

TAU AUGUST 2020

The Province of the Pacific, Third Order Society of St Francis



St Clare of Assisi

CONTENTS...

Pages

Coming up...	2
From the Provincial Minister	3
From the Formation Director	5
St Isaac's Opononi	7
Canterbury with Otago	8
Refugees	9
Message from Honiara	10
Obituaries - Br Damian ssf	12
Terry Molloy tssf	15
Bread, Bush and Brolly's	16
The Chalice Prayer	19
Life in Rarotonga	20
Family of God	24
Lost Cross?	25
A Reflection from Auckland	25

Website - tssf.org.nz Please check the website regularly for updated Intercession and Address lists.

Please send any articles that would interest us about your area events or other Franciscan happenings in time for the next issue to

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The next Tau is due out at the end of November and will be a Christmas issue.

Please send me your stories, etc by Friday 20th November.

Coming up...

Chapter meeting dates 16-18th October at Vaughan Park.
Please pray for clarity and wisdom as Chapter meets.

WEBSITE

I update the website regularly so please check it.

The Intercession List and Address List are uploaded each time they are updated so please check them and add new addresses to the lists you have or you could print them. It is probably wise to print a new one about once a year and write any changes into the one you have in between.

If you require a new one and can't print it yourself please contact me or ask your Convenor.

CONVOCATION 2021

Now is the time to start planning to go to Convocation in Wellington next year. There is financial help available for getting to this but also start putting money aside to pay as well. We are all encouraged to go to Convocation because we all can gain so much encouragement for our Franciscan walk. Convocation runs from 12 noon Thursday 30th September until 12 noon Sunday 3rd October, 2021.

Because this period covers St Francis Day the theme will go back to 821 and look at what Francis and Clare and the Tertiaries were doing. What does being a Tertiary in the 21st century mean for us?

I'm looking forward to this event and catching up with many of you

Peace and blessings Janice Thorne tssf—Tau Editor



“Human rights are not a privilege conferred by government. They are every human being's entitlement by virtue of his *[her]* humanity”.

Mother Teresa

Dorothy Brooker shares

Peace and greetings

I have been pondering a little about what it means to live in Community, especially with now being back in Lockdown 2 or 3.

Our daily Principles and prayers for each other certainly are very relevant at this time.

As a Franciscan my connection with my brothers and sisters is so important and although we meet and function in areas I feel a real connection with all regardless of where or with who I am with, whether I am with 1st Order, 2nd Order or 3rd Order. We are a large family and our prayers, our connection with one another is so important.

Next year is Convocation an important time for us to gather and be community.

So... I am doing a little plug for us to think of being 'one' and ensuring our diary has the date for Convocation. I know that some find the cost a problem, but there is money available to help. If we all begin to plan now it will be a great opportunity for us to gather, to pray, to plan our life as Community. As Third Order, we have an important part to play as religious in this Country now that there is no First Order.

Nga manaakitanga, te pai me te rangimārie. (Blessings, good and peace)

FROM THE PROVINCIAL MINISTER...

Hi Franciscan friends

Rumi, the Iranian poet who grew up at the same time as St Francis has challenged me during this covid19 time. He wrote:

“Waves from the stirring keep coming in.

The soul has been given its own ears

To hear things the mind does not understand”

Take some time to contemplate this and “the sacred web of life” allowing God to breathe new life into you.

In this Province of the Pacific many areas have been studying climate change and other matters related to creation, justice and peace. We have talked about having a specific link with Franciscans International allowing us to better connect globally on issues of creation and human rights.

This morning we had a Ministers provincial meeting by zoom, always great to hear what is happening in the Franciscan world. Apart from CJP topics lifelong formation is also a key item. The goals for us are to make sure discernment is completed, build strong foundations in the lives of Novices and encourage Professed to continue the journey of lifelong learning and formation. Thanks to Marion Fairbrass for her efforts on this.

The challenge for us all over the next few months is to pray for countries other than our own. Across the world Covid19 has created some issues that we don't have in our part of the world. Here are some prayer suggestions

1. Physical health and wellbeing of nations
2. Political stability and wise government decisions
3. Release from anxiety and fear
4. Provision of resources for those in need
5. Peace of God to prevail

I do hope and pray that the hibernation aspect of wintertime has provided extra space for contemplation and reflection. We are past the winter solstice and have hope through God's Grace of blessings on our spiritual Franciscan walk and the work we do as part of that.

Go well and in Peace

Blair Matheson

FROM THE PROVINCIAL FORMATION DIRECTOR...

We are the Beloved of God.

