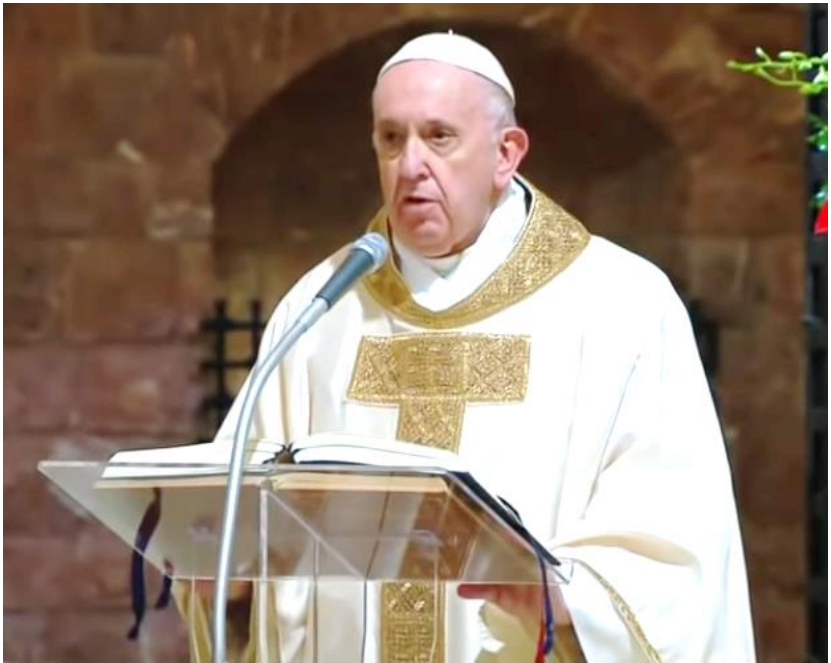


**SECULAR
FRANCISCAN ORDER
+EAST ANGLIAN
REGION**



**AUTUMN
2020
ISSUE 12**



**Pope Francis celebrates
Mass at the tomb of St.
Francis on October 5th
and then signs the new
Encyclical on the altar:
“Fratelli tutti”
“All Brothers and
Sisters”**

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Dear Readers,

It is my pleasure to present you with some interesting reading. Let not Covid-19 ruin our spiritual lives. If we are more confined to our homes, let us make use of any extra time we have to improve our knowledge and spirituality and what better to sit down and digest this Autumn magazine!

With Pope Francis – such a wonderful Franciscan example to us all – releasing his new Encyclical in Assisi at the tomb of St. Francis and signing it on the tomb altar, we just had to let *ALL* our readers know about it!

Our Regional Minister, Sr. Brigid Rawlinson, has set us a good example by giving a substantial report on her life of Faith, and from our fraternity reports we can get a good idea of what is going on in the region, even during lock-down.

Apart from those, we have some good articles on a variety of topics and by a variety of contributors and I thank all those who sent in articles and reports.

I am always worried in case I have “lost” or omitted an article sent in and I hope I have not omitted any on this occasion, but if I have, please forgive me and let me know.

Where there were spaces I have inserted thoughts from homilies and elsewhere which I hope will be thought-provoking!

Our next issue is due in the Spring of 2021. Please record anything of Franciscan interest and send it any time from now onwards to:

michaelsimmonds36@virginmedia.com or contact me by phone:

01234 308395. Happy reading!

“Fratelli tutti”: short summary of Pope Francis’s Social Encyclical

Monday, October 5th, 2020 @ 11:48 am

Fraternity and social friendship are the ways the Pontiff indicates to build a better, more just and peaceful world, with the contribution of all: people and institutions. With an emphatic confirmation of a ‘no’ to war and to globalized indifference.



What are the great ideals but also the tangible ways to advance for those who wish to build a more just and fraternal world in their ordinary relationships, in social life, politics and institutions?

This is mainly the question that *Fratelli tutti* is intended to answer: the Pope describes it as a “Social Encyclical” (6) which borrows the title of the “Admonitions” of Saint Francis of Assisi, who used these words to “address his brothers and sisters and proposed to them a way of life

marked by the flavour of the Gospel” (Par 1). The Encyclical aims to promote a universal aspiration toward fraternity and social friendship. In the background of the Encyclical is the Covid-19 pandemic which, Francis reveals, “unexpectedly erupted” as he “was writing this letter”. But the global health emergency has helped demonstrate that “no one can face life in isolation” and that the time has truly come to “dream, then, as a single human family” in which we are “brothers and sisters all” (Par 8).

Chapter One: dark clouds cover the world

In the first of eight chapters, which is entitled “Dark Clouds over a Closed World”, the document reflects on the many distortions of the contemporary era: the manipulation and deformation of concepts such as democracy, freedom, justice; the loss of the meaning of the social community and history; selfishness and indifference toward the common good; the prevalence of a market logic based on profit and the culture of waste; unemployment, racism, poverty; the disparity of rights and its aberrations such as slavery, trafficking, women subjugated and then forced to abort, organ trafficking (see Par 10-24). It deals with global problems that call for global actions, emphasizes the Pope, also sounding the alarm against a “culture of walls” that favours the proliferation of organized crime, fuelled by fear and loneliness (see Par 27-28).

Chapter Two: strangers on the road

To many shadows, however, the Encyclical responds with a luminous example, a herald of hope: the Good Samaritan. The second chapter, “A stranger on the road”, is dedicated to this figure. In it, the Pope emphasizes that, in an unhealthy society that turns its back on suffering and that is “illiterate” in caring for the frail and vulnerable (see Par 64-65), we are all called – just like the Good Samaritan – to become neighbours to others (see Par 81), overcoming prejudices, personal interests, historic and cultural barriers. We all, in fact, are co-responsible in creating a society that is able to include, integrate and lift up those who have fallen or are suffering (see Par 77). Love builds bridges and “we were made for love” (Par 88), the Pope adds, particularly exhorting Christians to recognize Christ in the face of every excluded person (see Par 85).

Chapter Three: vision of an open world

The principle of the capacity to love according to “a universal dimension” (see Par 83) is also resumed in the third chapter, “Envisaging and engendering an open world”. In this chapter Francis exhorts us to go “‘outside’ the self” in order to find “a fuller existence in another” (Par 88), opening ourselves up to the other according to the dynamism of charity which makes us tend toward “universal fulfilment” (Par 95). In the background – the Encyclical recalls – the spiritual stature of a person’s life is measured by love, which always “takes first place” and leads us to seek better for the life of the other,

far from all selfishness (Par 92-93). The sense of solidarity and of fraternity begin within the family, which are to be safeguarded and respected in their “primary and vital mission of education” (Par 114).

The right to live with dignity cannot be denied to anyone, the Pope again affirms, and since rights have no borders, no one can remain excluded, regardless of where they are born (see Par 121) In this perspective the Pontiff also calls us to consider “an ethics of international relations” (see Par 126), because every country also belongs to foreigners and the goods of the territory cannot be denied to those who are in need and come from another place. Thus, the natural right to private property will be secondary to the principal of the universal destination of created goods (see Par 120). The Encyclical also places specific emphasis on the issue of foreign debt: subject to the principal that it must be paid, it is hoped nonetheless that this does not compromise the growth and subsistence of the poorest countries (see Par 126).

Chapter Four: heart open to the world

To the theme of migration, the latter, entitled “A heart open to the whole world”. With their lives “at stake” (Par 37), fleeing from war, persecution, natural catastrophes, unscrupulous trafficking, ripped from their communities of origin, migrants are to be welcomed, protected, supported and integrated. Unnecessary migration needs to be avoided, the Pontiff affirms, by creating concrete opportunities to live with dignity in the countries of origin. But at the same time, we

need to respect the right to seek a better life elsewhere. In receiving countries, the right balance will be between the protection of citizens' rights and the guarantee of welcome and assistance for migrants (see Par 38-40). Specifically, the Pope points to several "indispensable steps, especially in response to those who are fleeing grave humanitarian crises": to increase and simplify the granting of visas; to open humanitarian corridors; to assure lodging, security and essential services; to offer opportunities for employment and training; to favour family reunification; to protect minors; to guarantee religious freedom. What is needed above all – the document reads – is global governance, an international collaboration for migration which implements long-term planning, going beyond single emergencies, on behalf of the supportive development of all peoples (see Par 129-132).

Chapter Five: better politics

The theme of the fifth chapter is "A better kind of politics", which represents one of the most valuable forms of charity because it is placed at the service of the common good (see Par 180) and recognizes the importance of people, understood as an open category, available for discussion and dialogue (see Par 160). This is the populism indicated by Francis, which counters that "populism" which ignores the legitimacy of the notion of "people", by attracting consensus in order to exploit them for its own service and fomenting selfishness in order to increase its own popularity (see Par 159). But a better politics is also one that protects work, an "essential dimension of social life". The best

strategy against poverty, the Pontiff explains, does not simply aim to contain or render indigents inoffensive, but to promote them in the perspective of solidarity and subsidiarity (see Par 187). The task of politics, moreover, is to find a solution to all that attacks fundamental human rights, such as social exclusion; the marketing of organs, tissues, weapons and drugs; sexual exploitation; slave labour; terrorism and organized crime. The Pope makes an emphatic appeal to definitively eliminate human trafficking, a “source of shame for humanity”, and hunger, which is “criminal” because food is “an inalienable right” (Par 188-189).

The politics we need, Francis also underscores, is a politics centred on human dignity and not subjected to finance because “the marketplace, by itself, cannot resolve every problem”: the “havoc” wreaked by financial speculation has demonstrated this (see Par 168). Hence, popular movements have taken on particular relevance: as true “torrents of moral energy”, they must be engaged in society with greater coordination. In this way – the Pope states – it will be possible to go beyond a Policy “with” and “of” the poor (see Par 169).

Another hope present in the Encyclical regards the reform of the UN: in the face of the predominance of the economic dimension, a task of the United Nations will be to give substance to the concept of a “family of nations” working for the common good, the eradication of poverty and the protection of human rights. Tireless recourse “to negotiation, mediation and arbitration” – the Papal Document states – the UN must

promote the force of law rather than the law of force (see Par 173-175).

Chapter Six: dialogue and friendship

From the sixth chapter, “Dialogue and friendship in society”, further emerges the concept of life as the “art of encounter” with everyone, even with the world’s peripheries and with original peoples, because “each of us can learn something from others. No one is useless and no one is expendable” (see Par 215). Then, of particular note, is the Pope’s reference to the miracle of “kindness”, an attitude to be recovered because it is a star “shining in the midst of darkness” and “frees us from the cruelty ... the anxiety ... the frantic flurry of activity” that prevail in the contemporary era (see Par 222-224).

