s gift of discernment allowed him the flexibility needed to adapt the formation process of the noviciate to fit the cultural context, without losing in translation what was essential: daily reflection on our TSSF Principles. Over Godfrey’s six-year term, the growth of our Order has been mainly outside Australia and he and Bronwyn have been as it were midwives in bringing this to birth. As someone who has had the privilege of staying with them several times and sharing their wonderfully warm and generous hospitality, I have experienced at first hand the way their work together is undergirded and empowered by prayer and the daily offices in their little Chapel.

On 5 October, John Davison, in Hong Kong, copied me in a Francistide email to Godfrey and Bronwyn, conveying his appreciation and admiration for their work. As it expressed so well my own thoughts, I quote from it here, with permission:

I just want to say thanks to both of you on behalf of all of us in the far flung outposts of empire . . . that you have been travelling to over the weekend for all that you have done to care for our new Franciscans in these places and the careful and caring way you have provided for the Zoom novicing, profession and renewal events over the last few years and especially over this last weekend.

I don’t think anyone in Australia even on Chapter . . . appreciates just how much goes into the work that the two of you have done and the cross-cultural and sometimes political difficulties that surround the work.

I feel sure that, like John, we would all like to express our appreciation and admiration.

“Never forget that the way which leads to heaven is narrow; that the gate leading to life is narrow and low; that there are but few who find it and enter by it; and if there be some who go in and tread the narrow path for some time, there are but very few who persevere therein.”

- St. Clare of Assisi

In recognition
From: Rt Reverend Keith Slater
and Reverend Nicholas Whereat

Bishop Godfrey Fryar moved into retirement from being the Bishop of the Diocese of Rockhampton expecting some quieter time - but suddenly found himself the Provincial Minister! The demanding role he undertook as the Provincial Minister included giving oversight and leadership for the Third Order in Australia, Papua New Guinea, Hong Kong, and Malaysia. To this he has brought enlargement.

Godfrey has served in this role for two terms of three years, and during this time brought vision to the development of the Order in Sri Lanka, and to the re-development of the Order in South Korea. This has meant the undertaking of a number of overseas trips, and thanks to modern technology many Zoom meetings. In many ways these developments have meant that he has added the equivalent of the role of a Regional Minister to his already major role of Provincial Minister.

Whilst acknowledging his critical role in the development of these new areas of the Province it is also important to acknowledge the support and encouragement of his wife, Bronwyn. Thank you, Bronwyn.

Godfrey has also represented our Province at Interprovincial meetings of the Provincial Ministers and the Interprovincial Third Order Chapter. At the Interprovincial level he has served as the Assistant Minister General.

As his term of office concludes on Advent Sunday we say thank you to Godfrey for so ably leading us during these past six years. He has brought to this role a life-time of experience in the church, and an ever deepening spirituality which has been inspired by Francis and Clare of Assisi. He has brought his own particular gentleness, compassion, humour and joy to the Chapter, to the matters in hand and to his individual interactions with members of the Order.

For all that he has given we say thank you to Godfrey.
Thank you, Godfrey, for the gift of yourself.

From: Gloria Malouf-Marsh
(Newsletter Editor)

In the six years I have known Bishop Godfrey, I thank him for his leadership, for his faithfulness, willingness to assist and his calm demeanor. The Holy Spirit has been gently guiding him all the way. Godfrey teaches by example, as a servant of the Lord. In knowing him I have learned to be measured. And for that, I am very thankful.

Also thanks goes to Bronwyn for being always ready to offer valued wisdom and her time, in all areas of his work. I appreciate Godfrey's encouragement and support he has given me during my time as Editor, and I will miss his sense of humour. You both make a wonderful team. I wish Bishop Godfrey and Bronwyn every blessing to where God leads them to next.

From: Janet Long

For those of you who have been members of the Third Order for many years, it may come as a surprise to hear that Godfrey is the only Provincial Minister I have known. I came to the Franciscans back in mid 2015. I met Godfrey very early in my Franciscan journey as he led our silent retreat that first year. There I heard with wonder for the first time some of the inspiring stories of St Francis' ministry that are now well known and loved.

At General Chapter in Brisbane, we met again over cups of tea and meals in the dining room happily enjoying the fellowship of so many brothers and sisters. As he led services and sessions during Chapter, I was drawn to his friendly, relaxed style of leadership, and could see his love for everyone there.

I became Regional Minister in NSW last year more by default than actual choice! I was comforted by Day 24 in the Obedience: "Nevertheless, when asked to undertake work of which we feel unworthy or incapable, we do not shrink from it on the grounds of humility, but confidently attempt it through the power that is made perfect in weakness." Taking over at the end of 2019, at first all seemed to run smoothly, guided by willing mentors from within my close group. The administrative tasks were not unlike my work role: managing a team of researchers to complete projects on time, satisfying the funders and keeping things cordial among the Team.

