

TAU FEBRUARY 2021

The Province of the Pacific, Third Order Society of St Francis



CONTENTS...

Pages

Minister Provincial	2
Treasurers Report	3
Convocation 2021	4
Obituary - Jean Adams	5
Formation Director	6
Book Review - "The Franciscan Saints"	8
Te Aroha (Bay of Plenty)	9
Auckland News	11
Gubbio (Wellington) News	12
North Island West (Waikato & Taranaki)	14
Book Review - "Exploring the Bible"	15
Portiuncula (NIC)	16
Study week at St Isaac's	18
A Compassionate Prayer	20

Website - tssf.org.nz Please check the website regularly for updated Intercession and Address lists.

Please send any articles that would interest us about your area events or other Franciscan happenings in time for the next issue to

janicegthorne@gmail.com or Janice Thorne

204 Bowler Road

RD2

Te Aroha 3392

New Zealand

The next Tau is due out at the end of May 2021.

Please send me your stories, etc by Friday 21st May.

From the Minister Provincial...

"Virtual hugs and hullo's to all of you.

The year of 2021 has begun in some exciting and challenging ways. As an Order tssf has had a great number of enquirers leading to Postulants and Novices. Marion, as Formation Director has been busy as have Novice Counsellors across the Province. In Aotearoa we have seen some new areas being formed, area name changes and a new focus in group studies mainly around sacred ecology, Indigenous peoples and a move to have formation as a lifelong goal for tertiaries. To this end we have Sarah Hart working as the Post Profession formator, Anthony Maelasi linking with the worldwide group on Sacred ecology and the Indigenous and Sam Faga working with the global group around deepening our Franciscan journey in small groups.

We live and work in a changed world which brings differences to how we do some things and the extra care we show not only for our own wellbeing but how our behaviour may affect others too.

The plans for convocation at El Rancho are underway and it looks like an exciting time to gather together as a community in residence. I encourage you all to think about attending and start saving to come along. Please do remember there are funds available if you cannot afford the cost and the transport let your area Chaplain know."

Take the challenge of knowing "what is ours to do" and be safe in your doing.

Peace Blair

John O'Donohue wrote "Come Home to Yourself"

"May all that is unforgiven in you

Be released

May your fears yield

Their deepest tranquilities.

May all that is unlived in you

Blossom into the future

Graced with love"

From the Treasurer . . .

A reminder that the end of the financial year is fast approaching and that one of the pillars of our Order is to contribute financially. Many people have set up regular automatic payments, so this is for those who give one-off donations.

I will be away for the first half of April, so the annual receipts will be sent out in the second half of the month.

TSSF Bank Account

38-9014-0214422-00

Please make sure you put your name in the particulars if you are paying by internet banking. Kiwibank no longer accept cheques.

Pip Colgan

Leaving a Bequest!

“ A reminder that some of you may want to consider leaving a bequest to the Franciscans.

However you choose to look at it, arranging for a bequest in your Will is perhaps the greatest gift you can make - it is a powerful way to make a difference in the world for generations to come.

1. A bequest can be made to tssf to advance the work of tssf in the Province of the Pacific,
2. to Franciscan Aid, to assist the aid work of Franciscans globally,
3. or to Franciscans International to assist in the promotion of basic human rights for all through the work of the United Nations

If you are interested in this please contact Pip Colgan, Provincial Treasurer or Blair Matheson, Minister Province of the Pacific”

‘What is Yours To Do?’

Obituary - Jean Adams

Jean Adams who died on 12th January aged 94 was part of the North Island Central area since the mid-1980s and was a highly respected member of the third order.



Jean lived in and served the Gisborne area for all her married life. As a busy mother of three children she did much in the community of Kaiti and in the guiding movement. In later years Jean worked as workplace chaplain for Wattie's, and as a lay reader drove long distances, often on her own, to isolated communities up the coast to lead services bringing with her the reserve sacrament.

Jean's devoted service was given over many years with humility and compassion.

Jean was indeed both humble and compassionate, but she was also feisty and very, very honest! She was much loved by all of NIC tssf. Jean was an inspiration to us with her joy in and care for all creation.