Chapter Seven: renewed encounter

The value and promotion of peace is reflected on in the seventh chapter, “Paths of renewed encounter”, in which the Pope underlines that peace is connected to truth, justice and mercy. Far from the desire for vengeance, it is “proactive” and aims at forming a society based on service to others and on the pursuit of reconciliation and mutual development (see Par 227-229). Thus, peace is an “art” that involves and regards everyone and in which each one must do his or her part in “a never-ending task” (see Par 227-232). Forgiveness is linked to peace: we must love everyone, without exception – the Encyclical reads – but loving an oppressor means helping him to change and not allowing him

to continue oppressing his neighbour (see Par 241-242). Forgiveness does not mean impunity, but rather, justice and remembrance, because to forgive does not mean to forget, but to renounce the destructive power of evil and the desire for revenge. Never forget “horrors” like the Shoah, the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, persecutions and ethnic massacres – exhorts the Pope. They must be remembered always, anew, so as not to become anaesthetized and to keep the flame of collective conscience alive. It is just as important to remember the good (see Par 246-252).

“Just War”

Part of the seventh chapter, then, focuses on war: “a constant threat”, that represents “the negation of all rights”, “a failure of politics and of humanity”, and “a stinging defeat before the forces of evil”. Moreover, due to nuclear chemical and biological weapons that strike many innocent civilians, today we can no longer think, as in the past, of the possibility of a “just war”, but we must vehemently reaffirm: “Never again war!” The total elimination of nuclear arms is “a moral and humanitarian imperative”. With the money invested in weapons, the Pope suggests instead the establishment of a global fund for the elimination of hunger (see Par 255-262).

Death penalty

Francis expresses just as clearly a position with regard to the death penalty: it is inadmissible and must be abolished worldwide. Not even a murderer loses his personal dignity” – the Pope writes – “and God

himself pledges to guarantee this” (Par 263-269). There is emphasis on the necessity to respect “the sacredness of life” (Par 283) where today “some parts of our human family, it appears, can be readily sacrificed”, such as the unborn, the poor, the disabled and the elderly (Par 18).

Chapter Eight: religion and fraternity

In the eighth and final chapter, the Pontiff focuses on “Religions at the service of fraternity in our world” and emphasizes that terrorism is not due to religion but to erroneous interpretations of religious texts, as well as “policies linked to hunger, poverty, injustice, oppression” (Par 282-283). A journey of peace among religions is possible and that it is therefore necessary to guarantee religious freedom, a fundamental human right for all believers (see Par 279).

The Encyclical reflects, in particular, on the role of the Church: she does not “restrict her mission to the private sphere”, it states. While not engaging in politics she does not, however, renounce the political dimension of life itself, attention to the common good and concern for integral human development, according to evangelical principals (see Par 276-278).

Lastly, Francis quotes the “Document on Human Fraternity for World Peace and Living Together”, which he signed on 4 February 2019 in Abu Dhabi, along with the Grand Imam of Al-Azhar, Ahmad Al-Tayyib: from that milestone of interreligious dialogue, the Pontiff returns to the appeal that, in the name of human fraternity, dialogue be adopted as

the way, common cooperation as conduct, and mutual knowledge as method and standard (see Par 285).



[From Vatican News]

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From Homilies

What does God want from me?

The prayer of the Rosary can change the course of history.

I command you to love one another. You did not choose me, *I chose you*.
I have commissioned you to go out and bear fruit, fruit that will last. Love one another and whatever you ask of my Father in my Name will be granted to you.
[John 15, 12-17]

Regional Minister

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

How time flies. I cannot believe it is six months since we went into the initial “Lockdown”. All around I hear people say, “how strange the world is now”. We are negotiating this “strange new world” in our own personal way and for some, alongside our families and friends (as we keep to the rule of six!).

Everyone has their own way/ways of coping but on more than one occasion I have heard it said, “How do people cope without a faith”? Yes, we are very blessed to have a faith and I know that there are people around me who are using these strange times as an opportunity to deepen their faith. Equally, I am meeting people who have no faith and they are struggling with anxiety and depression brought on by the pandemic.

Personally, there have been huge changes in my family life. Due to Covid-19 my husband lost his job of 25yrs. He was quite shocked by the phone call that delivered the news of his “redundancy” (but not as we know it in the UK). Basically, he was cut adrift with no redundancy pay out from the American Company he had worked for. We were left with the stark realisation that we could lose our home. I informed my husband that there was only one thing for it... we were going to have to pray! My husband was baptised into the Anglican faith but does not practice although he is not averse to asking me to pray for him!

Well, I set to the praying and within two weeks he was told about a local firm who were looking for someone. He went to meet the owners and was given the job on the spot. After a few months he looked again for a job where he could use his engineering skills more fully. Once again, through prayer, he was informed of a bigger company who were looking for staff. He went to see them and was offered a temporary contract up until November.

I am not surprised by this as God always answers prayers. It may not be in the ways that we think they should be answered but I know He is always with us and I trust him. My husband knows that I have a deep faith but as yet, he says he does not understand it. I try to witness to my faith every day through prayer and “good works”. My prayer is that my husband and sons will one day walk along side me and come to know Jesus with all the hope and joy that it brings.

My favourite passage from the Bible is Mark 4 35-41

With the coming of evening that same day, he said to them, “Let us cross over to the other side” And leaving the crowd behind they took him, just as he was, in the boat; and there were other boats with him. Then it began to blow a gale and the waves were breaking into the boat so that it was almost swamped. But he was in the stern, his head on the cushion, asleep. They woke him and said to him, “Master, do you not care? We are going down! And he woke up and rebuked the wind and said to the sea, “Quiet now! Be calm!” And the wind dropped, and all was calm again. Then he said to them, “Why are you so frightened? How is it that you have no faith? They were filled with awe and said to one another, “Who can this be? Even the wind and the sea obey him”. (The CTS New Catholic Bible)

This is the faith I speak of, the God who I turn to in the midst of the pandemic, the God who I turn to when there is a job loss and the threat of losing my home. The image of Jesus sleeping peacefully on the cushion fills me with a great calm within my own personal storms because I know that I just have to call on Him and He will answer me.

I found the following text written by John Oman (1860 – 1939), a Presbyterian theologian quite thought provoking.

“The test of a true faith is the extent to which its religion is secular, the extent to which its special religious experiences are tested by the experiences of every day. In the life of Jesus nothing is more conspicuous than his meagre

interest in specially sacred things, and his profound interest in the most ordinary things of the secular life. In his parables the only figures from the special religious life of a specially religious time are the Pharisee praying with himself in the temple, and the priest and the Levite turning aside on the road to Jericho – self-approving and little approved men, solitary to their heart’s core. But what a varied secular procession of kings and slaves, and bailiffs and debtors, and farmers and fisher-folk, and housewives and children, and all at their secular occupations, with more feasting than fasting, and more marriages than funerals!”

Yes, Jesus did not spend time with the self-approving men of the church or as Mary McAleese (two times Irish President) in her new book “Here’s the Story: A Memoir”, described the Catholic church’s hierarchy as a “small, self-serving hermetically- sealed group of men”. No, he was to be found with the ordinary people who were leading ordinary lives. When you think of those, whom he has raised up to do His will, and those whom he has brought down to do His will, Jesus is to be found in the “ordinary”, the mundane the boring even but in the midst of this with faith we will find joy!

As St Paul writes to the Philippians (2:1-11)

Therefore, if there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort provided by love, any fellowship in the Spirit, any affection or mercy, complete my joy and be of the same mind, by having the same love, being united in spirit, and having one purpose. Instead of being motivated by selfish ambition or vanity, each of you should, in humility, be moved to treat one another as more important than yourself. Each of you should be concerned not only about your own interests, but about the interests of others as well. You should have the same attitude toward one another that Christ Jesus had, who though he existed in the form of God did not regard equality with God as something to be grasped, but emptied himself by taking the form of a slave, by looking like other men, and by sharing in human nature. He humbled himself, by becoming obedient to the point of death – even death

on a cross! As a result God highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow – in heaven and on earth and under the earth and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father.

To stay strong in Christ it is important to continue to deepen our faith, our faith needs nourishment. I found this piece by the young Maltese priest Fr Rob Galea quite illuminating and helpful.

“Have you ever gone into a shop to choose a rose for your valentine or for your mother on Mother’s Day? I have. Around Mother’s Day there are thousands of red roses in flower shops across Australia. What most people consider when choosing the rose is the brightness of the petals and how open the petals are. They will check the scent and make sure there are not bugs. Very few would walk in and choose the rose because of the stem, no matter how impressive it is.

Think of it this way. The petals represent our relationship with God, and the stem represents the tradition and ritual of the church. For many, all they know is the stem. It is strong and sturdy. It has thorns. Some are happy with that and feel safe with that. I did not. Maybe you don’t either. As a child, I knew about the stem, but nobody ever told me about the petals. And you know what? The stem was fine at first, but when I became a teenager the thorns started to cause me discomfort. Eventually it was like I was being whipped with the stem...

By the time I was fourteen, I didn’t want to have anything to do with the stem. It was painful, judgemental, and inconvenient. I walked away.

At the age of sixteen, I got introduced to the petals. I could not believe how beautiful they were. The scent was unbelievable. All this time I had only ever seen the stem but never the petals. I wanted more. I began to fall in love, but all I wanted was the petals. I didn’t want the stem. I would go to youth group but not to Mass, and I didn’t pray. I did not carry out any works of charity, nor

was I interested in learning about the traditions and teachings of the Church. Eventually the petals began to dry out and fall apart.

That was until I began to pray and discovered the riches and beauty and necessity of the stem. The stem was necessary to hold the petals together, to protect it and give it life. The thorns protected the rose from the predators and allowed the petals to thrive.

The petals and the stem are incomplete without each other. Both are necessary. The stem without the rose petals seems lifeless and torturous to many. The petals alone are attractive but can't survive for long without being fed nutrients by the stem.

We need a relationship with God, but we need the believing community, the sacraments, God's Word, and the teachings and tradition of the Church in order to grow, survive, and thrive as one Body of Christ." (Breakthrough by Fr. Rob Galea pp. 197-198).

As I said at the beginning "we are very blessed to have a faith" our faith and our relationship with God is precious and should shape our lives and make us who we are. We must take the time and space to nourish our faith.

To finish, I want share a piece from an interview with Mother Teresa about prayer. Dan Rather, a CBS anchor, once asked Mother Teresa what she said during her prayers. She answered, "I listen". So Dan turned the question and asked, "Well then, what does God say?" Mother Teresa smiled with confidence and answered, "He listens". For an instant, Dan didn't know what to say. "And if you don't understand that" Mother Teresa added, "I can't explain it to you"

Dear Sisters and Brothers, when I sat down to write this I had a blank sheet, I asked the Holy Spirit to guide me to write and this is the result, I do hope you find it useful. You are all in my prayers. Peace and All Good. Sr Brigid of +++

Fraternity Reports

Bedford Gospel to Life Fraternity

Alas, we are all getting old and we have lost two of our brothers this year:

Bro. Leon Lewis : 11th April and Patrick O'Neill: 1st May [Covid -19]

Also, my wife, Anne Simmonds, our Minister, has had to resign. Her Parkinson's has weakened her considerably and she felt unable to perform her office as she should, so I, as Vice-minister, am acting Minister until our next elections which are DUE next May. Who knows what the situation in our society will be by then?

