

# TAU MARCH 2020

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



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Tau will be published monthly for the time being so we can keep it touch and enjoy each others stories during the Covid-19 pandemic.

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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## Jesuit Prayer

"The Jesuits in the USA have circulated this prayer which I think many will find useful"

*Jesus Christ, you travelled through towns and villages "curing every disease and illness." At your command, the sick were made well. Come to our aid now, in the midst of the global spread of the coronavirus, that we may experience your healing love.*

*Heal those who are sick with the virus. May they regain their strength and health through quality medical care.*

*Heal us from our fear, which prevents nations from working together and neighbours from helping one another.*

*Heal us from our pride, which can make us claim invulnerability to a disease that knows no borders.*

*Jesus Christ, healer of all, stay by our side in this time of uncertainty and sorrow.*

*Be with those who have died from the virus. May they be at rest with you in your eternal peace.*

*Be with the families of those who are sick or have died. As they worry and grieve, defend them from illness and despair. May they know your peace.*

*Be with the doctors, nurses, researchers and all medical professionals who seek to heal and help those affected and who put themselves at risk in the process. May they know your protection and peace.*

*Be with the leaders of all nations. Give them the foresight to act with charity and true concern for the well-being of the people they are meant to serve. Give them the wisdom to invest in long-term solutions that will help prepare for or prevent future outbreaks. May they know your peace, as they work together to achieve it on earth.*

*Whether we are home or abroad, surrounded by many people suffering from this illness or only a few, Jesus Christ, stay with us as we endure and mourn, persist and prepare. In place of our anxiety, give us your peace.*

*Jesus Christ, heal us.*

## From the Formation Director...

This is being written on the eve of the general "lock down". I am very mindful of all of you under 70 who still have to experience the first few days solitude - especially if you live alone. I guess the advantage for those of us living alone is that there is no one in the house to fall out with after days of no break from one another! There are, however, some disadvantages like having to ask for help any time you need something from the supermarket! I was helped to see this in a new light as I read one part of my rule under "Humility" the other day, and realised that this is an excellent opportunity to practise allowing others to serve me!

It was so exciting a month ago, that I had finally managed to book in two sessions of Novice Counsellor Training - one in Wellington and one in Nelson. The Wellington one had to be cancelled and the Nelson one, at the end of May is in doubt. Who knows what will be happening by the end of May. In the interim, my plans to be in Nelson are cancelled, but will be reinstated if things are back to normal before then.

Finally, my apologies to **Jeremy Younger**, a new member of our Order, who became a Novice last December. Welcome, Jeremy - we look forward to meeting you when we are able to gather next year at Convocation.

Noho ora mai, my brothers and sisters,

Marion Fairbrass

Lord, help me to live this day, quietly, easily. To lean upon Thy great strength, trustfully, restfully. To wait for the unfolding of Thy will, patiently, serenely. To meet others, peacefully, joyously. To face tomorrow, confidently, courageously.

*Francis of Assisi*

## **Tena koutou katoa.**

Yesterday I listened to the announcement that all 70 year olds were asked to stay home, and I wept. I don't feel old. I am still working part time. What about my students? How will I cope with the loneliness? What about my income? I have energy and ability to help others. It's hard asking others for help. I don't want to stay home alone for weeks.

I live in a democracy where as long as possible they will not order me to stay home – and I like that. So I will do what I am asked to do – for my good and the good of my community.

This morning I lit a candle and looked for a Morning Prayer post on Facebook. To my delight I found myself viewing a person I know, The Revd Chris Darnell, a family friend from a while ago. He was live-streaming a service from his parish church. I joined in, responding to the prayers and singing the songs. How wonderful. I have now been given links to a number of places that are going to live stream each week. I can church hop!

In 1955 when I was 8, my family emigrated to NZ, leaving grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins and friends behind. My parents' only means of staying in touch with those left behind was by letter - mostly sea mail for a while. My mother was able to connect with her father once a year on Christmas day. There was not much money in our household and toll calls to UK were very expensive. Now that was isolation.

Years later, my daughter moved to Germany to accept a scholarship to do her Master's degree. We did have a computer by then and could email. Phone calls were still very expensive and the internet we had was not really good for sending photos. There was no face time, no easy, inexpensive daily or weekly contact. I felt cut off from her and longed to be there for her and to know how she was.

