

THIRD ORDER



news

Issue 55

July 2015

NOTES FROM PROVINCIAL CHAPTER, JUNE 2015

I attended my final Provincial Chapter in June this year so I was given the 'privilege' of writing up what we did and decided on – or even continuing to work on.

In a further move towards openness, it was decided that, at each chapter there would be an observer from one of the areas. The first one was June Freshney from the Lincoln Area who said she was blown away by the care taken to be as transparent as possible and to listen to the concerns of tertiaries yet it has to be acknowledged that there is still some way to go overcome negative feelings about Chapter.

All the discussions and decisions are taken surrounded by prayer – we are in chapel four times a day. In addition there is much banter and laughter. I really will miss all this.

There was a long discussion about how we treat older tertiaries who can no longer get to meetings and may be getting frail. An Assisi Booklet is being explored on the whole subject – looking at the positives as well as the negatives of ageing.

At present we have only one Third Order Office and tertiaries have been asking for more resources. This is being explored, along with an alternative Eucharist. If you have any resources then please do let your Link tertiary know.

Two discussions took up a long time, the first being finance. The main consideration concerned the format for the budget, in order to meet the demands of the Charity Commission. The second major discussion was regarding General Chapter which will

take place over two days in 2016. This really should involve everyone as preliminary discussions will be taking place at local group level so it will be 'bottom up' not 'top down'. I think it all sounds *really* exciting.

However, it won't take place unless there are volunteers to do a variety of jobs including looking after the bags. If you think you can help, look out for details in TON.

Peter Dixon, the Provincial Novice Guardian, has been working hard putting together new postulant material. The new novice material has already been distributed and postulant notes will be coming soon.

It is important that, at the postulant stage there is a willingness to be open-minded and to contribute to the life of the order. As a follow up to the discussion on ageing, there is no age limit on Franciscans beginning their journey, but should be capable of taking a full part in the order.

There was a reminder that novicing and profession should take place at an area meeting not in the local group although renewal can take place locally. In addition we were asked to remind ANGs that the manual is given at novicing to mark entry into the order. Pages from the manual can be downloaded from the website if they are needed earlier.

There were a number of other issues which need to be passed on. Training for local group convenors is in the planning stage so watch out for further information.

The First Order brothers and sisters have asked that tertiaries make contact with the smaller houses. In this way we forge links across the three orders.

Mollie Kingham, the provincial membership secretary has made a plea that the areas let her know as quickly as possible if there are changes of roles or addresses and when a postulant becomes a novice. This keeps the records straight and stops information going to the wrong person. She also needs a volunteer to help her compile the intercessions list which is constantly changing.

Averil Swanton wanted to remind us that there is an agreed process when a name is brought to chapter requesting leave of absence. Chapter needs some information about all that has gone on before so that info needs to go to the Link Tertiary.

And finally, on a personal note, I have loved being on chapter and it has been one of the best experiences of my time as a tertiary. The most moving part of June chapter was when prayers of farewell were said to Roger Healey and me as we were leaving and when Wendy Scott and Peter Thompson were commissioned as our replacements. When a call goes out in future for someone to volunteer to serve on chapter, do take time to pray about whether you might be called to serve in this way.

Jan Davies

FUTURE CHAPTER DATES

2015 16-18 October
2016 11-13 February
 16-18 June
 14-16 October



ELECTION TO PROFESSION

The election to Profession by their Areas of 14 Novices was ratified by TSSF Provincial Chapter after prayerful consideration on 12 June 2015.

