

Knit Together



in community and prayer

Newsletter for the Province of Asia-Pacific

Third Order, Society of Saint Francis

www.tssf.org.au

Advent / Christmas 2023

World-wide perspectives

IPTOC 2023

Sally Buckley
Former Assistant
Provincial Minister

The theme of the nine days at IPTOC was 'Ours to do', referring back to some of St Francis' final words from his death bed: *'I have done what is mine to do, may Christ now teach you what you are to do'*.

One notable speaker was Budi Tjahjono, the new International Advocacy Director for Franciscans International, who shared some of their current projects which they are bringing before the United Nations.

He also played a short video from the SSF brothers in the Solomon Islands on the subject of logging and the myriad issues which have resulted from a multinational company coming into a community.

Many of the promises made to the locals have been broken and the resulting environmental and social impacts have been devastating: schools and villages have been flooded due to the denuding of the forests, traditional fishing grounds and agricultural land has been poisoned. It is mainly men who have come into the villages and women have been targeted. Local men are suddenly earning large wages, often spent on alcohol, and the rate of domestic violence has increased.

IPTOC business included great news of the appointment of Blair Mattheson as the next Executive Director of Franciscans International. Blair, a lay Anglican and previous Provincial Minister of the Pacific, will take up his position in January.



Hyeran Helena Yang, Sally Buckley and Mandy Wheatley at the InterProvincial Third Order Chapter in September

Other items of business included:

- the new format of our personal Rule of Life based on the Principles;
- *Contemplation, Community and Missional Action* through life-long formation;
- plans to create an international website with easy access to interprovincial resources and links to each province;
- a group instituted to review our Constitution;
- frequency of IPTOC – may meet more regularly via Zoom or similar;
- discussion of peace-making and reconciliation; cry of the Earth; inclusion and diversity.

The Lifelong Formation Task Force also gave a presentation on the work that they had done. It was obvious that ‘one size’ does not fit all. Context, culture, personal situation and learning style need to be taken into account. The group, four of whom were present, agreed to continue to work and meet together via Zoom.

Once again, it was an honour to represent our Province in this forum.

Further reflections from Sally on the IPTOC speakers, page 11 online

Notices

We in the Third Order acknowledge the hard work and dedication of those who have completed their terms of office in both our own Province and internationally. Since IPTOC the people in the following positions have been elected and appointed:

- TSSF Minister General – Michael Twum-Darko (Africa), who replaces John Heberton (retired with thanks from TSSF at IPTOC)
- Provincial Minister Asia-Pacific – Mandy Wheatley re-elected for second 3 year term in office
- Assistant Provincial Minister Asia-Pacific – Pirrial Clift (Vic/Tas), who replaces Sally Buckley, with thanks for her faithful service
- Provincial Secretary Asia-Pacific – Stephen Briggs (Qld B/N NSW), who replaces John Blakemore who has served with patient good humour and now retires
- Regional Minister QLD A – Andrea Maslin (recently moved to Qld A), who replaces Graham Miller, who recently retired from Townsville Mission to Seafarers and is moving to Western Darling Downs after giving loving service to the tertiaries in Qld A
- Provincial Minister Pacific – Peter Bargh, who replaces Blair Mathieson (who in 2024 will move to Geneva as Executive Director of Franciscans International)
- Provincial Minister Americas – Charles McCarron, who is replacing Ken Norian and Peter Stube.



*The Rev Mandy Wheatley
Provincial Minister*

Just picked up this newsletter? Find out more about the Third Order at:

<https://tssf.org.au/>

Synchronicities

Cecilia Francis tssf

For me the pathway to the Third Order has been a long and meandering one.

It began when I was a child, with my father introducing me to Paul Gallico's *The Small Miracle*, and promising to take me to Assisi where he had visited.

The story describes a 10 year old orphan boy whose sick donkey, source of income and comfort, is healed after the Bishop, hearing the boy's plight, allows boy and donkey to visit St Francis' final place of rest, where even more comes to light.

The vulnerability, searching, healing and restoration within the story are all reiterated in my own life in very different ways, alongside the re-entries of St Francis, sometimes intentionally, sometimes unexpectedly through people I encountered.