Then COVID hit. As we went into lockdown, a growing wave of enquirers starting contacting me. Perhaps the lockdowns had allowed people to reflect on their lives and to look for new ways to bring more meaning and structure into their Christian practice. Whatever the reason, I felt myself quickly getting out of my depth. The Enquiry period is a time to allow prayerful reflection on where one has been and whether the Third Order is something to which one is being called. I tentatively felt my way through the listening, talking, gentle questioning and testing and tried to discern the wise path forward. At this time, Godfrey graciously let me talk through my doubts, questions and issues when I was confused and helped me be more confident. Throughout this time he has shown unwavering support for me and deep compassion for enquirers who are truly seeking to draw closer to God. Thank you, Godfrey.

Peace and every good,

Reflections!

By: Sandra Saad



**We are strong and resilient;
Bold and brave;
Kind and compassionate,
Gentle and wise!
All these things are we and more,
With God's Grace He sustains and nurtures us!**



Advent – A time of Waiting

By: Reverend Timothy Narraway

I began writing this while on our third order Franciscan retreat at the Canberra mindfulness Centre, with the words of Jesus from Mark 6 resounding in my heart. “Come away with me, to a quiet place by yourselves and rest awhile”. •Just as I am a mighty worrier rather than a mighty warrior, so I am less inclined to

waiting and more keen for the waiter to hurry up.

It’s interesting for me to think about how much time we spend waiting. It’s that annoying little circle that takes thirty seconds to load the latest movie from Netflix. It’s the time it takes to put in the 20 digit code to get my software working. We live in an age of instant results. We take a photograph and seconds later can beam it across the world.

I was pondering how much of the time the people of God by contrast spent waiting. What did they do for those 400 years of silence before the Messiah was born? Much of the New Testament is spent teaching the people of God how they are to be in the time between the resurrection and Christ’s return. At this time in the lectionary we are working through the book of Thessalonians. Someone managed to convince many in that church that Jesus had returned, and they had somehow missed it. One key to understanding the book is how the Apostle Paul writes to encourage the Thessalonian church to “keep calm and carry on”. •To wait faithfully.

Advent is a time of waiting. A time of refreshment.

This month our family has played host to a poddy lamb, Josh. One thing he has done for me is teach me to trust that all good things happen in due season. Take the time to sniff the grass along the way. Leave no weed uneaten. It takes an experienced farmer to wait through the winter months knowing that the sowing will happen in time for the spring. He does not sow and reap all year round.

St Francis was particularly moved by advent, and what struck him was Jesus the God-man, who not only taught about taking the lower place but lived it in the incarnation.

In our world of aimless distraction and 24 hour news cycles, may you know His true presence, power and tenderness.

“Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up”.• *Glatians 6:9.*

Bishop John Roundhill, Br Donald, CHAC students Chip Makusha and Kelly-Ann Sparks, and CHAC Chaplain Br Nathan at St Philip’s Anglican Church, Annerley at Br Donald’s collation as Archdeacon of Moreton on Sunday 11 October 2020.

Br Donald’s collation

REFLECTIONS

Cannon Hill Anglican College student Kelly-Ann Sparks reflects on her experience at the recent collation of the new Archdeacon of Moreton, Br Donald Campbell on Sunday 11 October, Cannon Hill Anglican College (CHAC). Chaplain Br Nathan James invited fellow student Chip Makusha and me to represent our school at the collation of Br Donald Campbell as Archdeacon of Moreton.

Br Donald is a former Chaplain of CHAC, and our College is one of the schools he ‘looks after’. The event was held at St Philip’s Anglican Church in Annerley, Brisbane on Sunday 11 October.

Part of the role of Archdeacon is to support parish priests and school chaplains in their respective roles. Archdeacons also serve the Church in part of a Diocese by taking responsibility for all buildings, the welfare of clergy and their families, and the implementation of Diocesan policy for the sake of the Gospel.

Advertisement

The liturgical act by which a priest becomes an Archdeacon is called a ‘collation’.

Bishop John spoke on the Parable of the Wedding Feast. A prominent takeaway from the service was: in a world with such violence, like the actions of the King in the Parable of the Wedding Banquet, it might be easy to forget we are dealing with a merciful God. It might be difficult to strip away the violent imagery of the passage and focus instead on the superior kernel underneath it all. However, God calls people to himself and desires that they come to him. The reminder that ‘many are called but few are chosen’ should cause us to pause, reflect, and re-examine our lives.

It was an honourable experience to witness Br Donald’s collation, and I thank Br Nathan for the invitation.

“This is our Lord for whom we have waited; let us be glad and rejoice in his salvation” (Isaiah 25.9).

Tributes to John Max Yage Yage, tssf,

Milne Bay Province. PNG

Sent to me

By: Reverend Mandy Wheatley

By: Sandra Beck (QLD A/N NSW)

Yes! He was at conference in Canberra about 1996, he was extremely dignified despite his loin cloth and pole which he manipulated cleverly, he reminded me of Gandhi, I always treasure the memory of meeting him and feel deeply saddened that he has died.

By: Kate from St Albans. (NSW.A)

I clearly remember John Max. He was at Melbourne Conference in 1995. A cheerful quiet brother who got around amazingly on his pole. I hope he now enjoys two legs in heaven. May he rest in Peace.