“Unpretentious God, you call us as we are;
and in our weakness you find strength.
Help us so to delight in who we are,
that we are set free to dream of all that we could yet become;
Through Jesus Christ our Liberator, who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
Amen”

“Help us to delight in who we are”

When I first read those words in the collect we have prayed together today, I was excited by them. The words resonated within me, and I immediately knew they were the words that were the beginning of something to share with you in this contemplative service.

But it has not been easy to frame what those words mean for me and how to share that with you. Over the intervening days, many voices accused me. The voices from childhood. “You are too noisy.” “Don’t get so excited.” “If only you could be good like your sister.” “You are not good enough.” I grew up thinking that in order to become a good Christian woman I would need to learn to be quiet, serene, peaceful, compliant. Not really the adjectives that describe who I am.

So “Delight in who I am?”

As I faced some challenges over the past week, there were too many times when I was not happy with my actions and words. When I criticised someone when I didn’t need to; when I was too preoccupied to listen to someone; when I chose to sit and watch TV instead of calling someone recently bereaved; when I was ashamed of the way I spoke to someone. Times when my actions were not even pleasing to me, let alone God

So how, then, can I delight in who I am?

I can – because God created me. She saw me when I was being created. He knows me – not only who I am now – growing in love, learning to walk in the Spirit, wanting to allow the grace of God to work through me, often failing, –

but the person God created me to be – healed, whole, fully alive in Holy Spirit. Filled with the spirit and increasingly walking in the way God calls me to walk.

And God – the creator of all – loves me – loves us all with “an unfailing love”. A love which never falters. God has chosen us – each one of us – and called us by our name. God calls us “beloved” and children of God – she longs for us to accept this love, to live in this love.

As Henri Nouwen wrote in his book, “Life of the Beloved”, we need to listen to what God says and claim the truth. He writes:

“Listening to that voice with great inner attentiveness, I hear at the centre, words that say, “I have called you by name, from the very beginning. You are mine and I am yours. You are my beloved, on you my favour rests. I have moulded you in the depths of the earth and knitted you together in your mother’s womb. I have carved you in the palms of my hands and hidden you in the shadow of my embrace. I look at you with infinite tenderness and care for you with a care more intimate than that of a mother for her child. I have counted every hair on your head and guided you at every step. Wherever you go, I go with you, and wherever you rest, I keep watch. You belong to me.....Nothing will ever separate us. We are one.””

One of the amazing things about being loved – really, deeply and unconditionally loved – is that we become free to see ourselves as we are. We become less afraid of acknowledging our faults, asking forgiveness and asking for the grace of God to change. Because we know that nothing we can say to the one who loves us will change that love. I cherish the few friends to whom I can be completely honest and confess the times I fail, knowing that they will still love me: that they accept me as I am.

It took me a long time to begin to know that God loves me all the time – not just when I am being good.

Some years ago I read this sentence:

“There is nothing you can do to make God love you more, and there is nothing you can do to make God love you less. “

How amazing is that! And in that freedom, that knowledge of God’s love, we

need not be afraid to know ourselves: to celebrate the times when we manage to allow the love of God to flow through us, but also to acknowledge the times when we don't: to open ourselves to the healing and wholeness that God offers so that we can grow in the likeness of Christ through the grace of God and the work of Holy Spirit in our lives.

We can dare to open ourselves to God.

"For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Romans 8:38, 39)

Marion Fairbrass

St. Isaac's, Opononi

If you are considering a visit to the Hokianga the please arrange to come and visit St. Isaac's, Opononi.

To find out more, please get in touch with Maranu Gascoigne (Kiatiaki/Warden).

Call 09 405 8834 / 021 071 7033

Email: stisaacs.wardens@xtra.co.nz

There are several comfortable cottages available to book singularly or for a small group.



Upper right: Chapel



Left: Guest House



Right: Bach

More about St Isaac's on page 12 - "Bread, Bush and Brolly's"

News from Canterbury with Otago

Over the covid lockdown period we have continued our monthly meetings using zoom, which has been a learning experience for us, but has enabled us to include our members in Christchurch, Invercargill and Laos all at the same time



In the last couple of months, we have started meeting in the Delta Church Chapel in Richmond, Christchurch. It is a church shared by Baptist, Presbyterian and Methodist congregations, and one of our members, Mary Allen, is the Baptist Pastor there. The Delta complex has been recently rebuilt, so provides spacious and comfortable surroundings for our meetings.

We have five new Enquirers, three in Christchurch and two in Invercargill. Mike Baker has taken up the role of our Chapter Representative, and one of his first tasks is to gather our suggestions for a new name for our group (Canterbury with Otago doesn't quite fit any more) and take our preferred name to Chapter for its consideration.