Some threads of connection also emerged between St Francis and those formative years in England and our move to Australia – in the deep trust in God's provision, simplicity of life and involvement in the Eucharistic life of the Church.

My father's early death prevented us journeying to Assisi together, so I made plans. The first visit was suddenly cancelled but I did stay with some Franciscan sisters in London, hearing their stories. My curiosity and encounters continued.

Some years in ministry in Chile, South America, expanded my concerns for social justice, the environment and peace-making, leading eventually to ordination and work in theological education.

When I finally visited Assisi with my husband Stephen in 2014, I had a profoundly surprising response in the Basilica's crypt. On return home I asked a wise Spiritual Director what this might mean given my Franciscan explorations. He responded, 'Sit with it awhile'. Somewhat frustrated, I searched out a Franciscan Spiritual Director, and synchronicities abounded – a Brother offered a list of names, I met Sandra Jackson at a dinner, who mentioned Chris Winkett, a name on the list, and their connection with the Third Order.

So began my entry into deeper connections with things Franciscan, ongoing reading, reflection and questions, and finally contacting Colin Valentine (then Regional Minister) as an Enquirer, then a rich Novitiate with Anthony Frost.

What was vital for me in moving to Profession was capturing My Rule of Life, commitment to an ordered, accountable way of life, seeking to embody Humility, Love and Joy – day by day, and journeying with a community also inspired by St Francis.



The Rev'd Cecilia Francis was professed on 19th August.

Prayers for Peace
At this time of many horrific wars raging across our world, TSSF has called the Anglican Bishops in Australia to promote PRAYERS FOR PEACE with silence for one minute at 9.00pm each night. The Silent Minute Prayer currently in use is:
*'Source of my being,
Help me to live in peace,
And save my home the planet Earth'.
See:
www.thesilentminute.org.uk/*

A Franciscan life:

Illtyd Loveluck

15.10.1930 – 21.9.2023

Graham Miller tssf

Illtyd was born Alan Loveluck in the village of Kenfig Hill, Glamorgan, Wales. His father, Edward Thomas Loveluck, a cobbler, was Welsh. His mother died during Illtyd's birth, and he was raised primarily by a young great aunt and her husband. They were chapel folk and Welsh speaking.

From a young age, Alan was heavily influenced by his local religious environment. The words DUW CARIAD YW – 'God is Love' were painted in gold leaf on a blue background on the wall above the deacons' seats in the Presbyterian Church. He later explained that those words left a deep impression on him, reinforced by the holiness of some of the deacons who were extremely caring men.

After school at Kenfig Hill and Bridgend Grammar, Alan worked for a time with his father in his shoe shop but was called up for national service. During this time, he had a serious illness and spent a long period in hospital, leaving him to consider what he wanted to do with his life.

After enrolling in Lampeter St David's College in West Wales, Alan studied classical Greek and afterwards entered St. Michael's Theological College in Cardiff, being ordained deacon in 1953 and priested in 1955 (notably in the Welsh language).

A glimpse of his future calling saw Alan serving as curate in the Rhondda Valley, among some of the poorest areas of industrial Wales.

This awakening led to a more monastic life and in 1958, he entered the Society of St Francis, taking the name Illtyd after the local Welsh saint. This 7th Century saint established the great abbey of Llanilltyd Fawr in Glamorgan. The monastery that carried his name became famous for its teaching throughout Western Christendom.

With the SSF in the UK, Illtyd worked in the East End of London in hostels for migrants, in halfway houses for ex-prisoners and those with schizophrenia, and as a chaplain to schools, prisons and universities.

Bro Illtyd entered our lives in 1964 when he was sent to Brisbane to join the fledgling group of SSF brothers at The Friary, (at that time rural) Brookfield. Illtyd once again became involved in chaplaincy and was drawn to the ex-patriate Welsh community in Brisbane and Ipswich.

While with the SSF in the Brisbane Diocese, Illtyd worked with the disadvantaged by establishing the first halfway house for psychiatric ex-patients and out-patients at The Friary, Brookfield, and setting up a halfway house for teenagers at Morris House, Toowong.

In 1965-7 he was appointed the secretary of the Pacific Province of the Chapter of St Francis and Novice Master from 1970-74.