Glenys (QLD A/N NSW)

John Max Yage Yage came to the Canberra Conference when my girls were very much younger.

I have fond memories of John Max walking the fields with us and watched, in wonder, on how well he walked along using his long pole on the diagonal.

I, among others, prayed for him with kind thoughts and happy memories.

Can you please let Anselm know that my family send our condolences to his family and that he was well regarded and prayed for often through the years?

By: Reverend Sally Buckley (WA)

So sad. I remember meeting him at the Canberra Provincial Conference many years ago. He was greatly esteemed and was treated like royalty by the PNG Embassy in Canberra.

By: Bishop Godfrey Fryar

"I had a call yesterday from Anselm Rupusina to let us know that John Max Yage Yage died last week. John Max had one leg and walked for much of his life with the aid of a pole. I think he came to a tssf Conference some time long ago."

Please pray for those who respected, loved and cared for him. May he rest in peace and rise again in glory, Amen.

By: Bishop Jeremy Ashton

When I knew John Max, he had a withered leg. People tried to persuade him to have it amputated and wear a prothesis so that he could move around more freely, but he refused. He preferred his pole. He was one of the most joyful people I have known.

Hospitality

Taken from: "Advent and Christmas Wisdom from St Francis of Assisi"

Compiled By: John V. Kruse

Wherever the brothers may be, either in hermitages or other places, let them be careful not to make any place their own or contend with anyone for it. Whoever comes to them, friend or foe, thief or robber, let them be received with kindness.

St Francis, The Earlier Rule

(VII: The Manner of Serving and working), 69

Making Room For Christ By Making Room For Others

And she gave birth to her first born son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger because there was no place for them in the inn.

Luke:2:7

Prayer

Lord in our world, many people feel unwelcome and excluded, whether because of race, a mental or physical condition, ethnicity, social-economic level, simply because they are "different." It seems as if our world has no room for such people. Help me to see your face in such people, for when I make strangers and the socially outcast feel welcome, I am, in fact, welcoming you.

Advent Action

Reach out and make an effort to include someone who might feel excluded or "pushed to the side." Offer a kind word or a word of welcome to this person. Include someone in a social function or conversation who might otherwise be forgotten.

* * * * *

The Reign of Christ's Peace

A shoot shall come out
from the stump of Jesse,
and a branch shall
grow out of its roots.
The spirit of the Lord shall
rest on him,
the spirit of
wisdom and
understanding,

the spirit of counsel and might.
the spirit of knowledge and fear of the Lord.
Righteousness shall be the belt around his waist,
and faithfulness the belt around his loins.
The wolf shall live with the lamb,
the leopard shall lie down with the kid,
the calf and the lion and the fathling together,
and a little child shall lead them.
The cow and the bear shall graze,
their young shall lie down together;
and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.
The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp,
and the weaned child shall put its hand
on the adder's den.

Isaiah 11:1-2, 5-8



Someone who is loved by all who know him

– Rev Canon Alan (Illtyd) Loveluck

By: Sandra Beck, tssf

My first introduction to ‘Illtyd’ was a dog, not the man himself! The Right Rev John Bayton, then Dean

Llandaff Cathedral, Cardiff, Wales



of St Paul’s Cathedral, Rockhampton had a corgi named Illtyd which often came into church. I did not know Illtyd but I think I encountered him when some First Order brothers, SSF, came to Central Queensland for the opening of St Francis’ church at Moranbah in 1983. I attended this with members of St Paul’s choir. Because I was familiar with the dog, Illtyd, I made note of meeting Illtyd Loveluck.

Illtyd tells a sad tale of his childhood. He was born in 1930 in Kenfig Hill near the town of Pyle, where his father’s shop was, the younger son of a shoemaker who, we are told, had been awarded the best shoemaker in Europe several years running. Illtyd’s mother, sadly, died shortly after his birth and Illtyd maintains that his father did not like him because he was so like his mother in looks. I attempt to assure Illtyd that the resemblance to his mother may have caused his father pain. Illtyd was sent to stay with an aunt, and lived for the next several years in a Welsh-speaking household. His father married again. The step-mother did not speak Welsh so Illtyd’s brother was brought up speaking English. Illtyd says that Welsh is the language of heaven which we cannot enter unless we can say the Lord’s prayer in Welsh. I made an effort to learn Welsh but it was ‘too hard’ for me.

Illtyd’s aunt and family were staunch members of the Welsh Evangelical church. After returning home, Illtyd and his brother sang in the choir in the lovely evangelical church in Llandarf but Illtyd felt attracted to the more traditional Welsh Church, disestablished from its established Anglican heritage in 1940. He enjoyed the more ordered services and the music. For some time, he attended Bridgend Grammar School, which coincidentally was attended some years prior to Illtyd by Brisbane Anglican priest, Bernard Thomas, a close friend of Illtyd. This school still exists and Fr Bernard visited some years ago.