Pam Barrett reached a wonderful milestone last month – her 40th Anniversary of Profession.

Last weekend I led a series of four sessions on Franciscan Spirituality at the Diocesan Deacons' Retreat at Te Waiora House at Hororata, outside Christchurch. I was very pleased to be asked to do this, and the Deacons were very interested and engaged with the sessions. One of the Deacons, Anne Russell-Brighty, is one of our new Enquirers

In future months we intend to have a full zoom meeting every second

month. On the alternative months, we will have a face-to-face meeting with Christchurch members, and also a separate zoom meeting for members outside Christchurch. This way we hope to have the best of both worlds, keeping face-to-face meetings for those who find most benefit in those, but also zoom meetings to include those who are in different locations

We are looking forward to Blair visiting us in the South Island in the relatively near future, as circumstances allow

Ian

REFUGEES

They have no need of our help	Share our food
So do not tell me	Share our homes
These haggard faces could belong to	Share our countries
you or me	Instead let us
Should life have dealt a different	Build a wall to keep them out
hand	It is not okay to say
We need to see them for who they	These are people just like us
really are	A place should only belong to those
Chancers and scroungers	who are born there
Layabouts and loungers	Do not be so stupid to think that
With bombs up their sleeves	The world can be looked at another
Cut-throats and thieves	way.
They are not	
Welcome here	(now read from bottom to top)
We should make them	<i>By Brian Bilston. A clever poem.</i>
Go back to where they came from	
They cannot	

MESSAGE FROM HONIARA

It was another great journey and experience to work alongside my brothers and sisters of the Third Order Society of Saint Francis (TSSF) and the Friars (SSF) here in Honiara as of 2017 September after my return from study in New Zealand until last year 2019 August when I was appointed the Regional Chaplain of the Solomon Islands Region.

We have some very enjoyable programs and activities. We keep all Wednesdays to visit the Hospital in Honiara, we have monthly fellowships in our homes, and at times we attend Holy Communion Services or fellowships.

We also joined the True Life in God Ministry to feed the homeless poor along the street in Honiara as well as sharing items such as clothes and cooking utensils for the very poor homes or families in town.

My final job was to make sure to arrange the retreat for all brothers and sisters for Honiara Area and to arrange an Admission Service for the Novices and the Postulants to be made a Novice. Besides that, we also elected our new Honiara Area leaders.

The two Novices who were professed on 9th August 2020 at Hautabu were Fr. John Ashley and Mrs Sandra Ashley. Also Postulant Willie was made a Novice. Prior to our Admission Service on Sunday, Rev'd Fr Lent SSF led a Retreat for all the TSSF members, who went to Hautabu for the weekend, and with those who prepared for Admission.

Also, every professed member after the Admission Service made their Renewal of Vows.

Rev'd Fr. Lent SSF officiated at the Holy Eucharist service and the former Honiara Area Chaplain Rev'd John Patteson Ngalihesi TSSF conducted the Admission and Renewal of Vows.

Walter Lent Sinehanue, Regional Chaplain.



Top left: Brother Clifton ssf ready to conduct the election of the new Honiara Area leaders.



Middle left: Regional Convenor Jimmy Maeigoa speaking at Hautabu

Middle right: Shaking hands to the newly Noviced and Professed.



Bottom left: In front of St Francis Chapel at Hautabu after the Admission service and renewal of vows

Obituaries...

Brother Damian Kenneth SSF

Brother Damian Kenneth SSF, the one remaining First Order brother in NZ, died at Tamahere Eventide Home & Village, just south of Hamilton, on May 21 this year.

Damian started life as Kenneth Charles Wilson, born 11 March 1944 in Te Kōpuru, on the northern Wairoa River and the site of the nearest maternity hospital to where his family lived at Maungawhare, Dargaville. The eldest of three children and the first grandson of the family, he grew up with a sense of responsibility and leadership right from the beginning.

It was here he became a committed Christian and active member of Holy Trinity Church Dargaville and a member of its choir. He also became a boy scout, serving as patrol leader. Damian loved things which were well-organised, and which achieved a worthwhile purpose of offering good experience. Scouting provided this for him. He also acted in some local drama productions.

He was the first in his family to attain School Certificate, but left school as soon as he turned 16 to join the Royal NZ Air Force as a boy entrant at Woodbourne near Blenheim. He did well here, was top student in his intake and reached the rank of Corporal. He continued with scouting during this time, gaining a Queen's Scout award.

After about 6 years he left the Air Force for NAC where his work mainly involved selecting and training cabin crew.

