



# The Franciscan Times

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

*Pace e bene*

Summer 2021

## St. Francis, Books, and Authors

*By R. John Brockmann, Editor*

**S**t. Francis had a difficult relationship with books. Joan Acocella wrote in her lengthy piece on Francis in the *New Yorker* about his distrust of book learning:

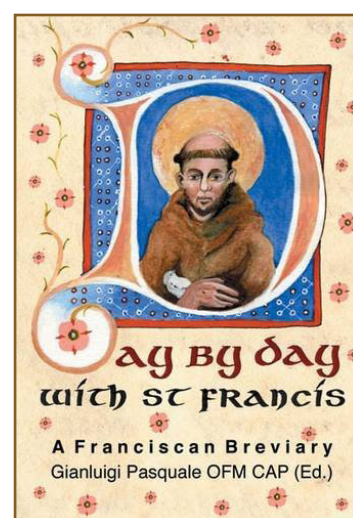
“Almost proudly, it seems, he called himself ‘illiteratus.’ He never owned a complete Bible. He never became a priest. To him, book learning smelled of wealth—only rich people had books at that time—and thus of arrogance. One medieval source records his response to a novice who asked for a psalter: ‘When you have a psalter, you will want a breviary; and when you will have a breviary, you will install yourself in a throne like a great prelate, and you will command your brother: ‘Bring me my breviary!’ ” He then took some ashes from the hearth and rubbed them into his body, all the while repeating, ‘I’m a breviary, I’m a breviary!’ Over time, his hostility to scholarship encouraged some people—for example, members of religious orders devoted to education, such as the Dominicans—to regard the Franciscans as a bunch of oddballs and half-wits...” (Joan Acocella, “Rich Man, Poor Man: The radical visions of St. Francis.” *New Yorker Magazine*, January 14, 2013).

### Celebrated Franciscan Authors

And yet, later tertiaries were some of the most celebrated authors in history, *e.g.*, Dante and his *Divine Comedy*, and Thomas More and his *Utopia*. (Neslihan Senocak explores this paradox in *The Poor and the Perfect: The Rise of Learning in the Franciscan Order, 1209-1310*, Cornell University Press, 2012 (ebook)).

Our Province has long had a number of authors as I established in *The First 100 Years: The Third*

*Although in his day St. Francis railed against allowing his friars to own a breviary, it is ironic that today there exist several books by the name Breviary of St. Francis. A fairly recent one entitled Day by Day with St. Francis: A Franciscan Breviary was published in 2012 by New City Press.*



*Order SSF in the Americas: 1917-2017* (Amazon, 2017): Desmond Lionel Morse-Boycott, H. Baxter Liebler, Peter Funk, Hugo Muller, Emily Gardiner Neal, and the eight other TSSF authors in Chapter 16 of the book.

### Three New TSSF Authors in Our Province

This issue will introduce you to three new authors in our Province: Ernle Gordon and James Alexander, whose books are reviewed in this issue. We also celebrate the work of the Minister General of the Community of St. Francis, Sister Helen Julian, in two of her books on Francis, Clare, and Franciscan saints. All of these books authored by tertiaries have been collected and are available to you from the Provincial Library, which can be found on the TSSF website.

With all these authors and books written in our Province, surely no one will regard us as half-wits...although they might be fair in labeling some of us oddballs. ♦



## The Franciscan Times

is a magazine  
of the Third Order  
Society of Saint Francis  
Province of the Americas.



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## Liberation Theology: Articles and Essays

Book by The Rev. Canon  
Ernle Gordon

Review by Masud Ibn  
Syedullah



Kingston, Jamaica: Inspirational  
Literary Works, 2014, 188 pages,  
hardback.

I deem it an honor that the *Franciscan Times* asked that I review a work by one of our tertiaries, Ernle Gordon, who died November 12, 2020 in Kingston, Jamaica [see last issue of the *Franciscan Times*, Spring/Lent 2021, pp. 23-5].

Reading *Liberation Theology: Articles and Essays*, and its disclosure of the Christ-centered prophetic witness of Ernle Gordon, is like discovering a rare and precious gem. Although I met Ernle in Jamaica in the early 2000s during my time as Minister Provincial, visited him in his home, met with some of his students at the theological school, and addressed his Sunday morning congregation at St. Mary the Virgin Parish in Kingston—I had *no idea* of the magnitude and depth of the man until I just read this collection of his writings.

This anthology is a clear and revealing window into the theology, spirituality, and humanity of one whose life exemplified, in an extraordinary way, the heart of the gospel of Christ and Franciscan spirituality. Oh, how I wish I had known then what I now know of the man. I would have taken more time and made greater effort while in his presence to plumb the depths of his knowledge and experience. That he did not call attention to himself and the breadth of his influence also speaks to the Christ-like humility he possessed.

Ernle—a native Jamaican born in 1938, a priest of the Anglican Church in the Province of the West Indies, theologian, pastor, educator, Third Order Franciscan, and social activist honored by the Jamaican government with the designation O.D. (Order of Distinction for Public Service)—expressed through his writings a vast spectrum of wisdom, pastoral guidance, and prophetic vision for the Church and society. His writings reveal an informed, disciplined mind and a courageous, persevering spirit as he challenges commonly held ideas, theological perspectives, and social practices within his culture that counter gospel-centered values and life. His was often

a voice crying in the wilderness, proclaiming inconvenient and uncomfortable truths about inequitable policies and procedures of both Church and society. Yet, with the spirit of a pastor, his prophetic pronouncements were accompanied by sincere and demonstrative care for the people he so faithfully served.

The articles and essays of this collection are organized in three sections that address the following categories: History and Theology,

Culture and Theology, and The Bible and Theology. The author, rooted in Jamaican history and culture, yet informed by personal knowledge and experience of the broader world, insists on focusing his attention on the relevance and application of Christian theology, spirituality, and practice to the religious, social, and political realities of Jamaican life.

### What is Liberation Theology?

As the title indicates, the theological school or methodology represented in Ernle's writings is that of liberation theology—a theological perspective developed largely in South America from the 60s onward that makes practical application of Christian principles to the social, economic, and political realities of communities.

*Although I met Ernle in Jamaica in the early 2000s during my time as Minister Provincial...I had no idea of the magnitude and depth of the man until I just read this collection of his writings.*

*cont. on page 5*



*Liberation Theology, cont.  
from p. 4*

*As one reads Ernle's work, it...is clear that his reading of the gospels fuels him to proclaim ideas and advance Church and social policies in the Spirit of Christ to set people free from all chains that bind them – of body, mind, and spirit.*

Such a theology is concerned with empowering people to identify, challenge, and transform those political and social systems and structures that do violence to them and to others who suffer from social and economic marginalization, oppression, and politically controlled suppression. It is Ernle's persistent courage and dedication to this form of theology that is distinctive to his writings and has been a challenge to many of his fellow Jamaicans (including those in the Church), and illustrates his commitment to being authentic in his endeavor to proclaim, in word and deed, the Good News of Christ for all people.

From its inception, liberation theology was suspect by many Christians (including those at the Vatican as well as some Anglicans) because some of its proponents identified themselves as Marxists – Marxism being a philosophical and economic system developed by Karl Marx, based on the centrality of *materialism as the foundation* for a just and equitable society. While Liberation Theology and Marxism share the goal of a just and equitable society with particular concern for the needs of the poor, marginalized, and oppressed, they diverge regarding their

understanding of what is ultimate. For Marxism, materialism is ultimate. For Liberation Theology, Christ and the Good News of God's liberating power of the Holy Spirit is Ultimate as it champions the struggle of the poor, marginalized, and oppressed to justice, freedom, and respect. As one reads Ernle's work, it is clear that his Center is Christ, not materialism. It is clear that his reading of the gospels fuels him to proclaim ideas and advance Church and social policies in the Spirit of Christ to set people free from all chains that bind them—of body, mind, and spirit.

### **A Theology Particularly Relevant to Jamaican History**

Jamaica, having been created as part of the British Empire, with enslavement and exploitation of imported African peoples as part of its history, is the context of Ernle's writing. He connects the historical reality of the institution of slavery and its dehumanizing ideology and structures to the thinking, conditions, and practices lingering in post-colonial Jamaica. Ernle boldly addresses such topics as "The Legacy of Slavery and Forgiveness," "The Anglican Church and Slavery," and "Liberation From Christian Europeanization." Each is an evocative subject, uneasily received by many, joyfully received by some.

Regarding culture and theology, he addresses such topics as "Theology and the Environment" (he also held a Diploma in Agriculture), "The Budget Debate [in Jamaica] and Human Development," and "Rastafarianism and the Decolonization of the Church." He approaches each topic within the context of his interest, courage, and ability to address the current socio-political topics of his time from a theological and spiritual perspective that takes seriously the rightful connection and intersectionality of religion, social issues, and public policy.

The last section of the anthology, "The Bible and Theology," daringly engages such topics as "Homosexuality and the Bible,"

*cont. on page 6*

*Liberation Theology, cont.  
from p. 5*

“Liberation Theology,” and “The Church and Violence,” among others. He approaches each of these topics within a Church and culture that experiences great struggles in an effort to discern a path of morality that faithfully honors both Godly principles and human dignity.

### A Controversial Person

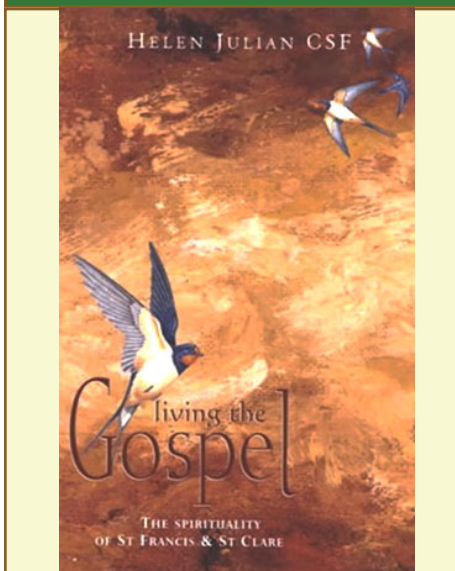
Ernle experienced himself as a controversial person as a result of his writings and public statements—theologically, socially, and politically. Central to his work is an emphasis on affirming the legitimacy and value of *Jamaican* experience of life and culture distinct from British life and culture. It is clear from his essays that the people of Jamaica, mostly of African descent, and having been under British rule and greatly influenced by European culture and values, are in a period of rediscovering and affirming the value of its African roots and culture. The premises of liberation theology provide a framework for affirming Franciscan beliefs that God affirms all of God’s creation, desiring all to be respected, free to express the distinctive gifts and particularities of the array of people who inhabit the earth.

Although Ernle, in time, became honored by both Church and State in Jamaica, few in other regions of our Province knew of him. We are fortunate to have a copy of *Liberation Theology: Articles and Essays* in the TSSF Library, and efforts are being made to assure the availability of more copies for distribution in our Province. I commend his work to all—as a better understanding of Jamaican history and culture, the witness of Anglicanism in Jamaica and the West Indies, and the faithful life and work of one of our fellow Franciscan tertiaries. ♦

### Living the Gospel: The Spirituality of St. Francis and St. Clare

By Helen Julian, CSF

*Review by Janet Fedders*



The Bible Reading Fellowship, Oxford England 2001, 128 pages, paperback.

**F**irst of all, Helen Julian’s elegant prose makes this book a true pleasure to read. Beautifully crafted, the stories and ideas come together and seem to float from the page. In this slender volume, she begins where we all begin—with the stories of both Francis and Clare. And as she says, “the stories bring the vision to life.” From the stories, she continually turns to Christ, to the gospel—the place where all Franciscans dwell. “Francis and Clare were seeking to recapture the intimacy of the first disciples of Christ.” And she illustrates the contrast between Francis’ focus on humility and obedience, and Clare’s focus on generosity and poverty.