Winifred Watkins	Canterbury
Mark Hoskin	Solent
Judy Benham	Solent
Karen Wainright	Devon
Alice Oakey	Devon
Sue Blackall	Devon
Jennifer Kennedy	Wales
Martin Cruiks	East Anglia
Amy Simeons	East Anglia
George Wilson	Cumbria
Nikki Wilson	Cumbria
Iain Greenwood	Cumbria
Clive Gray	Borders
Jason Melia-O'Brien	Ireland

COMMUNITY OBEDIENCE

There has been a request for alternative daily readings, other than the Principles. The short answer is 'that cannot be'. We are obliged to be obedient to the Rule, which together with the Constitution, the forms of Profession and Renewal, include the daily reading of the Principles, set within the two prayers specified. It is the Rule that binds us together as a worldwide Order. We acknowledge this at Profession and those who offer service to the Order commit themselves to this when they are asked at the Blessing of a Ministry, 'Will you see that the Rule of the Third Order is maintained with love, patience and understanding.'

This is not to say that we cannot include commentaries on the Principles or also use extra daily readings on Franciscan themes, using material from our roots and other sources, but the daily reading of the Principles is a given. Unlike the Principles, any other material would be in addition and optional. In his last letter to the Order, our Minister General re-emphasised the importance of 'reflecting on the Principle of the day and praying for the Order worldwide and provincial.'

A further query has arisen about the use of the title Br and Sr. As a secular Order we are not entitled to call ourselves by the title of Br or Sr; nor are we to wear anything which could be mistaken for a brown habit, or which could cause confusion that we may be members the First Order. Francis asked members of the Third Order to dress and eat simply, not to wear any kind of uniform. We are identified by the wearing of the Tau cross, which is usually our professional cross. Francis also instructed the Tertiaries to meet monthly to care for each other. This is something of which we might remind those who say they don't like meetings!

*Averil Swanton
June 2015*

**SHIRLEY ROSE'S LIFE-PROFESSION
IN THE ROMAN CATHOLIC THIRD ORDER
SECULAR,
Glasgow, 5 July, 2015.**

On 5 July, I went to Glasgow with Freda Alexander for our transferring TSSF Sister, Shirley Rose's Life-Profession into the Roman Catholic Third Order Secular. It was at 'The Franciscan Church of St. John Duns Scotus' in the Gorbals, where there is also a friary. A Franciscan Friar came from a Custos in London, via Dublin, to receive her vows and those of a local man called Jim, and to celebrate Holy Communion.

It was a lovely service in a very fine modern church and I got a warm blessing at the altar. Guitars accompanied 'All creatures of our God and king' and 'Make me an instrument of Thy peace.' They also accompanied a joyful chant I didn't know but soon learned, and after the Mass the guitarists and some of us sang 'Brother Sun and Sister Moon' from the film.

There was tea/coffee and sandwiches in the hall afterwards and so we had a chance to mingle with our Roman Catholic Brothers and Sisters, which, apart from going to support Shirley and celebrate with her, was the other reason for our trip. It was very good.

Lawrence Osborn (Glasgow TSSF) was there and I met Susan Rossi, a Roman Catholic OFS (Order of Franciscans Secular) whom I had known in St. Andrews when she was a student and had worked in our local All Saints' Episcopal Church's Ladyhead Bookshop for a while.

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I also met a couple of TOS who post on their Facebook page, to which I also subscribe in the interests of making Community with them and we had plenty to talk about.

There were hugs and kisses all round and it was a warm and joyful occasion. I hope our Scotland Area will invite the Third Order Secular Tertiaries to some of our events in the near future and foster good relationships and perhaps some joint endeavours between us. The Tertiaries I met yesterday were keen to know what we did in our Local Groups and were after new ideas. I'm sure we could gain some new ideas from them, too.

Avril Pauline

CHAPLAINCY IN ASSISI

Are there any Tertiaries who could do chaplaincy duties in Assisi, based at the SSF apartment in the centre of the town, and looking after the Anglican congregation on Sundays. The Anglican congregation meet in a RC Church for the Eucharist – hence, just at the moment we are looking for male priests only. Suitable for a priest (and spouse) who could do a month, two months or three months duty. Utility bills paid, but you need to buy your own food. Duties also include looking after the few guests who sometimes want to share the apartment on a self-catering basis. More details by writing to Brother Benedict benedictssf@franciscans.org.uk

CLIMATE CHANGE

Miguel Canete, European Commissioner for climate and energy, has the task of leading the important UN climate talks in Paris this December. He has said that there is "no plan B - nothing to follow ----- Paris is final".