Around 1978 he started study at St John's College, Auckland, but then in 1980, in order to have more contact with other people he took time out to help run a dairy he co-owned with his brother in Benson Rd, Remuera.

The call for some form of religious service hadn't gone away and having got to know SSF was received as a novice on 30 May 1981 at the Parnell Friary. Damian would observe that much of his noviciate consisted of driving Br Leo Anthony around Auckland and far beyond! The brothers at that stage were significantly involved in parish visits and church camps and Damian was very much a part of this. He also, inevitably, put his stamp on a number of administrative tasks at

the friary and his scouting skills were useful when it came to catering for the crowds who often came to the friary.

He was part of the small community we had in Boundary Rd, Otara 1983 – 1985 and during this time made his first profession in St Mary's Parnell on 11 April 1984 (the feast day of Bishop Selwyn). The ministries in Otara focussed on local initiatives with families and youth in need. Another aspect of Damian's life came to the fore here—his concern for social justice and also his management of donors and other organisations he would gently encourage to support in practical ways.

After the Otara house closed he had a period in the European Province, spending some time at the House of the Divine Compassion, Plaistow, in the East End of London. It's a neighbourhood with much need and Damian put his energy into organising a summer adventure programme, and again he managed to drum up donations which helped provide outings and other fun things for local children. The brothers who knew Damian there still remember this programme, all these years later.

After returning to NZ he was life professed on 6 Dec 1986 at St Pauls, Symonds Street. He then served as administrator of the Auckland Seafarers Centre through the later 1980s. Again, his skills in administration, and also in motivating supporters, helped build up the centre as an ecumenical ministry offering much practical and spiritual aid to seafarers.

Damian moved to Newcastle, NSW, in 1989 to be part of the new SSF house in Windale Parish in a neighbourhood with many needs. The brothers there served in the local parish and Damian embarked on a new challenge as university chaplain at the University of Newcastle. The chaplaincy was establishing a proper base on what was then still a fairly new campus. Damian arranged for containers and furnishings to mysteriously fall off the backs of various lorries and soon they had a proper centre. Much later in life he told me that of all his ministries in SSF this was the most significant. It was something of a surprise for him, never having had a university education himself. He did it because SSF asked him and the brothers on chapter could discern the potential in him.

It was also in 1993 he had major surgery to remove cancer on his ear and a number of health issues began to be increasingly significant for him. But this was also a time of real spiritual growth as he recovered from the surgery and

could feel the prayerful support of many.

In early 1994 he moved to Brisbane for a year and then returned to New Zealand having been elected as guardian of the Parnell Friary.

Auckland Diocese was then developing the Vaughan Park retreat centre and Damian became part of this project, serving as the first Director of the Centre from 1997 to 2002. During this time the friary moved from Parnell to Vaughan Park.

By 2002 we'd done what we set out to do at Vaughan Park and it was time to hand it over to others. And so, Damian and the friary moved from Auckland to Hamilton to the House of the Divine Compassion, Hillcrest. His main ministry now was supporting Anglican Action, also on the same site with other social service agencies. He thrived on committee meetings while he had the strength to do so, and subject to his health would be available at the friary for people seeking his counsel.

Increasing health issues and the dwindling number of brothers at the friary led to the decision in 2016 to accept the inevitable and take what would be his final move, to a villa in the Tamahere Retirement Village. Here he was finally able to relax and feel he didn't have to be "running a friary," although of course Damian never really gave up control of anything! But he was able to set his own pace and enjoyed the community life of the retirement village, contributing to organising the regular quizzes.

Damian could be intensely stubborn and adhere fiercely to some particular principle. But this was usually driven by a sense of justice and fairness. For him being a Franciscan gave him a family based on equal relationships, and a way of living based on fairness and serving those most in need.

His funeral in St Peter's Cathedral Hamilton was small scale because of the COVID-19 regulations. It's been recorded and can be viewed at: <https://vimeo.com/422346929/66472f664c>

When trans-Tasman travel opens up, hopefully later this year, there will be a memorial service in Hamilton to which everyone will be invited.

May our brother, Damian Kenneth, rest in peace and rise in glory.

Christopher John SSF

Paying tribute to a special Franciscan, Terry Molloy

Terry, loving husband, wonderful father, Priest, Franciscan. As I write this I couldn't help reflecting that all these things become one in the way Terry lived his life.

I met Terry quite a number of years now and it was when I became Minister Provincial that I really got to know him as he was then the Provincial Secretary. He arrived at all our meetings with his suitcase and I quote from Margaret Bedggood's tribute "his love of order his minute taking was impeccable. These were always handwritten and then he would stay up all night checking, then typing before posting them out."

