

TAU August 2023

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



Contents

Page

Minister Provincial Blair Matheson	2
Formation Director Marion Fairbrass	3
Community Franciscan Style	4, 5
Quiet Times, Graeme Webb	6, 7
Why, Tony Stroobant	8, 9
Calling, Richard Roberts	10, 11
Gubbio, Rosemary Jamieson	12, 13
3 "G"s, Maranu Gascoigne	14-17
Juniper Forest, Anne Moody	18
Emily Colgan, Manukura	19
Rest in peace, Barb Lash	20
Nelson, Ian Lothian	21
Triune Marvels, Christopher Diggle	22
King's Companions, Helene Young	23
Wishing, Ella Wheeler Wilcox	24
Evening Prayers, Bronwyn's Invitation	24
Rule of Iona, Ian Lothian	25
Christopher John's Citation	26
Portiuncula, Val Chapman	27
Cold Water, Bronwyn Emson	28, 29
Dignity, Franciscans International	30
Storm, Raymond Pelly	31
For your diary	32

Tau's next issue due out end of November 2023

Articles, reviews, reports on Areas welcome **by Friday 17 November 2023**

Contact: Penny Kennett Provincial Newsletter Editor,

penelope.kennett@gmail.com

3 Farm Road, Wellington 6012, mobile 021 0222 7355

.....

Website - tssf.org.nz

Please check the website for updated Intercession and Address lists.

Contact: Janice Thorne janicethorne@gmail.com

A Prayer Page

Blair opens our newsletter with an invitation for us to contribute to an ongoing prayer page, for the wider communities, for issues of future concern. He starts us off this time round, with these requests for prayer:

- ◆ A reminder to pray for and to vote in the current election of a new Minister Provincial in our Province of the Pacific. This is an important role and you are encouraged to prayerfully make sure you send your vote in via one of the several options to do so, such as the email from the Diocese of Dunedin on 11th August.
- ◆ Pray for Chapter as it meets in Auckland, 25-27th August.
- ◆ The Inter Provincial Chapter meetings of the Society of St Francis, 1st, Second and Third Order meetings are being held near London from 2nd to 14th September. This is an important and wonderful gathering of representatives from each Province in each Order. Many items for discussion and reflection influence the daily life of us all as Franciscans. Pray for wisdom as Pip, Marion and Blair represent this Province of the Pacific.
- ◆ The Aotearoa New Zealand region of our Province is blessed by a large number of Enquirers, Postulants and Novices. Support them and their Novice Counsellors by praying for their time of discernment in each step of their journey.
- ◆ Em Colgan is now the Manukura/ Principal of St John's College in Auckland. See page 19.
- ◆ Remembering those in our region who are ill, frail or facing changes in their living situations.
- ◆ Blair is in the process of handover into the role of Executive Director of Franciscans International. Prayers for safe travel over coming months, doing what needs to be done before a final trip in late December to be based in Geneva for 3 years.

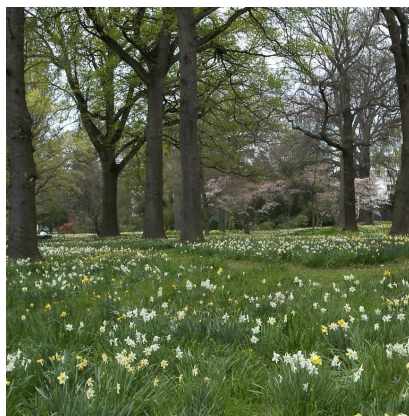
Minister Provincial Blair Matheson



Formation Director's Greetings

...from a sunny day in Otautahi Christchurch. This message is probably going to break all records for being a short one from me.

In the last month we have welcomed some new Novices. In Juniper Forest, Rich De Vera and Kit Willet made their Novice vows on 6 August. At the same service Margaret Strong made her Profession vows. Further south, in King's Companions John Hislop made his Novice vows. As always, it is a joy to welcome new members and the newly professed on our shared journey.



There are a number of new Enquirers in some areas which is always encouraging.

Thank you to all who have undertaken to journey with newcomers as their Novice Counsellors. In the last Tau some Novice Counsellors shared about what a positive experience it has been. I am still looking for some Professed members to offer to train for this role.

This year I am privileged to represent our Province at IPTOC (Inter Provincial Third Order Conference) in England.

Following that I will be staying on for a 2-week holiday with close friends and visiting cousins near them – most likely for the last time in this life. I will not be taking my laptop with me, so won't be responding to emails to the Formation Director email address. If I accidentally delete emails from my phone they will not be saved to my laptop. Therefore, I would appreciate it if you could hold all communications regarding Formation until after I return home on 29 September.

Rangimarie,
Marion Fairbrass, Formation Director

Community Franciscan Style

I am a member of the world-wide Society of St Francis, an Anglican religious Order which contains three parts. The First Order of the Society is made up of men and women who live together in community, following a daily pattern of prayer under vows of Poverty, Chastity and Obedience. Members serve the church and the community around the houses in which they live in a variety of ways. In the Second Order are women who take the same vows, and live together in seclusion with a ministry of prayer. It is relatively easy to “see” what community looks like for these two Orders.



However, I am a Tertiary – a member of the Third Order - made up of women and men, single or married, ordained or lay, who feel called to live a life of simplicity, following Christ in the manner of St Francis. We live in our own homes, so community looks very different for us. In joining the Order, we move through the same stages of Postulant, Novice and Professed. We promise obedience and have practices of accountability in living our personal rule, reporting annually to an Area Chaplain. As often as possible we meet together to worship and study in a shared commitment to lifelong formation, seeking to follow Christ more closely. We are encouraged to share our spiritual journey and support one another in our various ministries.