This constant interplay of stories leading to gospel wisdom pervades the book. For instance, she takes the story of Francis and Clare meeting in the woods and how people see flames leaping up above them and turns it into a long commentary on their prayer lives around the gospel.

In the book, she quotes copiously from Francis and Clare, as well as Bonaventure and Celano. And her two-page treatise on Obedience should be required reading for all Franciscans (pp. 53-4). In a later chapter she speaks of the founding of the Third Order, the “Brothers and Sisters of Penance,” its first title, saying “Penance

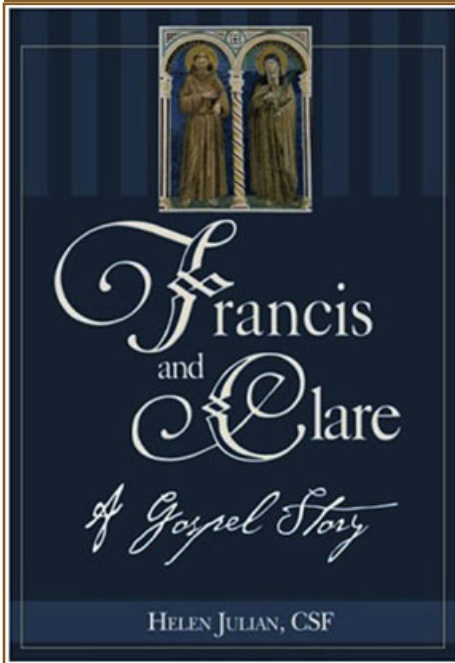
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*Living the Gospel, cont.  
from p. 6*

## Francis and Clare: A Gospel Story

By Helen Julian, CSF

Review by Pamela Mooman



Published in 2005 by The Word  
Among Us Press, Ijamsville,  
Maryland

143 pages ISBN: 1-59325-060-6.  
Originally published under the title  
*Living the Gospel: The Spirituality  
of St. Francis and St. Clare*, 2001  
by The Bible Reading Fellowship,  
Oxford, England, U.K.

restores relationship with God, the relationship broken by sin (*Gen. 3*)" and makes us children of the Father (*Matt 5:45*) and spouses, brothers and mothers of Christ (*Matt 12:50*).

This would be a wonderful read for those in Formation, of course, but, in reality, we can all benefit from Helen Julian's direct writing, her passion for the gospel, and her love for Francis and Clare. ♦

**Want to hear a good story? Sister Helen Julian, Minister General of the Anglican Community of St. Francis, has one for you. In fact, she has a number of them. Details about Francis and Clare and discussions about what makes Franciscans essentially *Franciscan* always make for fascinating reading.**

Yet Helen Julian goes beyond.

*Francis and Clare: A Gospel Story* is steeped in documented history and is rooted in Holy Scripture. Along with some beloved, well-known stories, such as Francis and the Wolf of Gubbio, this volume is also rich with information that helps readers better understand the passion and utter faith with which Francis and Clare embraced the difficult way they had chosen — the narrow path.

### Living with Food Scarcity

For example, Helen Julian tells of how Clare and her sisters at San Damiano lived daily with food scarcity. Once they had half of a loaf of bread to feed 50 sisters. Clare told one of the sisters to cut 50 slices from it. In obedience, the sister began to slice the loaf, and in the end, everyone was able to have a sizeable slice from it. While the poverty of Francis and the brothers is often told, Helen Julian tells of the sisters' trials without dwelling on them. She mentions the deterioration of the structure at San Damiano over time, so that once when Clare was closing the main door, it fell on her.

The book's numerous stories are accompanied by thoughtful reflections from Helen Julian about their meaning, and the seven chapters have specific themes. From the very beginning of what would become the Franciscan Order with Francis's own spiritual journey to how his well-known love of all of God's creatures evolved to the nature of the profound spirituality of Francis and Clare, Helen Julian dips readers into their lives. She tells of their challenges, but she concentrates on their efforts to overcome them by focusing on the Risen and Crucified Christ.

While the many stories illustrate aspects of Francis's and Clare's daily journeys into conversion, Helen Julian's penetrating lens into the deep contemplation they practiced and the fruits these practices delivered helps readers launch into reflections of their own, for she makes the struggles of Francis and Clare relevant to people today seeking to go deeper to know God.

### The Franciscan View of Poverty

The book's chapter on poverty, "As Poor, Yet Making Many Rich," offers a particularly meaningful, easy-to-understand explanation

*cont. on page 8*



*Francis and Clare: A Gospel Story, cont. from p. 7*

of the Franciscan view on poverty, Francis' beloved Lady. As we release material possessions, knowledge, talents, spiritual traditions, power, reputation, fear, and our own wills, we become free. We can face God in the pure nakedness of Eden, without anything in between. Helen Julian posits that Francis's poverty is actually another term for conversion. She makes the fascinating point that giving up things of this world, since this act is visceral, is actually the easiest part of the process. Surrendering everything else, except for our sins and mistakes, which are our own, is much more challenging. Daily renewed effort to strip everything away and give it and ourselves to God is how we embrace poverty and ongoing, ceaseless conversion.

This book would certainly be useful to people in Formation, but it can also freshen the outlooks of those who have been Franciscans for years and serve as a fountainhead for new perceptions. Just as Franciscan stories are inherently as dramatic as the Order's earthly founder, so they are also deeply spiritual and filled with a love of God. This book by Helen Julian captures and holds this holy tension skillfully. ♦

**About the Author: Sister Helen Julian**  
by Pamela Clare, CSF  
*Minister Provincial, Province of the Americas*

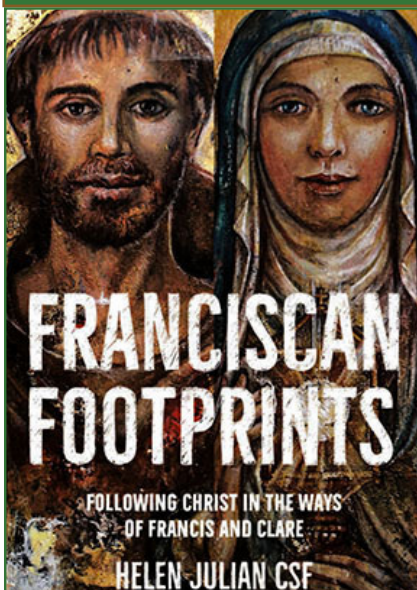
I first started getting to know Helen Julian when she came to San Francisco as part of a First Order Chapter and stayed on for vacation time some 20 years ago. A major part of her vacation was attending various Aikido classes—something about which she was quite keen at the time. She has a love of books and of knowledge, having been a librarian. I was visiting the Birmingham CSF House some years ago when Helen received perhaps her first “rejection notice” for a book she was writing. She kept at it and now has published a half dozen books and also various articles on Franciscan topics as well as other aspects of spirituality.

About 18 years ago she felt called to a more solitary life. (CSF has had several hermits in its history.) Her efforts at a solitary life were hindered first by her period of theological training for the priesthood and then by CSF electing her as Minister General. She very generously has given of herself to the community for the past nine years in that role, for which CSF is very grateful.

**Franciscan Footprints: Following Christ in the Ways of Francis and Clare**

By Helen Julian, CSF

*Review by Ted Witham (Province of Asia-Pacific Newsletter)*



Oxford, England: Bible Reading Fellowship, paperback and Kindle 144 pages. 0857468111

**F***ranciscan Footprints*, like much of Franciscan spirituality, is deceptively simple. In this helpful and engaging book, Sister Helen Julian, Minister General of the Anglican Community of St Francis, tells the story of about 100 Franciscans over the last 800 years—from Saint Francis and Clare in the 12<sup>th</sup> Century to Padre Pio and Algy Robertson, SSF in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The stories are mainly of individuals and some organizations presented in nine thematic chapters. The first two chapters tell the stories of the original founders, the two Assisi saints (Francis and Clare), and the founders of the Anglican Franciscans, including Sister Rosina Mary, CSF, who founded the Community of Saint Francis in 1905.

The titles of further chapters, “Thinkers and Writers,” “Mystics and Spiritual Writers,” “Social Care, Social Justice,” “Martyrs,” “Missionaries and Preachers,” “Pastors” and “Simply Living,” display the breadth of the Franciscan way of life. Placing each of her characters into these themes allows Sister Helen to “follow the followers” and explore the many paths along which Franciscans follow Jesus.

The Franciscan intellectual tradition is represented strongly by the 13<sup>th</sup> century Bonaventure and the 21<sup>st</sup> century Sister Ilia Delio. Many

*cont. on page 9*



*Franciscan Footprints, cont.  
from p. 8*

of these Franciscans are new to me. Felix of Cantalice (born 1515) was a ploughman who became a lay Franciscan friar. He begged for the friars in Rome for many years and was known as Brother Deo Gratias, because he exclaimed, 'Thanks be to God' (Deo Gratias) for every gift. He sang simple songs in the street and was beloved of children and the poor. His story is told under "Simply Living." His life was seemingly uneventful, but by faithfully being who he was, he attracted many.

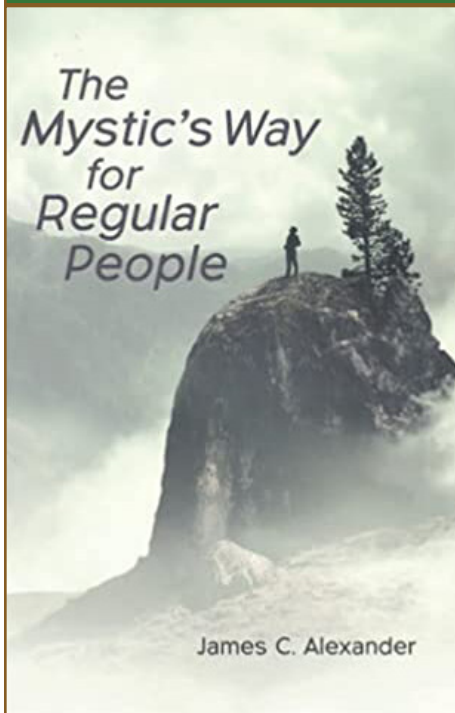
It was good to see the United Nations NGO Franciscans International in its context as an expression of the Franciscan family's social care and social justice.

I commend *Franciscan Footprints* warmly. It is a good book to share within the Franciscan family and beyond. ♦

## The Mystic's Way for Regular People

By James Alexander

Review by Rick Bellows



Resource Publications (2021), 98 pages: hardback, paperback, and Kindle editions

**J**ames Alexander in *The Mystic's Way for Regular People* provides welcome onramps to experiences of God. James, a newly professed tertiary, makes mysticism accessible through clear explanations towards deeper friendship with God. He provides logical explanations of how to develop a friendship with the God of love. "It's all about love, the love of God, love for our neighbors, and love for ourselves" (p. 30).

James puts his Baptist and Roman Catholic seminary training and his experience as a professor to good use by providing theological foundations simply expressed. He addresses logical quandaries clearly laid out, such as the inconsistency between God's omniscience and omnipresence vs. the possibility for a dynamic relationship of love with God. James is very clear that he chooses the relationship of love, which he describes as a mystical friendship with God.