As he shared his encyclopaedia knowledge of the Order's affairs he always had a tale to tell. I don't know if he always agreed with me, but he certainly was someone that I could trust completely.

He was the guardian of our Profession Crosses and I well remember a time when it was suggested that we start charging the other Provinces when they ordered their crosses. He was most outraged and said as a Province we gift them. However, a koha would be accepted. I hope that is still what happens.

Terry was well known by the 1st Order brothers and they had many a tale to tell once Terry had visited. His sense of humour, his story telling and his many jokes.

When our Order offered a prayer presence at Paihia in the Bay of Islands Terry was there and I know Brother Daniel as well as Christopher John were pleased to catch up with him when we arrived for a weekend.

Although there have been hard times Terry took his Franciscan Vows seriously as he did his Priestly Vows, both he renewed annually. His partnership and love of Alison was not hard to conceal and it is hard to not think of Terry without thinking of them both.

He knew and took seriously the three threes – our aims, the ways of service and shown by the notes.

Our Aims

To make our Lord known and loved everywhere.

To spread the spirit of love and harmony.
To live simply.

The ways of service

To do it by faithful prayer, work and study
and to do it living out the notes
always with humility, love and joy.

I thank God for Terry, what he taught so many of us, how he showed us all what being a Franciscan was and most of all how he shared his Franciscan life with love, with humility and with joy. Terry you are now at peace in that closer presence and our love goes with you.

Bread, Bush and Brolly's

It was a promise we made that we, Sarah and Rick, would travel from Taupo to the Hokianga to visit Maranu Gascoigne at St Isaac's Retreat. Maranu was re-professed as a tertiary in January 2020 and she had planned to spend some time at St Isaac's later this year. March the 13th changed everything and Maranu choosing not to take her International flight came directly to our farm near Wairakei until a plan was hatched and she then drove to the Hokianga to arrive at St Isaac's just one day before the start of lockdown.

News of serious flooding and severe thunderstorms gave us pause for thought but on the 19th July, we drove north pleased to be in a 4-wheel drive Ute. We met the flooding in Dargaville and felt sad for the farmers who had endured months of drought only to have their grass now under water. The sea mist on the tops of the hills just beautiful and the road through the Waipoua Kauri Forest was winding and spectacular. We stopped to pay our respects to Tane Mahuta. It is impossible I find to be in the presence of such a majestic tree without feeling emotional.



We had 4 days in which to enjoy time together with Maranu and to take part in her life at St Isaac's. Evening prayer in the small Chapel was my first

introduction to this beautiful place that has been holding a prayer presence since Rev. Clementina Gordon founded the house in 1974. It was established in 1982 as an Ecumenical Christian Trust. Clem was inspired by the teachings of St Isaac of Syria, who lived in the 7th century. He was a hermit and profound theologian of prayer. The Sisters of the Love of God (SLG) a contemplative order widely known as Fairacres, Oxfordshire where invited to live here holding in balance the contemplative work of prayer and hospitality. Sister Anne continues the SLG life of prayer and has done so for over 20 years. Brother Brian SSF lived in the small cottage Alverna for 5 years and Rev Oenone and her husband Mike have been wardens for over 4 years and it was to this community that the Trustees of St Isaac's welcomed Maranu.

Maranu moved into Alverna and Brother Brian's photograph smiles across the small living room. By the time we arrived she had cleared weeds and overgrowth and a beautiful vegetable garden was flourishing. The same



could not be said for the sour dough bug that we had sent up to the Far North with Maranu. Bread making had not been a great success and one sniff of the jar containing the bug gave us the reason. It was off and more than sour! Like one of those cookery courses on the TV I had brought a new bug with me and fresh flour so we set to work making fresh bread for both

Maranu and Sister Anne.

The wild weather continued and thunderstorms and lashing rain made the nights memorable. Sister Anne had returned from Whangarei in her small car in the afternoon of Friday that has now been marked as a 1 in 500 year flood! And without giving away her age contemplating sleeping in the car for the night or, driving in the tracks of a large lorry across floodwaters was the way to go.... And go she did arriving home safely and ready for a good nights sleep!

We were all in St Isaac's Chapel on the Wednesday morning for Eucharist. How precious to be able to be together and for Rick and I to be made so welcome at the Lords table. Afterwards we visited Sister Anne before we went to explore the bush, which is flourishing thanks to a good stock fence. A beautiful bush walk has been created that meanders through regenerating

coastal bush with Nikau palms being of special interest to those of us from the Central Plateau. We walked for about an hour and were thankful for the small bridges and steps that had been so thoughtfully created. At the top of the hill Maranu took us off the track to the Hermitage which provides an idyllic peaceful place to sit and pray. The valley stretches out below and reminds us just how close the waters of the Hokianga are and sacred hills sighted by Kupe stand guard on each side of the valley.



