



# The Franciscan Times

A NEWSLETTER HELPING MEMBERS OF THE THIRD ORDER, SOCIETY OF ST. FRANCIS, PROVINCE OF THE AMERICAS SHARE THEIR COMMON JOURNEY THROUGH NEWS FROM FELLOWSHIPS AND INDIVIDUALS, REVIEWS OF BOOKS, CDs, DVDs, POETRY, STORIES, ESSAYS, REFLECTIONS, MEDITATIONS, GRAPHICS, AND WHATEVER THE HOLY SPIRIT MIGHT BLOW OUR WAY. ■

Summer 2015

## Ground Zero Liberia—Ebola

*Kathryn Challoner*

That is what the Liberians call the northern part of Lofa County. This is where the Ebola virus killed two-thirds of the villagers and left hundreds of orphans. And this is where Benedict and I travelled this week. We crossed the St Paul River and drove to Bolahun where Benedict was born.



There at Ground Zero, Benedict and his group (Baffa) are building a huge new school, and a dormitory (orphanage) for the Ebola orphans. The school is close to completion. Classrooms have blackboards but no desks or seats yet. We have a computer room almost assembled. We have just installed a generator so adults can attend night classes. We have a new Library and we are installing shelving. All school supplies are free and the minimal tuition for all Ebola orphans has now been paid (thanks to several donations from members of my parish, Bishop Breidenthal of Southern Ohio and the generous work and gifts of the Third Order). I wish you could see it!

We already have 320 students enrolled. Benedict and I attended the opening day Eucharist with the students in the old packed St Mary's church (once used by the Anglican Order of the Holy Cross). And suddenly the children began to sing and to dance in their places. A girl would lead off then the whole congregation would join in-then the percussion drums

played by one of the boys would begin to beat and then one of the girls would chime in with the *shekere* (a percussion hand drum from Africa, consisting of a dried gourd with beads woven into a net). All I could think of was "Dear Lord, with all these children have been through and they can still sing like this".

Benedict, of course, had to make a speech as the President of Baffa, and he stated I was his American Mom. The Priest then—not to be outdone—stated that since Benedict was everyone's Father, it followed that I was everyone's Grandmother. Here I had been hoping for grandchildren and suddenly I had 320 of them.

We also travelled to the Anglican Leper Colony just up the hill -the oldest in Liberia. The WHO provides the boxes of medicines but we have developed shortage problems with food and dressings. Benedict and I made hasty arrangements for immediate deliveries-along the way scooping up "Uncle," a frail emaciated old man, to drive him to the nearest hospital for a chest XR. In Liberia, sputum for AFBs are 85 % unreliable but there are so few places where a Liberian can get CXR. His CXR, when he got it, cost \$20 US dollars, which of course, is prohibitive for the average Liberian and so was covered by the medical mission fund of the Third Order.

In the leper village, babies clung to Benedict's and my clothing whimpering to be picked up. I was trying to follow

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**Ground Zero Liberia —Ebola(cont.)**

the no contact Ebola rules, but I sure felt sympathetic when Benedict suddenly scooped up several in his arms.

Then an even more gut wrenching point of the day – we travelled to the Ebola villages. Benedict's truck was loaded with rice, schoolbooks, hand sanitizer, crayons, pencils and pens. As we made the deliveries, we faced the devastation this virus had caused. One village had an Ebola memorial- 27 names out of one small village were painted on a simple stone. The children in the village wandered with hurt lost eyes and clenched fists – signs, Benedict told me, of severe depression. We told them that we loved them, that these gifts were from others who loved them and a new school had just opened where they were welcomed and which was free to them.



The village leaders—Christian and Muslim—encouraged the little ones to try and go. One day they would have a story to tell of what had been lost in their villages—a story to be remembered when there was no one left to tell—of this horror that had destroyed their families and lives. I met the wife of the first nurse who died of Ebola while trying to care for his patients. She had five children and was destitute. Benedict spoke to her promising rice, food, a free schooling for her children, and that we would always be there for her.

How right this place was for this new community. “Keto-baye” is the Liberian word for Hope.

I awoke the next morning with a song in my mind. Now before you think I am writing poetry or something, this song was actually composed by the Paul of Peter, Paul and Mary (which probably dates me big time).

*For the Love of it all  
I would go anywhere.  
To the ends of the earth,  
What is it worth if Love would be there?  
Walking the thin line between fear and the call  
One learns to bend and finally depend  
On the Love of it all.*

*For the Love of it all  
We are gathered by grace*

*We have followed our hearts*

*To take up our parts*

*In this time and place.*

*Hands for the harvest,*

*Hear the centuries call:*

*It is still not too late to come celebrate*

*The Love of it all*

**Ecumenical Advocacy Days, 2015**

*Dianne Aid*

Some members of our JPIC team, especially those associated with the Franciscan Action Network Commission, gathered in Washington DC for the annual meeting of the FAN Commission and to participate in Ecumenical Advocacy Days April 17-20, 2015

**The Franciscan Action Commission** current focus of work is for just and humane immigration reform, addressing issues of gun violence and of Care for Creation and Climate Change. Roman Catholic members of the Commission recently began exploring some work around The Doctrine of Discovery, and, we from TSSF have some input to offer, especially based on the work we accomplished at our last Provincial Convocation in Minnesota. Father Junipero Serra is up for canonization in the Roman Catholic Church as a missionary. He founded the California Missions, a system which was responsible for enslaving thousands of indigenous people, and for all of us as Franciscans, this is something we need to think about and carefully navigate and use as opportunity for dialogue.



*Francesca Wigle, Dianne Aid, Shannon Berndt from Episcopal Peace Fellowship, and Verleah Kosloske*

**Ecumenical Advocacy Days** attended by nearly 1000 Christians from various denominations gathers annually to study and plan for action around critical social justice issues of our times. In the past years we have addressed immigration, gender violence, food justice, and this year the topic was prisons for profit.

A vast majority of prisons and immigration detention centers are contracted by governments to private corporations, and the profits are astounding. I am most familiar with the immigration detention system. For example, the Northwest Detention Center in Tacoma, Washington has 1500 beds. The US government guarantees keeping the beds full, and paying \$200.00 per day per detainee. GEO, the private company who manages the detention center has no worries that even US Citizens have been locked up for up to three months.

GEO incidentally manages the Guantanamo Bay facility. Private corporations invest in the building of the detention centers, and also support anti-immigrant legislation—all for what? Profits. In the criminal prison system, laws like “Three Strikes and you’re Out” feed the private prison system, especially impacting communities of color.

During the course of the weekend, we have an opportunity to caucus with others from our home states, and on Monday, visit our congressional offices and bring up tasks to enact more important than just legislation.

Participating from TSSF were Francesca Wigle, Verleah



*Pam Moffat, Francesca Wigle, and Dianne Aid*

Kosloske, Dianne Aid, Pam Moffat and Chris Cowen. Verleah was welcomed as a new FAN Commissioner along with Francesca and Dianne, she also helped to manage the Episcopal Peace Fellowship Table at EAD.

Dianne and Pam visited the Episcopal Church Office of Government Relations coordinating work on immigration reform.

Please contact us regarding any of the issues mentioned here so we can form action circles throughout TSSF.

## When Did I Begin This Beguine? Ministry Not the Way I Planned It

*Diana Wheeler, Deacon, Diocese of California*

I’m not going to talk about dancing. I don’t dance. Don’t ask me.

I started out my life as a Franciscan because I was born in San Francisco. Five generations of my family were born here. And so we have always known St. Francis well. He is our patron. But it wasn’t until I began my life in ministry that I came to depend on him deeply.

I became an associate of the Society of St. Francis when I was in discernment for Holy Orders years before I was ordained. I had worked with the First Order sisters for many years teaching vacation bible school with them and attending mass at St. Francis House in San Francisco. My “day” job was working with children and families from the housing project across the street from a large parish in the City. My other “day” job was mothering three challenging children. It was young folks 24/7, so a 7:45 am mass with the sisters was a respite.

During that time, I needed to change spiritual directors

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and that’s how I came into contact with the brothers at San Damiano Friary. The year before I was ordained, Brother Justus had mentored me at the parish I worked at. It was Justus who talked me off the ledge the week before I was ordained when I threatened to bolt. That was 2003. It was Brother Richard Jonathan who taught me how to swing a thurible and chant the Exsultet. And it has been Brother Jude who has helped me talk through and walk through all the changes and discernment that I have lived through over the last 15 or so years. Brother Simon and I made our first pilgrimage to Assisi together.

Somewhere in the midst of all this, I received a fellowship with San Francisco Night Ministry. Five nights a week for two years I walked the streets of San Francisco between the hours of 10 pm and 2 am, offering pastoral care and crisis intervention. Then I went home and slept and then went to the “day” job. Then started all over again. By that time I was living with my youngest son and adjusting to a new lifestyle and identity.

When my fellowship ended I moved onto a real grownup job as a head of school for a large Episcopal child development center in the suburbs. I still worked the streets once a week with SF Night Ministry as their official deacon. It was an interesting mix of experiences as I had this sort of typical career in the daytime and this other “out of the box” identity at night. Then my son moved out to start a life as an acrobat. Really.

*Continued on page 4*



*Annual Palm Sunday Procession in the Castro Neighborhood of San Francisco, 2014. It includes Brothers Simon and Juniper, SSF and several community members.*

A few months before he moved, I had begun my Third Order formation process. It was both a challenge and a comfort to share my strange life with my counselor and connect it with my journey as a Franciscan. But it was hard to work all day with a large staff, 200 families, a rector and a school board and then come home, put on my collar and my walking shoes and drive into the City for a few hours of ministry. It was hard to do alone.

So, four and half years ago I came to live at the friary with the brothers. What it's like to be the only woman living in a friary is the subject of a whole other article (and at least 5 chapters in my memoir), and the important part is that I became part of the life here. I went through my novitiate and was professed in the chapel here. Many of the brothers and I have done much ministry together over the years. And most importantly, I have lived right in the middle of the neighborhood that I serve as a night minister.

It wasn't long after I came here that I discovered the history of the Beguines. Not the dance. Remember, I don't dance. Don't ask me.

The Beguines began in Belgium, Holland and Germany about the 12th century. They were women who lived an apostolic life, supporting themselves while doing works of mercy teaching children, caring for the sick and feeding the hungry. Sometimes they lived with their families. Sometimes they lived in their own houses near other Beguines. Most often they lived in community together in beguinages. They were women who did not take solemn vows. They did not have a Rule. They committed themselves to works of mercy and being in community with each other. They could leave at anytime. They were single, widowed or separated. They were noble, educated women and working class women.

Sometimes they were poor women. They were servant ministers. During their history they were loved and then feared and persecuted. At their height, there were thousands in many countries of Europe. Then over time and through the efforts of the Church to control religious women, they died out. The last Beguine in Belgium died in 2013. An excellent book, just published is *The Wisdom of the Beguines* by Laura Swan. It's a great start if you want to learn more.

I very strongly identified with these women. I had left the life of a "householder" to be more available to offer ministry. I left my grownup job and scaled down to be able to devote more time to service. I moved into a community life to have practical and spiritual support in ministry. As I discovered more about these women, I learned that there were many who became tertiaries and many were attached to the friars for sacramental support and spiritual direction. And the friars and other clergy sought many Beguines out for direction. Over the centuries it has been a mutual relationship with its ups and downs.

In recent years there have been experiments in community living inspired by the Beguine movement. I have wondered



*Easter Vigil at San Damiano Friary. Br. Jude is the celebrant and I am the deacon.*

*The Wisdom of the Beguines, The Forgotten Story of a Medieval Women's Movement* by Laura Swan

*A Review by Beverly Hosea*

Laura Swan is a Benedictine and former prioress of St. Placid Priory near Olympia, Washington. I have been to St. Placid Priory and retreat center on a number of occasions, and I had read with interest her previous historical book, *The Forgotten Desert Mothers*. This new book, *The Wisdom of the Beguines*, is a historical overview of a fascinating though mostly ignored women's movement that began around the time of Francis and continued for several centuries.

It has only been in the last 30 or 40 years that there has

if there are any TSSF folks out there who have taken the plunge and jumped into a full time life of servant ministry? Do you have the support you need in living a radical life of servanthood in a world that doesn't "get it"? I would love to hear from you.

Let's start a conversation.  
dianarwheeler@gmail.com.

been a growing interest in and research about the Beguines. Names such as Mechthild of Magdeburg, Catherine of Siena and the Flemish Beguine Hadewijch have been attracting attention. And so Swan's book serves a needed purpose in giving the context and background for these literary and spiritual personalities.

Who were the Beguines? They were single women who did not want to be nuns or live in convents or monasteries, but instead gathered together in community to support one another in living independently from ecclesial and male dominance. They were neither a religious order nor an organized movement. Scattered throughout Europe beguinages, or living compounds for the Beguines, came into existence independently of each other, although there were many aspects that were the same or similar



among them all. They supported themselves by means of various industries and skills, such as illuminated manuscripts or textiles or other trades. They proved to have expertise in business that made them formidable competitors in the marketplace. In each beguinage the women had regular communal prayers, read voraciously the spiritual classics and theology, and gained spiritual status and maturity that made them sought out as spiritual directors, teachers and preachers. They engaged in significant ministries in areas of need in their towns and cities not otherwise addressed: care and feeding of the poor, hospitals and ministry to the sick and dying, education of children and women, care of lepers, and intercessory prayer.

As I read this book I kept in mind striking parallels between this women's movement that had been largely ignored and the spiritual impact of Francis, Clare and the Franciscan movement of the same time period. The Beguines emerged contemporaneously with Francis. They provided women with an alternative to monastic life as it had been known. Economically the Beguines had an impact in how the merchant class was developing and the growth of cities with a new way of living in the world. Beguines shared a common life, valued highly simplicity of living, and were generous with the poor. They engaged in commerce and owned property, which was often seen as legally unsupportable for women. And they claimed for themselves a calling to apostolic ministry in serving the poor, the outcast, the suffering and the dying. Although the Beguines did not adopt the same Gospel poverty as Francis, they held loosely to their beguinages and possessions, for they suffered greatly from various ways imposed

on them to control them. They were taxed, their beguinages were looted and/or destroyed, they were prohibited from certain trades where their competition was too threatening, they were expelled, they were taken over by local governments, and plundered and damaged during times of war. Yet the Beguines persevered and continued ministering to the ill, the dying and the poor, always paying their own way.

Laura Swan's book shows good scholarship in presenting a well organized history of this women's movement, and she includes short biographies on many of the significant beguines or beatas over several centuries. She writes about the opposition persecution they faced, as well as their contributions to practical theology. They provided models of spirituality that addressed directly current situations, and her book gives witness to the impact these women had at a time when history rarely credited women for their contributions.

What Swan does not do is comment on comparisons between the Beguines and the feminist movement of the last hundred plus years. That is left to the reader. But for myself I have been reflecting on the creativity of women (and men) to think outside the political and ecclesial boxes in configuring a faith community. The Church currently is expending huge energy in the direction of regaining membership. What is needed is authentic communities of faith where the experience of the Divine is real and apparent, and where action in ministry flows from a more profound faith basis than is generally offered in most churches. I also think about how the example of the Beguines can stir our own creativity in the Third Order to think of new ways to be a faith community centered on our Lord Jesus and with the charism of Francis. I would recommend this book as a stimulating read as we prepare for our Centennial Convocation in 2017.

## Brother Jude, A Printer's Devil?

*Alison Saichek*

Many famous people began their careers as "printer's devils"—apprentices mixing tubs of ink and fetching type: Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson, Walt Whitman, Mark Twain, Joel Chandler Harris, Warren Harding, and Lyndon Johnson. To this illustrious number, we can now add Brother Jude.

I recently spent a pleasant time with Brother Jude, SSF, in his sunny workshop at the San Damiano Friary in San Francisco, learning about his printing activities for Pax et Bonum Press, accompanied by the musical rattle of the antique printing press and the smell of printer's ink. Because of the transfer of Little Portion Friary to another group, the Society needs to find ways to replace the income which had come from retreats and other rentals, and Brother Jude's contribution has been to pursue a lifelong interest in hand printing. His projects include greeting cards, booklets, prints, and books of poetry and stories.

Brother Jude's press is a 1930's

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**Brother Jude, A Printer's Devil? (cont.)**

Chandler & Price platen press. Thanks to a bequest from a dear friend, he was able to purchase it from a collector near



*Br. Jude and His Chandler & Price Press*

Healdsburg CA and have it transported to San Francisco, where it took a crane to get it into the lower level of the Friary, as well as some sweat and a little blood!

Jude showed me his cabinets full of individual letters, initials, and pictures. The letters and image blocks are set in a form, or "phrase", which is mounted in a frame called a "chase" and held in place by

spacers called "quoins". This is where we get the expression "to coin (quoin) a phrase". It's all too easy to reverse or transpose letters, since everything looks backwards, which is why we have to "mind our p's and q's". When the press is operating, the place where the two platens come together to make the print is called a "cropper". If you don't get your hands out of the way in time and get them caught between the two platens you have "come a-cropper"! Jude says he finds the process of hand setting each phrase and the chase, which can take several hours, to be a form of meditation.

Jude has been learning the trade for about 18 months, studying with an experienced printer, although he has been fascinated by hand printing for a long time. He has attended several printers' fairs and meetings of a local group of printers, who have been very supportive, donating equipment and various fonts and image blocks to Jude's collection.



**This is our Vocation:**

**to heal wounds  
to bind what is broken  
to bring home those who are lost**



Other fonts and image blocks have been found through online sources. He has ten blocks showing St. Francis, including one of St. Francis with the birds, which was advertised on e-Bay as "Jesus with parrots"! Another collection of images is building towards a set of cards of the Cantic of the Creatures. Currently he has about thirty sets of fonts of different sizes and styles, from very old fashioned to modern. He's also collecting T's for Tau's. As his collec-

tion grows, Br. Jude plans to produce seasonal greetings for Christmas, Easter and other holidays, and personalized cards and prints for people depicting other crafts and hobbies. After SSF Chapter in May, Jude hopes to have more time to create new cards and prints. He has two blank cards currently available, one with an image of St. Francis and the words "Pax et Bonum", and another saying "This is our vocation: to heal wounds, to bind up the broken, to bring home those who are lost", which is appropriate for professions and renewals. As the catalogue is developed, Jude hopes to create an online ordering system. If you wish to order cards before that, please contact Brother Jude by e-mail at [judehillssf@aol.com](mailto:judehillssf@aol.com) or write to him at San Damiano Friary, 573 Dolores St., San Francisco, CA 94110.

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**An Interrupted Prayer**

*John Cooper TSSF, Fox Lake Correctional Institute*

We have a small window in our doors here, and I've seen men put a sign in their window when they are in prayer so that they won't be disturbed. I don't practice this because even in prayer I want to be open and available, even if it's

just for a friend looking to borrow a clean shirt for a visit.

The other night, deep into my evening Office, I had made it part way through my intercessory prayers when a knock came at my door, and a familiar face at the window. I marked my place with a ribbon and set my prayer book on the bed, opening my door for a friend.

It was one of the guys here who was just having a tough day; un-restful, frustrating, and just looking for someone to talk to for a while, so we hung out in my door-way and talked.

He's a prayerful man, a church-going Roman Catholic, but when he discovered that I'd been in prayer he confided that even when praying he had trouble feeling the presence of Jesus here in his life. Oh, he believed in God...out there somewhere. It was just hard to see in here; immersed in the devil's playground. It may be common everywhere, but the shortcoming is on us; the failure to see what is.

One of the ways we may fail to see is when there isn't enough light to see by. Another is when we're blinded by too much light; like looking into the sun. That's one of the ways I think of the evidence of the presence of God around us. Every time I open my eyes, or even that I can open my eyes, everything that is offers evidence of its Creator.

So I asked my friend about his visit with his mother.

"She must really love you to come this far." I told him.

"Yeah. We're pretty close."

"And she still believes in you?"

"Oh...yeah."

"How about me; do you believe in me?"

