

## **Christopher John Wren.**

As I write this it is Advent and we are bidden to 'be prepared'! Like a thief in the night, totally unexpected, for me, came the call to be nominated for this post. After prayer and consultation with several others I have agreed to test this call and offer my skills.

### **Who am I?**

I started life with the Franciscans through Alnmouth at the age of 16 and explored the Third Order as a student at Durham University, becoming a Novice in the Thames Region and Professed in 1979 in the North-East, the same year that I was Ordained as a Deacon. 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 and Regional Novice Counsellor for Men (as it was) in the late 80's and early 90's. For the past 18 years, I have been in the North-West where I have worked as a Novice Guardian and as a Spiritual Director for Tertiaries. My wife Ann and I have recently retired to Dumfries and have been involved in the Scotland Area for the past 5 years. Ann is also a Tertiary and was professed in 1975.



### **What can I offer?**

I have considerable experience in Trusteeship; having been Chair of an Educational Trust, a Director 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, having taught Physics at Secondary level) and have wide experience in local Faiths and Ecumenical dialogue as Chair of Faith Forum and Moderator of the Churches Together on the Fylde. I have worked and lived in both deeply Urban and Rural situations and understand much of their individual needs. My life as a clergyperson in Blackpool has led me into strategic partnership planning in the Borough. I am of course an Anglican Priest who has worked in the Church of England and am now retired and based in Dumfries, am involved in the Scottish Episcopal Church.

I have always been attracted to the Franciscan contemplative spirituality, its rich iconographic liturgy and the balance it holds between those and real active service in 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 I have been in, and this both to me as giver and receiver. Holding a Rule of Life to steer me though my path has been an essential part of my spiritual experience.

I see the Provincial Chapter as a Working Team, which empowers the Order to be faithful to its calling under God in following a Franciscan spirituality and life style. As we work together we need to be pastorally sensitive to the needs of our widely-dispersed community as well as maintaining a sense of togetherness, unity of purpose and vocation. We especially have a calling to open the mind and path of those with whom we work and live to be good stewards of God's Creation celebrating its goodness and wholeness moving us to be mindful and prayerful in issues of Justice and Peace in a fractured world. Though our lives a Joy and Simplicity, which are not often found, to engage in openly encouraging Vocation to a simpler and more prayerful life which is spiritually and ecumenically appealing. We have a calling to be open, purposeful and visible in God's world, like Francis, indicating through our touch God's love for all people and Creation.