Lunch of fresh sour dough bread and soup sustained us along with some good conversation. Maranu has accepted the offer to become the Kaitiaki / warden of St Isaac's. Oenone and Mike leave early August and everywhere we looked we saw evidence of their hard work over the years. St Isaac's has excellent accommodation for small groups, including a bach for one person. Woodburners and beautifully stacked firewood mean cooler months are not a problem. The library looks amazing, an absolute treasure trove and I look forward to settling down on the deep sofa surrounded by books for an afternoon or two in the future.

Maranu will again foster a Franciscan spirit along with Sr. Anne SLG at St Isaac's. The simplicity and peace of the retreat is precious. The little chapel (housing the alter and tabernacle from the Friary at Hamilton), the huge Macrocarpa trees, the prayer life, the hospitality, and bush await those of us in the Third Order who wishes to visit. Even with the rain and storms the sun shone through. Each house had Red Band gumboots at the door and umbrellas with Waikato colours from the Friary ready to be worn safely to daily prayers.

AS John O'Donohue wrote:

'May the sacredness of your work bring light and renewal

To those who work with you

And to those who see and receive your work"

We loved our time at St Isaac's and wish Maranu well in her new role as kaitiaki/warden.

The Prayer Of The Chalice

My Father, to You I raise my whole
being—a vessel emptied of self.
Accept, Lord, this my emptiness,
and fill me with yourself—
Your light, Your love, Your life
That these your precious gifts
may radiate through me and
overflow the chalice of my
heart into the hearts of all
with whom I come into
contact this day—
revealing unto them
the beauty of
Your joy
and
wholeness
and
the
serenity
of your peace
Which nothing can destroy.

Frances Nuttall

Life in Rarotonga (continued)

Rebecca and I have now been in Rarotonga since 18 March; a period of 5 months, longer than we could ever have anticipated. Supposedly, the Cook Islands Immigration Authority is supposed to act after 18 September. Maybe they will, maybe they won't. Every week, there are new stories drifting around in the news in Rarotonga and New Zealand, but they seem to change on an almost daily basis. There are hundreds of people here from other countries, especially Fiji, who are working mostly in hospitality. Their situation is extremely precarious, as we have personally witnessed some of these individuals receiving drastic reductions in salary on short notice. At the same time, everyone here agrees that any opening of the borders of this island nation must not be rushed, as the effects on the population here, with very limited health resources, could be disastrous. In brief, this is a time in which one can only put their trust in the Way of St. Francis and the example we have in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Concretely, what exactly does this mean? How can these desires be translated into actions? From our perspective here, there are two aspects – external and internal. Externally, Rebecca and I have received the support of the local Catholic Bishop to enable us, and others who are interested, to channel support to those foreign workers here who are in such dire straits. We have been blessed with online work during the past few months and are happy to contribute on a monthly basis during our time here. Perhaps some of you are involved in something similar in your local communities. This, in my opinion, is the work of the Holy Spirit throughout the diverse members of the Body of Christ, as St. Paul reminds us in 1 Corinthians:12-27.

Internally, we have found ourselves taking a new interest in the approximately 40 wild chickens who roam the large property where we are currently living. According to a UK website on 14 August: “Rarotonga is the spiritual home of free-range chickens.” These beautiful creatures have a

long and distinguished history, probably arriving in the Cook Islands in the 1200s, on board the “mighty vakas” of the chiefs from Samoa and Tahiti. Known as “moa,” these birds are usually smaller and are able to fly. They also like to roost in trees.

Fowl, in general, play a prominent role in the Old Testament, with the highest number of references (16), in the Book of Genesis, with 8 mentions appearing in the two accounts of the Creation. The word in the Bible is “owf,” in Hebrew, which is the word still in use today in modern Palestine/Israel. In Judaism, belief in the Creation is the first in Maimonides’ Thirteen Principles of Faith, locating these ubiquitous animals at the heart of the Jewish faith.

In the New Testament, there are 2 well-known references by Jesus to hens (“ornis” in Greek) or female chickens (“nossia” or “nossian” in Greek) found in Mathew 23,37 and Luke 13,34.