And he answered, "You're always the one telling me I can do this."

Getting about as far as I could with this, I opened my prayer book to where I had marked my page to show him the list of people tucked inside there that I had been praying for. I watched him read the list, waiting for the recognition I knew would come when he spotted his own name.

Then I explained:

"What we have when we gather this together is a mother's unconditional love and belief in you in the face of your mistakes—a friend's faith in you, and the Force that guided you to go see him. A man sitting alone in his cell praying for you, and the Force that guided him to be doing that right now. Praying, because he believes, not only in God, but in you. And he knows that Jesus does too. How can we not see the Creator of all of this, present and at work in our lives?"

He just looked at me for a while and then smiled.

I confess that I often struggle with seeing Christ in some of my circumstances. And I can forget that I'm standing in His presence. But there are moments these Truths become vividly clear in some extraordinarily monumental moment, like the quiet smile of a friend.

## Our History: How You Can Help, How You Can Build Your Own Copy

*John Brockmann*

The next 12 pages are Part 2 of the serialization of the *History of TSSF, Province of the Americas 1917–2017*. Help me get this history right. I have rummaged through the archives and interviewed many older members of our Province to produce the book you are about to read. However, you may know some information I have not been privy to or perhaps my interpretation of facts could be corrected in some way. By all means, don't keep this to yourself, but rather send it to me forthwith so I can perfect the facts of this book. (Please send them to me electronically at [jbrockma@udel.edu](mailto:jbrockma@udel.edu) or by mail at 78 Mann Hill Road, Scituate, MA 02066.)

It would be easy and relatively inexpensive to produce this history in an ebook format, and eventually it will be. However doing so would leave out all those who are not tech savvy nor know how to get and use an ebook. Producing this whole book in paper copy would also be very expensive. So, your mission, if you choose to accept it, is to begin pulling the pages of each serialization part out of the Franciscan Times, making a 3-hole-punch of each page, and collecting them into a binder until you have all of them sometime in 2017.

In 2017 the ebook of the whole project will be published and possibly also a paperback book depending upon costs and reader demand.

## A Question Sent In From the Last Installment of Our History—Why Did Third Order Members Take On A New Name at The Time of Novicing?

Taking on a new name at the time of entry into a Religious Order is somewhat akin to women taking on the last name of their husband to signify being part of a new family. In the *Bundle of Myrrh* (1924), Father Joseph writes about this in regards admission to the Noviate:

*When the Postulant is admitted to the Novitiate, he takes his first definite step in the Franciscan life. He is "Clothed" (i.e., his is invested with the little Habit) and given a new name by which he is to be known in the Order, (selected in honor of the Saints or of some mystery of the Faith).*

Later in the *Little Book of the Rule* (1929), Father Joseph expands on this and explains:

*14. As a sign of the new life which the postulant begins when invested with the habit, a "New Name" is given. God changed the name of Jacob to Israel, Saul to Paul, Cephas to Peter; Naomi's name was changed to Mara;*

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### Question Sent In From the Last Installment of Our History (cont.)

*and Our Lord tells us that upon him that overcometh shall be written His Own New Name (Rev. 3:12). So also does the tertiary change his name, or rather add, to the "Christian name" a "religious name." But this name is not used except in the documents and fellowship of the Order, and is the "secret of the King" rather than an external title.*

*15. The postulant is allowed to express a preference for the "New Name", but it shall rest with the Novice Master or Novice Mistress to decide what the name shall be. Only thus can undue duplication be avoided or the ideas and history of the Order sufficiently emphasized. In every case it shall be the name of a Saint or of a mystery of our Holy Religion which shall be chosen for the "New Name." In the case of a woman, the name "Mary" shall be added before or after the name unless the name chosen is already one of Our Lady's names or titles. The novice should seek information from the Public Library or other sources as to the devotional associations of the "New Name" that it may thus become a devotional help.*

In the *Third Order Manual of the American Congregation of Franciscans* (1962), information about the religious name only briefly comes up during the explanation of the Novice's Clothing Office:

*The Priest then confers the new name by which the novice is to be known in the Third Order saying:*

*My Son (or daughter), hereafter thou shalt be known in the Third Order as Brother (Sister or Father) N.*

Finally, when we get to the incorporation of TSF into the English TSSF in 1967, you will see that Brother Paul (our Provincial Minister at the time) observed this about Third Order members no longer taking on or being given religious names:

*About Names—Over a year ago [post-Vatican II], the Roman Friars Minor permitted all friars to resume their Baptismal Names if they so desired. Now all their Novices must keep their Baptismal Names. The tendency to keep the Baptismal Name is widespread in Roman Communities today because there is increasingly an emphasis on one's Baptism as the entrance into the Christian Life, our incorporation into the Body of Christ. There can be no greater event this side of heaven. It is the desire to emphasize the Sacrament of Baptism that Baptismal names are to be treasured and kept. The First Order now is encouraging Novices to keep their Baptismal Names unless there is good reason to change (repetitive, outlandish, etc.).*

"Address to the Third Order Committee" (1968)

Finally, when Peter Funk comes to write his series of Formation Letters in 1968-70, there is no mention of the taking on of a new religious name. (This despite the fact that Peter did take on a new name on his own novicing some years earlier.)

### New Information Corrects Part 1's Story Of Our Founding by Father Joseph

*John Brockmann*

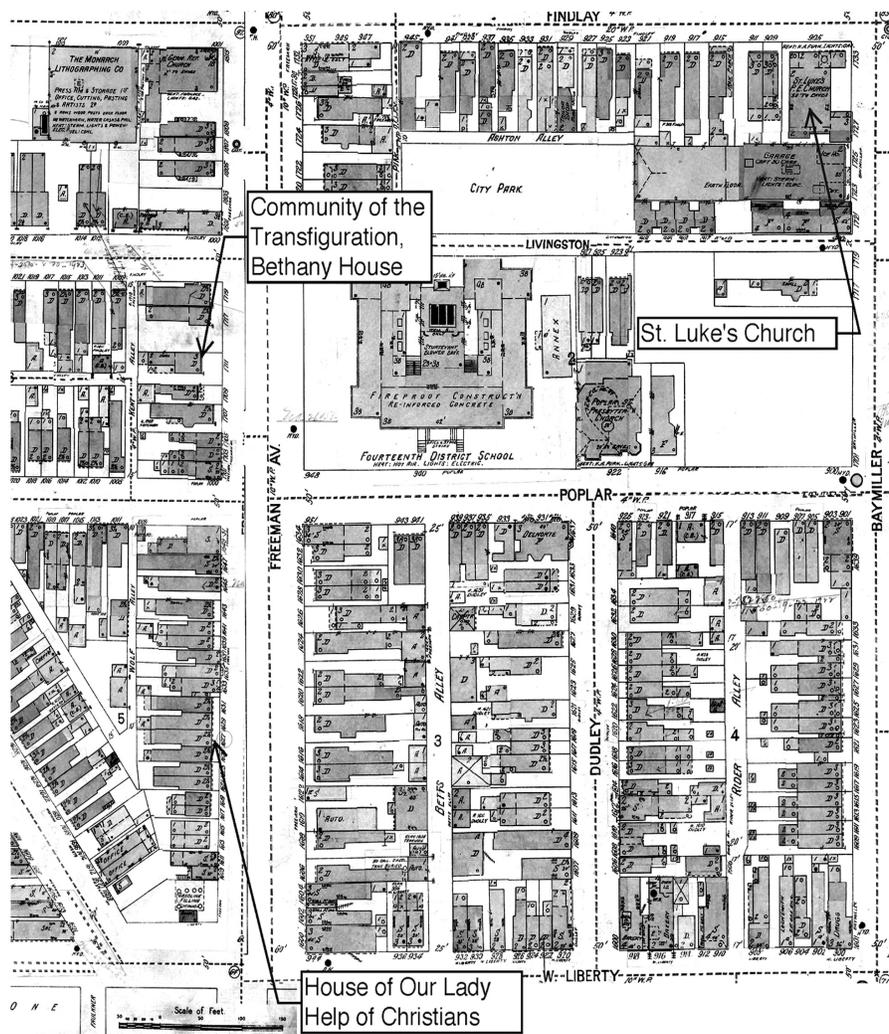
In the last installment and with each subsequent one, I ask everyone's help in writing this history: "you may know some information I have not been privy to or perhaps my interpretation of facts could be corrected in some way. By all means, don't keep this to yourself, but rather send it to me forthwith so I can perfect the facts of this book." Thus, thanks to some detective work by Janet Fedders at the Cincinnati Library and in the Archives of the Diocese of Southern Ohio, we have new important insights into our founding in 1917 by Father Joseph.

Figure A on the opposite page are two conjoined insurance maps from 1904-17 with three important locations explained in the following pages. Then from the parish register of St. Luke's Episcopal Church is Rev. Claude Crookston's entry for his position as Assistant Minister (Figure B, page 10), and on page 11 is his entry for his position as Rector-in-Charge for December 1917 to January 1918 (Figure C). Inspired by these intriguing facts of Janet's, I am able to offer the following more detailed and contextualized story of our founding.

### The First Religious Orders in the Episcopal Church

Henry VIII closed down all religious Orders in the mid-sixteenth century, and it was only with the Oxford Movement in the 1830s that the Anglican Church began to recognize religious Orders. In the Episcopal Church in the United States, of those Order which have continued, the first religious Order to be founded was the Community of St. Mary in 1865 (New York), followed by the Society of St. John the Evangelist in 1870 (Boston), the Sisters of St. Margaret in 1873 (Boston), and the Community of St. John Baptist in 1874 (New York). In 1884, another Order was founded in New York, the Order of the Holy Cross. Thus the centers of American religious Orders up to 1884 were Boston and New York.

However, in the 1880s, religious Orders began to be established in the American heartland: in 1882, in the Diocese of Fond du Lac in Wisconsin, Bishop Charles Grafton helped to establish the American Congregation of Saint Benedict (now The Benedictine Order of St John the Beloved), and, in 1898, the Community of the Transfiguration was established in the Cincinnati's West End in the parish of St. Luke's. The founder of the Community of the Transfiguration (C.T.), Eva Lee Matthews (Mother Eva Mary), was the sister of St. Luke's rector (The Rev. Paul Matthews). Bishop Boyd Vincent of



Avenue, is Bethany House founded by Mother Eva Mary and the Community of the Transfiguration in 1898. Also in Figure A, at 1627 Freeman Street, is the House of Our Lady Help of Christians founded by the Rev. Claude Crookston in 1917.

## Founding a Franciscan Religious Order

The religious Orders founded in the Episcopal Church in the United States from 1865 to 1898 seem largely based on Benedictine principles and sensibilities. However, in 1898, Graymoor Friary in Garrison New York was the site of the first Franciscan foundation in the Episcopal Church. The Franciscan sisters and friars of the Society of the Atonement with Fr. Paul and Sr. Lurana as their leaders created and publicized the *Week of Prayer for Christian Unity* (1908) still celebrated today. However, as part of their movement towards unity, this Episcopal Order advocated the primacy of the Roman pontiff. Such a position quickly became untenable, and the two friars, five sisters and ten tertiaries of this Order left the Episcopal Church in 1909 to join the Roman Catholic Church. (This was the third U.S. religious Order to transfer to the Roman Catholic Church (Peter Anson, *Call of the Cloister*, 1955, p. 594))

Figure A. Sanborn Insurance Maps of Cincinnati 204 and 205 (1904-1917) ([http://virtuallibrary.cincinnati.library.org/virtuallibrary/vl\\_maps.aspx?ResID=381](http://virtuallibrary.cincinnati.library.org/virtuallibrary/vl_maps.aspx?ResID=381))

the Diocese of Southern Ohio was intimately involved in their founding as suggested by the following from *Mother Eva Mary, C.T.: The Story of a Foundation* (1929):

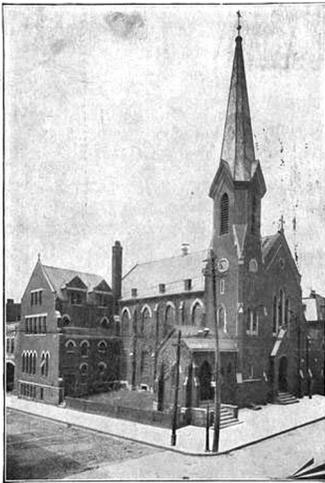
*It was her valiant Americanism, which finally won Bishop Vincent's cooperation. ... The Bishop had hesitated long about accepting Eva's offer to work in his diocese as a Religious and under life vows. He had endeavored to persuade her to become a deaconess, as that office appealed to him as scriptural. Their conversations were long and friendly, and he finally agreed to allow her to work out her plans for the Religious life under him if she on her part would recognize his authority by obedience to him as her diocesan. To this she readily agreed, and rented a house conveniently near to St. Luke's Church in order still to cooperate with her brother...*

In the map, Figure A, St. Luke's Church is in the upper right corner, and one and half blocks away at 1711 Freeman

Twenty miles further up the Hudson River, a Commissioned Lay Reader of the Diocese of New York, Claude Jansen Crookston, was probably familiar with Father Paul, Sr. Lurana, and their foundation. Moreover, when the Franciscan Order of the Atonement left the Episcopal Church, some men and women in New York formed a group to pray for the reformation of an Episcopal Franciscan Order. Nineteen-year-old Claude Crookston emerged as a leader in this group. From this time forward, young Claude Crookston seems to have begun a single-minded quest to refound a Franciscan religious Order in the Episcopal Church. Yet, very much akin to St. Francis's mistakes and detours as he slowly came to understand his call to "Rebuild My Church," so too Claude Crookston had many false starts, mistakes and detours as he worked to establish Franciscan religious Orders in the Episcopal Church. His final clerical mentor as a Commissioned Lay Reader in the Diocese of New York, Rev. John Marshall Chew, arranged for Crookston to journey *Continued on page 10*

## New Information On Part 1's Story Of Our Founding by Father Joseph (cont.)

south to Uniontown, Kentucky where Rev. Dr. Frederick Thompson, rector of St. John's Episcopal Church, had a school for ministry postulants. From Uniontown, Crookston matriculated at the University of the South in Sewanee Tennessee where he completed his undergraduate degree from 1910-1913. From Sewanee, Crookston went directly to General Theological Seminary back in New York. Somehow around this time, Crookston became an ordination candidate sponsored by the Missionary Diocese of Fond du Lac in Wisconsin where Bishop Grafton had earlier helped to establish the American Congregation of Saint Benedict. On behalf of Bishop Weller of Fond du Lac, Crookston was ordained as deacon by a Pennsylvania Bishop in St. Paul's Church, Overbrook, Pennsylvania (March 30, 1913).



S. LUKE'S CHURCH  
REV. EWALD HAUN, RECTOR  
FINDLAY AND BAYMILLER STS.  
CINCINNATI, OHIO

THE PUBLIC LIBRARY  
of Cincinnati  
and Hamilton Co.

Both St. Luke's Church and 1627 Freeman Avenue, House of Our Lady Help of Christians were demolished.

declined. (Dunstan, p. 219)

In 1915, Bishop Weller, Crookston's diocesan bishop, conferred with Crookston about his religious life plans—very much like Bishop Vincent of the Diocese of Southern Ohio urging Mother Eva Mary to consider religious alternatives. Bishop Weller encouraged Crookston to join the Order of the Holy Cross or the Society of St. John the Evangelist since Weller did not see the need for a new community. Crookston persisted in his vision of a new episcopal Franciscan Order (Williams, p. 154, yet within the year, he resigned his parish responsibilities in Tomahawk on account of illness.

## Leaving Wisconsin To See What Ohio and Tennessee Might Offer

At this point in Crookston's journey, one may observe a willful soul persisting in founding a Franciscan Order, yet his

persistence brought him only illness and physical maladies. Was he mistaking his personal timing of founding (chronos) with God's timing (kairos)?

At about the time that Crookston took ill and went on sick leave from his parish and the Diocese of Fond du Lac, his seminary roommate, Frank Gavin, became rector of St. Luke's Church, Cincinnati. From this very parish, the Community of the Transfiguration had been successfully founded seventeen years earlier. Crookston probably thought what better parish and diocese to launch a re-founding of Franciscan Orders in the US than here? So Crookston joined Gavin as an Assistant Rector that August. Within the year, however, something happened because Crookston received a letter of reprimand from Bishop Vincent concerning his practice of "reservation of the Sacrament." (Williams, p. 154) A strong objection to Reserving the Sacrament and a reprimand could have been expected from this Bishop (Bp. John McGill Krumm, *Flowing like a River* (1989)).

In St. Luke's parish register (Figure B) where Rev. Crookston signed in, the register reveals that he began his ministry as Assistant Minister on August 1, 1915, but ended it on October 4, 1915. It then reveals that he resumed his ministry as Assistant Minister on June 1, 1916. Thus there are eight months when he was gone from both his canonical diocese, Diocese of Fond du Lac, and from his duties in St.

ASSISTANT MINISTERS.		
NAME	BEGAN	TERMINATED
Claude Crookston, priest	Aug 1, 1915	October 4, 1915
	June 1, 1916	Jan 1, 1917

Figure B. Claude Crookston's two entries as Assistant Minister in the Parish Register of St. Luke's Church

Luke's parish in Cincinnati. A hint of where he was and what he was up to appears in the record of the 84<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention of the Diocese of Tennessee where it noted that he led Morning Prayer for the Diocesan Convention in Chattanooga on May 11, 1916. Perhaps the Rev. William C. Robertson was responsible for bringing Crookston to Tennessee.

The Rev. Robertson was called to Christ Church Chattanooga as their rector on December 8, 1900. Yet his "high" church services and sensibilities caused much parish discontent and calls for his resignation persisted for many years. (See Grady M. Long, *Notes Toward a History of Christ Church Parish 1900-1960* <http://christchurch.dioet.org/Church%20History/history-from-1900-to-1960.html>) In 1916, just at the time Crookston was absent from St. Luke's in Cincinnati, Robertson was in the process of helping Miss Jesse Tyler establish St. Gabriel's Convent. (Later in May 1918, Mother Mary Gabriel (the former Jesse Tyler) and Sister Mary Joseph would profess life vows at Christ Church, and found the Sisters of the Tabernacle. (Chuck Hamilton, *A Brief History of Christ Church, From its Founding in 1901 Up to the Present as of Spring 2015*) There is no record that Crookston was

Sewanee, Tenn., July 5, 1916.

THE RT. REV. R. H. WELLER, D. D.,  
FOND DU LAC, WIS.

My Dear Bishop:—

About a year ago I left active work in the diocese of Fond du Lac on account of illness. Since then I have lived in Cincinnati, O., and in Chattanooga, Tenn., and have celebrated the Holy Eucharist regularly on Sundays and Holy Days and usually at other times at the invitation of the parish clergy where I have been visiting. I have also preached from time to time and administered Sacraments as occasion and health permitted. I have not officiated regularly as an assistant priest or in any other capacity for any length of time and consequently have never asked for a license from the Ordinary.

My health is greatly improved and I hope, with the blessing of God, to be well in time.

Your faithful son,  
CLAUDE CROOKSTON.

*From Annual Proceedings, Diocese of Fond du Lac, 1916*

ever officially designated a clergy person associated with Christ Church Chat-

tanooga, but he was probably there to both witness and aid Robertson in the creation of this new religious Order. (This inability to specify his relationship with Christ Church can be partially explained by the fact that Grady M. Long, historian of the parish, claims that “from April 1915, to March 1920, no written records were available on Christ Church Parish.” (p. 18)) With such firsthand experience of founding a religious Order, Crookston returned to his duties on June 1, 1916 as Assistant Rector at St. Luke’s in Cincinnati.