Illtyd proudly relates that the Loveluck family has owned the same tract of land for over six-hundred years. For some time, Illtyd worked for his father then attended Lampeter University in Cardiff. After university he worked in the East End of London where he encountered the Franciscan brothers and was drawn to join the Order. He came to Australia in 1965 with two other brothers, Simon and William (who lives on at the Friary now in Cornwall St), at the invitation of Bp Strong. Illtyd lived with the brothers in a friary which later bloomed at Brookfield, more recently known as the Brookfield Centre for Christian Spirituality.

Some TSSF members remember meeting him there. He has always been friendly, Franciscan, faithful and fun, even if he still describes himself jokingly as a ‘shy fellow’.

He left the order after a disagreement on priorities and has been active in Brisbane and Townsville Dioceses since then mainly as social worker, lecturer and priest. He went to Townsville to work at the Townsville College of Advanced Education where he set up a course in Community Welfare, originally a diploma course admitting aboriginal students one of whom is Denis Ware who did his degree there. Dennis worked in the Federal Department of Aboriginal Affairs for many years. After amalgamation of the CAE with James Cook University in 1982, the diploma course became a Degree Course within the Department of Social Work. Illtyd was made a senior lecturer in that department in the mid 80s.

His last parish was acting PIC of Auchenflower where he had a ministry to the gender marginalised, a unique ministry at that time. Some of his more notable experiences were initiating the above Aboriginal student studies, managing flood relief in Ipswich after the 1974 floods, being very involved with Tufnell Home, Nundah (orphanage) and being very involved in Vietnam War protests.

Illtyd now lives in Glasshouse, Parkview, Wheller Gardens, Chermside and is an emeritus parishioner at All Saints Chermside. I took on the role of honorary sister shortly after Illtyd moved from Palmwoods to Brisbane and try to maintain this role. Illtyd loves visitors, although you may need to explain who you are and he may not retain this memory. He spends his days mostly in prayer, worship and reading. He has several lots of visitors, chief among whom are his loved and caring friends and executors, Robert and Manuel.

Notes (i) There are several articles in Google on the Loveluck family of Glamorgan eg The Loveluck Family of Glamorgan; The Early Loveluck Family of Glamorgan

An Ecumenical Christian Prayer

O God, Trinity of love,
from the profound communion of your divine life,
pour out upon us a torrent of fraternal love.
Grant us the love reflected in the actions of Jesus,
in his family of Nazareth,
and in the early Christian community.
Grant that we Christians may live the Gospel,
discovering Christ in each human being,
recognizing him crucified
in the sufferings of the abandoned
and forgotten of our world,
and risen in each brother or sister
who makes a new start.
Come, Holy Spirit, show us your beauty,
reflected in all the peoples of the earth,
so that we may discover anew
that all are important and all are necessary,
different faces of the one humanity
that God so loves. Amen.

St Elizabeth of Hungary

Princess, Third Order, Franciscan (1207-'1231)

From: "The Franciscan Saints"

By: Robert Ellsberg

St Elizabeth, the daughter of Hungarian royalty, was betrothed at the age of four to Ludwig, the nine year old prince of Thuringia in southern Germany. Despite the arrangement, in which they had no say, the two children established a close friendship and eventually blossomed into a loving marriage. Elizabeth bore three children, But Ludwig's family disapproved of her piety and especially her "inordinate" charity toward the poor and sick. The young princess, it was said, dressed too simply; she was too profligate in her almsgiving. After Elizabeth established several hospitals she aroused scandal by nursing the sick, even lepers, with her own hands.

Nevertheless, her instinctive spirit of poverty was only magnified upon the arrival of the first Franciscan missionaries in Germany. Elizabeth was captivated by the story of Clare and Francis (from whom she received the gift of his cloak), and she eventually embraced the rule of a Franciscan tertiary. During a time of famine, while Ludwig was away, she opened the royal granaries, thus winning the people's devotion. Such generosity however, only increased the scorn of elite members of the court.

In 1227, Ludwig died on his way home from a crusade. In a paroxysm of grief, Elizabeth cried out, "The world is dead to me, and all that was joyous in the world." Without her husband's protection, she was at the mercy of her in-laws. They banished her from the court forcing her to leave the palace on a wintry night, carrying nothing but her new born child. She who had embraced the spirit of poverty now found herself happy to accept shelter in a pig shed.

Eventually, to avoid scandal, she was provided with a simple cottage, where she supported herself by spinning and fishing. She continued to visit the sick in their homes or in the hospices she had endowed. Over time her reputation for holiness spread, and she earned the grudging respect of those who had persecuted her. In 1231, she fell ill, and announced calmly that she would not recover. She died on November 17 at the age of twenty-four. She was canonized less than four years later.

We must give God what we have, gladly and with joy.

- St Elizabeth of Hungary



ADVENT 2020 – Hold Fast the Faith

By: Margaret Edridge tssf

What a year this has been! Floods, fires, and Covid19 illnesses and deaths. Borders closed between states and countries isolating families and loved ones. Gatherings muted as get-together numbers, even for weddings and funerals are strictly limited. Church services postponed or also limited to specific numbers requiring parishioners to reserve seats! So difficult for those without the internet or computer expertise. Children home-schooled with parents often working at home too. So many difficulties and additional deep concerns – Aboriginal deaths in custody, climate change and the precarious state of affairs between many nations. More intimate difficulties too, as family members become ill, or diagnosed with cancer and other life threatening diseases.