It is almost impossible to put into words the sense of community felt when meeting with other Tertiaries, whether one is meeting them for the first time or has known them for years. I believe it comes from awareness of a shared journey in the daily struggle to die to self and take up our cross. Here are others who carry out ongoing self-examination, asking “Am I making my Lord known and loved as I go about my daily work? Am I spreading the spirit of love and harmony, and seeking to work for justice for all? Am I really living a life of simplicity and giving as much as I can to help others?” This common goal and purpose in life leads to a deep sense of connection, even with those we may never meet.

Continues next page

Community Franciscan style, continues

One element which holds us together is praying the “Daily Obedience” which outlines the elements of our calling, and praying for one another. Using a monthly cycle, we pray for the office holders and members in each Province across the world and for individual members in our own Province by name.

Within our community we are usually known by our Christian names, and often do not know from a list of names who is ordained or lay, who is doctor or bishop. Francis turned away from the hierarchical community structure, insisting on equality of all. As with all that Francis established, the gospel was the basis, taking the example of Jesus washing the disciples’ feet. Those who hold office do so in order to serve members of the community, not to be elevated above them.

Once every three years the Third Order in each Province holds “Convocation”. Every Tertiary who possibly can is called to gather together for two or three days of worship, togetherness, learning and some decision making. Oh what joy, to be together. The laughter and tears, the fun and stories shared, the praying and singing; the sorrow of those who are no longer with us in this life; the joy of witnessing vows of new Novices and Professed.

It may seem strange to call the dispersed Third Order a community – but somehow, through the grace of God, we do experience community even when we are apart, but more especially when we come together in small or larger groups.

I wrote the above a couple of years ago at the request of a friend who was planning to write a book about different Christian communities. The book has not gone ahead, but I am glad I was asked to write about our Third Order Community. Right now, in 2023, I am preparing to travel to England for IPTOC (Inter Provincial Third Order Conference). It is a privilege to have this opportunity to meet a large group of brothers and sisters from different Provinces. I look forward to experiencing this sense of community with those who come from very different backgrounds.

Marion Fairbrass

Quiet Times for Fools Like Me who Stumble Around on the Francis Way

Once upon a time years ago, when my prayer life dried up to an uncomfortable degree, I went to see an established Anglican guru.

Looking back, it was no wonder my spiritual life grounded itself in the Sahara: I was a newly solo-father of three lively young children serving as the Vicar in a large suburban parish from which my predecessor had run away and his predecessor had had a breakdown. Stress everywhere. Challenges aplenty.

My usual prayer-place was the only quiet place in my existence at that time: my morning shower. (Remain calm Mums; I know what you're thinking!)

The guru was gentle. "OK, start to pray," he prompted.

So, I struggled out: "Dear Lord, ..That's as far as I got.

The guru stopped me. "Why are you using words?" he asked.

I spluttered some hopeless answer.

And then, in true guru fashion, he opened a bottle of red wine.

The next few hours introduced me to a variety of ways to occupy a quiet time that a stressed-out, eternally restless, cricket-playing, wine-loving, over-educated, constantly-voyaging, music-loving-and-making, utterly horrible cook who stumbled around on the way with Jesus needed to hear. Praying little, or praying not at all faded from memory. The guru cut the chains.

Guilt was swallowed up. Now I'm retired (or are clergy merely re-treaded?), and 4pm most days sees me in my comfy-place, either feeling totally bushed or full of energy, either giving in to a nap or sensorily fully-alive, either listening to music (Mahler's *Second Symphony* takes me to holy places) or totally silent, either reading some slice of holy writing (hey, isn't the Gospel of Thomas a minefield of goodies?) or not involved with words, either sipping wine (only on weekends these days) or water or coffee, sometimes with a candle or a flower or some incense or a pic of the kids or grandkids or nothing at all, either with a...

Continues next page



Quiet times, continues

Well, you get it... And sometimes I read the lectionary readings for a while: but I remember once when the set daily readings for a whole month were Daniel from the OT and Revelation from the NT and I cheerfully tossed the Book aside having had quite enough of apocalypse thank-you-very-much.

Eternal holy variations. This is God's time, not mine. Its quality lies not in what I feel but in the totality of who I am. It's a time of abandonment to God. It's a time when I try to still my mind and be open, receptive. Images, words maybe, music, silence. I sometimes shake my fist at God on days of tragedy. I often just share my struggles. I am, after long years, now fully relaxed about this God-time most days at 4pm.

Don't get me wrong; I sometimes go for months with a daily prayer-book service until I get restless. Or I read the daily Richard Rohr emails until I get restless reading a whole slice of the Bible is more satisfying for me than daily lectionary nibbles. Once, living in Asia, I even used the daily Enlightenment readings given to me by a Buddhist friend and found them wonderfully Christian at times.

But hang on, I'm a Franciscan Tertiary. I'm relaxed here, too. No guilt. The daily community obedience gets a look-in often and has a rest often. As does the Franciscan book of Offices, and the Franciscan book of daily readings. I made the haj to Assisi at Francis-tide one year and still have flashbacks in my quiet times to Francis' tomb at the Basilica, to a day spent down the hill at wonderful San Damiano, to walking with the pilgrims at midnight to Santa Maria degli Angeli down on the Umbrian plain, to a quiet time inside the Portiuncula. People like me find difficulty with the annual TSSF reporting, with the rigidity of filling in a form that doesn't really fit (or seems to have been written by Attila-the-Hun, as one Gubbio member opines), even the need to report at all. My rule of life is a celebration of freedoms. No guilt. I have used a variety of reporting styles and a variety of rule formats. The forms they take fit the reality experienced. I enjoy the creativity, and send a prayer Godwards for my poor chaplain and TSSF friends who must tut-tut about me. Their tolerance is their gift. I hope they can see that for some people it's OK to eat dessert first. Grace still finds me, poor fool that I am.