### Crookston's First Attempt at Founding Franciscan Orders

While St. Luke’s Assistant Rector, on February 2, 1917, Rev. Crookston dedicated himself to a Franciscan vocation becoming Father Joseph. By that time, there were three other people in Cincinnati desiring to live a Franciscan life. They called upon a prayer group to keep a solemn novena as they sought guidance, and, even before the novena was finished, one of the women offered herself and a good-sized sum of money toward the creation of a convent if the Anglican Franciscan life could be started immediately. Thus in May 1917, a house at 1627 Freeman Avenue was rented, and three

While all this was happening on Freeman Avenue, the Rev. Frank Gavin, Fr. Joseph’s rector at St. Luke’s, evidently shared Crookston’s sense of a call to a religious Order, and left in November 1917 to enter the novitiate of Society of Saint John the Evangelist (SSJE) in Boston. That November Crookston began to look after Father Gavin’s parish becoming its Rector-in-Charge (Figure C) only to leave the parish and Cincinnati two months later in January 1918 because of a heart attack. (Williams, p. 155)

The non-residential Third Order Secular was established by the time Fr. Joseph left Cincinnati, but Bishop Boyd Vincent of the Diocese of Southern Ohio did not support Fr. Joseph’s attempt to form a residential 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Order. Why this happened is ambiguous. His opposition was partially the reaction of a Low Church bishop reacting to High Church practices (Bp. John McGill Krumm, *Flowing like a River* (1989)), but only twenty years earlier Bishop Vincent had supported the establishment of the Community of the Transfiguration that grew out of the same parish. Thus his opposition to Crookston may also have been an instance of Bishop Vincent being wary of another Order attempting to establish itself only two blocks away from the diocese’s supported Community of the Transfiguration. (In the final chapter of this book, the Community of the Transfiguration reappears in the story of this Province as offering a home in 1976 to one of the Province’s great healers and authors, Emily Gardiner Neal, who died there in 1989.)

Bishop Vincent had earlier tried to dissuade the COT’s foundress from creating a religious Order in the diocese, but eventually relented. He probably relented because Mother Eva Mary was the sister of St. Luke’s rector (1896-1906) (The Rev. Paul Matthews), then Dean of the Cathedral in Cincinnati (1906-1915), and finally elected as Bishop of the Diocese of New Jersey (1915-1937).

(Moreover, her father had been a U.S. Senator of Ohio and member of the U.S. Supreme Court.) Finally, in the negotiations, Mother Eva Mary had recognized Vincent’s authority over her and her Order as her Diocesan Bishop.

Compare all of that leverage to support Mother Eva Mary’s project of founding a religious Order with that of Crookston in 1917. He was only an Assistant Rector, not canonically-resident in the diocese, a strong

objection to Reserving the Sacrament and a reprimand could have been expected from this Bishop (*Flowing like a River* (1989)). Moreover, there is no evidence that Fr. Joseph offered the same recognition of Bishop Vincent’s authority over his Franciscan Orders as his Diocesan Bishop.

### The Respite and Re-focusing Offered by the SSJE

Crookston’s “heart attack” in January 1918 may have been a physical manifestation of his spiri- *Continued on page 12*

Name	Date	Name	Date
1. Louis Brown	May 19, 1894	Jan.	1894
2. Wm N. Barbak	May 21, 1894	May	1894
3. Carl Stewart Matthews	May 31, 1896	June	1900
4. Daniel Gardner Wells	Sept. 15, 1900	March 27,	1910
5. Gerald Auman	April 3, 1910		1912
6. Frank Gann	June 20, 1915	Nov. 1, 1917	
7. Claude Crookston, Rector-in-Charge	Jan. 1, 1917	Dec. 1917 - Jan. 1918	
8. Edmund C. Boggess	August 1, 1917	November 15, 1918	
9. Alfred W. Cooke	February 24, 1917	February 16, 1920	
9. Gerald H. Lewis	Feb. 23, 1920		

Figure C. Claude Crookston's Bracketed Entry as Rector-in-Charge in the Parish Register of St. Luke's

women began living a religious life there. This “House of Our Lady, Help of Christians” was blessed on the Feast of the Sacred Heart, June 15, 1917. At this benediction all the men and women who later began the three Orders of St Francis were gathered together. By the end of 1917, 18 men and women had become novices in the 3rd Order Secular.

## New Information On Part 1's Story Of Our Founding by Father Joseph (cont.)

tual exhaustion arising from his personal attempts to found Episcopal Franciscan Orders in the US. Perhaps his sense of timing was not God's timing. In any event, when Crookston left St. Luke's and the Diocese of Southern Ohio in January 1918, he followed his former seminary roommate, Frank Gavin, and spent eleven months (*Journal of the Annual Convention of the Diocese of Massachusetts*, 1918, p. 138) with the Society of Saint John the Evangelist (SSJE) in Boston. (*Episcopal Year 1969*, p. 208) Older members of the SSJE today suggest that Fr. Joseph stayed at the Boston Mission House consult Fr. Spence Burton about founding a Franciscan Order. They also suggest that he came to get an idea of what life in a small monastic community would be like.

These months in 1918 were the first time that Fr. Joseph had lived in a friary community of a religious Order, and his time here seems to have healed him physically and sharpened his sense of what an American religious Order in the entailed. In early 1919, Rev. Robertson of Chattanooga—who had finished the founding of the Sisters of the Tabernacle—invited Fr. Joseph to return to create a companion community of men. (Williams, p. 155) Father Joseph declined.

## This Time The Founding Works

Father Joseph's stay with the SSJE appears to have changed his mind on a number of points because very soon after Father Joseph reorganized the Third Order introducing a stricter Rule as part of the Poor Brethern of St. Francis of the American Congregation of Franciscans. (Only three novices transitioned to this new stricter Rule (later published in the 1924 *Bundle of Myrrh* manual). Many dropped out, though a number joined the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Orders as they were organized.) Father Joseph returned to Diocese of Fond du Lac where he resumed his duties in Tomahawk (the parish he had left in 1915) along with the parish in Merrill in May 1919. (Jones, McVean and Others, *History of Lincoln, Oneida, and Vilas Counties Wisconsin*. 1924) About this same time the Order of the Holy Cross established a House in the Diocese at Ripon, and the Sisters of the Holy Nativity established by Bishop Grafton continued their work in the diocese.

Father Joseph was joined by one of the Cincinnati tertiaries from 1917, and, in the spring of 1919, by a priest. These three men began a community life and, on Holy Cross Day 1919, Bishop Weller received them as postulants, and the life of the First Order began.

Four years previously, Weller had been reticent to have Rev. Crookston found a religious Order, but by 1919 that had changed. Weller had come to believe that "he will do a blessed work among our people in a poor mission field where the Catholic religious can only be propagated through devotion and self-sacrifice of some earnest priest." (Williams, 154-5)

## When Last We Left...in Part 1

This history is an **anthology** of the words of many TSSF members, and a **scrapbook** of pictures, diagrams and tables, with an emphasis on **flesh-and-blood stories**.

The first eight chapters use the leaders (mostly Ministers Provincial) to organize the historical information: Fr. Jospheh, Fr. Paul, John Scott, Kale King, Dee Dobson, Alden Whitney, and Anita Catron. The next four chapters use themes, projects or events that overlap the terms of individual Ministers Provincial: the integration of Brazil's Order of St. Francis into the Province of the Americas; the creation of the Safe Community and Conflict Resolution; our final act of independence from the First Order by the choosing of our own Bishop Protector, and the Canadian story of our Province. The final four chapters return to organizing on the basis of the Ministers Provincial terms of Masud Ibn Syedul-lah, Ken Norian, John Brockmann, and Tom Johnson. A final chapter celebrates the work of many of the authors of our Province.

Chapter 1 offered a macro-view of the Province's development by examining the distribution and concentration of TSF and TSSF members from 1926 to 2012. In general, the Province moved from a center of activity in the Midwest to a general distribution across the Province, across national boundaries, and with new centers of activity spread from East to West, and from North to South. The Third Order in this Province escaped from being an artifact of the "biretta belt" and spread into other expressions and experiences of the Anglican communion.

That New York (from 1926) and California (from 1935) continued as centers of tertiary activity was surely helped by the presence of the First Order brothers and sisters in these areas. In the same fashion, Wisconsin and Illinois saw diminished tertiary activity as the First and Second Orders moved.

Chapter 2 examined the era of 1917-1966 when Father Joseph was the leader and guiding spirit of the Order. This was a time prior to the formal combination of the TSF in the American Episcopal Church and TSSF in the Anglican Church. The formation of TSF in the American Episcopal Church is mostly told through Father Joseph's creation of a number of crucial documents: the *Bundle of Myrrh* manual for the Third Order in 1924, his *Pastoral Letter to Our Third Order from The Franciscan Monastery, Merrill, Wisconsin* in 1926, *The Little Book of the Rule* in 1929, and the introductory material to the *May 1935 Roster of the Third Order*.

Part 1 concluded by looking at Fellowship and Custodia Meetings. To Fr. Joseph, *Fellowship* meetings were "the smallest group of organization within the province, and corresponds somewhat to the monastery or friary of the Order of St. Francis, just as the *Custodia* corresponds to a custodia within a province, and the province corresponds to the ordinary provincial organization of the Order of St. Francis. A fellowship must have at least three members, and it is never to be a parish organization." From early on, Fr. Joseph urged Custodias to meet.

## History of TSSF, Province of the Americas 1917—2017

### Part 2 The Era of Father Joseph *cont.* (1930-1960).

R. John Brockmann, Provincial Historian

#### The London Custodia: 1935-1967

The London Custodia of the American Province continued for 32 years and had as many as 30 members in the 1950s. When TSF and TSSF officially merged in 1968, the names and records of the London Custodia (Fellowship) completely vanished. The 1967 TSF Directory records that a majority of the Custodia had over ten years in the Order and two had 32 years in the Order.

For most of its existence, the English Custodia was consistently among the top five most populous areas of the Order. In fact, whenever the *Little Chronicle* would comment on organized custodias (fellowships), they would mention only New York, Los Angeles, and London (February #5, 1929-30). From 1935 to 1950 the Rev. Desmond Morse-Boycott directed the Custodia, but, in 1950, passed the leadership to the Rev. George Hall. Like the rest of the Province of the Americas, it was a woman who was first professed and started the English Custodia, Mabel Julia Mary Pinco. Father Joseph traveled to England in 1933 and was a guest at a meeting of the English Custodia.

The English Custodia consistently maintained very high levels of longevity or faithfulness. From 1935 to 1948, 66% remained faithful; from 1948 to 1955, 75% remained faithful; from 1955 to 1960, 70%; and from 1960 to the last records in 1967, 52% remained faithful.

The motivation for such faithfulness in the Fellowship in a foreign country can be gleaned from letters written in the early 1940s to a Father Hurst that have been kept in the Lambeth Palace Library and Archives (Lambeth Palace Library: TSSF/8/6). The first letter was written by Mabel Julia Mary Pinco, the first of the English Custodia to be professed in TSF:

*You say you like to hear how our movement came into being and that you gather we have connections with the Episcopal church in America. We have more than that, we only exist as a Custodia of the Third Order of the American Congregation of Franciscans, and the way we, the English Custodia, came into existence was as follows. As you will know, a complete Franciscan Congregation should have the Three Orders: the Friars, the Poor Clares, and the Tertiaries and the last may have both religious and seculars members, though not many Congregations in our Communion have both, I believe. I went out to America some years ago to join the Poor Clares, but my health broke down and it was decided I ought not to remain in America.*

*Under those circumstances, I had of course to give up the hope of being a Poor Clare, but the Fr. Minister [Father Joseph] sent me back to England as a Franciscan Oblate [Third Order member who took a vow of celibacy], with the understanding that I might do what I could to spread interest in our work. With the help of Fr. Morse-Boycott, a friend of many years, we were able to start our little Custodia, which is very small, and will I think always remain so, as naturally English people who are drawn to St. Francis prefer to join one of the English Congregations. (May 3, 1941)*

A novice, Jane Mary, who lived in the United States during the World War II wrote to Father Hurst to explain how the American Third Order is distinct from the English Third Order:

*One big difference is that American Tertiaries are not allowed to report on money or almsgiving—that is considered to be part of the “Inner Rule.” Paradoxically enough, I find that it makes me more scrupulous in these things—rather like one’s school days and being “put on one’s honour.” The other great difference is the wearing of a habit, and the taking of a religious name...the Little Habit consists of a scapular, about four inches square, and a cord, with three knots—both of which are of obligation to be worn under the secular clothing, except under special dispensation. The Greater Habit is a black gown, with a long white scapular and cord, which holds it round the waist. This may not be worn except at Franciscan gatherings, and when visiting the monastery, or otherwise when special permission is granted, but one has the privilege to be buried in it, if one wishes.*



Rev. Desmond Morse-Boycott

In addition to these letters are a number of preserved newsletters from the English Custodia, *Tertiary Tidings* (Lambeth Palace Library: TSSF/4/2). These newsletters produced between 1938 and Spring 1941 not only are the earliest Custodia/Fellowship newsletters of the Province, but they also capture first hand the experience of being a Third Order Franciscan in the midst of war. (Complete copies of these six newsletters are available in the *Historical Documents* section of the TSSF website.) However, here are some highlights (Although most issues are issued “under the authority of the Rev. Desmond Morse-Boycott” (Br. Anthony) and reviewed and approved by him as Father Provincial (Father Minister’s [Father Joseph’s] *Continued on page 14*

**History of TSSF, Part 2 (cont.)**

representative in England), most of the writing was done by Mabel Julia Mary Pinco (Sr. Mary Francesca).

*St. Francis-tide dawns upon a troubled world. On every side the nations are aggressive, menacing, obsessed by fear which is the antithesis of love. Hatred is generally considered to be that, but surely fear is the creator of hatred and many other foul growths of our national life? But during the week of great anxiety through which we have just passed many must have been struck by the extraordinary appropriateness of the gospel appointed for Monday's Mass (Feast of St. Januarius and His Companions): "When ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars, be not troubled, neither let thoughts arise in your hearts (thoughts of fear, distrust and discord). 'Nation shall rise against nation—but the end is not yet'. What that end may be none can say, but at least two salient facts seem emerging from the welter. First, that practically no civilized nation desires war, and secondly, that in England and doubtless in other countries also, there is an increasing belief in the power of prayer to control our destinies. The last is surely an immense spiritual gain, and I do beg all to do everything in your power to foster this spirit, both in yourselves and others."*

As *No. 6 Summer 1939* was published, a War Powers Act was approved by Parliament; the Royal Navy was put on a war footing, all leaves were cancelled, and the Naval and coast defense reserves were called up:

*"T.O.S.F." This strange unintelligible title came to my notice through one of our brothers at the C. A. Training College, and I was told it was a Third Order secular for men and women who, though not called to the monastic life, desired to carry out as far as they could the ideas of St. Francis in their daily life. So I prayerfully decided to offer myself for membership, being much inspired by the example of two members I knew personally. These two men seemed to remain quite undaunted by the sneers and rebuffs of people with adverse opinions; carrying on quietly in the true spirit of Franciscanism, fighting unwearyingly in the battle against evil and striving always to draw men and women from the dark abyss of sin into that glorious Lovelight of the Sacred Heart of God. How could I resist such a wonderful call—the call which every Franciscan has received, the call which our Seraphic Father heard and obeyed. But the joy of that wonderful vocation cannot be complete unless we pass on that message of love to our fellowmen. Such is the contest of the appeal made by the Editor in the Spring No of T. T.—that each Tertiary will make some effort to win souls to the fellowship of the League of the Sacred Heart. Our Franciscan Rule teaches us that we should be "in the world, but not of the world" and there is a divine inspiration in these words. An inspiration to read the path*

*which leads us at last to our goal—into the Presence and Love of the Sacred Heart of Our Blessed Redeemer.*

As the *No. 11 Autumn 1940* "Foreword" was written by Rev. Desmond Morse-Boycott (Br. Anthony), Germany's Luftwaffe began bombing British civilian centers in the Battle of Britain. Thousands of pilots and aircrews engaged in battle in the skies above Britain, Germany, and the English Channel, each side losing more than 1,500 aircraft by the end of the year. Prime Minister Winston Churchill, speaking of the British pilots said, "Never in the field of human conflict was so much owed by so many to so few." Rev. Desmond Morse-Boycott's St. Mary's of the Angels Song School was destroyed by fire:

*You will be glad to know that St. Mary-of-the-Angels Song School is still in being, despite its disastrous fire, and that a release of timber has been made by the Authorities, sufficient at least to roof the undamaged "Wing". We have a temporary lease of a house nearby the estate, and spend most of our nights all of a bunch in a sort of fortified coal-cellar. Our boys are serene and happy and daily defeat the nuisance-value of Mr. Schicklgruber by learning history or singing Offices in their shelter. We sometimes get an early Mass in the small hours, in-between raids. In the midst of life we are in death, but get many laughs. I do not know if it is Franciscan mirth, but for some unknown reason all the family regard my clambering into an alleged bed on a table in the shelter as the evening's star turn. Certain "Angels" sleeping under it do not appreciate my suggestion that their shelter is thereby reinforced, and they make dark remarks about what may happen if the table collapses.*

*I ought to have told you that Schicklgruber is Hitler's real name. I feel a comfortable assurance that no man with such a name can possibly "down" the British Empire. I have lately been talking with a rather pessimistic priest who says we are being punished for our national sins, and we are the most immoral nation in the world, and full of insincerity. Indeed we have previous sins of which to repent, but I told him that at any rate THIS was an attack by Berlin and Rome on Bethlehem; that we are not a nation that DELIGHTS in war; and that, without self-esteem, we could say that we had some of the human virtues without which God obviously can't get His world to work.*

*Our word is as good as our bond, even when it is to our great disadvantage (e.g., we are not using necessary ports in Eire; we went to the help of Poland, however ineffectually). Axis nations make treaties with the express intention of breaking them when it suits their purpose. We love freedom and fair-play. We do not machine-gun women and children. We are not embarking upon reprisals for the bombing of London. We know how to laugh. We acknowledge God by days of prayers.*

*It is a sinister fact that reputedly Catholic nations are arrayed against us. Italy, Austria, parts of Catholic Germany, near-Catholic France. Spain will join our enemies actively just as soon as she thinks we are certain to lose. "Where the carcass is..."*

*General Franco, who I believe has since been blest by His Holiness the Pope, put Madrid through two years of the torment we are now experiencing ourselves. Most of us went on our ways indifferent. (The thought of how little I myself realized it, stabs me).*

*There must, therefore, be lonely souls in the Latin Communion who are looking for the coming of one with the spirit and power of St. Francis, an Elisha to follow an Elijah, though sundered by the centuries. Meanwhile, to each of us in the Franciscan family is give one small lamp to be kindled and kept brightly burning. See to your one.*

As No. 12 Christmas 1941 was being written, on December 29-30, German aircraft blanketed incendiary bombs over London setting both banks of the Thames ablaze and killing almost 3,600 British civilians. December 29 saw the widespread destruction not just of civilian targets, but of great portions of London's cultural relics (the Old Bailey, Guildhall, and eight churches designed by Christopher Wren). Fifteen thousand separate fires were set by the bombs.

*I must begin this new Issue of T.T. with an apology for its late appearance. As you know, we always try to get out the winter number in time to convey our Christmas greetings to you all, but this year both Fr. Antony and myself have had to change residence just before Christmas. Fr. Antony, having to remove a good deal more than just himself, finds it impossible to do more than send you his love and blessing through me, and leaves T.T. entirely in my hands for this issue. To Fr. Anthony's loving wishes I add my own praying that the New Year may bring you every blessing of the Sacred Heart, and may its close find us no longer in the midst of the horrors of war.*

*That is the thing we must all long and pray for, and yet we know there are worse things than even in its most horrible aspects we have seen it during the last few months. It is the forces of evil we have to fight, and we can sometimes only fight evil by suffering from it. Suffering is not in itself evil nay, it is forever redeemed and grown triumphant by the Cross. And if this blessed Christmastide is in so many homes overshadowed by that Cross, let us remember that the first Christmastide was only joyful for those few loving and simple souls who had eyes to see, and that the outward circumstances preceding the Birth of Jesus Christ were those of great hardship and difficulty. Mary and Joseph had a rough experience to go through before the ineffable joy of the wondrous Birth. So on this first day of the New Year, though we know not what it may bring forth, let us thank God and take courage. Let us look forward with eager hope to the future; let us solemnly rededicate*

*ourselves here and now to His service in whatever manner He may call us. So shall 1941 and every succeeding year we have to live be blest; so shall the mighty purpose of which even now we begin dimly to discern the working in the chaos which surrounds us find its echo in our own hearts and enable us to fulfill our vocation to the end.*

Mabel Julia Mary Pinco, Sister Mary Francesca, the first of the English Custodia to be professed in TSF and the editor of their newsletter, died five months after this issue on May 10, 1942.