In 1949 Jean cycled with a friend throughout war torn Western Europe, it had a profound effect on her. She did all she could to protect the environment.

As an area we were so thankful for the years she served as our chaplain, the huge distances she drove to be at meetings. Helene remembers Jean coming to New Plymouth for a NIC weekend and we all recall the hospitality she gave when NIC visited and stayed with her in Kaiti.

Jean moved to Rotorua ten years ago to be close to her daughter and granddaughters. She and her dog Sam became local identities as they walked long distances by the Lake. Jean was always so welcoming to visitors and it was wonderful to be with her in her home.

The North Island Central area ceased to be an area just before Jean died, and as an area we will remember with love and joy the meetings and precious times we spent together. We give thanks that Jean was so much a part of our group and we give thanks to God for a life well lived.

Sarah Hart

From Formation Director...

Congratulations to those who made significant steps in their Franciscan journey at the end of 2020:

Those who have taken Profession vows: Gordon Gallop, (Auckland), Penny Kennett, (Auckland), Michael Vine, (BOP), Jeanene O'Keefe, (Southern), Laurie Hopping, (Waikato).

And Margaret Strong, (Auckland), who has become a member of the Third Order, Society of St Francis by taking her Novice vows.

New Enquirers. We have had a number of new Enquirers over the past months, many of them a lot younger than most of us. This is very exciting but I am hearing concerns about how we accommodate younger adults in our groups. Here are some thoughts:

There is a lot that is positive about growing relationships between adults of widely varied ages. The onus is on us to:

- ***Remember that they are just people, and in this case people serious enough about their faith journey to want to discern whether they are called to be part of tssf.***
- ***Accept younger adults as adults.*** The mental trick I use is to think about who I was at their age: what was I doing? How did I feel about myself? How did I appreciate other adults treating me?
- ***Engage them in conversation.*** Share yourself with them – and be open to learning from them. Don't assume that you will always know more than they do. Our charism of humility comes into play here!
- ***Avoid making assumptions*** about what they think, enjoy, believe, or feel.
- ***Be open to developing meaningful friendships across the ages.*** I have a very dear, close friend of 29 with whom I share deeply. There is great richness to be found in having relationships with people of other generations.
- ***Be open to changes*** in how and when your group meets, and how often you expect younger people to be able to participate in group activities.

- **Don't.** *(I have tried to avoid that word, but I need to use it just this once.) Don't refer to young adults as boys and girls, children, young ones. They are adults. On a personal note, I know how patronised and belittled I feel when one older friend says that I am only a spring chicken. At 74 that is wearing very thin! But I can remember feeling belittled and discounted when it was said to me in my 30's.*

I do hope that our current Enquirers will feel welcomed and safe in meetings where they may be the only one in their age group. At the same time, we are beginning a series of Zoom gatherings which will begin the process of introducing these Enquirers to one another so they can feel connected. It is Convocation year, so that is also something to look promote and look forward to.

Novice Counsellors Needed: Please can all professed members pray about whether you can offer to accompany another through the discernment and initial formation process. Talk with your Area Chaplain about it. Contact me if you wish to. We need more Novice Counsellors, especially in Auckland and Wellington. As soon as I have some names I will schedule an Introduction session via Zoom. Later in the year I may be able to do some training in person – we shall see.

Thank you to the Novice Counsellors who have messaged me to let me know how their December catch up with their postulant/novice went. Just a wee memory jog for all current NC's to send me a brief message after receiving each quarterly report – so the next will be March.

God Chats in the Closet *by Max Lucado*

Religious leaders loved to make theatre out of their prayers. The show made Jesus angry. In Matthew 6:6 He said, "When you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father who cannot be seen. Your Father can see what is done in secret, and He will reward you."