The Rev Canon Illtyd Loveluck tssf

It was at this time that there was a break with the First Order SSF, and Illtyd moved on to work for the Department of Children and Family Services in Qld after attaining his degree in Social Science in 1972.

He also became a counsellor for Lawson House at the Royal Brisbane Hospital, and for victims of the 1974 floods in Ipswich. During his time at the Department, Illtyd reviewed the Juvenile Justice System and worked with children in need of care and protection, completing his Masters in Social Science, part-time.

In 1979, Illtyd was appointed Senior Lecturer in Social Studies at James Cook University, Townsville, remaining there for ten years developing programs in Community Welfare.

At this time Illtyd's priestly work involved caring for the faith community of St Peter's Anglican Church, West End, Townsville, where he took services and established the first Aids Council office in North Queensland under his house, creating a safe space for those living with HIV.

Returning to Brisbane in 1989, Illtyd worked with severely abused children at Tufnell House with the Sisters of the Sacred Advent where he established programs of counselling and assistance. He was also involved in setting up the first Church funded [Anglicare] foster care program in Queensland.

Retiring in the late 1990s, Illtyd continued community and social work and his priestly vocation acting as Consultant in Social Work to the Northern Territory Welfare Department, the Department of Family Services Qld, and the Cerebral Palsy League.

In 1999 Illtyd became locum tenens at St Alban the Martyr, Auchenflower where his fees were donated to the parish as it required a new roof. At the same time Illtyd ministered to the Welsh community. He conducted services according to the Church of Wales at St John's Cathedral Brisbane, as well as being rostered weekly for the daily morning Eucharist.

On September 17, 1999, Illtyd was professed as a member of the TSSF in Brisbane.

In the early years of his retirement, living quietly at Auchenflower, Illtyd kept up his love of attending concerts at QPAC (Qld Performing Arts Complex) where he would meet up with friends, entertaining visitors with home cooked meals that could have fed a community, playing the piano at all hours, or playing solitaire on the computer, using his very own rules.

But every morning and every night of his life, his Office book and Bible were beside him as he lived his Franciscan life.

When asked once what to speak to people about, his response was simple –

'The Gospel, the Gospel, the Gospel.'

Thank you, dear brother, Illtyd... for your life and witness to sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ and loving your Lord until your very last breath!

The language of heaven?

Illtyd's love of the Welsh language, and deep knowledge of Koine Greek and Hebrew meant that he would often start a sermon in English, then unwittingly switch to one or another language during the sermon.

And anyone who met him was encouraged, indeed urged to learn Welsh. A member of my family recently sent me a favourite Illtyd saying: 'How will you communicate in Heaven if you don't speak the Holy Language?' GM

Clothing line

David White tssf

One of our members requested Chapter consider making shirts and hoodies available which identify us as Tertiaries. Among the options considered, Chapter agreed to produce garments including the tssf logo and the name of the province. A second option, to include a Franciscan theme or motto, to advertise tertiaries to a broader audience may be used later at a provincial conference.

There are four kinds of garments available in a range of sizes:

- T-shirts
- Polo shirts
- Pullover Hoodies
- Zipped Hoodies

The first members to receive their shirts and hoodies were our representatives at IPTOC – Mandy, Sally and Hyeran – so everyone will be reminded about the Asia-Pacific Province (see photo page 1).

Since the website for online orders became available in mid August, there has been a steady stream of orders. Note that orders may take at least 5 weeks for delivery – this allows for the amount of other work at the factory, the actual time for the embroidery and Australia Post’s delivery time. Rush orders including Express post can be arranged at extra cost.

Online orders are emailed directly to the treasurer and to David White. Please check your email copy to ensure that the order is accurate. If you discover any errors, please email David (comms@tssf.org.au) promptly before the order is sent to the factory, which will be about once a week. They will then obtain the items from the supplier, embroider the logos, and post the order directly to you.

The factory only works with reputable suppliers who supply garments without variation in sizes. Our website includes links to the supplier’s website, which includes instructions so that you can check the correct size to order. While these sizes are quite accurate, it is possible that they are too snug for some people. Please check the sizes carefully.

You can find our order form at <https://tssf.org.au/tssf-clothing-order/>

For members outside Australia, please email David to make any enquiries. Note that extra postage will apply, and that some countries may impose import duty.