## English Custodia Leader for 15 Years: Desmond Lionel Morse-Boycott (Professed 1932)

From *The Little Chronicle* (December 1930-31)  
*Our American tertiaries follow with interest any news of the London Custodia under the care of the Rev. Father Morse-Boycott. His plans to develop a choir school in connection with St. Mary's Somers Town, seems to be working out gradually. Every tertiary should give him the support of constant prayer. It is to be hoped that all who can do so will buy his new book, Ten Years in a London Slum. This details the magnificent work being done there for God."*

### From "Official Chichester Cathedral Website"

*Fr. Desmond, as he was known far and wide, served his first curacy at the Church of St. Mary's, Somers Town, which is situated in the King's Cross, Euston, area of London.*

*In those days there was a terrible amount of real poverty, particularly within the parish in which Fr. Desmond served. He would venture out at night and mingle with young lads on street corners, many of whom he found playing cards and gambling. Often he put himself at physical risk trying to stop the gambling by the young and the more adult members of*



Picture from *Ten Years in a London Slum*

(continued on page 16)

**History of TSSF Part 2 (cont.)**

the population. His intervention worked to varying degrees although this never deterred him. The police in those days had hardly any success in stopping street gambling for there was little else for the men and youngsters to do. Fr. Desmond could be very persistent and persuasive, influencing the young and gaining the respect of the old. He encouraged some of the lads to partake of whatever food he could spare at the time. Coming as they did from poor homes where food was at a premium, such an offer was extremely popular. These boys eventually became the foundation of Fr. Desmond's choir and school.

After five years working in the parish, Fr. Desmond decided that the majority of the boys needed educating to a much higher standard. With this in mind, he resigned as curate at St. Mary's in order to found his school and, from then on, his life became one long struggle. He appealed for donations far and wide with some success. His first home was "under the pavement" in Somers Town. This was where the school began and was called the St. Mary of the Angels Song School. Those boys who joined Fr. Desmond's school were given the opportunity to be educated and to be trained to sing in his choir. Because of Fr. Desmond's love of music, the boys were also encouraged to play various instruments under a professional tutor.



A contribution box for St. Mary of the Angels Song School—note the boys singing in the windows. Coins would be deposited down the chimney

**“The Boys Who Sang Like Angels”**

UKAuthors.com 4/10/2013

What would you do to improve the lives of disadvantaged children from 1920s London?

Truth is much, much stranger than fiction. If you were a priest in a poverty-stricken area of London in the 1920s, how would you improve the lives of young boys living in slums? Father Desmond Morse-Boycott had his own solution.

Start a public school in a cellar. Turn them into choristers.

The priest and his wife had started by running a lad's club, first in their house, and then in a cellar in Somers Town, a poor area in central London. So far, so unremarkable. But then Morse-Boycott, in his account, casually explained that they had begged money to send a number of the boys to public schools.

Why? I doubt the board schools gave anything more than a basic education, but there were grammar schools and other institutions. I think the theory was that the boys would return during the holidays and spread new ideals gleaned on the playing fields of some select establishment.

Not surprisingly, this sometimes failed. It was "a heavy risk." So he took the idea a step further. "Why not turn our underground Centre into a little Public School itself?"

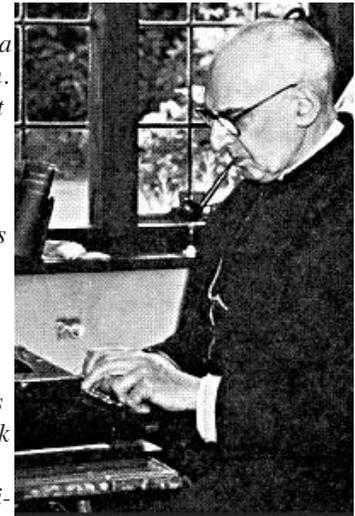
And he did. The St. Mary-of-the-Angels Song School was founded in 1932, first as a day, and then as a residential, school. Morse-Boycott managed to raise enough money to keep it going, with himself in charge and his gallant wife as Matron. In a more relaxed age the fact that "My knowledge of school-mastering was nil" was not deemed relevant.

I can't help thinking this approach leaves a lot of poor people outside the school doors, such as females and those of us with voices like crows. But Father Desmond seems to have been committed and dedicated, and the school thrived. The boys learned to sing like angels, and the choir became renowned, performing in cathedrals and churches throughout Britain, and touring Europe.

**February 1950 and 1959 (Little Chronicle)**

Father Morse-Boycott, by now famous for his founding in 1931 and directing the St. Mary's of the Angels Song School, had to give up his leadership of this Custodia of the American Province. *The Little Chronicle* went on to explain (in the February 1959 edition) that he started this school "to take boys out of the London slums, give them an education, and make them into a well-trained choir which could be called upon at any time to provide proper music for Church services in any place. The school has cared for and helped into life 268 boys, 22 men have been helped into the priesthood, and 3 have become professional musicians. The choir has traveled 106,286 miles in its tours of professional work."

Morse-Boycott died August 9, 1979. In addition to the *Ten Years* book, Father Morse-Boycott also wrote many other books with an emphasis on the Oxford Movement including: *The Secret Story of the Oxford Movement*; *Lead, Kindly*



*Light; Studies of the Saints and Heros of the Oxford Movement; They Shine Like Stars; A Tramping Parsons Message; Thirty-One Practical Sermons; Pilgrimage of Song; The Great Crimes of the Bible; Fields of Yesterday; The Pilgrim's Way; and A Tapestry of Toil.*

This little pocket size, 4-fold booklet demonstrates how Father Morse-Boycott integrated his TSF life with his work with the choir boys at St. Mary's.

**The Third Order of Saint Francis.  
London Custody of the American  
Congregation of Franciscans.**

He adapted the TSF Rule and prayers to fit his elementary school pupils.

For example, his boy's Franciscan Rule included

- no smoking until 16,
- to go to bed in good time,
- to take care of clothes, and
- to be chivalrous.



Saint Mary of the Angels.

## A RULE OF LIFE.

- 1—To say my morning and evening prayers.
- 2—To say Grace before and after meals.
- 3—To deny myself something on Fridays and never, on that day, to go to the pictures or any entertainment, unless obliged to do so.
- 4—To refrain from smoking until I am sixteen, and thereafter to be moderate in the enjoyment of tobacco.
- 5—To make a private confession daily.
- 6—To confess before a Priest at least once a month.
- 7—To attend Mass at least twice on weekdays.
- 8—To make my Communion at least once a week.
- 9—To meditate daily (e.g., by spending a few minutes with my Bible, or Rosary, or at least by saying the Angelus).
- 10—To pray daily for others.
- 11—To give to God one-tenth of my pocket-money.
- 12—To avoid all quarrels. To be a peace-maker. To do at least one daily act of charity out of love for God, even though it be no more than to throw a crumb to a bird.
- 13—To plan each night when I shall get up the next morning, and to get up to it.

- 14—To go to bed in good time.
- 15—To be careful not to waste money, and to keep a strict account of what I have and spend.
- 16—To answer letters without delay.
- 17—To take care of clothes, and not to be in love with finery.
- 18—To be chivalrous and courteous.
- 19—To be careful in the friendships I enter into, lest they draw me away from God, or distract me in my work for Him.



### Solemn Days for Franciscans.

- April 16.—Solemnity of St. Francis.  
 May 24.—Translation of St. Francis.  
 July 16.—Canonization of St. Francis.  
 Sept. 17.—The Stigmata of St. Francis.  
 Oct. 3.—VIGIL OF ST. FRANCIS. (A day of Fasting.)  
 " 4.—OUR SERAPHIC FATHER, ST. FRANCIS.  
 Dec. 12.—The Invention of St. Francis.



### A Prayer.

O GOD, Who by the merits of blessed Francis dost increase Thy Church with a new offspring: grant, we beseech Thee, that after his pattern we may learn to despise all things earthly and ever to rejoice in the partaking of Thy heavenly bounty. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.



- 1—A *postulant* must essay to keep the simple rule for at least three months, and furnish a monthly report to the Director, as do the Novices and Tertiaries. The postulancy is designed to show the postulant whether he has a vocation (i.e. desire and fitness) for the life of the Third Order.
- 2—When the postulant is admitted to the Noviciate, he takes his first definite step in the Franciscan life. He is "clothed," being given the first Habit (a cord and a scapula), which must ever be worn, and a new name, by which he is known in the Order (selected in honour of a saint). He remains a Novice for at least a year and a day.
- 3—After that time, if he so desire, he may be admitted (at the discretion of the Director) to *profession*. This is not a taking of vows, nor does the profession bind one to observe the Rule (in this case the full Rule as set forth in the *Little Book of the Rule*) under pain of sin. But it fixes the Tertian permanently as a member of the Franciscan family, and entitles him to the spiritual privileges thereof for eternity. Wherefore none should be professed as Tertian without a deep desire for the honour, and a firm intention to observe the Franciscan Rule always. At the profession the full Habit is granted, to be worn as the Director shall approve.

### THE FRANCISCAN ROSARY. (The Crown of Our Lady's Joys)

1st Joy: Annunciation. 2nd: The Visitation. 3rd: The Nativity. 4th: Adoration of the Magi. 5th: The Finding in the Temple. 6th: The Resurrection. 7th: Crowning of Our Lady in Heaven.

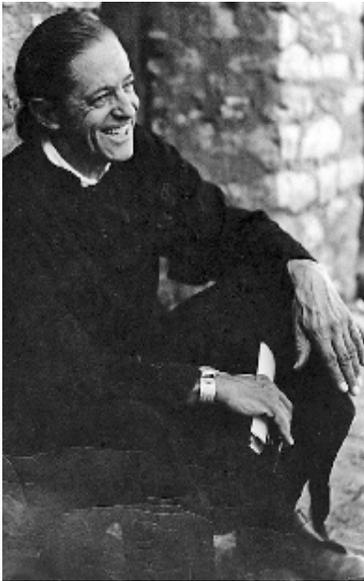
After the seventh decade add two Aves to make 72 in all, the traditional age of Our Lady. Then a Peter and Ave for Church unity.

(continued on page 18)

## History of TSSF Part 2 (cont.)

HYMN TO ST. FRANCIS, OUR SERAPHIC FATHER.

- 1 Blessed Francis, holy Father,  
Now our hearts to thee we raise,  
As we gather round thine altar,  
Pouring forth our hymn of praise.  
Bless thy children, holy Francis,  
Who thy mighty help implore,  
For in heaven thou remainest  
Still the father of the poor.
- 2 By thy love, so deep and burning,  
For the Saviour crucified,  
By the tokens which he gave thee  
On thy hand, and feet, and side:  
Bless thy children, holy Francis,  
With those wounded hands of thine,  
From thy glorious throne in heaven,  
Where resplendently they shine.
- 3 Humble follower of Jesus,  
Likened to him in thy birth,  
From thy tender youth despising,  
For his sake, the gods of earth,  
Make us love the priceless virtue  
By our hidden God esteemed;  
Make it valued, holy Francis,  
By the souls of the redeemed.
- 4 In thine own beloved Assisi  
Thou didst stir men's hearts to love,  
Teaching them that holy possession  
Was the road to heaven above.  
Bless thy children, holy Francis,  
Who thy mighty help implore,  
For in heaven thou remainest  
Still the father of the poor.
- 5 Teach us, also, dear St. Francis!  
How to mourn for every sin;  
May we walk in thy dear footsteps  
Till the crown of life we win.  
Bless thy children, holy Francis,  
With those wounded hands of thine,  
From thy glorious throne in heaven,  
Where resplendently they shine.



### H. Baxter Liebler: Tertiary Apostle to the Navajos (Professed 1926)

From the January 1980  
*Franciscan Times*

In the last newsletter we heard from Baxter Liebler, who said that he was retiring "a little more" from his work at Hat Rock Valley Retreat Center [Utah]. Fr. Liebler has been blessed with many long and fruitful years in the

service of Our Lord, but one thing he doesn't seem to be able to do is retire!

After spending 25 years founding and building St. Savior's Church in Old Greenwich, Connecticut, Fr. Liebler came to Utah, where, in 1943, he fulfilled the dream of a lifetime by founding St. Christopher's Mission to the Navajo at Bluff Utah. He established St. Christopher's Mission in a log-con-

structed cabin, and it became the first medical facility to treat tuberculosis and trachoma among the Navajo in Utah.

Another 25 years later, in 1966, he and three of his staff members retired together to a spot they named Hat Rock Valley Retreat Center saying that they were "retreatants from years of labor." At Hat Rock Valley Retreat Center, Fr. Liebler has continued his work with the Navajos.

When asked how he became a Franciscan in the first place, and how it has figured in his life, he sent this reply:

*For a person who has not kept a diary, except for a few straggling weeks at a time, reminiscences are easy enough, but the fixing of dates is a difficult matter. When I am asked when I became a Tertiary of St. Francis, the answer does not come easily.*

*I do recall a deep devotion to St. Francis, our Blessed Father, from soon after my conversion to Jesus Christ, which was during my first year in college (1907-08). After I had been a priest for six or more years (I was made a priest on St. Francis' Day, 1914, by the Bishop's choice!) I read in some church papers about an effort to set up a Franciscan Order in the Episcopal Church. I noted that the founder was classmate in seminary of a man who had been my classmate and roommate in college, and I asked him what he thought of the venture. I recall his precise words: "Anything that is associated with Claude Crookston is of God; fear it not!" Such words from a classmate are not to be taken lightly!*

*When I became rector of St. Paul's Church in Riverside, Connecticut, where I had been confirmed in 1908 and married in 1914, I invited Fr. Joseph to the parish to preach a mission, which he gladly did.*

*While he was staying with us, I asked him about the Third Order. He gave me an outline of the Rule. I asked if he would accept me as a postulant. He immediately said, "I'll enter you as a novice—you don't have to be a postulant"—which he proceeded to do.*

*Discussing the rule with him, I found that I was already following a self-imposed rule, which, except for the periodic reports, was the Rule for Tertiaries. He was delighted with this, and released me from the necessity of writing the periodic reports except when I felt I needed help.*

*Years later, having realized the poverty of my meditations, I asked him for advice. Foremost among his suggestions was to start writing them. This I did, and I still enjoy reading my *Anima Christi, Meditations on the Prayer of St. Ignatius*. It was published in 1925, and a copy is on my bookshelf within easy reach as I type!*

*While pastor of two shore lands parishes—Riverside and Sound Beach (now known as Old Greenwich)—I*

*frequently took groups of parishioners to Little Portion, across the Long Island Sound in a borrowed motorboat, to the great edification and enjoyment of the people as well as the Friars!*

*Those days have gone, but I can still, as I near 90, say the offices of the Seraphic Breviary, and pray especially for all who love and follow our Blessed Father Francis.*

### **From the Epiphany-tide 1983 *Franciscan Times***

The Rev. Harold Baxter Liebler, senior Tertiary, Society of St. Francis, died last fall [November 21, 1982. He was professed for 56 years.]

The Rev. Harold Baxter Liebler, an Episcopal priest who devoted much of his life to helping Navajo Indians, is dead at 92. He was called by the Navajos 'the one with the long hair who drags his garment.' He discarded the notion that Indians must renounce their traditional beliefs to convert and he tried to interpret Christian religion in terms Indians could use in their life. He baptized 2,000 Navajos in 40 years.

He came to southeastern Utah nearly 40 years ago to establish St. Christopher's Mission, and later started Hat Rock Valley Retreat near Oljeto, where he has lived since 1966. He was known for his work in improving sanitary and health conditions among Navajos in Monument Valley.

Liebler was ordained in 1914 in Brooklyn, NY and served as curate of St. Luke's Church in New York City and rector of St. Paul's Church in Riverside, Conn. In 1918, he founded St. Savior's Church in Old Greenwich, Conn., and served there nearly 25 years. He became interested in the plight of the Indians when he heard a fellow priest discuss Indian missions. He studied the Navajo language and culture and in 1942 took a trip west and rode a horse into southeastern Utah.

"This area had not been evangelized at all, and only touched briefly by travelling Methodist missionaries," he said in a 1975 interview. In 1943 he resigned from St. Savior's and moved to Bluff.

"I actually spoke very little Navajo when I arrived in Bluff," so he kept his conversations short, he said. He later learned Indians would ask one another, "What sort of white man is this that talks like a Navajo but only says a few words and then won't say anything more?"

### **From the January 1956 *St. Christopher's Newsletter***

One of the Christmas cards that gave us a good laugh was one done in doggerel verse, and concluding thus: "P.S. After all the riot, don't you love the peace and quiet?" because the riot of Christmas had hardly subsided before some real excitement came.

It was a typical St. Christopher's Mission Christmas. We

had movies the night before, while Fr. Liebler "sat," as is the duty of priests before the great festivals. In the morning there was an early Mass, well attended, followed later by the High Mass which taxed the capacity of the church—well over 200 by a conservative estimate. Many more would have come in, but also many more were on hand just for the fun and the food and the gifts (let the innocent cast stones if they will). The customary archery contest again showed the younger men as not lacking in skill and courage, although the prize went to a "Hosteen." Meantime Brother Juniper and his helpers were busily putting the final touches on a delicious dinner of elk meat (thanks to the Fish and Game Commission), beans and bread and cake (thanks to Vitakist). Well over 400 people were your guests and our, and at least 30 or 40 who came late were not sent away empty. There was candy for all, and then gifts for the children—we had to draw the line at 14 years of age. It was a happy occasion, and only a few of the men felt it necessary to imitate their White brothers in celebrating with spirits; even these were less obnoxious than in previous years. All in all, it was a happy Christmas, with the emphasis placed where it should be—a joyous thanksgiving to God for the Gift of His Son. So, weary but glad, we settled down for the "peace and quiet."

Crack of dawn—nay earlier, three of us went to San Juan Bautista at Montezuma Creek, where "on the Feast of Stephen" we sang Mass for an unusually large congregation at about 9:30, baptized seven Navajos, and got back about dark. Early Tuesday morning the excitement began.

A young man who seldom visits the Mission rode in on his horse. In true Navajo style, he stood around; in answer to inquiries he "just happened in," but before long he broke down and said that Mrs. Constable's newborn baby was frightfully sick, and had been for four days; medicine men had sung over her to no effect, and if we would go to the river bank she would bring the baby over on a horse. We lost no time—turned on the red light of our "ambulance" and ignored speed limits, Met Mrs. Constable, riding towards the Mission, baby on cradleboard held before her on the saddle; the horse was quickly turned loose, and the baby was under oxygen in less time than it takes to tell it.

Obviously this was a case beyond our feeble facilities. Fortunately the telephone in Bluff was working; the cooperative sheriff in the County Seat called Fort Defiance, and in a few hours the hum of a plane was heard. Meantime our oxygen had given out, and a fresh tank had been flown in from nearby (75 miles by air) Cortez, Colorado. The Cortez plane landed on the gravel road above Cow Canyon; the Fort Defiance plane landed on the road west of Cottonwood Wash. (We had then no practical landing field at Bluff.) The baby was turned over to the Navajo nurse who came with the plane, and in minutes they were on their way to the Medical Center, 100 air miles to the south.

*(continued on page 20)*

**History of TSSF Part 2 (cont.)**

Next day Carolyn and Catherine took a full load of patients to the hospital at Fort Defiance—not emergency cases for the most part, just broken legs and things like that needing attention—by the old-fashioned, primitive medium of the automobile.