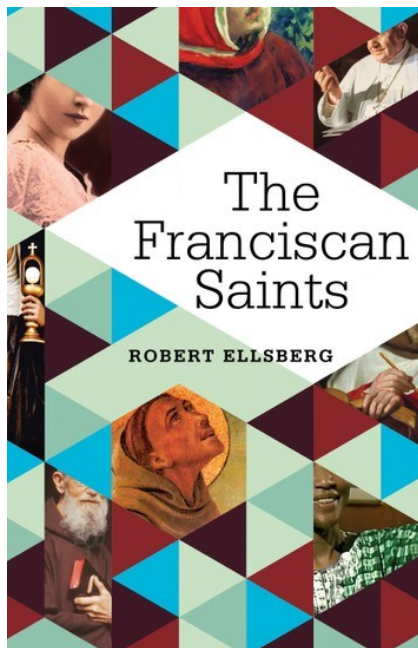
The words surely stunned Jesus' audience. The people were simple farmers and stonemasons. They couldn't enter the temple. But they could enter their closets. The point? He is low on fancy, high on accessibility. You need not woo him with location! Or wow him with eloquence. It's the power of a *simple* prayer.

From Before Amen

Book Review.

Are you looking for something extra to read during Lent? May I recommend **The Franciscan Saints**, by **Robert Ellsberg**, published by Franciscan Media, Cincinnati, USA, 2017.

This book is made up of numerous short entries for Franciscan Saints spanning the years from St Francis (1181 – 1226) to Sister Dorothy Hennessey (1913 – 2001). Each entry is from 1 – 3 pages long, giving a summary of the individual's life, what marked their Franciscan journey and often including a quote from them. This format made it an easy read in a busy life as it did not take long to read a complete entry.



Some of the names are well known – others were not known at all. Some are official saints, others recognised as saintly but not canonised. They were members of different Franciscan orders; some living in Community as our First and Second Orders do, many were Third Order.

Each story was inspiring as I learnt how the charism of Francis and Clare, the seeking after a life of simplicity, love, joy and peace has continued in an uninterrupted stream across the years. There was for me a sense of connection, of belonging to something far bigger than the current Franciscan family which is so central to my life. We belong to a family that stretches back over the years and hopefully will extend beyond our life span, consisting of brothers and sisters who also followed Christ after the example of St Francis. I was inspired, and encouraged as I read the stories of so many brothers and sisters.

Marion Fairbrass

Te Aroha (New Bay of Plenty)

by Peter Bargh

Our new group which incorporates the old Bay of Plenty Area as well as the Coromandel (which was formerly part of Waikato) and the Central Plateau, (which was formerly part of NIC) met in Katikati on 23 January. It was a joyful experience of worship and fellowship as well as attending to some logistical matters, such as setting dates, electing officers and choosing a name.

The group were inclined to explore a name in Te Reo Māori to ground us in this land. From the window we could see through to Mt. Te Aroha. This inspired the group to consider Te Aroha as a new name, reflecting on the breadth of the name encompassing such meanings as:



the mountain itself, which might be a focus for a future pilgrimage for the group. This reminded us of both:

the story of it being named by Te Mamoe as a place that allowed him to see his home. The name reflects his love for both land and people. And;

holy mountains in Scripture and for Francis, including La Verna/Alverna (from which we reflected on the cabin which bears the same name at the St. Isaac's Retreat Centre in the Hokianga, where Brother Brian spent time - also home to the Sisters of the Love of God so a link with Te Aroha/love, as well)

the breadth of understandings of love which can be held in *Te Aroha*:

from the various Greek words and associated concepts in Scripture - *agape*, *philia*, *storge* (as well as *eros* - not in the NT)

our own sense of the Gospel reflecting the love of God

the Franciscan emphasis, as made explicit through the first two

Aims of the Order as well as the Second Note

the richness of the Māori name *Te Aroha*, which spans love through to compassion - a lovely link to the First Order Province (of the Divine Compassion) as well.

The group has sought to check with relevant other people and bodies about the name, including having the blessing from Te Pihopa ki Te Mānawa o Te Whēke, Ngarahu Katene. The bishop has also asked the group to develop, or find, a whakataukī (saying/proverb), that gives expression to our understanding of the name. This will be homework for the group at our future meetings.

Have you planned you 2021 Retreat?