Graeme Webb, Gubbio Hanger—on

Why I Am a Franciscan

My name is Tony Stroobant, I am Aotearoa/NZ born, and my family roots are mostly in lowland Scotland, but with a dash of the Flemish (what is nowadays northern Belgium) thrown in.



I am the father of three, and the grandfather of five. Bronwyn, my partner and the love of my life, and I have been together for around ten years.

I started my professional life in the 1970s as an electronics engineer but sensing there was “something more” to life I became a Christian and am forever grateful to the late Rev Brian Malcouronne for his part in my conversion. May he most assuredly rest in peace and rise in glory.

I took it all too far and offered as a candidate for the Methodist ministry. Although I expected to be sent home with my tail between my legs, thus began nearly 40 years of ordained parish ministry first in Christchurch, and then in Auckland.

Big jump.

In retirement, fed up with what Auckland had become, I washed up in Mangawhai.

Christ the King was (and still is) the only church up here. I slipped into the back row, but was- all too soon- spotted by the then Priest-In-Charge, Diane Hawken..

Over recent years especially, Bronwyn and I have both been very involved, especially in leading worship.

Getting to the point....at last!

Bronwyn, I found, belonged to the TSSF. Some say the best kept secret in the Anglican church!

Forty years on from my ordination, the Franciscan commitment seemed to be the 21st century “something more” I was looking for to refresh my faith and ministry.

This journey was by no means straightforward, and I gladly acknowledge my indebtedness to Bronwyn Emson tssf, and to Rev Michael Watson TSSF towards my profession in 2018.

continues next page

Why I am a Franciscan, continues

During my novitiate, Bronwyn kept up a near-endless supply of reading material on the lives of Francis and Clare, and on the early history of the Order. Michael, over many hours of our meeting together, both encouraged and challenged me on my Franciscan journey.

At the time of my profession, I said that I found the “doing of it all” to be the most important. Daily prayer, Bible reading, peace-making, and a steady, intentional attention to simple living seem to be those things that lead to an increasing awareness of one’s utter dependence upon the gracious love of God alone, which I believe to be the goal of every Christian. In retrospect, my profession was yet another beginning, another fresh start, on the life-long journey of faith.

There are very many things I- and we all, I guess- might and might not do as Franciscans. As some sort of bottom line, I try to uphold what I regard as my personal four “non-negotiables” of being a Franciscan today.

1. Daily obedience: the near-inviolable commitment- no matter how busy I am- to pray, every day, either in company or alone, for the Order, and for the world. This it seems to me to sound the right theme for whatever multitude variations every coming day holds.
2. The annual Francis-tide giving to the life of the Order, and to my charity of choice The Leprosy Mission. We might run on the smell of an oily rag- and probably should- but every organisation needs reliable, concrete support from all its members.
3. The commitment to meet, physically, with other members of the Order, whenever possible. For me, Christian discipleship is almost unimaginable apart from the mutual support found in the life of the church; similarly in our Franciscan pilgrimage.
4. The annual review of vows and annual reporting, which to me are part of the “spiritual stocktaking” I need to do from time to time. Golly! Did I undertake to do that back then? I did! Hmm, how have I been doing.....

Others may have other ideas about all of this.

What has gone right for you since your profession?

What has gone otherwise?

What more might we learn from each other?

Pax et bonum, Tony S. Mangawhai Northland

Calling

"It was their movement that fascinated him. Their motion was a pattern scribbled in the air which disappeared as soon as it was made. There was no permanence in these tiny signatures, no monument to themselves left behind. That is what he wanted to be: a tiny signature in the air that thrilled someone who saw it, but....as anonymous as a lizard's zig-zag darting on a pink Assisi wall. His movement would be his poem."

Murray Bodo *The Journey and the Dream—a Life of St. Francis*

As lizards shed their skins in growth,
it's similarly so for saints, I think
—but more a matter of relinquishment
of the comforts and entitlements
we others cherish,
and rarely ever think about
—like how the cost of ownership
might be borne more heavily
on our behalf by someone else who makes
the warp and wefted piece of cotton
into the shirts we wear upon our backs.
It's a story that would leave us quite appalled!

Could we then as Francis did,
briefly step aside, and out of it
—and after consideration, and a bit more lightly clad,
step right in again to dance with him in simpler steps,
to find our mind and body disciplined
with sufficiency as best;
—and distributing more from self,
that others simply live?
And in the end accept — as he did then,
that when our Sister Death comes calling,
our mite of little deeds is simply honoured fondly
in others' memories while they last,
as some quiet impetus for change;
—then rest content to leave the fame,
and the mausoleums to Kings and Presidents
for the humble dust, as he once intended?

