



SECULAR FRANCISCAN ORDER

NATIONAL FRATERNITY OF GREAT BRITAIN - BULLETIN February 2014



Candlemas Thought



At Candlemas we remember Simeon describing Jesus as “a light to enlighten”. The feast reminds me of the story of Christmas at Greccio.

In Chapter 30 of the Life of Francis, Thomas of Celano describes how the villagers arrived with candles and torches to light up that night. Later Celano adds that the night became “lit up like the day.” Further in the episode, we read that one of the people had a vision of a child lying lifeless in the manger, until Francis approached to “waken him from a deep sleep”. Celano described this as “fitting....Now he is awakened and impressed on their loving memory by His own grace through His holy servant Francis.”

Light occurs seldom in the writings of Francis but two extracts come to mind: “Enlighten the darkness of my mind” (The Prayer before the Crucifix that Francis prayed from the beginning of his quest for God.) During his last months, the blind, sick Francis wrote the Canticle of the Creatures and uses light, first of Brother Sun and, then, in a manner reminiscent of the Greccio account, he describes Brother Fire, “Through whom You light the night and he is beautiful and robust and strong.” Francis pointed us to the effects of the Light.

By contrast, the Life written by Celano, portrays Francis as someone who brought light and a refreshing newness to a darkened world. Pope Gregory IX would take up the same biblical reference, Sir 50:6-7, in the Canonisation Document for Francis as Thomas of Celano did in Chapter 15 of the Life: “Like a shining star in the darkness of night”.

Simeon spoke as a prophet when he described what Jesus would do – surprising words for a tiny baby being presented to God.

Unexpected light and treasure abound in our fraternities and the Chapter of Mats is going to offer us a unique place to share nationally and uncover our light that is often hidden. I hope that all your OFS activities this year will reveal the light you bring and will be times of celebration, but also give you the wisdom and strength to face, and work on, any shadows or darkness.

Paula Pearce 2nd February 2014

Regional Elections



We have 9 regions in Great Britain and during 2014 no less than 7 of these regions are having elective Chapters. Please pray that the Holy Spirit will enlighten the hearts and minds of those taking part – may His will be done!



Ilia Delio in UK

Ilia Delio, a Franciscan religious sister and author of many books is coming to speak in Britain at various venues in June. The main event, 'The Emergent Christ', is in Norwich – application forms and full information available on the website below. Rob Hardie ofs (Minister of East Anglia Region) has kindly offered accommodation for the Norwich weekend. Please contact Rob directly:

robclarehardie@aol.com 0160 3897609

4th June London (an evening) www.silenceinthecity.org.uk 0207 2316278

6th - 7th June Norwich (a 2 day 'intensive' event) www.norwichmediation.co.uk 01603 416973

11th - 12th June Manchester (times tbc) www.northreddish.org.uk 07789 915263

14th June Perth (time tbc) www.bieltatblackruthven.org.uk 01738 583238

National Spiritual Assistants

Since the death of Fr Peter Hall OFM the responsibility for Spiritual Assistance has been carried by Fr Stephen Innes OFM Cap. At the last National Council meeting in December 2013 Paula officially announced the appointment of Fr Jesmond Pawley OFM Conv as Spiritual Assistant to OFS GB. In addition Fr Patrick Lonsdale is now our OFM contact - he is not a Spiritual Assistant. Paula joined with the other members in thanking Fr Stephen for carrying the responsibility on his own for an extended period. Please remember our 2 Assistants (Fr Stephen and Fr Jesmond) and Fr Patrick in your prayers.

100

100 Club - Fundraising for the OFS

100

Subscription is now due for participation in 2014. Please contact Roger to make payment of £12 per entry rogerofs@gmail.com

It is hoped that we can have 2 draws this year.

For more details go to the 100 Club page on the website.



Pewter/English text £3

Badges

New stock of OFS badges
available from Paula
paulapofs@gmail.com
01303 813095

These pictures are not
actual size



Enamel/Latin text £4

Chapter of Mats

An OFS GB celebration



“Fraternity needs to be discovered, loved, experienced, proclaimed...”

(Pope Francis message – see * below)

Have you booked your place? Forms are available on the front page of the member’s area of www.ofsgb.org or contact Roger Yelland rogerofs@gmail.com 020 8981 1554 to pay your £20 deposit.

Pope Francis



The Lord is knocking at the door of our hearts. Have we put a sign on the door saying: “Do not disturb”?
13 January 2014

If we live the faith in our daily life, then our work too becomes a chance to spread the joy of being a Christian.
21 January 2014

These are 2 recent ‘tweets’ from the Holy Father - short quotes to make you think.

Have you read any of his longer writings?

- Apostolic Exhortation on the Proclamation of the Gospel in Today's World: *Evangelii Gaudium*
- Message for the World Day of Peace 2014: *Fraternity, the Foundation and Pathway to Peace* *

Both available online at www.vatican.va

DIARY DATES

25th April - International fraternity celebration of Year of St Louis opens

30th May – 1st June weekend seminar in Crewe on The Prayers of St Francis – **now booking**
– contact John: t.johnpower@googlemail.com 0164 668 2297

4th – 11th June - Assisi trip led by Paula Pearce ofs (National Minister) – last chance to book
– contact Paula: paulapofs@gmail.com 01303 813095

19th – 21st September Chapter of Mats (National Assembly) at The Hayes, Derbyshire – **now booking**/limited places filling up. Forms are on the website www.ofsgb.org.uk or contact Roger: rogerofs@gmail.com 020 8981 1554