



The Province of Asia-Pacific

AUSTRALIA, HONG KONG, MALAYSIA

PAPUA NEW GUINEA, SINGAPORE & SRI LANKA

NEWSLETTER

Stigmata / Francistide Edition



PROVINCIAL REPORT

My dear sisters and brothers,

It has been an eventful year of learning to share the love of Christ in new ways. It has also been a time of fear and hope – of prayer and longing – of Covid and Afghanistan.

As Franciscans, we are called to be messengers of perfect joy in all circumstances and strive to bring joy and hope to others. (Peace Prayer of St Francis). Behind lockdowns and separations, our Province has been working faithfully to call others to follow Christ in the way of St Francis, to provide a safe and supportive system in our Third Order by which to do this.

On 5-6 June we held Chapter by Zoom. I commend those who have been called to serve as Chapter members, sharing a small part of the highlights of our TSSF Province's year for your prayers and joyful appreciation.

- Website renewal – with huge thanks to David White who has spent unold hours improving and updating our webpage (<https://tssf.org.au/>) – please check out the latest additions including:
 - Subscription payments - are now available online on the website under 'Forms and Payments' on the menu. It really works!
 - Safeguarding – David White has also taken on the task of making sure our Province keeps the Third Order a safe organisation for our brothers and sisters, and that all those who we minister to are cared for well. Therefore all Office bearers will be asked to log in as a 'Leader' and complete the Awareness Course online – (it's easy and informative). Please visit: <https://tssfap.safeministrycheck.com.au/start/>
 - Lifelong learning - It was suggested at the 2017 IPTOC – Inter-Provincial Third Order Chapter – that a Lifelong Formation Guardian in our Province may be appointed to work alongside our Regional Ministers and Area Convenors to provide resources for Tertiaries after Profession. This person will help guide study to encourage contemplation, build community, and develop missional action within local groups.

Please pray for wisdom and guidance to invite the right person for this role. If you have any ideas please contact Sally Buckley.

- Region in Formation – South East Asia and Asia – please hold our sisters and brothers in your prayers.
 - o China – On 12 June a beautiful gathering on Zoom celebrated the novicing of Dorcas Ma.
 - o Sri Lanka – TSSF is sponsoring the education of 5 girls with the help of Franciscan Aid.
 - o South Korea – On 5-6 June 2021, we celebrated a service on Zoom when;
 - 6 novices were professed; Eun Gyeong Deborah Kim, Hong Il Ambrose Kim, Gu Il Bede Kwon, Jin Kwon Lee, Woo Whee Elizabeth Nahm and Hyeran Helena Yang.
 - 4 postulants were admitted as novices; Wonsang Lucas Yu, Sun Jin Ezekiel Park, Imran Frances Hwang, Sungsonn Lucy Edwards Lee.
 - o Malaysia – Bradley Sangan sends greetings from Kuching, Sarawak. This group began in the 1980's with Br Geoffrey's mission and is still faithfully living out the Franciscan Rule, praying for us today.

Two years before he died, when Francis, one year after he had built the first crib in honour of Our Lord at Greccio, he went off to a lonely mountain, La Verna, for forty days of fasting and prayer. On the feast of the Holy Cross, September 14, Jesus gave him the wounds from his own body. These wounds stayed in his hands, feet and side, and continually bled for two more years, until he died in 1226. My we cheerfully carry our own cross, bearing our own wounds with joy knowing that by doing so we glorify God in the footsteps of beloved Francis.

Peace and good,

Mandy tssf, (Provincial Minister Asia-Pacific)

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



(left to right) Brs Christopher John, Alfred BoonKong, Bruce-Paul)



The peace and tranquility

Hermitage of St Bernardine Stroud, NSW!

By: Christopher John SSF
Minister General, First Order Brothers

Greetings to our sisters and brothers of the Third Order from the First Order brothers at the Hermitage of St Bernardine Stroud, NSW!

I live here with two other First Order brothers. As a hermitage it's a place with a focus on prayer, life in community, silence, simplicity, hospitality to others as well as some occasional outside ministries. Mostly, the First Order brothers around the world (about 125 of us) are living in friaries with some focus on active outside ministries such as pastoral care, advocacy, education, or parish ministry, etc. But in the First Order there are also a few places with a focus similar to ours at Stroud.

We've had brothers here at Stroud for more than 45 years. We came initially as chaplains to the Community of St Clare when they were living in the old rectory, as well as providing parish ministry. Just over 40 years ago the sisters moved out of the rectory into a purpose-built mud-brick monastery on a block of land just a few kilometres out of Stroud, and the brothers moved along with them into a hermitage, built also on the same property.

It's a place of great physical beauty. Not stunning beauty in the sense of majestic vistas or mountain peaks or broad rivers. The beauty is that of being set among the bush with an abundance of wildlife and an ever-changing kaleidoscope of seasons bringing variety in blossom and leaves. We catch glimpses of the neighbouring properties, mainly farms, but also our local country club and golf course.

It's also a place of silence. Not the silence of the desert, but of the bush. Bird and insect calls, wind in trees, our neighbour's cattle, and the occasional whack of a flying golf ball. It's a place where we notice the rain and dry. Attend anxiously to the news of bushfires when they're about. And now, after extensive rains, we rejoice in an abundance of citrus in our orchard.

And here too, it's a place where we notice the changing light, season by season. It's dark at night, except for the stars and moon. We adjust our timetable for winter or summer, responding to the changing sunrise and sunset.

And although we're "out in the country" we're not removed from the concerns of the world. Email, internet,

newspapers, conversations with friends, calls from strangers—all keep us informed and our prayer focussed. Covid-19 we can't avoid! And the concerns of Afghanistan, of Australia's inhumane treatment of refugees, of climate change, of people we know with family or work difficulties, or struggling with their faith or an unfeeling institutional church—these are all part of our prayer.

The pandemic has put a stopper on many things for everyone. The one which affects us most is suspending our guest ministry. Hospitality is an important part of our life—not as an optional extra—but as a Franciscan imperative to "give away" what we know and experience of community and prayer from our life in this place and to share that with those who come.

I mentioned the Community of St Clare (and later the Clare Community) and their history in this place. Unfortunately, they weren't able to establish a stable foundation here. But the beautiful buildings they lived in remain and as the Old Monastery are available for individuals or groups coming for self-catered accommodation.

We'd love to welcome any of you here at the Hermitage or the Old Monastery. The pandemic makes that hard—but there are two excellent videos I'd recommend you see:

The Assisi of the South:
https://youtu.be/lvkQu_cchrY

History of the Old Monastery, Stroud:
https://youtu.be/_F_JTBbmJ1c





Accommodation



For Information:

The Old Monastery at Stroud, NSW,
47 St Clairs Rd, Stroud NSW 2425
(02) 9160 4775
oldmonasterystroud@gmail.com

The Hermitage of St Bernardine,
PO Box 46, Stroud, NSW 2425, Australia
+61 2 4994 5372

**“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.”**

- **St Francis of Assisi**

A Companion on the Journey

Rev Dr Gemma
Dashwood TSSF



Last week at work in the Intensive Care Unit I sat with a man as he died. There was no one else there apart from me and a nurse. I had mixed emotions – sad that his family had left but also privileged that I could accompany him during his last couple of hours on this earth. His death was peaceful and dignified and it was a good death.

Witnessing this event got me thinking about journeying alone. As someone with no family locally, I often travel alone and interestingly I never seem to feel lonely. However, I know of many others who struggle without friends and families around them. Particularly during lockdowns, it can be very very difficult if being alone is a challenge – even people who think they are independent may struggle once they realise they might not see another human being for several weeks.

Another privilege I have had over the past two years has been working as a Novice Counsellor with Selina. On recent reflection I have been really overwhelmed how the journey is not just hers but mine too. We have both grown in our faith and Franciscan life as we have discussed, debated and defined what we understand the Franciscan Call to look like for each of us. We have most certainly journeyed together.

I have realised something very important during all of this – that actually, as Franciscans, we *never* journey alone. This is because we understand that St Francis, St Clare and all the saints of the Third order are with us journeying with us all the time. It is therefore not possible for one Franciscan to journey without all of us somehow moving too.

This illustrates just how important we are to each other as a Community. We all have something valuable to add. And so with each Profession of every Novice, we all benefit. Let us give thanks for all those who journey with us and guide us on our journey.

