



# The Franciscan Times

A Magazine of the Third Order,  
Society of St. Francis,  
Province of the Americas

*Pace e bene*

Spring 2019

## New Developments in Our Order

By R. John Brockmann, Editor

## Holy Poverty & Perfect Joy

By Susan Pitchford

**W**ith spring barely upon us, and this issue nearing completion, I am already looking forward to our summer issue, which will pursue in depth some interesting new dimensions of our Order that are sketched in this first edition of 2019. In our article on page 17, “Young Anglican Franciscans in Northern Mexico,” and in the summary on page 15 of news throughout TSSF, we see evidence of successful efforts to engage a younger generation of Franciscans. We will look deeper into these developments in our Summer 2019 issue.

Who are these “Young Franciscans?” What do they seek? How can we help and encourage them? What can they teach us?

We will also be exploring the rise of virtual fellowships. If you scan through the biographies of the newly professed, you will see that half are members of virtual fellowships. On page 17 of your 2019 *Directory and Intercession List* you will see that the number of virtual fellowships has grown to three from 0 in 2015. What do they seek? What can they teach us? What will be the effects of these “Zoom fellowships” be upon physical fellowships that require driving time in all kinds of weather?

Stay tuned!

*The whole Christian life is a life in which... the more we progress, the poorer we get so that the man who has progressed most, is totally poor—he has to depend directly on God. He’s got nothing left in himself.*

Thomas Merton *Confessions of a Guilty Bystander*  
(Based on Sessions from the Western Convocation, August 2018)

**Y**ou know how you get onto a subject and it just won’t leave you alone? I’ve been thinking about poverty almost incessantly for several years now. Well, it makes sense: poverty is a core Franciscan value, after all. But why did Francis and Clare place poverty at the heart of their spirituality? It could have been something else: given Jesus’ summary of the law, love is always a good choice. And of course, love, along with humility and joy, are the three “notes” of our Order. But poverty has a special place in Franciscan spirituality, and in these reflections I’d like to propose some reasons for that.

### “Holy” vs. “Unholy” Poverty

First, though, it’s important to make a distinction between the “holy poverty” Francis and Clare treasured and the “unholy poverty” forced on the world’s most vulnerable people. Our founders took on poverty voluntarily, both having experienced luxury in their youths.

*Holy Poverty, cont. on page 3*



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*Holy Poverty and Perfect Joy, cont. from p. 1*



*Susan Pitchford*

Poverty rooted in the selfishness and greed of the powerful is hardly holy in itself, though it can become holy to the person who embraces it for the love of God.

As Franciscans, poverty is at the heart of who we are. That much is clear, but figuring out what that means is the work of a lifetime. Augustine Thompson is a Dominican historian who's pointed out that for Francis, poverty and humility are so close that at times they're virtually interchangeable, and sometimes when Francis seems to be talking about one, he's actually thinking of the other. For instance, in the story of the novice who comes to Francis asking for a psalter, you may remember that Francis turns him away three times, lamenting the novice's offense against holy poverty. "If you get a psalter, you'll soon be wanting a breviary. Then you'll sit in your big chair and summon the brothers, saying 'Bring me my breviary.'"

And yet, Francis himself had a psalter. Was he having a little hypocritical lapse? There's a different way to see this. Thompson notes that psalters were commonly used in the Middle Ages by

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*Holy Poverty, cont. from p. 3*

people learning to read. It seems this brother wanted to become literate, and while most of us would applaud that goal, Francis had little time for scholarship. He knew that literate brothers had a tendency to get themselves ordained, so that in time, this guy would indeed be sitting in a big chair, snapping his fingers and calling for a brother to “bring me my breviary.”

The point is, Francis was less worried about a brother wanting to possess something than he was about the lure of upward mobility. Desiring a “better” position relative to others is more dangerous than desiring “stuff.” And while Francis did, of course, take Lady Poverty as his bride, it’s interesting that he rejected having his order called the *Frates Pauperes* (“Poor Brothers”), preferring instead *Frates Minores*, or “Lesser Brothers.” It was less, Thompson argues, about poverty in itself and more about making oneself small and the servant of all.

**St. Clare’s “Privilege of Poverty”**

I think the degree to which Francis valued poverty for itself is something we could debate, but there’s no question about Clare’s commitment to poverty *as* poverty. In her time, a vow of poverty meant no personal possessions, but a nun could live a relatively comfortable and secure life because of possessions held by her community. Yet Clare stubbornly refused both income-

*The point is, Francis was less worried about a brother wanting to possess something than he was about the lure of upward mobility.*

generating property and the safety of the city walls: San Damiano is down the hill from Assisi, in the middle of nowhere, utterly unprotected. A fine place, the authorities thought, for a group of upper-crust women to live. The sooner they got over this girlish fantasy, the less chance for something to go horribly wrong.

Clare waged a lifelong battle with the Church hierarchy, who kept trying to force her into the Benedictine mold when she and her sisters were forging a brand-new way. Pope Gregory IX granted her the “Privilege of Poverty,” but it was a partial



*Francis weds Lady Poverty, Giotto’s fresco in the Basilica of St. Francis in Assisi.*

victory and, after his death, his successors started furiously backpedaling: they required some of the monasteries to accept property, made them live under the Benedictine Rule, and so on. It was one thing to cut a deal with a pope who liked and supported her. But a Rule would make it law, and Clare fought for that Rule until her dying breath.

Why was it so important? It’s no sin to own things, after all. If Jesus doesn’t recognize me at the Last Judgment, it won’t be because I’m writing this on a nice laptop. I don’t in any way want to discount the importance to Francis and Clare of literal economic poverty, of not knowing where the next meal is coming from. They both knew that God regards the poor with a special tenderness, and that the uncertainty created by a lack of resources forces us to depend on God like nothing else can.

Yet I notice that the gospels give us two sets of Beatitudes: in Luke’s version Jesus blesses the poor—full stop. But in Matthew, he blesses the poor *in spirit*. It’s important to avoid spiritualizing away the things Jesus said about money. I’m pretty sure he meant them. At the same time, it’s important to recognize that neither wealth, nor

*cont. on page 5*

*Holy Poverty, cont. from p. 4*

its roommates, status and power, can supply all our needs. If they could, we wouldn't see the likes of Robin Williams, Kate Spade and Tony Bourdain committing suicide. Matthew's account of the Beatitudes tells me that Jesus also looks with tender compassion on those who "have it all" and find that "it all" is not enough to keep them alive.

In this essay, I want to focus on what we might call "holy poverty of spirit." I'd like to suggest that there are at least two pivotal moments, two key transitions, through which poverty of any kind can take us deeper into God. I believe that it was Francis and Clare's shared intuition of this that made them so fierce in their commitment to poverty. They both believed that material poverty was a necessary beginning. But they both understood that poverty takes many forms, each of which can take us into the heart of Christ.

**Into Poverty: First Steps**

Some people's lives are harder and more painful than others', but we all have poverty in our lives to some degree. There's something, or someone, we want but can't have. There's a situation we can't control, maybe a need we're expected to fill but we can't. In my own case, teaching is a form of poverty that regularly brings me to my knees. I teach sociology to students at the University of Washington; this means that I regularly enter rooms where anywhere from twenty-five to several hundred people are waiting for me to provide something tasty and nutritious for their brains. Here's how this usually goes:

**I (approaching the lecture hall):** "Lord, where am I going to get enough knowledge to feed all these people? Can't you send them to someone else?"

**Jesus:** "There's no need to send them away. You give them something to eat."

**I:** "Ugh."

**I (after class):** "You did it again—you're amazing!"

**Jesus:** "Told ya."

In other words, my poverty lies in being responsible, on a regular basis, to put on a meal for people when I know I don't have the resources. There was a time when I just felt this as a deep personal sense of inadequacy. I don't say that feeling is

*I noticed at some point along the way that my prayer changed from "I feel so inadequate right now" to "I feel my poverty right now."*

entirely gone, but it's shifted, and this is the first transition. I noticed at some point along the way that my prayer changed from "I feel so inadequate right now" to "I feel my poverty right now."

Well, so what? I'd still rather be brimming with self-confidence, right? But to go from *I suck* to *I'm feeling my poverty* is to reorient myself toward God and the values of God's kingdom. This is precisely the sort of change that happens when "rotten luck" becomes "carrying our cross," and thereby entering into the Passion of Christ, uniting our suffering with his. It's about love, it's about loyalty, our allegiance to God over all else. And even if we didn't heroically renounce the more comfortable way, it's never too late to embrace our discomfort for the love of God.

When we do that, then our suffering takes on spiritual significance. And isn't that what we want when we suffer and there's no remedy? I'm no ascetic, and if there's a remedy, I want it. But when there's not, then at least I want my suffering to have meaning. The one thing I can't bear is for suffering to be pointless, to be unseen by God, to be barren. If I can't get rid of it, then, by God, I want fruit out of it—the character, endurance and hope we've been promised (Romans 5:3-5).

**Deeper into Poverty: The Place of Refuge**

It's been said of fasting that it creates a vacuum within us, which draws God in. I think the same could be said of poverty, but I want to suggest that it goes both ways. Our need creates space within us that makes room for God; the process of *kenosis* is all about this. But poverty can also pull us into God, and I want to draw on Clare and some other medieval mystics to show how this happens.