Dis-ease! How we have all suffered from it this year. For me though, it has been a time of reflection and reading. And I would like to share a portion from David Winter's *After the Gospels*, a book of 100 readings from early Christians ranging from approximately 40-400CE. It is from the Epistle of Barnabas, c.120CE:

... in difficult times like these when it almost seems the Evil One himself is in control of events, it means we must apply ourselves more than ever to a careful study of what God has done and promised, patiently and reverently reinforcing our faith... If we can hold fast the faith and seek holiness, the Lord will also give us wisdom, insight and understanding of the times.

Now we look forward to the Season of Advent. I was once present when a bishop asked the gathered clergy when they took the opportunity of preaching about Christ's second coming. There was silence! Yet Advent is especially the time when we look forward to His blessed return. So as I pray for the peace of the world, during the morning prayers with Peter, I always conclude with the prayer that God's Kingdom of Peace may come about soon.

So to each of you, my Franciscan friends, hold fast the faith, consider all the blessings you have received throughout your life and know that, in this time of difficulty, the tender mercy from on high shall indeed visit each one

Keep a clear eye toward life's end. Do not forget your purpose and destiny as God's creature. What you are in his sight is what you are and nothing more. Remember that when you leave this earth, you can take nothing that you have received...but only what you have given; a full heart enriched by honest service, love, sacrifice, and courage."

- Francis of Assisi



Patrick Street Morning

By: Margaret Thirwell

The wattle bird insisently
cackles from the banksia tree:
day’s here! day’s here!

But banksias, ancient, patient,
fruit of harsh dry aeons
wait for the sun to appear.

Still air bears sea salt,
walkers’ talk, magpies’ carols, and
the drifting voice of a train.

Night workers head for home,
early surfers bear their boards,
and bins are emptied in the lane.

And through all these, the Angelus
Gabriel tells Mary, all will be well!
and All will be well!



Franciscan & Holy Days To Notes
2020/2021

December	1	Requiem for all departed Franciscans
December	8	Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary
December	25	THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD
January	16	The First Franciscan Martyr
February	9	Anglican Franciscan Pioneers
February	17	Ash Wednesday
April	2	Good Friday
April	4	Easter Sunday
April	11	Brother Geoffrey SSF
May	29	Jack Winslow
June	13	Anthony of Padua

‘Readings and other material for worship
and devotion are in the Manual - Section F’s

Tssf Community Obedience for
Monday 23rd November, 2020

Humility confesses that we have nothing that we have
not received and admits the fact of our insufficiency
and our dependency upon God. It is the basis of all
Christian virtues. Saint Bernard of Clairvaux said,
“no spiritual house can stand for a moment except
on the foundation of humility.” It is the first
condition of a joyful life within any community.



New Provincial Minister

The time has come for
me to stand down as Provincial
Minister after 6 wonderful years,
and I am very happy to pass on
the baton of leadership to our
sister Mandy Wheatley.

Mandy was Professed in the
Third Order in 2001 and was
ordained Deacon, and then Priest in Newcastle Diocese in
2005. She served as Regional Minister in NSW B/ACT and
for the last few years has served as our Provincial Chaplain.
She is married to Michael and they live in Narooma on the
beautiful south coast of NSW.
Mandy is a wonderful person in whom the Franciscan notes
of love, joy and humility are very evident in her life.
I know you will all support her in this new ministry of
leadership in our Asia Pacific Franciscan Community.

Godfrey, tssf

Rev. Mandy Wheatley

By: Saroja Namadevan, Sri Lanka

We were delighted to hear through sister Bronwyn that you
have been selected as our Asia Pacific Provincial Minister.
Up to now you had served as the provincial chaplain with
success by the grace of God.

We take this opportunity to thank Bishop Godfrey for his
kindness, patience extended towards the Sri Lankan tssf
society members. Bishop Godfrey has always been in constant
contact with us during our Franciscan journey. Sister Bronwyn
has been my Novice Counselor. We thank God for the
valuable services extended by Bishop Godfrey and sister
Bronwyn. We trust that both of them would continue their
services in the future as well.

On behalf of the Sri Lankan tssf and ssf members, we extend
our good wishes so that God will bless you abundantly to
shoulder the responsibilities in the discharge of your duties.
We too would be praying for your leadership, so that God
will give you the necessary strength.

With prayers

Prayer by Dr. Roger Hurding

From: Franciscan Meedia

Jesus, I thank you for your love so strong. May that
love flow through me to others.
May I be patient when change comes slowly.
May I be kind when life seems harsh. May I be gentle
when others feel bruised.
May I be humble when things go well. May I be
peaceful when anger rises within.
May I rejoice when the truth is discovered.
Love never fails, but I do.
May I hope when things seem hopeless.
May I persevere when the way is hard.
Amen.