Deep commitments

Jeni Nix tssf

On 30th September, Brisbane and nearby regional Tertiaries gathered in the Chapel of the Holy Spirit at St Francis College Milton for their annual renewals. We were also privileged to participate in the Profession of David Mason and re-admission of James Macdonald.

It was a lovely sunny day, with the campus jacarandas in full bloom. David Mason has been ‘wanting that cross’ for as long as I’ve known him, and it was beautiful to witness the delight in his eyes as Carolyn Smith placed it on him. The depth of his commitment was clearly evident in the quiet moment he took for himself with God before the altar.

I was unaware of James Macdonald’s journey until I saw him at the gathering, even though we have been in the same congregation for quite a while! At church afterwards he humbly shared with me his colourful journey into the Third Order, leaving to explore the First Order and now returning to our merry Queensland band in fresh dedication.

It’s a joy and honour to share these moments in people’s lives, and to do so in wonderful community with others whom we may only see once or twice a year, yet are always ‘knit together in community and prayer’.



Renewals in the Chapel of the Holy Spirit



Left: The Rev Graham Warren prays for James Macdonald at his re-admission. Right: David Mason receives his profession cross from Carolyn Smith.

Our wild brothers and sisters

Margo Holt tssf, Milang, SA

St Francis has been called a ‘deep ecologist’ – meaning one who has a rich understanding of the integrity of creation, a cosmic kinship and a deep, connected passion for all forms of life.

One of the things that drew me to the Franciscans many years ago was the passion for care of the environment and the love for our wild brothers and sisters. For Br Francis, the Kingdom of God was not just *living in harmony* with one another but living in a *relationship* with all creation – human and wild, all life – seeing them all as family.

‘Trees for Life’ is a wonderful organisation that I joined as a volunteer so that I could be actively involved in bush care. We plant thousands of trees over the cooler months each year and have helped revegetate private properties in the hills which lost many of their trees during the horrific fires in December 2019.

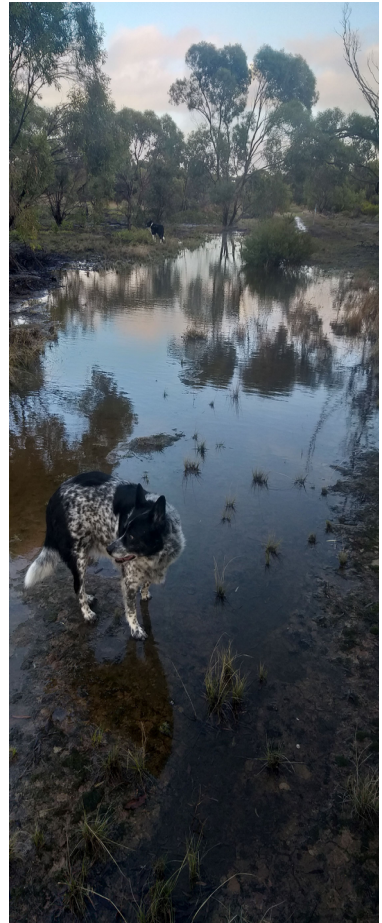
I also have a bush care site and a conservation reserve near where I live in a rural area which I care for regularly. The bush care site is a reclaimed place that Trees for Life have revegetated. We continue to support the local ecology to regenerate and be restored.

These places are sacred spaces for me where, amidst the working, weeding, and monitoring, I am able to ‘be’, pray, listen, watch and sing with my wild friends. These places bring me great joy and peace, and closeness with the One who is Source of all.

There is also a big community garden right over the road from my house which I have worked in for many years now. We have many fruit trees and beds of vegetables and a lovely garden full of flowers and colour. I have been inspired to learn more about growing my own food and planting native trees and shrubs in my garden to attract birds and other local wildlife to come and live there with me!

The local councils have many meetings for interested locals to keep up to date with what is happening with our rivers and waterways, our conservation reserves and parks. I have met many people of like mind this way, and learned a lot which gives me more confidence to speak out for our wild brothers and sisters and our sister earth who are under so much pressure at this time.

The earth sings of an infinite Love: how can we not hear her cry and care for her?