Taken from: Seasons of Creation

<https://seasonsofcreation.org/>

The Season of Creation is our special time for the Creator and each other.

From September 1 to October 4, Christians around the world celebrate the Season of Creation. Some of us pray, some of us do hands-on projects, some of us advocate.

We all protect creation. It’s powerfully good work that’s urgently needed. The momentum continues long after the season ends through ongoing prayer, changes in lifestyle, and advocacy.



Reflections across the Province

Not planting trees, just enjoying

By: Janet Down

Nothing went according to plan, but what a wonderful day we had at La Posada at Kinglake. This is the five acre property where the Rev'd Pirrial Clift lives a solitary life of prayer.

As we were driving up the mountain, the rain set in and the temperature dropped below 4 degrees.

When we arrived at Pirrial's front gate, the Landcare people were just leaving, but first they explained to us that (unsurprisingly) our planned tree-planting had been called off. They also let us know that Pirrial wasn't home as she had to take her very sick cat to the vet.

However, she had left the door open with instructions to let ourselves in, so we were able to make coffee and catch up with others who began to arrive. Catherine, Pirrial's daughter, was later than she'd hoped to be, having had to take a long detour around a tragic traffic accident.

When the rain eased off, Catherine took us to see the magnificent Grey Mountain Gum that is thought to be about 300 years old. Catherine and Pirrial have measured its girth at 5.5 metres. The local Council has suggested it may be eligible to go on the National Trust register, and enquiries are underway.

Pirrial finally arrived home with poor puss, and we were about to begin our Eucharist when the Landcare man who was lined up to speak to us over lunch pulled in to the driveway! So Pirrial went out and spoke to him, and he came inside and joined in our service very happily. Later, over lunch, he said it was the first time he had taken communion in many years, and it was a real privilege to join us. Surely God was in this moment.

It was a moving service, during which Pirrial anointed Chris and John Winkett and we prayed for their healing, as Chris was about to have knee surgery and John continues with cancer treatment. We also had a time of thanksgiving for creation, with people naming aloud the things for which they were thankful, such as wetlands and wombats, pelicans and parrots.

During Pirrial's sermon, she talked about Francis and his love for nature:

Francis was not a Greenie or a conservationist – the whole idea would have been totally foreign to him. Our century frequently makes him a sentimental nature-lover, and he was not. His famous attachment to nature was an extension of his love for God the Creator. The simplicity of his logic is breathtakingly clear. If the person you love most makes a beautiful garden, you treat that garden with respect. You would no more think of destroying it than flying to the moon, because it belongs to the one you love.

She encouraged us to give thanks and simply enjoy the beauty and diversity around us, ending by saying "Nature is one of the windows through which we can catch a glimpse of Jesus Christ, who is the true source of all joy."

Thanks to Pirrial for her ministry to us on what must have been rather a challenging day for her.



Caption for photo) Under the Grey Mountain Ash: John Winkett, Jan Down, Colin Valentine, Sandra Jackson, Chris Winkett and Catherine de Ron. Michael Down was taking the photo.



A gift of his grace, the willingness to be poorer

Hyeran Helena YANG

I'm so grateful for all the prayers before and after my profession from brothers and sisters, particularly from my novice counselor and the regional minister. While in preparation for it, an exploration began in me asking what I am longing for in my profession. Still things of my life went on as before including the health issues. Being healthy was the last and only possession that we were aspiring to since we identified the time banking movement as the call for both of us. We gave up every possible possession that was seemingly reachable within our capacity since then, except for health. The last resource available was running out when my husband was diagnosed with multiple myeloma.

The profession went so warmly and touching deeply despite the limitation of zoom gathering. Now in one and a half months in profession I feel awakened to a call to another step to poverty. Acknowledging the facts and statistics of medical studies that indisputably tell about a possible relapse of my husband's health someday, I managed to stay hopeful for me and my husband. I'm willing to lose more than I can imagine in order to earn Love for life. I'm willing to keep the journey of losing as long as we stay in Love for life. God is Love for me. This is what sustains me hopeful day-by-day against all odds. This willingness to be poorer physically, materially or spiritually is now preceding the restlessness that was unbearable and agonizing. This is a gift of his grace, inexplicable by logic or theory. But that explains to me the Francis who further took off the underwear from his biological father when deprived of all inheritance from the father. It is the willingness to lose.

In praise of Sister Death

By: Margaret Edridge tssf

Diagnosed with breast cancer in my late forties I reassessed my spiritual life and realised I needed more structure if I was to grow spiritually and be able to meet my God face to face. So I became a Franciscan. It has been a journey that has led me deeper into spirituality and contemplation, and closer to our Triune God. I have joined with Catholics at Lent in the Stations of the Cross and between the Stations we would say, 'Jesus, who for love of me didst bear thy cross to Calvary; by thy sweet mercy grant to me to suffer and to die with thee.' We all have many and various crosses to bear, but God will not allow us to suffer beyond that which we actually can. I am not afraid of death having a history of cancer – bowel, thyroid and melanoma as well as breast cancer - so I praise God thankfully for my life.

Ken, my brother, suffered so much pain during his journey with prostate cancer. We shared many memories while I was with him in May. He had a difficult relationship with our mother so I told him about her terrible childhood after losing her mother at the age of four. Some time later he said, 'Margaret, I am so looking forward to seeing Mum again.' What a great comfort that was, both in terms of his reconciliation with Mum and also reassurance of his faith.

Sunday night before Ken died, I prayed God would take him out of pain, enfold him in love and take him into the Heavenly Kingdom. Ken died so swiftly and peacefully the next day at 11.30a.m. that the nurses were astonished, although I was not prepared to face his death so quickly. But as God gently informed me, 'It is just what you asked for, Margaret!'

Recently I was lazing in my chair, neither asleep nor awake, when a clear voice said, 'I am just showing Ken around heaven, Margaret,' and I saw an expanse of beautiful bush and mountains. Instances like these, though few and far between, are truly 'gifts of God for the people of God' and now I can say with St Francis, 'Be praised, my Lord, through our Sister Death.' According to tradition, it was sung in its entirety on his deathbed, this particular verse having been added just a few minutes earlier.

The Stigmata

By: Revd Tim Narraway

Our world today is marked by division. We tend to define ourselves by what we are for, or against. This is particularly true of social media.

A different type of media confronts these same issues. These past few weeks we have been examining St Paul's letter to the Ephesian church in our lectionary readings. In it there is an emphasis on the Church as a unified whole. It's a useful foil to the individualistic viewpoint of Christianity that so often creeps into our thinking. The Greco-Roman worldview of St Paul's day saw disconnect between spirit and body, between sacred and secular.

The Stigmata of Francis reminds me that the faith of the same unified Church is an embodied one. We are one Body, with one faith and one Lord. Francis's imagination was captivated with the incarnation. Who is this God become man... and what does it mean that I am part of his body?

Paul writes to the Corinthians, "if one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it."

Francis's gift was to draw attention to the "stubbed toe"• of the marginalised, the forgotten and the broken. What others avoided, he embraced. What others passed by, he engaged with the love of Christ. He saw serving the marginalised as serving Christ. So readily did he identify with Christ as to say with St Paul "I bear on my own body the marks of Christ.

Seeking to imitate

By: Fr. Daniel Hobbs tssf

In Francis, I stumbled on a way to imitate Christ. Francis was my invitation into the heart of God as expressed through the humanity *and* divinity of Jesus of Nazareth. Church and religious affiliation was a constant presence from birth, but a "disciple" I was not. I knew what to believe (orthodoxy) and all the right words and when to say them, when to sit, stand, kneel and offer the sign of the cross as rituals of practice (orthopraxy), right behaviour, but interior awakening had not yet been my lot (orthopathy: right feeling). In the church of my childhood there seemed few opportunities to focus on the interior life and no shortage of behavioural expectations set by church and society. This is quite possibly why faith communities lose so many young adults; not having had the opportunity to experience and nourish an interior relationship with God through Christ, they leave once they are no longer beholden to familial behaviours and expectations. There is no reason to stay. It was and remains an encounter with Divine love at the foot of the crypt of Francis that sparked to life my searching soul.

The Stigmata of Francis is a constant reminder that *imitation* of Christ is the life into which we are called. We have to paraphrase Fr. Richard Rohr SSF, worshipped Jesus at the expense of imitating Jesus. Humanity made Jesus into a religion (an organising principle) as distinct from a path to interior transformation and deeper union with God and each other (a personal encounter; a nourishing relationship).

