

THE THIRD ORDER of the SOCIETY OF SAINT FRANCIS
European Province

ELECTION ADDRESS for LINK TERTIARY AND TRUSTEE, Robert Dimmick



Professed 1996; formerly Secretary of Berkshire Area and member of Provincial Communications Group with responsibility for the Intercessions List; now Area Minister for Berkshire (since 2010) and Secretary/Treasurer of the Central Fund (since 2013).

My previous experiences have given me a fair knowledge of the Order at local, provincial and international levels. I was employed for 39 years in the computer industry and have good IT skills and numeracy. As a member (at times employee chair) of the company's UK and European consultative forums, I needed to communicate with many employees. Contact with people was also important when I was parliamentary candidate and a local councillor. I have considerable experience of committee work, and some knowledge of the responsibilities of a charity trustee as PCC member and former treasurer of my local church.

As Link Tertiary I would aim to get a feel for the life of the Third Order in all the Areas in the cluster, and bring this to discussions in Provincial Chapter. I hope to contribute both practical experience and a total commitment to our spiritual aims. I would seek to keep everyone informed of Chapter's thoughts and decisions, to enable Tertiaries to participate fully. We are not just members of our local groups and areas; we are part of a Province throughout Britain and some other parts of Europe, and of a world-wide Order. Our focus should not be on ourselves; we should be a resource for the whole Church and its mission to the world.

I was born in 1947, and studied maths at Cambridge. In 1970 I married Margaret (also a Tertiary, who was priested in 2003 and is now retired from self-supporting ministry). We have two adult children. In my job, I was a software developer and support specialist, and a trade union activist at ICL (now Fujitsu). I retired in 2008.

In 1976 I was baptised following my conversion from atheism. In 1980 we moved to Reading and became members of Caversham Park Church, a Local Ecumenical Partnership where we have worshipped ever since. We were both Professed in 1996 and I became an authorised local preacher in 2008. We are committed to ecumenism, and I also preach occasionally in URC and Methodist churches.

I have been an active member of the Labour Party since 1962, and contested the 1979 general election in North Norfolk. From 1984 to 1992 I served on Reading Borough Council, ending as Mayor in 1991-2. While my faith inspires my political activity, I will not seek to impose my views on others. The Church and the Order should be engaged with the world, but not partisan.

Since 2001 I have been the Chair of the Reading Düsseldorf Association. This has given rise to a wider interest in Germany, and as a result I have attended the Protestant Kirchentag three times (and am going again in June).

For recreation I cycle, not very far nor very fast.