At the climate change lobby on 17 June a group of us were able to ask David Cameron's representative what we could do to help the Prime Minister to stay strong in the face of those resisting climate change action. The reply was, "Write letters. He needs to hear from the silent majority." St Francis would have taken this very seriously indeed!

FORMING FRANCISCAN COMMUNITIES

A gathering for anyone interested in nurturing the Order's local life and mission

Saturday 14 November 2015

11.00 a.m. – 5.00 p.m

The Magdalen Centre,
adjacent to Euston Station, London

'Forming Franciscan communities' is an opportunity to find help and encouragement in serving the Third Order. It will be particularly useful to those who have recently taken on a role. The day is designed with local group Convenors and other Area Team members in mind, in response to demand in the Central and Eastern England cluster. However Tertiaries around the whole Province are very welcome, and you are welcome to register whether you hold an office or not.

Looking ahead to next year's General Chapter, we will explore our part in forming Local Groups and Areas marked by twin themes of Francis' life – gospel life and fraternity. During the day it is proposed to make time to:

- Reflect on the nature of Franciscan vocation – our own and others' – and the many ways it is expressed in the Third Order
- Explore how we can enable the common life of TSSF to nourish lifelong vocations, including through the elected roles of the Order locally
- Learn from and exchange ideas with fellow office holders in your role, and seek each others' advice on challenges you might encounter.

Please register by the end of August by visiting the website at www.tssf.org.uk/14nov. You will find a short questionnaire asking how you would like the day to help you and your fellow Tertiaries.

If you do not have internet access, you can write to me at Corner Cottage, Main Street, Langar, Nottingham NG13 9HE.

Places will be confirmed, with a proposed programme, in early September. Travel expenses can be reimbursed for office-holders.

Paul Bodenham
Provincial Formation Guardian
formation@tssf.org.uk

UPDATE ON THE FRANCIS FILM

The film *Finding Saint Francis* will be completed by the end of July, and will be launched at the BFI Southbank in London on 5 November. Public sales will begin on 6 November.

In the meantime we'll be glad to support private showings (e.g. TSSF area meetings) subject to voluntary donations from audiences to help us recover costs.

All enquiries to: John Wiltshire
(mobile 07717 547672;
email: katherine.wiltshire1@ntlworld.com)

TSSF KNOX DICK FUND

In recent years there seems to have been some misunderstanding about the way in which the Knox Dick Fund operates. This Fund is explicitly for tertiaries in need, who would like help with the cost of Retreats. It is vital that the Administrator checks that the applicant is a novice or professed and also details of the costs of the Retreat. It has been the custom to grant 50 – 80% of the costs, and decisions will be made on the information provided on the reasons needed for help.

Understandably many Tertiaries do not like to talk about their financial circumstances, but this information is necessary, because the Knox Dick Fund is a charity and under charity law it has to be established that the applicant is in need. Without this information it is not possible to determine the proportion of the cost of the Retreat needed. This information stays with the Administrator.

Since the funds available are limited, requests for travel abroad to Assisi or to other Provinces of the Third Order have not been granted.

The Order has been blessed with able and sensitive Administrators of the Knox Dick Fund, John Gordon Clark, Anne Spalding in the past and now Rachel Alexander. It is not always an easy task and we owe them our sincere thanks.

Averil Swanton
June 2015

GENERAL CHAPTER 2016 – DATES FOR LOCAL GROUPS

Our small steering group has been working hard to organise the province's first General Chapter for 10 years. Here we outline the plans and ask you to schedule time in your forthcoming programme of local group meetings. Full details will be circulated with the next issue of *Little Portion*.