We worship God. We imitate Jesus. Francis, especially his Stigmata, draws our attention back to this. "Follow God's" example, therefore, as dearly loved children and walk in the way of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God• (Eph. 5:1-2). Christians are called to live a cruciform life: a life shaped by the selfless sacrifice, humility and simplicity of the cross. In seeking to imitate Christ with authenticity and integrity, we hold fast to our baptismal promises and our Franciscan Vows.

Perhaps, with me, you might spend some time this Francistide prayerfully reading (or re-reading) Thomas a Kempis "The Imitation of Christ". It remains a powerful invitation into the heart of God as lived by our spiritual Father Francis.



PATHS TO GOD

2. The Jericho Road,

By: Anne Kotze

The Jericho Road

Read Luke 10 v.25-37

The Jericho Road is the way of service. It is not very far from Jerusalem to Jericho but the road is dusty, very hot and enclosed by dry hills – a perfect place for an ambush. Both the man who was attacked and the Samaritan were travelling alone – unwise because of the bands of robbers living in caves in the limestone hills who found single travellers an easy target. The Jewish man was left, robbed of all that he had, naked and half dead.

Along came other travellers on the Jericho Road. First came a priest. If he touched the man and the man died the priest would be defiled and ritually unclean. He would need to go through a series of cleansing rituals before he could perform his priestly functions again, and so through pride, selfishness or laziness he went to the other side of the road so that he need not even come close to the victim.

The Levite represented the Law, the great Law of the God of the Old Testament. These were the people who reduced God's Law of Love to man's picky concern with tiny details, the Law being in their eyes more important than the person. He did not feel any compulsion to help the wounded man, no compassion for a man in dire trouble because this was a Samaritan and so beyond the pale. It needed Jesus to teach the world that Love can break all man-made rules.

The Jericho Road is the road of service – the way of giving of ourselves, our time, our money if we have it, our concern and our prayers. We should always remember that this last is perhaps the greatest service of all because it will give us the wisdom we need to give the rest of our service.

The Samaritan did not say to the Innkeeper, "There is a poor chap on the road who is badly injured and needs help." In the story he "put him on his own donkey, took him to the inn and took care of him."

On the road of service we recognised Christ in everyone we meet and then it is our joy to serve them. Mother Teresa of Calcutta says: "My secret is quite simple. I pray and through my prayer I become one in love with Christ: and praying to Him is to love Him and that means to fulfil His words and His will." Her joy is to recognise Christ in whoever she serves. She treats everyone with the loving reverence she would feel were it Christ Himself whom, dirty and dying, she rescues from the Calcutta gutter.

Our Lord shows us this way by serving us, by being our Healer, our Shepherd, our Teacher, our High-priest, our Advocate.

"I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go: I will counsel you and watch over you." Psalm 32 v.8

It was when Francis held the leper in his arms that he realised he was holding Christ. Then he went to live with the lepers, washing their wounds, and feeding them with his own hands. He used to refer to himself and his followers as "servants of God" and that is all he ever wanted to be because the servant of God is the servant of all. Service with love is a fail-proof way to draw nearer to God and to understand His teaching.

Walking the road of service is not easy. We may not choose to serve only the sweet-natured person. We must serve the awkward and the unlovely. And – the other side of the coin – we should be ready to be served by others and this takes patience and humility. Once again looking to Jesus as our example we know He was served by Martha in her home; by Peter's mother-in-law who got up from her bed "and began to wait on Him"; by Mary Magdalene who anointed Him, of whom Jesus said "she has done a beautiful thing for me", and by Simon of Cyrene who helped to carry His cross.

Paths to God No 3. In Advent Edition



Directed Retreat

Santa Teresa Spirituality Centre
267 Wellington Street, Ormiston Qld.
9.00am Monday 25th October
9.00am Saturday 30th October, 2021
Facilitator: Marie Thompson
pacecommunity.org.au
\$1200.00
RSVP by 8th October
Register: admin@pacecommunity.org.au

Stigmata as a phenomenon

By: Sandra Beck



Mike Willesee was a household name in Australian journalism for decades.

He created and presented A Current Affair, hosted The Mike Willesee Show, Willesee at 7 and many other well-known TV and FM radio shows. As a schoolgirl, I was fascinated with the midlife conversion and somewhat transformation of Malcolm Muggeridge, a passionate sceptic. Other well-known conversions and transformations are St Paul, St Augustine (God, transform me but not yet) and Cliff Richard. I am still waiting or Philip Adams to exhibit a transformation. I suppose most of us who follow Christ are constantly being transformed but, as this can be a very gradual process, we may hardly be aware of it.

Stories of persons who receive the stigmata are the very food of sceptics. I have not been able to find mention of stigmata prior to St Francis, but Willesee presents it as a factual and current occurrence which he witnessed himself and documents in this book and in a television documentary.

A fundamental question occurs to me. If St Francis was the first recorded person to 'receive the stigmata', how was it determined that the phenomenon was holy? The answer is beyond me. St Francis became renowned as a holy person early in his religious life. He was blessed with many manifestations of simplicity, humility, obedience and courage. He was never afraid to speak up.

In a way, I see his stigmata as a crowning of his holiness, in the same way we might view the crowning of Jesus with the crown of thorns, an 'outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace'. I was lucky enough to visit the Accademia in Venice and was overwhelmed with the number of and sheer impact of the paintings depicting St Francis. Clearly his holiness was early recognised and the impact of his call to simplicity. This impact also had a profound effect on art of that and subsequent periods. Prior to the influence of the spirituality of St Francis, Jesus, the Virgin Mary and other religious topics were represented in a more formal, saintly and serious style. The influence of St Francis produced more humane, realistic representations, evincing pathos.

Dennis (et al p121) recount how, during a prolonged fast on Mount Alverna, two years before his death, St Francis so longed to experience the pain which Jesus experienced during his last few days and hours, in order to achieve a 'oneness in Christ's suffering', that he entered into a complete state of agony, the end product of which was the appearance of wounds in St Francis's hands, feet and side which corresponded with those received by Jesus. For the rest of his life, St Francis tried to keep these wounds private, he gained nothing by exposing them, but his followers became aware of them. (Brown in Dennis (et al) p 123), states 'in order that he should understand that he was to be utterly transformed into the direct likeness of Christ crucified, not by physical martyrdom but by enkindling of the mind'.

We do not need to understand the stigmata. What is important is that we understand that transformation of ourselves and of others is possible, is always possible through Jesus, through God, and that, if we truly want transformation, it will happen. I have to say that, I hope, I am a living witness of his. In the words of St Luke (4:47), who will love God more, (the one) who has been forgiven little or (the one) who has been forgiven much.

Bibliography

- Dennis, Marie (et al). St Francis and the Foolishness of God. Orbis Books, Maryknoll, NY .1993 .
- Habig, Marion A. (Ed). St Francis of Assisi, Writings and Early Biographies: English Omnibus of the Sources for the Life of St Francis. Franciscan Herald Press. Chicago. 1973.
- Willesee, Mike. A Sceptics Search for Meaning. A Spiritual Journey. Pan Macmillan. Australia. 2019 .
- Sources quoted: brown, Raphael (Ed) and trans. The Little Flowers of St Francis. Image Books. NY. 1958.

Daily Obedience for Saturday 31st July, 2021-07-31

About the Principals of the Third Order

The Principles of the Third Order, a portion of which is set for reflection each day, are based on the Rule of the Christa Seva Sangha from Poona in India. This community, formed in 1922 was inspired both by the Gospel of Christ and the way of life in an Indian Ashram, This community of married and single people, ordained and lay, led by Fr Jack Winslow, lived a common life as equals.

In 1928 the Rule was revised under the guidance of Fr Algy Robertson and some aspects of that Rule can also be found in The Third Order Principles.

We give thanks to God for the Principles of the Third Order that inspire us in the Franciscan way of following Jesus.

Reflect on which portion has particularly encouraged or challenged you in this past month.