Continues next page

Calling continues

*And when true joy reveals itself,
from life's acquaintance with our roughest passage,
to full delights' extent of heart and mind,
could our compassion
bend to neighbours' plight
where sad impediments reign despairingly
beneath rented roofs with stone cold hearths,
and many suffer much for others' gain?
Could we raise our voices then,
to help address refurbishment;
—and call disturbingly upon authority when injustice
tears community apart
—help make the resurrection happen daily
—stoop down to hear another's pain,
—speak to raise esteem;
and burnish, or refine
the tarnished gold among the drift and dross
we find tipped out by rigidities of thought
onto leaner streets?
Or more tangibly re-enact a miracle
with gifted sandwiches,
and some fish and chips.
We can pass the daily peace to all as equals:—to the proud and self-possessed,
as well as least;
and host our own rebirth for *Papa-tû-â-nuku*
and all her creatures,
with a newly planted seedling
here beneath our *Southern Cross*.
*If this and that,
and mindfulness was so...*
then incrementally we repair what he was bidden
once,
who heard his Master's voice speak clearly,
"Mend my Church "
from San Damiano's other one.
Then is that not for us encouragement enough!*



Richard Roberts — 2023

Gubbio's Losses and Gains

Gubbio is bursting at the seams after welcoming three younger members last year, Sarah, Karen, and Ingrid, and six new members this year, Claire, Karen, Sean, Mike, Sarah and Jean. It has been great to welcome Ailsa back after her nine-year stay in the States. All this has been so



encouraging after losing Maggie, Art, Richard and Christopher to the South Island. We were able to say our special good-byes to Richard and Christopher in February when Novice Jai, who is Fijian-born, hosted a delicious Indian meal at her home.

We now have 14 Professed members, 5 Novices and 4 Enquirers – plus two Professed members of the Order of Ecumenical Franciscans (OEF), who are valued members of Gubbio. Most of us are keeping in good health, but a few of us are very fragile and, though they have difficulty attending meetings, they make an enormous contribution to the Franciscan family by their faithful prayers.

Gubbio meets six-weekly on Saturdays for sharing of news, Community Obedience, Eucharist, packed and later on shared lunch and study. We are very fortunate to have had both Rev Graeme Webb and Rev Reg Weeks celebrate for us this year. Using study notes compiled by Christopher, we finished the last chapters of Robyn Parkin's *Reflections on the Journey* and are now a good way through *Franciscan Footprints* by Helen Julian CSF, with Penny, Ailsa and Claire leading so far.

Thanks to Convenors Virginia and Bill, Gubbio met at St Aidan's Church in Miramar in February, in April at Robin Clark's home in Waikanae, in May at St Ronan's, Eastbourne, in June at St Aidan's, Miramar and in August at St Mark's, Raumati Beach, when we remembered the Transitus of St Clare. We also marked the Transitus at Chaplain Jenny's home, followed by a simple café lunch. After Chapter, we will meet at Robin's home again and mark St Francis tide with a Quiet Day.

Continues next page

Gubbio 's losses and gains, continues

For our final gathering for the year, we plan to join the Wellington Cathedral midday Eucharist as usual and then lunch together at a café nearby.

Gubbio Area tertiaries continue to endeavour to live simply and give service.

A representative group of eight of us leads communion services and home group Bible study, works as a Cathedral Chaplain, knits beanies for seafarers and baby clothes for those in need, weeds gardens, grows and shares vegies and fruit, composts, uses the washing line, minimises plastic use, buys local, uses public transport or walks, supports charities, hosts neighbourhood meals, shares accommodation with people in need, leads Bible study, writes Bible studies, preaches, works in conflict resolution services and works as an environmental watchdog advisor, takes Communion to a dementia unit, visits the elderly, is the parish shopper, drives, provides food for Alpha and the church plant, writes minutes and newsletters for church committees, pays for scholarships, has stopped buying clothes, takes people shopping, to medical appointments or for coffee, takes a lady out as respite care for her husband, belongs to a spiritual group, lives more practically in response to climate change issues, makes meals for any neighbours, friends and parishioners in need, bakes for Te Hahi, the Police initiative for those suffering family harm, helps with Communion at two rest homes, gives clothing to charity, gives to the local Foodbank, prepares food for the church plant dinners and Alpha dinners, helps a refugee family, recycles, helps the Eco-Church, supports charities in environmental issues, animal welfare and human rights, gives practical assistance in her retirement village such as shopping for others, collects up dirty dinner dishes, serves on the library committee, mans the village shop and even fixes microwaves!



Rosemary Jamieson, Chapter Rep for Gubbio

The 3 “G”s of Water Grievance – Generosity – Gratitude

May I invite you, before you read this reflection, to pour yourself a glass of water and light a candle.

Many of us have said it, many of us have felt the devastating effects of it, and many of us wish it would stop RAINING!

If you have visited St Isaac’s, you will know two important facts: The first is that we have, until recently, been dependent on a dam for all our water, and secondly, every Kaitiaki will have a story to tell that begins, ‘we have a water problem.’ This past autumn, two rainwater tanks have been installed—just below Gordon House and at Alverna. Yes, I am thankful. However, carrying my drinking water across a couple of paddocks was a far cry from those in rural Africa who walk six kilometres to haul 18 litres of water, with an estimated 200 million hours used for this task every day by women and children. (1 End Note)



The **grievance** has to be that more than one in every 10 people on the planet lack basic drinking water. Every day, 800 children are dying of diarrhoea attributed to poor water, and a staggering 2.3 billion people live without access to basic sanitation. I hasten to add that

it would be a serious mistake to think that, here in Aotearoa; all of our communities have access to clean water. (2 End Note)

Just pause, take a drink from your glass, and lament that 90 percent of all natural disasters are water-related and it is considered that all ‘wars’ in the future will be fought over WATER.

Lord have mercy

We are all well aware of the necessity of water. From keeping us alive and quenching our thirst to washing the dirt from our bodies and our food, not to mention its role in producing that food. Our survival depends on water. But what does such a valuable life force mean spiritually?