Consider St. Isaacs Retreat House Opononi
contact Maranu Gascoigne 09 4058349
email: stisaacs.wardens@xtra.co.nz



Have you ever contemplated the word **HEARTH**?

The **art** of keeping the **ear** open to **hear** the beat of the **heart** in the **hearth** of the **earth**.

'It is a distinctively human trait to stop and consider, to chew on something with the teeth of our minds and hearts, to roll some reality around in our thoughts and press it deeply into our feelings'. David Mathis - Habits of Grace



Warming your heart by the
hearth of the Gospel

Dear Lord
may I be quiet enough to cultivate
held in the ground of being
your call to prayer.
Amen

Auckland News

by Liz Farrands

Sue Liapis and Anne Moody (and others) at the presentation of their Certificates of Completion of their four years of Study of Education for Ministry programme (EFM). Several members of the Auckland group were present at this well-deserved celebration late 2020.



Gordon Gallop, Penny Kennett, and Margaret Strong.

The Auckland Group met for our last meeting of 2020 at the Selwyn Library on 12th December.

This joyful event included the Professions of Penny Kennett, and Gordon Gallop, while Margaret Strong was made a novice.

During the morning we enacted one of Rose Christie-French's little plays written for our colleagues in the Solomon Islands, 'The First Crib Service', while setting up the Nativity Scene in celebration of Christmas. Rose also spoke about her new book Exploring the Bible. (Copies available from Rose).

The group in process of taking part in Rose's play 'The First Crib Service' while setting up the Nativity Scene.



Auckland Meeting Dates

Our Meetings are held at Selwyn Library, St. Stephen's Avenue, opposite the Cathedral, Parnell.

Dates for this year are:

Saturday 10th April,

Saturday 19th June,

Saturday 14th August,

Saturday 30th October,

Saturday 11th December.

Gubbio Wellington News

Greetings from the Gubbio Third Order Area, which now covers Wellington-Wairarapa and Kapiti to Manawatu. The new name for the Wellington Area was chosen for us at Chapter 2020. We receive the name in joyful obedience.

Rose Christie-French, in her delightful book "The Franciscan Stories", has written a story about how Francis met and tamed the wolf at Gubbio, a town near Assisi. Here is a shortened form of Rose's story:

Once, when Francis was visiting Gubbio, something wonderful happened. At that time the people of Gubbio were very frightened because in the woods nearby there lived a fierce, hungry wolf. It had got so hungry that it had started attacking people as well as animals. And sometimes it came right up to the town.

While Francis was there with one of his Brothers, he felt very sorry for the people of that town and he decided to go and meet the wolf. Trusting in Jesus and armed only with a cross, he bravely went out with his Brother to meet the wolf.

Before long he saw the fierce wolf running towards him with its mouthwide open. Francis made the sign of the Cross towards it. The wolf slowed down and shut its cruel mouth. Francis called out to it, "Come to me, brother Wolf. In the name of Christ, I order you not to hurt me or anyone else." As soon as Francis said this the wolf lowered its head and lay down at Francis' feet as though it had become a lamb. St Francis then growled at the wolf and told it how wicked it had been. They promised to feed the wolf every day so it would never be hungry. And because of this miracle many people believed in God.

Until the wolf died two years later, the people of Gubbio fed him every day.

Our Gubbio family began the year with a well-attended meeting at Robin Clarke's home at Waikanae. The schedule of our meetings for the remainder of the year is below:

GUBBIO (WELLINGTON AREA) TSSF MEETINGS 2021	
DATE	VENUE
Saturday 20 March 2021	St John's Anglican Church, Johnsonville
Saturday 1 May 2001	St John's Anglican Church, Johnsonville
Saturday 19 June 2021	St Aidan's Anglican Church, Miramar
(CHANGED DATE)	
Saturday 24 July 2021	St John's Anglican Church, Johnsonville
Saturday 4 September 2021	St Mark's Anglican Church, Raumati
Thursday PM 30 September	Convocation at El Rancho, Waikanae
to Sunday PM 3 October 2021	
Saturday 6 November 2021	Quiet Day at Art's Home, Te Horo
Friday 10 December 2021	Midday Eucharist at Wellington Cathedral

Eucharist and a generous shared lunch are the regular foundation of our Gubbio meetings. The theme for our study this year is twofold:

Study of our Franciscan Principles, using Reflections on the journey by Robin Parkin; and watching the videos of a virtual Franciscan Pilgrimage led by Archbishop David Moxon in Palmerston North last year <http://www.pilgrimagenz.nz/node/12> .