In these 2 passages, it seems clear that Jesus, speaking as a biblical prophet, was thinking of the same metaphor in Psalm 17,8, which is in the Night Prayer in the Daily Offices SSF:

“Keep me as the apple of your eye. Hide me under the shadow of your wings.” This text is placed just before the “Nunc Dimitis,” in which we remember the revelation of Christ to the world. Why did Jesus deliberately choose this metaphor, which is cited by the same historical source “Q” or “quelle” in both Matthew and Luke?

To grasp how revolutionary this understanding of God is, I return to our chickens in Rarotonga, where there happen to be 2 mother hens with their broods. On any given day, Rebecca and I probably spend an hour by our kitchen window, watching the interaction between the hens and their chicks. What we have gleaned from these observations are the following:

The hen is constantly preoccupied for her brood. She often runs across the entire front yard to find a bit of food, then immediately dashes back to the little ones to urge them to follow her with clucking sounds. Alternatively,

she spends her time scratching everywhere to find something to eat for the chicks.

The hen always protects her brood from all threats, including a large dog that lives with us, as well as a number of tough roosters.

The relationship between babies and their mother is both intimate and playful. They often play games, climbing on the mother hen's back and hiding underneath her body and her wings.

Taking all of the above into account, we can move from the majesty of creation in Genesis to the closeness and intimacy of God, who is with us at all times – notably as a Mother.

To conclude, why was St. Francis preaching to the birds, including chickens, according to Giotto's beautiful painting? I like to think that, perhaps, he was thanking them for all that they had taught him. By focusing on both the external and the internal during these times of uncertainty, my wife and I have been able to continue our journey along the path of "Il Poverello" (the poor little one). Finally, Rebecca and I would like to take this opportunity to thank you all for your thoughts and prayers.

Peace and all Good

Please see these links for details:

<http://www.hanway.co.uk/curiosities-cook-islands-chickens/>

<https://www.lonelyplanet.com/rarotonga-and-the-cook-islands/history>

<http://www.cookislandsnews.com/item/67479-local-chicken-s-potential-food-source/67479-local-chicken-s-potential-food-sour>

https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/search.cfm?Criteria=fowl&t=KJV&ss=1#s=s_primary_0_1.

https://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/332555/jewish/Maimonides-13-Principles-of-Faith.htm

<https://biblehub.com/interlinear/matthew/23-37.htm>

<https://biblehub.com/greek/3555.htm>

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Q_source#:~:text=The%20Q%20source%20\(also%20called,in%20the%20Gospel%20of%20Mark.](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Q_source#:~:text=The%20Q%20source%20(also%20called,in%20the%20Gospel%20of%20Mark.)

**Right: St. Francis
Preaching to (or
possibly thanking)
the birds
(including
chickens)**



**Left: Chicks
learning how
to find and eat
food.**

Family of God / Followers of Christ

God of love and peace,
God of justice and fire,
when the order put in place disorders your grace with bullets and bullies,
hear those who shout, "I can't breathe."

In the midst of corporate control and the conspiracy of lies,
we plead, "I can't breathe."

As a virus raids a slum and insidiously tracks a migrant camp,
have mercy on those caught who cough and struggle, "I can't breathe."

As the cars return and the airlines receive huge government subsidies,
listen to the earth gasping, "I can't breathe."

The waters rise, God of sea and sky, but dominions do not rest from their
wrecking power.

Heed the world as it cries, "I can't breathe."

When we continue to inhale and exhale
as if the suffocation did not matter,
as if our breathing were somehow separate from the struggles of others
for air,
align our lives with our prayer.

Forgive us all that does not honour your love,
all that does not live gratefully from the gift of your grace,
all that restricts the communion that your Spirit extends far and wide.

Alongside all those who can't breathe,
we seek the fresh wind over the chaos of our lives,
setting us free,
setting all your people free to breathe,
through Jesus Christ. Amen.

*(Sunday Prayers Service of Evangelical Lutheran Church of Geneva
(English), Terry MacArthur and team)*

If you are looking at this cross it might just belong to you?

It was dropped on the ground as St. Isaac's at Br. Brian's funeral back in 2013. Many Tertiary's were in attendance. The outgoing warden gave it to me for safe keeping but I would like to see if the owner recognises it and would like it returned.

Please contact me at stisaacs.wardens@xtra.co.nz and I will get it posted to you, Maranu Gascoigne



We'll meet again, don't know where don't know when.....

A reflection on a recent meeting

Recently tssf Auckland shared an interesting experience together as we for the first time since February met in person on August 8th. We were fortunate, as shortly after this we moved back into Level Three. Having had our previous two meetings online via Zoom it was a delight to be together in person!