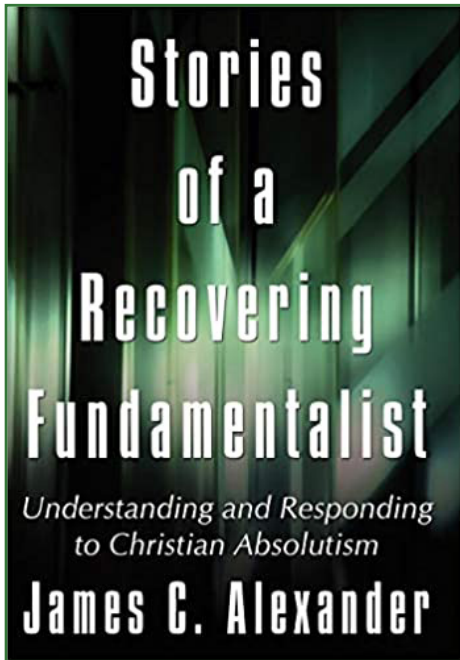
Notes of James's Franciscan spirituality ring clear in ways that non-Franciscans would not find threatening. James avoids threatening arguments with everyone. This may make evangelicals uncomfortable, for the book does not attempt to engage them or draw them into mysticism. Though James himself was an evangelical early in his Christian journey, it seems he would rather dismiss them now rather than disagree with them. "We may never know why non-evangelical mystics and evangelicals are so far apart. The best we can do is leave it for the Good Lord to sort out!" (p. 9) James's refusal to argue keeps the focus on the positive, giving the book a refreshing tone.

The book is addressed to regular people open to friendship with God, rather than to those seeking mysticism related to God's transcendence. I recall a fellowship conversation about mysticism with the late Paul Jakobowski, TSSF, a regular tertiary, but a remarkable person. He didn't want to be a friend of God because he needed to experience God's transcendence. The book does not address mysticism in terms of mysteries, paradox, tensions, inconsistencies, or those things that stretch a person beyond friendship. James is clear that the book focuses on mysticism as friendship with God and the universe.

Part of what makes the book accessible is its short length. In fewer than 100 pages, James provides reflection questions and references for further study for each of the nine chapters. In that short length

*cont. on page 10*

*The Mystic's Way for Regular People, cont. from p. 9*



James packs in some experiences, personal history, and history of mysticism from various perspectives, including Christian points of view from the early church, medieval times (especially Franciscan), and the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Non-Christian perspectives include Hebrew, Jewish, Buddhist and other Asian theistic and non-theistic religions. (Islamic mysticism was mentioned only in passing.) The author does not attempt to provide a comprehensive survey of all of the influences on contemporary mysticism.

Whether you see the spiritual life as an outward journey or an inward journey, you would find the theology, history, models, and tools provided in these pages to be helpful in deepening your love, joy, and peace, hallmarks of the mystical friendship with God. Thank you, James, for this helpful book. ♦

*Also by James Alexander, Stories of a Recovering Fundamentalist: Understanding and Responding to Christian Absolutism. This 2008 book "recounts a gripping personal pilgrimage—at times both humorous and painful—that is rooted in honest reflection and informed by theory and research. It offers worthwhile reading for mainline Christians, curious evangelicals, recovering fundamentalists or anyone wanting to understand this timely topic." (Amazon.com book description.)*



Surrounded by Love:  
Seven Teachings of St. Francis

By Murray Bodo

*Review by Janet Nail  
Published Posthumously in the  
Mississippi Episcopalian, May 2021*

**Editor's Note:**

*A remembrance of Janet Nail appears on page 32 in the Rest in Peace section of this issue.*

**A**s a lost and confused adolescent, Murray Bodo found in St. Francis of Assisi a brother and a friend. He traded his self-absorption for the adventure of the Holy Quest, the ascent of Mount Subasio, where Francis was born and lived his youth in the walled city of Assisi. However, what he mistook for an immediate ascent of the holy mountain began in the plain below where lepers lived.

Like Francis, Bodo had to learn some hard lessons about following the path God had laid out for him. Today, Murray Bodo, O.F.M., is the foremost chronicler of Francis of Assisi, his life, and his spiritual influence in prose and poetry. *Surrounded by Love: Seven Teachings from Saint Francis* is his most recent contribution and gift.

The teachings of St. Francis begin with his foray into battle, as the city of Assisi went out against her rival, Perugia. Instead of glory, Francis (or Francesco as he was known) found humiliation and defeat and the agony of imprisonment as he waited for his father to ransom him.

It was a long wait, and during the time, Francesco fell ill. His body became wasted, but the worst injury was his spirit (today, we would say he suffered PTSD). When he finally was ransomed and returned home, he found it was no longer his home. Something was missing.

No longer the roistering young troubadour who kept the neighbors awake and led his cronies in songs and laughter, he roamed the hills trying to recover his *joie de vivre*. It seemed another war party would do it. His father bought him armor and a horse and watched his son go forth to battle.

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*Surrounded by Love, cont.  
from p. 10*

Legend says that God spoke to Francis in a dream and asked him whether it was better to serve the man or the master; Francis said, "The Master, of course." God replied, "Then why do you go forth to serve the man? Go home, Francis, I have work for you." Francis gave his horse and armor to a poor knight and returned home to ridicule, whispers, and jeers.

Bui God showed him that to reach high, you must bend low. Francis met the leper who repulsed him, gave him alms, then, seized with something beyond himself, gave the leper the kiss of peace that was a change of heart for the fastidious young man. He began to serve the lepers and found "that which I found foul became sweet." He discovered humility.

### The Seven Teachings

The first teaching was this: Christ is the fullness of the incarnation of God. If you listen to God, He will direct your path.

*We often think we are following the Gospel when we are actually following our own version of the Gospel.*

The second teaching is that we find God when we become poor enough for God to find us. As Jesus said, "Those who live in palaces wear fine clothes and soft garments." God seeks you when you are poor enough to recognize him.

Live the Gospel. How many times have you heard that? But Francis took it further: make sure you are following the true Gospel.

Discern the truth. We often think we are following the Gospel when we are actually following our own version of the Gospel. It is easy to dismiss the actual commands of Jesus by saying that he was speaking metaphorically ("He didn't really mean for us to give all we have to the poor and follow him. He was speaking in metaphor.") This is a chapter that kept me thinking about it for a long time.

Go and repair God's house. Here, we should remember that Jesus is speaking in metaphor. Bring the church back to the true teaching of Christ. And remember, you, your body, is the house of God. Are you showing the true light of Christ? Are you repairing the damage that sin may have inflicted on you?

Making peace. Remember that God's House is all of Creation. That is the source of the identification of Francis as the patron saint of ecology. Protect and repair the community of planet Earth.

There is joy in praise and humble service to God. People want to do something grand for God, something that gets their name in the paper. But God delights in simple things, teaching children in Sunday School, for instance. I always feel God is beaming with joy when I am teaching children, even as most other members may dismiss what I do.

The main thing that Francis taught us is love and humility. Love God, love our human family. Give oneself in service and humility.

Along with the teaching, Bodo includes poems of spiritual growth and magnificence. You will surely grow as you read this book.



## The Lives of the Saint: Francis & Diakonia in the Films of Roberto Rossellini

Review by Charles Demers



A movie poster for *Europe 51*.

To describe the mid-twentieth century international film star Ingrid Bergman as *iconic* would, under most circumstances, be to use the domesticated language of celebrity culture hyperbole—but in reference to her performance in 1952's *Europe '51*, the term reverts to something of its original, sacramental meaning. One of her collaborations with romantic partner Roberto Rossellini, the film is explicitly paired by its contemporary curators at the Criterion Collection with the director's preceding film about arguably the most spiritually and ecclesiastically impactful deacon in church history, Francis of Assisi: "[t]he intense, often overlooked *Europe 51* was, according to Rossellini, a retelling of his own *The Flowers of St. Francis* from a female perspective."

Seen in the retrospective light cast by *Europe '51* and its portrayal of life-giving, kenotic *diakonia* in the figure of Irene—the story's protagonist, played by Bergman—the gentle calm and meditative peacefulness of *The Flowers of St. Francis* (1950) makes new sense against the violence and despair which preceded it in Rossellini's post-WWII output. In 1948, the director had released the final and bleakest installment of what has come to be known as his "post-war trilogy" (*Rome: Open City*; *Paisan*; and finally, *Germany: Year Zero*), filmed in the rubble of a flattened and occupied Berlin, and culminating in the most hopeless of nightmares: juvenile suicide.

Then, almost unfathomably, two years later, came the nearly unspeakable beauty of *The Flowers of St. Francis*, a perhaps appropriately beatific adaptation of the late-medieval collection of Franciscan history, legends, and lore, made with the collaboration of a professed Franciscan, as well as one Dominican friar. Despite the raging and vastly destructive warfare of Francis's time, either between Italian city-states (violence in which the pre-conversion Francis had been caught up, leading to an extended and traumatic imprisonment), or in the Crusades (to whose Egyptian front lines the post-conversion Francis famously dispatched himself in order to convert the Muslims, leading instead to a celebrated encounter with Sultan al-Malik al-Kamil, now regarded, perhaps legendarily, as an early prototype for respectful inter-religious dialogue), this connection with war-ravaged mid-twentieth century Europe is left unexplored in the picture; the one sequence that deals with a warlord is played largely for laughs.

### Francis as an Icon of Christ

The film is, instead, a soft and invitational one, portraying Francis as an icon of Jesus the Christ, sending out his disciples in every direction at the picture's end in the manner instructed by the Gospel of St. Matthew. This parallel-drawing between the life of Francis and the life of Jesus is also true to the film's source material, as in this passage from *The Little Flowers* on Francis's Lenten fast at Perugia: "In many ways, as a true servant of Jesus Christ, St. Francis was given to the world as Christ himself was: for its salvation. God's will was accomplished through Francis, as we saw in the lives of the twelve companions, the mysteries of the stigmata,

*cont. on page 13*



*Films of Roberto Rossellini,  
cont. from p. 12*

and in the continuous fasting of holy Lent that Francis kept..." In fact, in his introduction to his edition of *The Little Flowers*, the scholar Jon M. Sweeney points out that the faction of Franciscans originally responsible for the book were "comparing their revered founder to Jesus in ways that understandably made more mainstream Franciscans (as well as a few popes) uncomfortable."

The seeming disjuncture, however, between *Germany: Year Zero* and *The Flowers of St. Francis* is erased by Rossellini's feminine recapitulation of Franciscan themes in an explicitly contemporary context in *Europe '51*. And rather than providing an icon of Christ through literary allusion or aesthetic rhyming, we have, instead, in the words of Ormonde Plater, historian of the diaconate, a "distinct symbol of Christ the servant."

### Salvation in Agape

Bergman plays Irene, the wife of a wealthy representative of American industrial interests in Italy, who buries her trauma from the British air raids in the incessant niceties of bourgeois socialite life—until her 12-year-old son, with whom she cowered during the bombings, throws himself down a stairwell, dying shortly afterwards. Initially paralyzed by despair, Irene is drawn out of her bourgeois social enclosure by her husband's Communist cousin, Andrea, a man driven as much by selfless principle as by haughty condescension, and also, possibly, an attraction to his cousin's wife. Andrea introduces Irene to a working-class family whose son's life her money can save with an otherwise unattainable operation, and she comes quickly to realize that the only salvation, for her or for others, lies in *agape*.

*The Flowers of St. Francis is the deacon saint in stained glass; Europe '51 is Saint Francis of Assisi in stained washcloth and stained apron.*

In an exchange with the Marxist Andrea, Irene—whose name, invoking peace, also echoes Irenaeus, thus associating her with martyrdom, apostolicity, and the elimination of heresy—makes it clear that, without ignoring the immediate physical needs of those around her, she is operating at dimensions of redemption more profound than the exclusively material plane to which his project is restricted:

Andrea: We would have a paradise — here on earth. Real, material. Willed and made by man.

