

Christopher John Wren

Election: Link Tertiary for Scotland and Ireland Cluster.

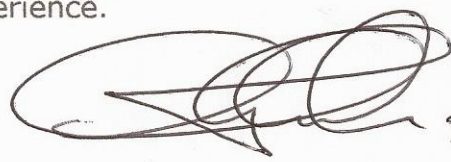
I started life with the Franciscans as a Companion at Alnmouth at the age of 16 and then as a student at Durham explored the Third Order, becoming a novice in the Thames region and professed in 1979 in the North-east. I was instrumental in setting up the Third Order "Under 35's Conference" at Mansfield College, Oxford, in the late 70's. Since then I have lived in the Durham Area for 20 years where I was Area Chaplain in the 80's, a Novice Counsellor again in the 80's and Regional Novice Counsellor for Men (as it then was) in the late 80's and early 90's. Whilst in the North-west I have latterly been a Novice Guardian. I have also worked as a Spiritual Director for Tertiaries.

I have considerable experience in Trusteeship; having been Chair of an Educational Trust, a Director of two other Trusts and Treasurer for yet two more whilst in the North-west. I have professional interest and experience in education at Primary level (but have also taught physics at Secondary level). Wide experience in local Faiths and Ecumenical dialogue has been an integral part of my ministry for the past 25 years. My life as a priest in Blackpool has led me into strategic partnership planning in the Borough.

The Scotland and Ireland Cluster represents a widely spread geographical area which demands good inter-personal communication and reliable dialogue. I have good skills in I.T. and above all am more than used to travelling to meet people in their own setting, gaining much encouragement and insight from face to face encounters. I believe the Third Order at this time needs a pastoral approach which involves all its members, listens, synthesises information and feeds communication appropriately across the Order. I would hope to bring those skills to this role as Link Tertiary for the whole Cluster.

I am presently a Parish Priest in Blackpool who is retiring in July 2016 and has had a home in Dumfries for the past 3 years. Ann, (my wife who is also a Tertiary professed in 1975) and I ostensibly have lived in Scotland and have worked in Blackpool for the past 3 years. We have been very involved in the Local Group in Dumfries as well as the Scotland Area, where diaries have allowed. The Third Order sought out my vocation. The whole concept of offering myself and skills as the Link Tertiary came as a suggestion from others and found confirmation through prayer and discussion with trusted friends. I am aware that I have the time and space to offer to the Order in retirement and at the age of 62 still have the capacity to travel, engage and offer my gifts to be utilised appropriately.

I have always been attracted to the Franciscan contemplative spirituality, its rich iconographic liturgy and the balance it holds between the two and real active service amongst Jesus' people. Being a member of TSSF has served me well as a Parish Priest over the past 37 years. The Gospel tenets of hospitality and touching the world as Christ have brought joy in many life situations. Living by a Rule of Life has steered my path and been an essential part of my spiritual experience.



30 June 2015