We look forward to visits from Tertiaries further afield but ask that you be gentle with our bushy-tailed furry four legged friend. He has no intention of becoming a vegetarian for lent.

Shalom

Jenny Barns

Gubbio Area

North Island West (Waikato and Taranaki)

Our new area has joined Waikato and Taranaki groups together. We had our first meeting in Otorohanga on Saturday February 13th.

Our Minister Provincial, Blair, led us in introductions and the choosing of office bearers. We are considering what our new name will be. There are a number of ideas and now we need to agree on a name either by email or at our next meeting.

Two members of the Taranaki group are stuck in Rarotonga and not able to get back to New Plymouth where they have a daughter and her family.

After our business had finished we shared our lunch with a lot of chatter and fun, then had a photo of us all taken by Blair.

All in all a good start and we are looking forward to meeting again and getting on with things.



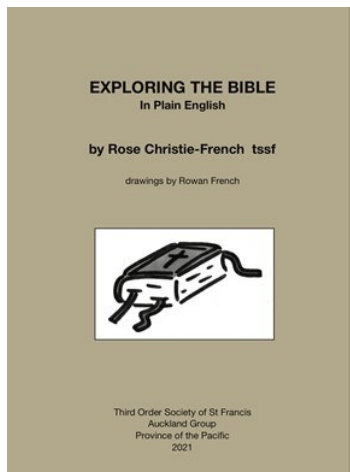
A friendly shared lunch with wine supplied by Andrew

Left - right: Laurie Hopping, Lesley Dowding, Ray Gallagher, Jill Fleet, Norris Hall, Amanda Bradley holding the photo of Peter and Rebecca Frey stuck in Rarotonga, Helene Young, Janice Thorne and Andrew McKean. Missing was Suzzarna Henry who lives at Kawhia and was unwell.



Book Review - Exploring the Bible

By Rose Christie-French



This is the foreword of Rose's new book. The Auckland Group has already sent 100 copies to Melanesia. Her other books are popular and well used in the groups there. If you want a copy of this new book or any of the other title's contact Rose. rosechristiefrench@gmail.com

These are The Francis Stories, The Principles in Plain English, Followers of Francis, Six Short Plays and the latest, Exploring the Bible. They are all \$10 each, payable to Third Order SSF Auckland Area (tagged Rose's books)
(ASB) 12 3008 0286799 01

EXPLORING THE BIBLE

Do not get any gold or silver or copper to take with you in your belts— no bag for the journey or extra shirt or sandals or a staff. This is the Gospel of St Matthew (Matt 10 : 9-10) that the young Francesco Bernadone heard in church one February morning in 1208. It was the Gospel of the day called the "Commissioning of the Twelve". Jesus was calling his disciples to go and tell the good news, to those who would listen, that the Kingdom of God is at hand.

Francis was so inspired by this, that from then on he lived as the poorest of men. He always dressed in a coarse woollen tunic with a knotted rope around his waist. With no money, no food or place to sleep he went from village to village telling the people about Jesus. He trusted the people he met to feed him and give him shelter. In less than a year he had 11 followers who came together as a community of Brothers, the Friars Minor. They lived together extremely simply in a farmer's run-down pig sty near Assisi.

Some people have had life changing moments as Francis did while reading or listening to a passage from the Bible. Many more have favourite stories or verses that mean a lot to them. This book may help finding your favourite stories and will also tell you things about every book in the Bible. It has been written in Plain English, first of all, for the Third Order of the Society of Saint Francis in Melanesia. But wherever and whoever is reading it

HAPPY EXPLORING

PORTIUNCULA (NIC)

North Island Central gathered at the home of Rosemary and Bryan Carey's on Saturday January 23rd for the last time as that Area. It was great to have Helene, Jill and Lesley from Taranaki who travelled across to join us and for us to have them with us was very special. 8 of us were present with two of our members away on holiday.