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*Holy Poverty, cont. from p. 5*

In her intriguing study of women mystics, Carol Lee Flinders captures something of why Clare was so infatuated with poverty:

Clare's life of poverty was not a grim, calculated handing over but rather a joyous, easy, impatient flinging aside: lovers don't feel the cold, lovers don't care what they eat—and Clare was a lover, running full tilt toward her Beloved . . . Christian contemplatives have always taught that poverty 'of the spirit' leads to unitive prayer, prayer so undistracted and so deep that all barriers between oneself and God vanish. By undertaking spiritual disciplines, you free yourself from all attachments and all preoccupations, *creating a kind of inner vacuum that God cannot help but fill.*"

Flinders, Carol Lee, *Enduring Grace: Living Portraits of Seven Women Mystics* (San Francisco, HarperOne, 1993), pp. 23, 24; emphasis mine.

We begin by drawing God into ourselves, but as medieval devotion turned increasingly toward the wounds of Christ, those wounds—particularly the wound in his side—came to be seen as a place of intimacy and refuge. (Wright, Wendy M. *Sacred Heart: Gateway to God*, Ossining, NY: Orbis, 2001). Drawing on imagery from the Song of Songs (2:14), medieval mystics saw the wounded side as “the cleft in the rock into which the contemplative beloved is invited.” (Ibid, p. 21.) Here is Bernard of Clairvaux, whose mysticism was—famously—romantic, passionate, even erotic:

Enter, O my soul, enter into the right side of thy crucified Lord. Enter through this blessed wound into the centre of the all-loving Heart of Jesus, pierced through for love of thee. Take thy rest in the clefts of the Rock sheltered from the tempests of the world. Enter into thy God! Covered with herbage and fragrant flowers, the path of life lies open before thee. This is the way of salvation, the bridge leading to heaven. (*Ibid.*)

What does all of this have to do with poverty? If the first pivotal or transitional movement is when we shift from regretting our poverty to seeing it

as invested with spiritual significance, then the second is this: The wound in the side of Christ was understood by medieval mystics as a kind of shortcut into his heart, into a place we could flee to for refuge. It takes us to the deepest intimacy with our God: that cleft in the rock where the beloved is called to shelter from the storms of the world. And that wound, that “way in,” is poverty.

Here is the power of God to redefine things. All of the struggles and sufferings that seem to diminish us are, in reality, paring us down to a size that will allow us to enter that sacred place of union. The diminishment is real; we are being “cut down to size.” But far from being a destructive process, it's one that is taking us to the place for which we were created. It's part of the movement back to our Source, to the place of ultimate healing and peace.

The second and deeper step into poverty, then, takes us from embracing our troubles for Christ's sake to recognizing and accepting those troubles as an invitation. We can be resigned to our suffering, or we can hear the call to enter into the place of deepest *one-ing*, as Lady Julian would say, with God. To hear that call and follow it is to learn in the depths of our own heart that “all will be well.”

***Let's be honest here. There are times when suffering is so great that I frankly don't care what spiritual significance it may have; I just want it to stop.***

### Conclusions

Poverty draws God into us, and then draws us into God. It's no wonder Clare spoke of poverty as a “privilege,” and Francis embraced her as a bride. They understood, and we do too, that the most profound spiritual truths tend to come to us in the form of paradoxes: God is both three and one. You must lose your life to save it. The last will be first. And as St. Paul said, we live “as having nothing, yet possessing all things” (2 Cor. 6:10).

But let's get honest here. There are times when suffering is so great that I frankly don't care what spiritual significance it may have; I just want it to

*cont. on page 7*

*We can be resigned to our suffering, or we can hear the call to enter into the place of deepest one-ing, as Lady Julian would say, with God.*

stop. I can take a certain amount of pain—physical or emotional—but when it becomes unendurable, I don’t care if it will buy me a seat in the angelic choir; just give me some drugs and make it go away. I have been to that place more than once, and maybe you have too.

If so, I want to speak a word of compassion: we can cling to what we know, even if we aren’t feeling it. God gets that we are more than our emotions in a given moment. And the God who has promised to wipe away every tear from our eyes is no sadist; suffering and grief and death are what Jesus came to conquer with his own suffering body and soul.

We don’t have to celebrate the brokenness of the world. But when it touches our own hearts and causes them to splinter and break, there is a part of us that can rejoice in our poverty. We know there’s a gift hidden in there, and, even if we can but see it, it will indeed take us to the place of “perfect joy.” ♦

## REFLECTIONS

Mary  
Janet Fedders



*We all contain Mary’s strength, and her vulnerability, all of us, male and female. As Franciscans, we are open, not closed. We bear Christ to the world every day.*

**M**ary has been with me this February. Ever since the Feast of Epiphany, she’s been rattling around in my head and mostly in my heart. I decided to keep a small crèche scene up near my desk to radiate the light of Epiphany throughout the season.

And then a young friend of mine sent me a card, a representation of Mary called The Divine Journey, from Janet McKenzie. (If you don’t know Janet McKenzie, visit her website; you’ll be changed. (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tCYTIBHzQBA>) This card portrays a strong, determined, but very peaceful Mary holding a sleeping Jesus. She is surrounded by timeless women in a setting of sunlight.

Next arrived a gift from someone of the icon Mary of the Cosmos, by Bernadette Bostwick, SGM. This one triggered a season of cosmic dreams for me. It portrays a cosmos around and in Mary, her openness to the cosmos evident in her posture. (<http://www.greenmountainmonastery.org/the-work-of-our-hands/mary-of-the-cosmos/>)

Mary also came up in a healing session I did recently.

So, where do I take this? Why do I share it with you? Strength, that’s why. That rare strength that fully contains vulnerability. That opens up instead of closing up. We all contain Mary’s strength, and her vulnerability, all of us, male and female. As Franciscans, we are open, not closed. We bear Christ to the world every day.

So, I’m wondering how the Epiphany Mary, so present to me, will carry me into Lent. *Stay tuned.* ♦

Lenten Rejoicing:  
A Message from the  
Bishop Protector

*The Rt. Rev. David Rice*



*So, Sisters and Brothers, my hope and prayer for you and for myself in this Lenten Season is that we will laugh a little louder, smile a bit broader and embrace and bring joy into as many circumstances as possible.*

*Greetings Sisters and Brothers of TSSF,*

I have been invited by The Very Reverend Penny Bridges, Dean of St. Paul's Cathedral in the Diocese of San Diego, to preach at their Zydeco Mass on Fat Tuesday. Penny has described this occasion as a "raucous celebration" where there is dancing in the aisles and even on the pews. She attended the installation of our new Cathedral Dean at the beginning of Advent last year. Almost immediately after the service Penny wrote inviting me to preach at this event. I can only surmise that she perceived that I would fit in nicely into such a raucous environment. A New Orleans Jazz Band provides music for the service and the after-match function is a Cajun Dinner. Fat Tuesday indeed! And in my element I will be!

I must confess, I am not thoroughly convinced that we engage in Mardi Gras, Fat or Shrove Tuesday with as much vigor as we should. If I am completely and utterly honest, some of Fat Tuesday activities I have attended in the past felt a bit like moving towards palliative care. Oh, there were certainly enough pancakes to more than satisfy one's hunger, but joyful occasions, not often enough.

As you know, Mardi Gras has typically been the practice where we eat entirely too much rich and fatty food before the ritual fasting of Lent occurs. Another description I heard years ago is that this is one of the *counter-ethic occasions* where we are given permission to be slightly naughty so that we have something to confess for Lent. Be that as it may, I do think that we have a lot to learn regarding embracing joy and celebration and to simply be more-than-slightly silly at least once in a while. So, Sisters and Brothers, my hope and prayer for you and for myself in this Lenten Season is that we will laugh a little louder, smile a bit broader and embrace and bring joy into as many circumstances as possible.

So perhaps Fat Tuesday is the absolute ideal prelude to the Season of Lent. It would do us no harm, in fact, it would be to our great benefit, if we were to add to our *Franciscan Way (Micah 6:8), Act Justly, Love Mercy, Walk Humbly, to be embraced by and bring Joy in all circumstances.* Now that is a Lenten Discipline!



Every Day a Sacrament

*Diana Turner-Forte*

**R**ecently, I informed the choirmaster at my church that having taken a one-year sabbatical from liturgical dance, I was not inclined to dance on Palm Sunday or in any future worship services. What had become a tradition, four services beginning at 7:30 a.m. was going to require a change. For ten years the ritual of Palm Sunday at our church began with the Blessing of the Palms, procession into the sacred space and the reading of the Passion, followed by a dance as the centerpiece. Accompanied by a single solo voice, the dance "Were You There?" and song filled the space, replacing the sermon. The choirmaster replied with a very gracious and understanding note about respecting my decision and valuing the holiness of our collaborations and remarked that "our lives are marked by seasons."

