



Newsletter for the Province of Asia-Pacific

The Third Order, Society of St Francis

www.tssf.org.au

Pentecost 2022

The Holy Spirit and St Francis

Mandy Wheatley
Provincial Minister



'The wind blows where it wills...'

Dear sisters and brothers,

Pentecost celebrates the beginning of the Church, and gives us an opportunity to renew our commitment to embrace the Spirit of peace and service as we follow our Lord in St Francis' footsteps.

In a Pentecost sermon in 2019, Pope Francis said; *'The Spirit brings order to our frenzy. The Spirit is peace in the midst of restlessness, confidence in the midst of discouragement, joy in sadness, youth in aging, courage in the hour of trial. Amid the stormy currents of life, he lowers the anchor of hope.'*

As we continue through the emotional roller-coaster ride of life in this Covid world; watching war unfolding in Ukraine, refugees moving around the world by the million, the effects of climate change and environmental degradation around us, Francis' greeting of

'Peace and good wishes!', 'Pax et bonum'! rings out with hope.

We know that St. Francis was an instrument of peace on numberless occasions during his lifetime.

Most famously, Francis made several attempts to visit the troops fighting in the Holy Land. In September 1219 he met with Sultan Malik al-Kamil in Egypt to talk to him about God's peace.

Another occasion happened toward the end of Francis' life when the Bishop of Assisi and a public official of the same city were in bitter conflict. Bishop Guido had excommunicated the Podesta and he in turn forbade the merchants of the town to make a sale of anything whatsoever to the Bishop.

Francis devised a means of bringing reconciliation to the two belligerent parties. He

composed an additional stanza to the "Canticle of the Sun":

'Praised be my Lord for all those who pardon one another for His love's sake, and who endure weakness and tribulation; Blessed are they who peaceably shall endure, for Thou Most High, shall give them a crown.'

He then had two Franciscan brothers sing a duet of the Canticle with the final stanza before His Lordship and the seething Podesta, and pardon and peace ensued!

Let us celebrate this Pentecost by asking the Holy Spirit to guide us, as he guided Francis, in the service of the Prince of peace, constantly giving others the blessing: 'peace and goodwill' to all we meet.

Let us commit ourselves to pray:

Lord, make us instruments of your peace and goodness.

Where there is hatred, let us sow love, where there is injury, pardon, where there is sadness joy.

Where there's despair in life, let us bring hope. And, where there is darkness, let us bring and be your light. Amen.

Mandy
tssf Minister Provincial



Notes and dates from Chapter:

Chapter 7 May 2022 –

Election of new Regional Ministers:

The Provincial Secretary will send out emails and letters to all members asking for nominations where the Regional Ministers have completed their terms of office. Please be talking and praying for persons to step into their roles.

Qld A – Graham Miller
SA – Roselind Ruwoldt
Vic/Tas – Colin Valentine
Qld B/N NSW – Keith Slater (Not standing for re-election)

New forms online:

Your annual subscription for the year 2022 is now due for all novices and professed. Chapter asks that subs be paid by 31st March 2022. For those online, see tssf.org.au <https://tssf.org.au/subscription-invoice/> Electronic receipts will be sent.

If you wish to pay by instalments, please use the PDF form and pay by direct bank transfer or cheque / postal order. If you require a printed receipt, please post a self-addressed envelope.

This form is also available online, or ask your Regional Minister to send you a copy.

Returning Annual Reports All Professed and Novices are to send their reports to their respective Regional Minister by November 15. Regional Ministers are to send their personal reports to the Provincial Chaplain.

A PDF version for printing and completing offline can also be obtained online – see tssf.org.au <https://tssf.org.au/annual-report/> or ask your Regional Minister to send you a copy.

Update Membership – use this form to update your contact details: <https://tssf.org.au/contacts/update-membership/>

VIC/TAS Region

Novices

David Miller: Noviced – 20 March 2021
Cecilia Francis: Noviced – 21 August 2021

Professed

Sue Ball: Professed – 2 Oct 2021

QLD B/N NSW Region

Novice:

David Mason – 12/6/21
Professed
Selina McMahan – 2/10/21
David Nix – 2/10/21
Catherine Richards – 9/4/22

SA Region:

Novices:

Elise Silson – 3/8/2019
Louise Townend – 28/3/2020

Professed:

Simon Waters – 5/12/2020

Hobart at last!

Evan Pederick

A very special gathering of Victorian and Tasmanian tertiaries who had been unable to meet together since 2018.