On this endless journey

By: Woo- whee Elizabeth Nahm from Korea



I had heard about St. Francis for a long time, when I finally met Sr. Frances(CSF Korea) in 2016. The following year, I did my internship in the U.K. for two weeks, and she arranged for my accommodations at London. I stayed at two different Franciscan convents, one in Southwark and the other in Plaistow, where I spent a very blessed time. I was so grateful to

all the Sisters there, but especially to Pat. Pat was a Tertiary, and she introduced a lady vicar, who was also a Tertiary, to me and asked me if I was interested in becoming a Tertiary. Although it sounded great, I was not sure whether I was qualified or not at that time. Yet, the thought of becoming a Tertiary started to dwell in my mind.

At the end of 2017, a discussion about establishing the Third Order in South Korea began. Thankfully, I was recommended for a Tertiary by Sr. Frances, who encouraged me to pursue my call. After preparatory period, I joined the Third Order as a Novice on the 22nd February 2019. In the middle of the ritual, I offered my personal rule of life on the altar.

While writing this essay, I read that rule again, where I promised to cherish 'The Eucharist', 'Penitence', 'Personal Prayer', 'Self-denial', 'Retreat', 'Study', 'Simplicity', 'Work' and 'Obedience'. For almost three years, I have learned a lot and I am very grateful for it. Above all things, I would like to mention 'Simplicity'. When I was a teenaged girl, I was eager to grasp the meaning of Simplicity without knowing why for sure. I just thought that I might be more sensitive or conscientious than my peers. After encountering the Third Order and getting accepted as a Tertiary, I have realized the true meaning of Simplicity. Simplicity is a material issue, rather than a spiritual or psychological one. Now I regard possessiveness as a bad company, and I am trying to get rid of it.

I have loved Jesus and yearned to know God deeper through him. On the way to reach the triune God, St. Francis is an excellent guide. I have loved the Church, but sometimes it felt like a dim light in the fog. Now I believe that St. Francis will be the light to lead me to the Church and the Son. Thanks to the Third Order, I accept and understand the Gospel more profoundly than ever.

On the 11th July this year, I was professed in the ritual with five other Novices and became a Tertiary. Members from South Korea and Australia joined online to celebrate us, and I was deeply moved. As predecessors, I hope they will guide me on this endless journey. The Third Order is one holy, catholic and apostolic. I cannot help but express my gratitude to Bishop Godfrey, Bronwyn Fryar, Sally Buckley, Gemma Dashwood and other ministers. Last but not least, I would like to thank the 1st Order Sisters and Brothers in Korea from the bottom of my heart.



STIGMATA

By: Cathy Richards

The Stigmata is a miracle which is difficult to comprehend but which is mirrored in other events in the Bible - times when the dimension of Heaven and the dimension of Earth meet. Moses speaks to God on Mt Sinai as a cloud covers the top of the mountain. Jacob wrestles with God at Peniel

and is named Israel. The Transfiguration of Jesus on the mountain top is witnessed by John, Peter and James who are awestruck and wish to continue in this marvelous space. Jesus' appearances to his disciples and others after his crucifixion are unexplainable in human knowledge. Paul's life-changing meeting with Jesus on his journey to Damascus is a happening which cannot be explained in our worldly knowledge. These unexplainable happenings or miracles seem to me to be intersections of the Heavenly and the Earthly dimensions.

The love of God and the desire of Francis to share that love, led him to wish for the wounds of Christ to be part of him physically. The appearance of the Stigmata is an unexplainable miracle of grace, a meeting of two dimensions. That visible sign of God's presence brought Francis the pain of suffering as Jesus had suffered and also the joy that he was suffering on behalf of mankind as Christ had done. "It was total abandonment to the will of God, a physical, mental and spiritual surrender to the mystery that lay at the heart of Christ's love".
(1)

I am humbled when I look at the moon rising over the Pacific Ocean, and consider that this is the same moon that Jesus saw, shining on the Sea of Galilee and that Francis gazed at from his home in Assisi. Similarly, when I feel the warmth of the sun at the beach, I know Jesus felt that same sun shining on his face as he walked on the dusty roads to Jerusalem, and Francis labored under as he travelled with his brothers around the villages. The planet on which we live, created by God, was also Jesus' home and Francis' home. This is a thought which pulls me up short, to comprehend, that I am looking at the planets and stars that Jesus looked at and under which Francis sat to pray. This also helps me to understand the miracle of the Stigmata and Francis' wish to be united with Jesus in both the pain and the love which Jesus had for everything on Earth. To remember that the wounds on Francis' body were the same as Our Lord had also borne, is to cloud of witnesses.

1. Brother Ramon. A month with Saint Francis. London, SPCK, 1999.

Francis

By: Sean Carson

I lived the first forty of my forty-eight years as an angry, militant atheist. I hated Christians as thieving, conniving hypocrites. This belief only got worse when my life took a drastic turn for the worse. Originally a high achiever, I was studying to be a doctor, much to the expectation of everyone around me. Sadly, my mental health had been deteriorating over the first years of this degree until eventually I dropped out with a diagnosis of schizophrenia.

What followed was a turbulent, tortured existence, punctuated by bouts of serious psychosis. Destitute and at times homeless, I had even more reason to become very unpleasant towards the Christians who shied away from me in fear.

Despite all this, eventually I was able to find my way back into academia, beginning my training as a Veterinary surgeon. I managed three years before my illness overtook me, complete with all the appalling symptoms it presented with. Once again, I found myself cold, hungry and destitute.

That was when St Francis came into my life. I was talking to a friend and noticed his profession cross and asked him what it was. His answer was like being hit by a bolt of lightning. Everything we spoke about from then on resonated so profoundly with me, especially Francis' love of all people including the lame, the destitute and the lepers. Suddenly, I came from that very cold and dark place, into the love and warmth of God through St. Francis.

But more than that, getting to know Francis also allowed me to change my desires and hopes for the future. I had lived most of my life aiming to be a high achiever, both in academia and in my career. However, my journey with Francis allowed me to grow in a different way. I could change my aspirations away from secular ones, just as happened to St. Francis. Now, for the first time I was able to sit on a riverbank or walk through the bush keenly aware of God's presence. I started to call it 'present to the moment of presence.' I came to realise that I had been living my life without seeing ýý the rivers, the birds, the kangaroos and thee sea for example. But also the love that some Christians are capable of showing towards those in need. Now I can celebrate God, Jesus and St Francis. I hope to grow into my Franciscan calling, supported and loved by my Franciscan family. With that, I am no longer a slave to a world which demands status and prestige. Instead, I am nothing, and in that, I am everything.



“I play the notes as they are written, but it is God who makes the music.”

- Johann Sebastian Bach

How I became a Franciscan

By: Mac Campbell

Dear Friends,

Let me cite a recent example of the usefulness of the apocalyptic narrative frame:

Around the 1970s or 1980s, I think, an Aussie philosopher named Richard Rowland (Later named Richard Sylvan) teamed up with a guy from Norway, named Arne Naess.

Together they came up with an argument for the “inherent value” of the universe, as opposed to “instrumental value” (value for humans). The argument was dubbed the “last man argument”.

The story went a bit like this: “ You are last person alive on the planet. You decide to kill yourself. You also at the same time, have the power to end the universe. Do you have any obligation **not to** destroy the universe? “

The result of this story was the birth of what has come to be called “Deep Ecology”. So there developed a literature of critique of anthropocentric value systems. (quite a lot of “not that there’s anything wrong with that” went on too)

Convinced that the universe has intrinsic value, I became a deep ecologist. Then as I was working in literary criticism, I began to troll our legacy of past English literature in search of precursors to Deep Ecology. Thus a new academic field called “Ecocriticism”.

Naturally I looked in millenarian and apocalyptic baskets. For example, Coleridge’s “*Ancient Mariner*” is about the death of all things, caused by the last man; (whose moral wrong was to shoot the albatross; thus unraveling the natural world).

After some years of ecocriticism, I accidentally ended up as a guest scholar at the Franciscan International Study Centre.

The Franciscans there mistook my “deep ecological” world view for theirs. And I mistook their thinking for mine. I joined their tribe.

“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



To Ponder on the Cross

By: Fr David Craig

Do we ponder on the Cross, or do we really ponder on the Cross? The Cross always remains a constant source of prayer. Francis has shown that the Cross we deeply ponder on is always a place where we can intimately and personally meet with God. The Cross is a place where we encounter God's love, and leads us directly to the most violent, horrific, and excruciating of deaths, the crucifixion. This example of the cross shows and teaches us that regardless of chaos, violence, and death there is the opposite through the resurrection, grace, peace and glory. It has been recorded that Christ first spoke to Francis at Damiano, and from that time Francis had a deep love for the Cross. Francis has left this legacy for us to follow, to deeply ponder on the Cross.