Irene: Perhaps. But if only everyone would understand that the problem is much deeper than that. More spiritual. Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. Only that will bring us close. Closer to one another as equals. Humble in the same way—for only with love will we find salvation together. I want to thank you, Andrea. You've opened my eyes, in spite of your ideas. I know now that all my life's been a mistake. If God would help me! [...] I want to make sure that [my son] Michel knows how great my love for everyone is. It's part of my love for him...

Drawn in to the geography of working-class life in her city, Irene meets a young mother raising six children alone; she finds her a job in a factory, then works one of her shifts so that the woman doesn't have to break a date with a young man. Irene moves into the

*cont. on page 14*

Films of Roberto Rossellini,  
cont. from p. 13

*Europe '51* is available on YouTube with English subtitles, and *The Flowers of St. Francis* (The Criterion Collection) is available from our Provincial library; contact [John Brockmann](#).



apartment of a sex worker, dying prematurely, who lives in the building of the boy whose operation she paid for; the woman is shunned by her neighbors, but Irene brings her first a doctor and then, after the fatal prognosis and last rites have been delivered, spoon feeds the woman her last meals, and bears solemn witness to her final moments.

*The Flowers of St. Francis* is the deacon saint in stained glass; *Europe '51* is Saint Francis of Assisi in stained washcloth and stained apron. In tracing the story of a renunciation of privilege in favor of *diakonia*, and emptying of personal wealth and comfort in prophetic ministry to the sick, the naked, the hungry, the thirsty, the imprisoned, “the least of these” (Matt. 24: 42-45), the film intimately follows the biographical arcs of the founding saints of the Franciscan way, both Francis and Saint Clare. And as we prepare to move into the aftermath of the greatest global trauma since WWII, at a time of deep malaise and unrest, this extended meditation on Franciscan spirituality and its responses to human brokenness in the face of mass devastation are deeply instructive.

*...as we prepare to move into the aftermath of the greatest global trauma since WWII, at a time of deep malaise and unrest, this extended meditation on Franciscan spirituality and its responses to human brokenness in the face of mass devastation are deeply instructive.*

### Nothing Will Be More Urgent

In the coming months, years, and decades, nothing will be more urgent than the loving care for and recuperation of the creation that sustains us; this must be done with concomitant respect for the integrity of the embodied lives of other creatures, human and otherwise, with whom we are related and entangled; with the nurturing of just peace, mutual respect, and friendship with those we’ve been taught to imagine as enemies; with the renunciation of hoarded wealth and its liquidation to slake the thirst of the poor and exploited; and with the tending of the sick, whether in body or in mind. While it would be delusion to imagine that Francis’s medieval circumstances could speak directly to ours without any remainder, we’d equally have to strain ourselves not to hear the resonances between them. In *Europe '51*, Bergman and Rossellini reimagined Francis for the darkness of postwar Europe; as we begin to make the first tentative steps towards post-pandemic life, maybe another wave of saintly recasting is due. ♦

## Good News from Chapter

By Janet Fedders  
Minister Provincial

**A**t Pentecost we sent out an appeal to assist the Guarani Peoples of Brazil in education, in reclaiming their culture and language, and in preserving and passing on their artwork. You responded generously. We were able to send Rev. Antonio Terto (our Regional Minister for Brazil) over \$15,000 for this project. On behalf of the Guarani Peoples, a huge thanks to all of you who participated.

In other news, the TSSF Medical Mission Fund joined with the Stu Schlegel Fund to provide a new ultrasound machine to the hospital in Tobago. We thank our sister, Dr. Kathryn Challoner, for her generous gift to help out with this project. Sister Ossilla James sent us the idea at last Chapter.

The Medical Mission Fund is under new leadership now: David Lawson-Beck has joined the Medical Mission Fund's Advisory Board, and Lance Renault is the new Executive Secretary of the Medical Mission Fund. Thank you both for your stepping forward in service.



## Retreating to Draw Closer to God: "Love—The Bridge to the Kingdom"

By Pamela Mooman

### Looking for Retreat Venues?

Zoom retreats remain an option, but now that we can once again meet in person, many of you are probably eager to plan a real, live retreat. Do you have a favorite retreat spot? We'd like to hear about it. Newly professed Amanda Sisk is compiling the list, and it will be posted on our website. We're interested in the location, the size, how to contact the venue, and why you like this place. Let Amanda know, and she'll take it from there!

[info@ateliersisk.com](mailto:info@ateliersisk.com)

**T**he global pandemic has affected the ability of tertiaries to fulfill that article of their Rules calling for silent retreat, for quiet time alone with God to reflect and to listen. Everyone has felt it, and some in the Cloud Fellowship started considering how they could put together an online retreat that honored the tenets in individual Rules of Life while offering something meaningful to a larger audience.

From this "What if..." grew the online retreat on 26-27 Feb. 2021 called "Love—The Bridge to the Kingdom." The retreat featured three speakers, each focusing on a specific aspect of love and how it helps Tertiaries overcome challenges in the world, especially in this time in the United States when there is so much division and anger, to become instruments of peace for God. Diana Turner-Forte also designed and presented a gentle movement session that soothed and connected body and mind with spirit. A reflective worship service with Taizè music concluded the event.

The organizing group consisted of Steve Eubanks, Diana Turner-Forte, Linda Cannata, Edie DiTommaso, Pam Mooman, and Ailsa Cornell, Convenor. The result after months of planning was a gathering grounded in the TSSF Principles but also rich with the individual approach of each speaker to bring these values into the wider world. About 20 people joined the retreat online through Zoom, with Steve Eubanks serving as online moderator.

"Among several online programs I participated in during our pandemic year, 'Love—The Bridge to the Kingdom' was the most well-planned and enlightening," said Alice Baird. "It was obvious that a lot of careful preparation went into making this a meaningful and spiritually nourishing retreat."

*cont. on page 16*

*Love—The Bridge to the Kingdom, cont. from p. 15*



*Peter Stube, whose presentation focused on the mystery of the love of God.*

### **Peter Stube TSSF, Love of God**

In his presentation, Peter Stube covered the arcing history of God's deep love for creation. Opening with the Presence of God moving over a formless, dark void, Peter took participants back to the very beginning when the Word spoke Creation into being with a love that rang out over the face of the deep — "Let there be light."

Through a series of three vignettes, he poignantly explored the sacrificial love to which Christians have been called as well as the deep way God has sacrificed His Holy Trinitarian Self for us.

Starting with Genesis, Peter traced God's relationship with humans, which began a descent when Adam and Eve chose the serpent's word over the Word of God. Even then, however, he pointed out God's unimaginable love.

"This God never lets His people go," he said, and added that God chases his beloved creatures with love and compassion.

The second vignette began with the Gospel of John and the beautiful words that echo Genesis: "In the beginning...."

"We see the curtain drawn back, and we see God as He really is," Peter said. He went on to use illustrations to show what a huge, incomprehensible sacrifice God made to win us.

The third vignette was about his beloved mother, Barbara Stube.

"I learned how to love by watching her," he said. Through music, and later with poetry and love-filled intercessions, he described how she reached out to God her entire life.

Ultimately, the love of God and love for God is a mystery. Peter summed it up this way:

"When we have loved Him for the first time, when God's love touches us, eternity has begun for us."



*In her talk about love of self, Susan Pitchford focused on the role Franciscan poverty plays.*

### **Susan Pitchford TSSF, Love of Self**

Susan Pitchford opened her lively presentation by saying we are made by, for, and of love. This beautiful logic is reassuring to follow:

"Life is about God. God is Love. Life is about love."

Susan pointed out that if we are mired in ego, we cannot properly love either God or our neighbors as we should. The *point vierge* so often spoken of by Thomas Merton refers to that virgin point, a pure spot shining like a diamond, where God dwells in each of us. The difficulty humans face is fumbling through all the worldly detritus in order to reach this place of purity.

She posited the medieval devotion to the Sacred Heart is the answer to right-sizing our earthly selves in order to reach that sacred place of love and mercy and light. She said our poverty strips away the debris we gather so we become small enough to enter the Sacred Heart and rest there.

Poverty comes in many forms of big, deep challenges, she pointed out — a loveless marriage, an ill child, or mental illness, for example.

*cont. on page 17*



*Love—The Bridge to the Kingdom, cont. from p. 16*



*Masud Ibn Syedullah urged us to reach outside our established comfort zones in practicing love of neighbor.*

Poverty is equivalent to our cross here in this life. When we take up our crosses as Christ tells us to, they will lead us to Him and away from earthly distractions.

Ultimately, all of this is about control, Susan said. Through suffering, we lose control, and our faith is burnished and polished to gleaming strength. God, she said, is beckoning us to exercise our more perfected faith and step out onto that lake.

### **Masud Ibn Syedullah TSSF, Love of Neighbor**

Masud Ibn Syedullah has spent his life working for neighborly togetherness — between communities, faiths, congregations, races. He opened his presentation by exploring how we are being realigned to Love — at Easter, when we can celebrate our own resurrection in Christ — and every moment of our lives.

“Jesus articulates who God is, what God is like,” Masud said. “Jesus, the Word of God, is love.” He went on to say that each Christian is called to be a Word of God. Jesus is the Way, he said, and He invites us to follow Him in the Way of Love.

“The Good News is that God is here, God is near,” Masud said. God uses each one of us in the Sacraments, as we make ourselves available to Him.

However, Masud warned against nursing a stale, dogmatic set of beliefs, pointing out that religion itself can become a sort of god, an idol.

To help us avoid this and open more fully to God’s call through Jesus to love, Masud used multiple examples of reaching outside established comfort zones:

- The good Samaritan
- The Canaanite woman
- The jealous brother in the parable of the Prodigal Son
- Jesus’ washing of his disciples’ feet
- Francis and the leper on the road

Masud encouraged everyone to see people, events, and this world through the lens of Jesus and posed three thought-provoking questions as catalysts for reflection:

- *How and with whom do I need to love more perfectly?*
- *What steps might I take to express love?*
- *What resources can help me love my “lepers” more perfectly?*

Masud suggested that a careful examination of these points can help us all grow in love for our neighbors, who are also beloved of God, just as we are.

### **Available to All**

Recordings of the three presentations are available on the TSSF website at <https://tssf.org/resources/articles-videos/>.



## A Chrysalis Moment for TSSF's Initial Formation Program

By John Rebstock  
Formation Guardian



**O**ur Province's English-language formation program has been undergoing exciting transformation since the recommendations of a working group were adopted by Chapter last October.

The major elements of the changes include:

- differentiating the stages of formation,
- enhancing communal engagement among those in formation with each other and professed members, and
- strengthening a team approach in leading the formation program.

### The Stages of Formation

**Welcome**—Our desire is to provide warm hospitality to all whom God sends us. In addition to the Inquirer's Secretary, who mails an initial packet to people who express an interest, we now have an Assistant Formation Guardian for Welcome, who answers questions, provides encouragement, and shares basic information with Inquirers in periodic online presentations. After Inquirers apply and become Aspirants, they complete a few additional tasks. When all is ready, a Postulant review is conducted via videoconference to introduce the Postulant and formation team and prepare for the work ahead.

**Postulancy**—For six months, the Postulant works one-on-one with a formation counselor to write a personal rule of life consistent with our Principles, using the nine prescribed areas of the Rule. Previously, applicants developed their rules mostly on their own before formally starting formation. The focus during postulancy is to begin living this personal rule, becoming familiar with our Principles, Franciscan joy, and Franciscan ways. At the end of six months, the postulant's progress is reviewed at another online meeting to advance to the Novitiate.