Chaplain Dorothy shared Jean Adam's death and thanked those who had an input into the funeral sharing that Sarah Hart did on behalf of us all. Jean had been a well-loved member of N.I.C. as well as Chaplain for many years and continued to feel part of us when she moved to Rotorua to be close to her daughter.

A "round robin" sharing and touching base as this was first meeting of new year and many had not seen each other since November and for other not since onset of Covid 19 and the associated pandemic lockdowns.

It was good to report that even with all that 2020 brought we had the opportunity over the year to Profess Maranu and admit 6 Novices. We have had some enquirers.

Everybody felt privileged and relaxed to be in New Zealand especially in holiday season but all looking forward to 2021 and what is planned.

Dorothy also shared that she had contacted the Secular Franciscans who meet in Palmerston North and they are keen to have the opportunity to meet annually with TSSF. Some dates to be finalised on our calendar.

Before we shared Eucharist we spent some time looking at the Principle for the day "Humility" and how it impacted on our lives. Good discussion took place.

Dates set

10-16 May Retreat at St Isaac's.

Dates for regular meetings 2021:

27 March 10-3.00pm – ? Val's. Venue to be organised.

10-16 May St Isaacs for those registered.

29 May Waipawa 10-3.00pm at Claudia's home.

Transistus of St Clare early August also to be arranged.

July or September Possible meeting with Roman Catholic Secular members, possibly to meet in Palmerston North, which allows an opportunity for

anyone from Wellington or the Taranaki to join us.

October Convocation (El Rancho Waikanae) 30 September-3 October
Celebrating 800 years of Tertiary order. (Some sponsorship money available, if needed).

27 November in Napier for end of year events. (at Dorothy Brooker's).
Companions or those interested in TSSF to be invited to each meeting.
Previous members from Taranaki, Taupo, Palmerston North, Turangi to remain on mailing list to receive information of meetings they may wish to be part off.

A report on the Virtual Pilgrimage to Assisi October 2020 held in Palmerston north with John and Jenny Hornblow and Sir David Moxon was shared. Four members (NIC) attended and thoroughly enjoyed the time spent together. The Hornblow's are investigating the possibility of a New Zealand Pilgrimage due to pandemic restrictions for travel. It was great that 50 people attended this gathering and Dorothy was able to arrange for 3 Companions to be admitted.

We as an area have chosen the name **Portiuncula** which will include Hawkes Bay, Central Hawkes Bay and Eastland.

Portiuncula, "a small portion of land", and as Maranu said it makes the connection of the word for land, whenua. All life is seen as being born from the womb of Papatūānuku. And NIC is a small portion of land in the heart of Aotearoa.

Bonaventure summarised the importance that the Portiuncula had for St Francis in his "Major Legend of St Francis" (1263): "This place the holy man loved more than other places in the world; for here he began humbly, here he progressed virtuously, here he ended happily. This place he entrusted to his brothers at his death as the most beloved of the Virgin". (Chapter 2, paragraph 8)

It is the place where the First Franciscan movement started and often the General Chapter was held here.

I think also it holds that Spirited Church within the Church and for us TSSF holds that Spirited Church within The Church!

Maranu concludes, I think also that Portiuncula can represent our Turangawaewae our foundation, our place in the world, our home as TSSF.
Special greetings from Portiuncula.

Dorothy Brooker - Chaplain

Study Week at St Isaac's Opononi May 10th 2021

The closing of New Zealand's borders has challenged us to look closer to home at ways we can grow our faith. Over the years we have enjoyed the privilege of travel and being able to go on pilgrimages to Assisi and countless other amazing places. Some have been able to visit and share with fellow Franciscans in other provinces as well as with our brothers and sisters in Melanesia and Stroud in Australia.