Prayer, deep prayer, is powerful. Saint Francis was praying during the days of the Exaltation of the Cross on the mountainside of Mt. La Verna where he saw a six-winged seraph described as "fiery as well as brilliant, descend from the grandeur of heaven." Bonaventure records St Francis "as the vision was disappearing, it left in his heart a marvellous fire and imprinted in his flesh a likeness of sign no less marvellous." Francis immediately recognised the image of man crucified while pondering the six-winged seraph. The identified hands and feet extended undoubtedly were identified by St Francis as a form of a Cross St Francis being transformed while deeply pondering on Christ Crucified and identified a poor and humble God who is the prime example of humility for us and all who ponder on the Crucified Christ. This pondering for us is having a special openness to God allowing a transformation within ourselves.

When we gaze upon the brokenness within our communities and within ourselves, we often despair. We look upon and hear about the suffering, the poor, the mentally wounded, the broken and forsaken within our communities. At times can we be broken by the effects of sin, directly or indirectly? The effects of this troubled world can wear us down. The hope through Jesus, we too can experience transformation by the same seraphic spirit of God. Deep pondering on the Cross draws us to a deeper relationship with God, as well as the deep suffering of our own humanity. We need constantly to have a deep ponder on the Crucified Christ which can guide us into a complete transformation of ourselves, and into the realm of those in our own communities with regards to their poverty, woundedness, suffering and loneliness, with love. We can follow the example that Jesus gave us as St Francis did.

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.



The Big Bad Wolf

Taken from: "God's Fool"

By: Julien Green



Gubbio is a very old little town whose fortifications zigzag down the slopes of Mount Ignino. Less pleasant than Assisi, it seems a bit severe, but the immense Piazza della Signoria in the heart of the town gives it the majesty of open spaces. Houses form the border on one side; opposite them a terrace overlooks the lower town with its dark red roofs.

And at each end of the great rectangular piazza two palaces face one another.

In St Francis's day Gubbio lived in terror because of an exceptionally large wolf that haunted the countryside. The inhabitants had to lock the gates of the town and went outside – if it was absolutely necessary to go – only when they were armed with pitchforks and piles. But the infernal creature feared nothing and no one, and emerging from the woods, took its toll of victims like the Minotaur.

Francis decided to straighten things out and went to Gubbio, where the townspeople begged him to remain. But he didn't listen and, leaving the town by the Roman gate, went with his companion down the path to the forest, the lair of the master murderer. First, he had to cross a deserted stretch, a place of horror where bones strewn here and there spoke for themselves. From atop the ramparts the townsfolk cried to him to come back. Francis had no thought of fear, while his companions every limb was quivering. Suddenly in the nearby woods there echoed the drawn out howl that everyone knew.

Francis marched straight up to the predator, made a broad sign of the cross over him, and cried out: "Brother wolf, come here. In the name of Christ I command you not to harm anyone any more. And you will not eat Brother Ass" (as he called his body). The wolf stopped, his pendulous tongue in his gaping mouth, which he closed. He approached Francis, who gravely lectured him. "You are very bad. You wound and eat God's creatures without his permission, and not only animals, but men, made in god's image. But I wish to make peace with you between the people of Gubbio." The wolf wagged his tail and twitched his ears, then bowed his head to signify his agreement.

Christian Discipleship Today Part 3. Exploring Poverty, Chastity and Obedience.

John Gibson tssf NSW B/ACT Region.

“We are called to serve God in the spirit of Poverty, Chastity and Obedience in everyday life (rather than a literal acceptance of these principles as in the vows of the brothers and sisters of the First and Second Orders). The Rule of the Third Order is intended to enable the duties and conditions of daily living to be carried out in this spirit; “so we read and reflect on Day Four of each month.

In the last two editions of our Newsletter I have reflected on Poverty and Chastity, drawing on the insights, responses and life stories of the Sisters in the book by Helen Stanton written in 2017, *‘For Peace & for Good. A History of the European Province of the Community of St Francis.’* I have found the stories and insights have given me a deeper understanding of the vows and how we apply them today. Where I quote from the book I will acknowledge it by ‘FP&FG together with the page number.

It is so easy to think of obedience in a negative way, as slavishly following the whims of one more powerful than us and being specifically directed of how and when we do things. I will use only one example from the experience of the Sisters, - *‘lining up and waiting for Mother’s hand-clap before going into meals.’* (FP&FG p.74.) We may well recall examples from our own life experiences. It was jokingly said but with more than a grain of truth that one priest told his assistant clergy when they arrived to serve in the parish that they had but one privilege, ‘Christian burial if required!’ Enough of mindless obedience and let’s move on to the more dynamic exploration of this vow, while acknowledging that obedience is in many ways counter-cultural in our society where ‘my rights’ trumps all.

St Francis and St Clare saw obedience as service and lived this out by word and example. In doing this they were following the example of Jesus. *‘Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus. Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient unto death – even death on a cross! (Philippians 2:5-8. NIV).*

Although Clare was abbess for almost forty years until her death, she always lived with her sisters including sharing the common dormitory and helped with the menial tasks. Clare shared authority with her sisters much more than was customary. They met together at least once a week, and were consulted on anything to do with the life of the monastery. All the sisters had to agree before a new member could be admitted to the community and office -holders were to be elected by the whole community. Clare writing in her *Rule* made the observation that God often revealed what was best to the youngest and newest.

Francis had a strong sense of God choosing those who were to be his brothers. Francis didn’t decide what skills resigned as leader of his community in 1220 and wrote in his *Testament* that

he needed, then went on to find men who had them. He simply lived as he felt God was calling him to do and others were attracted to join him. He saw them as God’s gifts to him. Francis

he wanted to have a guardian to whom he was responsible and to obey the minister general. Francis chose to let go of his power.

The terms we use in our *Manual* and *Prayer Cycle* like protector, guardians, ministers, convenors, contacts and counsellors can remind us of service rather than power.

A real turning point which had profound effects for religious communities came with the reforms of Vatican 11. On pages 75 and 76 of FP&FG Helen Stanton writes about Obedience Revisited - *“The legacy of Vatican 11 produced further reform, with its emphasis on the business of listening: to God, to context, to individuals, and especially, in a liberationist way, to the voices of those silenced and silent. For the most part, then, the Sisters and former Sisters to whom I have spoken have talked of obedience in terms of its Latin roots, oboedientia, ‘listen to’ or ‘pay attention to.’ And for the most part, at least since Vatican 11, the listening has much more been seen as the wisdom of the whole community, not that of an isolated Superior, and all through the guidance of the Holy Spirit.”*

A number of the Sisters and former Sisters have referred to the prayer of the Methodist Covenant Service as a source of inspiration or a hermeneutical (which is the theory and practice of interpretation) framework for their understanding of obedience. The prayer is:

I am no longer my own but yours

Put me to what you will, rank me with whom you will;

put me to doing, put me to suffering;

let me be employed for you or laid aside

exalted for you or brought low for you.

Let me be full, let me be empty,

let me have all things, let me have nothing.

I freely and wholeheartedly yield all things

to your pleasure and disposal”

For the Sisters and indeed for ourselves the process of ‘listening’ or ‘paying attention’ to God and to each other leads to obedience flowing out in actions. Our primary aim of making Christ known, working for justice and peace and in all situations trying to bring about dignity and worth for all. In our dispersed community we do this through obedience to our personal Rule of Life which covers worship individual and corporate, penitence, self-denial, retreat, study, simplicity and work.

In our *Manual*, under Resources For The Day Of Penitence there is a short petition:
Make us obedient Lord,

for you have made us in your own image.

Obedience is liberating and gives us the framework in which to respond to God’s love for us and his creation. Ideally we are obedient because we want to, not because we have to.

In the next Newsletter I will try to draw it all three parts together.