The theme of General Chapter is 'Gospel life together: how are we called to act on our Aims today?' Many Tertiaries have told us they look for the Order to grow as an attractive, distinctive and counter-cultural witness in today's world. So we hope this General Chapter will renew us as an order in the profession and Principles we share, nourished from our Franciscan roots and fit for a new generation. It will take place in three stages:

- Preparatory explorations in local groups between September 2015 and June 2016
- A Gathering open to all Tertiaries at Coventry Cathedral on 29 November 2016
- A Convocation for local group representatives on 30 November 2016.

We explain each stage in more detail below.

Explorations in your local group

We will begin our General Chapter journey in local groups, reflecting on two principles of Francis' own witness - gospel life and fraternity. We ask you to schedule meetings as follows.

- **Three sessions before 1 June 2016:** two to develop your ideas, conclusions and recommendations on the questions which will be circulated; and a third to finalise your group's response and complete bookings for the events at Coventry Cathedral.
- **A fourth session between September and late November 2016:** to consider the emerging recommendations and pray for General Chapter.

Meeting at Coventry Cathedral

After this 'dispersed' stage the 'gathered' General Chapter will comprise two distinct events at Coventry Cathedral:

- **Tuesday 29 November 2016:**
A Gathering for all Tertiaries on the Feast of All Franciscan Saints, including a festal Eucharist, a keynote speaker, a workshop to explore the conclusions of local groups, a 'peace walk', and time to meet people, learn and make connections.
- **Wednesday 30 November 2016:**
A Convocation of Local Group representatives to which your group is asked to appoint one of its members. The day will draw on the conclusions of local groups around the Province and the experience of the previous day.

Every local group's contribution counts! More information will be distributed with the next *Little Portion*. Meanwhile please ensure that members of your local group have the opportunity to take part by scheduling the sessions requested.

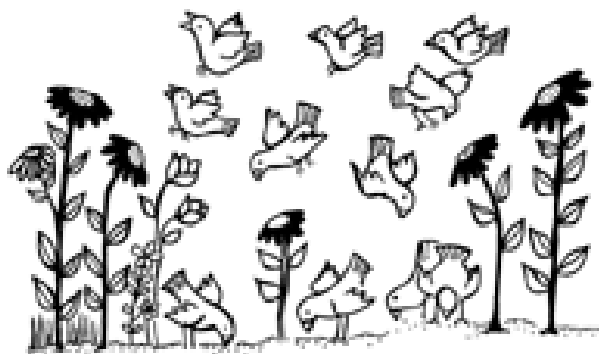
*Anne, Anne-Marie, Daphne,
Francis, Freda, Hilary, Paul.*

GREENBELT FESTIVAL 2015

**28-31 August;
Boughton House nr Kettering**

We're about to contact all who've helped at the TSSF stall in G-Source to date.

If you'd like to be involved as well, please contact Jenny Fox Eades at jenny@celebratingstrengths.co.uk



AGEING IN THE ORDER: A POSSIBLE ASSISI BOOKLET?

Provincial Chapter is considering commissioning an Assisi booklet on the subject of ageing in the Third Order. Could you help produce it?

As we grow old all of us will benefit from the understanding, flexibility and encouragement of our fellow Tertiaries. We might need to simplify our individual rule; we might rely more on our fellow tertiaries if we are to keep in touch.

An Assisi booklet might not only help us as our own vocation takes an unfamiliar turn with age; it might also help Area teams support their elders. It need not only address practicalities: it could also offer theological signposts into old age from our Rule and the Franciscan tradition.

To begin with we'd like to identify volunteers who might form an editorial group. We would need people from a variety of skills and backgrounds – some who have served on Area Teams (e.g. as AFG or convenor), or who have some experience of social and pastoral care (for instance, among those with dementia or in transition to residential care).