We two Tasmanian members, Sue Ball and I, were excited to be joined by tertiaries from across the Strait. We were blessed also to be joined by Provincial Minister Mandy Wheatley who inspired us with news from across the country. Area Convenor

Sandra Jackson and Regional Minister Colin Valentine updated us with more local news, and Colin was able to make a belated

presentation of Certificates of Profession for Sean Carson and Sue Ball.

We were grateful for the hospitality provided by the Parish of All Saints South

Hobart, and a number of parishioners joined us for our afternoon meeting, during which I delivered a Franciscan reflection on forgiveness. Beginning with the reunion of Jesus with his disciples over breakfast on the shores of Lake Galilee, the reflection centred on the practice of forgiveness as participation in the resurrection life of Christ, and brought together New Testament stories with stories and teachings of St Francis, the *via pacis* offered by St Bonaventure to the divided early Franciscan Order, and Bonaventure's systematic theology of forgiveness as participation in the triune life of God. A copy of this paper can be found on the TSSF blog:

<https://tinyurl.com/2p8c8xcd>.

We joined the parish for a Saturday evening Eucharist as well as mass on Sunday morning before interstate visitors departed. While we have been fortunate to have been able to meet by Zoom during pandemic lockdowns and restrictions, there is nothing like the joy of actually being together for meals and conversation and shared worship.

Above: Sue Ball receives her certificate of profession



*From top: 1. Sandra Jackson and Sean Carson
2. Mandy Wheatley, Graeme Frazer, Michael Down at All Saints morning tea
3. Back: Patti and David Singleton, Michael Down; front: Colin Valentine, Evan Pederick
4. Sean receives his certificate of profession*

Pray for Vladimir Putin

**Margaret Edridge
Karabar, NSW**

Like all of us, Peter and I have been praying for Ukraine, but in my meditation time recently I was challenged to 'pray for Putin'. It was truly a challenge, and I was extremely reluctant. But it brought to mind the conversion of St Paul! How many people in Jerusalem and Damascus would have been praying for him to have a conversion, to stop persecuting Christians, especially as he was heading for Damascus, breathing fire and brimstone.

I also realised this was indeed spiritual warfare, but also that I should give Putin the dignity of either his full name or position. But I was still very reluctant and somewhat afraid. I am reading *Seven Days of Solitude* by Br Ramon SSF and there, as I was wrestling with this call, I found the following:

*There is, of course, a unique sense in which Jesus confronted the dark powers for the redemption of the world – a work which he did **for** us. But there is also that which he does **in** us. We are called to enter into his redemptive work and in his strength and grace to know our own confrontation, sharing his sufferings (Phil 3:10) and by our prayers putting dark powers to flight for the good of our world.*

That kind of spiritual warfare is open to every Christian (Eph 6:10-12) though few enter such a battlefield. Those who do, realise quite soon the need for solitude and waiting upon God, for only the spirit-filled Christian dare contemplate such a path.

I still felt very isolated, inadequate and also spiritually at risk in what I was being called to do. So of course I searched the web for others praying for Vladimir Putin and found this excellent call to prayer by the Ukrainian Archbishop of Philadelphia, Archbishop Gudziak:

*Right: Margaret Edridge
Below: Inside Novodivichy
Convent, Moscow*



*We pray for the defenders of Ukraine,
We pray for the people, for the refugees.
We pray for the conversion of Vladimir
Putin.*

*We pray that as we begin Lent and go
through to your resurrection,
We realise that every crucifixion is lived in
you.*

*(9 March 22, Catholic News Agency,
Denver, USA)*

The full article can be found at the Catholic News Agency:

<https://tinyurl.com/Pray-for-Putin>. It gives an excellent summary of the history of Russian involvement in Ukraine and a background on Vladimir Putin too.

I also found the following prayer for him in *Catholic365* by A.M. Carlson:

*Just as your precious blood flowed from
Calvary for me,
it flowed for them, Lord.*

*Just as your blood covered my sins,
it is your desire for it to cover the sins of
President Putin.*

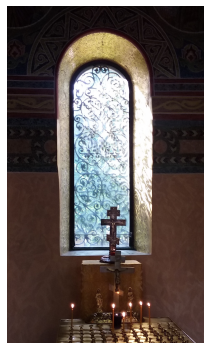
*Just as you called me to repent of my sins,
you call President Putin to repent from his.*

Lord, have mercy.

Christ have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

So I am not alone, either physically or spiritually, none of us are. And our tssf community is such a blessing to us all! May we remember Tennyson's statement in *Morte d'Arthur*: 'More things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams of!' It has been my guiding principle since I was 13 years old and we studied *Morte d'Arthur* at a little country high school in New Zealand. Some 70 years later I can certainly swear by the power of prayer in many, many ways.