During lockdown, as Formation Minister, I have been sending out on-going formation study sheets [Hilary Carter's] along with our Minister's letter and a Franciscan reading and suggested that these be studied on the day when we had, by our forward planner, arranged each monthly meeting.

From March 2020, when we began "POSTAL MONTHLY MEETINGS", we have covered:

- Poverty and Simplicity of Lifestyle
- Humility
- Chastity 1
- Chastity 2 [helping young people]
- Obedience to the Will of God
- Suffering
- Living a Prayer-centred Life

All with appropriate readings from "To Live as Francis Lived" etc including the most appropriate article of our Rule. By all accounts I believe this has been helpful. I plan to continue this form of communication for as long as is necessary. We would have been meeting on zoom if it had been available to our members but most of them do not have a computer. Very Franciscan! Our sister Petronella is chair-bound in a residential home, in lock-down and so unable to be visited by us or, apparently, by a priest. She has a television

but not a computer, so cannot follow a streamed Mass. She is, in effect, cut off from the Church.

My wife, Anne, has been particularly concerned about Petronella's spiritual welfare and although we have managed to speak to her a few times on the phone, Anne has been unable to Minister the Eucharist to her as she used to do. So recently, I wondered if she would appreciate some of Bishop Barron's daily mini homilies, which are printed in quite large print, which Petronella can manage to read. Also, a lady in our parish produces an artistic interpretation of one of the readings from the Mass of the day. Petronella liked what I sent, so about every other day I send her a homily and a picture. As the Transitus of St. Francis is a few days from my writing, I have sent illustrated copies which I downloaded from the internet a couple of years' ago for Fraternity use, but as we cannot meet at present I have given them to our brothers and sisters, suggesting that each of them prays the Transitus on the eve or the day of the Feast of St. Francis, imagining the fraternity around them.

[Michael Simmonds, acting Minister]

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Cambridge "Our Lady of the Poor" Fraternity

Cloudy with a possibility of silver linings

"I counted them all out. I counted them all back-in" (I trust you all get the reference). It is a sad truth that we are all still living with the pandemic, but Cambridge "Our Lady of the Poor" is now as we were and by the grace of God will remain until the virus is 'seen off'.

Indeed, as the internet is no respecter of distance, our meetings are now better attended than heretofore, and by the wonders of Google Meet technology and the good offices of Maria, we enjoy the bon vivant company of one another, share the Office of the Day, render any required reports (eviscerated, naturally; how could it be otherwise), but most significantly

simply “be there” for the fraternal brethren. Special arrangements allow the participation of Daphne who is without internet facilities, i.e. a phone and the good offices of Chris.

Speaking personally, if I may, our meetings, now slightly abridged because of time constraints, have always been a source of encouragement and fond fellow feeling. It is true enough that one does not know, or perhaps appreciate, what one has until it is elided, rescinded or revoked, and the current circumstances truly frame the integral value of fraternity. But was it ever meant to be fraternity ‘in diaspora’? It is said that “patience is a virtue”; well, it would be nice to have at least one virtue.

For now, we are all well (other things being equal). We, that is Chris, Jaci, Daphne, Annette, Trudie, Trish, Maria, Stephen, and myself, Peter, keep one another and you all in our prayers. I hope you do the same for us.

Until by the grace of God we all meet again in this life, or indeed, in the next,...

[Peter (Cambridge “Our Lady of the Poor” Fraternity), Minister

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Ipswich ‘Blessed John Duns Scotus’ Fraternity

New technology via Zoom has enabled the Fraternity to continue meeting monthly during the Pandemic!! What would we have done in the circumstances without it? Although our churches are now open for Masses with restricted access, it will inevitably be sometime before we can safely physically gather for Fraternity meetings. The wearing of face masks and social distancing are not conducive to a comfortable fraternal meeting!! In any case some members and/or their spouses have health conditions that would mean they might not be able to take part. So we will be continuing to

meet on Zoom for the foreseeable future. That said, we do miss not being able to come together physically for meetings!!

We took a break from the National Fraternity's Ongoing Formation Programme for our May Zoom Meeting. Instead we focussed on Pope Francis' great Encyclical *Laudato Si'* as it was its Fifth Anniversary. Before the meeting, I emailed a selection of paragraphs from the Encyclical for us to focus on. They included paras. 1, 2, 10, 11, 12, 87 and 218 as they all mention St Francis!! In para. 10 Pope Francis explains:

“I do not want to write this Encyclical without turning to that attractive and compelling figure, whose name I took as my guide and inspiration when I was elected Bishop of Rome. I believe that Saint Francis is the example par excellence of care for the vulnerable and of an integral ecology lived out joyfully and authentically. He is the patron saint of all who study and work in the area of ecology, and he is also much loved by non-Christians. He was particularly concerned for God's creation and for the poor and outcast. He loved, and was deeply loved for his joy, his generous self-giving, his openheartedness. He was a mystic and a pilgrim who lived in simplicity and in wonderful harmony with God, with others, with nature and with himself. He shows us just how inseparable the bond is between concern for nature, justice for the poor, commitment to society, and interior peace”.

Forgive me – I just had to share one of the paras from this Franciscan document with you!! Unfortunately, Governments are not taking sufficient action to limit the increase in global temperatures.

Edwin Edwards, our JPIC Minister, usually gives a report at every Fraternity Meeting. At our June Meeting the topic was Racial Justice. Lorcadia Nyoni was invited to give examples of her own experiences. Members were appalled and greatly saddened by the treatment experienced by Lorcadia and her family when they lived in Leicester, and also incidents when working as a teacher. She had dealt with these challenging situations courageously and in a

dignified way. Thankfully Lorcadia and her family have not encountered any unpleasantness where they live in Ipswich. Lorcadia was thanked for her important contribution.

We recalled that Article 13 of our Rule states: “As the Father sees in every person the features of his Son, the firstborn of many brothers and sisters, so the Secular Franciscans with a gentle and courteous spirit **accept all people as a gift of the Lord and an image of Christ**”. It was agreed we should not permit racially biased comments made by others to go unchallenged.

In July we completed Part 3 ‘Prayer’ of the National Fraternity’s Ongoing Formation Programme ‘Following in the Footprints of Francis of Assisi’. The final topic was on St Clare, amongst the extracts we reflected on was one from ‘To Live as Francis Lived’ which beautifully stresses the importance of Clare for Franciscans:

“To consider Franciscan life without reflecting on Clare of Assisi is like having a one-sided coin, a song without music, a rainbow without sunshine”.

On Saturday 18th July Edwin Edwards and Chris Housden took part in the National Justice and Peace Network Zoom Conference. Chris’s report appears on page 29.

Since August we have been following Part 4 of the Programme on the theme ‘Building the Kingdom of God on Earth’. Pope Francis highlighted the importance this endeavour in his Apostolic Exhortation ‘*Gaudete et Exsultate: On the Call to Holiness in Today’s World*’:

“Just as you cannot understand Christ apart from the kingdom he came to bring, so too your personal mission is inseparable from the building of that kingdom: “Strive first for the kingdom of God and his righteousness” (Mt 6:33). Your identification with Christ and his will involves a commitment to build with him that kingdom of love, justice, and universal peace. Christ himself wants to experience this with you, in all the efforts and sacrifices that it entails, but also in all the joy and

enrichment it brings. You cannot grow in holiness without committing yourself, body and soul, to giving your best to this endeavour”.

There is a clear link between the theme of Part 4 ‘Building the Kingdom of God on Earth’, Articles 13, 14, 15 of our Rule, and justice, peace, and the integrity of creation.

At our August Meeting we reflected on the first topic of Part 4 ‘The Kingdom of God on Earth’. In September we considered the second topic – ‘Repair My Church’ – the commission given by Christ on the San Damiano Cross to St Francis, and the whole Franciscan Family!!

We are very grateful to Hilary Carter of who produced the original National Fraternity Ongoing Formation Programme, and John Power of for updating it!! They devoted many hours of hard work to make available an excellent resource which is helping to enrich our formation!!

Edwin’s September JPIC Report reminded us that we were meeting on ‘Climate Sunday’ and focused on the ‘Season of Creation’, Pope Francis’ Apostolic Exhortation ‘*Querida Amazonia*’, and the partnership of the Global Catholic Climate Movement with the Vatican Dicastery for the Season of Creation. The GCCM’s goal is to enable an ecological conversion of the Catholic faithful, a “change of heart” that can motivate an integral ecology and a more passionate concern for God’s creation. A very Franciscan endeavour!! The beautiful ‘Common Prayer for the Fifth Anniversary of Laudato Si’ completed Edwin’s important contribution.

Loving God

Creator of heaven and earth and all that is in them,
You created us in your own image and made us
stewards of all your creation,
You blessed us with the sun, water and bountiful land
so that all might be nourished.

Open our minds and touch our hearts
so that we may attend to your gift of creation.

Help us to be conscious that our common home belongs not only to us, but to all of your creatures and to all future generations and that it is our responsibility to preserve it.

May we help each person secure the food and resources that they need.

Be present to those in need in these trying times especially the poorest and those most at risk of being left behind.

Transform our fear and feelings of isolation into hope and fraternity so that we may experience a true conversion of the heart.

Help us to show creative solidarity in addressing the consequences of this global pandemic.

Make us courageous to embrace the changes that are needed in search of the common good.

Now more than ever may we feel that we are all interconnected and interdependent.

Enable us to listen and respond to the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor.

May the present sufferings be the birth pangs of a more fraternal and sustainable world.

Under the loving gaze of Mary Help of Christians we make this prayer through Christ our Lord.
Amen

Wishing you peace and every good.

[David Gleave ofs, Minister, John Dunn Scotis Fraternity, Ipswich]

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Norwich “Pax et Bonum” Fraternity

‘Norwich Pax et Bonum fraternity have successfully continued their meetings throughout the pandemic with a normal agenda on Zoom. We have three members who have some internet connection issues but can often hear if unable to contribute. Our September meeting on the Care of Creation was conducted outdoors in a section of St John’s Cathedral garden devoted to St Francis in a Covid-friendly manner. We all brought our own refreshments and some even their own chairs. The weather was truly kind despite the occasional threatening cloud. It was a great joy to be able to see each other in an actual physical sense. Unfortunately the new Covid restrictions mean that we cannot now meet in Br Rob’s barn to celebrate the Transitus as we had planned for the October meeting. We will have to resort to Zoom meetings again for the time being until restrictions are lifted.’

‘Shielding through lockdown

Initially lockdown was a welcome break from the hustle and bustle routine of daily life, time to spend clearing much overdue rubbish from the home and more time for prayer and contemplation. The silence on the roads was much welcome too. All this allowed for more time to appreciate God’s wonderful creation – watching the avian population from their courting to their nest building, through to hatching and listening to the nest contents growing louder and louder as the fledglings grew. Somehow I missed the first flights but then watched as the very thin parents continued to feed their fat, avaricious young on the lawn. The same applied to the garden itself, being able to watch every detail of plants, flowers and trees come to full fruition. And new things learnt: on a GQT program we were told if you can’t get out to garden centres to buy seed try slicing tomatoes and cucumbers and planting them. I had two very small Piccolo tomatoes, little larger than a centimetre in diameter, and from the five little slices I ended up with nine plants from which I am still garnering the fruit!