Continues next page

The 3 “G”s of water continues

Many cultures use water as a sacred practice, drinking or bathing in water from mountains, wells and springs, believing that water has the ability to absorb prayers, cleanse and bestow good medicine. Last year, I stood at the Ghats and witnessed Hindu devotees take a holy dip in the River Ganga to purify the soul. The sacred rite of immersing the corpse before it is burned is an incredible sight to behold. Similarly, Islam has a daily ritual of ablution, called *Wudhu*, to cleanse inside and outside the body before prayers. In Christianity, the ritual of baptism is representative of death to self and a rise into new life with Christ, a cleansing from sin and symbol of new life. As a symbol of life, water represents divine **generosity**.



Just pause, take a drink from your glass, and give thanks for Heni Te Kiri Karamu, who risked her own life to give water to the wounded during the battle of Gate Pa, Tauranga on 29th April 1864. And the many today who will offer a cup of water to the stranger in their midst. “Anyone who gives you a cup of water in my name because you belong to the Messiah will certainly not lose their reward” (Mark 9:41, NIV).

Lord have mercy



Continued from previous page

A great variety of writers let water organize their imagination, creativity and art. Rather than look to the mystics for *he whakatauki tapu*, let me point you to a well-known musician, Paul Simon. Now in his 81st year, Simon ruminates on mortality and faith through a series of dreams. *Seven Psalms* offers a provocative reflection on life, death and transition in an album that begins and ends with bells asking us to wake into this one precious life that is ours to live.

(3 End Note)



Just pause, take a drink from your glass, and marvel

Dip your hand in heaven's waters

God's imagination

Dip your hand in heaven's waters

All of life's abundance in a

Drop of condensation

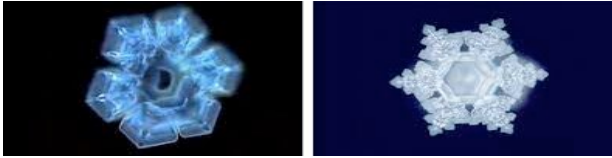
Dip your hand in heaven's waters

Lord have mercy

Generally, when we drink water, we tend to be unaware of its significance. Habitually, we drink it hastily. However, we can drink water with intention—an intention of **gratitude**. In his research into the mysteries of water, Dr Masaru Emoto discovered that when water was held in love or was thanked and spoken to, in the way we talk to and encourage plants to grow, the frozen water crystals were beautifully shaped, but when they were told they were evil, the crystals were very misshapen. This discovery can lead one to wonder what the wider implications are. Our bodies are mostly water, 60 percent, and if these thoughts and intentions can influence water then how do our thoughts and intentions about ourselves affect the water in our bodies and our souls? (4 End Note)

Crystals shown under the microscope, continues on next page

The 3 “G”s of Water, continues



Just pause take a drink from your glass—Amen

The YouTube links below are really worth taking the time to watch, further informing your prayer and next glass of water.

(1) World vision

<https://www.worldvision.com.au/global-water-crisis-facts>

(2) 'Stop polluting our rivers' Hokianga people plead for sovereignty over their water (3minutes)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yvC1KRBKKh>

(3) Paul Simon (30 minutes)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ANtntuDslnk>

(4) Masaru Emoto's Experiment in Gratitude (both about 4 minutes)

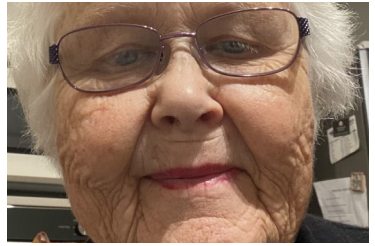
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SDNhH8deZPq>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MMfCvdyaNGQ>

Finally, if you would like to stay at St Isaac's Retreat House, at Opononi on the Hokianga Harbour, please contact Maranu Gascoigne (below, with Gia) on 0210717033 or (09) 4058439 stisaacs.wardens@xtra.co.nz and she will send you more details about accommodation available. There is no set fee and we will graciously accept a koha.



Juniper Forest North and the Seculars



Each year we meet with the Seculars and this year it was our turn to organise. A good number, for a public holiday weekend, met together at St Thomas Anglican Church in Kohimarama. As it was Bonaventure's day - Saturday 15th July we chose to explore two aspects of his theology - creation and humanity.

Anne Moody TSSF introduced Bonaventure's understanding of the Trinity as it held his theology. She told us that they had used Ilia Delio's book - *Simply Bonaventure* to try to keep it simple. His imagery was wonderful - "Creation is like a river which flows from a spring, spreads through the land to purify and fructify it, and eventually flows back to its point of origin".

Paul Hitchfield, Secular, read a paper on Bonaventure's theology of creation and Anne spoke to his theology of humanity. Each session was followed by group discussions around questions using Biblical readings - Colossians 1: 15-20 for creation and Psalm 139: 1-17 and 23 for humanity. It was a challenging day but people said they had learnt about Bonaventure and could mostly understand it!

Submitted by Anne Moody, Juniper Forest

Companions' Corner

Dear Fellow Companions, haere, haere, haere mai.
You are most welcome to submit any piece that you feel expresses how you are in your journey, as a group or as Individuals.

We welcome your contributions.
Please send your writing or prayers for inclusion in Tau, to
penelope.kennett@gmail.com
Nga mihi nui

Penny Kennett, Editor, on behalf of the Third Order whanau

Emily Colgan of Juniper Forest Installed as St John's Manukura

A significant event took place at The College of St John the Evangelist on Thursday 10th August 2023 when Emily Colgan, TSSF, below, was installed as Manukura (Principal) of the College.

Emily, professed 16 02 2013, within The Third Order Society of St Francis, has taught at the Theological College for many years and will be known to many of our Order from her valuable contributions in many spheres of the life of our community.