“To whom shall we go”

By: Irene Alexander and Christopher Brown (editors), *To Whom Shall We Go? Faith responses in a time of crisis*, Cascade 2021

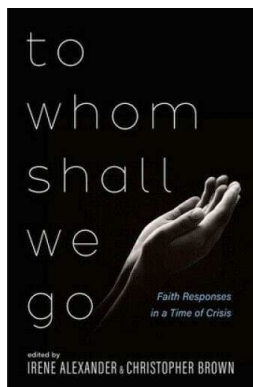
Paperback ISBN 9781725289550

Hardback ISBN 9781725289567

eBook ISBN 9781725289574

Available from the [publishers, Koorong](#), or from the authors at holyscribblers.blogspot.com

Hardback \$40, eBook and Paperback \$25



Reviewed by Revd Ted Witham

Part of us wants to pretend the Coronavirus pandemic has not happened, and that the Church can go back to its old ways after the worst of this is over. I have no doubt, however, that there will be enduring changes, not least in the way Church organisations use technology.

The collective of Christian writers behind *To Whom Shall We Go*, who call themselves the “Holy Scribblers”, are also convinced of permanent change. Their interest, as shown in this series of eleven essays, is in changes to our spiritual lives more than technology.

The book is loosely structured around the Beatitudes and this structure gives the book an optimistic feel: we Christians will be stronger and our faith will be deeper – we will be more blessed – because of living through this moment. Their grounds for optimism are historical. We have before lived through past pandemics and challenges and emerged changed and stronger.

The authors are an eclectic mix of academics and thinkers who are looking for thoughtful Christian readers, clergy and lay. Two Franciscan Tertiaries, Terry Gatfield and Charles Ringma, are among the contributors. As is always the case with essays from diverse authors, some essays will resonate more strongly with individual readers than others. For example, Chris Mercer’s explorations of Desert Father Evagrius’ “eight deadly thoughts” (gluttony and lack of thankfulness for food, sexual lust, sadness, boredom and apathy, vainglory and pride) made sense for me.

I have some quibbles with the structure of the book. Each section gave rise to prayers and questions for reflection. The reflection questions were at the very end of the book. In the eBook format, especially without hyperlinks, this rendered the questions almost useless.

The prayers were crafted along quite traditional Anglican lines, so some could be used or adapted, for example, for intercessions at the Eucharist. I found them a bit too stolid, with none of the creativity of the stunningly beautiful prayers of another Australian, Craig Mitchell, in his recent [Deeper Water](#) (Mediacom). *To Whom Shall We Go* is a timely book and will stimulate lively thinking about where God is now leading God’s Church.

Bonaventure Minister General of the Order

(Doctor of the Church) – 1221-1274

From: Franciscan Saints

By: Robert Ellsberg

Bonaventure, who was born to a wealthy family in Orvieto, joined the Franciscans around 1238 in the midst of his studies at the University of Paris. St Francis had died only some dozen years before, but already his order was rapidly changing the face of the Church in Europe. To Bonaventure, it seemed that the Franciscan Order “was not invented by human providence, but by Christ. In it, the learned and the simple lived as brethren.”

Bonaventure, himself was definitely one of the learned, Franciscan simplicity might not have seemed an attractive fit for such a scholar. In fact, Francis had held learning in great esteem so long as it was subordinated to the pursuit of holiness. In this spirit, Bonaventure received support from the Order to continue his studies. In 1257 along with his Dominican counterpart, St Thomas Aquinas, he received the doctorate in theology.

Rather than pursue the life of a theologian, however, Bonaventure was immediately elected to serve as minister-general of the Friars Minor – a role in which he left a lasting mark. During a time of contending factions within the Order, Bonaventure tried deftly to steer a middle course between the radical freedom of Francis and the disciplined order of the religious community. To reinforce his moderate interpretation of the Franciscan charism, he composed an influential life of St Francis. For his successful efforts, he would become known as the Second Founder.

He wrote a number of other important works, including his mystical treatise *The Journey of the Mind to God* this was his attempt to translate Francis’s identification with Christ into philosophical terms – a journey of the soul along the path of holiness, leading from contemplation of the spiritual order, and progressing ultimately toward the goal of union with God.

In 1265, Bonaventure respectfully declined an appointment as archbishop of York. In 1273, however, Pope Gregory ordered him to accept the title of cardinal-bishop of Albano. When papal legates arrived to present him with his red hat and insignia of office, he kept them waiting while he finished washing the dishes. Summarising his spirituality he observed: “The perfection of a religious man is to do common things in a perfect manner and a constant fidelity in small matters is great and heroic virtue!”

Bonaventure died in 1274. He was canonized in 1482 and later declared a Doctor of the Church. In recognition of his angelic virtue, he is known as the Seraphic Doctor.

*If you learn everything except Christ, you learn nothing.
If you learn nothing except Christ, you learn everything.*
– St Bonaventure



Queensland B/Northern News South Wales Regional Retreat: By: Rt Rev Keith Slater

With the ever imminent shadow of the pandemic looming over us, we managed to bring together our annual Retreat (16-18 July) at the beautiful James Byrne Centre, Highfields, Toowoomba. There was much uncertainty but in the end 23 folk engaged in the Retreat which was given inspiring and challenging direction by the Minister General of the First Order, Brother Christopher John ssf. For those who were unable to physically attend the opportunity was provided for tertiaries to be virtually present through the power of Zoom. Likewise, following the Retreat the broadcasts and digital copies of the Retreat have been circulated.

The theme being explored for the Region this year has focused upon our present context of the pandemic and how we move forward 'out of the desert'. This was picked up in the Retreat by Brother Christopher John exploring ecological and justice issues and addressing how we can pursue bringing forth exterior conversion.

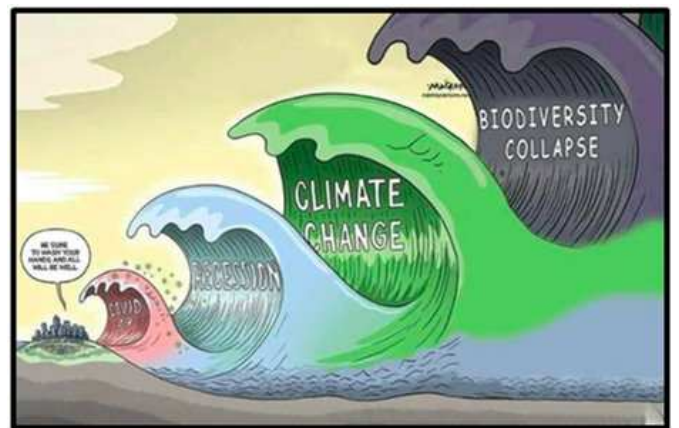
He initially spoke of the context of today which seems to be totally focused upon the pandemic when in actual fact there are other contexts as well. He said:

".....in the European Province the Covid pandemic has provided us with space and awareness of the bigger issues behind the pandemic. At the Candlemass chapter this year (held over Zoom) we looked at a cartoon. In the left, a city with a speech bubble, "Be sure to wash your hands and all will be well". Looming over the city is a large wave labelled Covid-19. But behind that wave, and hidden by it, is an even larger wave, "Recession", and behind that a still larger wave, "Climate Change" and then, even bigger, another wave, "Biodiversity Collapse".

We can get so caught up on just the one wave immediately looming down on us, we don't see what's behind." We were challenged to consider how we live out our Franciscan vocation in the midst of all this. Brother Christopher John suggested two tools or values which Francis used, which can help us face these challenges. \

1. "Relationships of brotherhood / sisterhood - *Fraternitas / Sororitas*. A kind of looking horizontally. It comes from Francis' intuitive theological vision that if we are made by God then we are brothers and sisters of each other. Not just humankind, but all of creation.

2. Looking at the world from the "bottom up" – *minoritas*. Taking the view of the weak, the powerless. We can see this in Francis' understanding of the incarnation. That the great all powerful Lord God took the weakness of a baby, born in human flesh, in order to be fully present among us. We also see it in Francis' direction as to how the brothers were to live. Simply and subject to all. Not in positions of power."



Brother Christopher John encouraged us not just to be talkers - but to be and to do. He said:

"It needs to be at the heart of what we do. Of the way we live our lives."

He also introduced the four disciplines and capacities of moral imagination using as a resource: (Lederach, John Paul. *The moral imagination: the art and soul of building peace*. Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2005.)

1. "the capacity to imagine ourselves in a web of relationships that includes our enemies;
2. the ability to sustain a paradoxical curiosity that embraces complexity without reliance on dualistic polarity;
3. the fundamental belief in and pursuit of the creative act;
4. and the acceptance of the inherent risk of stepping into the mystery of the unknown that lies beyond the far too familiar landscape of violence."