Best of all was when our lovely Parish Priest, Fr Sean Connolly, set up nightly podcasts for Evening Prayer. He was incredibly entertaining at the beginning and end of each session with his skilled piano playing and tales of his dog, Dylan. He would mention messages from parishioners including birthday and anniversary wishes, and asked for photos of special occasions such as any altar we may have dedicated to Our Lady during May, or anything that was worthy of publishing on the parish website. There was also the occasion when Fr Sean was out cycling during his exercise hour and his bike had a double puncture. Realising he would not be back in time to broadcast Evening Prayer, undaunted he did it pushing his bike along the Cromer Road, including singing the Magnificat which we heard with the sound of traffic in the background!! The event made the local news and radio, and East Anglians will no doubt have seen the article in the Diocesan newspaper.

And then came live daily Mass. How wonderful to watch directly onto the altar and listen to the readings and words with no interruptions or distractions, seated in the comfort of one's own chair rather than on a hard pew! I have spoken to many a devout Catholic who admit that they felt such an experience far more spiritual than physically attending Mass. Of course, we did miss receiving Holy Communion in kind, but how wonderful is a properly conducted act of Spiritual Communion!

For those of us shielding with no one else in the household, the only other means of seeing anyone was when one's prescription or shopping was brought round, or, for those of us with tech capability, on Zoom meetings or the like. Being in touch with the Parish, being able to see the familiar décor of inside the church, being so in touch with our PP, and to know we had a means of communicating with those we would normally meet with on a regular basis, was a great insurance against feelings of complete isolation.

The hardest part was July when non-shielders were allowed certain freedoms and we weren't. The shielders' concession was meeting with a single person outdoors. One week of bad weather sent the mood plummeting. However,

we must thank God for giving us the best summer on record – locally here at least - and one bad week in 26? How grateful should we be to our good Lord!’

with peace and prayers, [Anne Murrin, Minister]

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Sr. Maureen South OFS of the Norwich Pax et Bonum Fraternity died very peacefully at her home in Norwich after a very long and debilitating illness on the evening of Saturday 3 October (2020), the Transitus of St Francis of Assisi..

*“I can never say Goodbye to you
For you are in my heart.
And so for now Farewell must do
As we’ll never be really apart.
I will hear you in the music,
I will see you everywhere.
Though the miles take you away
You’ll always be so near;
I will see your smile
As I rest awhile,
Hear your voice in the song of a bird.
So how can I say Goodbye to you?
Farewell is the only word.
Now if, maybe,
You should miss me,
Then find the tallest tree,
With its branches stretching Heavenward.
That’s the place where you’ll find me
As we listen to the music of nature all around.
You and I will join together in the sweetness of the sound.
And as we sing the praises of our Heavenly Lord above,
You and I will be united resting gently in His Love.”*

Maureen South

For very many years Maureen had been a 'Tertiary' and following the dissolution of the Norwich Fraternity in the 1990s was a founder member of the new Pax et Bonum Fraternity when this was established in 2007.

Maureen was born on 20/10/43 and had been married to Robin for 57 years. They have 2 daughters, Carol and Dianne, 5 grandchildren and 2 great grandchildren. Apart from the Lord, her family, her dogs and her secular Franciscan vocation, Maureen's greatest love was for poetry. Her husband chose that for us from the many poems she wrote:

[Half close your eyes and the poem is shaped like a chalice. Editor]

May she rest in the Peace and Love of Our Lord. [Br Rob Hardie, Norwich Fraternity]

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NATIONAL JUSTICE AND PEACE NETWORK

ZOOM CONFERENCE SATURDAY 18TH JULY 2020.

"Post Pandemic Church: paralysed or energised? Recovered or re-imagined?"

Introduction

Edwin Edwards kindly sent me information on the NJPN Zoom Conference, stating he was going to enrol. I decided to join him and I am glad I did! NJPN started in 1978 and has organised annual weekend conferences `ever since. Regular communication is maintained through network meetings, email bulletins, the newsletter and information circulated from working parties. NJPN exists for all who are seeking Justice and Peace in this world. Its roots are Catholic but those of other faiths and none are welcome. The Patron Saint of NJPN is St Oscar Romero. (Bishop Michael Evans had a great devotion to Oscar Romero!)

The Conference

One of the impressive features of the day was the liturgy. We started with two young people, Anna and Eleanor Marshall, leading us in hymns/songs, which they did beautifully. It was lovely to read of the work Anna and Eleanor have done to promote Justice and Peace and in 2019 they received the Pax Christi Peace award in recognition of their efforts.

The conference in the morning featured four speakers followed by break out groups to reflect on two questions.

Colette Joyce. Westminster Justice and Peace Co-ordinator

Colette, based in London, talked about the government strategy for rough sleepers during the pandemic. This has been positive but not everyone has been reached by the strategy. Therefore Colette and others have been on the frontline providing practical support for immigrants and failed asylum seekers. We were then shown a short extract from an excellent Newsnight report showing volunteers packing bags of food and toiletries and distributing these in Trafalgar Square. Colette finished by stating the government has not changed its policy of None Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF) for failed asylum seekers, unlike countries like Portugal and New Zealand. (The injustice of NRPF was a theme running through the conference.)

www.justice-and-peace.org.uk/westminster

Nick Hanrahan. Jesuit Refugee Service Outreach Worker

Nick spoke with passion about the work of the Jesuit Refugee Service. It exists as an advocate for refugees through campaigning and providing legal support. For example there is an excellent JRS report on the detention of refugees and asylum seekers. The charity has arranged for food parcels to be given out. There were regular visits to the detention centre near Heathrow airport but these have been put on hold with the pandemic. Hosting schemes have also been set up. (Hosting placements involve a group of very generous

parishioners who support a homeless person through their parish.) JRS also runs a day centre but this is currently closed because of the virus. Nick mentioned Marcus Rashford's amazing work as an advocate for food vouchers as an example of what can be done to bring about change.

www.jrsuk.net

Kevin Flanagan. Director of St Anthony's Centre for Church and Industry

Kevin put on a very thought-provoking slide show on how the pandemic has affected our lives in relation to work and employment. He started by examining the "Common Good", looking at Catholic Social Teaching and John Paul II's teaching in *Centesimus Annus*. (1991). We were then presented with a number of facts relating to Covid 19. Amazingly 175.3 million working hours have been lost through the pandemic when compared to last year. Those living in poverty in this country has increased to a staggering 14.7 million. It became clear that it is the poor in our country who are suffering the most from Covid 19. www.stantonyscentre.org.uk

Clare Dixon. CAFOD. Head of Region-Latin America and the Caribbean.

Speaking with considerable knowledge of Latin America, Clare described the impact of the pandemic on countries in this region with 2 million cases and 78,000 deaths in Brazil alone. She stated that there was considerable under reporting of cases of the virus. Some countries were in turmoil even prior to Covid 19. For example there are 5 ½ million Venezuelan refugees across Latin America, whose lives have been made even more difficult by the virus. Cafod is working with partner agencies to address the crisis of hunger being experienced in parts of the region.

Clare spoke about Cafod's work with community-based radio, as radio is a key means of communication in Latin America. She also described the situation in Middle East and Asia where again there is a similar problem of under-reporting of cases of the virus. There is limited access to health care. and demolitions continue, "which cannot be stopped." (The weekly average of

Palestinian buildings and structures that have been demolished by Israeli forces in the occupied West Bank is increasing according to the UN.)

www.cafod.org.uk

Breakout Groups

Following this we broke into groups of about 6 in each group. I was fortunate to have in my group Barbara Kentish. She retired last year after 12 years working as the Westminster Justice and Peace co-ordinator. She has an amazing amount of experience in J&P and spoke with great passion about the Safe Passage charity, aimed at uniting child refugees with their families.

www.safepassage.org.uk

We were asked to consider two questions:

1. How do you feel about what you have heard?
2. How do you feel called to respond?

Paul Bodenham, who chaired the conference, was also in my group, and said we can be so busy with charity that we ignore justice. (This was a very telling comment.) We discussed job creation schemes, climate strikes and helping the homeless and agreed that to live simply was a key value in promoting Justice and Peace.

After the breakout groups had finished, we all broke for lunch and I could hear Zoom conversations continuing whilst eating. Someone recommended the drama “The Chosen” as a powerful programme about Jesus. There was also a lot of talk about the pandemic and the Church’s response to it.

Session 2 (pm)

In the afternoon we had uplifting liturgy led by Marty Haugen, a composer and musician. Some of the music he composed himself and there were also readings from the Bible and Laudato Si’.

Rev Dr Joseph O'Hanlon

Fr Joseph, a retired priest from the Nottingham diocese, then spoke on the theme of Justice and Peace. The fact that he is a biblical scholar soon became apparent with his confidence in expounding passages from scripture.

Commentating on the pandemic, he expressed regret that the bidding prayers had been dropped at Mass, as these were the prayers of the laity. He spoke of the Kingdom of God being God's rule and what would happen if God's rule went throughout the universe?

He talked about the steadfast love of God in Psalm 136. He asked us what does God do? The answer? Justice and Peace. We are called to do the right thing, doing what God has called us to do.

Fr Joseph spoke about house churches. He stated that the letter to the Romans was written to five distinct house churches. He wondered what house churches could teach us and asked us to be open to the Holy Spirit. Fr Joseph also said we need more popes like Pope Francis. He spoke of the hierarchy of the church needing to change with God's people being at the top rather than the bottom. (He used the image of the church hierarchy as a pyramid and then inverted this to illustrate this point.)

Fr O'Hanlon also spoke about General Absolution, giving a number of advantages he saw with this rite. He also spoke about the ordination of women and married men as being an issue of justice. He gave us two questions to consider in our breakout groups.

1. What is the message of Jesus?
2. What is the kingdom of God?

Breakout groups. (pm)

We considered in our group the importance of perseverance. It is easy to be enthused about Justice and Peace at a conference but continuing to work

towards Justice and Peace back in our parishes can be challenging. We also discussed the impact of the pandemic on church life and the frustrations with not being able to relate together in a meaningful way with masks, social distancing and no opportunity to meet after Mass. There was a strong sense of relationships being central to our lives as Christians.

The closing liturgy was again led by Marty Haugen.

Conclusion.

According to the Zoom screen, there were 133 delegates signed into the conference. It was wonderful to hear of all the work that is going on to promote Justice and Peace and was stimulating to be with Christians who were not afraid to speak out on subjects they felt strongly about. The key message for me was to be careful that not to be too busy with acts of charity that justice is ignored.

[Chris Housden.ofs - EAR – JPIC]

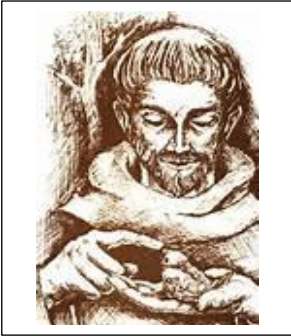
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[Bishop Barron]: Jesus begins setting a topsy-turvy universe right..... And so, “Blessed are the poor in spirit.” We might say, “How lucky you are if you are not addicted to material things. Here Jesus is telling us how to realise our deepest desire, which is the desire for God and not for passing things, that only bring temporary comfort

[Art.11 of our Rule]: “Trusting in the Father, Christ chose for himself and his Mother a poor and humble life, even though he valued created things attentively and lovingly.”