In some ways it has been all too easy and with the global pandemic we are now revisiting and rethinking how we live our lives and care for our planet.

The First Order Brothers at Stroud made it possible for a small group to travel to NSW to take part in a pilot study week that had been designed and facilitated by them for post formation growth. The idea was for the course to be offered on a regular basis to all tertiaries.

Chapter 2020 was delighted to accept the invitation from Maranu Gascoigne tssf to continue the study week at St Isaacs Opononi where she is now warden.

The study week is confirmed for May 10th till May 16th. We are so fortunate that Margaret Bedggood and Pip Colgan have agreed to facilitate the course. It's exciting to be able to use the skills and talents we have already within the Third Order and the course filled very quickly with numbers limited to 10.

It is proposed that we will hold similar courses again and would like to hear if you are keen. At this stage a waiting list will be created if you would like to attend this May week as it's possible that someone is unable to come.

Please contact Sarah on Coolbreene@gmail.com.

Cost is koha based and I'm happy to talk further about how this could work.

The reason I am writing this is that Chapter 2020 also decided that the Province of the Pacific would follow the recommendation of IPTOC that as a global order we should look at post formation opportunities and ideas that help tertiaries grow their vocation in the third order. While this idea is still in its infancy, Chapter voted to create a post formation role that focuses on lifelong learning in the third order.

I have been invited to step into this role and have accepted. While it is

always daunting to begin something new. I pray post formation opportunities will evolve and I am so excited that we have this focus to grow our faith as Franciscans.

The role will begin with small steps

- I plan to research and follow up with Anne Moody who has been working so hard on our behalf with the IPTOC post formation committee.
- I am looking forward to offering practical support with the organisation and planning of the May study week at St Isaacs.
- I would love the opportunity to meet and talk with individuals and areas about what post formation means and also what the immediate needs are so we can get started.

As with any new focus it will take time but the opportunities are exciting and I so look forward also to working with Anthony Maelasi, Sam Faga and Jimmy Maeigoa, and the regional chapter in the Solomon Islands.

I'm really looking forward to hearing from you and to working together in life long formation learning

My contact details are Sarah Hart

Coolbreene@gmail.com or 021850146 or 073776159

The Five ways to Apologise: *from 'The Five Love Languages' by Gary Chapman*

1. Expressing Regret *"I am sorry"*
2. Accepting Responsibility *"I was wrong"*
3. Making Restitution *"What can I do to make it right"*
4. Genuinely Repenting *"I'll try not to do that again"*
5. Requesting Forgiveness *"Will you please forgive me?"*

As Franciscans to learn to love more and accept Jesus' deep abiding unconditional love for us which we can overflow to others it is a useful reminder to keep on growing

Blessings Hélène

A Compassionate Prayer

Reverend Dr. J. Alfred Smith, Sr

Older than the morning stars that twinkled in the blackness of night's first birth, the rotation of the axis of time, bring us into the freshness of your mercy and the newness of your presence. We come to you today with heartfelt gratitude, not with mixing Judas paint with Judas praise in order to cover our hypocrisy. Some of us come to you with triumph over tragedy. Others of us come with enduring pain suffered from shameful defeat in an inescapable battle of life. Some of us feel like going on and others of us feel like giving up. But to you we come just as we are. Whether we are winners or losers, we know that you love us one and all. Greatest of the Greatest, you know just how much we can bear. We all come to commune with you:

The tireless champion;

The tired loser;

The retired forgotten ones;

We all come to be consistently corrected and comforted by you.

We come counting our lost.

We come confronting our crises.

We come as citizens of cities controlled by crime.

We come chilled by the cold of cowardice.

Great God Almighty:

Commune with us conscience clean.

Caress us with the cradle of compassion.

Consecrate us with outrageous convictions.

Control us with Christlike concerns.

Great Physician Powerful:

Pardon us with the conscience of peace.

Place us in paths of productivity.

Practice the perfection of healing upon those who are physically, emotionally, or spiritually sick.

This is our humble plea, we present in the precious Name of the prince of peace, Jesus Christ, our priceless priest. Amen.