It doesn't seem possible that so many emergencies could be crammed into a few days, nor can anybody tell how many lives were saved by promptly popping patients into the oxygen tent. Our future hospital, not yet formally opened for use, has actually been utilized more than it should. On New Year's Day two separate trips had to be made to Shiprock, and the following day another: 450 miles in all. We had to call on the local deputy sheriff for help at least once, and his car was broken down. Epiphany had come and gone before the pace slowed to normal. It all makes us realize that we are spending a great deal of time and money in travel. When our clinic gets really under way, we hope we can cut down a lot of this.

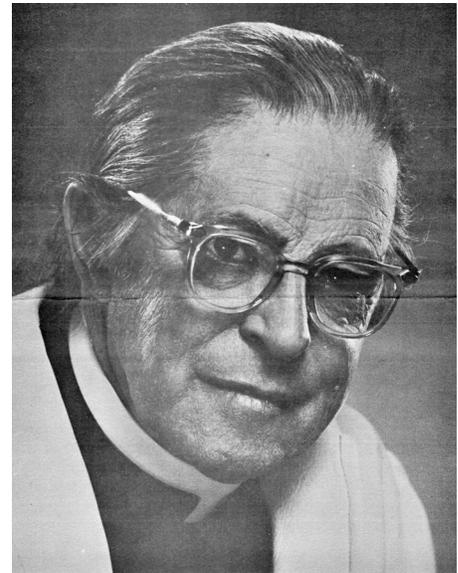
The great Chief White Horse has gone before us. Readers of our Newsletter back in the mimeograph days may recall how he rode in with twenty or more of his descendants for the marriage of a relative near here. Most of them attended our daily services. White Horse himself came and was deeply impressed. Mary Rose Allen styled him "handsomest man on the Reservation" and she was not far wrong. He asked us to come out to Montezuma Creek and hold services there. At that time we were just getting started here at Bluff, and it was not easy to get away, but before long three of us went, horseback, carrying all our camp equipment; we took two days finding the place from instructions. Had we been willing to let down our standards, we could have baptized fifty or more Navajos at that time—but we had determined to test and try all candidates and see to it that they were adequately instructed. After that, we made several trips, with equal enthusiasm on the part of the People, and when the trader gave us two acres of land we started to build our school and chapel, "San Juan Bautista, at Montezuma Creek, in the heart of the White Horse country. For three years Father Botelho taught school, and conducted services, tirelessly instructing the People in the Faith. Several of White Horse's great-grandchildren, who later came to our school here at St. Christopher's, were baptized, and only last spring and summer some others of his descendants. In October he announced himself ready, and, on the 30th, he was solemnly baptized, surrounded by numerous progeny.

It was his last visit to the church—he was then barely able to mount a burro, let alone walk. A month later, at his home, he received his First Holy Communion; on St. Stephen's Day his Viaticum. His son-in-law brought the news of his imminent death "White Horse, he call all his relations and he told them 'I'm gonna die' he said, 'and so somebody go and tell Father come here and help me and put me under the

ground, God's way,' he said. So, I'm here, and, now, you come, please, now." Miners' bulldozers have widened and smoothed the old primitive road that used to take hours, and the jeep brought Father Liebler to Montezuma Creek in less than an hour. By sundown all was done as the Chief would have wanted it done. Here was a man of whom we can be certain that baptismal innocence carried him through his Christian life. May he rest in peace, and soon be admitted to the blessed company of those who like himself have washed their robes in the Blood of the Lamb, and at the Throne of Grace pray earnestly for the conversion of his People.

After the burial we gathered in the hogan. There was some talk among the unbaptized which implied the existence of a state of *ch'iindi-the taboo* that surrounds everything connect-

ed with a Navajo death. The widow spoke up briskly: "Didn't you hear what Father told us? When one is baptized, and the soul is in grace, there is no *ch'iindi*, There is no need to fear, all is peace." There was no contradiction; tentative assent was indicated by grunts of "aan, aan." Truly, "*perfect* love casteth out fear."



**Five Tertiary Recollections of the Father Joseph Era: Lucy Pierce (Professed 1946), Mary Alice White (Professed 1961), Caroline Banks (Professed 1963), Claire Linzel (Professed 1961), Marie Webner (Professed 1953), and C. David Burt**

**Lucy Pierce (Professed 1946)**

*Franciscan Times Fall 1998*

I was born in 1924, and grew up in Gambier, Ohio, home of Kenyon College and Bexley Seminary where my father taught. I went to high school at Margaret Hall in Versailles, Kentucky, run by the Sisters of St. Helena, and to college during World War II at Western Reserve in Cleveland. I met my husband, Nicholas Pierce who went to Nashotah, and, after his ordination, moved with him and our children to Staten Island, then to Ferrell, PA, then back to Staten Island, then to Milton, Massachusetts, Pekin, Illinois, and finally to Peoria, Illinois where we have lived since 1965. In one of

these places one or another of our seven children joined our travels.

When we moved to Illinois, I began teaching 1st grade and ended up teaching high school special education classes. Nick worked at Keystone Steel Company and did supply work at parishes around the diocese. I retired in 1989, and Nick a few years later although he still does supply work occasionally.

My husband was the first one interested in the Third Order, and we started off together in it. He later became a Priest Associate of the Holy Cross, but I stayed on in the Third Order I think by the tenacity of the Holy Spirit. I knew that I wanted some framework to carry me through life, to keep me from ever getting lost, to keep me in the Faith. As I look back over the years, I'm somewhat amazed that I'm still here.

I've never had much contact with other Franciscans. In the early days, under the American Order of St. Francis, I reported to the First Order Priests. It was a numerical sort of report—how many times omitted grace before, after meal, morning, evening prayers, meditation, etc.

The reply contained a penance and counsel. I still have a few of the letters that were especially helpful. I don't remember much about the change from OSF to SSF, but I knew enough about the English Franciscans to welcome the change and to be glad to be part of a worldwide Order.

I once went to a retreat once conducted by Father Joseph, and I knew Fr. Vivian Peterson who helped the First Order get started. One of the Sisters of St. Helena, who I knew at school, was in the early Cincinnati Third Order group. I also knew Fr. Baxter Liebler who worked with the Native Americans in Utah, and the peripatetic bishop, Br. John Charles.

Most of the time I have been an isolated tertiary busy with children, or with teaching school. There were times I kept a minimum rule not very well, and hoped that some day I would do better.

I have received a great deal from TSSF and other tertiaries, and from OSF and SSF. I am grateful to have lived for so many years as part of the world-wide and ages-old Franciscan Order.

It's hard to look back over 50 years and come up with anything special. There's too much—the ups and downs, the good, the bad, the ugly, and the mountaintop beautiful. The rather surprising thing is that it really is always a journey. There is never a feeling of having arrived. I always feel that I know a bit more now than I did before.

At the moment, I am impressed with the literalness of St. Francis: the way he seemed to take every reading, every occasion in simple concrete terms. This is what it says; this is what it means. That's a great way, it seems to me, to look at psalms, lessons, and prayers. I stop and look closely at

phrase in a collect. I try to look at gospel readings without a lifetime of familiarity. I stop and really immerse myself in an idea such as “in whom we live and move and have our being.” Peter said that Jesus walked on water—there wasn't a sandbar. The water didn't suddenly freeze. That's what it says. That's what it means.

There are some commonsense rules to go with literalness: not taking things, for example, out of context, and being aware of cultural and linguistic analysis, that's for another time. Right now, I'm just trying to take a fresh, close look at old truths. It's a simple idea, and that's about where I am at the moment.

### Mary Alice White (Professed 1961)

*Franciscan Times* 2003

*Scapular: 1. A sleeveless outer garment falling from the shoulders worn as part of a monk's habit. 2. Two small pieces of cloth joined by strings, worn on the chest and back under the clothes by some Roman Catholics (and Anglicans) as a token of religious devotion.*

The second meaning of ‘scapular’ was my first introduction in the fifties to the Order of St. Francis. I was on Altar Guild at the old St. Mary's Episcopal Church in Denver with Alice Trout. As we worked, I noticed she had a string attached to her bra strap. “What is that?” I asked. She pulled on the string and brought forth a tiny square of gray cloth. “It means,” she explained, “that I'm a member of the Third Order of St. Francis.” Inquiring further I found that the Tertiaries met once a month at St. Mary's or in some other church or more often in someone's home.

“How great that you are reminded of St. Francis, not just Sundays but every day through your scapular,” I said rather liking that strange word and peculiar practice.

I began to attend the monthly meetings where Father James Mote of St. Mary's and Father Justin Van Lopik of St. Andrew's were members. Our meetings consisted of reading one chapter from *The Little Book of the Rule for the Third Order Secular of the American Congregation of Franciscans* and meditating thereon. *The Little Book of the Rule* observed “Would you know St. Francis? Read his rule. Would you know his rule? Study his life.”

In those days we all abided by the rule as laid down in the *Little Book* and did not venture to make up our own rule. That was thought at that time to be presumptuous. I remember the eighth rule was to do one act of charity every day even though it be no more than to throw a crumb to a bird. I do not know for sure, but I should think our precepts in making a rule today are based on those in *The Little Book*.

We always had refreshments and always collected an offering for the Third Order because as far as I know, no one made a pledge of money in those days. By the way, once we were professed, we did indeed wear a gray scapular, as in the first definition above, and a knotted white rope around the waist when we attended meetings.

(continued on page 22)

**History of TSSF Part 2 (cont.)**

Once we had car trouble on the way to a meeting, and Fr. Mote remarked should someone see us they would think we were on the way to a masquerade.

But I'm getting ahead of myself. I must have attended meetings for several years before I thought seriously of becoming a novice. Why did it take me so long?

I suppose it was a serious commitment and one I didn't want to enter into lightly. But finally in 1959, I did indeed become a novice. In those days, when we were professed, we took the name of a saint as our name within the Order. I chose the name of Sister Magdalene Claire at my profession on October 2, 1961 at St. Andrew's Church and Marjorie Nevels, mother of one of our priests, became Sister Mary Dominica. We were received with much ceremony and, of course, it was a momentous occasion for us both.

In those days, we reported directly to the brothers at Little Portion. I remember Father Hugh answered one of my reports with the following which I quote verbatim:

*Dear Sister Magdalene Claire:*

*Thank you for your report and note. Please say the 84th psalm as penance for the reported infractions of the regulations.*

*God bless your striving to obtain the great virtue of Humility, which is basic in the development of the Life of Christian Perfection. (Note: Alas I'm still striving!) I think it is a good idea to have a checklist and to mark it at the close of each day. The Lord grant you His peace!*

*Faithfully yours in Him,*

*Fr Hugh, O.S.F*

By the way, the monthly report of Tertiaries was formidable to say the least (see copy of the two-sided report form on the opposite page). In 1968 at the urging of Peter Funk, I became a novice mistress. That's what it was called at that time. In other words, novices reported to me, and I answered them. It had become too much for the brothers to do this work of direction as our numbers increased. This was a fruitful if fairly arduous job since I taught full time, and had three teens at home. In 1971, I asked to be relieved of this responsibility when my husband died in March of that year, and I went through a very stressful period. I do not know the date of Brother Robert Hugh's arrival from England and the merging of our Order and the English Order into the Society of St. Francis. I only know that there came a renaissance within the

Order.

Other brothers, of course, came. I believe actually it was 1960 that I first met Brother Robert when he visited Denver. He told a small group of us what the brothers did in England as well as at Little Portion. Now that I think back upon it, I believe that his enthusiasm and knowledge of the brothers' work is what really inspired me to become a full-fledged tertiary in the first place. He then and now means so much to the Order and has influenced hundreds of people, I'm sure, to become Third Order people.

Another beautiful occasion was getting to meet and know Father Joseph a bit. He had been living in Orlando, Florida, and my friend, Marie Thompson, valued him very much. He came to Denver and stayed with Marie for a while. Once I was driving him to Marie's house in North Denver when he suddenly asked if I had read the book, *The Naked Ape*. I think it had not been long published, but he must have been in his early eighties at this time, and had a remarkable capacity for keeping up on books and other matters too, of course.

Another fond memory of the early days took place shortly after my husband died in 1971. Two young brothers (Jeremy and Chad) came to Colorado on vacation. They stayed in Denver with the Sisters of St. Anne, an Episcopal order. They wanted to be able to spend some time in the mountains, and I was able to secure for them St. Raphael's, for a few days, a cottage in Evergreen about 30 miles from Denver. The sisters of St. Mary's, I believe, owned it at that time. Maybe they just rented it for their summer retreats. At any rate, the two young men were delighted. I drove up to see them and brought my seven-year-old grandson, Brian, with me. Brian has never forgotten how they carried him piggyback and taught him the rudiments of the recorder. They were delightful.

Aftermath: After many years in the Order I'm still enthusiastic. We meet every other month in each other's homes. Mary Lou Hall and I were co-conveners for a long time, but now Whitney Heim, a young woman with two small children, who teaches piano among other things, is our convener, and we are thankful for her enthusiastic leadership. Well, this is just one person's reminiscences of the "olden times." I hope you have found it interesting, though sketchy and limited.

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### **Caroline Banks (Professed 1963)**

*Franciscan Times 2012*

I come from a "mixed religious family"; Episcopal, Roman Catholic, and Methodist to be exact. I went to school in a convent school in Little Rock, Arkansas before graduating from public high school and going on to college at the University of Arkansas in Fayetteville, Arkansas. In 1952, I married my college sweetheart who had just finished law school as a USAF veteran when he was recalled to active

duty in the Air Force. In 1958, after several years of traveling as an Air Force wife and having two children, I went back to the University of Arkansas where my husband became a law professor. I eventually finished two degrees and began teaching history in the local high school. We also joined St. Paul's parish here in Fayetteville.

Not long thereafter my husband decided to "test his vocation" by going to Bexley Hall Seminary in Ohio for a semester. While we were at Bexley Hall, we came to a decision: my husband decided he did not have a vocation, and I decided that I did!

With the help of a wise counselor and mentor on the faculty, I wrote to Father Joseph at Little Portion on Long Island. You see our pastor in Fayetteville, The Rev. Marius Lindloff, had been a friar at Little Portion, and was, in fact, an adopted son of Fr. Joseph. He discovered he did not have a vocation to the friar's life and instead married and became our parish priest in Arkansas. Since he and his wife were close neighbors, we all became good friends, and he would regale us for years with stories about Little Portion. So I felt familiar with Little Portion and the Franciscans.

In 1960, I was contacted by Father Hugh (not the present Brother Robert Hugh) and entered postulancy. In those days Father Hugh—see following comment by Br. Robert Hugh—served as the chaplain for all tertiaries. We had a long and influential correspondence, and he guided me through the postulancy with a firm but gentle hand. In those days no one knew what I was undertaking, nor did they much approve, so it could have been a very lonely trip without Fr. Hugh's support. I also give credit to my husband for never wavering in his support for my vocation.

After six months of postulancy, I entered the novitiate. In those days a novice wore a cord under their clothing, as well as a scapular. At times the cord or scapular would flip out of a collar or sleeve, and I have always remembered the day when a gentleman patted my shoulder and whispered to me: "My dear, your price tag is showing!"

We kept a small notebook in which we recorded our progress or lack thereof, according to *The Manual*. The Manual was extremely detailed and gave directions for one's response to almost any event. Every day was a constant interior conversation with oneself as I added up my "faults". It was a very severe but very valuable period of training. The idea was that, in time, a person could be so conformed to the Rule that they became a "living Rule." At least, that was the goal to which I was taught to aspire, although it took me many years to understand that it was always a goal and never an achievement! (See following excerpt from *The Manual*, 1962 on page 4.)

In 1963 I was accepted for Lifetime Vows. The Poor Clare Sisters made and sent me the full-scale scapular to be worn with a habit I had made myself. The habit was a full-length brownish tunic, while the scapular was gray wool. I also

received a cord/girdle of white rope with the three knots representing the profession I was about to make. The final gift was a beautiful silver crucifix with St. Francis on one side and St. Dominic on the reverse. My profession was at St. Paul's Fayetteville with family and friends attending. The rite was similar to ordination.

I wore the unadorned habit, but the scapular, cord, and crucifix were placed on the altar. As I knelt before our rector, Father Lindloff, he gave me a lighted candle, but then blew it out. At that point I prostrated myself before the altar, and he placed the gray wool scapular over me praying that I would rise to a new life. At that point he gave me my new name in religion, Sister Mary Benedict. Then as I arose, he put the scapular on me; I put on the cord; and he placed the crucifix around my neck. It was very solemn and very moving. I am supposed to be buried in this habit, which also includes a white collar and brown veil.

There was no hard and fast rule on what I should do as a Sister, but Father Lindloff put me to work helping run the Sunday School and the kitchen (the women's roles in the church in those days.) Mind you, I still had my own household to run and children to raise, so my time was constrained, but I never suffered from idle hands!

In the mid 60s, when Br Robert Hugh paid a pastoral visit to our parish, I acted as his hostess. To prepare for his visit we had several open house lectures and meetings, so by the time Br Robert Hugh arrived there were a number of people who had shown an interest in TSSF. After he left, we organized a fellowship, and I served as convener for almost 15 years. The fellowship grew to include associates who were very active at that time, and we held a provincial convocation here in the early 70s.

As a fellowship, we did not focus on any common missions because each member had his or her own individual calling. I, for example, while busy teaching, and caring for an invalid husband and a handicapped child, found myself continually called on to rescue animals! And these rescue calls continue to this day!

In 1972 my husband had a chance to go to England to teach some courses at Oxford University. When we arrived at our cottage in Banbury where we would stay while he taught, there were flowers on the table and food in the fridge from nearby tertiaries. I so enjoyed our time in England, where I had the truly fulfilling chance to be part of a large and close Franciscan community. I had been isolated to some extent, and it was also a relief not to be the convener or elder for the first time! We spent a weekend in Hilfield with the brothers, and I formed a close friendship with a sister tertiary, Eileen Samuels, who lived in the next village.

When we returned to Arkansas, however, I discovered that things had changed. We had a new rector and bishop and neither entirely approved of the influence of our TSSF fellowship. They felt that it was *(continued on page 24)*

**History of TSSF Part 2 (cont.)**

too autonomous and insufficiently under the control of the established hierarchy. Luckily, Dr. Wray Wilkes was elected to replace me as convener, and he was able to work with the rector and the diocesan officials.

As a retired convener, I became a novice counselor for several years, and during that time, I was asked by the tertiaries in England to come back and do some courier work. Since my husband and I both yearned to return to England, the offer came at just the right time. The Franciscan Order provided us with accommodations throughout our months there. So from England, through Scotland, Wales, and Ireland, then to Rome, and Assisi, we stayed in convents, monasteries, guesthouses, and in individual's homes. Everywhere we went there were Franciscan sisters and brothers to greet us and make us feel like family regardless of denomination! I knew for the first time what the family of Franciscans really means.

In return, we carried documents, made purchases, and passed messages. We finally returned from Italy to a convent in the English midlands with a huge replica of the San Damiano cross we had purchased in Assisi. Many eyebrows were raised as we trekked through airport lounges and across the tarmac with this enormous package on both our shoulders. It finally was hung high up in the convent chapel where its large size was perfect. While making a visit to the isle of Iona, my husband became ill, and we returned home.

In 1979 we ventured forth again, this time to North Africa and Spain, but once again my husband's health failed so we came back to Arkansas.

In 1980 our son died, while at the same time my husband's health continued to deteriorate. After several surgeries they discovered that he had cancer. So I gave up full-time teaching and went to work at the university where I continued on the office staff until 1988. I was my husband's full time caretaker until he lost his struggle with cancer in 1987.

Soon after his death, Dr. Wilkes also died. His wife, Mary Lillian, was elected convener, but by that time, due to continued restrictions placed on our tertiaries and associates, many had moved away or left the Order. An example of the restrictions placed on us included a priest-in-charge of our parish who refused to hear confessions from tertiaries because he did not believe in religious orders! He soon left, but the parish was no longer inviting friars and sisters to visit, and we had become dependent on their visits for spiritual oxygen. By the time Mary Lillian became convener, we had only five members: three tertiaries, one postulant, and one associate.