Reflections on my journey with Laudato Si

By: Ann Ellis

Only the Divine matters, And because the Divine matters,
Everything matters.

By Thomas Keating, "What Matters"

The simplicity of the final poem in The Secret Embrace speaks eloquently of what I (Richard) know more deeply to be true with every passing year. It's the incarnatioal message at the heart of the Gospel: everything belongs! It is a Christ-soaked universe. Richard Rohr

We go around in my community as if all is well with the world. We seem to be managing Covid 19 well and our lives continue in more or less a normal manner. Spring is here, the grass is growing. Climate change, what's that? You wouldn't know it is happening.

I've made a few lifestyle changes, what more can I do? Well, I read articles from The Conversation and The Guardian because I trust what they have to say particularly about climate change. I also subscribe to a few conservation groups for the same reason.

I am dismayed when I read stories like, the icecap is melting, polar bears could be extinct by 2050, and we were all horrified about the destruction caused by last year's bushfires.

I wonder how bad the climate consequences have to get before we all wake up and realise we must act, we must work to reduce emissions. We must get out of fossil fuel. We must reach net zero emissions by 2050. My Annie asked me recently, with tears in her eyes, have times passed ever been so uncertain as they are now. I had no words of comfort or certainty to offer. My heart ached for her and all young people.

I thought Laudato Si when it was first published would be a catalyst. It certainly has caused ripples and waves, just as last year's bush fires gave most of us a jolt and a scare. But it has not brought us all together as covid has, prepared to act. It's interesting that we were happy to accept the science around covid but we are not all convinced re the science around changes to climate. We have a big problem of our own making, and we are reaching a tipping point.

I worked through the themes of the on line course based on Laudato Si.

The cry of the earth, the cry of the poor-

I look round in my suburb and have to remind myself we are living on borrowed time, that we are reaching a tipping point. Some countries are committing to net zero emissions by 2050, China by 2060, Australia? no target.

Pope Francis talks about ecological conversion, the need for a change of heart, to be engaged in the action, our motive, love, to be totally sold on the idea that the earth and humanity should thrive together. We need to put people's lives, health and wellbeing before corporate profits and make the economy serve everyone.

The Gospel of Creation is very Franciscan. Francis wrote the Canticle of the Creatures. God is in everything and everything is in God. Creation is the first incarnation.

Do we just give lip service to this or do we seek Justice for all?
Do we continue to trash the gift or help to mend it. Our choice.

We are into the season of Advent, the coming of Jesus. St Francis began our tradition of the nativity. Jesus born among the animals, laid in straw. Humble simple beginnings, a carpenter for an earthly father, a village girl for a mother. Jesus later gave us the beatitudes, one of which is to hunger after justice. Climate change is a justice issue.

Some suggestions for action from Laudat Si

Change personal behaviours

Act- Seek justice

Get out of fossil fuel, Encourage Faith communities to get out of fossil fuel

Support the Paris agreement.

Join a movement

Join a group like Australian Religious Response to Climate Change which welcomes all faith communities.

Lobby Government

Educate: love and respect for all of creation. Live simply so that others may simply live.

* * * * *

Prayer for our Earth

By Pope Francis*

Taken from: A Prayer for our Earth - The Global Catholic Climate Movement

All-powerful God, you are present in the whole universe and in the smallest of your creatures. You embrace with your tenderness all that exists. Pour out upon us the power of your love, that we may protect life and beauty. Fill us with peace, that we may live as brothers and sisters, harming no one. O God of the poor, help us to rescue the abandoned and forgotten of this earth, so precious in your eyes. Bring healing to our lives, that we may protect the world and not prey on it, that we may sow beauty, not pollution and destruction. Touch the hearts of those who look only for gain at the expense of the poor and the earth. Teach us to discover the worth of each thing, to be filled with awe and contemplation, to recognize that we are profoundly united with every creature as we journey towards your infinite light. We thank you for being with us each day. Encourage us, we pray, in our struggle for justice, love and peace. *

Pope Francis published this prayer in his Laudato Si' encyclical, and is meant for sharing with all who believe in a God who is the all-powerful Creator.

*"We have been called to heal wounds,
to unite what has fallen apart,
and to bring home those who
have lost their way."*

- St. Francis of Assisi



Christmas is Coming

By: Jeni Nix

The storm birds are out,
Heralding the coming of Christmas.
The early baby birds of Spring are today's teenagers,
Eating, playing and resting together as siblings
Under the offside-but-watchful eye of mum. Or dad.
The sun is brighter, warmer...
Creation is literally 'warming up' to
Celebrate and greet the coming Incarnate Creator –
Their master and friend.
Are we ready?

The Leopard tree at church
Which months ago appeared dead
Now bears rich green leaves,
Its brown pods for the future
Camouflaged in spring growth.
The supplies have been purchased
For making the Advent candles;
The Deacon and L.A. are excited for
A day of creating.
Visual signs for worshipping our coming King.
Are we ready?