**Novice One**—During the first year of Novitiate, novices participate in a monthly online forum with other novices and professed tertiaries who serve as forum mentors. Study focuses on deep reflection on our Principles, Franciscan history and theology, and integrating this tradition into daily life. After the first novice year, the formation team again conducts an online review. Fellowship input is welcomed at each review point.

**Novice Two**—During the second novice year, novices typically work every other month with a formation counselor, and join with other novices and professed mentors in the intervening months in an online service formation group. This group is called Novices Exploring Our Service (Nexus). The focus at this stage is continuing to live by the Rule, with a deeper exploration of our three ways of service (Prayer, Study and Work), as well as other ways of embodying Franciscan spirituality. Novices also learn about missional priorities of the Order, such as sacred ecology and racial harmony. With the agreement of the formation team, second-year novices may also develop a Principles-based rule if they desire. At the end of this time, a Profession Review is convened to develop a recommendation for profession that is presented to Chapter for approval.

*cont. on page 19*

*Formation Program, cont.  
from p. 18*

## Communal Engagement

Technology is helping us connect with our Aspirants, Postulants, and Novices in wonderful ways. Previously in formation, many of us never met or spoke with our counselors, interacting almost exclusively through written reports. If we lived near a local fellowship or regional convocation, we might have met other tertiaries in person. As you can see from the descriptions above, now our folks in formation can meet other TSSF members from the very beginning, in online information sessions, reviews with multiple formation-team members, a novice class, and novice peer group. The formation team is also working closely with the Fellowship and Lifelong Formation Guardian so that aspirants and postulants can be integrated into a fellowship as soon as possible. By the time a person is professed, the individual will have met and worked closely with a range of other TSSF members in a variety of formats (in writing, by telephone, by videoconference, in person, one-on-one, and in groups). We hope this variety provides a rich sense of being formed into community.

## Enhancing a Team Approach

At each transition point in formation, we convene a team meeting to review progress with the person in formation.

Decisions are made communally. If a postulant or novice desires, a fellowship representative and others (spiritual director, area chaplain) may also be included. If a fellowship representative does not participate in the online review conversation, the fellowship is asked to submit written input to the formation team. Fellowships are key components in TSSF formation, both initial and lifelong.

*Our formation program is a huge undertaking with many helpers. It is also a major form of service that our Order offers freely and that renews all of us.*

## New Formation Team Members Are Welcome!

Our formation program is a huge undertaking with many helpers. It is also a major form of service that our Order offers freely, and that renews all of us.

The English-language formation program includes:

- A Formation Guardian (John Rebstock)
- Seven Assistant Formation Guardians (Judi Thomas for Welcome; Valerie Hart and Bob Thomas for Postulants; Ailsa Cornell and Jonathan Lloyd for first-year Novices; Cristine Mincheff and Peter Stube for second-year Novices).
- Six group mentors: (Rick Bellows, Charlie McCarron and Dave Scheider lead the N1 class; Sarah Hartzell and Janet Strickler lead a geographic formation class in Colorado; and David Milliken and Janet Strickler lead the Nexus groups for second-year Novices).
- 25 counselors
- More than 40 Postulants and Novices. These Postulants and Novices constitute close to ten percent of our Province's English-speaking membership.

If you are intrigued by the changes to formation and would like to get involved, we welcome your participation. There is much to do, from helping to grow new Franciscans as a formation counselor; leading or making presentations to novice groups; convening peer groups of counselors to share experiences; helping improve our use of technology both to store and share information; and working with a team of counselors as an Assistant Guardian. Please pray and think about joining us. ♦

## CALLING ALL TSSF BLOGGERS

Do you maintain a blog, website, or Youtube channel through which you discuss Christian and Franciscan themes?

*The Franciscan Times* wants to know for an upcoming article!

Contact the editors.

### TSSF Province of the Americas Financial Summary 10/01/20 - 06/30/2021

<b>Fund Balances</b>	<b>10/1/2020</b>	<b>6/30/2021</b>
Operating Fund	21,885.38	43,732.93
Savings Account & CD	126,298.22	161,529.06
JCFU Account	6,456.46	12,536.46
<b>TOTAL FUNDS</b>	<b>154,640.06</b>	<b>217,798.45</b>
Schlegel Urgent Needs Fund	-	22,752.66
Kay Miller Scholarship Fund	34,281.96	30,881.96
Medical Mission Fund	675.68	675.68
Guarani Appeal Funds		14,610.85
Tom Johnson Mission Fund	1,300.00	-
Memorials	2,189.74	2,117.74
Companions Funds	3,740.89	5,604.59
<b>TOTAL RESTRICTED FUNDS</b>	<b>42,188.27</b>	<b>76,643.48</b>
<b>UNRESTRICTED FUNDS</b>	<b>112,451.79</b>	<b>141,154.97</b>
<b>Fiscal Year 2020-2021 As of 06/30/2021</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Actual</b>
<b>Contributions</b>	45,000.00	47,749.00
<b>Other Income (Amazon Smile, Interest)</b>	492.00	333.00
<b>Total Operating Income</b>	45,492.00	48,082.00
<b>Operating Expenses</b>		
Servants (Ministers, Chaplains, Officers)	18,788.00	10,280.00
Formation	2,175.00	-
Outreach (Support for other Orders & Organizations)	8,663.00	5,150.00
Communications	4,613.00	3,394.00
Meetings Chapter 2020	7,500.00	-
Overhead (Insurance, bank charges, website)	10,200.00	1,941.00
<b>Total Operating Expenses</b>	51,939.00	20,765.00
<b>Income less Expenses</b>	<b>(6,447.00)</b>	<b>27,317.00</b>



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# MILESTONES

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## *Welcome the Newly Professed*

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### *Newly Returned*

#### **John Tolbert**



*John Tolbert shows his Franciscan style.*

***I had been keeping my Rule because it was a necessary part of my life, and I missed my brothers and sisters in the Order.***

**W**hen I was a child of 8 or so, my parents were not associated with any churches, so they named all the denominations in our town, and allowed me to choose the one I wanted. Out of them all, I said Presbyterian. So my mother began to take me to the Presbyterian Church, which was within walking distance. When I was 11, I was baptized. I attended church on a regular basis. I went to college in the pursuit of becoming a Presbyterian minister. However, I came to have a desire to be in a liturgical church. The closest church I knew at home was the Methodist church, which followed a liturgical form based on their “ancestry” in the Anglican tradition. But in college, my roommate was an Episcopalian, and I went to church with him. I was hooked. By the start of the second semester, I was confirmed by John M. Allen, Bishop Coadjutor of Mississippi, on the first Sunday of Lent in 1966. Now I was an Episcopalian.

Some years later I heard about the Third Order of The Society of St. Francis from a communicant (John Dotson) in our church, and I felt I was called to become a Franciscan. I made my profession on May 19, 1990. I was an Episcopalian until the mid-1990s when the Episcopal Church was torn somewhat apart by issues over gay bishops, women bishops, gay priests, and women priests. I decided I did not want to deal with that, so I left the Church. In doing so, I had to give up my relationship with the Order. That was very distressing to me. Looking for another liturgical church, I went to the Orthodox. I went first to the Antiochian Orthodox, but when I moved, I had to switch to Greek Orthodox. My wife and I had our wedding blessed in the Orthodox Church.

However, I began to have some concerns about some of their policies, such as their feelings about gay people, their not being in communion with other Christian churches, their lack of evangelistic music, and an attitude of superiority to non-Orthodox. These things bothered me more and more through the years. One day my wife said she just could not wrap her head around Orthodoxy and wanted to go to another denomination. She would not tell me that for a long time, thinking I would not agree, but finally came to the point of just having to tell me. She thought I was happy with Orthodoxy since I had not told her about my own negative feelings. I asked her where she might go. She suggested maybe the Episcopal Church. After her research about the Episcopal Church, she thought that was where she would like to try.

### **Hooked Again**

We prayed about it. WOW!!! Hooked again! The answer to our prayers. I agreed with her on the spot. In the years after leaving the Episcopal Church, I had mellowed concerning the issues I had when I left. I was ready to COME HOME! And the first thing I thought of was the Third Order. I had been keeping my Rule because it was a necessary part of my life, and I missed my brothers and sisters in the Order. One of the first things I wanted to do was to see if I could be readmitted. I checked into it, and here I am. As for my wife, she is so happy in the Episcopal Church! It was what she needed. She was received into the Episcopal Church and is starting to get into things at our church, St. Alban's in Hixson, Tennessee.

***Being back HOME is such a JOY! ♦***

## Newly Professed

James Alexander



*Humility is not thinking less of yourself; it is thinking of yourself less.*

**I am happy to be a professed Franciscan. I was spiritually enriched** by the Formation process, and I have met and grown close to many Franciscan sisters and brothers. I am very close to my fellowship group (Sister Water), and I am thankful for Zoom, especially since I am the only Franciscan (well, Episcopal anyway) in Indiana.

I am married (45 years) to Irene (*aka* Renski). She is the love of my life, and we have two sons. Aaron earned a degree in computer science and mathematics and is a software engineer. I'm fortunate that we moved to his town three years ago, since I am technologically challenged (big time!). My other son, Galen, is a sociologist, and has been involved in government relations work for many years. Renski and I have great daughters-in-law, and the three best grandkids in the whole world...with one more on the way!

I have done lots of things in my life. I was an elementary school teacher, a remedial reading teacher for grades K-2, a director of literacy education in a state prison, and a minister in another denomination. I earned degrees and had training in all those areas. But mostly (25 years) I was a professor of Educational Psychology at a liberal arts college in Kentucky. I retired three years ago.

I'd like to mention three reasons why I am a Franciscan, and they all relate to the notes of the Order:

- **Humility**—I have worked around many poor folks and, as I said, even criminals. I came from a very poor family (no refrigerator, phone, car, etc.) that lived for a time on welfare. But, as years went on, I think that I really lost sight of the plight of the poor and humble. I mean, I knew their plight intellectually, but it seemed so far removed. I very much needed to get back to humility in my life. Back to a foot-washing life. My Franciscan journey, especially the call to work, has really pulled at my heartstrings. As a postulant, I got involved in tutoring illiterate adults and feeding the homeless lunch at our church. I have heard it said that humility is *not thinking less of yourself*; it is *thinking of yourself less*. I have a way to go. But my Franciscan family has been a great help to me.
- **Love**—I have been a pacifist since I was 16. That is my expression of love. When I went to register at that Draft Board in Kansas City, Missouri, when I was 17, I told them that I would always refuse to take up arms against anyone for any reason. I have encountered a lot of hostility about that position over the years, often being regarded as unpatriotic or a coward. That was when I discovered that Francis was a peacemaker. I liked it when he told his Bishop that the Order couldn't have property, because they would need weapons to protect their property. Again and again, Francis was a peacemaker. I discovered that his peacemaking was not a theoretical thing; it was a Jesus thing. Motivated not by theory or politics (as my pacifism came to be over the years), Francis's peacemaking was deeply rooted in the love from and for Christ. I want to follow in his steps.
- Finally, **Joy**—I come from a long line of the anxious and the melancholy people, which is totally opposite from my wife Renski! For her, the glass is always half-full, and she has the assurance that it will be filled up again when that runs out.

*cont. on page 23*

James Alexander, cont.  
from p. 22

Me?? Totally a half-empty guy. My nature is gloom and doom. Over the years, God has constantly reminded me that the “Joy of the Lord is my strength,” and then I discover Francis telling the friars to smile and get the gloomy look off their faces. And you know what? He says the same thing to me!

I am glad to be a Franciscan. I am glad to have ever-deepening humility, love, and joy in my life. Being Franciscan is not just a response to compelling words; to me, it is a calling. I am happy that I had “ears to hear.” And that, too, is a gift from God!