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*Every Day a Sacrament, cont.  
from p. 8*



*Diana working with her students.*

For forty years, my prayer life and church experience had been woven together through liturgical dance, especially on holy days, occasional feast days, baptismal celebrations, and even a few memorial services. It was an identity that I clung to and felt to be my unique contribution. But much more was going on in this new season. While for me embodiment of worship was a natural and deeply religious experience—for many people prayer is still very much a mental and verbal endeavor and though expressing all that is holy through movement was appreciated as *my* mode of prayer, in most cases others were challenged by the experience.

It was a revelation that came to me after a morning session of centering prayer. Trusting the insight, I surrendered to the Holy Spirit. Instinctively, I had a *knowing* there would be no turning back and another path would appear for the sharing of sacred dance. Even still, I was a bit disheartened by the finality of the decision. Since my response to queries or introductions about myself had always

been “I am a dancer,” I expected that my next feeling would be a downward spiral into deep sadness or loss. That didn’t happen!

Instead I had a reverie of reflections from an earlier time in my life. Long before I had heard of the Third Order Society of St. Francis, the Francis and Clare charism filled my bones. Dance and movement were sacred ideas and experiences for me, incarnational moments, so to speak. The scriptural quote, “Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you . . .” (I Corinthians 6:1), enlivened my work and was my daily mantra, for I knew I was not alone in my creative endeavors.

Most people don’t realize that unless performing on the stage, dancers spend weeks and endless hours in front of mirrors—far from being an exercise in vanity; it could better be described as a study in perfection. Classical ballet is a non-forgiving art form in reshaping the body to be an instrument of seamless beauty. Hours of rehearsal to perfect a leg line and height or studying a series of shapes for them to appear effortless required a deep belief that the inner eye would produce something better than what the two eyes were reflecting. Relinquishing pride and judgment to the greater good of the group were lessons in emptying of self (poverty of spirit) and fortitude.

Our lives were simple, we understood humility and, as a community, we loved each other immensely. We knitted mittens, hats, scarves

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*Every Day a Sacrament, cont.  
from p. 9*



and legwarmers for children of families in need, we did extra performances to call attention to our brothers dying of AIDS, and we walked to the studio (10 very long Chicago city blocks) instead of riding the train; pooling our money to feed the beggar on the street (there weren't as many then)!

In this newfound freedom of letting go of the identity of a liturgical dancer, a vast opening and life-giving vortex appeared. It seemed that now, other creative ideas could unfold. Besides all of that, on any given day I have the luxury of driving (avoiding squirrels, turtles, and deer) through a rural countryside on the way to my studio. Some days I teach creative movement to adults who have been labelled "disabled" mentally and physically; other days I teach Pilates/Yoga to people serving the Monarch Creative Arts and Community Center, and every afternoon I teach classical ballet to students between 4-17 years of age.

What has been transforming and healing in *making our Lord known everywhere* and *seeing God in everyone*, especially people who are not disciplined in an art form that requires care of the body, provides lucid moments of powerlessness, while simultaneously holding students in sacred space. *To spread the spirit of love and harmony* toward human beings struggling to make connections between brain and body, especially teens who encounter many psychological and bodily crises both from society and peers, forced me to teach myself to simplify the movements, shapes and concept being communicated. By developing these skills I'm able to reach a much broader spectrum of people than I ever imagined. Doing this work and bringing forth the notes of *humility, love and joy* is not always easy, simple or even fun; but the soul knows what it is doing, perseverance endures and there is nothing I'd rather be doing!

My beloved community looks much different these days, but incredibly diverse with a blend of ages, genders, abilities, and ethnicities. I take breaths between Divine intervention, prayer and the mystery unfolding into another season of "I am a Teaching Artist in Dance and Movement," even though titles and roles don't matter that much anymore. And I close my days saying, "thank you and amen." ♦

***Long before I had heard of the Third Order Society of St. Francis, the Francis and Clare charism filled my bones. Dance and movement were sacred ideas and experiences for me, incarnational moments, so to speak.***

## The Breath of God

Lance Renault

*What might you say to those who want to know what we are about as an Order? Consider sharing this piece with them from Lance Renault.*

**F**or those who would seek to know God and the fullness of his love, stop your striving to find him. He is not in a place beyond yourself. We may speak of drawing close to God, or we may say, "Come Lord Jesus." But that's all metaphor, because he is already here, within you!

*"...the mystery that has been kept hidden for ages and generations, but is now disclosed to the Lord's people...is Christ in you, the hope of glory." (Col. 1:26-27)*

And what about the fullness of God's love.....how do we experience that? That also is already within us. God's presence and his love are inseparable because they are really one and the same. The Apostle John tells us:

*"And so we know and rely on the love God has for us. God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in them." (1 John 4:16)*



*Early morning fog – God's breath – on the lake at the Kanuga Conference Center in Hendersonville, North Carolina. Photo by Alice Baird*

However, knowledge and experience are two different things. Are we looking for the personal experience of love? Then look first for experiencing the intimate presence of God, the author of love. All creation emanates from him and reflects his glory. Like the fish whose life is sustained by the water in which it lives, so all of creation is sustained by the permeating presence and love of God.

Yes, we can quote the Bible, and we can reason our way

through a logical understanding of where to find the love of God, but that doesn't mean we are able to *experience* the transcendence of God's love. For the experience of God's love we have to move from the propositional side of our faith to the contemplative/mystical side. This is countercultural, and yet it is exactly the radical faith that Jesus taught. It means the death of the false self that we have created over a lifetime of managing our fears and fostering our self-centered universe.

The true self, on the other hand, is the self that God gave us at birth to reflect his sacrificial love so beautifully described by the Apostle Paul:

*cont. on page 12*

*The Breath of God, cont. from  
p. 11*

***We know that daily sleep is crucial to physical and mental health as the body is repaired, restored, and re-energized. In the same way, contemplation restores and recenters our spirit so that it is more receptive to God's presence.***

*"Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres." (1 Corinthians 13:4-7)*

There is a process, developed by the Christian monastic tradition, to reclaim this depth of selfless love that is available to everyone. In the Franciscan Order it employs a personal discipline that includes worship, penitence, prayer, self-denial, retreat, study, simplicity, work, and obedience. And these practices are not restricted to religious orders alone.

Anyone can employ them. They are all important for rediscovering our true selves, but for many, prayer is the most important. And in a noisy world clamoring for our attention, prayer needs to include the contemplative prayer of silence. We know that daily sleep is crucial to physical and mental health as the body is repaired, restored, and re-energized. In the same way, contemplation restores and recenters our spirit so that it is more receptive to God's presence.

And so love is rediscovered, but also faith and hope. And when the body returns to the earth, these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love. It is the very breath of God.



## FRANCISCAN NEWS

### Reflecting on My First Year as Minister General

*Rev. John Hebenton*

***Ed. Note:*** *We received these reflections in 2018 as we were going to press with our Advent issue, so we present them here.*

**J**ust over a year ago the Inter-Provincial Third Order Chapter (IPTOC) elected me as Minister General. It has been a humbling responsibility to be the functional head and servant to the worldwide Order. This year I have had the privilege of representing the whole Order at the Conference and then Chapter of the Asia-Pacific Province; the meeting of Chapter for the Provinces of Europe and then the Americas, as well as attending meetings of The Central Fund and Franciscan Aid.

Since my election two new Ministers have been elected, Janet Fedders in the Americas, and Blair Matheson in the Pacific. I am grateful for all Tom Johnson offered us until his death earlier this year [2018]. And I thank Maggie Smith for her ministry in the Pacific. We have met as Ministers via "Zoom" three times this year—the wonders of technology. These meeting allow us to grow in our joint responsibilities for our Order. We are able to share both the areas of growth and as well as our concerns. As a western religious Order, we are struggling with an aging membership and, at times, we wonder about our future. But it is also clear that the Holy Spirit

*cont. on page 13*

*Minister General's Reflections,  
cont. from p. 12*



*Rev. John Hebenton, Minister  
General of The Society of St.  
Francis*

*The costs of climate  
change are being felt  
now. We can't keep  
doing the little we are  
doing. Drastic action  
is needed, or we will  
leave our children and  
grandchildren a hostile  
climate.*

is at work in all five provinces building on the work begun last year at IPTOC. Thus, these are exciting times to be Minister General.

### **Global Climate Emergency**

But these are also daunting times. One of the Chapter reps for the Americas is Rev. Canon Dr. Jeff Gollither, Adviser for the Environment, Climate Change and Sustainable Communities at the Anglican Communion Office at the United Nations. At the American Province's recent Chapter, he spoke about the UN's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) recent warning to humanity about the global climate emergency issued on 8 October. In this special report the IPCC said that, if we continue on our present course, we will face irreversible catastrophic changes by 2040. Jeff then shared an article that he and Rev. Canon Dr. Rachel Mash, Environmental Coordinator for the Anglican Church of Southern Africa, had written for the *Anglican News* ([www.anglicannews.org/blogs/2018/10/anglicans-respond-to-climate-crisis](http://www.anglicannews.org/blogs/2018/10/anglicans-respond-to-climate-crisis)). The science is clear that we must cut 50% of global greenhouse emissions by 2030 and essentially eliminate them by 2050. "This must be done in order to prevent global temperatures from rising no more than 0.5 degrees Celsius above present levels, rather the 1.0 degree increase that the Paris Agreement considered safe." The costs of climate change are being felt now. We can't keep doing the little we are doing. Drastic action is needed, or we will leave our children and grandchildren a hostile climate.