Would you be able to help? If you think you can, please get in touch. We may not be able to take up every offer of help, but the idea will go no further if no-one replies!

Please email formation@tssf.org.uk or write to me at Corner Cottage, Main Street, Langar, Nottingham NG13 9HE indicating what you might be able to offer, and any suggestions for the booklet's content.

*Paul Bodenham
Provincial Formation Guardian*

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FOR RETREATS

Are you finding it financially demanding to go on Retreat? If so, you should apply to the KNOX DICK FUND. This Fund is used to help Tertiaries of modest means keep their Rule of Life by helping with the costs of going on retreat.

Please write or send an email to:
Rachel Cornish, 36 Highfield Road,
Felixstowe, IP11 7BZ E:
knoxdick@tssf.org.uk

SPIRITUAL DIRECTION – WHAT'S IT LIKE FOR YOU?

In September I shall be starting the third and final year of a part time study in Christian Spirituality at Sarum College. I'm proposing to look at the essential elements in Spiritual Direction, and how it can contribute to adult faith formation, and I'd like to support my investigation by tapping into the experience of the Third Order.

It wouldn't be appropriate to approach tertiaries in my own area of Cumbria and Lancashire, where I'm currently serving as Area Minister. But I hope folk from other areas might be willing to take part.

At this stage, I'm looking for tertiaries who would be willing, in principal, to respond to a questionnaire about their experience of spiritual direction as directee or director. The scope of the questionnaire will be defined by Sarum's ethical requirements, particularly with regard to confidentiality, which are monitored by the University of Winchester. There will be no attempt to identify or make contact with anyone's Spiritual Director, all responses will be anonymised and there will be no follow up without the explicit permission of the respondent.

If you want to know more or think you might be willing to take part (you can always change your mind when you've looked at the questions!), please send your contact details by email or post by 15 August 2015 to:

Andrew Schofield, Holker House, Whittington,
Carnforth LA6 2NX or
atschofield@outlook.com

BOOK LAUNCH

Bruce Driver, London South, is publishing a book (Publisher: Halsgrove Publishing) entitled: *House of Bread: Poems and Paintings from a Prayer Journal*.

It will be launched on Saturday 31 October 2015 in The Crypt at St Margaret's Church, Lee Terrace, London SE13 5DN at 11am.

TSSF RETREATS AND OTHER EVENTS

RETREATS AT THE OLD PARSONAGE, FREELAND

Date: Friday 24 - Monday 27 July 2015

Silent retreat: 'Images of God'

Conductor: Sister Joyce, CSF

Cost: £145 including conductor's expenses

Date: Monday 5 - Thursday 8 October 2015

Silent retreat

Conductor: SSF Brother

Cost: £145 including conductor's expenses

Date: Monday 7 - Thursday 10 March 2016

Silent retreat

Conductor: Giles Charrington TSSF

Cost: £145 including conductor's expenses

Bookings: Lesley Sutton,

12 Hill Top Road, Oxford, OX4 1PB

T: 01865 248847

E: oxfordretreat@yahoo.co.uk

TSSF EAST LONDON & SOUTH EAST ESSEX AREA ANNUAL RETREAT.

(Silent Retreat)

Date: Friday 6 - Sunday 8 November 2015

Silent retreat

Cost: £154.... including conductor's expenses.

Deposit: £20.00

Venue: The Retreat House Pleshey, Chelmsford.

Please contact.

Barbara Read.

20 Theydon Bower Epping Essex CM16 7AB

T: 01992-679375.

E: barbara@loughtonchurch.org.uk

Please let me know of any dietary requirements, if vegetarian please state if you eat fish.

Please could you send me your deposit

A.S.A.P to guarantee your place.

All cheques made payable to: Barbara Read.