It was with delight that a number of members of Juniper Forest, our Minister Provincial Blair Matheson and Rev Peter Bargh, Provincial Secretary, attended to witness her installation and support Emily at the Powhiri, and Eucharist. This event was memorable with all three tikanga of the Anglican Church in Aotearoa NZ, present and in full voice. The preacher was The Most Reverend Don Tamihere and The Most Reverend Sione Uluilakepa presided at the Eucharist.

We offer Emily congratulations on her appointment, and our continued prayers and loving support for her in this work.



Robert Santa, Pip Colgan, Elizabeth, Margaret, Tai's sister Maria, Tai, Emily, Blair, Peter B

Elizabeth Farrands, Chaplain, Juniper Forest

Rest in Peace Barb Lash

Barb progressed steadily through the stages of engagement in tssf: initially as an Inquirer, Postulant, as a Novice then being fully professed in 2018.



Barb's spiritual life was a rich one which she shared with her fellow Franciscans and it was Carolyn Hughes' privilege to share Barb's journey on the Franciscan path to her becoming professed in 2019. Barb was passionate about supporting new members through this journey to, in turn, become Novices.

Barb brought several strands to her Franciscan work:

1. The discipline and rigour gained from studying for her maths degree from Victoria University.
2. Her capacity to see the big picture through her analysis of statistics enabling Government departments to base their planning for the future. Her skill with figures and budget planning has been, more recently, very helpful in her parish work.
3. While completing her maths degree, Barb also became a Christian and her other passion expressed itself in her researches into advanced theology and reflecting on her own spiritual experiences. Of particular interest was her in depth research into the Eucharist and study of Greek enabling her to read the Gospels in the original and share her nuanced commentaries.

Barb was in some ways an intensely private person. However she expressed her innermost thoughts and feelings through the medium of poetry and collected her poems into two self published books; *Stones in God's Wall: Poems of spiritual adventure*, *Poems of Place*, and in 2018, *The Narrowing Stream: Maturing with the Seasons of God*.

My lasting impression of her was her warmth and interest in others - even when she was very ill, she remained engaged and enthusiastic. She evoked respect and affection among her Franciscan family and we will all miss her *and* her bountiful gifts.

***I want that kind of trust that throws myself into the safe arms of God.
To feel his embrace and joy at my safe arrival.***

Barb Lash, *Faith as a Child*

Carolyn Hughes, Nelson

Nelson Area's Virtual Hermitage



At our July Virtual Hermitage (Zoom) meeting, we considered the ongoing celebrations of St Francis 800-year anniversary and dipped into the 2023 topic of *The Nativity Scene by St. Francis at Greccio*, pictured above. It was helpful to be able to access the website from one of Blair's emails: <http://www.centenarifrancescani.org/index.php/it/>. We downloaded and watched a short video from the website entitled *Santuario di Greccio – Centenario 2023*. The Italian soundtrack was beautiful and came with English subtitles!

What makes Greccio unique in the life of St. Francis is what happened there at Christmastime in 1223, three years before he died. He came there wanting to celebrate Christmas in a new way, a midnight Mass with a real ox and donkey and with townspeople gathered around witnessing this live Christmas crèche. Christmas was the dearest of feasts because it revealed the profound humility of God in choosing to become a little baby, helpless and in need of us, just as we were when we were newborn babies.

For St. Francis, Christmas was linked inseparably to the Passion as well, because to become a human being means suffering and death. And there is already suffering in the Incarnation in God's becoming human, leaving behind the trappings of divinity, emptying himself, as St. Paul says in his letter to the Philippians, "Becoming obedient to death, even death on a cross" (2:8). And all of this sprang from profound love. St. Francis' first biographer, Brother Thomas of Celano, said of Francis, "Indeed, so thoroughly did the humility of the Incarnation and the charity of the Passion occupy his memory that he scarcely wanted to think of anything else".

Ian Lothian, South and Nelson

Molecule of Triune Marvels

How yielding water is,
when we stroke our fingers through it!
But then again, consider how it sculpts, disrupts the land:
Relentless, inexorable! - in carving, moulding - re-arranging.

Given time, even granite bows to its erosion.
No wonder then, the respectful, Japanese allusion,
for those possessed of patient and enduring resolution,
in exclaiming: "How much - water - there is, in that person!"

But water's full of surprises.
See - one scene can comprise all its triple phases.
At altitude and cooler latitudes we feel its icy firmness,
While planet over, its spirit-like, cloudy vapour wraps around us.

Back at shore level, where we marvel at its softness, Surprise again!
- to find, how salty-sea-like is the water surging, right here, inside us.

Christopher Diggle, South



St Peter's Pool - a 'kettle lake', Franz Josef Valley. Chris Diggle

**I do not at all understand the mystery of grace -
only that it meets us where we are but does not leave
us where it found us.**

- Anne Lamott -



A Day for Rejoicing for all King's Companions

On Sunday the 30th July, John Hislop became a Novice with King's Companions in Taranaki at St Paul's Church, Okato, supported by Third Order members, his Lions' Club friends and locals. The service was followed by a light lunch, and a lovely cake made by Lesley, a professed member of TSSF. We look forward to sharing in John's insights and challenges, which will no doubt challenge us as well, on living the charism of Francis and Clare. The Reverend Phil Dyer is his Novice counsellor so has helped him make the choice to continue the Franciscan Journey. We are thrilled to have him on board and look forward to growing with him in loving and following Christ.