### **What Does Hope Look Like?**

To be honest, it is hard to know what to do. I feel helpless and a little bereft. Yet as a Franciscan, doing nothing is not an option. As I write this we are about to enter into the season of Advent; a season of hope. What does hope look like in this world where we are not sure what future our churches and our Order has, and some even suggest humanity is under threat?

Walter Brueggemann suggests that hope begins with honestly acknowledging the situation we are in (*Reality, Grief, Hope* by Walter Brueggemann). The world has changed. Let's stop pretending it is business as usual. He says that when we can do that then we can give voice to our lament both to each other, and to God. As I ponder the future of the Church and our world, I am left feeling bewildered, uncertain, angry, frustrated and without hope. I grieve for what was, what is, and what will be. And I have no idea how to respond. Brueggemann says the Psalms can help us give voice to all that in their laments. I wonder what our prayer life looks like when shaped by these honest laments. Brueggemann says that only when we honestly grapple with our present reality and only when we allow our lament to have voice can we know real hope—a hope based on God. This is not an easy hope where God will fix everything, either through scientific breakthrough or divine action. This is the hope born of the knowledge that God stands with us in

*cont. on page 14*

Minister General's Reflections,  
cont. from p. 13

The three questions we  
need to hold on to are:

• *Whose are we – how  
might we describe God?*

• *Who are we as people  
who seek to follow the  
way of God? (and in light  
of that)*

• *What is ours to do?*

lament, weeps with us in our despair. The world desperately needs people who offer this kind of honesty.

Hope also comes in knowing that in the cross we are freed from the chains that hold us to our current ways of both seeing things and of living that are leading to such dire consequences. This is real hope. What might this look like? I have often said that the three questions we need to hold on to are: *Whose are we – how might we describe God? Who are we as people who seek to follow the way of God?* (and in light of that) *What is ours to do?*

As Franciscans we might answer those questions in some very different ways. To be a Franciscan is to walk in the footsteps of Francis and Clare, who walked in the footsteps of Christ. When we follow Francis's example of beginning with the gospels, we are given a picture in Jesus' life of the God who is generous, hospitable, compassionate and just towards all people and to creation as a whole. To be Franciscan is to seek to live the gospel in the way of Francis and Clare; to be a people marked by these characteristics individually and as an Order. This must always be our starting point. Too often we move to *what shall we do and how*, and we miss the *why?* Starting with God keeps before us the mission of God. Ours is to live in God's ongoing mission marked by generosity, hospitality, compassion and justice.

#### **"The World Has Need of This Franciscan Spirit"**

Pope Pius XI said to the Secular Franciscans of Italy on July 1 1956, "The spirituality of a saint is nothing other than his special manner of representing God, of speaking about him, of going to him, of treating with him... There is a Franciscan manner of contemplating Jesus, of loving him, of imitating him. The world has need of this Franciscan spirit, of this Franciscan vision of life. It is you who must know it deeply, to love it with enthusiasm, and to live it, and spread it." (Vorreux and Pembleton, *A Short History of the Franciscan Family*, Franciscan Press, 1989, p. 105) The world is in such need of this vision. Over the last year I can come to appreciate how our Rule is the frame which invites us to more deeply know, more enthusiastically love, more intentionally live and spread this spirit. How do we live that brings hope for this world and all that live in it?

I want to finish with a short prayer. As we look to our uncertain future, I invite us all to pray honestly that we might be icons of hope for this troubled world we live in.

*Christ our Lord,  
we ask you humbly to gather us under the wings of your love.  
Keep us alive with the water of remorse,  
the air of contemplation,  
the fire of love  
and the earth of humility,  
so that we may join you,  
who are life itself and blessed through all ages. Amen.*

(Sermons 11.394, Anthony of Padua)



## News of Provinces Throughout the Third Order

*Janet Fedders*

*It seems that no matter where you look at the Third Order around the world, you can observe lovely green shoots of new growth.*

### Province of Asia Pacific

There is a lot of growth right now in South Korea with the Community of St. Francis (CSF) directly involved in a number of ways, including counseling and fiscal oversight. Minister Provincial Godfrey Fryar and his wife Bronwyn just completed an extensive tour of South Korea, complete with press interviews and banquets. Another area of growth this province is experiencing is Sri Lanka, where there are no counselors per se, so Australians have filled in and are doing the formation counseling via Skype.

### Province of Africa

There is a new group of tertiaries forming in Malawi, and they will be supported by tertiaries in Zambia. However, in several places on the continent it is a liability and a danger to be known as a member of the Third Order. Some governments are suspicious of any kind of meeting, which makes it difficult to gather in fellowship. Minister Provincial Michael Twum-Darko has placed advisors for Young Franciscan movements in various locations, hoping to see if interest develops.

### European Province

The Young Franciscan group in London, formed last year, is getting along very well. It is hoped to be a model for other Young Franciscan groups beyond Europe. Throughout the Province they have been focusing on *The Sultan and The Saint*. Showings of the movie have been paired with workshops, exhibits and in one location local tertiaries took a meal to the local mosque, to repay the meal the Sultan gave Francis. All events are multi-faith oriented. FAN found great reception in England where their focus will be Christian-Muslim relations.

The Brexit protests are getting ugly and tertiaries are organizing a silent praying presence around them. Minister Provincial Jamie Hacker Hughes has asked us to join in.

Sweden is growing by leaps and bounds, with Finland right behind. They are attracting young inquirers.

### Province of the Pacific

Minister Provincial Blair Matheson will be traveling to Melanesia, to work with them on what they call their Social Projects. They have a new Formation Director there, after having carefully reviewed their entire process. They also inserted a Quiet Day right before Profession, and it seems to be finding purchase. They have brought their website up to date. ♦

## From the Bursar

Alison Saichek

*Greetings to all my Brothers and Sisters! Here is a report of our income and expenses for the fiscal year 10/17 - 9/30/18.*

*Did you know that you can designate TSSF as an Amazon Smile charity? Amazon donates 0.5% of the price of your eligible AmazonSmile purchases to the charitable organization of your choice.*


**TSSF Province of the Americas  
Financial Summary 2017-2018**

Fund Balances	9/30/2017	9/30/2018
Operating Fund	48,044.00	62,302.00
Savings Accounts	30,207.00	30,207.00
JCFU Account	2,275.00	2,617.00
Medical Mission Fund	17,403.00	8,550.00
Tom Johnson Mission Fund	-	775.00
Memorials	765.00	2,794.00
<b>Fiscal Year 2017-2018</b>		
	Budget	Actual
<b>Contributions</b>	70,000.00	58,234.00
<b>Other Income (Amazon Smile, etc.)</b>	50.00	126.00
<b>Total Operating Income</b>	70,050.00	58,360.00
<b>Operating Expenses</b>		
Servants (Ministers, Chaplains, Officers)	16,500.00	16,454.00
Formation	4,100.00	5,314.00
Outreach (Support for other Orders & Organizations)	11,900.00	9,465.00
Communications	9,150.00	5,773.00
Meetings	6,250.00	9,880.00
Overhead (Insurance, bank charges, website)	1,750.00	1,832.00
<b>Total Operating Expenses</b>	49,650.00	48,718.00
<b>Income less Expenses</b>	<b>20,400.00</b>	<b>9,642.00</b>

**T**he first thing you will probably notice is that contributions fell short of our budget estimate. The current year budget (which will be added to the website soon) has been adjusted accordingly. We budget for “net income” every year so that we can set aside funds for the next Provincial Convocation, as well as maintaining funds for “emergencies.”

Since we are a dispersed order, the greatest part of our operating expenses are for travel and meetings. Even though we now use Zoom (a conference video call platform) for many meetings, sometimes there is no substitute for getting together in person. It is also important that TSSF be represented at other Franciscan gatherings, such as the Joint Committee on Franciscan Unity, and at meetings of NAECC (National Association of Episcopal Christian Communities) and CAROA (Conference of Anglican Religious Orders in the Americas).

I delight in all the kind notes and beautiful cards that are often included with your contributions! **Please continue to use TSSF, P. O. Box 92, Fremont, CA 94537 as the mailing address for contributions.** Pledge envelopes are available but not necessary. I love a monthly giver! Many of you are using your bank’s bill-pay service to send monthly contributions. This helps to even out our cash flow, and as they say in every pledge drive ever, giving a smaller amount every month is easier on the pocketbook than writing a larger check once a year. You might find you can afford to give more than you thought!

Yearly contributions to TSSF are one of the three marks of a Professed Tertiary, and are also a requirement for Novices and Postulants. How much to give is entirely up to you; I have received a few dollars folded in a piece of paper and mailed in. Some of our members embrace simplicity with joy and do not have bank accounts. Whatever works for you, works for me.