Walking Larapinta

Christopher Garland
New South Wales A



L–R: Chris Garland, Les Wheareat

The chance to walk sections of the Larapinta Trail to raise funds for the Anglican Board of Mission seemed an eminently worthwhile thing to do. The Trail was completed about twenty years ago, linking paths along the West MacDonell Ranges to the West of Alice Springs. It ascends and follows the ridge-line of the ranges, dipping down into the river valleys that bisect the ranges in their course.

There are some quite steep hills to climb, even apart from the redoubtable Mount Sonder (1531m high), whose traditional name, *Rwetyepme*, means the pregnant lady. It is a well acknowledged truth, reluctantly accepted by many walkers, that the best way to tackle Mount Sonder, is to begin from the base in the middle of the night in order to be present at the top in time to view the sun rising at dawn. After a little muttering, our group all scrambled out of their sleeping bags at 1:30 a.m. on a freezing June outback morning in order to be in time for the mini-bus ride to the start of our ascent. Having reached the start by just after 3:00 a.m. we steadily climbed the undulating slope of the mountain and reached the summit in time to be awestruck by the gradual spread of the dawn light across a clear night sky, as seen from a mountain-top vantage point.

I composed a hymn/poem about the Trail to try and condense the experience and response I had shared with my fellow walkers. I trust that the verse about the Word of God being expressed in all creatures and summed up in Christ strikes a Franciscan chord. Its starting point is a summary by Abp Rowan Williams of the teaching of a great early Eastern Christian writer, Maximus the Confessor.

Larapinta hymn

C Garland (Tune: Slane)

Sun-speckled ridges, green, orange, and black,
Snake through the bush-land that stretches
“outback”.

Their shapes bring wonder and stories then
spawn
Of kinship from dreaming in life’s early dawn.

Learning from story how they may live well,
Arrernte people in tune with land dwell.
Here in the centre of vast-stretching land
May all who will come here in harmony stand.

Word of Creator in each creature heard,
Each word’s united in God’s loving Word.
To all that is broken, rejected, and lost,
Christ came to bring healing and carry the
cost.

We walkers who came here had much in
“back-pack”
For justice and peace, we would follow the
track,
Scrambling up paths that are rocky and steep,
Supported and guided, the right way we keep.

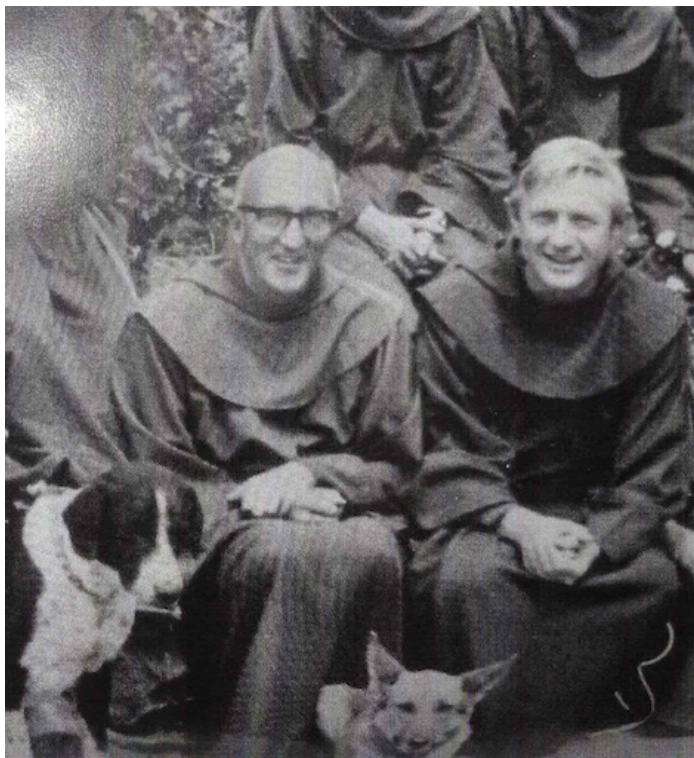
Vistas through valleys, horizons from hills
Each way the path turned brought fresh joys
and thrills.
Sharing the challenge, together we knew
How we by walking in fellowship grew.

Scenes that we witnessed now linger in
thought,
Blessings and questions together they brought.
How for this wide land should we better care
and how can all people its riches best share.