PILGRIMAGE TO ASSISI – OCTOBER 2015

Date: Friday 23 October - Monday 2 November

Leaders: The Reverend David & Ann Faulks TSSF, CHARISMA Pilgrimages

Estimated cost:

€950-€1000 approx. £700-£850

plus Ryanair flight cost estimated at £120.00

Accommodation in a double or twin rooms (Singles are available at an additional cost)

St Anthony's Guest House with the Franciscan Sisters of the Atonement.

see web page: www.graymoor.org/italy.html

Further details and a booking form are included in TON Mailing

PACE e BENE - OFS FRATERNITY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT 2015

Date: Friday 20 November from 4 pm until after lunch on Sunday 22 November

Conductor: Father Patrick Lonsdale OFM

Cost: £145 residential/£80 non-residential

£25 deposit. All cheques should be made payable to 'OFS Ladywell'. book by 31 July, with full payment by 30 September 2015

Further details and a booking form are included in TON Mailing

Residential is encouraged to gain maximum benefit from the Retreat

This is a wonderful opportunity to spend some quiet time in contemplation and reflection within the Franciscan family. Members of other Franciscan Fraternities and all those with a 'Franciscan heart' will be most welcome to join us.

The Retreat will be led by Father Patrick Lonsdale OFM, previous Guardian of the Friary, Chilworth and leader of several of our pilgrimages to Assisi. He is Custos of the OFM Order in Great Britain and a National Assistant to the OFS. Father Patrick is well-known for his wisdom and deep Franciscan spirituality.

Please contact: Jennie McManus, 1 Cricketts Hill, Shere, Surrey GU5 9JY
or e-mail: s@jenniemcmanus.plus.com
or telephone: 01483 20 3642

Who to send things to:

Changes in address, telephone number, e-mail address, TSSF Office held

Mollie Kingham, Membership Secretary,
12 Buckingham Gardens, West Molesey,
KT8 1TH.

T: 020 8979 8053 E: memsec@tssf.org.uk
E-mail copy to Chris Jenkins (PCC),
E: comms@tssf.org.uk

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E: editor@tssf.org.uk

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Eltham, London, SE9 5PE

T: 0208 850 0189 E: ton@tssf.org.uk

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Somerset, BA5 2TL

T: 07860 712354 E: comms@tssf.org.uk

Contributions, TSSF expense claims and letters about finance

John Lovatt, Provincial Treasurer,
Lower Stonehouse Farm, Brown Edge,
Stoke on Trent, ST6 8TF,

T: 01782 503090

E: john.lovatt@dsl.pipex.com

Enquirers interested in joining the Order

Peter Dixon, Provincial Novice Guardian
Dove House, 4 New Road,
Uttoxeter, ST14 7DB

T: 01889 569722

E: novguard@tssf.org.uk

All other enquiries about the Order

Averil E Swanton, Minister Provincial
11 The Grange, Fleming Way,
Exeter, EX2 4SB.

T: 01392 430355

E: ministertssf@tssf.org.uk

Disability Advisor Team (alternative formats, access, support)

Margaret Armstrong, Cridlands Barn,
Brompton Ralph, Taunton, TA4 2RU

T: 01984 623918

E: disabilityadvisor@tssf.org.uk

Third Order Resource Material

Third Order Distribution,
The Old Parsonage, 168 Wroslyn Road,
Freeland, Witney, OX29 8AQ.

E: distribution@tssf.org.uk

Much material is available on the TSSF website and can be downloaded. Paper copies are kept at Third Order Distribution where you may send your requests and make arrangements for payment.

One new item for sale is the biography of Dorothy Swayne, lay founder of TSSF. This booklet, costs £6, which includes a discussion paper and P&P.

Website comments and enquiries

E: webmaster@tssf.org.uk

It may also be of interest, for those who are young or wise in the ways of the Internet, to report that TSSF is establishing presences on Facebook and Twitter. For more information go to the website, given below.



All opinions expressed in this publication are those of the authors and contributors and not necessarily those of the European Province of the Third Order, Society of Saint Francis.

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