In short order, the postulant left, one tertiary and the associate each fell victim to Alzheimer's, and then Mary Lillian suddenly died. That left only me so I seemed to be back at the beginning of my whole TSSF journey. I am comforted each Sunday by a beautiful prayer shrine in the vestibule of our church dedicated to Dr. Wilkes and to the other tertiaries

from our parish. As I pass by, the candles flicker, and they help revive my memories of all of them.

After I officially retired, I continued to serve on the Board of Directors for Retired University of Arkansas Faculty and had a home business writing and editing papers for publication (in a university town there is a lot of call for such work!). In 2007 I won the state Arkansas Historical Association award for editing and writing. Realizing I could not trump that, I retired for the second time.

It has been a busy half century and hard to believe how swiftly it flew by.

**Claire Linzel (Professed 1961)**

*Franciscan Times Summer 2011*

After much discernment and prayer, still favoring Francis, I applied to the Third Order. This required my rector's recommendation and consent from my husband who was aware of my intentions and agreed to my vocation. Thus I had the opportunity to move through postulancy and then, the novitiate. Fr. Hugh (a priest from the Old Catholic Church in the Netherlands) had gone to England during WWII, became a Franciscan, and later, was transferred to the US. He was delightful, playful, and an extraordinary scholar. He guided me in to the study of the saints, some history, legends, and a joyful awareness of living a Franciscan life in our secular society. He was quite elderly yet astute, and possessed a gift of understanding via mail of what I needed to do and how to manage it all within busy family life. His comments were given directly with a lighthearted style that penetrated the minutiae of my daily responsibilities. I became more sensitive to the "ordinariness of vocation" as being a real instrument for personal growth and a style of influencing others within the environment. After two years as a postulant, I took vows at Little Portion and became a novice. The family was growing toward four children when I was life-professed in 1961.

The Founding Father Joseph came [to Little Portion] with a couple of friars. He was austere, tall with a straight back, and he emanated authority without pretense. His large eyes were aware of everything, but he said very little. The others carried the conversation, and he remained very focused in manner and attitude. In short, he was quite formidable, and I simply did not force interaction with him. He had a very powerful presence in spite of saying so little.

**Coming in Part 3**

*We move into the big transition time when TSSF joined TSSF during the years of Brother Paul and the Third Order Committee 1966-73.*

## Larger than Life

Joseph Wolyniak

“And *blessed is the servant* (Matthew 24:26) who does not place himself in a high position of his own will and always desires to be under the feet of others.”

Francis, XIX: The Humble Servant of God, *The Admonitions*<sup>1</sup>

At the Cathedral Basilica of St. Francis of Assisi in Santa Fe, New Mexico, there is a little niche tucked away, outside, and around back with a statue of the Little Poor One. Even if you’ve been there, you probably haven’t seen it. It’s pretty nondescript, easy to walk right past. There is, after all, much that commands the attention amidst that stunning 1800s-era cathedral complex. A towering replica of the Cross of San Damiano in the main nave, a life-size statue of Francesco dancing in ecstasy out front, another gigantic Poverello around back (flanked by plaques of his Canticle of the Creatures and that most beloved “Prayer of St. Francis” we winkingly attribute to him).



The little statuette in a small niche, tucked away, outside, and around back doesn’t really compare. Its clay tones blend in with the earth-hewn stones around it. The diminutive likeness is no more than 18 inches tall, accompanied by a simple print of his 13<sup>th</sup> century canticle in a less-than-waterproof frame. Of all there is to see in that southwestern monument to our beloved patron saint, this little statue definitely wouldn’t make the guidebook cut. And that’s precisely why I’d bet Francis might like this particular likeness of him the best—if, that is, he could stomach any such likeness at all.

Don’t get me wrong, Francis was no iconoclast. He wouldn’t object to such statues in and of themselves. It was, after all, the interaction with an image that first spoke to him and sent him on the spiritual journey that we all—in our own ways, in our own time and place—seek to follow. But my hunch is that the Little Poor One would find all of our memorials—all of our icons, statues, prayer cards, paintings, devotions—just a bit much. My guess is he’d find our larger-than-life depic-

tions a bit silly, even if he could appreciate that—with all that we’ve erected to make him into the super-saint-celebrity he never intended to be—we’re really just trying to say that we see Jesus in him. He’d get it, I think. But he also might just roll his eyes. Indeed, I would be willing to bet he’d blush if he knew he beat out Brigid for this year’s Lent Madness Golden Halo (<http://is.gd/iu2ek8>).

It was Dorothy Day (1897-1980), co-founder of the Catholic Worker movement, who is reported to have said: “Don’t call me a saint. . . I don’t want to be dismissed that easily.” But the sentiment would undoubtedly resonate with Francis. He, like Dorothy, was not setting out to be a saint. He wasn’t trying to secure his position in posterity, to be the one they’d name an order after. His preferred name for those who followed him wasn’t “Franciscans,” after all, but simply “lesser brothers” (*fratres minores*). But his corpse had barely turned cold before the cause for canonization began. And Dorothy too is on her way to joining the sanctoral Hall of Fame. It’s anybody’s guess whether they’d approve.

The eschewal of celebrity is yet another reason we recognize the heroic virtues of figures like Dorothy and Francis. In a world (and church) obsessed with celebrity-seeking, self-promoting, me-myself-and-I types pursuing their 15 minutes of viral-video-in-blogsphere fame, the humility of people like Dorothy and Francis is rather jarringly refreshing. So unusual in an era of social media selfies, we can’t help but think they are something special—a rare breed with a holiness that literally sets them apart. Towering statues, then, are just the natural byproduct.

But as the papal namesake of the Poverello reminded us in a recent reflection at the Angelus for the Solemnity of All Saints (<http://is.gd/qgCtYK>), “saints are not supermen.” They were not born on planet Krypton, in a galaxy far away, and rocketed to earth to show us the way. And we ought not place them on pedestals that distance them from us, valorizing them to the point that we infantilize our moral and spiritual selves. Sure, we cannot help but recognize the grace that was operative in their lives—even in special and unique ways. But if in so doing we make them to be something bigger, bolder, better than we ourselves could be, we actually do an injustice to them. For they only ever wanted to be like us, ordinary Christians who took seriously the message of a homeless vagabond prophet in first century Palestine—a God who took the form of human flesh to dwell among us. As Pope Francis suggests, “we are *all* called to walk along the path of sainthood. And this path has a name, a face. And that name and face is Jesus Christ. He shows us the way in the Gospel: the Way of the Beatitudes.”

My hunch is that Giovanni di Pietro di Bernardone wouldn’t be the biggest fan of the larger-than-life saint—and statues—we’ve made him into. My hunch is he’d rather us worry about carving ourselves into the image and likeness

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## Larger than Life (cont.)

of Christ. But if it takes a little stone statue tucked away, outside, and around the corner of a cathedral complex to remind us of the Little Way we're *all* called to follow, then so be it. Let's just not mistakenly assume that the path will lead to such statues. Let's just remember that for the Little Poor One the path led the "gift" of the first recorded stigmata on Mount La Verna, mirroring the One Who Became Poor whose path led to a cross on Mount Calvary. A just reward, perhaps, for those who sought not the high position but desired always to be under our feet.

Joseph Wolyniak, TSSF, is a Theologian-in-Residence at the Church of the Ascension (Denver, CO), where he is completing a DPhil in theology from the University of Oxford.

### (Footnotes)

<sup>1</sup> *Francis and Clare: The Complete Works* (Paulist Press, 1982), p. 33.



## The First Beat

*Rick Bellows*

As fast meets slow and fresh meets brine,  
The shallow currents mix and combine  
With deep waters whipped up by the flight  
Of hovering wings that beat the night  
Into day to refine light into life  
And start the love song never silenced by strife.

Nothing and something, difference, the same—  
The guilty and the innocent sharing the blame—  
The blending traces back to the first beat of the wing:  
Echo or reiteration become everything,  
The whole song given by that first note in the score.  
In a river flows the stream that first shaped its shore.

## Refugees: A Primer

*Victoria Logue (Recent blog post anticipating World Refugee Day on June 20)*

It sounds simple, really: I traveled to Kenya and Rwanda with Episcopal Migration Ministries (one of nine resettlement agencies in the U.S.) the first two weeks in March to

learn the process through which Congolese refugees are resettled in the United States. Yet it is not simple at all. The process is actually dismayingly complex.

So, as Maria sang in *The Sound of Music*: Let's start at the very beginning . . .

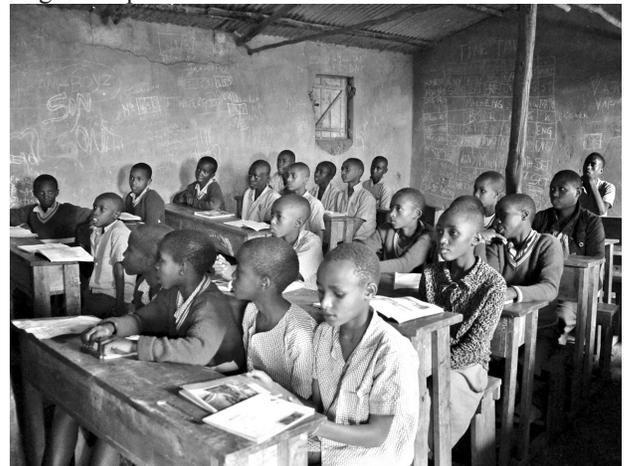
What is a refugee? You can find numerous definitions, both simple and complex, but in this case a refugee is essentially a person who is outside their home country because they have suffered (or feared) persecution on account of race, religion, nationality, or political opinion; because they are a member of a persecuted social category of persons; or because they are fleeing a war.

That all sounds fairly straight forward, right? But can you pick the key phrase out of that definition?

*essentially a person*

And that's not simple at all because these are humans and humanity is complex. In addition, refugees are humans who have endured things we cannot even possibly begin to imagine.

These are people who fled their homes, and the nations they loved, because life and survival were more of a priority than the risk of remaining in their homeland. And while a fraction, about 1 percent, of the world's refugees are resettled in the countries that welcome them, most of them are forced to live in refugee camps.



Unfortunately, most camps are just that—camps. They provide the bare minimum of what a human needs to survive—shelter (but no electricity), water (but not running water in their homes) and food (but hardly enough to exist on). And "shelter" can vary from brick huts to tents.

But, what is even more staggering, perhaps even mind-blowing, is the number of people living in these conditions. In East African, alone, there are 2.5 million refugees and asylum seekers in Sudan, South Sudan, Eritrea, Djibouti, Somalia, Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Rwanda, Burundi, Democratic Republic of the Congo and Republic of

the Congo.

And that's just East Africa. In fact, nearly a quarter of the world's approximately 15 million refugees and asylum seekers are Syrian. The UNHCR (United Nations High Commission on Refugees) deals with refugees from Afghanistan, Myanmar, Iraq, Columbia, and areas of Africa.



So, take these primitive conditions, add tens of thousands of humans to each camp and leave them there for years—in some cases more than twenty. In some camps, children have been born and raised to adulthood without ever having been outside the camp.

Can you imagine holding onto the hope that you will be among the one percent chosen to be settled into a new life in a new land? And how absolutely terrifying it might be to be among the chosen—to leave the life you've known, albeit a horrendous life, and move to a land where you don't speak the language nor are you familiar with the culture? And yet despite the hopelessness of it all, hope remains. Perhaps it is just a tiny ember, but it is there nonetheless.

Because, maybe, one day, what is known in the parlance as a “durable solution” will be found for *all* refugees and not just the one percent. Perhaps you will be able to return home no longer afraid for your life. Or maybe you can be assimilated into the country of your asylum. Or, as scary as it might be, perhaps you will be resettled in a town in a new country—the United States or Canada or Australia or one of the other nations that accept refugees—where you can begin life anew.

If only it were that simple. But more than refugees are involved. There are those people, the minority, who have given their lives to help refugees find a new life, but there are also those people who fight against bringing refugees into their nations. There are also the governments of the nations that host refugees. Some of these governments do what they can to help those seeking refuge, but more often than not refugees are actually unwanted and are treated as less than human beings subjected, male and female alike, to sexual violence, being forced to pay bribes to government officials and gangs, as well as becoming victims of scams that promise them resettlement in exchange for money.

Conditions in refugee camps are not improved in the hope

that it will encourage the refugees to leave despite the fact the reason they are refugees is because they have no place to go—they are truly homeless. They are neither wanted in their homeland nor in their country of asylum.

And yet in the midst of this I did see signs of hope even if the refugees could not see it themselves. In an upcoming blog post I will share signs of this hope.

### ***The Franciscan Story: St Francis of Assisi and His Influence Since the Thirteenth Century by Maurice Carmody***

*Reviewed by David Weeks*

For those of us interested in our family history, the Franciscan Story is a very readable start. It is a serious historical book, but is an enjoyable read. Therefore, it is a break from the quasi-mythical St Francis tales and Francis based fiction that is easily available. It does have a solid biographical early component of the life of Francis, mildly tinted with “stories” that may not be subject to normal historical analysis, but the author makes this clear. It is also Italio-centric but this is unavoidable given the Order's Italian heritage and its long history, interwoven with that of the papacy.

It is this interweaving of history that makes this book so valuable for us Anglican Franciscans. While we are familiar with the reformation from the outside perspective so to speak of the Protestant churches, this book details the “reformation” from the inside of the Catholic church, a reformation started by Francis long before Luther. The other major strand of history described in the book is the inevitable tainting of religion that occurs when the basis of religion shifts from being grounded in love as the Order was when created by Francis: to being grounded in force and power, as the Order became once it became primarily a tool of the papacy.

This struggle between the role of the Order as a group helping its members seek God,



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***The Franciscan Story: St Francis of Assisi and His Influence Since the Thirteenth Century by Maurice Carmody (cont.)***

and an organization of talented individuals being asked to serve others through the Church, is really the heart of the book. And never a clearer demonstration of the difficulty of balancing the first great commandment to love God and the second to love thy neighbor will you be likely find in history. In the end hopefully, we can remain proud to be a member of this Order, but also be eternally grateful we are Anglicans and (most of us tertiaries) and therefore not likely to be caught up in the tempests of religious history. We can enjoy life in the calm after the storm, by sailing through the Order's struggles vicariously through history, instead of in person. And what a blessing that is.

**RIP: Ruby Mowlah-Baksh—The Journey of a Convert**

*Gemma Poliah (daughter)*

Ruby Mowlah-Baksh passed away on Tuesday 3 March and was laid to rest on Saturday 7 March, 2015. The service in Celebrating her Life, Service and Witness was held at the St. Paul's Anglican Church, Harris Promenade San Fernando at 10:00 a.m. and internment took place at the Roodal (Broadway) Cemetery in San Fernando, Trinidad.

Our mother shared with us, her children, her life's story, including her own writings that we have left in the first person.

What we will attempt to unfold for you dear friends and family, as we pay last rites to our dear mother Ruby, is not a mourner's tale but a story that leads you to a 'bright and shining cross.'

We will unfold this by first telling you about the temporal life of our mother with the hope that you, too, will find yourself a place in this narrative.

"I was born on 25 November, 1927 to Majaralie and Jasseran Pooran of George Village, Tableland. I was the eight of fourteen children. My parents were of the Muslim faith and myself and my thirteen siblings were brought up in the Muslim faith.

My father was a cocoa proprietor who owned an eight-acre cocoa estate on which our old homestead was built. The house was a wooden building comprising five bedrooms, kitchen, living room, dining room, toilet and bath. Together with cocoa, coffee, citrus, bananas, ground provisions and other short term crops were grown. My mother was my father's greatest helpmate on the estate.

I had a happy childhood playing with my brothers and sisters and especially enjoyed the orchard which was full of fruit trees – plums, cherries, mangoes, guavas and oranges. I attended the Elswick C.M. School (the school closest to

our home), from age five to thirteen and left school as a pupil teacher in training.

During the Second World War the price of cocoa had begun to decline and in 1939 my father bought land and built a house at 149 Southern Main Road, Marabella. One by one my older brothers and sisters moved to Marabella to either attend school or to seek employment and when I myself finished school, I joined them. My father and mother were the last to leave Tableland as they continued to try to make the estate as productive as possible.

During the years 1942 to 1944 I attended Boland Commercial School in San Fernando and pursued a Commercial Course. I was successful in obtaining certificates in Typewriting, Bookkeeping and Shorthand, which held me in good stead through the years of accounting and economics as a house wife and mother." Sterling added in later years, 'Our mother was always good at numbers and would remember every telephone number, birth and anniversary dates when called upon, many times on the spot' and Phillip fondly remembers that, 'Although our father brought in the income, it was our mother who built the house.' She wisely managed the little earnings, saving some for rainy days.

"I met John Mowlah-Baksh in September, 1945 and we were married on 6 June 1946. I was baptised into the Christian faith on the same morning just before our marriage. The ceremony took place at St. Clement's Anglican Church officiated by Canon Trench. I lived with my new family at 120 Southern Main Road, Marabella for a short time. I observed closely their love for Jesus and each other and admired their commitment to regular church worship." She soon became a sister rather than a sister-in-law. "The marriage of John and I bore seven children – Phillip, Gemma, Anthony, Sterling, Keith, Peter and David. I dedicated my life to the care and upbringing of my children. Together with my husband John, we brought up our children to love and fear the Lord and instilled in them the importance of Bible reading and prayer.

My involvement in church life began by attending regular worship with the Mowlah-Baksh family at St. Paul's Anglican Church, San Fernando. During this time members of the family encouraged me to become confirmed but it took me some time to agree to do so. However, one day while reading the Bible the words became so alive... I felt as though Jesus was speaking to me... and as I looked up I had a vision of a bright cross. This experience caused me to make up my mind to be confirmed. On the day of my confirmation, just as the Bishop anointed me, I felt so moved that I began crying and



couldn't stop for the entire day. Little did I know then, that my life was destined to unfold in a profoundly meaningful and spiritually driven way. A way that was going to take me to a bright and shining cross."

Some years later the family decided to join the congregation of the Holy Cross Anglican Church in Marabella. Both myself and John served... he as Secretary/Treasurer of the Anglican Outlook among other duties, and I becoming a member of the Sanctuary Guild and Mother's Union, ministering to the sick and shut ins and in Lay Ministry."

Her involvement in the Mother's Union and her love for writing saw her become the Link Secretary with Somerset House (the Mother Union's Headquarters in England), and was later selected with Mrs. Joan Jones to attend the worldwide conference of delegates in Australia in 1979. Our mother served as a correspondent with the Anglican Outlook in earlier years, submitting monthly Intercessory Prayer bulletins to the Diocesan newspaper and in organizing and compiling questions for the annual Bible Quiz for Sunday Schools.

She ministered to the sick and shut ins, not only of the church community, but to members of her family as well. Her sister-in-law Lucy Mowlah-Baksh, who had been diagnosed with cancer, spent her last months in our mother's care. When her own mother and father grew ill and frail she never wavered in her daily visits to them, ensuring that their physical needs were met and praying for the Lord's healing. Our mother understood that God's healing comes in different ways...even in death. Over some time, during Anthony's visits with her they had been exchanging thoughts on the topic 'The Kingdom of God'. Her response to Matthew 4:23...that 'Heaven is a place of healing and wholeness' was, "We are travelling to Heaven. On this journey we are encountering all the various healing miracles of Jesus and we are to recognise them in our own lives".

She, along with the late Mrs. Muriel Holder and others, walked the roads singing and praising the Lord on their way to the homes of ill and shut in members... bringing to them solace and comfort through constant prayer and communion. One special little prayer that she would close our nightly fellowship with was, 'Now I lay me down to sleep, I pray Thee Lord my soul to keep. If I should die before I wake, I pray Thee Lord my soul to take.'

