

Lawrence Osborn: Electoral address

I first came across the Third Order in the 1980s when I was working and studying theology in Durham. There followed a long, slow process of exploration aided by my growing interest in Francis and all things Franciscan as a result of my research into Christian attitudes to the environment. Ultimately this led to my profession as a member of the Third Order in 1991. Since returning to Scotland in 1999, I have been a member of the Glasgow group and served as its Convenor from 2004 to 2010. I also serve as a Novice Guardian.

I live in Glasgow and worship at St Aidan's Clarkston where I am part of the Ministry Team. Although I now earn my living as a freelance copy-editor, I have maintained my interest in theological research and writing. Currently that interest finds expression mainly through my attempts to write a book about the relevance of Franciscan spirituality to contemporary Western culture.

Clearly the Link Tertiary must be comfortable working as part of team. I have had considerable experience over the years of working in a variety of teams and committees both church-related and otherwise. In addition to my membership of the Scottish Area Team while I was convenor of the Glasgow group, this experience has included membership of the Council of St John's College, Durham (1982–84), the Executive of BCC/CCBI's Gospel and our Culture programme (1989–94), the Vestry of St Mary's Episcopal Cathedral, Glasgow (2002–05), and the Council of the Society for Editors and Proofreaders (2008–12).

However, being Link Tertiary involves more than functioning well on a committee. I see the role as being the personal connection between cluster and Chapter and thus the primary means of communication between the two, sharing the priorities and concerns of the cluster with Chapter so as to inform its decisions and its developing vision for the life of the Order and sharing those decisions and that vision with the cluster. Within the cluster, I see the role as one of encouragement, particularly in relation to our core Franciscan vocation of building up the Church and following Christ wherever he is to be found.

I note that the first responsibility of the Link Tertiary is to pray regularly for the cluster. If elected, I would be delighted to make this my priority and to do whatever is necessary to be able to pray intelligently for individual Tertiaries and for the life and activities of the local groups and areas. The listening necessary to be able to pray intelligently for the cluster would also prepare me to keep Chapter fully informed about the life of the cluster and the priorities and concerns of the areas within it.