## Newly Professed

Will Hamilton



**I was educated in English boarding schools from ages 8-18 and** attended Anglican services the whole time. I did not realize it at the time, but these services must have made a deep impression on me, because about 20 years ago I began to yearn for the liturgy and to sit in the quiet corner of an English country church. Following two incidents of a profound awareness God gave me of his presence at the ages of 17 and 20, I became an evangelical in a conservative denomination for many years. I was not equipped for the political and theological struggles involved in the leadership role I found myself in, which I found very depressing.

My departure from the conservative denomination I found myself in was precipitated by the invasion of Iraq, which was supported by most of the leadership of that denomination. About that time I discovered St. Francis, and my love for him has never diminished as I have devoured much literature about him.

I discovered the Third Order about the time I joined a local Episcopal Church some three years ago. I don't know what gifts I can bring to the Order. Perhaps writing. I am currently intrigued by how the *Book of Common Prayer* emerged out of the tumultuous lives of the Tudor kings and queens and Thomas Cranmer and want to write on this subject. It will take time.

It is comforting to have the Rule that has emerged during my novitiate. I look forward to meeting more of those in the Order, including those in the Caribbean and Latin America.



## Newly Professed

John Heilman

**A t age 79 I have come** late to the Order, but far better to come to the feast late than to walk around in the darkness outside.

I am a retired educator who spent most of 40 years teaching delinquent and troubled teens and then working in the administration office that supported the teachers and students.

cont. on page 24





*John Heilman, cont. from  
p. 23*

I am married to a strong woman who directs the Montana Racial Equity Project, which, as its name implies, works for justice among people of color and other historically marginalized groups. My main job these days is to take care of the domestic and other distractions that could impair my wife's work, freeing her to fight the systematic racism that afflicts our country.

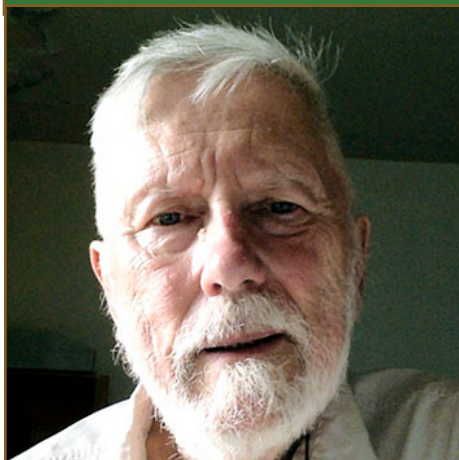
We live in a beautiful Western Montana mountain setting, about 90 minutes from Yellowstone National Park. (We welcome visitors to our guest apartment.) Our two sons have provided us with numerous grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

I am a member of St. James Episcopal Church here in Bozeman where I am a lector and am presently serving a term on the Vestry. And finally, I am a member of the Poverello virtual fellowship, a group of joy-filled men and women whose company I treasure.



### Newly Professed

Lay Canon Gary Russell



*The article at right by Gary Russell originally appeared in Rupert's Land News, Anglican Church of Canada, February 2019, pp. 10-11.*

**I've been on a long journey, from teaching economics in Canadian and Chinese universities, to renouncing the narrow vision of my profession, to working on a Franciscan vision of economics, in harmony with my work in the indigenous Anglican Church in Canada [see following article, "Living Abundantly with Less"].** I've found this to complement well my work with the Diocese of Rupert's Land in rescuing stewardship from a narrow image of fundraising, toward recognizing it as making disciples in our midst and fostering engagement of our parishioners in our mission. With all of that, I look forward to working with our campaigns for compassion and justice across the Third Order.



### *Living Abundantly with Less*

**Y**ou might think *Living with Less* lines up well with *Stewardship*—if you reduce your consumption, you can give more money to the Church. But that flows from a hopelessly narrow concept of stewardship, one that completely misses the mark.

Stewardship is an expansive concept, and its larger meaning is living our faith to the full. It's a whole lifestyle – a broad commitment to changing the way we live in the world according to the vision of Christ. That lifestyle is one of being faithful stewards, commissioned by God to nurture the garden bequeathed to us and to honor all its inhabitants with our loving care. It takes all our gifts – our time, talents, and treasures – packaged in a lifestyle of generous living, to fully reflect God's grace. Give more and take less, because a simple life frees you to serve. That's an all-consuming mandate, not just a week in the fall when we fill out a donation card.

We need to rescue a crippled stewardship that's been narrowed down, in the minds of many, to that dreaded financial pitch one Sunday. But it's not only, or even primarily, about our treasure.

*cont. on page 25*



*Gary Russell, cont. from p. 24*

It's about all the things we are grateful to give: the time we devote to caring for our neighbors, the skills and abilities we contribute to God's children, the passion we put into our work. In that spirit, we turn stewardship into an opportunity to make our faith so meaningful and rewarding that we're eager to serve. When we make people excited to be part of that mission, they will step forward. Then the money aspect can be viewed in its true context.

### Stepping Back from Scarcity Culture

If our grandparents had known we'd be producing 30 times more commodities than they could produce, they'd say we're living in a time of extravagant abundance. If they also knew we all think we're living in a time of nagging scarcity, they'd think we've lost our minds. Perhaps we have.

What lies behind this scarcity mindset that seems so absurd yet colors everything we do in our economy?

Some would say it's the product of our consumer culture, fed by a marketing industry that has mastered all the psychological techniques to suck us into obsessive behaviors that render us perpetually dissatisfied. A scarcity mindset is deliberately and carefully cultivated so that, no matter how much we have, it's not enough.

But I think it runs deeper. It's rooted in the most basic moral choices we have made within our society. What are we doing with our lives? Why do we work? What is the purpose of consumption in our lives? As abstract as these questions are, they actually determine how we conduct our lives.

Here's the anti-economics of it. Do we work to meet our *needs* or to indulge our *wants*? You may think there's a fine line between them, and it's an impossible question to define. But that belies a clear relationship that is more simple and distinct than anyone can understand.

Take two facts. *One*: our economy produces more stuff today than it did a generation ago. *Two*: there's a marketing industry out there that pushes us relentlessly to want more stuff every day, because we can never have enough. As a result, we live in a culture of scarcity where shortages are the norm and losers go without.

That's *wants*. Now let's add another fact regarding *needs*. Though our economy produces more stuff today than it did a generation ago, our needs haven't changed much. For example, how much more food do you need than your grandmother did? From a needs perspective, we live in a culture of abundance where surplus is the norm and nobody need go without unless goods are deliberately denied them.

So, which is it: scarcity or abundance, shortage or surplus? Here's what I would suggest. Abundance is the natural order of things, unless we're subject to psychological marketing scams that trick us into believing that too much is not enough – and unless they make us so addicted to frivolous wants that we don't even know what our needs are, and how modest they really are, or how much surplus stuff we're drowning in.

*What are we doing with our lives? Why do we work? What is the purpose of consumption in our lives? As abstract as these questions are, they actually determine how we conduct our lives.*

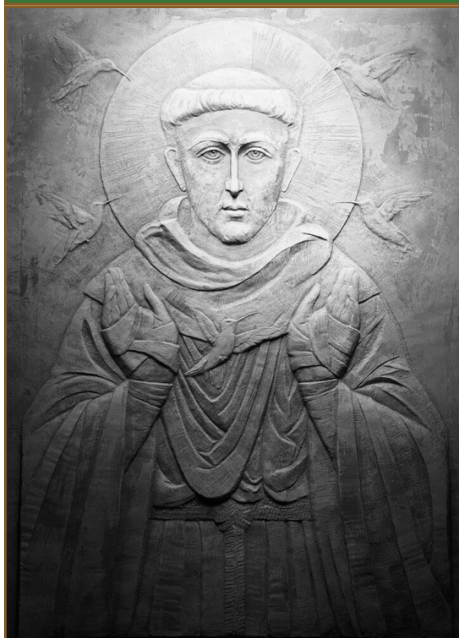
### On a Mission

What do we make of our needs? We follow our calling instead of our insatiable appetites. What is God calling you to do? What do you need in your life in order to follow that mission? Surely you don't really need all that unnecessary stuff that clutters your living space. Of course, we need to consume up to a point in order to live without distress. But beyond that, we should heed the call to serve. That's where stewardship comes from. And there's another side to it: casting off what you don't need for the use of others who *are* in need. Now carry it a step further – it's not limited to giving mere money. Give the three T's: your Time, Talents, and Treasures.

Note that Treasure is last on the list, but only because it should not be considered until after you have considered what of *yourself* you are ready to give, before you know which of *your holdings* you might part with. That's real Stewardship. That's Generous Living writ large. And that's living with less because you're on a mission. ♦

## Newly Professed

Amanda Sisk



*This sculptural icon was created by fine artist Amanda Sisk. You may view more of her works at [ateliersisk.com](http://ateliersisk.com)*

## Greetings in our Lord Jesus Christ!

Joy in the healing beauty of the natural world and supporting the dignity of every life are now the dominant aspects of an intertwined spiritual and creative existence: at the time of my profession to our Order, I continue to be oft-identified as an itinerant artist.

Francis came to me as my bridge to a renewed and deepening relationship with Jesus after witnessing and experiencing cycles of abuse in the Church and elsewhere, and additional trials have been survived to date because of this and God's grace.

My postulancy and novitiate repeatedly educated me about spiritual warfare and my gift from the Holy Spirit seems to be that of the discernment of spirits: various healers encountered along this path have helped me and encouraged me to remain open to how it may be used for good.

Much of my prayer time is intercessory, and I am learning how to balance hermit-mode with being of service in community.

May God bless our time together and strengthen us as blessings to one another and the world! ♦

## Rest in Peace

### Rest in Peace

Dr. Kathryn Ruth Challoner

Professed 16 Years



*By Dorian Challoner*

**K**athryn died on June 30, 2021, at 73 years of age. She led a blessed life as the loving and devoted wife of Dorian, mother of Christine, Byron, and David, as Emergency Physician and Clinical Professor at LA County-USC, as a Third Order Franciscan, and as a well-recognized humanitarian.

Kathryn and her twin sister were born in Toronto. At a coming out party arranged by their parents in 1963, the boys from University of Toronto School were invited and both girls met their husbands-to-be. Kathryn excelled academically and graduated in 1966 as a Prefect, then attended University of Toronto where she graduated with a Bachelor of Science in 1969. On June 20, 1969, Kathryn married Anthony Challoner and began her career as a laboratory technician.

She supported and followed her husband after his graduation to Ottawa, Canada, where he began his career as an engineering scientist, and she soon aspired to becoming a medical doctor like her father. She excelled in her qualifying year and successfully graduated, *magna cum laude*, from University of Ottawa in 1977. After

*cont. on page 27*

*RIP: Kathryn Challoner, cont. from p. 26*



*As a truck unloads school supplies and rice in a Liberian village devastated by Ebola in 2015, a little girl speaks to Kathryn Challoner, who was a specialist in tropical medicine. Taken from her Facebook page, this photo can be seen as an emblem of Dr. Challoner's great humility in her humanitarian work around the world.*

a Family Practice Residency in Toronto, Kathryn and Dorian eyed mutual opportunities in Los Angeles—an Emergency Medicine Residency at LAC-USC and satellite engineering at Hughes. They moved to their home in Manhattan Beach in 1983, and Kathryn pursued her career in Emergency Medicine at LA County Medical Center until retirement in 2015.

Kathryn led an exemplary career at LAC-USC, attending and teaching residents, and helping many personally in their careers. She earned a Master of Public Health, a Diploma in Toxicology and Tropical Medicine, numerous professional honors, and was well recognized by her peers for her moral leadership, always caring for the least among us.