Phil Dyer, John Hislop, Hélène Young

Blessings

Hélène, Chaplain for King's Companions, Waikato and Taranaki

Wishing

by Ella Wheeler Wilcox

*Do you wish the world were better?
Let me tell you what to do.*

*Set a watch upon your actions,
Keep them always straight and true.*

*Rid your mind of selfish motives,
Let your thoughts be clean and high.*

*You can make a little Eden
Of the sphere you occupy.*

Do you wish the world were wiser?

Well, suppose you make a start,

By accumulating wisdom

In the scrapbook of your heart;

*Do not waste one page on folly;
Live to learn, and learn to live
If you want to give men knowledge
You must get, ere you give.*

Do you wish the world were happy?

*Then remember day by day
Just to scatter seeds of kindness*

*As you pass along the way,
For the pleasures of the many*

*May be ofttimes traced to one,
As the hand that plants the acorn
Shelters armies from the sun.*

Submitted by **Janice Thorne**

Bronwyn's Invitation

All Franciscans are invited to join Juniper Forest North on Monday nights on Zoom at 7:30 for evening prayer. Please be a few minutes early.

To mark The Transitus on 3rd October, there will be a service on Zoom at 8 pm. This is a quiet and contemplative service; all you need is a quiet, darkened room, and a candle.

Please use this link to join in.

It is a permanent link and is used for Monday nights and will be used for The Transitus.

Passcode (if required): 285493

Zoom link: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82541292583?pwd=RFNyaW44K2dyTUorMTB0UXBDdVEwQT09>

The Rule of Iona

At our August meeting in Christchurch Mike Baker led us in a very interesting reflection on the Rule of the Iona Community, and in particular the approach of the Iona community to sharing their financial and other resources. Iona Abbey is located on the island of Iona, just off the Isle of Mull on the West Coast of Scotland. It is one of the oldest Christian religious centres in Western Europe.



The abbey was a focal point for the spread of Christianity throughout Scotland and marks the foundation of a monastic community by St. Columba, when Iona was part of the Kingdom of Dál Riata on the western seaboard of Scotland and north-eastern Ireland. Saint Aidan's served as a monk at Iona, before helping to re-establish Christianity in Northumberland, on the island of Lindisfarne.

Iona Abbey is the spiritual home of the Iona Community, an ecumenical Christian religious order, whose headquarters are in Glasgow. The Abbey remains a popular site of Christian pilgrimage today.

The Iona Community Rule of Life is the commitment which members affirm annually, and is a common discipline of:

1. Daily prayer, worship with others and regular engagement with the Bible and other material which nourishes us.
2. Working for justice and peace, wholeness and reconciliation in our localities, society and the whole creation.
3. Supporting one another in prayer and by meeting, communicating, and accounting with one another for the use of our gifts, money and time, our use of the earth's resources.
4. Sharing in the corporate life and organisation of the Community.

It was fascinating to reflect on the common ground, and differences, between the Iona Rule and our own TSSF Rule of Life. Many thanks to Mike, for leading us.

Ian Lothian, South

Lambeth Awards 2023

Shining a Light on Outstanding Effort and Dedication

Justin Welby, the Archbishop of Canterbury recently announced that Brother Christopher John SSF has been awarded the Dunstan Award for Prayer and the Religious Life For a lifetime of outstanding service through SSF across the Anglican Communion.

Brother Christopher John is the Minister General of the Society of St Francis. He has provided a lifetime of service through the Society of St Francis. An irenic and careful leader, he is respected, very able and intelligent. He has the confidence both of the Order and of the wider Church.

He has served as Guardian, General Secretary and then Minister Provincial prior to assuming responsibility as Minister General.

He founded the Korean SSF friary and grew the order there quietly for many years as guardian. He served in the chaplaincy to ACC-17 ,the Anglican Consultative Council, and the 2022 Lambeth Conference, leading international teams of members of different religious communities and providing pastoral support with grace and insight.

Earlier in his ministry he made significant contributions to education and training development for non-stipendiary clergy, and as part of the Franciscan community in Auckland worked in various mission and educational programmes which were influential and effective in terms of Franciscan spirituality - a lasting impact.

He has completed postgraduate a Masters in Franciscan Studies with distinction and recently received a PhD in Peace and Conflict Studies. Brother Christopher John is a humble, insightful, dedicated and effective leader whose understated contribution has provided outstanding leadership across the Anglican Communion.



Christopher John, next to Archbishop Justin Welby, at Lambeth Palace

Portiuncula and Joy

We were so blessed with such a beautiful sunny day, when Dorothy and Raechel met at Val's home. Our thoughts went out to Rosemary and Bryan as they had just returned from a family funeral in Auckland. Nettie is hoping to be able to come back home as soon as their home is fixed following the damage done in the cyclone. Raechel is expecting to have surgery for her cataracts in Hamilton soon. Jeremy is in Napier for the day for another reason, but unfortunately unable to join us. Dorothy keeps in touch with other members of our group.

We looked particularly at days 28 and 29 of our Principles, on Joy. We considered the May 2023 article of *The Franciscan*, a First Order publication from England, on forgiveness and reconciliation. Dorothy will be posting out a copy to those who were not at the meeting. Called The Gift of Others, it considered G.K. Chesterton's "I am" as being the main focus of our lives, and nobody else is like us, and who we are. He relates it to what is so wrong in the world today. The author of the article, Heston Groenewald, touches on Desmond Tutu and reconciliation, "My humanity is bound up in yours, for we can only be human together." Also, he shares Joan Chittister saying, "Others are the bridge to our own development. They make up what is wanting in us." We praise God for the gifts of others in our lives, whoever they are, what they believe, and whatever they do. Love is the bridge between you and everything. In that is joy, a life of joy, and one relevant to our Principles. When you receive the copy, I would encourage you to spend time with it, and what it is saying to you.