[a] How has being a Franciscan changed my attitude towards material things? [b] What do I understand by the phrase “detachment from temporal goods”?

St Francis – Scripture in his Writings



One of the ways we can get acquainted with Francis, his spirituality, and the things that were important to him, is to read and reflect on the writings he has left for us. He insisted on the preservation of what he wrote, and he called for the transmission, knowledge and putting into practice of his writings.

Francis described himself as ignorant and without learning. He was without scholarly training and possessed only basic learning, with some knowledge of how to read and write Latin. Nevertheless he produced some thirty documents, the texts of some of these contain many biblical quotations. For example, the Prologue to our Rule, which reproduces Chapter One of the *‘Earlier Exhortation to the Brothers and Sisters of Penance’*, also known as *‘The First Version of the Letter to the Faithful’*:

[Chapter One]

Those Who Do Penance

¹All those who love the Lord *with their whole heart, with their whole soul and mind, with their whole strength* ^{Mk12:30} and love their neighbours as themselves, ^{Mt 22:39} ²who hate their bodies with their vices and sins, ³who receive the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, ⁴and who produce worthy fruits of penance. ⁵O how happy and blessed are these men and women while they do such things and persevere in doing them, ^{Mt 22:39} ⁶because *the Spirit of the Lord will rest upon them* ^{Is 11:2} and *make Its home and dwelling place* among them, ^{Jn 14:23} ⁷and they are children of the heavenly Father Whose works they do, ^{Mt 5:45} and they are spouses, brothers, and mothers of our Lord Jesus Christ. ^{Mt 12:50}

⁸We are spouses when the faithful soul is joined by the Holy Spirit to our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹We are brothers to Him when we do *the will of the Father who is in heaven*. ^{Mt 12:50} ¹⁰We are mothers when we carry Him in our heart

and body through a divine love and a pure and sincere conscience and give birth to Him through a holy activity which must shine as an example before others. ^{Mt 5:16}

¹¹O how glorious it is to have a holy and great Father in heaven! ¹²O how holy, consoling to have such a beautiful and wonderful Spouse! ¹³O how holy and how loving, gratifying, humbling, peace-giving, sweet, worthy of love, and, above all things, desirable: to have such a Brother and such a Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, Who laid down His life for His sheep and prayed to His Father, saying:

¹⁴*Holy Father, in your name, save those whom you have given me in the world; they were yours and you gave them to me.* ^{Jn 17:11 Jn 17:6} ¹⁵The words that you gave to me I have given to them, and they accepted them and have believed in truth that I have come from you and they have known that you have sent me.

¹⁶I pray for them *and not for the world.* ^{Jn 17:9} ¹⁷Bless and sanctify them; ^{Jn 17:17} *I sanctify myself for them.* ^{Jn 17:19} ¹⁸*I pray not only for them, but for those who will believe in me through their word* ^{Jn 17:20 Jn 17:23} *that they might be sanctified in being one* ^{Jn 17:11} *as we are.*

¹⁹*I wish, Father, that where I am, they also may be with me that they may see my glory in your kingdom.* ^{Jn 17:24 Mt 20:21} Amen.

(FAED Vol I p41)

It is generally acknowledged that he derived his knowledge of Scripture mainly from the liturgy as he heard it read, prayed, and chanted. It is clear from the different ways in which Francis used scripture that he had an exceptional knowledge of the Word of God.

Another text we are all very familiar with is:

The Canticle of the Creatures

¹Most High, all-powerful, good Lord,
Yours are the *praises, the glory, and the honour*, and all *blessing*, ^{Rev 4:9 Rev 4:11}

²To You alone, Most High, do they belong,
and no human is worthy to mention Your name.

³Praised be You, my *Lord*, with all *Your creatures*, ^{Tb 8:7}
especially Sir Brother Sun,

Who is the day and through whom You give us light.

⁴And he is beautiful and radiant with great splendour;
and bears a likeness of You, Most High One.

⁵*Praised* be You, my Lord, through Sister *Moon* and *the stars*, ^{Ps 148:3}
in heaven You formed them clear and precious and beautiful.

⁶*Praised* be You, my Lord, through Brother *Wind*,
and through the air, cloudy and serene, and every kind of weather,
through whom You give sustenance to Your creatures.

⁷*Praised* be You, my Lord, through Sister *Water*, ^{Ps 148:4 Ps 148:5}
who is very useful and humble and precious and chaste.

⁸*Praised* be You, my Lord, through Brother *Fire*, ^{Dan 3:66}
through whom *You light the night*, ^{Ps 78:14}

and he is beautiful and playful and robust and strong.

⁹*Praised* be You, my Lord, through our Sister Mother *Earth*, ^{Dan 3:74}
who sustains and governs us,

and who produces various *fruit* with coloured flowers and *herbs*. ^{Ps 104:13 Ps 104:14}

¹⁰*Praised* be You, my Lord, through those who give pardon for Your
love, ^{Mt 6:12}

and bear infirmity and tribulation.

¹¹Blessed are those who endure in peace
for by You, Most High, shall they be crowned.

¹²*Praised* be You, my Lord, through our Sister Bodily Death,
from whom no one living can escape.

¹³Woe to those who die in mortal sin.

Blessed are those whom death will find in Your most holy will,
for the *second death* ^{Rev 2:11 Rev 20:6} shall do them no harm.

¹⁴*Praise* and *bless* my Lord ^{Dan 3:85} and give Him thanks
and serve Him with great humility.

(FAED Vol I p113)

Francis' writings were inspired by, or completely permeated with, Holy Scripture. Without using any explicit quotations, he could weave almost the whole fabric of a document from threads of biblical thoughts (*the biblical quotations shown in the two extracts above are those given in 'Francis of Assisi: Early Documents'*).

By simply counting the number of biblical quotations he used in the various documents, we can see how important they were for him. He quotes the Old Testament 156 times and the New Testament 280 times, a total of 436 quotations. Most of Francis' quotations from the Old Testament are from the Psalms, while from the New testament, he quotes 146 from the Synoptic Gospels (75 times from St Matthew, 58 from St Luke, and 13 from St Mark); 21 from St John, and 50 from St Paul. *This information was gleaned from 'Francis of Assisi: The Message in His Writings' by Thaddée Matura OFM.*

An amazing accomplishment for someone who described himself as 'ignorant and without learning'?!!! Francis' humility is evident from this comment. The evidence of his writings, rich in content, must lead us to conclude such sentiments do not really do him justice.

More than once Francis apologises because his letters, admonitions, and rules are simple in style and totally unadorned. In reality, they are more often, gems of true Christian wisdom. God works indeed in mysterious ways His lessons to impart; indeed, the Writings of Francis truly bear the imprint of the Holy Spirit!

Francis' ardent love of scripture is recorded by his early biographers. His earliest biographer Thomas of Celano gives us this revealing description:

Although this blessed man
was not educated in scholarly disciplines,
still he learned from God *wisdom from above*
and, enlightened by the splendours of eternal light,
he understood Scripture deeply.
His genius, pure and unstained,
penetrated *hidden mysteries*.
Where the knowledge of teachers is outside,
the passion of the lover entered.
He sometimes read the Sacred Books,
and whatever he once put into his mind,
he *wrote* indelibly *in his heart*.
His memory took the place of books,

Because, if he heard something once,
it was not wasted,
as his heart would mull it over with constant devotion.

(FAED Vol II p314)

St Bonaventure takes up the theme in his Major Legend of St Francis:

Unflagging zeal for prayer
with a continual exercise of virtue
had led the man of God to such serenity of mind that,
although he had no expertise in Sacred Scripture through learning,
his intellect, nevertheless
enlightened by the splendour of eternal light,
probed the depths of Scripture
with remarkable incisiveness.
For his genius, pure and unstained,
penetrated *hidden mysteries*,
and where the knowledge of teachers stands outside,
the passion of the lover entered.
Whenever he read the Sacred Books,
and something struck his mind
he imprinted it tenaciously on his memory,
because he did not grasp in vain
what his attentive mind heard,
for he would mull over it
with affection and constant devotion.

(FAED Vol II p612)

It is clear these early Franciscan scholars saw in Francis someone who was imbued with scripture. Perhaps one day Francis' deep love and understanding of scripture will be as widely appreciated as his love of animals!!

[David Gleave ofs, Regional Formator] +++

Becoming a Secular Franciscan

Many of us will probably remember the 1960s even if we only associate this decade with the Beatles. Age-wise the 1960s were my 20s during which I married and became a Secular Franciscan. It was the decade of the so-called cultural revolution, of Vatican II, the birth control pill and the Papal Encyclical *Humanae Vitae* and much else -a very formative time for me. Up until then I had not 'settled down' as people liked to say and was still searching, without much guidance. I took a short holiday to one of the Italian seaside resorts and managed to get in a trip to Assisi over a weekend. Later in the same year (1966) I discovered that talks on Vatican II were being held at the Franciscan Study House (Seminary) in East Bergholt, Suffolk. These talks were being given by the Friars, the academic staff members, at the Friary on a variety of topics under the general heading 'The Council comes to You'. These were evening talks and of course I wanted to attend. In the follow-up I decided to get in touch with the Friary to enquire about the Third Order of which I was vaguely aware and I began to attend the meetings. Beryl my wife grew up in East Bergholt and her family were known by and knew the Friars well from the time the latter had arrived in their village; she was already a member of the Third Order and my letter of enquiry had been passed to her for reply. After two or so meetings we began to go out together and later became engaged; we were married in May 1968.

The Church after Vatican II slowly began to change and I was very keen to follow all that was happening. Beryl on the other hand had learned the Catholic Faith from the age of five upwards and we had many discussions

about the changes; I learned much from her (and have continued to) having become a Catholic myself only a few years before we met.

The Third Order meeting was a quite simple affair on a Sunday afternoon with a talk by the Friar who had been delegated to assist us, followed by a discussion and a little business. Afterwards there was Benediction in the chapel with others from the village or surrounding area.

The point I would wish to make with this personal account of the start of my vocation is to acknowledge the many different paths that can be followed on the journey of faith. As I now look back to the 1960s, a time of change, I would say we seem to have left behind some beautiful Catholic teaching and moral certainties which had come down the centuries from Greece and Rome and refined by thinkers such as St Augustine and St Thomas Aquinas. Natural (moral) law is as important as ever and can still be used to assist those, especially the young, who are seeking answers and clarity in the world of today.

[Edwin Edwards, Ipswich 'Blessed John Duns Scotus' Fraternity]

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**FRANCISCAN SPIRITUALITY RUNS THROUGH LAUDATO SI'
A REFLECTION BY BR DOUGLASS WARNER OFM
Saint Barbara Province (California USA)**

Have you ever thought about how our Father St. Francis feels looking down from heaven on Pope Francis? Don't you think he is feeling overwhelming joy? Do you share that joy? I hope you do!