She was notably and fittingly a devout Third Order Franciscan, beloved by her local chapter, with memorable journeys to Assisi and convocations with her husband. The life rule of the Franciscans permeated her ethos. She attended devotedly and

donated generously to the Episcopal Church, to Las Familias, setting up scholarships for international medicine and music and a TSSF Medical Mission Fund. Characteristically, Kathryn would both donate and shop for bargains at Goodwill and Salvation Army.

### A Storied Humanitarian

Kathryn was a storied humanitarian, making select donations and conducting medical teaching and healing worldwide. Since 2001 she traveled multiple times wherever there was need that she felt she could effectively address: in Liberia, Ghana, Ethiopia, Thailand, and Haiti. Responding to the Ebola Crisis in 2014-15, she first trained at the CDC and then helped to cover a severe medical staff shortage at Phebe Hospital, Liberia. Sadly, she contracted malaria just as she completed her mission. While she recovered many months later, she was frustrated that she was weakened and could no longer travel and help the needy.

However, she devotedly cared for her mother-in-law, giving her another two years of life. She built a garage lab for her husband's startup, InertialWave, and while he was traveling on a concert tour with their sons Byron and David in Vienna, she took up painting and presented her husband with a painting of a sea shell on their wonderful 50<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary when she lovingly arranged a rededication of vows.

Kathryn Ruth Challoner led an exemplary life for many and will indeed be sorrowfully missed by all.



### From Mary Atwood, TSSF Associate

**Kathryn was a warrior, fighting disease and the pervasive poverty often surrounding it.** Whether in the Los Angeles County Emergency Room or broad in Africa, Kathryn stepped into the battle to restore health. She risked her own life many times and in many ways; she did not even step back from the Ebola crisis. Sadly, Kathryn's own health was significantly damaged by the recurrent malaria she contracted. How like Francis! Transcending her own suffering to communicate the gospel through her skill and compassion.

Kathryn, may you continue to go from strength to strength, enfolded in Christ's love.





## Rest in Peace

The Very Rev. Roy Mellish

Professed 42 Years



*Undated photo of a young Roy Mellish. He was Chilean by birth, British by parentage, and American by adoption.*

**R**oy Whyllie Mellish was born in Chile in 1941 and passed away on March 4, 2021, in Louisiana, and between those dates he packed in a lot of ministry.

He was Chilean by birth, British by parentage, and American by adoption. He was educated in Chile and at the Seminary of the Caribbean in Puerto Rico. He was ordained in Panama in 1972 and served there before arriving in Honduras in 1976 for an assignment at San Marcos, Muchilena, Honduras. Later the Bishop of Honduras sent Roy to San Francisco de Muchilena to share the rough horseback trips into the mountain villages. In 1985, he became Dean at La Iglesia del Buen Pastor (Church of the Good Shepherd) Cathedral in Honduras.

La Iglesia del Buen Pastor stands on the outskirts of the commercial center of the country. Located on the edge of the richest section of the city and close to a poorer section where campesinos and refugees live, the church is in a position to serve both communities. It has three services: an early morning service in English; a later morning service in Spanish; and a service in Spanish in the evening, when campesinos prefer to worship. (*Episcopal News Service*, March 7, 1985)

At La Iglesia del Buen Pastor, Roy helped build a new Episcopal church and school—thanks to grants from the United Thank Offering and the Diocese of Central Florida's Venture in Mission, and a loan from the Episcopal Church Center with repayment guaranteed by ten churches in Florida.



*Catedral del Buen Pastor in San Pedro Sula, the new church which Roy had built and where he served.*

Around this time Roy became professed in TSSF. At that point there wasn't much TSSF material available in Spanish, just "Principios" and part of the *Devotional Companion*. Eventually all the formation letters were translated, and Roy became the first Spanish Formation Director (*Franciscan Times* Spring 2000, p. 7).

### First Spanish Formation Director

He left Honduras and moved to Houston in 1989 where he was priest in charge of Iglesia Episcopal de la Epifania. In 1991 he moved to Louisiana where he ministered at St. Stephen's Episcopal Church in Innis, then at Trinity Episcopal Church, Morgan City, Louisiana, for 15 years. Bishop Jenkins recorded in his journal in February 2005:

*cont. on page 29*



*RIP: Roy Mellish, cont. from p. 28*

*I celebrated the Eucharist and Confirmation. Fr. Mellish continues to be a faithful and caring pastor to his flock. There is a consistent caring and quiet faithfulness in the ministry of this priest.*

It was from Trinity that he finally retired. In retirement, Fr. Mellish served as a supply priest in both English and Spanish-speaking congregations in the diocese. ♦

### From John Rebstock

**I think of Roy as an “in-between” person.** In Honduras, he was pastor in a lovely new church building that bordered a well-off neighborhood even as it sought to minister to the many poorer neighborhoods nearby. The parish had an English-speaking congregation mostly of ex-pats, and a growing Spanish-speaking congregation. The Episcopal Church in Honduras at the time was in the early phase of great growth, expanding from a mission mainly to “gringo” banana-company and other business and government families as well as English-speaking families who had settled many years earlier from the West Indies to work the banana plantations. Roy was able to minister in between these three spheres—White and Black English-speakers, and the rapidly growing Spanish-speaking Hondurans.

Roy was a native of Chile, but he must have grown up bilingually as he seemed equally fluent in Spanish and English. He had only the slight hint of an accent in English that added to the melodiousness of his voice. His bilingualism enabled him to minister in between with greater ease than those of us who struggle to learn a second language.

Honduras at the time was a place of relative calm sandwiched between the unrest in Nicaragua and El Salvador—another in-between aspect of Roy’s life. The country then was second to Haiti in the hemisphere in terms of poverty. The gang violence of today had not yet emerged. ♦

### From Bill Graham

**Roy had served in Honduras prior to when we** did a youth mission trip from Nebraska in 1989. He was helpful when we unsuccessfully tried



*Roy Mellish with Fleur de Lis Fellowship members Becky Thompson, left, and Cheryl Hubbell, right.*

to get permission from the government to have a young man spend his senior year with us in Alliance, Nebraska. ♦

### From Becky Thompson

**I was momentarily saddened when I heard of** Roy’s passing. Then I smiled. I always smiled when I thought about Roy, or spoke about him, or laughed with him when visiting. There were just the three of us in Fleur de Lis Fellowship here in Louisiana, Roy, Cheryl Hubbell, and me.

We were a bit spread out, and all three had issues with mobility. One of my happiest memories of our attempts to meet as a Fellowship was when I loaded my walker into the back of my car and headed out to pick up Cheryl in Vacherie. She put her walker in the back, and we drove on to Morgan City to meet with Roy. He had recently moved out of his home and into a Long Term Care Facility. He met us in the lobby with his walker, and we cruised by his house and church.

It was a small church, so warm and inviting with lots of wood and a feeling of peace. It was, as the Celts would say, *a thin place*. Clearly a lot of love and prayer happened there. Roy suggested that we go to Shoney’s for a lunch meeting. We had all three walkers in my trunk, but only used two in order to save on some space in the restaurant. It seemed logical at the time. So, here we go into Shoney’s in Morgan City, Louisiana, with two

*cont. on page 30*

*RIP: Roy Mellish,  
cont. from p. 29*

people sharing one walker and one solo walker. Heads turned but not for long. We sat in a large corner booth, walkers parked alongside and had one of the most happy Fellowship meeting I can recall. We prayed, talked and laughed. We laughed a lot, the way one can laugh with long-time friends or family. It felt like a loving family, the three of us with our shared understanding of our spirituality and way of life.

*Yes, when I think about  
or talk about Fr. Roy  
Mellish, I smile.*

It was so easy to visit with Roy even if visits were rare and very far apart. His gentle nature and humility were like a balm. The next time we made our trek to Morgan City to meet, one of Roy's parishioners treated us to a lunch at the Petroleum Club. We were shown to a table in the middle of the club and had a wonderful meal, as usual a bouquet of laughter, sharing, love and joy. That part of Louisiana is very, very conservative and oil is king. It was clear to Cheryl and I that his parishioners loved him deeply and wanted to show him and his friends from out of town how much he meant to them. I was very moved by the gesture, as was Cheryl.

Roy, dear humble, loving and accepting Roy was pleased and grateful but did not take any pride in the gift. The last long conversation I had with him was shortly after he returned to his residence after time in Rehab following his stroke. I smile now as I think about it. Yes, when I think about or talk about Fr. Roy Mellish, I smile. ♦

## Rest in Peace

Dorothy Leslie Murray Hawkins

Professed 28 Years

*From her daughters,  
Elizabeth, Melissa, and Sarah*

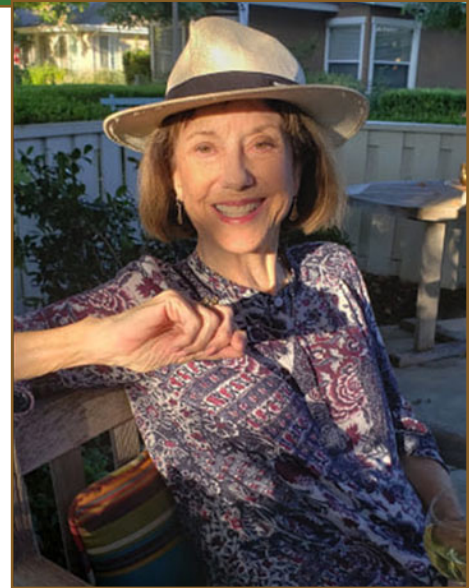
**P**re-war Balboa Island and wartime Long Beach shaped Dorothy's earliest years. She lost her father when she was only 13. The girl who emerged from those experiences had friends she would keep forever and a strong sense of self.

Adventurous and open to new experiences from the start, Dorothy adapted when her mother moved the two of them from Southern California to Kansas halfway through high school. She came back to California for college, studying sociology at Redlands, and making more friends that would last a lifetime.

Dorothy married and moved to Texas where her husband was stationed in the Air Force. The time left a mark on her: the racism she witnessed shaped her perspective on the world and her place in it.

She was a person who constantly sensed the most vulnerable person in a group and would draw them in, making them feel seen and genuinely valued. Everyone wanted to confide in Dorothy. Her family marveled at how passing contacts—a person delivering a package, someone standing ahead of her in a line—would tell her of divorce, death, or illness, and she would console.

She pursued certification in Lamaze technique, teaching and empowering women and their partners as they prepared



for childbirth. She fought for Pomona Valley Hospital to admit fathers into labor and delivery rooms. She was a proponent of breastfeeding. For many years she taught childbirth classes from the family living room. For those who were alone, she woke in the middle of the night—or, even more challenging given her biorhythms, first thing in the morning—to accompany them through giving birth.

She and Warren Hawkins married in 1976 on Mt. Baldy and began their life together, managing a merged family with teenagers. They later became wide world travellers, but returned over and over to Paris, Rome, and Assisi as favorites. Warren and Dorothy pursued their love of travel and learning new things together for many years. Warren supported her spiritual development and giving nature as over the years she became a lay hospital chaplain, served as a Lay Eucharistic Minister for the homebound, was a

*cont. on page 31*



*RIP: Dorothy Hawkins, cont.  
from p. 30*

hospice volunteer providing respite for families in their homes, delivered for Meals on Wheels, and served as driver for people needing rides to cancer treatment, among many other volunteer efforts. She held in her hands the sacredness of life, being present at birth and death and every crucial moment in between.

Her spirituality was fundamental to every aspect of her being. As a longtime, committed member of St. John's Episcopal Church in La Verne, she served on the vestry and was in leadership positions.