The shops are crazy busy,
People suddenly everywhere despite
A world-wide pandemic.
Red, green, gold, silver;
Christmas carols different in every shop.
Our sight, hearing and senses are bombarded with
The commercial voice –
“The most special day of the year is almost here!
You can't have the best day without this!
And these! And oh you MUST have those!
What about one for them AND one for you?”
The Saviour of the world is coming.
Are we ready?
The baby is coming.

Are our hearts as empty as
The church cradle before the altar,
Waiting to be filled with new life, new joy, new hope?
Do we have space within us for even scraps of the baby's love,
Let alone the magnitude of
What might transform our whole lives
If we let it?
Creator, King, Saviour –
Come now, come early to empty us
Of all that doesn't make space for You,
So that when the baby comes
We ARE ready to be filled again.

The very short version of a long story

By: Ian Wilsom

I think I started flying because it seemed like the sort of job that was equal parts brain power and physical skill. It's more a sport than a job. The boss couldn't look over my shoulder constantly, and more importantly for a 20-year-old, chicks dig pilots... or so I thought back then! To be blunt, God and service to humanity were the furthest things from my mind. I worked hard and played hard and I'm still great friends with the blokes I flew with back then. We all love a beer or three, and there is nothing like the company of people who know what your own life is like, from the inside out.

We all ended up flying for airlines. I spent 5 years with Qantaslink, and 17 years with Virgin, the last 10 years as a Boeing 737 Captain. Along the way there was a serious illness that stopped me from flying, and some soul-searching that lead me back to God. I found out the hard way, that we are not defined by what we do, what we own, or where we live. It's not that I was particularly conceited, just part of a world where those things are held up as being the fundamental elements of joy.

I lost my marriage too, and my house, through that illness. And I learnt something else. That we are all connected, fundamentally, as human beings. We come from God, and we all return to God. So, what I do to others, I am really just doing to myself.

Most importantly, I realised that in spite of losing everything, I was still here, and I knew that I was going to be OK, no matter what. God gave me great peace, through his love.

Eventually my illness was cured and I went back to flying, but not without a change of focus. I knew I wanted to stay simple, humble, and devoted to humanity. The life of St Francis interested me, for its parallels. I particularly loved his quote 'I have been all things unholy... if God can work through me, he can work through anyone.' So I left the airline and I took a job with the Royal Flying Doctor Service. Half the pay, double the adventure!

Last week, while working out of Charleville, I got a call at 11PM for a 'P1' emergency. A 9-year-old boy had been bitten on the face by a dog and needed to get to the surgeon in Roma. At about midnight I fired up the Beechcraft Super King Air 200, taxied out with a doctor and nurse on board, and took off into the inky black of the desert night, towards Quilpie. When we arrived in Quilpie it turned out the boy was not as bad as we expected, but I watched the normally gruff, direct, Doctor, pick him up from the stretcher, cradle him in his arms, and carry him up the aircraft stairs whispering to him that everything was going to be OK.

I don't remember to be humble, simple, connected, and joyful every moment. But moments like these, in my work, remind me why I'm here, and give me the peace that I pray for every day. Blessings everyone, for the Christmas season.

Preparing to be a Franciscan Non-stipendiary Deacon

By: Gemma Dashwood TSSF

As I am preparing for my Ordination, I've been thinking back to my Franciscan novicing and profession and considering how my calling as a Tertiary Franciscan will work alongside my calling to the priesthood (and indeed, along with my paid employment as a doctor – which is a calling too but of a different kind). I think my conclusion is that they weave together to form me – complex and a bit unusual, but someone who desires to see God's love at work in the world.



Like many people I've spoken to, I never intended to strive for Ordination. It was really only after I moved to Queensland in 2015 that my urge to study Theology grew – more out of academic interest than anything else. I was worshipping in a semi-rural parish at the time, and after a year or so became Priest's Warden. When the priest left the parish only a few months later, the continuation of worship was largely dependent on the wardens organising everything. It was not always easy going, but in hindsight perhaps that work actually helped me get to where I am now.

Two things happened during those months of running the Parish – firstly I read in "Focus" magazine a plea from one of the small parishes out in the Western Region – they were desperately seeking a priest to lead a Communion service for them around Christmas time. I don't know why that hit me so hard but I suddenly understood that I was being lead into ministry so that I could answer exactly that sort of request.

Secondly, one of the churches in my Parish had a significant anniversary, and we held a large thanksgiving service outdoors (the church being way too small to accommodate so many people). Someone took a photo of me as the LA during the service – and when I sent it to my parents, my father (who is a lifelong atheist and the least sentimental person you could imagine) took one look and announced "She's going to be a priest, isn't she?". He had no idea at that point that I had started the enquiry process.

And so now here I am at the end of the formation and the study, and I am preparing to soon stand in front of the Archbishop and make my vows as a Deacon. And those vows will sit alongside my Franciscan vows, and the oath I swore when I graduated from Medicine. The stoles which my mother is making will all have the Tau cross on them to remind me that the two commitments will forever co-exist. With medicine providing my paid employment, I hope to be able to offer my ministry to places who would otherwise not be able to afford to have clergy working with them.



