



Franciscan Aid: Newsletter

Winter 2019–20

Welcome to the latest Franciscan Aid newsletter, keeping you informed about our work with the world's poorest communities.

Averil Swanton: an appreciation

Franciscan Aid's former Secretary, Angela Alexander, pays tribute to a former trustee and remarkable woman.

Averil was such a very remarkable Franciscan who touched so many during her life. She had a strong personal interest in the foster homes at Masiphumelele, South Africa, and had been out to visit Monika du Sautoy (who runs the project) a few times. During the time she was not involved with the Board of Franciscan Aid, she ensured Jamie took special interest in Monika's work. I am also sure that she was as interested as Peter Cunnings had been in the projects in Palestine. I believe she also went to visit the school there.

Averil was invaluable first as an observer and then as a Trustee of Franciscan Aid as she had a wealth of knowledge and experience to share concerning international Franciscans. She had the ability and intellect to perceive any inconsistent details in applications while maintaining a very deep compassion for the plight of the most deprived. She loved her time as an ex-officiate member of the Board and I did not have to encourage her too much to nudge her into returning as a Trustee.

I found Averil to be a strongly independent, quiet, reserved lady with a deep spiritual Franciscan faith, who was also a very focused and clear sighted leader. She was a very special friend, both to individuals and to all in any way involved with Franciscan Aid. Her untimely death is a shock for us all.

Averil died on 17 December 2019. May she rest in peace and rise in glory.

News from Chile

In Spring 2019 we heard from Simon and Clare Brignall then based at Valparaiso in Chile. Simon, a Tertiary, was Rector of the Anglican cathedral and his wife Clare was working with prisoners. She applied for a grant to set up a course and facilities enabling prisoners to learn to repair and make guitars, giving them a sense of purpose and a skill to practise after release. This project has been a great success – as the photos below show.



The learning of a new skill can break the cycle of offending and re-offending, so this is a gift with long term consequences. Read more about Clare's work in prisons at: <https://prison-teaching.home.blog>

Thanks from recipients

It is always a pleasure to hear from people and projects who have received grants from Franciscan Aid. Here are a few extracts:

“Your contribution makes a remarkable difference in the life of our children and in the career of our school” [Hope School, Bethlehem]

“Thanks for the wonderful work done to help the needy. May God bless you abundantly. Greetings from Uganda” [St Anne Masaka Vocational Training School.]

“Thank you very much once again for the support from Franciscan Aid, and also for kindly helping to sort out the issues with bank transfer from your side” [Paul Wisser Shelly, Kerala, India]

“We would like to express our gratitude to you for the great work you have done towards the lives of our students, teachers and the entire community. Glory be to God. It has come at the time we most urgently need water at school as the rain is so scanty yet the need for water is growing bigger and bigger” [Nakenyeni School, Uganda]



We have just received these photos from Nakenyeni School, showing progress on the water borehole funded by Franciscan Aid.

Changes to the Board

Last Summer we said farewell to Caroline Ugbo and Roland Randall. Both had served a full six year term on the Board and we are very grateful for their input. Happily we now have two new Trustees – William Mitchell from Blackmore Vale and Anne Lindley from Cambridge. Anne has taken over as Treasurer from Roland. We still need more Trustees though. If you are interested in an informal, exploratory chat please contact Richenda or Lesley (see bottom of page for contact details).

Find out more

If you would like a representative from Franciscan Aid to come and talk to your local group or area, please contact Richenda at richenda@ymail.com. We would love to come and meet you and talk about our work.

Where is the money going?

At the Trustees' meeting in November 2019, we were able to award grants to a number of projects including:

- The rebuilding of a school in Zimbabwe destroyed by Cyclone Idai.
- The use of special dolls to support psychosocial development of young children affected by HIV/AIDS in South Africa.
- Braille equipment for a girls' school in Lesotho.
- Equipment for a maternity hospital, and for a cancer hospital, both in Africa.
- The support of asylum seekers and refugees in Yorkshire.

Please pray

- For all the projects and initiatives mentioned in this newsletter;
 - For the trustees who must decide how to respond to all requests;
 - For more volunteers to come forward as potential trustees.
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