We are in a truly Franciscan moment in the church. Fr. Michael Perry OFM, the Minister General of the Friars Minor, describes Pope Francis' Apostolic

Exhortation “The Joy of the Gospel” as a Franciscan vision of the Church. I would certainly agree, and point to “Laudato Si” as a Franciscan vision of Catholic engagement with society and the environment.

We are fifty years out from Vatican II, and this is the most Franciscan moment in that period. I would argue that we have to go back to before the Protestant Reformation to find a more Franciscan moment in the church! Now this is exciting!

Now here’s the question: are we as a Franciscan family alert to the present moment? Are we able to follow the Holy Spirit’s lead? I am convinced that the future of Franciscan life – religious or lay – looks less like the Little Flowers of St Francis and a lot more like the spirituality of Laudato Si.

The Most Franciscan Encyclical Ever!

First, Francis and Franciscans are held up as authorities and examples -- more than in any prior papal encyclical. St. Francis is promoted as an example for Christian living today, in the 21st Century. He was a mystic and a pilgrim who lived in simplicity and in wonderful harmony with God, with others, with nature and with himself.” Francis is presented an example par excellence of Integral ecology, a concept introduced and emphasized in Laudato Si.

A most famous Franciscan theologian, Bonaventure, is given prominence. Laudato Si paragraph 239 describes Bonaventure’s vision of the Holy Trinity as divine communion, and how all of created reality reflects this Trinitarian structure of reality.

Second, care for the poor and care for the Earth are presented as inter-related, together, necessarily and always. Again, from paragraph 10: “He (Francis) shows us just how inseparable the bond is between concern for nature, justice for the poor, commitment to society, and interior peace.” This

approach is not new in the Church, but it is presented more forcefully and concretely in this encyclical. It is not really accurate to say this is “the environmental encyclical.” Yes, *Laudato Si* emphasizes that theme, but when we use the word “environment” in the US we generally assume that does not include questions of human wellbeing or social justice. *Laudato Si* integrates all of these themes.

Third, *Laudato Si* uses a Franciscan approach to doing ethics, exemplified by the following points:

- Creation is morally significant. Nature has dignity, value. These are not uniquely Franciscan ideas, but our tradition has emphasized them.
- *Laudato Si* does not start with abstract ideas or ideals, but with reality. Chapter 1 is an environmental science primer. It describes what is.
- *Laudato Si* emphasizes virtue ethics, specifically ecological virtue ethics. It proposes we adopt a global consciousness and an ecological responsibility.
- *Laudato Si* proposes an ethic of care. This means living in relationship with others, and practicing respect for the dignity of all. This is an approach to living the moral life that is not “law following.” Rather, it challenges us to live out loving relationship of the common good of everyone and all creation.

Some of the Franciscan values embedded in this encyclical that the pope is calling everyone to live in the 21st-century:

The encyclical offers a vision for human beings living together in harmony with each other and with creation. Ecological common good means good for everyone and everything everywhere! The term “common good” is mentioned 22 times. *Laudato Si* proposes collaborative approaches, worked out in dialogue between many different sectors of society, to pursue a vision

of protecting the planet and human flourishing. Efforts for economic justice and environmental protection have to work hand in hand.

We are called to recognize beauty as a path to God. Laudato Si presents love of beauty as a spiritual practice. St. Augustine claimed that beauty is a name for God, and many Franciscans throughout history have sought the face of God through natural beauty. Francis spent considerable time in hermitages, practicing contemplation surrounded by natural beauty. Laudato Si mentions the spiritual dimension of beauty 26 times.

We are called to ecological conversion. Since we are brothers and sisters of penance, we should be particularly alert to this dimension of our vocation as Franciscans. Paragraph 220 reads: “an ecological conversion can inspire us to greater creativity and enthusiasm in resolving the world’s problems and in offering ourselves to God ‘as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable.’” Penance is not a stance that inspires dread in us, but rather, joy! For we Franciscans know that it leads us into greater intimacy with God.

Living the Spirituality of Laudato Si

What does ecological conversion look like? For Franciscans, it means living out the values of Laudato Si in our own lives with our local fraternities. But it also means giving witness to these in local, national and global communities through:

1. Prayer
2. Dialogues
3. Education
4. Ecological virtue

Laudato Si gives us lots of examples. This section highlights a few recommended actions and then suggests how to live them out with your local fraternities.

First, we are called to live out an ecological spirituality, ecological conversion and prayer. We are invited to grow in awareness of other creatures and their needs, and to act in such a way that reflects that other creatures reflect God. Chapters 2 and 6 explain how Sacred Scripture, reflection on the Incarnation of Jesus Christ, Mary as Queen of Creation, and the sacraments can help us live an ecological spirituality.

Second, *Laudato Si* proposes a whole series of dialogues about the direction of humanity and its relationship with nature. One of these dialogues would be conducted at the global scale, about energy, climate and sustainable development. Pope Francis retains his faith in diplomacy even in the face of repeated political failures in crafting a climate treaty. He is in favour of treaties, but not naïve enough to believe that they alone are sufficient. He calls for a global energy transition to begin immediately. These dialogues would be geopolitical, and result in a common plan, and this would require a world political authority. Dialogue should also take place at the national and regional scales. These might better be understood as national and regional sustainability initiatives.

Here are some specific recommended themes:

- Renewable energy co-ops.
- New forms of industrial ecology, with greater emphasis on energy efficiency.
- Improving building technologies to make them more sustainable.
- Political activity to foster all these kinds of sustainable practices.
- Dialogue with other religions, religious leaders.

New models of economic development, such as social entrepreneurship.

Third, *Laudato Si* calls for more and better education. This vision of education for social transformation is much broader than classroom activities. It should take place in schools, homes, communities, catechesis, and the media. It should result in “a new lifestyle,” one that is moderate, sober, and ecological.

This kind of education should help us escape from consumerism, selfishness, hyper-individualism.

Fourth, consider the practice of ecological virtue. *Laudato Si* challenges us to make alternative, specific lifestyle choices, such as: avoiding plastic and paper, reducing energy and water usage, separating refuse, cooking only what can be eaten, showing care for other living beings, using public transport or carpooling, and planting trees (see paragraph 211).

Franciscan fraternities can be great places for initiating dialogues, but the conversation should not end there. These dialogues should go public, in keeping with the intended audiences of *Laudato Si*. I would like to challenge fraternities to devise activities that engage youth. The themes of this encyclical are ideal for being able to present Franciscan values to a new generation. We must seize this Franciscan moment in the Church! This is an occasion for joy, but also a challenge to us, as a Franciscan Family, to raise our voice. I am convinced that the future of Franciscan life – religious or lay – looks a lot less like the Little Flowers of St Francis and a lot more like the spirituality of *Laudato Si*. May we live it! [David Gleave, Ipswich]

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[Bishop Barron, USA] In becoming the Mother of Christ, Mary, by extension, would become the Mother of all those members of Christ's Mystical Body, across space and time. Just as the Holy Spirit and the Blessed Mother were required to bring about the Incarnation in history, so those same two agents [the Holy Spirit and me] are required to bring about the birth of Christ in our souls.

St. Francis: "We are mothers when we carry Him in our heart and body.
[1 Cor.6:20]

2020 – A YEAR OF TREMENDOUS IMPORTANCE FOR ALL PEOPLE ON EARTH

During the past year we have all had to accept changes in the way we live, for the sake of others, because of the virus; but there is another problem of great importance for us all, which has been caused by the way we are living, causing damage to the world environment. We need ideas of ways we can change, to stop the damage. Sir David Attenborough and Prince William are offering five prizes for each of the next five years, for ideas which will lead to ways to cope with five different areas of the problem, which need to be accepted by all nations - Earth shot Prizes.



During World War II, the essentials of life in the UK were rationed, and everybody, rich and poor, accepted that we were all treated the same.

For anyone to accept a new idea, it has to be the same for all nations, world-wide. Who has international influence to get us all to accept limitations – rationing? Who cares for the world as God’s wonderful gift? Basically it will be those whose Faith is like Abraham’s – our Father in Faith of a loving creator God – Jews, Muslims and Christians, who are spread throughout the world.

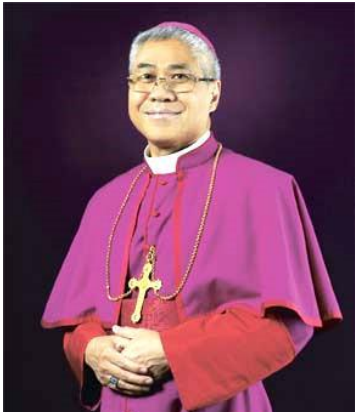
Who can get all of these three people of faith to work together? We need to start at the top – to get world leaders of each Faith together, and at all levels – faithful people being prepared to work together for the good of all people, especially keeping in mind those who are already suffering – floods, vast areas of fire, changes in atmosphere.

What can each of us, and all of us together, do to solve the problem?

An example: Air travel damages the environment, but has its value. If every adult were allowed a limited number of air miles, in every country – each nation could work out how many aircraft would be needed and no more. It would be fair and therefore acceptable – and would lessen the damage to the whole world environment.

[Daphne Bristow – “Our Lady of the Poor” Fraternity, Cambridge]

Archbishop William Goh of Singapore



GOH ON GRACE (and many other things ...) Lockdown and the church closed. A sudden end to my regular routine of attending some weekday Masses and Mass on Sunday. But quite quickly the alternative online Mass became a daily must, via YouTube, giving spiritual nourishment and real communion at the start of the day.

So initially my parish, Sacred Heart and Saint Oswald in Peterborough, live streamed daily Mass and other devotions, usually starting at 9 am (and with of course the opportunity to play or replay the video recording later in the day). With homily and novenas, and often exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, participation could take some time. For days when I had things to do at home (because lockdown for me was indeed sometimes busy, catching up at home and with personal and family affairs, and also getting out for exercise, usually dog walking or cycling) I looked for an earlier live online Mass. At Saint Peter and All Souls, the central of three Catholic churches in Peterborough, Mass was celebrated by one of the three La Salette priests serving the parish, and live streamed daily at 8.30 am, so quite often in April I took part in this. I was aware too of the 09.30 Mass live streamed from Walsingham, and occasionally joined this, having subscribed to Walsingham Catholic TV.

My usual Sunday routine before coronavirus was to attend the 12.00 parish Mass, celebrated at the Sacred Heart primary school, just down the road from where I live, so in an attempt to keep to a familiar schedule during lockdown I

usually closed the door in the quiet front room, lit a candle, and participated in the 12.00 Walsingham live stream Mass.

Feeling spiritually adventurous during the week I clicked on YouTube subscriptions to video recordings of Mass from Canada and the USA, but though these sponsored Masses were efficient and well presented I did not feel at ease with them. The liturgy of the Word used an American translation of the Revised Standard version of the Bible (which seemed to be the same as the English version but with the sentences split in half and the order of the two halves reversed, so not easy to follow with the Magnificat daily Mass readings I use). The Masses, particularly those from Canada, were short, maybe twenty minutes in duration, and though containing all the essential elements of the Mass, including a short homily, were edited to leave out unnecessary actions or moments. This was done perhaps to suit those with work or family commitments who might want a short daily Mass, but the result was a feeling of having rushed through the Mass, with little time for quiet prayerful reflection / participation. Also with regard to daily Masses from America I came to realise that they must all have been filmed the day before as vigil Masses, which somehow seemed to make them less immediate and relevant to the actual new day beginning.