This was the first of several meetings planned from early this year in which we wanted to draw on some of the material offered by IPTOC. With the agreement of members a small planning group developed a process which we hoped to adapt for our setting in Aotearoa.

I am always interested in how other groups express their Franciscan calling as community, so hope this sharing is of some interest to others.

Our focus was on *Shared Review: Living the Principles together*. We were each to reflect deeply and honestly for ourselves prior to meeting, on how we had lived the principles over the last year through our Rule of Life. Our intention was to then share in pairs, and as Anne Moody put it "to experience what is like to be listened to well.....appreciatively." We also considered our reflections in relation to four questions.

1. What have you found particularly fruitful or beneficial this year in living your vocation according to the Principles of the Order?
2. What has been particularly challenging?
3. How do you see your vocation evolving in the coming year, are

there circumstances presenting any challenges or opportunities?

4. What are the ways in which the group or Order at large can help you in the year ahead, or you help the Order?

The next step of our process was to choose two “significant things to share with the group” and to engage with each other round these offerings.

From Anne Moody.....As we gathered together I wondered how many would feel able to share deeply. The planning group made that possible through thoughtful and clear process.

Surprise, the process did take a bit longer than anticipated but I believe that there was good involvement and certainly lots of talking and listening.

It felt good to be given the time to talk with at least one other member and to share where we were at and then to share with the bigger group that which each of us had agreed to share.

Two things I identified as important were the Night Prayer two of us instituted over Lockdown 4 on the phone and which we have continued most nights, and the smaller South area group meetings.

It was certainly a good meeting which I think we started to share at a different level. I could recommend it to others.

It was also great to have Blair, our Minister Provincial join us.

From Penny Kennett.....At the last meeting my discussion partner and I took plenty of time to consider the questions which reflected our journey with our Personal Rule over the last year. We had made notes prior to the meeting, based on a meeting earlier in the year.

The question in my mind was how to be in community

This proved an engaging topic for discussion between us.

Examples of contemporary and historical examples of women who were secluded or isolated for one reason or another and yet very much connected to their faith community were considered.

Prayer proved the means of connection for community, not requiring both time and space to be in place but intention and bringing community to mind.

The Daily Intercessions for example and Daily Obedience both strengthen an experience of community through prayer, outside the constructions that

mobility and Covid (just two examples) place on an otherwise solitary seeming life.

Between us we shared with the whole group our consideration of community, which was the result of individual and shared reflection and an ongoing enquiry put before the whole group itself.

For myself (Liz)..... there were many things which I valued about the process. I have chosen just a few.

Firstly, committing time to reflect deeply before we met on how I had actually lived the Principles, as well as where I may have lived them less well, was good. Though I reflect on the principle for each day, this was different, an overview which somehow brought them more alive in how they fit together and are expressed in my life. Great preparation for renewal of my Rule at Francistide!

Secondly, the opportunity to share with one another honestly, warts and all, to be heard appreciatively, and also to be entrusted with another's confidence was indeed a privilege.

A third gift was sharing in the large group. This was enriching, and surprising in the breadth of different ways in which people live out their Rule, as well as the questions and thoughts that were raised, some similar and others unexpected.

For me, sharing my experience and the challenges of my first year in a new role, was freeing, and naming it as a 'learning year' felt appropriate. Like Penny, I have been and continue to ponder deeply, what being 'community' means in our Order, and in the Church.

On reflection, I am glad we drew on the offerings from IPTOC. Sharing and connecting with other Franciscans from different parts of the globe seems increasingly important. The process invited sharing of our joys, hopes and vulnerabilities, and called for trust in one another. It was important that we made the process our own, strengthening our sense of who we are individually and together as we "do what is ours to do".

Liz Farrands



FRANCISCAN *Virtual* PILGRIMAGE DAY

Led by Archbishop (Emeritus)
Sir David Moxon

3rd October 2020
(the 4th October is the Feast of St Francis)

9.30 am to 4.30 pm
All Saints Anglican Community Centre,
Palmerston North

This virtual pilgrimage will explore the life and theology of St Francis and St Clare, & their relevance for today. The programme will include Franciscan style devotions & Eucharist.

Refreshments, a simple lunch and a resource booklet are provided.
Cost: \$15 (payable at the door)

Full details on:
www.pilgrimagenz.nz

Registration is essential

Register on the website or
email jennyjohnhornblow@gmail.com;
or phone 021 437 566

The session talks will be recorded and available later on the website along with the resource booklet.

Hosted by Rev John Hornblow,
Dr Jenny Boyack, and the All Saints Parish
Enquiries 021 437 566



www.pilgrimagenz.nz