She wrote, "I attended St. Andrew's Theological College in San Fernando and weekly theological classes (in my final year), held at Bishop Anstey High School in Port of Spain. I received my Diploma in Theology and became a licensed Lay Minister in 1989 under the tutorship of Dr. Knolly Clarke. Mrs. Joan Jones and I were the first two women in the Diocese of Trinidad and Tobago to become licenced Lay Ministers. The induction service was held at St. Peter's Anglican Church in Gasparillo, conducted by Bishop Clive

Abdulla and parish priest Fr. Barry Coker." Preparing and presenting sermons and administering communion was a joyful service to which our mother was dedicated.

She was a member of the Third Order, Society of St. Francis, Province of the Americas. The Order communicated with her on a regular basis and she was always happy to get the most recent information about the programmes they were involved in. "I was invited by my friend Mirl Lewis to join a pilgrimage on a visit to the Holy Land. This was the highlight of my spiritual growth and development. I shared with my son David, when he asked me, 'Mom, what was the most significant experience of your visit to the Holy Land?' and my response to him was, 'When the tour guide announced that we were now entering the City of Jerusalem.' Her friend Mirl said, "Ruby had become very emotional then and at various points during the tour... as when she stood on the spot where our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ would have hung on the Cross...the Cross that had meant so much to her throughout her Christian life." The Attestation of Pilgrimage she received authorized her to bear the title of 'Jerusalem Pilgrim'.

Her involvement in church life was encouraged by the many priests who served at Holy Cross. Among them English priests Fr. Brian Newton, Fr. Barry Coker, Fr. Martin Russel, (with whom she exchanged yearly greetings especially at Christmastime), and with them Fr. Calvin Bess who recognised during her times of intercessory prayer that our mother would always pray a simple prayer, 'God, please increase our faith.' Our father admired her reverence to the Christian faith and said that "she was the most Christian person he had ever known."

In turn, our mother in a quiet way felt it her duty always to encourage others to church life. We learnt that Mrs. Marriott Chandler (one of the stalwart members of Holy Cross among others), became a member of the parish as a result, Mrs. Ruby Weekes and Mrs. Dianna Callender (among others) to become Lay Ministers themselves, Ms. Esla Crawford (former Manager of the Mother's Union Home for Children) and Mrs. Parris of St Clement's (among others) to be members of the Mother's Union, and my brothers Anthony to the priesthood, Sterling to spiritual mentoring, Keith to lay ministry, Peter to mission and outreach, David to be a student at St. Andrews Theological College, and to all of her children more so, she instilled the need for the study of the Bible, prayer and moral values and the importance of church and service to God. Peter remembers one of her valued teachings of encouragement to knowing and serving God... first and foremost, "Get rid of the ego...be selfless not selfish."

"I attended church services, Mother's Union and Special Events meetings and church-cleaning days on a regular basis. One day on my way home from one of these activities I was attacked. The person had grabbed hold of my handbag

*(continued on page 30)*

### RIP: Ruby Mowlah-Baksh—The Journey of a Convert (cont.)

and I pulled back for dear life. I lost the struggle falling and bruising my knees very badly and lost the handbag as well. I was not trying to save the little money that I may have had, but rather my most precious possession...the Holy Bible that was in that bag. My comfort and hope was that the person would read it.

My involvement took me beyond the church's walls and God granted me the time and energy for voluntary work and outreach programmes." She helped and ministered to needy families in the neighbourhood... collecting and distributing hampers; worked closely with the Child Welfare League at the Marabella Health Centre... assisting in anti-natal and post-natal care; the Housewives Association... joining in the protest against the poor quality and high price of food items; the Lady Hochoy Home for the Handicapped in Reform... reading the stories of Jesus to the children; the Church Women United of Marabella... encouraging ecumenism through secular and religious activities; the Mother's Union of Holy Cross Marabella... teaching the importance of marriage and family life to young mothers; and conducting Religious Education classes at the Marabella and Claxton Bay Junior Secondary Schools... bringing the Good News to the Anglican community there.

"I served in the parish of Holy Cross, Marabella for about 27 years. In the last few years I had become inactive due to ill health and was unable to attend church as I had grown accustomed to doing. I missed the fellowship of church services but members kept in touch with me and I, in turn, kept in touch with the sick and shut ins, through intercessory prayer. I looked forward to the monthly visits of Lay Minister Allison George and her team from Gasparillo. Allison administered the communion whenever Bishop Bess or my son Anthony, were unable to do so."

At no time during our mother's periods of discomfort did she ever question God's purpose. The faith that she had in Jesus never wavered and the hope of everlasting life that that faith represents. She had been quietly preparing herself for God's call and in her own way also preparing us. The readings, psalm and hymns for this home-going service were all chosen by her. When the time came to respond to God's final call, without any struggle... in a quiet breath, her soul was released into the loving arms of her Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Go now in peace thou good and faithful servant. We pray that your soul and the souls of all the faithful departed rest in peace and rise in God's glory. Amen.

### RIP: Peggylee Stephens (Professed 1993)

*Ithaca Journal*

Peggylee Stephens passed away on February 24, 2014 at the age of 89. She was born in Tonawanda, NY, attended Hamburg High School, University of Richmond (then known as Westhampton Women's College of Richmond) and earned her Master's Degree from Columbia University. She was a school Psychologist employed by Peekskill Military Academy and BOCES (Board of Cooperative Educational Services), NY. She retired from BOCES in the year 2000. She was a member of Church of the Epiphany, Trumansburg, NY, and belonged to the Franciscan Society and Sweet Adelines. She was married to the late Edwin A. Stephens for 23 years and leaves behind her son, Mark Werner Stephens of Ambler, PA, and two grandchildren.

### Provincial Convocation 2017 To Be Held In Cincinnati

*Beverly Hosea*

As the Coordinator and Chair of the Planning Team for the 2017 Provincial Convocation, I am excited to announce that the location of this Centennial Convocation will be in historic Cincinnati, Ohio, USA. It was here that the first tertiaries of the Third Order, Society of St. Francis, underwent their formation and made their profession in 1917. And thus began what was to become the Province of the Americas.

Tom Johnson, Minister Provincial, Anita Catron Miner, Provincial Secretary, and I traveled to Cincinnati in March to investigate a potential site for the convocation at St. Anne's Retreat Center, Melbourne, Kentucky, just across the Ohio River from Cincinnati a few minutes away. St. Anne's is owned and operated by the Roman Catholic Diocese of Covington, previously belonging to the American Province of Sisters of Divine Providence.

What we found was a perfect location that met everything we had on our wish list: close to an airport and metropolitan center, yet rural with spacious grounds for walking, adequate space for meeting rooms, small groups, chapel for worship, etc., handicap accessible, and inexpensive – everything from the feedback responses for Provincial Convocation 2013. We found it all!

Janet Fedders, our tertiary who lives close to St. Anne's, and who is very active in the Diocese of Southern Ohio, was our chauffeur and guide around the area, informing us of many historical landmarks and introducing us to key people in the area. The bishop, The Rt. Rev. Thomas Breidenthal, was very welcoming.

Chapter has now approved this site, and we have entered into a contract with St. Anne's Retreat Center, for what I am sure will be a truly historic occasion. I am so excited about how well our whole site visit went. I know that the Holy Spirit

was guiding, and probably Francis was helping to pave the way.

So put June 20-25, 2017, on your calendar now, and start saving up. We want to have someone from every fellowship, and scholarship help is available.

There are also many ways in which you can participate in the preparation for PC17 and in the event itself. I have a good core group who are helping me in planning, but there are areas of responsibility that need either leadership or support. Check with me directly about this: 206-713-5321, bhosea@mac.com.

### 100th Anniversary, Third Order, Society of St. Francis, the Province of the Americas Prayer

Lord Jesus Christ, when the world was growing cold, you raised up blessed Francis, bearing in his body the marks of your suffering, to warm our hearts with the fire of your love. Help us always to turn to you with true hearts, and for love of you to bear the Cross; who with the Father and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns, one God, forever and ever. **Amen.**

### Minister's musings . . .

*Tom Johnson, Minister Provincial*

While reading professor Pazzelli's book *St. Francis and the Third Order* recently, I found myself disturbed – at least initially – by his use of the term *evangelical* to characterize the Franciscan movement. However, I soon realized that I was reacting to what the term *evangelical* had come to mean in the current Christian context which had evolved into something quite different from what professor Pazzelli was saying.

The Reformation brought to life the term *Evangelical* to describe the Protestant Churches who based their teaching on the "Gospel." It also came to contrast the Reformed Churches from the Calvinists. Gradually, the term came to describe various movements in the Church that hung onto conservative theological stances. And in our own time, the term *evangelical* frequently describes those churches often called *Fundamentalist* and which are politically aligned with the "right wing." Thus my initial dismay at Pazzelli's use of the term with reference to Francis.

However, as I looked a little more closely, I came to realize that he was using the term to describe the Franciscan "way of life" that was patterned according to the "Gospel" in imitation of Jesus. He was translating "vita apostolica" as "evangelical life." So, once again I was drawn back into the basic Franciscan charism – living as Jesus showed us and told us to.

This reminded me of another word from the early days of the Third Order which has come to mean something quite different in our own time. The early members of the Third Order were called the "Brothers and Sisters of Penance." In

the early church, penitents were those who had been excluded from receiving communion through the sacrament of Penance. Over time, the administration of Penance became less burdensome, but nevertheless continued to be administered through the Sacrament of Penance as a way to atone for one's sins.

In the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> Centuries, however, there developed a number of penitential movements – including the Franciscan Third Order – that described those who "repented" and "turned to follow Christ" (*metanoia*) as Brothers and Sisters of Penance – or often as Penitents. This somewhat different use of the word, once again, points to the Franciscan emphasis on living the Gospel.

I recently read an interview of Pope Francis published in America. In it he was asked about the specific place of religious men and women in the church of today. He said, "Religious men and women . . . are those who have chosen a following of Jesus that imitates his life in obedience to the Father . . . In the church, the religious are called to be prophets in particular by demonstrating how Jesus lived on this earth."

This brings me to what I feel is a very important statement in a document from our Formation Team – Formation Guidelines: Reporting, Part 1: "The old view was, counselees were expected to write 6 postulant reports and 24 novice reports, then would be considered eligible for profession. The reports could be done at their own pace. If they didn't report monthly, the process would simply take longer.

That approach had some serious drawbacks, and we're doing things a bit differently now. It isn't the report count that qualifies a novice for profession. **The focus now is on whether or not the applicant is living the Franciscan life, and growing in humility, love and joy.** The reports are merely a tool for reflection and personal growth, to allow the counselor to provide support and guidance, and as a way to gauge whether or not the candidate is suitable for making life vows in TSSF." (the emphasis is mine. tj)

As we all think and discuss and pray about how we can best be Third Order Franciscans in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, let us not forget that it's all about **living** the Gospel life as exemplified by our little brother Francis.

## MorningWhispers

Thoughts for our Journey



"As for us, our days  
are like grass, we  
flourish like a flower  
of the field;"

Psalm 103:15

God knows all too well how fragile each of us are.  
During the life we are given upon this earth, there  
are times when we thrive and times when we  
wither.

God will never abandon us.

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*For about four months, the national UCC website and Facebook pages have been carrying Whispers on a daily basis. The OEF facebook pages has also been carrying Whispers since 2014.  
Br. John Gaudreau OEF*

### Passion and Service: Teaching Dance to the Inner Child

Diana Turner-Forte

*"The Third Order of the Society consists of those who while following the (extra) ordinary professions of life, feel called to dedicate their lives under a definite discipline and vows."*

I feel particularly blessed because on a daily basis my work environment consists of enchantment and wonder in an open space with various props: ribbons, scarves, assorted balls, beautiful music and little children eager to dance. In the mid-afternoons at Monarch Creative Arts and Community

Center (Southern Pines, NC) being with my students makes me truly alive and grateful to be teaching dance. The youngsters range in age from 8 to 11 years old. Their arrival at the studio may have been inspired by seeing a ballet like "Swan Lake" where the dancers skim across the stage, appearing to move like swans or imagining themselves as magical fairies in "Sleeping Beauty" or possibly even fantasizing about one day playing the role of Clara in the "Nutcracker".

More often than not though, my students are fulfilling maternal aspirations of childhood memories of their own dance experiences or wishing they had had the opportunity. The intangible pursuits of this art form include: discipline, poise, grace and elegance which are of little interest to my students. At their young age, fun and friends are much more important than hard work and control of their bodies, but in their child-like way they manage to grasp the total picture.

Take for instance our preliminary exercises. What began as an experiment to allow the children to relax after a day of sitting in school evolved into a pre-class ritual. When the multi-colored scarves are piled in the center of the studio space the students know it is time to begin. As the music fills the air something beautiful happens. At first glance, what may appear to be an invitation for total chaos turns into an outflowing of imagination, explosive energy, and unstructured play.

Often in the studio, through my Franciscan practices, I receive pure inspiration that facilitates the children's behavior and creativity, realizing their freedom is in my letting things happen and seeing where Holy Spirit leads—

*"To spread the spirit of love and harmony among all people."*

Interestingly enough, the students don't all go rushing toward the fabric at once. They behave in a civil and insightful manner, having cultivated a feeling of suspense and reverence for personal space, an awareness of others, and a sensitivity to peripheral activity. Their natural mechanisms for knowing, in and around themselves ensures perfect timing in relationship to the whole process. These are skills they have grown to master individually and collectively. By delaying a movement here or choosing an alternate pathway there; sudden, quick, sporadic, uncalculated change leads to delight and surprise. The children seem to intuitively know when to pick up a piece of fabric, toss it in the air, let it go, feel the touch of silk ripple through their bodies or experience stillness--either to take a comfortable conscious breath or merely anticipate the next movement opportunity.

*“We always keep before us the example of Christ, who emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, and who, on the last night of his life, humbly washed his disciples’ feet. We likewise seek to serve one another with humility.”*

Their unleashed exploratory nature knows no boundaries. As creatures of creativity they dive into each experience anew making each pre-ritual activity fresh and different. In my humble role as guide and guardian (servant) I hold sacred space while they negotiate the unknown through whole body movement. Enlivened by an eclectic mix of sounds the youngsters dance for the sake of dance. The space becomes electrified in the combined glow of natural light through the windows, accompaniment of a single instrument like a piano or drums serving as a backdrop to the sound of rushing water or singing birds: every stimulus moves my little students into imaginative lines, curves and patterns.

One thing is certain, between the music and the rhythmic patter of little feet on the surface of the floor, their discoveries seem to be limitless. The multiplicity of shapes, wisps of color floating through the air and landing some place random; the fall that turns into a rebound, and the occasional gleeful gasp as a child successfully accomplishes what only the child knows provides an exhilarating sight to behold and absorb. Even they are awed by the source of their inventiveness.

In service to others, I don’t always get the sense that I choose, more that others choose me or are chosen for me.

*Jesus said, ‘I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.’*

What these agile bodies can do is amazing, but, just as impressive are the accomplishments of the adult participants in the Creative Movement/Dance classes held earlier in the day. The goal is the same: to facilitate movement, resulting in similar, but very different experiences. With the adults, I am more a steward of love, patience and re-engagement holding a sanctuary of safety, if you will. The mature bodies lack the suppleness of youth, their movements are often more mechanical than freeing; the musical congruence is a bit off, but none of those things matter, as they demonstrate their own brilliance, that which comes from deep inside. What’s essential for the adults is that they re-connect to an interior space where the dynamics of sound, space and coordination override tangled feet, less responsive motor skills or short-ened memory. Concentration is intense and repetition is incessant. For the adults, finding freedom of expression within the perimeters of a basic movement vocabulary is worthy of accolades.

Overcoming the mental fears of falling, while at the same time holding the tension between stability and transference



*Diana Turner-Forte Surrounded by Her Ballarinas*



of weight, complicated by visual and aural issues, are challenging feats. What may seem like simple progressive movements for many of us can prove to be extremely demanding for people with mental and physical disabilities. For this group of folks, abled-differently, getting the correct neural message from the head to the body takes time, but, from my observations, their attempts are not futile, more an invitation to hold steady for the next integrative moment. When the beat, step and coordination

are synchronized, there is reason to rejoice. Pushed to the edge of personal perspective, equilibrium and poise, their hard-won struggle fills the studio with a joy that is palpable.

*“Tertiaries, rejoicing in the Lord always, show in our lives the grace and beauty of divine joy. This joy is a divine gift, coming from union with God in Christ.”*

I stand in awe, rejoicing in the courage of my students both young and older. Their movements of self-expression speaks their truths . . . and that’s enough for me — serving as the conduit for their imagination. From empowered little beings, leaping, twirling, gliding through space with pieces of fabric to the adults struggling to maintain balance and stability while practicing a rhythmic pattern, all of them are creative channels pouring out their voices through dance. Each con-

*Continued on Page 34*

## Passion and Service: Teaching Dance to the Inner Child (cont.)

scientific movement sparks the potential from within them through which other associations can be made in the future.

These are holy moments, moments of grace. These are moments where the essence of the experiences, in their brevity are encounters of such liberation. Freed by not having to prove anything, or be anybody but themselves, they become dancers on their own stage. Everyone has won through the power of movement, the sounds of music and the privilege to explore creatively. We all benefit from the student's diligence, desire to take risks, finding humor in their flaws and their sheer persistence to return each week, reinvigorated to simply try again.

*"The humility, love and joy, which mark the lives of Tertiaries, are all God-given graces. They can never be obtained by human effort. They are the gifts of the Holy Spirit. The purpose of Christ is to work miracles through people who are willing to be emptied of self and to surrender to him. We then become channels of grace through whom his mighty work is done."*

### Prayer As Dance by Patti A. Gill: A Review by Diana Turner-Forte

*Prayer As Dance* by Patti A. Gill is an enlightening approach to a heart-centered, intimate relationship with God. The book grew out of a pilot class, leading to a practical and tested experience for the reader. The reader is led through a process of prayer that is unusual, but formative. The author presents the concept of God as choreographer, the chief visionary and director of a piece of movement art, in which we are invited to participate. As an invitation to dance, to be Christ's partner in movement through life, the exercises help the reader to study our practices and behaviors, which hinder our ability to want to explore this level of intimacy with God. In a society wrapped up in many misperceptions about body and form, this may appear to be a rather crude way to be in relationship with God. Through the author's well-selected scriptural verses and support we are guided into a process, a process of choreography evolves and can become an integral part of our prayer experience where our prayers are dances in relationship with God.

Deeply rooted in scripture, Gell provides numerous exercises to acquaint us with this form of prayer. The book is divided into chapters, rather rehearsals, as all quality dancing requires hours of rehearsal that spectators would not appreciate, only the partners value. The rehearsals are times to fall, tests one's trust, evaluate strengths and weaknesses, renew the bonds of love, and take the leap knowing our partner, God is there. It's in the many practices that the final dance can be assured. Again, society often pushes us toward the final product, where mesmerized by the end goal, we tend

to think that that is all there is or ask "is that all there is?" However, Gell encourages us to spend much more time in enjoying the rehearsals and reveling in the practices with our partner. In essence, the prayer rehearsals are the necessary requirement where all the fine-tuning occurs, where precision, synchronicity and timing provides the foundation for freedom and intimacy with our partner. Rehearsals are on-going in order for each partner to learn to be in sync, reciprocating movements, giving and taking, establishing an ease and flow, so that movement occurs in unison, two bodies moving as one.

Each rehearsal in *Prayer As Dance* opens with a quote and then the process of rehearsing begins with an overview of the scriptural passage, a brief study of the experiences of the people in the passage and our own reflection, a link between their struggles and ours in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The questions engage us intellectually and purposefully. Gell makes it clear that the invitation is extended to all, however, we have to respond, be willing to be in partnership in the dance.

Even though *Prayer As Dance* is a small volume, there is much depth and growth that can occur in walking through the eleven rehearsals. It's a book to be revisited time and again, with fresh insight and wisdom, as we practice and live the intimacy of the partnership. Gell's goal with *Prayer As Dance* "is to spark attentiveness to the indelible touch of grace upon each life." She has provided a unique tool and process for doing just that, all that is required is our positive response.