Then there was the issue of Spiritual Communion. Initially during lockdown, in my experience, there was little thought given to this during the video streamed Masses I watched. One parish had on the website encouragement to pray the Saint Alphonsus Liguori Act of Spiritual Communion, just after the Communion Antiphon, which begins - "My Jesus, I believe that You are present in the Most Holy Sacrament, I love You above all things, and I desire to receive You into my soul ...", and at other Masses this Act of Spiritual Communion was read by the priest, or the text displayed on screen. In my pre-coronavirus complacency, a result of being able to physically receive the Blessed Sacrament at Mass, I had not given much thought to how important spiritual communion must be to those unable to receive the host. I soon became dissatisfied when at a live streamed Mass little prominence, time or

emphasis was given to this time of spiritual communion, as a time of real encounter with Jesus, a space where the actual spiritual reception of Jesus could take place, in faith, with confidence, love and joy.

So then I went East, to Singapore! The Archdiocese of Singapore live streams a daily Mass, celebrated at 12.00 noon, their time, and usually celebrated by William Goh, the Archbishop. The Weekday Mass is usually preceded by five minutes of calm music, to allow time for preparation and prayer. The lector has a strong, clear, and compelling reading style. Archbishop Goh's presence is calm and confident, he appears humble and completely sincere. He reads the Gospel and then gives the homily. Each day his theme is distinct and closely linked to the scripture readings, but usually this is done in a way that examines an important issue or topic in the Church, such as leadership, the role of women, or evangelisation, or an important Christian theme, such as love, contrition, and forgiveness. His teaching is invariably orthodox and in conformity with the magisterium of the Church, but his style is refreshing, not afraid to speak truth to power, or indeed truth to sinners (such as me). The homily lasts for maybe ten minutes, and shorter video versions are available on YouTube, after the daily YouTube presentation of the Mass. The Liturgy of the Eucharist follows and then the Communion Rite. Each day, following the Communion Antiphon, Archbishop Goh offers a brief and unique prayer of Spiritual Communion, based on the Gospel or readings of the day, which is always personal, reflective, and deeply inspiring. A few moments of quiet follow, to allow a real, prayerful, reception and welcome to the spiritual presence of Jesus.

A typical William Goh homily is the one entitled 'Parable of Grace', given on 20 September 2020, and based on the Gospel of the landowner hiring labourers for his vineyard, with those hired late in the day paid the same (one denarius) as those hired in the early morning. Given in his calm, inimitable style, he begins – "All of us, we feel that life is not fair, that God is not fair to us ..." The homily that follows is centred on justice, fairness, and merits, as indeed the parable of the vineyard appears to be. In this traditional

interpretation we are called as Christians not to complain about those who do much less than us for the same reward, or perhaps the focus is on the landowner (God) and our grateful response to his generosity. Alternatively it could be that those labourers hired first represent the Jews as the chosen people, and those hired later the Gentiles. But Archbishop Goh does not talk about these aspects; he simply says that we falsely equate human justice and fairness with Divine justice. Human fairness is to do with merits and earning rewards; human justice demands an eye for an eye. But meritocracy is not fair; some have better health than others, or more intelligence, or better social connections. This is not the way of the Gospel, where all we have is given by God and is not the result of our hard work or merits; we can only boast of God's mercy and generosity. The parable of the vineyard is a *parable of grace* that reminds us that God's mercy is abundant, that Divine mercy and justice is pure grace and pure gift. We cannot earn merits to enter heaven but we can show gratitude for the grace given to us. Just as each labourer was given one denarius, the amount needed to feed the family for one day, so each of us is given the grace we need. All are equal before God, who is indeed just and fair in giving us what we need.

I certainly cannot do justice to the excellence of Archbishop Goh's homilies in this short review but I highly recommend entering '[william goh homily](#)' or '[catholic mass singapore](#)' in the YouTube search bar. After a frenetically busy start to the year, for me lockdown brought peace and opportunities to explore and reflect on aspects of our Catholic faith and heritage, and participating in live stream Mass from Singapore, and listening to Archbishop Goh's talks, was (and is) a highlight of this time. It is back to church now, with unedited attendance at a live Mass, and the actual physical reception of Holy Communion. But lockdown was a time of grace and growth; may lessons learnt endure.

[Chris Whittam OFS, 'Our Lady of the Poor' Fraternity, Cambridge]

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Dear All,
Mankind is being punished. In Biblical times, the prophets would call people to prayer and they would ask for God's mercy. I suggest every Friday, until it's gone, we pray that this Covid punishment is lifted.

[Brother Monk – Sammy Tissoli ofs, - Norwich]



Sammy's memory of
Sr. Debbie Bool
who led the East
Anglian Region for
two terms,
before Sr. Brigid
Rawlinson accepted
the challenge.

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Saint Brigid of Sweden



I wanted to share this beautiful
reading from the Divine Office
reading for the feast of Saint
Bridget of Sweden, Franciscan
Tertiary, from 23rd July:
SAINT BRIDGET, Religious

Born in Sweden in the year 1303. She married while still a girl and gave birth to eight children whom she brought up in a religious spirit. ***She was a member of the Third Order of Saint Francis***, but after the death of her husband she decided to lead a more ascetical life even though still in the world. Later she founded the Bridgettine Order and went to Rome where she became outstanding in her practice of virtue. She wrote many works describing the mystical experiences she had and went on a penitential pilgrimage to the Holy Land. She died at Rome in the year 1373.

A reading from prayers attributed to St. Bridget : A prayer to Christ the Saviour:

Blessed be you, my Lord Jesus Christ, who foretold your death, and who at the Last Supper miraculously consecrated your own precious body from material bread, and in memory of your most sublime passion most charitably bestowed it on the apostles; then by washing their feet with your holy and sacred hands you showed your great humility in a humble manner.

Honour be to you, my Lord Jesus Christ, who through fear of your passion and death shed blood instead of sweat from your innocent body; nevertheless you accomplished our redemption as you intended, and in such a way you showed most clearly the love which you bore the human race.

Blessed be you, my Lord Jesus Christ, who were led to Caiaphas, and you, the judge of all mankind, let yourself be submitted to the judgment of Pilate.

Glory be to you, my Lord Jesus Christ, for the mockery which you endured while you stood clothed in purple and crowned with sharp thorns; and because you patiently allowed your honourable face to be spat upon, your eyes to be blindfolded, and your face and body to be cruelly beaten at the sacrilegious hands of unjust men.

We have to live the gift of Baptism.

Praise be to you, my Lord Jesus Christ, who enduring all, allowed yourself to be bound to a pillar, to be cruelly scourged and to be led bleeding to trial before Pilate, and to appear as the innocent Lamb.

Honour be to you, my Lord Jesus Christ, who, with your glorious body covered in blood, were condemned to death on the cross; in agony you carried the cross on your sacred shoulders, you were led amidst fury to the place of your passion and were stripped of your clothes: this was how you wished to be nailed to the wood of the cross.

Everlasting honour be to you, Lord Jesus Christ, who in such extremity humbly looked with fond love on your holy mother, who never sinned nor ever countenanced even the smallest sin; you consoled her and entrusted her to the faithful care of your disciple.

Eternal blessing be to you, my Lord Jesus Christ, who in the agony of death granted hope of pardon to all sinners, when you mercifully promised the glory of paradise to the thief who turned to you.

Eternal praise be to you, my Lord Jesus Christ, for each hour you endured such great sorrows and extremities on the cross for us sinners; the violent pain of your wounds penetrated your blessed mind, and cruelly pierced your most sacred heart until it broke, and you happily gave up your spirit; with head bowed you humbly entrusted yourself to the hands of God your Father and your body hung cold in death.

Blessed be you, my Lord Jesus Christ, who by your precious blood and most holy death redeemed souls, and mercifully led them from exile into eternal life.

Blessed be you, my Lord Jesus Christ, who for our salvation allowed your heart and your side to be pierced by a lance; and also in that from your side you poured forth your precious blood together with water, that you might redeem us.

Glory be to you, my Lord Jesus Christ; it was your will that your blessed body be taken down from the cross by your friends and laid in the arms of your sorrowful mother, and that it be wrapped in cloth and buried in the tomb; there you allowed it to be guarded by soldiers.

Everlasting honour be to you, my Lord Jesus Christ, who on the third day arose from the dead and showed yourself living to those you chose; again, after forty days in the presence of many witnesses you ascended into heaven, and there you established in due honour the friends whom you had freed from the underworld.

May rejoicing and eternal praise be to you, Lord Jesus Christ, who sent the Holy Spirit into the hearts of your disciples, and increased the immeasurable love of God in their souls.

May you be blessed and praised and glorious for ever, my Lord Jesus, who are seated in the glory of your divinity on your throne in the kingdom of heaven, yet living in your human nature with all the holy members which you derived from the flesh of the Virgin. Thus you will come in the day of judgment to judge the souls of the living and the dead: you who live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit for ever and ever. Amen

[Anne Simmonds ofs, Minister, Gospel to Life fraternity, Bedford] +++

Wordsearch [from David Gleave]

H	I	R	A	H	C	E	Z	T	E
E	T	P	T	A	E	E	I	O	
L	R	E	L	I	H	A	D	U	J
I	U	L	B	R	M	O	E	R	S
Z	I	M	E	A	E	D	S	F	P
T	O	S	R	H	Z	L	S	R	I
W	P	Y	R	C	A	I	E	U	R
C	O	A	L	E	B	H	L	I	I
M	E	N	E	Z	E	C	B	E	T
E	L	Z	Y	L	O	H	O	T	E

MARY
ELIZABETH
HOLY
BLESSED

JUDAH
CHILD
SPIRIT
FRUIT

ZECHARIAH
WOMB
CRY
LEAPT

Saint Clare



On Tuesday 11th August - we celebrated the life of St Clare. As part of the process for Clare's canonization 15 of the sisters who had lived with her at the Monastery of San Damiano were interviewed. Below is an extract from one of the witness statements which gives details of Clare's penitential life.

1. Sister Pacifica de Guelfuccio of Assisi, a nun of the monastery of San Damiano, said under oath she knew Saint Clare while that holy woman was in the world in her father's house; and that she was considered by all those who knew her to be a person of great honesty and of very good life; and that she was intent upon and occupied with works of piety.
2. She said that Saint Clare began the Order that is now at San Damiano through the admonition of Saint Francis. She entered it as a virgin, and always remained such a virgin. When she was asked how she knew these things, she responded that when she was in the world she was her neighbour and distant relative and that only the piazza was between her house and that of the virgin Clare. She frequently conversed with her.
3. She said the Lady Clare very much loved the poor and all the citizens held her in great veneration because of her good manner of life. When she was asked how much time had passed since the virgin Clare had left the world, she said it was about forty-two years. When she was asked how she knew this, she replied she had entered the Order at the

same time with her and had served her for the most part almost day and night.