But most importantly, I have the love of God and the inspiration of Francis to walk with me on my journey. Whatever the road looks like, I know that I am secure with them.

Coronavirus

By: Simon Fong

Fatigue afflicts us
Our connectedness
All has become less
Social distancing
People not meeting
Shops forced to shut down
'Curfew' in each town
Meeting face to face
Stiff fines one may face
Schools suddenly closed
Two weeks as proposed
Medics exhausted.
Workload much added
As for the jobless
Without hopefulness
Lingering anguish
Likely we languish
Still God is so true
He would lead us through.
Amen!

Advent Week 4 - Prayer for Love

By: Hope Bollinger

Heavenly Father, the whole meaning of Christmas can be explained in one little four-letter word...LOVE. You sent your gift of pure love to us that first Christmas. Love descended from heaven to be born of a virgin. Love lay in the scratchy hay of a manger in a meager barn in Bethlehem. All of your love, God, was robed in the delicate skin of a baby and wrapped in swaddling clothes. This final week of Advent helps us to reflect on the magnitude of love that was made manifest in Jesus.



The greatest gift of all came that first Christmas. It wasn't wrapped in a beautiful package and set under a decorated tree. The greatest gift came wrapped in the flesh of baby Jesus and laid in the rough wood of a manger. Our perfect gift would later be rewrapped in the scars of our sin and nailed to the rugged wood of a cross on Calvary, all because of love.

Father, this final week of Advent, fill our hearts and minds with the significance of that truth. Thank you, Lord, for loving us enough to send Jesus. In Jesus' precious name we pray. Amen.



A Place of Peace

Excerpt from: “The Sanctuary of San Damiano”

By: Giulio Manchini

It’s a simple place, not one crowded by the faithful and fine art.

Hidden on the slopes beneath Assisi in a charmingly naturalistic setting and intentionally sheltered from the flow of organized tourism, it is a call to the soul that brings one here.

Well over a thousand years old, yet all the same passed on to us through the restructuring that firstly Francis, then Clare, and later the friars did here, it is a privileged place of the highest quality, both the cradle and a reliquary of Franciscan origins.

God revealed himself here. The Spirit still makes its presence felt. From the shadows the faces of Francis and Clare appear; the Cantele of the Creatures oozes out from the walls.

These simple places speak in a silence which you can listen to. Francis’ conversion to Christ and his radical response to that call took place. Here the love of Clare was consumed in living out the gospel as Mary had done. Both of them, through lives which were Christ-like, Marian, church centred and very human – one almost another Christ one other almost another Mary – became evangelically speaking a restored House/Church in line with the command from the Crucifix.

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

As we come to a close to 2020, may we reflect on the year’s global pandemic, and ask ourselves, “what has this year taught us”? I know the world is fragile; the people are doubtful, fearful and questioning. As we face these challenging times, the Lord never leaves us. This is time to spend more time in prayer and contemplation, and allow the silence to speak to us.

We have gone about our lives doing things differently, and coping with restrictions incurred on us by covid. We have alternative ways to communicate with church communities and families; with singing in virtual choirs, and the churches have been working tirelessly to comfort their people.

Thank you to all who have contributed articles this year, and this is one way we are knitted in community.

We welcome our new Provincial Minister, the Reverend Mandy Wheatley and endeavour to support her as she transitions in her new role.

Articles in for Easter by 15th March, 2021

Blessings and peace for Christmas.

Gloria



Shout to the Lord Because the Savior Is Born!

Taken from Advent and Christmas Wisdom from St Francis of Assisi

Compiled By: John V Kruse

Exult in God our help!

Shout to the Lord God living and true with cries of gladness!

Because the Lord the Most High,

The Awesome is the Great King over all the earth.

Because the Most Holy Father of Heaven, our King before all ages,

Sent his beloved son on high

And He was born of the Blessed Virgin Holy Mary.

He called to me: You are my Father

And I will place Him, my firstborn, as the Highest, Above all the kings of the earth.

On that day the Lord sent His mercy

And at night his song.

This is the day the Lord has made

Let us rejoice and be glad in it.

For the Most Holy child has been given to us

And has been born for us on the way

And placed in a manger

Because he did not have a place in the inn

Glory to the Lord God in the highest

And peace on earth to those of good will.

Let the heavens rejoice and the earth exult,

Let the sea and its fullness resound,

Let the fields and all that is in them be joyful.

Sing a new song to the Lord,

Sing to the Lord all the earth,

Because the Lord is great and worth of praise

He is awesome beyond all Gods.

Give to the Lord, you families of nations,

Give to the Lord glory and praise,

Give to the Lord glory and praise

Give to the Lord the glory due His name.

Take up your bodies and carry His holy cross

And follow His most holy commands even to the end.

St Francis of Assisi, “Vespers of the Lord’s Birth, Antiphon:

*Holy Virgin Mary (Psalm XV), 156-157**

Psalms arranged by St Francis with interpolations.

Welcome to Country

We acknowledge, the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we work and live, the (people) of the (nation), and recognize their continuing connection to land, water and community.

We pay respect to Elders past, present and emerging.