## Young Anglican Franciscans in Northern Mexico

*By Father Miguel Angel Cristerna  
English Translation by Anita Miner*



*Donación de ropa a las colonias de bajo recursos.*

*Clothing donations in low-income neighborhoods.*

**S**omos un grupo de jóvenes anglicanos de entre 14 y 18 años que vivimos en fraternidad, somos creyentes en Cristo, y seguimos el estilo de vida de San Francisco de Asís, el cual también es nuestro guía, esto para un mejor crecimiento humano, franciscano y espiritual. En todo momento compartimos la fe y el amor entre nosotros y con nuestro prójimo, haciendo en nuestras vidas cotidianas un pequeña acción que haga feliz a los demás, siempre con el fin de que nuestras actitudes sean agradables ante los ojos de Dios. TOF y grupo JOVIC se enfoca en hacer servicio social en la comunidad de manera voluntaria en aquellas comunidades que más lo necesitan, desde el más pequeño hasta el más grande sin hacer excepción alguna. Así mismo se proporciona la ayuda al asilo y casas hogares dentro de nuestra ciudad, brindándoles alimento, ropa y medicamento de acuerdo a sus necesidades, también llevándoles diversión que hace sus días diferentes, a través de juegos, dinámicas, música y regalos donde siempre recibimos una sonrisa agradecida que brota del corazón. Estas labores son encabezadas por nuestros guías espirituales Padre Miguel Angel Cristerna y Rvda. Mariaelena Cristerna. Siendo dirigidas por el hermano Aroldo López y Hna. Jessica Ledezma (novicios) Tales labores se realizan al menos dos veces al mes, de manera que la relación con cada persona de aquellas comunidades se crea un vínculo de amistad y respeto y cuando se llega la próxima visita nos dan un cálido recibimiento. ♦

**W**e are a group of young Anglicans in Northern Mexico between 14 and 18 years of age who live in community. We are believers in Christ and follow the lifestyle of Saint Francis of Assisi, who is also our guide, to help us grow as better humans, Franciscans, and to be more spiritual. At all times we share faith and love among ourselves and our neighbors, creating a small difference in our daily lives that makes others happy, so that our attitudes are pleasing in the eyes of God.

The Third Order (TOF) and the JOVIC (Young Franciscan group, *see logo*) focus on doing social service in the community as volunteers in those communities that need it most, from the smallest to the largest without making any exceptions. Likewise, assistance is provided to the senior living centers and homeless shelters within our city, providing food, clothing and medicine according to their needs, also bringing fun that makes their days different, through games,

*cont. on page 18*



*Retiro Juvenil. A Happening Event.*

*Young Franciscans,  
cont. from p. 17*



*Young Mexican Movement  
logo.*

discussions, music and gifts. We always receive a grateful smile from people that springs from the heart.

These projects are headed by our spiritual guides, Father Miguel Angel Cristerna and the Rev. Mariaelena Cristerna, and directed by our TSSF novice guides, Earl Aroldo López and Jessica Ledezma.

The tasks are carried out at least twice a month, so that the relationship with each person in those communities creates a bond of friendship and respect, and when the next visit happens they give us a warm welcome.

These are some of the aspects with which we identify ourselves as faithful followers of San Francisco de Assisi:

- The way of life that we propose is in community.
- By living together as true brothers and sisters, all equal, without distinction.
- Creating among us a family atmosphere, simple and cheerful.
- Creating ways of fraternal life with the people among whom we work.
- To be “lesser” brothers and sisters, like St. Francis was.
- Making us as true servants of all.
- Humble and poor.
- Respectful and peacemakers.
- Simplicity in our way of life and in our relationships with others, and remaining as Franciscans, always faithful and obedient to the Church. ◆

*Donación cobijas, Piedras  
Negras.*

*Blanket donations in Piedras  
Negras*



## News from Spokane, Washington

*Beverly Hosea*

**O**n Sunday, February 10, members of Los Pequenos Fellowship in Spokane, Washington, gathered to witness the renewal of vows by the Rev. Finn Pond and Dr. Jonathan Steinhart at the Creators' Table, West Central Episcopal Mission. The fellowship has been meeting at West Central as a way to connect our Franciscan presence with a neighborhood in Spokane that is economically disadvantaged. The Episcopal parish that had been in that congregation had declined and is now in a restart phase. The facilities are hosting a number of social services for the struggling neighborhood.

Their website describes the faith community this way: "Creators' Table is a new site of Audubon Park United Methodist Church and the Episcopal Diocese of Spokane in Spokane's West Central neighborhood at the historic Holy Trinity Chapel. Under the leadership of Pastor Katy Shedlock of Audubon Park United Methodist and Rev. Jonathan Myers, vicar of the West Central Episcopal Mission, Creators' Table seeks to make meaning of God's stories, make beautiful our lives, and make sacred our world. Like our partner congregations, we extend a special welcome to non-het-cis people\*, people of color, people in recovery, people with a history, immigrants, people with doubts and questions, people in poverty, people with mental illness, people with disabilities, and to any person who has ever felt alienated by the church.

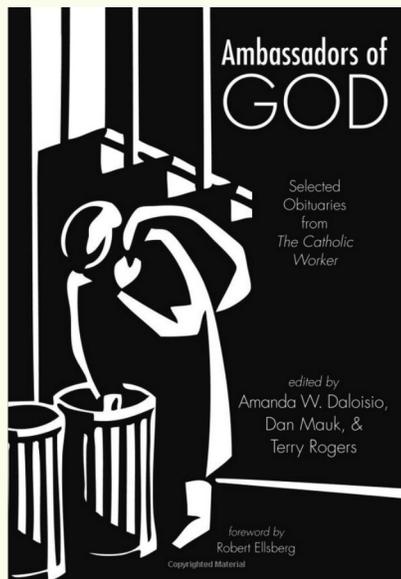


*The Lord's Table, set with the Eucharistic elements, at the West Central Episcopal Mission.*

"Creators' Table is committed to an ethic of relentless re-interpretation. We constantly negotiate with tradition in our liturgies; every worship experience is an experiment in making meaning, a wildly provocative statement on God's presence in our lives, and a collective art project seeking to reconstruct the world in the image of grace. We worship with discordant music, spoken word poetry, stand up comedy, round-table conversation, dramas, live art, mindfulness meditation, and Communion. Sometimes we even worship with swear words. Always we are seeking to make space for a transformative encounter with the Holy Spirit, the rogue-est artist of them all." ♦

*\* Non-het-cis are people who identify as other than heterosexual in terms of gender.*

## Book Review

*Ambassadors of God*

***Our own Terry Rogers, who has long been associated with the Catholic Worker movement, was one of the editors of this book.***

## *Ambassadors of God: Selected Obituaries from The Catholic Worker*

Edited by Amanda W. Daloisio, Dan Mauk, and Terry Rogers  
Resource Publications, an Imprint of Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2018

### Review By Verleah Kosloske

*Modern society calls the beggar  
bum and panhandler  
and gives him the bum's rush.  
But the Greeks used to say  
that people in need  
are the ambassadors of the gods.*

Peter Maurin

The editors, including our own Terry Rogers who has been associated with the Catholic Worker movement for many years, selected these 39 obituaries, which were published in *The Catholic Worker* over the years between 1936 and 2012. The obituaries honor people whose passing would have been ignored by other publications, but whose memory was precious to those who knew them during the time they were at the Catholic Worker. These memories, written by people who knew the deceased, are a model for us of how to see the spirit of God in others. For many, little is known about their lives before they became involved with the Catholic Worker. But once they came to the Catholic Worker they were seen and heard and loved no matter how challenging some of them sometimes were. Alcohol and mental illness did not take away their humanity in the eyes of those who beheld them.

Most of the obituaries are signed, but two of the oldest unsigned ones are thought to have been written by Catholic Worker co-founder Dorothy Day. She wrote about "Mr. Breen" in June 1939:

*He died leaving nothing, possessing nothing. If he had anything extra he always passed it on to others. But of course there was his cane, that cane he used to shake at people in arguments. Many a time he had threatened to wrap it around the neck of one or another around the house. That cane now is mine. And when I use it on the hills around the farm, I think of Mr. Breen, part of our family, who is now gone. He is happy now, as he was happy before his death; and we too are glad that he is released from his long agony and is having rest from his labors. May he rest in peace.*

In her memories of Natale Pace (1935-2006), Siobhan O'Neill wrote:

*I defy anyone to recall a time when Nat Pace was mean or belittling to any living thing. Was Nat peculiar? Eccentric?*

*cont. on page 21*

Book Review, cont. from p. 20

Ambassadors of God is available from the TSSF Library <https://tssf.org/resources/third-order-library/> and retailers such as Amazon. Your local independent book dealer may not have it in stock, but he or she would be glad to order it for you.

*Superstitious and consumed with all practices magical? This goes without saying. Was he liable to be sneaking ice cream despite having diabetes; prone to annoy roommates with his incessant nocturnal pacing....capable of letting loose unworldly and seeming uncontrollable guttural howls at any hour of the day or night: Was he puffing on three cigarettes simultaneously during his last days at St. Joe's? Yes - all these are true. But the more essential truth is that Nat Pace was a sweet, kind-hearted, generous, gentle, peaceful, serene, quizzical soul. Many believe that it was not an accident that he was born on Valentine's Day and given the name of Natale Pace, which translates from the Italian as peaceful birth, peaceful Nativity.*

In 2008 Carmen Trotta, remembering Roland D'Arcangelo (1943-2008), noted the irony that at his funeral mass Roland was remembered as a "great greeter."

