

# Scotland's Third Order Franciscan Spiritual Journal



November 21st 2007 - Newsletter 1



Dear Friends of St Francis in the Third Order,

This brief email comes to you as an invitation. At least, I hope you will see it that way!

On my own heart and mind over the last few years, since I have been back in Scotland, is this question:

**'What is the gift we Third Order folk have been given by Christ for His Crucified and Risen Body Scotland?'**

I, for one, can't get away from it - That picture of Francis in the little Church below Santa Chiara in Assisi, San Damiano is speaking to us! There Francis knelt before the icon crucifix and heard the words that have universal implications: 'Francis, rebuild my Church'. The rest is NOT simply history. Perhaps our spirituality is about doing the same and hearing the same, but in our context. Being a member of the Third Order is not for our spiritual development, useful though that may be, but it is for The Other... the impoverished, the alienated.... Maybe we have some small contribution to help our Church regain its vision and its Gospel determination. Or do you see this as a piece of flighty arrogance?

What I wondered is whether you might be interested in sharing responses with other TSSF members in Scotland to some 'pointers' about Franciscan spirituality which I would send out through email. If you had some feedback, questions or comments, I wouldn't necessarily respond to them myself, but would produce (with Nancy Adams help!) something like this Third Order Newsletter which was a kind of spiritual journal of our Order in Scotland. I would receive your comments and then we would 'download'

them into the Newsletter so that as many in the Order attracted by this process could share in the 'conversation'...

For example, if there is enough interest in my suggestion, I would perhaps begin with a few words on the practicalities of Franciscan life-style, prayer etc...

This exercise, if you are interested, could lead towards a major Scottish Third Order Gathering in 2009 (Summer, most likely) when we would come together to experience our calling at a deep level, receive some input and training, in order that our Franciscan life-style was directed towards the renewal of the Body in Scotland.

All this may read rather vaguely. What I feel strongly about is the possibility of this growing organically and not being dependent on one person's ideas.

I look forward to hearing your responses to this invitation. Please reply to the e-mail address below

The Passion of Christ in the marks of St Francis, mark your spirit for the Love of humanity

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