We organised the dates for meeting this year:

Thursday, August 10th, The Transitus of St. Clare. Dorothy will organise a zoom meeting for us.

Saturday, September 30th. Possibly meet in Woodville.

Tuesday, October 3 Transitus of St. Francis. At All Saint's Church, 23 Puketapu Road., Taradale, at 5 pm. The Companions are invited to join with us.

Saturday, December 2 at Rosemary and Bryan's home.

May you always know the inward joy that is gifted to us wherever we are in life's journey.



Val Chapman

When You have Only Cold Water

Recently, my gas hot water heater conked out completely. I washed my dishes by boiling the jug twice and had a cold shower. I managed the latter by simultaneously imagining that I was getting into the ocean for a midwinter swim, and that I was back in Africa where in some of the places I visited, effortlessly obtained running water of any temperature would be fabulous luxury. The best feature of a cold shower is when it stops, and you get the pleasantly tingling skin. At this point, when it seemed not so bad after all, I



had a conversation with myself - Do I need to have running hot water? Millions of people around the world live without running hot water. To have it puts me in a privileged minority. Does the imperative to live simply require me to forgo the things that others would regard as luxury? Well no, because that would mean no house, no food, no medical care. In New Zealand running hot water is not considered an optional extra; building codes and rules for landlords are very strict: lack of hot water is considered to be an emergency and must be rectified within 24 hours.

"Living simply" seems to be influenced, indeed defined, by time and place. My pioneer foremothers would have thought running hot water a dream. Here I am in 21st Century New Zealand where it is considered to be not only essential, but legally required.

Even in my own lifetime I can see the "creep" of things transforming from "nice to have" to "must have". I am not free to choose not to have many modern conveniences.

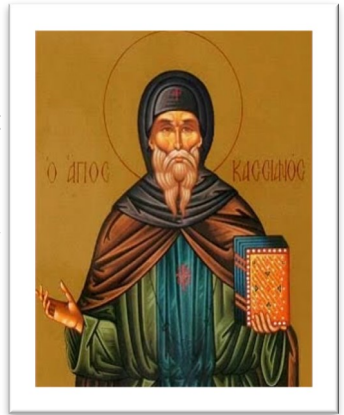
Continues next page

Continued from previous page

I consulted St John Chrysostom's book *On Living Simply*—as Christian/Franciscan/socialist a document you could ever hope for. He talks about “the rich” and “the poor”.

I imagine that in his day the distinction was very clear. It is not so clear today.

I could make a very persuasive argument that I am rich, and an equally convincing one that I am quite poor. Both arguments would require comparison with others, which is never a good idea, and creates a confusing mental spiral that achieves nothing.



I have not been able to formulate a definition of “living simply” that stands alone, and is independent from comparison with others, and survives scrutiny. The Franciscan definition “holding things lightly” seems to be something of a get out of jail free card. I can fill my house with expensive stuff and tell myself that I am holding onto it lightly. No problem. It seems to me that seeing myself as rich or poor is an act of will. Deciding which one I am will have a profound influence over how I live. Second thought: Perhaps being both at the same time answers all. Holding both notions of wealth and poverty in my mind and heart simultaneously will guide my decisions about how to live.

To be completely honest, this conversation with myself about the hot water heater was very short: the Sensible Nurse part of me spoke up quickly and loudly about hygiene and practicality.

One cold shower in May might be novel and quite bracing when I’m in my sixties, but would be an entirely different thing in August when I’m in my seventies. And hot water is a bulwark against disease - always a consideration!

The gasfitter obviously thought the matter more urgent than I did and arrived within an hour of being called. As I had my hot shower and blessed him, I wondered if being mindful and grateful for a luxury redeems it at all.

Bronwyn Emson, Juniper Forest North

Equal Dignity



The inherent dignity of all humans is a cornerstone of the Franciscan understanding of the world.

Starting with Francis seeking the company of lepers, who at the time were – quite literally – kept on the margins of society, Franciscan sisters and brothers embrace those that are excluded or left behind.

Today, Franciscans continue to oppose the many different persisting forms of discrimination, extreme poverty, and inequalities.

Around the world, they support marginalized peoples and communities in affirmation that all of us have equal dignity and inherent human rights that need to be defended.

This takes many forms – from establishing networks and shelters that provide aid and protection to taking to the streets in solidarity. In doing so, Franciscans often share a lived experience with affected people and communities.

One of our goals is to ensure that the concerns of Franciscans, supporting, and working with people experiencing marginalization and poverty are heard and acted on by relevant United Nations bodies.

Franciscans International

Storm

Sea birds, sentinels,
fleeing the black storm
brewing in the Strait
cry out their warnings
what's up ahead:

the rising wind
the stinging sand
the bone-chilling rain
the lightning-strikes:
the beach a killing zone?

The soul says:

Shall we see light?
Torrents wash us clean?
Wind blow through our minds?

Shall we know ourselves
the storm over and gone?
The beach still, the sea calm
rainbow preaching peace?
Shalôm?



Raymond Pelly *Heartscapes* (Austin Macauley Publishers, 2021)

Submitted by Bill Atkin, Gubbio

For your diary

2023 Chapter 25 - 27 August
Vaughan Park, Auckland

Area Retreats Please let us know as other members may wish to join you

2024 Chapter
1 - 3 October Vaughan Park

Convocation 3-6 October
Vaughan Park

National Retreat 2025 or 2026 to be discussed
at Chapter 2024

Lord, teach me how to pray.
Let my prayers for others today be a blessing.
Let me not forget that there are people praying for me.

AMEN