Today, I am alone in my home, unable to receive a real hug and sit and chat with a friend in my house. However, in the last 24 hours I have exchanged greetings and virtual hugs with friends and relations across NZ, in Australia, England, Scotland, Solomon Islands, Ireland and Germany. I have had a face time chat with a dear friend in England; had two phone chats; shared in a service of worship where I could see the people in their

church. It made me think of times of physical separation in the past and realise how blessed we are today.

I am so glad to be alive and in isolation in the 21<sup>st</sup> century rather than in earlier times. What a blessing all this technology is. I think it will be quite a struggle to switch off from all of this visual and auditory contact and find time to do the projects that I am looking forward to, not to mention the work that I still am able to do.

Kia kaha. Noho ora mai. (Be strong and stay well.)

Marion Fairbrass.

### **A Reflection** *from Amanda Bradley (Chaplain for the Waikato)*

Do you know you started out as a single cell which held DNA enough to hold 1,000 VOLUMES of coded blueprints.

One cell determined the colour of your eyes, the shape of your nose (no thanks to you Grandfather Alexander Lamb!), the size of your little finger.

NOBODY else in the whole world has, or ever will have, your smile, laugh, sense of humour. God designed your DNA. He made you just the way HE wanted you to be.

The world would be incomplete without you.

The psalmist says, (Psalm 139 v 14), "You are fearfully and wonderfully made"

Sometimes we focus on our failings, limitations and struggles. We compare ourselves to others and see ourselves as not good enough

God created you uniquely so instead of criticizing and comparing ourselves let us accept and embrace the things God has made for us to do right now wherever we are.

Nobody else can do the things we do, so you might be a piccolo, not the double bass or the big bass drum, but without you the music is incomplete so play loudly and share your joy with others who are also trying to do the same.

Let's make music together.

## **Auckland, TSSF: Letter 20<sup>th</sup> March 2020**

Dear Friends,

these are such unprecedented times! Every time I set out to write to you something changes again! Within such a rapidly developing situation, I am sure that you will in so many ways be caring for one another and the various communities of which you are part already. Thank you for how you care for and look out for others and all that you are doing in response to the Covid-19 pandemic.

I send thoughts and prayers from myself and from Diane, our convenor and hope you are all staying well, connected with others and coping with the stresses which arise daily.

Let's remember that while the pandemic crosses borders, that compassion and love are equally powerful!

***Keeping in touch:*** some of our small groups already have good communication networks with members. If these are less well established, please would convenors or group members set up some form of phone tree to keep in touch regularly with one another. Please let me (or Diane) know of illness or particular need for prayers, and please pray as usual for our Pacific Melanesian sisters and brothers.

***Annual Retreat:*** with real sadness at the cancellation of the National Retreat, I am sure we feel for and give thanks for our Provincial leaders (including our Bishop Protector Jim White) who have put such thought and energy into planning and facilitating this event. Their responsible and difficult choice to cancel the event must have been challenging!

***Cancellation of Church Services:*** from the Bishops Office....

A short time ago, following consultation with the bishops, the Archbishops released a statement with regards to public worship ([this can be viewed on the Anglican Taonga site – click here](#)). The decision has been made to **suspend all public services of worship following those services being held this coming Sunday 22 March.**

From the Anglican Taonga site.... you may like to join in the following invitation:

At 7pm local time on Sunday 22 and at 7pm every Sunday that worship services are suspended, please light a candle in your home and pray with and for others.

**Other News:** Currently plans are in place for Margaret Strong to be made a novice on Saturday May 9<sup>th</sup>, at 1.00pm in the Chapel of Christ Church, Anglican Church, Whangarei, at 1.00pm. At this point I am hoping this will go ahead however *'please watch this space'*!

It would be great for some of us to be there to support Margaret in her own setting, where those significant in her journey can be present. Will update closer to the time!

**Next meeting:** our meeting is scheduled for 18<sup>th</sup> April (9.30 am for 10 am) at the Selwyn Library. This will be under review over the next weeks.

I pray that you may sing, that you may hear each other and be upheld by one another as you care for others, yourself and our world.

Peace and all goodness, Liz Farrands, Chaplain.

## **The Little Flowers of St. Francis of Assisi**

And St. Francis added: "My dear and beloved Brother, the treasure of blessed poverty is so very precious and divine that we are not worthy to possess it in our vile bodies. For poverty is that heavenly virtue by which all earthy and transitory things are trodden under foot, and by which every obstacle is removed from the soul so that it may freely enter into union with the eternal Lord God. It is also the virtue which makes the soul, while still here on earth, converse with the angels in Heaven. It is she who accompanied Christ on the Cross, was buried with Christ in the Tomb, and with Christ was raised and ascended into Heaven, for even in this life she gives to souls who love her the ability to fly to Heaven, and she alone guards the armour of true humility and charity."