### Celebrate Our 100<sup>th</sup> Birthday Musically

Some members from the LI fellowship and some musicians from the area are creating a new Franciscan songbook, based on an old prayer book of St. Francis. Any TSSF members may submit poems, prayers, songs, essays or any other writings about St. Francis or Franciscanism to be considered for inclusion.

We will attempt to set your writings to music. Also, you may submit original completed songs that you may have composed with or without music. If songs or writings are chosen, writers will be asked to sign usage waivers allowing their work to be made available free of charge. However, authors will retain the copyright.

Submissions will be accepted until approximately mid-2016. Our intention is to make available a great resource for our Order free of charge. Works will be available online in written form, including scored music. Accompanying recordings will be made available as well.

There is a possibility that printed books may be made in time for our 2017 convocation. By the way, if you are a musician and wish to participate in any way please make contact as well. Anyone interested in any way, please contact Father Rick Simpson at [frsimpson@yahoo.com](mailto:frsimpson@yahoo.com).

### What did you go out to look at?

It's just a stonewall with daffodils beside it;  
 But here in the sugar bush?  
 No house, no garden, no farm nearby;  
 The straight stonewall is manmade,  
 The daffodils not wild.

But long ago in this New England place  
 There was a farm  
 All the trees of Ethan Allen's time cut down  
 To make hearth and home  
 A pasture full of sheep  
 A house full of children

But after the Civil War, children left  
 For the West  
 Pastures untended grew bushes,  
 then saplings.  
 The roof fell in.

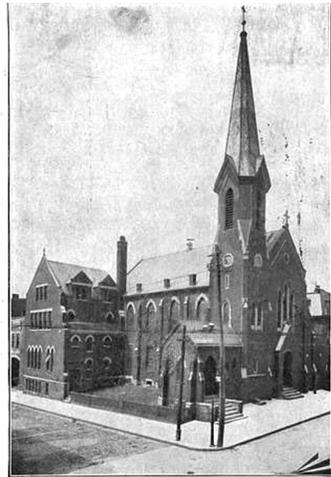
The land returned to Ethan's time,  
 Only this time it is  
 A sugarbush with a stonewall and daffodils.  
 What did you go out to look at?  
 The buckets on tree taps to collect the sweet  
 sap?

St. Luke's is gone; though Seven Hills  
 Neighborhood House is there  
 House of Our Lady Help of Christians bur-  
 ied, yet Interstate I-75 is there  
 Bethany House's building is there,  
 but the nuns went a dozen miles out of the  
 Old West End of Cincinnati

So what did you go out to look at?  
 The spirit of those Orders?  
 The footprint of their work?  
 What sweet sap have you come  
 to collect?

*John Brockmann*

*Sugar bush a forest of  
 maple trees used for pro-  
 ducing maple syrup.*



**S. LUKE'S CHURCH**  
 REV. EWALD HAUN, RECTOR  
 FINDLAY AND BAYMILLER STS.  
 CINCINNATI, OHIO

**THE PUBLIC LIBRARY**  
 of Cincinnati  
 414 Hamilton County

*Now Seven Hills Neighborhood  
 Houses, Inc.,  
 Findlay Street Branch*



*1711 Freeman Avenue,  
 Bethany House*



*1627 Freeman  
 Avenue,  
 House of Our Lady*

### West End of Cincinnati

Flowers of Bethlehem  
 Neighborhood housing  
 St. Luke's on the corner

Now  
 Vacant lots  
 Grassy plots  
 Once birthing  
 Flowers

Once vibrant  
 Claude pregnant, willful  
 No Bishop's cloak  
 round his shoulders

Soldiering on  
 In West End Bethlehem  
 The Vestiges of Christ  
 The Love of Francis  
 Claude Crookston coursing on.

18 in all, the first blush  
 And now  
 Vacant lots  
 Vagrant visitors  
 To Francis and from

Fragrant visitation  
 Once fulminant  
 Now dusty, tired.  
 Gives over to Other

A beginning, blossoming  
 Marked now with  
 Plastic fencing  
 Prayer

And love.

## Toxic Charity

Sarah Hartzell

*“In the United States, there’s a growing scandal that we both refuse to see and actually perpetuate. What Americans avoid facing is that while we are very generous in charitable giving, much of that money is either wasted or actually harms the people it’s intended to help”.*

When I first read these opening lines from the book *Toxic Charity* by Robert D. Lupton, and the text that followed, I cast my mind’s eye around at the agencies that serve the homeless here in Boulder, Colorado. I’d become familiar with the scene because I’d been volunteering at the day shelter and had been offering Common Cathedral (see [com-moncathedral.org](http://com-moncathedral.org)) for some time. All I could do was utter a heavy groan. Our providers, all with the best of intentions, unwittingly had fallen into the trap conducting charity in a way that, as Lupton says *“weakens those being served, fosters dishonest relationships, erodes recipient’s work ethic and deepens dependency.”*

As a result I set about trying to establish a different way of doing things that I hoped might be less toxic in its delivery. The result was Boulder Homeless Women’s Initiative (BHWI). In the description that follows I hope to share with you some of the principles from the book and some of the approaches we and others have used. I hope you find this consistent with our Franciscan view.

Here are the basic principles, according to Lupton:

- 1) Never do for the poor what they have (or could have) the capacity to do for themselves.** This is the difference between giving a man a fish and teaching him how to fish. It’s the difference between giving a poor community in the third world a new well, one built by short term mission trip volunteers from out of the country and a second well created in partnership with the people who will use the well. The first well falls into disrepair and no one fixes it because they don’t know how or they wait on the volunteers to come back and do it for them. The second one has been designed, owned and operated by engaging local laborers, and suppliers to build and maintain it.
- 2) Limit one-way giving to emergency situations.** Lupton provides five helpful stages in seeing how compassion can breed dependence:
  - a) Give once and you elicit appreciation.
  - b) Give twice and you create anticipation.
  - c) Give three times and you create expectation.
  - d) Give four times and it becomes entitlement.
  - e) Give five times and you establish dependency.

The food pantries and soup kitchens that simply give away food are not responding to a chronic need but rather an emergency need. One-way giving establishes the provider as “one

up”, and contributes to a sense of learned helplessness. A food coop, on the other hand, that requires a small donation and the active participation of its members affirms the capability of its members and brings them into supportive relationship with each other. I’ve noticed, at our Community Table meals (provided by the day shelter and served by church volunteers), the attitude of entitlement is clearly present in many of the recipients. Since they can get free food with nothing required of them in exchange, few ever volunteer to help out; some don’t even take their dishes to the kitchen for washing. Volunteers get annoyed at the entitlement and start blaming recipients for being lazy, ungrateful etc. without realizing that the system of one way giving creates the behaviors they don’t like. How could this be remedied? There are no easy answers. A good starting place might be to find ways to establish more human-to-human relationships between volunteers and recipients, to build a sense of “one community” rather than allowing an us/them attitude to prevail. It could be as easy as sitting down to talk with people, and listening with compassion. Over time, through those relationships, as strengths are affirmed, and participation cultivated, I believe people can be engaged in the practices of doing with rather than being done for.

**3) Strive to empower the poor through employment, lending, and investing, using grants sparingly to reinforce achievements.** Lupton gives numerous examples of how micro-finance programs work, especially in the developing world. What make those micro-finance programs work is a strong work ethic, entrepreneurial instinct and a stable support system. In the US the work ethic and entrepreneurial survival hustle gets eroded by give away charity. There are successes in US micro-finance programs, especially where there are family or friendship networks to support them.

At Boulder Homeless Women’s Initiative we’ve worked to establish a supportive network, and begun to rebuild work ethic and entrepreneurial instinct by initiating a voucher program where the women can earn gift cards for food, clothes, or a special treat by working at local non-profits at the rate of \$10 per hour. We also have art class, which allows the women to create art and facilitates getting it displayed and sold. They also have produced felt pouches and filled them with toiletries and given them to other women in the homeless community. Our hope is to give them a sense of capability, the opportunity to give back, and the pride of earning their way. Some, but not all have used the program and benefitted from it. Unfortunately the motivation to earn something through one’s own effort may get limited by the presence of so much that is simply given away.

**4) Subordinate self-interests to the needs of those being served.** Lupton says, “Do not allow your organizational priorities and schedule to supersede the needs of the peo-

ple whom you are serving.” So often we require people to abide by our rules, to come to our locations and to come during business hours established for our convenience. It’s also true that we enter into charity giving to fulfill our own unmet needs to be liked and appreciated and that our vision of ourselves and our expectations of others get in the way of effective service. Some self interest cannot be avoided; however a willingness to be inconvenienced, and to go to where people are rather than demand they come to us is a good indication that we are headed in the direction of prioritizing the needs of those being served.

Lupton quotes Jacques Ellul, a French philosopher and lay theologian in *Money and Power*: “It is important that giving be truly free. It must never degenerate into charity in the pejorative sense. Alms giving is Mammon’s perversion of giving. It affirms the superiority of the giver, who thus gains a point on the recipient, binds, demands gratitude, humiliates him and reduces him to a lower state than he had before.”

**5) Listen closely to those you seek to help, especially to what is not being said - unspoken feelings may contain essential clues to effective service.** Lupton notes “that like a good physician, those who are effective in providing healing and encouraging others to flourish need to observe carefully behaviors of those they serve, ask insightful questions and try to hear what isn’t being said as much as what is.”

So often we tend to take things at face value, not exploring the hidden thoughts and feelings behind the words and behaviors. It takes time to encourage people to say what they really mean. The fear of punishment for biting the hand that feeds them, especially in one way giving, keeps many from speaking up about their criticisms.

Becoming an astute observer and listener is a skill to develop. Early on in BHWI we listened to the women’s stories for a long time, and with an eye to deducing from what was being said what unmet needs were present. We quickly learned that the primary needs were for housing, safety, and community. Once we knew that, we could begin to look at how programs could be structured or restructured to provide for those needs. We structured our weekly support meetings for the women to experience being cared for and supported. We also put ourselves in the conversation to dispel the notion that we have perfectly smooth lives, while they don’t. Without “doing” much more than that we found that women more easily found their way into low cost housing and mental health services.

We also held monthly meetings for care providers and church people who had an interest in filling the gaps in services to the unique needs of homeless women. Although there had been many such community wide meetings to promote coordination of services, we departed from the usual protocols by inviting the women themselves to speak about their needs

and experiences. Telling their stories “live” gave the women a sense of voice and influence. Hearing the stories “live” gave the providers a boost in motivation to address the needs because it all became more specific, personal and real. All of us being together face to face in the same room helped us build a sense of community and partnership.

**6) Above all, do no harm.** Lupton says “Do your due diligence to ensure as much as possible that your vision and dreams are actually good for and longed for by the community. Putting up a homeless shelter is a noble desire, but the draw and heightened concentration of the cities poor in a particular neighborhood due to an over sizing of a facility may actually cause more communal harm in the long run than sustainable development.” He goes on to emphasize the importance of running charity programs with good business practices, using community development as a method of long term effective change, even strategic neighboring (people with a desire to help a poor community develop move into the neighborhood).

So now what? So we agree with these principles, but when we look around we don’t see much of it happening around us. Lupton is not suggesting that we simply trash all of the ministries that don’t fit this model. Two questions help us help others move in the direction of change. “*Is there a way we can bring more human dignity to the process of exchange rather than simply using one-way giving? Can we increase our personal involvement with those in crisis to assist them with housing, day care, or other support while they get back on their feet?*” These questions, asked and answered honestly can be the beginning of a course correction for healthier giving.

Lupton suggests the following to leaders for first steps:

- Begin with a discussion on how to support and strengthen the church’s ministry to the poor.
- Engage in an evaluation process to identify the greatest strengths and weaknesses of the current programs.
- Research ways other ministries have increased their effectiveness (read some books and articles on the subject, making sure to include “development”).
- Strategize ways to become more personally, relationally involved in the lives of those you serve begin to focus on those you are most deeply committed to).
- Explore new options, new paradigms of service, to expand current ministries in a more holistic direction (without devaluing current ministries).
- Identify new leadership to go on point for new initiatives (adding new energy to the existing ministry team without threatening the dedicated volunteers who have labored long to maintain the mercy approach).
- Once buy in for the new paradigm has been secured, the door has opened to move ahead with change.

Overall, I believe what Lupton is suggesting is a creative  
*Continued on Page 38*

## Toxic Charity (cont.)

blend of freely flowing compassion toward those in difficult circumstances coupled with a mindfulness of what is, or could be, an approach that more precisely fosters their empowerment. We can't say for anyone else when one-way giving or when more long-term community development is best for any given ministry. It's both, and we can pray for the wisdom to discern the difference. As you've likely experienced, to serve as Francis did and as Jesus did, in a non-toxic way, means everything about how we see people, either as helpless victims of a cruel world or as creative and resourceful despite or even because of their circumstances. If you know, as I do, that each individual is a precious child of God, with tremendous strengths, then I know you are already awed and inspired to join together in the creative dance of darkness and light that reveals the goodness of God on earth. —



### Southeast Convocation, May 2015

1st row from L to R - Joyce Wilding, Lynn Coulthard, Julie Goodin, Judith Atkinson, Nancy Chiafulio, Allison DeFoor, Melissa Hudson-Hall, Paddy Kennington

2nd row - Gini Halus, Gayle Roberts\*, Judy Kidd, Janet Nail, Anne Ocorr, Liz Peacock, Amy Nicolson, and Alice Baird

3rd - Dave Weeks, Lance Renault, Ed Holm, Tupper Morehead, Mike Halus, Frank Romanowicz, Bill Nail\*, John M. Fox, Ann Van Devoort, Lyle McLevain, and Dominic George (\* SSF Associates)

Joyce Wilding, the JPIC Animator on Chapter, was the presenter, and the theme was **Rebuild my Church in the 21st Century**. She wrote to say that part of their conversation was shaped by the idea of **transfiguration** in John Gatta's *The Inspiration of Christ and Creation* (2011). Transfiguration is an organizing principle that can bridge the immanence of this world with the transcendence of the one to come. The wisdom of the writers of the early church and our current concerns for the environment, ecology, elevated levels of consciousness, and the transformation of society can be

connected in the concept of transfiguration. For example, an enhanced liturgical commemoration of transfiguration can be the Christian expression of Earth Day liturgies currently held in some churches.

All convocation participants were encouraged to participate in art-as-meditation exercises with the paper labyrinth or an outdoor labyrinth. They were asked to remember the path in is the path out and the path in takes you out and around the six rose pedals at the center of an 11-ring loop labyrinth. Joyce read a prayer poem for each day of the week while John Michael Fox played violin. Participants were invited to think of the rose as described by medieval English mystics—the soul's becoming at last "one" with God. As T.S. Eliott concluded his *Four Quartets* on a note of universal conjunction:

*And all shall be well and All manner of thing shall be well*

*When the tongues of flames are in-folded  
Into the crowned knot of fire*

*And the fire and the rose are one.*

There were a number of reasons for selecting Transfiguration as one topic for the SE Convocation. However the history of our Order as written by John Brockmann inspired us to attend to this topic as we approach the 100th anniversary of TSSF's founding in 2017.

## Journal Entries On The Mexican Border

Victoria Tester

The School Sisters of St. Francis know the labyrinths of Jesus the Worker, *Jesús Obrero*.

Some people call this the second poorest neighborhood in Juarez. The Sisters say good-bye to the two towering June sunflowers in their soap-smelling courtyard and the beautiful silence of their house, punctuated only by the song from their three parakeets, yellow and blue, named after three saints: Francis, Clare and Ignatius. The Sisters leave their rose and yellow painted walls, walk past the purple coneflowers at their door, and go out into the hectic traffic of Juarez. I go, too.

We carry heavy bags of food to twenty families. I forget to look up; the bags are so heavy. We go down as if into a building built into the earth below a street, and when I do look up I see a mother, a maquila worker, whose six children do not play outside, as most children in Juarez do not play outside because so many children have vanished.

\*\*\*

I don't know where we are now, but I like it. It is like a garden, green trees bearing pomegranates, hiding the miracle of the red seeds in their bitter white corridors. There is an elderly couple. They are fragile; they don't want to leave their

home of forty years. Forty years ago is when they planted the trees, and all the hummingbirds began to visit. But their children are worried for them. They are forced to sell.

I see no addresses, few street signs, only streets of dust but the Sisters have found the next house, where a thin young mother cannot eat without vomiting because she's had a sunstroke. She and her husband occupy a gutted house that has been, like so many of the houses in Juarez when half the people fled, abandoned.

Deeper into the labyrinth, dingy cement walls too narrow, too illogical and winding for human passage, we find the very old man. His room is completely filled by his bed, with only enough room for two people to stand inside. A thermos of water sits on his antique bureau. The heat is almost unbearable, but he dons a long-sleeve shirt over his undershirt, for the dignity of a photo. He spends his life in this tiny room, sitting on the bed, or else huddled in it in winter. Christmas, the priest of Jesús Obrero, who must know about labyrinths, visits, and they share a bottle of tequila.

\*\*\*

The people we visit are poorer and poorer, and, impossibly, more and more joyful. You'll say I am making this up, but I swear it. An old woman with iron gray hair and face scorched by the sun and few teeth walks out of a rickety makeshift construction, her home. She is radiant. I can count her bones. God rubbed them together, and she is a palace for the Spirit.

I am lost, but I follow. Carry the bags of food, the beans, the rice, the can of sardines, the can of vegetables, the little can of milk, the bag of soap the children always smile at. Over sidewalks, turn here, and here, and here, to the right and across, inside, and we find a woman in a surgical mask; she is on dialysis, in the iron bed in a one-room house, too weak to stand. Her husband reels in grief. He wants to fix the vintage television for her, and he doesn't know what to do anymore. But she sings. His dying wife is singing.

The room is full of the song of three women. A little girl is watching, learning the easy, and the difficult, ways of love. I don't know the words, but I stumble, and I follow.

\*\*\*

Thieves have stolen the Eucharist and the wine from the little Anglican Church in the colonia. They also took the propane tank, and the stove. They took the water pipes. They stripped the wiring from the walls; even tore off the insulation. This was after they broke the windows, busted the metal grilles, and broke open the door.

But the minister keeps going, and the congregation keeps going. This winter, they'll wear their coats during the service, warmed by the small fire in their makeshift stove—the other half of the huge bell of the church of San José de Anapra.

The weekly offering is about ten dollars. The minister re-

ceives no salary.

She visits the hospitals and the prisons. She prays for bags of old clothes, any old clothes for women, or blankets. A woman gave birth in the prison and had nothing with which to wrap her newborn. So the mother cut off what she could of the pants she herself was wearing, and swaddled her child in it.

Sometimes people in Mexico, strangers, mock her, laugh at her minister's collar. They've never seen a woman priest. Her name is Reverend Tomasa Torres, and she is the only woman minister in Juarez, in the entire state of Chihuahua.

\*\*\*

I had a shouting match with You five years ago when You first called me to do this work on the Mexican border, telling You could surely choose more wisely than me; I was a bad choice. I was tired of the poor, sick of suffering, and wanted to be alone in my room with my hard-won fire and my books and did not want to go speak publicly, let alone ask for money. If anything, I wanted to become Benedictine, not a Franciscan. I did not want to share my quiet room.

But You wouldn't let it go.

The very last words of the fight, I ask, 'Why me?' And I distinctly heard You: 'Because you are willing.' That sounds something like predestination to me, which I'm still not happy about, but at that point who could argue? I knew what You answered was true. I was willing.

So I got on with it. Now five years later, I am ill.

You say joyfully, 'Now you can have your room, and your solitude.' And I am crying, because the broken heart of the world is going to be in that room with me.

Like my illness, it is in my blood. There's no way I can go into my room without it. Everything I have seen, the people I have visited, those that You and so many others made it



possible to help for a while. So much human pain. So much joy. Not the room I asked for. But it's a huge gift.

You want me to have this, a room with the whole world in it. How is it possible You can love me so much?

*School Sisters of St. Francis in Juarez,*

*whose work among the very poor is aided by the Bean Project. Sister Carol Jean Ory is on the left, and Victoria is holding the baby.*

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