Common Grace – Thank you to our knitters

By: Brooke Prestice

Margaret Edridge tssf

Throughout **July - September** we will be meeting with MPs and Senators to gift them our scarves and engage them in a conversation around the need for a bold and credible national plan to tackle the climate crisis. If you have knitted a scarf we would love you to be there to share your stories and gift your scarf to our Federal Parliamentarians. [Find out more.](#)

It's not too late to contribute to the Knit for Climate Action efforts. If you have finished knitting a scarf, half-finished one, or plan to knit one, keep going! We would love to reach as many leaders and people of influence as possible with our message of creation and climate justice! Find more information and register to take part below.

Mix your craft skills with your enthusiasm for climate justice.

Climate justice is an inescapable part of Christian discipleship for Australians today. We can all work together to create these beautiful, science-led works of art that will inspire our communities and leaders to take immediate and drastic actions to protect and restore God's beautiful creation in the midst of this climate crisis.

You are invited to join in and knit with other Christians across Australia.

Between the winters of 2020 and 2021, knitters from across these lands now called Australia knitted scarves representing the truth of climate change, powerfully illustrating 101 years of climate data. We have been blown away and humbled by the time and effort put into creating these hauntingly beautiful creations.

280 scarves have been knitted and returned. This represents 8,400 hours of knitting and over 11,850 meters of wool. That is enough scarves to gift one to every Federal Parliamentarian both in the House of Representatives and the Senate!

And that's just what we plan to do...

For information https://www.commongrace.org.au/knit_for_climate_action

EULOGY OF SISTER HELEN JULIEN SSF

By: Rt Revd Godfrey Fryar, tssf

Pictured in centre (without veil) in Korea with Sr Frances CSF (L) and Sr Jemma CSF (R) and friends.)

We have recently heard the news that Sr Helen Julian CSF died on August the 22nd. Helen Julian was the Minister General of the Community of St Francis, the Anglican First Order community for women. She had been battling with cancer for some time.

The CSF Sisters live and work in the UK, the USA and Korea, and our particular connection with her relates to Korea.

I met her in 2017 at the Inter Provincial Third Order Chapter in England, that was happening alongside and with the Chapter of the First Order Brothers and Sisters. I particularly sought her assistance and support for us to work with the CSF Sisters at Gumi in Korea as we moved to establish the Third Order in that country, and she was most helpful and supportive. As we got under way the sisters were an enormous help with Formation for our novices in the south of the country.

Sr Helen Julian was a professed sister for over 30 years and later in that time was ordained Priest. She was also a writer and some of her books include the recently published "Living the Gospel: Franciscan Footprints", and "The Lindisfarne Ikon: St Cuthbert and the Twenty First Century."



EULOGY FOR LISSIE BELLHOUSE

Lizzie Bellhouse – 21 May 1963 - 21 May 2021, Flying Free

By: Colin Valentine, Regional Minister Vic/Tas

As I write about our sister Lizzie, Welcome Swallows have once again arrived to nest in the corner of the garage, and welcoming the coming of Spring as they flit and dart around the sky. It was on her 58th birthday, 21 May 2021, that our Lizzie was welcomed by Sister Death and journeyed into the arms of her Beloved Lord.

Who was Lizzie Bellhouse? Those of you not from Vic/Tas will have met Lizzie through her writings in our TSSF Newsletter. Some of us in Vic/Tas also wouldn't have met Lizzie in person, as she was like the Welcome Swallow and flitted in and out of our meetings and retreats. Lizzie was a daughter, a sister, an aunt, a friend, a colleague, a TSSF sister, and someone whose very life was threaded through and through with her Beloved, Jesus, and what this meant for her in her own following of the Christ in the company of Brother Francis and Sister Clare. She was also a much-loved parishioner in the Parish of St George's Queenscliff and St James, Point Lonsdale, where she was a Server.

There were many facets to the beautiful person that was Lizzie Bellhouse; a lover of Greece; a lover of God's creation, particularly being able to sit by the sea, feel the sun and the sand, and a lover of mountains. And she was also a lover of God and delighted in being a beloved child of God.

Lizzie was a gentle soul who always warmly greeted those she met. When Lizzie was professed on the 19th of August 2014, Joy Bartlett was our Regional Minister, and Patti Singleton was Lizzie's Novice Counsellor, so I asked both of them to share something about Lizzie.

God introduced me to Lizzie when I attended a Retreat at her Parish Church. I spoke about my calling to become Regional Minister for Victoria and Tasmania of TSSF. Lizzie spoke to me about her calling to become a member, and we arranged a meeting. I recognised that Lizzie had the heart of a Franciscan, and I asked Patti Singleton to be her Novice Counsellor. We grew to love Lizzie, and the unique person that she was. Vale Lizzie and thank you for the contribution you made to our lives. Joy.

Sadly, Lizzie lost life's battle in June. Her funeral Requiem at St George's Anglican Church, Queenscliff, Victoria was a beautiful celebration of her life in Christ, who she faithfully served as a devoted Franciscan. The attached photo is of Lizzie on her Profession Day, humbly and joyfully receiving her Profession Cross, which I prayerfully laid on her coffin as part of her funeral service, following which this precious cross went with Lizzie at her interment. May God Rest Her Soul. Patti.

Due to Victoria being in one of our 'lockdowns' Lizzie's funeral was postponed, but because the lockdown continued it was decided that her funeral would take place on Tuesday, the 8th of June 2021. Sadly, I was not able to attend because of the restrictions, so I asked Patti to represent the Third Order, as she lived not far from Queenscliff, and to place Lizzie's cross on the casket. Those of us not able to attend were able to be there via live streaming.

My last conversation with Lizzie was only a couple of weeks before she died and I will always remember that gentle, quizzical, and warm conversation as we talked about life and faith. She also told me more about coming into the 21st Century and finally having an email address and being taught how to send and receive emails!

Our sister Lizzie Bellhouse forever flying free.

'A new heart I will give you, and a new spirit I will put within you,' says the Lord God; 'I will put my spirit within you and you shall live.' (Ezekiel 36.26; 37.14)



Lizzie's profession – 19 July 2014



Patti placing Lizzie's profession cross on the casket -
8 June 2021

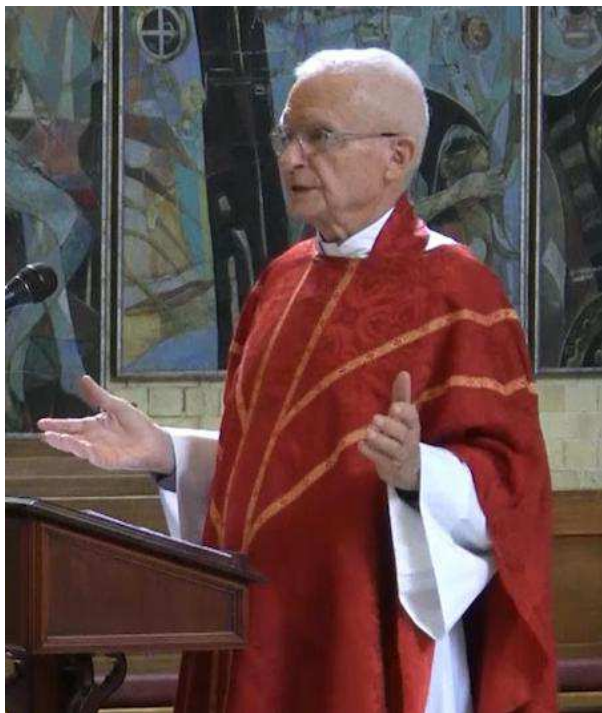


Eulogy of Revd Philip John Thirlwell, tssf,

Anglican Board of Missions

Excerpt taken from:

<https://www.abmission.org/pages/in-appreciation-of-philip-john-thirlwell-tssf-priest.html>



IN APPRECIATION OF PHILIP JOHN THIRLWELL TSSF, PRIEST

ABM gives thanks to the God of Jesus Christ for the life and witness of Philip Thirlwell (1934-2021) whose Life was celebrated in the Eucharist at Christ Church Cathedral Newcastle on 2 June 2021. ABM extends condolences to his wife, Margaret, and their family.

The trajectory of Philip’s priestly and ministerial life passed through the matrix of the ABM in key ways. As was so often the case in the time when ABM called, sponsored and sent Australian Anglicans into a global mission field, the House of the Epiphany in Stanmore was at hand.