*Taken from: ~ St. Francis of Assisi.*

## **Topic 8 - Integrity of Creation** by Laurie Hopping

This topic has given me a different view on St Francis. He clearly managed to see creation in a different way. To be able to talk and understand all living creatures has to be a real gift from God.

We all owe a great debt to Saint Francis of Assisi and to his "*Canticle of the Creature*" for leading us to the conviction that all brother and sister creatures make up one family under God's loving care. May all these wonderful creatures continue to lift our hearts upward to God in this glorious prayer of praise!

While doing this Topic I have been led to explore the last months of St Francis life, try to see what he was thinking, and what drove him to write "*The Canticle of the Creatures*", calling things like Mother Earth and birds' sister and brother. Interesting that the Maori have a name for Mother earth "Papatuanuku" (which means *earth mother and wife of Rangi-nui [great heavens] - all living things originate from them*). But to see the right picture we need to try to understand how Frances was able to arrive at that special moment when as they say that you and God become one.

It is therefore important to remember that Francis wrote the Canticle of Brother Sun and Mother Earth when he was very ill. Maybe a lot of things became a lot clearer; we are told that when the time comes to meet God face to face it is said that you can see your whole life in front of you.

I have a job feeding pigs. I arrive early and walk down the row of pig pens. Each time I go to a new pen, the pigs come up to the fence sniff me look me up and down and then proceed to talk to their mate. It would be interesting to see how far Frances could go if he was really understanding animals like this.

It makes our living with animals like dogs and cats very interesting.

After they have been with us for a while you can know what they are thinking, and they seem to know what is going on in the place they call home. Cats and dogs seem to cotton on to getting what they want faster than we humans. They know how to push our buttons when they want to be fed, or when they want to go outside. They seem to know what we are thinking and talking about and some are even able to make themselves



understood by barking or meowing. As I say, it makes for a very interesting time and sometimes you wonder who is looking after who. We have a cat who sleeps with his head on the pillow under the bed covers just like we do, and I have to say he seems to be in charge.

Did God give St Frances a very special gift to be able to communicate with the creatures on this earth. It follows very easily that he would call many brother and sister. Has St Francis been the only human that has been given this special gift?

The *"Integrity of Creation"* is one of the last things that tells us what St Francis was thinking and how he related to God and creatures around him. For us it has to be a foundation stone if we are to follow in his footsteps.

What can I do to help my brother and sister animals and to make our planet better for both them and us to live in?

We talk about bringing greater justice to the animals we live with; I remember when I was out visiting the farmers one day, I walked into this guys cowshed at calving time and he was calving this small heifer. He was using wire strainers to pull the calf out, he was yelling and swearing at this poor cow. Well, I had to step in, so I made the farmer ring the vet. Even the Vet had trouble getting the calf out. Both the vet and I had a heart to heart talk to this guy at his house, so his wife would know what had happened. From there it snowballed. In the farming industry there is a very strong women's support group which sprang into action. Through this the farmers actions, things like clopping horns off the cows, and getting deer velvet off without anaesthetic or trying to fix sore feet by carving bits off the hoof, are now done by the Vet or someone who has been specially trained. The farming industry has become a lot more aware with how animals are to be treated. It has gone a small way in helping our brothers and sisters to get a better deal.

In the farming industry the farmers I know value the land and make sure things like water ways and effluent are handled in a responsible way. When I was selling products to the dairy farmers, organic products were the first thing we talked about, using the right amount per dose and disposing of the empty containers properly and not just throwing them in the river or rubbish hole.

Each farmer makes sure the creatures he is looking after are fed and watered properly. Although they may not have gone organic, most try very hard to look after their farming operation by using the right types of sprays, making sure the food they feed their stock comes from plants grown in New Zealand, by people who are growing food that will sustain our planet, and most farmers try to leave the farm in better condition than when they took over.

As for us we grow our own food both meat and vegetables and we have a large avocado tree with lots of fruit on it. It is organically grown and we give the avocados away to people who like them. We use very little in the way of sprays, Both Diane and I have been taught to make sure the place we call home is left in better condition than when we brought it. And we have taught our children to value Gods earth.

What about the joy that comes from the brother dog as he welcomes you after your return from a trip expectantly, and when you are told that he has sat at the end of the drive every day that you have been away, in the hot sun, just waiting for you to return home.