Hong Kong dreaming

Part Two

Continuing John Davison's imaginary letter to an old friend. Here he remembers the beginning of the Third Order in Hong Kong. (For Part One, see the previous edition.)



*L–R: Brother Geoffrey, Minister General of SSF, in 1975; Bro Michael Fisher, who succeeded Geoffrey as Minister General. Taken in 1975, this photo is from the book *This Poor Sort* by Peta Dunston.*

Writing this letter has reminded me of the early days in Hong Kong when Sandra and I arrived in 1972 with an 11 week old baby, to work in the Hong Kong Government, but also charged with the task by Brother Geoffrey, then Minister General of the Society of St Francis (SSF), to establish a Third Order group amongst Chinese Anglicans.

I was living in Bundaberg when I came in contact with the brothers at the Friary at Brookfield in Brisbane, and became a Companion. I hadn't become a tertiary because the literature I was given on it at that time painted the Third Order as being hardly any different from the First Order. But I was fired with the idea of a third order and worked out my own third order rule in my head, never putting it in writing.

So when Geoffrey found out that we were going to HK he called me out to Brookfield (we were then living in Brisbane) and asked us to become tertiaries and to foster tertiary life amongst the Chinese – not amongst expats, which for us meant the Cathedral in HK, reported by a brother to be a nest of snobbish British colonials.

So we very hurriedly worked out our rules (and with no help in making them, made the wrong sorts of rule), had them accepted and went off to HK.

There we found a group of Companions at the Cathedral, including you, which Geoffrey had established at Easter in 1972. Though at that time they really knew nothing about being Franciscans (Mrs Lafferty thought it was about stray animals), they were the people from whom the first tertiaries were to emerge.

The drive to make Chinese Anglicans into tertiaries was led by Geoffrey who came to HK every year. With him I went to several Chinese Anglican Churches where he preached and I met members of the congregation. They found the tertiary idea so strange they thought it was a new religion.

Meanwhile, Sandra and I were struggling with our rules, with no help from Australia at all, and remained postulants. Out of the group of Companions, all expats, emerged two people who decided to become tertiaries, the first of these being noviced in around 1974. There was I, still a postulant, helping others make rules and seeing them noviced.



Pastoral Committee of St John's Cathedral Council. The Franciscans are: Back row: Angela Smith (in striped dress); left to right from her in back row, two along, tall man, Mike Sammes; Front row: second from left, Jennifer Edie

I remember being asked by one person what to do with the family silver!

Eventually Geoffrey decided we should do something about this, so I started a new rule in 1977 (Sandra decided to withdraw to become a Companion) with Geoffrey as spiritual director and novice counsellor. It was all done by letter and a session of counselling over a beer at the Dragon Bar in the Hilton when he was in HK. For the first time I actually had a novice counsellor.

In doing this, Geoffrey taught me the art of making a personal rule of life which has stood me in good stead ever since.

I was professed in 1979.

Eventually the Chinese Anglican priests we had been cultivating decided there would not be a Chinese Third Order in HK until they saw brown habits on the streets.

We then worked towards getting First Order brothers in HK. Our group committed to paying their expenses for the first year (they were expected to live as frugally as the Buddhist monks) and two brothers, one from the UK and one from the US, were selected to come. Unfortunately in 1981, when Geoffrey ceased to be Minister General, the HK project was dropped and never revived.

You will remember my deep disappointment at this, but it meant we could give all our energy, as should have been done in the first place, to attracting the expats at the Cathedral. This we did, and we found an immediate and warm response. Whenever someone came to the Dean wanting to put their spiritual life in order or help in prayer he sent them to me and away we

went. We led Lenten groups on prayer and so on.

In a short time we were able to build quite a lively group of tertiaries, all of them expats, while we remained under Geoffrey's general supervision. Eventually he formed us into an area group within the European Province.

You had gone by then, but in 1997 we decided that we should be part of the Asia-Pacific Province and were able to negotiate a transfer.

These days, with the normal wastage of people returning to their own countries, our numbers are small and we have two Chinese tertiaries. Geoffrey was a visionary and his vision of Chinese tertiaries in HK eventually came to fruition.

Meanwhile, out of the five lay readers at the Cathedral in HK in your day, four of us were Franciscans. And

we have former members of the HK group such as yourself all over the UK, several women priests, two who became Provincial Ministers in the European and African Provinces and one now professed in the Second Order at Freeland.

I didn't intend this letter to wander so much away from Chinese New Year in HK but you and I shared so much of this history and it's good to remember it sometimes.

Peace and all good,
John