Philip and Margaret were there for the 1961 program. Margaret said of their time there, “One of the many things that ABM’s House of the Epiphany did was enable adults to begin to learn to live in close proximity with those who were initially strangers... Philip and I were given the opportunity to complete a Graduate Diploma in Anthropology at Sydney University – helping to form a life-long mindset towards people in general, and in the short term, readiness for respectful and fruitful contact with the Indian and Fijian cultures of Fiji.”

They had married at St Luke’s Mosman in 1956 and Philip completed a Law degree at the University of Sydney in 1957. In the same year, following studies at St John’s Morpeth, he was ordained deacon and following further Theological studies was ordained priest in 1959. After initial ministry in St Matthew’s Albury, the drive to mission took them through the House of the Epiphany and then (with some post graduate anthropology added) to eleven fruitful years as missionaries in Fiji (1962-1973).

Reflections on those times were given in eulogies by family members and the depths within them were also reflected in correspondence from Fiji that is imbued with the reality of Philip and Margaret’s ministry from forty to fifty years ago. Archbishop Emeritus of the Diocese of Polynesia, Winston Halapua, wrote this:

As a young man in my last year of training at St John’s. I was sent to Ba for ministry formation. I am very grateful for [Philip’s] contribution in shaping my ministry. I saw firsthand the integrity of his whole life – the balance of worship, ministry and family life. Later I witnessed his powerful evangelistic ministry . . .

ABM acknowledged Philip and Margaret’s service to mission with the 2018 award of the Coaldrake Medal. Frank Coaldrake was prime mover in the establishment of the House of the Epiphany. His time in Japan may have in part inspired the Thirlwells in further service, this time with the Mission to Seamen in Kobe, Japan (1989-1992).

Standing clear as a thread within Fr Philip’s life was a love of languages and of learning in general. In Fiji his mastery of Hindi was part of his enmeshing with the world in which he ministered. Before his time in Japan, he completed an Arts degree at the University of Newcastle in Japanese and French. He was an accomplished poet and a musician – and all these graces were brought into the personal sphere of his primary vocation.

Amongst the eulogies is a remark that when Philip and Margaret returned to Australia in 1973, they felt they had returned to a country very different from the one they had left eleven years before. Perhaps it is too easy for me to quote Newman’s famous dictum: “To live is to change and to change often is to be made perfect”. It is clear to me, as I collate and form appreciations of the lives of ABM missionaries, just how much the life of faith changed in many ways in the Australia of the 1960s.

May lives that witnessed to Christ in their day continue to provoke and inspire in succeeding decades.

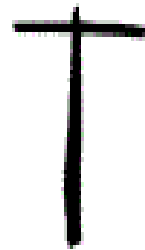
“Remember that when you leave this earth, you can take with you nothing that you have received—only what you have given.”

– Francis of Assisi

New Ways for Tertiaries to pay Subs and to Order TSSF items

From: Provincial Communication Coordinator – David White

For many years, Chapter has used the Centrelink pension rate as a benchmark of minimum income for Tertiaries, with annual subscriptions set near 0.6% of the pension. Last year subs were not changed from the 2019 amount. Earlier this year, the 2022 rates were approved by Chapter as \$135 for individuals and \$205 for couples. It was also decided that the invoice notices would be issued in September, allowing more than 6 months for the payment to be completed by the due date, 31 March 2022. Payment in full may be made by direct bank transfer, cheque or postal order. If you would like to make regular progress payments, please make them by direct bank transfer.

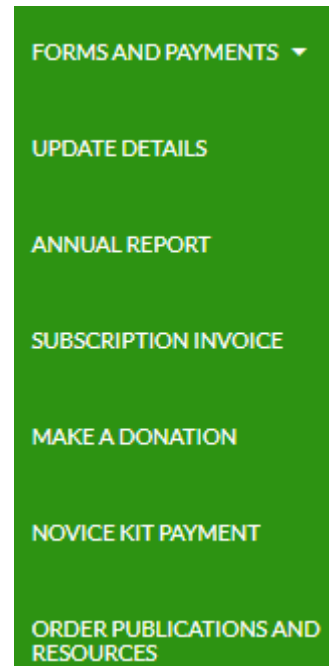


Any Tertiary having difficulty paying should contact their Regional Minister to discuss this. Any decision about the actual amount paid is confidential between the Tertiary, regional minister and the provincial treasurer. After such discussion, if you receive an invoice requesting full payment, please contact the Treasurer to resolve.

For the first time, the Province can now accept online payment via debit or credit card. We are charged a small fee for this service (typically \$2-\$5). Tertiaries may elect to pay this fee if they wish.

We have also introduced several other online services. These are all found under Forms and Payments on the website menu:

- UPDATE DETAILS enables you to notify us of any changes in your contact details.
- ANNUAL REPORTS, which will be due soon, can be completed online, or the PDF report form can be downloaded and printed.
- SUBSCRIPTION INVOICE enables online subs and donations payments, or a form can be downloaded and printed for posting to the treasurer.
- MAKE A DONATION can be used to make donations at any time in the year.
- NOVICE KIT PAYMENT is for new novices to pay for their novice kits online.
- ORDER PUBLICATIONS AND RESOURCES can be used to order booklets like Day by Day, or a replacement profession cross, and other items.



c

This is a new system, which has been tested, but is still under refinement. Please don't be alarmed if you do not automatically receive an email notification when you make an online payment. You should, however, receive an email receipt once the payment has been processed.

If you have any questions regarding your subs or other payments, please contact the treasury team, Jane Noller and Glenys McCarrick at treasurer@tssf.org.au

If there are problems with the web payment system, please contact me at comms@tssf.org.au

“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



From the Testament of St. Clare

<http://www.liturgies.net/saints/clare/testaments>

Among all the other gifts which we have received and continue to receive daily from our benefactor, the Father of mercies and for which we must express the deepest thanks to our glorious God, our vocation is a great gift. Since it is the more perfect and greater, we should be so much more thankful to Him for it. For this reason the Apostle writes: "Acknowledge your calling". The Son of God became for us the Way which our Blessed Father Francis, His true lover and imitator, has shown and taught us by word and example. Therefore, beloved Sisters, we must consider the immense gifts which God has bestowed on us, especially those which He has seen fit to work in us through His beloved servant, our blessed Father Francis, not only after our conversion but also while we were still (living among) the vanities of the world. With what solicitude and fervour of mind and body, therefore, must we keep the commandments of our God and Father, so that, with the help of the Lord, we may return to Him an increase of His talents. For the Lord Himself not only has set us as an example and mirror for others, but also for our sisters whom the Lord has called to our way of life, so that they in turn will be a mirror and example to those living in the world. Since, therefore, the Lord has called us to such great things, that those who are to be models and mirrors for others may behold themselves in us, we are truly bound to bless and praise the Lord and to be strengthened constantly in Him to do good. Therefore, if we have lived according to the form (of life) given us, we shall, by very little effort leave others a noble example and gain the prize of eternal happiness.

For the people of Afghanistan

Reflection: By: The Venerable Rob Sutherland

Taken from: Service of Prayer and Lament for Afghanistan
St John's Cathedral, Brisbane.- 22nd August, 2021

God of mercy and peace,
We hold before you the peoples of Afghanistan,
many of whom feel abandoned and betrayed.
Be living bread to those who are hungry each day.
Be healing and wholesome to those who have no
access to health care amidst the ravages of
pandemic.
Be their true home to those who have been
displaced. Be open arms of loving acceptance to
those who fear because of their gender, ethnicity,
religious or political views.
Be peace to those engaged in armed conflict and
those who live within its shadow.
Turn our hearts and minds to your ways of just and
gentle peace,
Open our eyes to see you in all acts of
compassionate care,
Strengthen our hearts to step out in solidarity with
your suffering people and hold us all in your
unfailing love.

Franciscan & Holy Days To Note 2021

October	3	Transitus
October	4	FRANCIS OF ASSISI
October	11	All Franciscan Saints
November	1	All Souls Day
November	2	All Saints Day
November	8	John Duns Scotus
November	16	St Agnes of Assisi
November	19	Elizabeth of Hungary
November	23	Fr Algy SSF
December	1	Requiem for all departed Franciscans
December	8	Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary
December	25	THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD

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

**Articles for the Advent
Newsletter are due in by the
15th November, 2021.
Thanks to all who contributed
articles for this Edition.
Blessings and all good,
Gloria**