For me personally to start with, we are just on the verge of moving into town and changing the car. I am hoping that there is enough in the budget to put solar heating into the new house and wind generators are getting better and I would like to buy a hybrid car.

You said I should be more outward looking, so I have taken your help to heart, and I have done a little research about the food we waste. I have found we waste food right through the supply chain, from what is produced on farms and in factories to the excess that supermarkets throw out. It is no wonder I have between 6-10 wheelie bins full to feed the pigs. However, the largest proportion of food wasted in New Zealand comes from the household.

New Zealand homes throw away 157,398 tonnes of food per year, all of which could have been eaten. This is enough food to feed the whole of Dunedin for a year.

New Zealand's yearly food waste produces 409,234 tonnes of carbon emissions. To offset this, we would need to take 150,453 cars off the road for one year or plant 163,693 trees. Wasting this food costs the average

household \$644 a year. Internationally we waste \$1.17 billion in food every year or one third of the food we grow is thrown away uneaten,

I am going to see if I can help in this area. I am sure New Zealanders care but don't know the size of the problem.

On researching I was interested to find that someone who does the ordering of a product like coffee, if the product is not perfect maybe it comes in a packet 5g heavier than asked is for all the coffee in that order is thrown out. While you may think that's the way it is, we in New Zealand over the past 6 years have had phenomenal growth in coffee consumption, rising from an estimated \$240,000 in 2004 to \$16 million last year. According to industry experts, total retail coffee sales were about \$150 million. (May 2, 2017)

But coffee is not only food we waste

1 Bread	15,174	\$62,589,440
2.Leftovers	12,901	\$140,374,320
3.Oranges and mandarins	6,302	\$20,516,361
4.Apples	5,117	\$14,818,152
5.Bananas	4,844	\$12,933,883
6.Potatoes	4,767	\$8,323,120

Into the tip it goes and this all turns to methane gas. There must be some way to stop the waste and feed all the people?

Throughout the canticle, we see how Francis saw God's goodness, radiance and beauty in all creatures. He saw them indeed as benevolent friends, as brothers and sisters—as family. In fact, according to Thomas of Celano, the first biographer of St Francis he went “joyfully to meet [death]” and “invited it to make its lodging with him. ‘Welcome,’ he said, ‘my sister death!’”

Be praised my Lord for our love for the creatures in our care, for the love we give to them, and for their love they give us.

## **A letter from Maranu Gascoigne**

Dearest TSSF, Friends & Family

I have been given the opportunity to reside at St Isaac's for the foreseeable future. I am unpacking as I stop to pencil this email from Alverna and our dear Br Brian's photo on the wall with such a beautiful smile.

I had planned to be here from Aug-Nov however in the present circumstances I am deeply humbled to be sharing in the deep prayer and intercession with this tiny community including Sr Anne SLG, the wardens Oenone & Mike (and many others who come here regularly, though currently closed). Whilst we are observing social distancing (I am self-isolating, having arrived just yesterday) we are committed to the daily office and intercession.

There are no words to describe this journey that we each now must take personally and collectively. This photo is from the front page of The Herald on Friday 13th March when I chose not to board an international flight to UK. Little did I realise that it would be where it is now.

As I drove through the Waipoua forest yesterday and thought about how nature lives with Kauri dieback. We human beings must now live with and through Covid-19.

Please send your prayer requests via email or text to 0210717033. Right now, I am here to hold stillness, light a candle, pray and intercede.

The daunting task many face being cut off from their everyday routine and rhythms is almost unbearable. All the familiar structures have been taken down as businesses and life as we know it closes its doors this evening with no certainty of when the key to open will be turned again.

At the foot of this cross we must wait and pray with hope and gratitude in our hearts.

May The God of love show us compassion.

My cat Tinsel for those of you who have met her is here with me!

We are all deeply loved.

Maranu

This poem by John O'Donohue was just forwarded to me from David, a Trustee here at St Isaac's.  
Maranu



*This is the time to be slow,  
Lie low to the wall  
Until the bitter weather passes.  
Try, as best you can, not to let  
The wire brush of doubt  
Scrape from your heart  
All sense of yourself  
And your hesitant light.  
If you remain generous,  
Time will come good;  
And you will find your feet  
Again on fresh pastures of promise,  
Where the air will be kind  
And blushed with beginning.*

## Nelson News

At the November, 2019, TSSF meeting at Carolyn and Alistair's house, Kathleen Hofman became a Companion and Alistair Monro renewed his Companion promise.