*Nurragi Reserve
after heavy rain*

Editor: What is your story? Could you write for this page on care for creation in crisis? I suggest about 350 words plus a photo if possible (at least 1MB please). Thank you!

Due-date for next issue: 21st February 2024 (earlier if possible)

Please send contributions to: jeidown@protonmail.com

We are trialling the new name for the newsletter: Knit Together.

The gift and grace of silence

Margaret Edrige tssf

St Francis and St Clare both valued silence. Silence was the very basis of their faith and their commitment to the tasks that God required of them. But do we, as Franciscans, also value silence? *'The first born of all creation dwells in our hearts'* – that is an amazing statement (quoting Col.1:15) by Fr Dan Riley OFM in his book *Franciscan Lectio*. Do we honour Jesus, Son of God, who dwells within us, who so humbly honours us, waiting for us to accept, acknowledge and commune with Him? Can we even conceive of Him really dwelling within us?

In our busy, noisy, technological lives, how do we find time to even acknowledge His presence within us; to find the time and silence to develop a deep awareness that the Creator of the Universe has chosen to live in humility in our lowly hearts; and to realise that we can indeed form the closest of relationships; brothers and sisters in Him and with Him, who is the Lord of All. He has no hands, no feet but ours in this world but it is His Holy Spirit who guides us and strengthens us in what He calls us to do.

Br Michael, a Capuchin in India, says in his blog spot:

'In the quiet of prayer, Francis finally learned to be silent so that he could listen to God, undisturbed by the noise of words and the glamour of his own thoughts. Silence is the best way of responding to God. Francis sensed that love of silence led to the silence of love, and in this depth of silence he responded to God. By keeping silent, Francis learnt to respect God's action within him, and allowed himself to be loved by Him and fashioned by that creative love.'



Light on a path at Stroud

Christ Jesus does reside in the very depths of our hearts. He loves us just as we are and yearns for us to love Him. It is only experienced in the silence of meditation, keeping silent for 20-30 minutes, and by stilling our thoughts by absolute concentration on saying the mantra, our word which brings us into the depths of Christ's presence.

So what is our word or mantra? John Main focuses on the Aramaic word, *Maranatha*, which means *Come, Lord Jesus*. It is in the second to last verse in the Book of Revelation. But one priest told me he just didn't like to be constrained to that particular word. I use both the Aramaic and English versions of that word, but I also frequently use the words of Thomas, 'My Lord and my God'. There is also the Orthodox Jesus prayer which I used throughout Lent, 'Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy upon me, a sinner.'

The main thing is to determine what word or phrase you are going to use and then stay with it faithfully for the full period of time. Thoughts do truly intrude, but just gently return to saying your mantra. John Main

proposes that we meditate twice a day, but if all you can manage is just once a day, even that brings us closer to our loving God. When you are old like me (82 years), you will have more time to devote to meditation, but in the midst of all your work and family responsibilities, that may be all the time you have available. I think we can be assured that God does understand. However, we do need to try and set aside a definite time that we can just about adhere to each day.

So what exactly is the gift and grace of silence in our lives? Silence draws us into a much fuller relationship with God. We come to rely on Him and have a relationship with Him that permeates all that we do. We turn to Him with all our problems and decisions that have to be made, and our faith is deeply strengthened. I was once asked what the difference was between meditation and contemplation. A Carmelite sister describes the difference as meditation being a human mode of prayer whereas contemplation is divinely infused prayer. Meditation leads into our contemplation of God within us and He does commune with us.

A brief instance I had recently was when praying for all the countries suffering from war, internal strife, floods, famine and drought, not to mention climate change and global warming. I gave up, saying, 'God, I just can't do this, there is too much!' The answer was gentle and immediate: 'I am Redeemer, you know!' What a relief! So now I pray, 'Jesus by your cross you have redeemed, are redeeming and will redeem the whole world.' After all, He knows all the problems there are far better than I do just listening to the ABC News.

There are some practical ways to aid our meditation and journey into silence. Slow, deep breathing while saying our mantra is important. Mostly, we just breathe very shallowly. There is also an app called Centering Prayer from Contemplative Outreach. It gives four guidelines to meditation and opening and closing prayers. It also provides timing for our meditation as well as opening and closing sounds at the beginning and end. Choice is available for all aspects in this app. A holding cross or rosary can also help keep our minds focused for the full time of our meditation.