*It was true. The mute who could not make eye contact became well known for throwing open his arms and calling out the names of friends entering the house, making them feel as at home as he did. Ideally for Roland, those open arms would lead to an embrace. That is what he craved most of all.*

The obituaries are accompanied by the simple black and white line drawings that we associate with *The Catholic Worker*. The drawings are the work of several artists including one of my favorites, Rita Corbin.

The tender love and grief reflected in these obituaries remind us that one of the fruits of The Works of Mercy performed by the Catholic Workers is the opportunity to know and love more of God's children. ♦

## Review By Carol Tookey

Many years ago a Franciscan Third Order sister gave me several years worth of subscriptions to *The Economist*. It was an interesting journal about economy and finance and gave me a larger perspective than the usual US-based periodicals I subscribed to. But the best part of *The Economist* was the Obituary section at the very end of each issue. Obituaries were offered for the rich, famous, well known, and not-so-well-known. They were always well written, and always an interesting perspective on a life.

Another Franciscan sister has subscribed to *The Catholic Worker* for me for years (a journal of the community started in the 1930s by Dorothy Day and Peter Maurin)—quite a different kettle of fish in terms of perspective and tone but also offering many obituaries, sometimes several in an issue. These were obituaries of the more well-known people in the Catholic Worker community, oftentimes priests, frequently writers and radical activists. Heroes of a dissimilar sort. These, however, I usually skipped over, not having ever known the individuals involved.

*cont. on page 22*

So when this same sister sent me a copy of *Ambassadors of God*, a book of Catholic Worker obituaries, I was not much interested, truth to tell. But I was asked to review the book, so I read the first entry, titled “Cold and Hunger Is Fatal to Man on 127<sup>th</sup> St. Pier,” written in January 1936. An unknown man who died due to poverty was given a place in the annals of this little newspaper. I read on. These were not stories of the priests and writers and activists. These were synopses of the lives of people who had touched and been touched by the Catholic Worker community. Homeless, impoverished, often addicted, these folks were the people the Catholic Worker community embraced. Many were mentally ill. Some were feisty, and not all that pleasant to be around. Their lives were as long, and sometimes all too short. But in this lovely way their lives are remembered and celebrated.

*Who would have thought that a book of obituaries could be so wonderful?*

...the people Jesus and Francis came to live among. Where else but by The Catholic Worker would these “ambassadors of God” be remembered and honored. The stories are honest, often funny, and always touching.

Who would have thought that a book of obituaries could be so wonderful? ♦

## Milestones

*Newly Professed*

**Luigi Battista**



*Teacher, Youth Counselor, Candidate for the Diaconate*

**G**reetings, brothers and sisters. I am living in Brampton, Ontario. When I was in my early twenties, I was with the OFM in formation and worked both in AIDS and chaplaincy ministries. My years in formation were fruitful and greatly helped form me. When I left Formation, I worked for a bank for a few years before I decided to go back to school and obtain my teaching degree from the University of Toronto.

I am currently a teacher with the Peel District School Board. My teaching qualifications are in English, History, Religion, Special Education, and Guidance. I have worked in a youth prison for several years as a Guidance Counselor. Currently I am back in a mainstream school working with students when they are experiencing issues with emotional and behavioral regulation. I see the work I do as ministry and call from God. When students come to me, I help them tap into their moral, spiritual, social and cultural perspective to help them understand the decisions they make and the decisions they need to make. My work with young people is very fulfilling, and I am blessed in the work I do.

I am a member of Christ Church Anglican in the city of Brampton, Ontario. I am active in my church community as Eucharistic Lay Assistant and help with the youth in the church whenever possible. I am currently discerning for the permanent diaconate and with that just completing a course with the University of Toronto on the pastoral care of those who are dying and their families. ♦

## Newly Professed

## Jeff Bonner



*Entrepreneur, Nature-lover,  
Lay Preacher, Divinity  
Student*

**G**reetings from Hamilton, Ontario, in Canada. My name is Jeff Bonner. I am married to EunJung ('E.J.') for just over 15 years, with a daughter and son named Lily and Coltrane. I am a realtor and owner of a small commercial cleaning business. I grew up in a small town in Ontario, moved to Hamilton for college and then stayed after graduating with an honours diploma in the Electronics Engineering Technician program. I'm also currently a part-time M. Div. student at Trinity College at the University of Toronto, as I discern the call to ordained ministry.

Ever since childhood, I have always had a great affinity and love for animals and nature, often spending entire days in the woods near my home. Camping is still a personal favourite getaway and an avenue for private retreat that I have used a few times. Needless to say, the nature-loving element of Franciscan spirituality was an immediate draw, and as I've come to understand Incarnation theology and embraced non-dual thinking, I've come to appreciate the TSSF Principles and philosophy even more. Living a Rule of Life quickly became a norm for me, and even while on a break from formation I continued to live my Rule consistently. Some of my greatest lessons have been around self-love and lightening expectations of perfection - none of us is called to perfection of results, only perfection of effort. I look forward to growing further into my Franciscan vocation and the TSSF community.

I am a member of St. John's Anglican Church in Ancaster, Ontario, Canada. We have just recently moved to this parish as our family church, so I am still finding my place in the community but have signed up as reader and intercessor. In my previous parish, I was involved in a variety of worship roles and committees, including a special permission from the diocese to preach as a lay preacher.

*...the nature-loving element of Franciscan spirituality was an immediate draw, and as I've come to understand Incarnation theology and embraced non-dual thinking, I've come to appreciate the TSSF Principles and philosophy even more.*

My primary link with the Order is the Little Sparrows Fellowship, which has started holding online meetings monthly to overcome the wide geographic distance for our members. I've re-joined the online Cloud Fellowship, which I had actually helped to start back in my first part of formation, and it's been good to reconnect with some old faces. I'm also looking forward to the budding possibility of a 'Young-ish' Franciscan fellowship that is in early stages.

My formation journey was an interesting one, perhaps not conventional with a break time in the middle of my novitiate. And it was coloured with a variety of life challenges and changes, time of hurt and times of great spiritual growth. But all through it and behind it, the Rule and the community helped to keep me grounded in faith and moving forward. I thank you for welcoming me into the Order and look forward to getting to know everyone I don't know yet! ♦

## Newly Professed

Dianne Lowe



*Deacon, Chaplain, Member  
of TSSF Virtual Fellowship*

**H**ello from Pullman, Washington, a small town in the far southeast corner of Washington. I am a retired risk/safety manager after having worked in industry in many capacities. I am the mother of one son, and a widow.

I started my Franciscan journey as a member of the SFO (Secular Franciscan Order) Roman Catholic and was professed in 1974. I would say, I have always been a Franciscan and living that charism, even after I left the RC Church and joined the Episcopal Church in 1993. It wasn't just the Franciscan life—I always perceived a call to the diaconate. In 2008, I began the process and was subsequently ordained a deacon in 2012. My wife (of blessed memory) was alive to assist my son with the vesting of the stole at my ordination; she died the following year. There was always a yearning for the wonderful fellowship I had known when a member of SFO.

I was busy with work, family, and church responsibilities, so when I retired, and had some time for earnest and honest reflection, I contacted TSSF about transferring. That was a very fortuitous contact. It began a year of formation as a transfer under the able guidance of John Rebstock and the Rev. Carol Tookey, as my formation counselor. The highlight of my formation year was a reconnection with the life-changing reacquaintance with Brother Francis, and Sister Clare, and their Companions on the way. I so enjoyed reading the testimonies of how they lived out the Gospel within the vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience; to which I added detachment and penitence as another way to commit to living the Gospel following the Franciscan charism.

*...in the presence of friends and my fellowship—with people present from nearly every time zone across the USA—I made my profession of vows via Zoom....We probably pushed the technology beyond the bounds intended, but it was lovely, and it worked.*

Since ordination, I have served St. James' Episcopal Church in Pullman, Washington, as that is the congregation that raised me up and sponsored me for ordination. In the world, I am a volunteer chaplain at two rural critical care access hospitals, both very small. I am a Crisis Intervention Stress Management Team member debriefing hospital employees who experience stress. A ministry within the church has been to help the dying and those who keep vigil with them.

In preparation for Profession, I met with a priest for the Reconciliation of a Penitent. I hardly have words to share about how profound was that experience. I don't know why I didn't do it before. On February 17, 2019, in the presence of friends and my fellowship—with people present from nearly every time zone across the USA—I made my profession of vows via Zoom. I am part of the virtual fellowship, Il Poverello, convened by the Rev. Deacon Chris Ledyard. I am strengthened daily by the habits of my Rule that I laid upon the altar at Eucharist in my parish prior to presenting myself for Profession. We probably pushed the technology beyond the bounds intended, but it was lovely, and it worked. I am grateful.