And on 2nd December, 2019 Carolyn became a New Zealand Citizen!



Nelson has started a phone tree and we are keeping in touch with each other daily. We are trusting that God is in control .

Kia Kaha!  
Love and blessings  
Yvonne (Nelson Chaplain)

**Where are  
we going Pooh?**



**Home Piglet. We're  
going home, because that's  
the best thing to do right now.**

## **A Prayer:**

*I share with you the following prayer by Br. Richard Hendrick, an Irish Franciscan friar.*

But,  
They say that in Wuhan after so many  
years of noise  
You can hear the birds again.  
They say that after just a few weeks of  
quiet  
The sky is no longer thick with fumes  
But blue and grey and clear.

They say that in the streets of Assisi  
People are singing to each other  
across the empty squares,  
keeping their windows open  
so that those who are alone  
may hear the sounds of family around  
them.

They say that a hotel in the West of  
Ireland  
Is offering free meals and delivery to the  
housebound.  
Today a young woman I know  
is busy spreading fliers with her number  
through the neighbourhood  
So that the elders may have someone to  
call on.

Today Churches, Synagogues, Mosques  
and Temples  
are preparing to welcome  
and shelter the homeless, the sick, the  
weary  
All over the world people are slowing  
down and reflecting  
All over the world people are looking at  
their neighbours in a new way  
All over the world people are waking up

to a new reality  
To how big we really are.  
To how little control we really have.  
To what really matters.  
To Love.

So, we pray, and we remember that  
Yes, there is fear.  
But there does not have to be hate.  
Yes, there is isolation.  
But there does not have to be  
loneliness.  
Yes, there is panic buying.  
But there does not have to be  
meanness.  
Yes, there is sickness.  
But there does not have to be disease of  
the soul  
Yes, there is even death.  
But there can always be a rebirth of  
love.

Wake to the choices you make as to  
how to live now.  
Today, breathe.  
Listen, behind the factory noises of your  
panic  
The birds are singing again  
The sky is clearing,  
Spring is coming,  
And we are always encompassed by  
Love.  
Open the windows of your soul  
And though you may not be able  
to touch across the empty square,  
Sing.

Fr. Richard Hendrick, OFM, March 13<sup>th</sup>,  
2020

## Rest now, e Papatūānuku

Breathe easy and settle  
Right here where you are  
We'll not move upon you  
For awhile  
We'll stop, we'll cease  
We'll slow down and stay home  
Draw each other close and be kind  
Kinder than we've ever been.  
I wish we could say we were doing it  
for you  
as much as ourselves  
But hei aha  
We're doing it anyway  
It's right. It's time.  
Time to return  
Time to remember  
Time to listen and forgive  
Time to withhold judgment  
Time to cry  
Time to think  
About others  
Remove our shoes  
Press hands to soil  
Sift grains between fingers  
Gentle palms  
Time to plant  
Time to wait  
Time to notice  
To whom we belong  
For now it's just you

And the wind  
And the forests and the oceans and  
the sky full of rain  
Finally, it's raining!  
Ka turuturu te wai kamo o Rangi ki  
runga i a koe  
Embrace it  
This sacrifice of solitude we have  
carved out for you  
He iti noaiho - a small offering  
People always said it wasn't possible  
To ground flights and stay home and  
stop our habits of consumption  
But it was  
It always was.  
We were just afraid of how much it  
was going to hurt  
- and it IS hurting and it will hurt and  
continue to hurt  
But not as much as you have been  
hurt.  
So be still now  
Wrap your hills around our absence  
Loosen the concrete belt cinched tight  
at your waist  
Rest.  
Breathe.  
Recover.  
Heal -  
And we will do the same.

**Be strong, Be kind!**



## **PRAYER FOR PROTECTION**

All powerful, living and all loving God  
Who has created the world  
In such wonderful beauty and order,  
Who has redeemed us through Jesus Christ  
And through the power of his Holy Spirit  
Has enabled us to share in his healing purpose,  
We hold up before you the present Covid 19 crisis,  
Set up a barrier against further infection,  
Deliver us from all fear and anxiety.  
Help us to adjust to the changes required  
And if necessary to re-order our lives.  
Remember all those who are affected  
That they may get adequate treatment  
And be enabled to recover,  
And protect all those who care for them.  
All this we ask in the name  
of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

Chris B, TSSF  
25/3/2020