In *A Book of Hours*, Thomas Merton says:

'All life is meant to be at the same time profoundly contemplative and rich in active work.'

'It is true that we are called to create a better world. But we are first of all called to a more immediate and exalted task: that of creating our own lives.'

Silence is a gift, and brings us grace, the grace of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, within our hearts, strengthening and leading us in all that we do. May each of us in our busy, noisy lives, receive and cherish the gift of Silence and Grace within us. Then each of us will know, in the words of St Francis, what we are truly called to do.



Margaret Edrige



IPTOC delegates visit South Woodford Mosque

IPTOC reflections

Sally Buckley

One of our speakers at IPTOC was **Charlie McCarron tssf** who has just been elected as the Provincial Minister of the Americas. He initially trained as an OFM (Cap), then later became an Anglican/Episcopalian.

Among other topics, he spoke about the work of Jack Winslow in India and his calling to create an Ashram in Poona, which then became the Christa Seva Sangha – an ‘inter-spiritual foundation’.

Charlie spoke of the Hindu and Sufi influences which were a part of the Ashram in Poona. Such concepts as Bhakti, Dnyana and Karma were deeply embedded in the community.

Bhakti – to give yourself totally to the love of God – we love God and God is so in love with us, it becomes a mutual dance.

He spoke of Bhakti as being something deeper than prayer, as prayer is something you do, but Bhakti is something you are. **Karma** is service and action – our way of service. **Dnyana** (*Jana*) is wisdom in study and knowledge.

Charlie encouraged us, rather than seeing three different paths – Prayer/Contemplation, Study and Service; to look at it as more like a well-built road with the surface being Karma – our service and action; the base being Dnyana – the wisdom we have gained in our studies; and the sub-base and foundation being Bhakti – the love of God.



Charlie McCarron tssf and Paula Pearce OFM

Another speaker was **Jeff Golliber tssf**, a cultural anthropologist, priest and environmentalist, who was Canon for Environmental Justice and

Community Development at the Cathedral of St John the Divine in Manhattan, and has written a number of books on this subject for the Anglican Communion and the United Nations.

This wasn't the first time I had heard Jeff speak. He is both inspiring and terrifying in what he has to say. One message was clear: 'Mother Earth is exhausted and is trying to cleanse herself' and we need to help her heal herself.

He said that as Franciscans we have a huge contribution to make. The strength of our inner resolve and faith is in doing what is ours to do.

Our final two speakers were equally inspiring: Brazilian Bible scholar, **Paulo Ueti tssf** and **Budi Tjahjono**, the new International Advocacy Director for Franciscans International.

Listening to Paulo turn the Gospels on their ear was profound, and many of us felt (and rejoiced) in meeting the Jesus we knew through the eyes of this man.

Paulo spoke of the importance of sharing – really sharing. He spoke about the film *Avatar* and the greeting 'I see you' to mean a deep seeing. He sent us off on an exercise in groups of three with the idea of 'seeing' each other in a deeper way.

It is amazing the power of sharing at such a truthful and deep level, being listened to... being seen.

In his second session the following morning Paulo took this idea of 'seeing' to an even deeper level. While previously we were learning to 'see' each other at a deeper, more truthful level, he now turned it on our perception of who we saw Jesus to be.

The Jesus I have in my mind colours my faith – who is he? We need to be clear about the Jesus we follow, if we are to share him with others.

One day we visited South Woodford Mosque. After being graciously shown around the mosque by the very entertaining Iman (he said he had wanted to be a comedian!) he then spoke about their work in the Three Faiths Forum and introduced Rabbi David with whom he works closely, including leading pilgrimages to the Holy Land. The third representative in the Three Faiths was our own Pat Mossop tssf, Provincial Minister of the European Province.

We moved on to East Ham where we hosted by the Bonny Downs Baptist Church and shown the incredible work they do in their community, not only with long time residents but also immigrants and refugees. The scope of their ministry was startling, from community gardens to food banks to meals for the needy.



Budi Tjahjono



Paulo Ueti tssf