4. She also said Lady Clare was born of noble stock, of noble father and mother. Her father was a knight, Sir Favarone, whom she, the witness, had never seen. But she saw her mother, Ortulana. This lady, Ortulana, went beyond the sea for reasons of prayer and devotion. She likewise testified she, [the witness], accompanied her beyond the sea for reasons of prayer and devotion. They also went together to Sant'Angelo and to Rome. She said she willingly visited the poor. Asked how she knew these things, she replied: because she was her neighbour and was with her, as mentioned above.

5. She also said Lady Ortulana came to that same Order as her holy daughter, blessed Clare, and lived in it with the other sisters in great humility. There, adorned by religious and holy deeds, she passed from this life.

6. The witness also said three years after Lady Clare had been in the Order, at the prayers and insistence of Saint Francis, who almost forced her, she accepted the direction and government of the sisters. Asked how she knew this, she said she was present.

Her Manner of Life in the Monastery

7. This witness also said the blessed mother kept vigil so much of the night in prayer, and kept so many abstinences that the sisters lamented and were alarmed. She said that because of this she herself had sometimes wept. Asked how she knew this, she replied: because she saw when Lady Clare lay on the ground and had a rock from the river for her head, and heard her when she was in prayer.

8. She said she was so very strict in her food that the sisters marvelled at how her body survived. She also said blessed Clare fasted much of the time. Three days of the week, Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, she did not eat anything. She said on other days she kept such abstinences she developed a certain illness so Saint Francis together with the bishop of Assisi commanded her to eat on those three days at least a half a roll of bread, about one and a half ounces.

9. She also said the blessed mother was persevering and careful in her prayers, lying a long time upon the ground, remaining humbly prostrate. When she came from her prayer, she admonished and comforted her sisters always speaking the words of God Who was always in her mouth, so much so that she did not want to speak or hear of vanities. When she returned from her prayer, the sisters rejoiced as though she had come from heaven. Asked how she knew these things, she replied she lived with her.

10. She also said Lady Clare, when she commanded her sisters to do something, did so with great fear and humility and more often than not she wished to do what she had commanded the others.

11. She also said that when she was so sick that she could not get up from bed, she had herself raised to sit up and be supported with some cushions behind her back. She spun [thread] so from her work she made corporals and altar linens for almost all the churches of the plains and hills around Assisi. Asked how she knew these things, she replied that she saw her spinning. When the cloth was made and the sisters had sewn it, it was hand-delivered by the brothers to those churches and given to the priests who came there.

12. She also said the blessed mother was humble, kind, and loving to her sisters, and had compassion for the sick. While she was healthy, she served them and washed their feet and gave them water with her

own hands. Sometimes she washed the mattresses of the sick. Asked how she knew these things, she replied she had seen her many times.

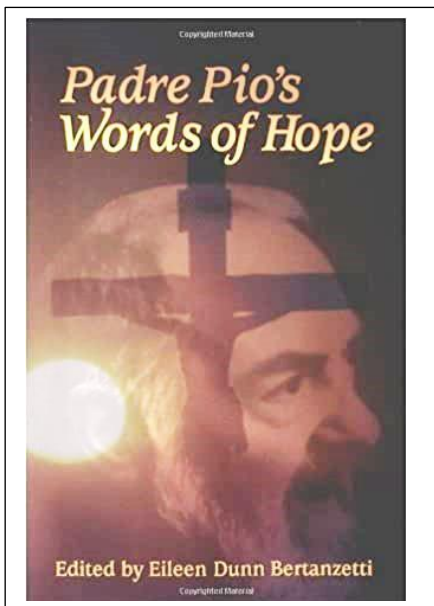
13. She also said she particularly loved poverty, but she could never be persuaded to desire anything for herself, or to receive any possession for herself or the monastery. Asked how she knew this, she replied she saw and heard the Lord Pope Gregory of happy memory wanted to give her many things and buy possessions for the monastery. But she would never consent.

14. She also said Lady Clare was as careful about the [regular] observance of her Order and the government of her sisters as someone might be in safeguarding her temporal treasure. And these things, she said, she knew because she was always with her, for about forty years and more. What a wonderful Saint!!

David Gleave of

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Book Reviews



For those wanting an introduction to the spirituality of St. Padre Pio, I strongly recommend this book, based on the Letters of Saint Pio of Pietrelcina, Volumes I, II and III.

There are 150 meditations, one meditation to a page, covering such themes as Anxiety, Confidence in God and Gratitude. The structure of each meditation is the same:- First a short quote from scripture, then a response followed by Padre Pio's comforting words. What follows is one example:-

Meditation 91 on Mercy.

1

Timothy 1:15-16 "...Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners-of whom I am the foremost.

But for that very reason I received mercy..."

But I still fear that God won't want to show mercy to me.

Padre Pio's assurance: "Your every fear is useless and lying; it is imaginary. Live tranquilly in the presence of God, who has loved you for a long time now...your miseries and weaknesses should not frighten you, because God has seen more serious ones within you and did not reject you for this due to his mercy."

The scriptural references come from the New Revised Standard Version of the Bible and the Padre Pio quotes, except for some minor editing, are produced practically verbatim. There are also some thoughtful illustrations drawn by the editor. I can't tell you how helpful this publication has been to me since I purchased it in November 2015. It has acted as a powerful antibiotic to the negativity and trauma I come across in my work as a Social Worker.

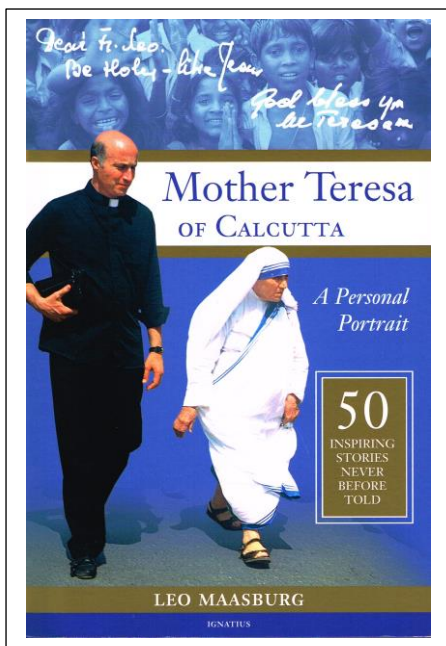
On the Amazon website it is available for £5.22 second hand or £9.22 new, plus postage and packing. Highly recommended.

[Chris Housden of Ipswich Fraternity].

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Christ becomes flesh on the altar. Am I giving myself completely to him?
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Mother Teresa of CALCUTTA. by Leo MAASBURG



This is an easy read that gives a portrait of Saint Teresa of Calcutta from a priest who often travelled with Mother Teresa and said Masses for her in the different places where she went. She was setting up new houses for her sisters to work in from different parts of the world and the various places where she was invited to speak.

ISBN:978-1-58617-827-7

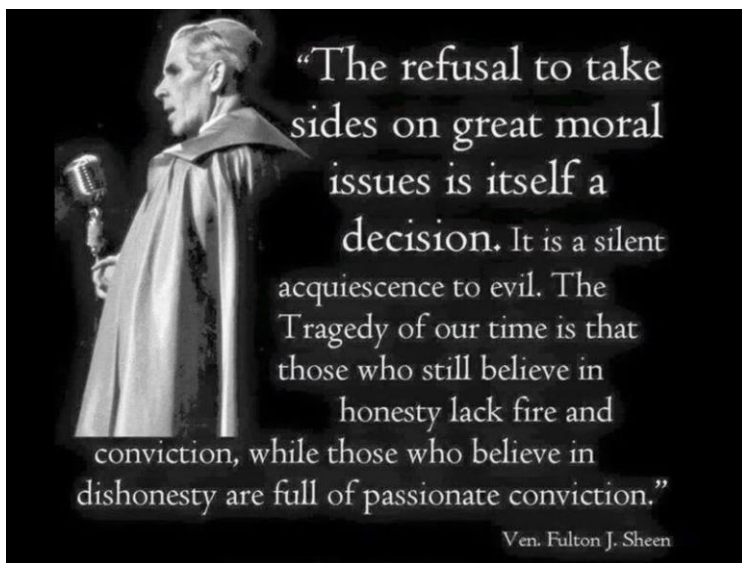
Ignatius Press

She wanted everything to show the love that Jesus has for everyone and how we can help everyone in the simplest ways. Wherever she went she wanted to pray and ask Jesus to help and she lived very simply and gave her example to everyone that the simplest things are important. She was often found cleaning the toilets and one of the basic things that she taught to her sisters was daily washing of their Saris and how she saw in every person someone that Jesus loved and therefore we should show them that love. Father Leo was many times surprised by her but his love and admiration comes through. It's a good easy read and inspiring.

[Anne T Simmonds – Gospel to Life Fraternity, Bedford]

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What do I refuse to do for Jesus?



"The greatest love story of all time is contained in a tiny white Host."

-The Venerable Servant of God Fulton J. Sheen –

"We abide in God insofar as we do not sin."

Saint Bede the Venerable (673 – 735)

Eucharistic Prayer III:

"You give life to all things and make them holy."

An Intercessory Prayer:

We pray that as individuals and a community
we may be signs of God's love and concern
to all whom we meet
that as Christ's hands, His feet and His mouth
we may proclaim the Gospel in all we say and do.

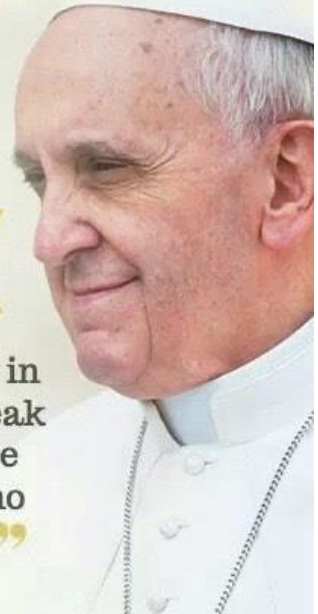


Santuario del Sto. Cristo Church

Pope Francis *List*

DON'T GOSSIP

“ Every time we judge our brother in our hearts or worse when we speak badly of them with others, we are murdering Christians. There is no such thing as innocent slander. ”



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Mgr. Philip Moger, the new Rector at the Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham: **"We do not know what the future holds but we do know who holds the future."**

Dear Reader,

If you found this magazine interesting, whether or not you have contributed towards it before, please consider sending something that might be of interest to other readers.

An article, perhaps on why you became a Secular Franciscan or how it has helped your faith in ongoing formation; perhaps a sentence or phrase from the Holy Mass which struck you, or part of a homily. Surely some of you have been reading a religious book and enjoyed it so much that you want to share it with others? Or perhaps you have read [or written] a poem about religious thoughts and or experiences and would like to share with others.

**For entry into the Spring 2021 EAR magazine,
please send your offering to:**

michaelsimmonds36@virginmedia.com

or get someone to send it for you if you do not have access to the web.