*Rest in Peace*

The Rev. Donald Catton:  
*Professed 51 Years*

**Editor’s Note:**

*Father Catton’s “adventurous ministry” sounds very much like that of his celebrated contemporary Hugo Muller among the Cree in Northern Quebec (Franciscan Times, Advent 2013, p. 34), or page 68 in The First 100 Years.*

**F**ather Don was a gentle, compassionate soul. He was called to ordained ministry in his 40s after a career in the business world. He had an adventurous ministry with the First Nations people in the in the far northern territories of Canada where they had to fly in and boat to reach the reserve communities.

Reverend Catton served the parishes of St. Matthew and St. Aidan, Buckhorn; St. Barnabas, Peterborough; St. Lawrence, Toronto; and, after his retirement in 1992, as Honorary Assistant of St. Peter’s Church, Oshawa, Ontario.

In the 51 years in which Donald Catton was in the Third Order, his only mention came 39 years ago when he was in his early 50s. Kale King had just been elected our second Minister Provincial, and the May 1980 *Franciscan Times* noted that Donald had a stroke and was having a hard time making it to meetings.

He died January 28. The Right Reverend Riscylla Shaw, Bishop of Trent-Durham, was the celebrant at his Requiem Eucharist.

*(With thanks for information from The Rev. Jeff Donnelly, Anglican Parish of Kokanee, British Columbia)*



*Rest in Peace*

Alice Young:  
*Professed 33 Years*

**F**or many years as you finished your **Directory intercessions** on Day 29, you have always concluded by praying for Alice Young in Northbrook, Illinois. She was professed in 1985 and thus was professed in our Province for 33 years—300% longer than the average length of time of a marriage these days.

Alice was born June 30, 1931 in Chicago; she died Dec. 15, 2018 at age 87. Alice was active in The Church of the Holy Comforter in Kenilworth, Illinois. There she served on the altar guild, and used her knitting and craft skills to benefit those in the inner city. Alice was interested in pursuing her faith and was professed as a Tertiary in the Chicago Fellowship of the Third Order Society of St. Francis on September 14, 1985. Alice moved to Covenant Village of Northbrook in 2004, where she sang in the choir and attended chapel services and the Episcopal gatherings.

*Remembrance from  
Alonzo Pruitt*

I remember her as a warm and welcoming presence in the then Chi-Rho (Chicago) Fellowship. She was a woman of few words, but each of them chosen from the vineyard of love that seemed constantly growing in her heart. She had a good sense of humor but

*Alice was “a woman of deep faith and vibrant Franciscan presence.”*

she only laughed with and never at. Until her health became an issue, she was a regular attendee at Fellowship meetings. Alice was one of those people who never draw attention to themselves and who are quite comfortable being quiet and in the background. No amount of humility, however,

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RIP: Alice Young, cont.  
from p. 25

made it possible to not be aware of her steady, ongoing, love affair with Jesus and St. Francis, and this love shined brightly in the way she spoke and in the way she treated those for who she believed Christ died.

Remembrance from  
Linda Watkins

I met Alice a couple of times early in my formation when I was in Chicago. A woman of deep faith and vibrant Franciscan presence.



Rest in Peace

The Rev. William Otis  
Breedlove II:  
Professed 31 Years



**W**illiam Otis Breedlove II was the son of a Baptist minister who followed in his father's path and, after college and seminary, was ordained in the American Baptist Church. His years at the Divinity School of the University of Chicago started him down a different spiritual path from that in which he had been raised and shortly after his ordination in the Baptist Church he left that tradition and became an Episcopalian. After receiving a M.S. in Library Science, he spent time at The Free Library of Philadelphia working mostly in adult literacy and outreach services. He has also served as the director of two public libraries in New Jersey. In the late 1980s, he again began to explore ordination. After Anglican Studies and training as a spiritual director at General Theological Seminary, he was ordained a deacon and priest. He has served as the vicar of Trinity "Old Swedes" in Swedesboro, NJ and in a number of interim positions.

Bill played a number of roles in provincial leadership: Area Chaplain for New Jersey, Philadelphia, and Delmarva 2003-04; Assistant Fellowship Coordinator 2004; Assistant Formation Coordinator 2005; Provincial Archivist 2005-07; and Formation Director 2006-08. Later Bill worked with Terry Rogers to revise important Formation documents in 2012.

Right, from Bill Breedlove's article in the Winter 2005 *Franciscan Times*, when he was newly elected Formation Director.

*Once upon a time, TSSF, American Province, had one Formation program in one language with most participants living in one country on one continent. Today, TSSF, Province of the Americas, has two formation programs in three languages in eight countries on three continents.*

*TSSF is a community. One of the major questions I have as Formation Director is how are we forming a community in our program and not just individuals? How do all of these programs in various*  
*cont. on page 27*

RIP: Bill Breedlove, cont. from p. 26



Newly elected Formation Director Bill Breedlove, listening to Celian Roland from Guyana at Chapter in 2005.

languages operating in different countries and cultures work to form a community, not just an organization? We have a good formation

program that has evolved over a number of years. Just last year under Barbara Baumgarten's direction, we made revisions in the procedures and issued new manuals, but no program can be allowed to grow stale, especially in an Order as alive and growing as TSSF, Province of the Americas is.

When I talk to people who are from different cultures or have had experience in different cultures and people who have had experience in religious formation in other contexts, I realize that there are things that we could learn that could strengthen TSSF's formation program(s).

### Remembrance from Anita Miner

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In March 2008 Anita Catron Miner and Bill Breedlove made a ten-day trip to ensure that the Brazilian Assistant Fellowship Coordinator had all necessary Fellowship materials and help to perform her job in Brazil. Anita Catron Miner and Bill Breedlove's trip included visits to five cities. Here's how the two of them summarized their trip in the Summer 2008 *Franciscan Times*:

*It was a very fulfilling trip to get to know members better and to see how we could serve them better. Everywhere we went we were introduced kindly as "the Franciscans." People were happy to know us, and, of course, we felt the same. Bill and I feel that those members with specific TSSF responsibilities are very capable and in due time will lay the groundwork for greater things to come.*

For this issue of *The Franciscan Times*, Anita submitted this remembrance:

I recall vividly the trip Bill and I made in 2008 to some Brazilian cities to do TSSF fellowship and formation training, professions and novicings, and generally encourage the members in the pursuit of their Franciscan journey. At the time Bill was the Formation Director of TSSF.

*cont. on page 28*

*RIP: Bill Breedlove, cont.  
from p. 27*



*Bill, Anita Catron Miner, and Cezar Alves, SSF in Sao Paulo, Brazil in 2008.*

My fondest memory of Bill was seeing him celebrate the Eucharist in Porto Alegre in Portuguese—his first time! It had to be intimidating while among so many Brazilians, but he did it graciously, and we congratulated him at the end. During the service two people were professed and two renewed their novice vows—all because of Bill! He provided the service and I was happy to do the professions and renewals.

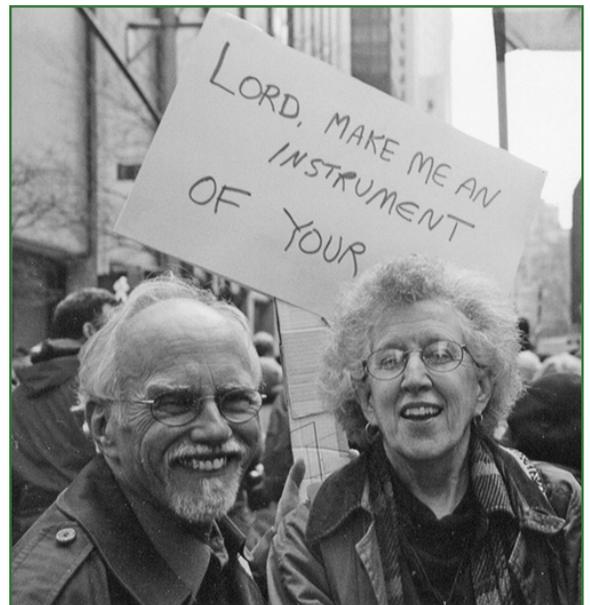
In Rio de Janeiro Dom Celso Franco de Oliveira shared his passion with us by leading a group of us from the Anglican Cathedral to a venue downtown—about a 20-minute walk—where his street ministry was well known among the recipients. Bill and I walked along with the others, carrying a makeshift altar, liturgical supplies and musical instruments. At this Eucharist we professed Dom Celso; did novicings for Luciene, Dom Celso's wife, and some others; plus one postulancy reception. Then sandwiches and fruit juice were served to the assembled street crowd. It was truly emotional for Bill and me.

A special event for Bill was to bless a profession cross and present it to Carmen Etel Gomes, who had never received her cross. Bill proved to be an important link in the Brazil Franciscan connection. The rest of the trip was spent renewing friendships, and we left Brazil satisfied with our efforts.

### *Remembrance from Terry Rogers*

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Bill had such a deep and intuitively practical understanding of the religious life as we live it as tertiaries. I have known him for so many years and in so many capacities, and his underlying, and very down-to-earth sense of our vocation was always there. I could take it for granted, we could build on it, and it was our point of reference in any work we did together. I trusted his judgment, and I turned



*Bill and Terry Rogers at a Peace March in New York City in 2004.*

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*RIP: Bill Breedlove, cont.  
from p. 28*

to him for insight in tricky situations. He understood compromise; he understood give-and-take. His kindness was simple and natural. He wasn't full of himself and put on no airs.

*"They loved their Lord so dear, so dear, and His love made them strong."* Bill understood doubt and struggle, and still loved his Lord, so dear, so dear. May he be embraced by the One who loved him always.

### **Remembrance from Bill Graham**

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I first met Bill in the Fall of 1969 in Philadelphia. The first Sunday after I moved there from the Chicago area, I attended St. Mary's, Hamilton Village where John Scott was rector. Bill was the first person I met at coffee hour, and he introduced me to a number of parishioners. At that time, Bill and his wife Elizabeth were both librarians.

Bill and I quickly became friends. I learned that he had a Bachelor of Divinity from University of Chicago where he had studied under Martin Marty among other noted professors. He had been ordained a Baptist minister, but he found the teachings of the Episcopal Church much more compatible with his beliefs.

I joined the Third Order in the early 1970s, but Bill had no interest at the time.

When I was ordained deacon, Bill gave me the most practical of the gifts I received at the time, a set of Marples screwdrivers with oval wooden heads. I've used them ever since. A few years later, I bought a table saw from Bill. He'd had an accident and decided to do his woodworking with hand tools only. Bill had moved from Philadelphia to New Jersey and been ordained an Episcopal priest.

It was a few years later when Bill decided to become a tertiary, and I was assigned as his formation counselor. Bill's biggest problem in Formation was getting reports completed. At the time, we required six reports as a postulant and 24 as a novice. These ideally were to be done monthly, which amounted to two-and-a-half years. It probably took Bill about four-and-a-half years to get to profession. Later on, Bill himself became the Formation Director for the Province.

I last saw Bill at NERC (Northeastern Regional Convocation) while I was serving as Fellowship Coordinator. Over the years we had kept in touch via Christmas letters and occasional phone calls.

### **Remembrance from Tracey Carroll**

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Bill was the Formation Director of the Province when I was a novice seeking profession. I remember feeling so loved as I read his review for my profession. It was not the easiest time of my life, but Bill showed me ways to be a Franciscan while still being a mom. He was so kind and gentle. I shall always be grateful for his influence.



*Rest in Peace*

**William D. Jones**

*Professed 20 Years +  
One Month*



*Remembrance from  
Bill Haynes*

**I**t is an honor to speak about my friend, Bill Jones, whom I have known for over 30 years. We had a special relationship built upon multiple layers: medical, religious, and military.

I was his cardiologist, and he was my patient, including the years, before, during, and after his bypass surgery in 1993.

We shared a strong faith that was powerful and poignant during the 60 days he was hospitalized prior to bypass surgery. We shared many prayers during that time and in the years since, have attended retreats each year to share and strengthen our faith. Sometime ago, the four of us, Bill, Rev. Bill Breedlove, Philip Muniz, and myself, became professed members of the Third Order meeting for prayer and sharing fellowship three or four times a year.

*Bill and I were always friends—  
except for three hours each December  
during the Army-Navy game.*

Through recent years Bill and I socialized at the Princeton Officer’s Society, a society composed of former military officers who come together for formal dinners ever few months to socialize and reminisce over former military days. Bill and I were always friends—except for three hours each December during the Army-Navy game—for you see, Bill was an Army West Pointer, while I was a Navy man.

Bill was a humble, generous, caring man who loved his family, friends, country, and church. We have been richly blessed to have called Bill our friend, and we will miss him greatly.



*Rest in Peace*

**Julie Goodin**

*Professed 13 Years*

*Remembrance from  
Weston Cook*

**I** cannot but be saddened by Julie’s departure. For decades, she was a beloved sister and a dear friend. Yet I also rejoice to know she has gained release from so very many burdens and entered into the joy of Our Lord.

She served as a passionate and compassionate Franciscan sister, embodying in her life and words all that the Franciscan calling embodied. She was a scholar, a writer, a witty observer of the human condition whose reflection came well salted with insight and understanding. Tireless and joyful like her beloved terriers, she especially advocated passionately and without embarrassment for God’s Creatures and their welfare. Julie spoke “truth to power” including some who, being in the Church, regarded their power and responsibility as immune to the accountability they pronounced on others. A gifted teacher, a talented poet, a creative liturgist, and an exemplary Franciscan leader, she was simultaneously humble and heroic. Under her tender and abiding care, The Wolf of Gubbio Fellowship grew and thrived in an environment where lay

*cont. on page 31*

*RIP: Julie Goodin, cont.  
from p. 30*

monastic ministry received little nurturing and yet benefitted so much from the unseen contributions of Julie and her work.

Leaving North Carolina, I missed her, and our Franciscan Brothers and Sisters, deeply. I still do. But as my Quaker mother liked to say, "For Christians, all goodbyes are temporary."

*At right, Julie Goodin in costume for a St. Francis Day celebration.*

*Good-by, Sister Julie.  
Thanks for it all. Until again... ♦*



### *Reflection:*

## "While We Await His Coming in Glory"

*By Julie H. Goodin*

*Reprinted from The Franciscan Times, Summer 2012*

We have waited, and waited, and waited for this event for over 2,000 years now.

So Jesus, what is with the delay? In your time on earth you made it sound like it was going to be very soon. Paul was sure your return was imminent, but still we wait.

Sometimes I wonder what reason you could possibly have for the delay, are you waiting for everyone on earth to become your follower? Are you waiting for those who claim to be your followers to start living the way you said we should live? You know! the stuff about loving each

***Are you waiting for those who claim to be your followers to start living the way you said we should live?***

other as you have loved by us, turning the other cheek, taking care of the poor, the hungry, the homeless ones; advocating with action for justice and peace. If those are the reasons why you are delaying your "coming in glory," we might still have a very long time to wait. I hope you haven't given up on us, washed your hands and resigned yourself to the idea that after 2,000 years we still don't get it and therefore never will. No, I don't believe you could do that; you gave up too much for us to ever give up on us.

But wait, even though you might be delaying your grand re-entrance in great glory you do come to each of us who love and follow you every day in the faces of the poor, the broken, the hurting, the sick and friendless; those fragments of humanity whose paths intersect with ours day after day. Until the day of your coming in great glory are you watching to see how we handle these small glimpses of you? Maybe, just maybe, when we get that right you will know we are ready to see you coming in all your glory. ♦

## Poem: "St. Francis"

The Rev. Katy Shedlock

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*Katy Shedlock is a slam poet and pastor who has launched The Studio, a new congregation within Audubon Park United Methodist Church in Spokane Washington.*

### FRANCIS

kneels to pray  
in an old church.  
The congregation died out  
years ago  
and the only sign of life  
is the mouse shit  
in all the corners.  
The furnace is out  
and there are jagged holes  
in the stained glass,  
the young man  
hears  
*Francis*  
*Francis*  
*Rebuild my church.*  
And Francis  
says  
Yes Lord!  
I got you!  
Rebuild my church

I know exactly what that means!  
I'm gonna get you -  
some new carpet up in here!  
My daddy's in the fabric business  
so don't you worry about a thing, Lord!  
Rebuild my church,  
I am on it!  
And in the highest heavens  
Christ Jesus the Lord  
sighs loudly.  
He turns to the archangels  
says  
What is it with church people  
and new carpet?  
Francis  
tries again.  
Rebuild my church.  
Ok, it wasn't the carpet  
but I got it this time, Lord!  
Rebuild my church -  
It's a metaphor!  
And your church  
started in the Middle East  
which is now controlled by Muslims  
so I will -  
go there and convert them all!  
Catching a boat to Egypt tomorrow!  
I got this, Lord!  
And the Lord Jesus Christ  
turns to the cherubim and seraphim  
pulling at his beard  
and says  
Did I say anything about Muslims?  
What is it with church people  
and  
Muslims?  
Francis!  
If you want  
to rebuild my church  
first  
you have let me

*cont. on page 33*

*St. Francis, cont.*  
*from p. 32*

rebuild  
 you.  
 Can you be still?  
 Still enough to learn the language  
 of birds?  
 Can you be loving?



Can you love even a wolf  
 as your brother?  
 Can you be free?  
 Free enough to leave all your baggage,  
 even your clothes  
 behind?

Can you be poor?  
 Poor enough to beg?  
 Beg for everything?  
 Well how else  
 do you think  
 we're gonna rebuild?  
 We cannot repair  
 what you  
 do not believe  
 is broken.  
 Francis  
 I know this sounds  
 so much harder  
 than new carpet.  
 But in this  
 rebuild  
 our tools  
 are epiphanies  
 and we measure our progress  
 in bursts  
 of light and joy.  
 And I promise  
 that when we are done  
 you will become  
 so human  
 so alive  
 the palms of your very hands  
 will bleed,  
 like mine. ◆

***Send your comments  
 on this issue to:***

John Brockmann, [jbrockma@udel.edu](mailto:jbrockma@udel.edu)

The deadline for our next issue is  
 June 1.

We welcome your news,  
 reflections,  
 poems,  
 remembrances of your  
 deceased Franciscan friends,  
 and notices of upcoming events.