Any account of her life requires a mention of her love of animals. Her daughters had a constant stream of pets through the house, and with a few exceptions, she loved them. She always had at least one dog in her life, tending toward the feisty variety, including her current Westie, Sophie. It was perhaps the intersection of her spirituality and love of animals that led her to become a professed member of the lay Third Order of Franciscans, being a co-convenor for many years.

She leaves behind Warren, her husband of 45 years; her three daughters and their spouses and grandsons; Warren's sons and their spouses and grandchildren, and a young man she considered to be her son, Athain Russell. ♦

#### From David Burgdorf

**I always respected her constancy** in reaching out as pen pal and visitor to a young man in prison for life. Her anger at the injustice didn't affect her kindness to the person behind the crime. ♦



*Dorothy Hawkins, center, with daughters Elizabeth, left, and Melissa, right.*

*Rest in Peace*

**Thora Crooks**

*Professed 19 Years*

**T**hora Crooks of Mt. Pleasant, Tobago, passed away on 11 November 2019.

#### From Carol Tookey

**When I was Formation Director, I flew into Tobago to attend the Caribbean Convocation**, and I was picked up at the airport by Thora and her husband. (It was scary for me, never having been out of the U.S. except for a walk across the bridge in Juarez!) I flew into this little airport and had to go through Customs, which I'd never done before. I was the only white person in the building, so I figured I would be easy to spot, but as I wandered around, nobody came up to me. I ended up going outside where I finally found them—or they found me. I stayed at their home for the first night I was there. She had been a home economics teacher. So many things were beautifully sewn by her, and I was really impressed by their food—how much of it they produced themselves. She was a fabulous cook, fixing dishes that to me were very exotic—and delicious!—food: fish, lime sauce, salad for breakfast, etc. They gave me the car tour of their beautiful island. Then we flew over to Trinidad and had our convocation at a Retreat Center run by a community of brothers (I think a Roman Catholic community). ♦

#### From Julia Bergstrom

**I remember that Thora was warm and friendly and gracious.** Barbara Baumgarten stayed with her when we were there for a convocation. Barbara also remembers just how warm and kind she was. That was always my experience with tertiaries in the Caribbean: their warmth and kindness. They were as warm as their weather. ♦

*Rest in Peace*

Gabriel Jones

*Professed 13 Years*



*Gabriel Jones served as Catechist at Chinoweing, Guyana, for approximately thirty years or more. He was 90 years old when he passed away in March.*

*By Father Charles Roland*

**G**abriel Jones was Catechist serving the Church at Chinoweing for approximately thirty years or more. He was married and lived at Chinoweing with his wife, now deceased. He worked ardently as a Catechist, and also as Minister of the Blessed Sacrament, travelling to take the message to other villages. He was never absent when we had gatherings for our Evangelistic Missions.

As a young man he said he had no time for God and used to party a lot and had blood on his hands (I don't know what he meant). However, he met the late Canon John Dorman\* who visited the Mission for a service at a time there were no Anglicans. The message that Fr. John preached was so powerful that it made a turning point in Gabriel's life. From that time onwards Gabriel became a leader in the Anglican church.

Gabriel was always an enquirer about the Order when he came to me at Imbaimadai and stayed with me. There I was able to encourage him and to recommend him.

From then on, he was always in touch with me. He was with Fr. Winston Williams for a few days at Jawalla. He went back home at Chinoweing, where we heard he passed away. You have to climb a high mountain and walk for four hours through the savannahs before you reach the village of Chinoweing. So sad to hear of his passing, but we know he is in the presence of God. ♦

**Editorial Note:**

\*For more information about Canon John Dorman in Guyana look at these books in our Provincial Lending Library: R John Brockmann, *The First 100 Years in the Americas: 1917 - 2017: Third Order Society of St. Francis* (2017), pp. 92-8; Derek H. Goodrich, *Old-Style Missionary: The Ministry of John Dorman, Priest in Guyana* (2003); and Robert J. Moore and Gerald T. Rayner, *Audacious Anglicans: Heroes of the Anglican Communion* (2008), Chapter 15: John Dorman.



*Rest in Peace*

Janet Nail

*Professed 13 Years*

*From Jim Nail, Companion, God's Joyful Fools Fellowship*

**J**anet Christeen Stewart Nail died May 3, 2021, at her home in Marion, Alabama, with her family by her side. She was 76 years old.

Janet was born November 1, 1944, to James Thomas Stewart and Laura Elizabeth Bond in Ft. Bliss, El Paso, Texas. A self-described "Army brat," she attended schools in several states before graduating high school in Picayune, Mississippi, in 1962. She was awarded a scholarship to Mississippi State University, where she earned a BS degree in English. Mississippi State was also where she met James H. Nail. The couple married January 23, 1966. They had two sons, John Ashley Nail and Jefferson Kegan Nail, and later adopted a daughter, Judith Alma Shadi Nail.

*cont. on page 33*



RIP: Janet Nail, cont. from p. 32



From Jo G. Prichard, Executive Director at Mississippi Center for Nonprofits

Janet continued to live an itinerant life during the early years of her marriage while her husband was enlisted in the U.S. Air Force, living in San Antonio, Texas; Tacoma, Washington; and Sacramento, California. The family soon settled, for a time, in San Jose, California, where Janet studied at San Jose State University, earning a master's degree in English. It wasn't long after she got that degree that the Nails moved again, this time to Denair, California, where Janet worked briefly as substitute teacher.

However, as anyone who knew her could attest, Janet, a voracious reader, was born to be a librarian. So, it was no surprise that after the Nails moved to Clovis, California, she went to work at the Fresno County Public Library's Doris Gates Room. She later worked for the Hattiesburg Public Library in Hattiesburg, Mississippi, and the B.S. Ricks Memorial Library in Yazoo City, Mississippi. Even after retiring from Ricks Memorial in 2009 and moving to Marion, Alabama, she couldn't resist the company of books and took a part-time job at the Marion-Perry County Library.

Janet was just as devoted to the Episcopal Church, having first been introduced to the church by her sister-in-law while still in college. She was confirmed during her senior year at Mississippi State. She taught children's Sunday School for many years, was the director of the A.V. Center for the Diocese of Mississippi, and wrote a regular column for the *Mississippi Episcopalian*. In 2008 she became a member of the Third Order of St. Francis and enjoyed many years of service in God's Joyful Fools Fellowship.

In addition to reading, Janet enjoyed writing, baking, and spending time with her grandchildren and her cats.

She is survived by her husband, James H. Nail, two sons and their spouses, and four grandchildren. ♦

**I have never known a saint more faithful in offering her gifts** and her love for learning with the children and people of God than Janet Nail. "Miss Janet," as she was affectionately known, was a special gift from God to the hundreds of folks like me who were blessed by her wit, wisdom, and passion for books and for the people and love of God.

For decades Janet introduced hundreds of her Sunday School children to the love of Christ, inspired countless more children she served in public libraries with a contagious love for books, helped parishes across Mississippi locate Christian education curricula, and enticed hundreds of us adults to read the wide-ranging books she reviewed for *The Mississippi Episcopalian*.

God offers us great gifts in unexpected packages and people. I can still remember the first time I saw Janet Nail, her spouse Jim, and their three children walking down the aisle of Trinity Church in Yazoo City. "Who can these folks be?" I wondered. "Some of the finest and most faithful folks you'll ever know," God whispered. Forty years later, I give thanks for the opportunity I had to share my personal pilgrimage with this incredible lady and her family.

cont. on page 34

*RIP: Janet Nail, cont. from p. 33*

Janet Nail never saw a glass half empty. With her X-ray vision, she saw God filling each and every glass to overflowing and she was always more than willing to help God do so. Janet Nail helped bring new and abundant life to Trinity parish, Yazoo City, to Ricks Memorial Library, to her countless friends across the Diocese of Mississippi, and to her parish and library families in Alabama during her later years.

It was with a heavy but full heart that I heard the news on May 3 that Janet had transitioned from this life to the next. I can almost hear God's words to Janet: "Welcome home, good and faithful servant. You have multiplied the talents I gave you tenfold. You have shared the great books and eternal truths. You have inspired my children and my adult pilgrims. I have prepared a special place for you. Rest, faithful servant! And when you feel up to it, Janet, would you please take a critical look at our heavenly library!"



### Rest in Peace

Diane Brelsford

Professed 11 Years



*With some additions from July 1 obituary in the Seattle Times.*

**D**iane was a priest in the Diocese of Olympia and had worked at Group Health Hospice. (That's her dog Zane in her lap.) She was married to Harry Brelsford for 54 years at the time of his death in 2003. His career in law brought moves to himself, Diane, and the children from Texas to Colorado, Montana, and Alaska. In 1980 he became General Counsel of the Alyeska Pipeline Service Company, where he remained until he retired in June of 1988. He then moved to California to join Diane, who had completed Seminary at Church Divinity School of the Pacific (1986). Diane was ordained a priest at Grace Cathedral in San Francisco in 1988, among the pioneering generation of women in the priesthood. He and Diane moved to Washington State in 1991 and resided in Seattle.

### A Lifelong Activist

Her lifelong activism began in Denver in the 1960s, where she was involved in the civil rights and peace movements. Her support of her eldest sons in conscientiously objecting to the draft led her to become a member of the Episcopal Peace Fellowship and to be trained as a conscientious objection counselor. She later extended her ministry to empowering those with addictions towards recovery through Al-Anon and other 12-step programs.

*She was among the pioneering generation of women in the priesthood.*

Her last relocation was to Seattle in 1991, where she joined the ministry of the healing rail at Ascension Church and St. Mark's Cathedral for nearly 30 years while working as a hospice chaplain. Throughout her life, Diane continued to serve while surviving breast cancer and multiple sclerosis.

They had five children, and Diane had lately become a great-grandmother. ♦

*cont. on page 35*

*RIP: Diane Brelsford, cont.  
from p. 34*

### From Dianne Aid

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**Diane was a dear Sister. She made it possible for me to be part of the Assisi Pilgrimage.** We roomed together and shared our experiences at the end of the day. Diane was a longstanding and faithful member of the Episcopal Peace Fellowship. I remember a story Diane told me of confronting a bobcat or some sort of wild animal in her parking lot and staring it down.

To Diane, defender of peace and stronger than bobcats, I love you. I will miss you, my Sister, and will see you again. ♦

### From Steve Best

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**Diane was a true Franciscan and helped me see what a priest of humble, unassuming and Christ-like power looks like.** ♦

### From 2013 Annual Report, Bayview Retirement Community

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**Diane has a depth of compassion, which led to her chosen careers.** She graduated from the University of Denver and worked as a special education teacher in a home-based program. Diane enjoyed working with children and their families. She later became an ordained Episcopal priest and worked as a hospice chaplain in California and Washington State. ♦

*Appended to this prayer was this note: "I was walking the eight-hundred-year-old labyrinth in Chartres Cathedral and had a powerful sense of energy moving around me as I stood in the center of it. As I entered the labyrinth I prayed for discernment about a course of action. I felt I received guidance about which path to take. This was a blessing for me and hopefully will be to others who walk a labyrinth. The Rev. Diane Brelsford"*

#### "Walking the Labyrinth"

by Diane Brelsford

*From Women's Uncommon Prayers:  
Our Lives Revealed, Nurtured, Celebrated*  
(Harrisburg PA: Morehouse Publishing, 2000), p. 52

Thinking of the frustrating turns in women's lives

How empowering to find Christ at the center

Where Mother Spirit leads us

As we yield to the path, the mind slows and quiets

The voice of the heart can be heard

Telling us how to be prophetic change makers

If we keep on walking through confusion

Speaking our truth

We enter the dwelling place of peace.

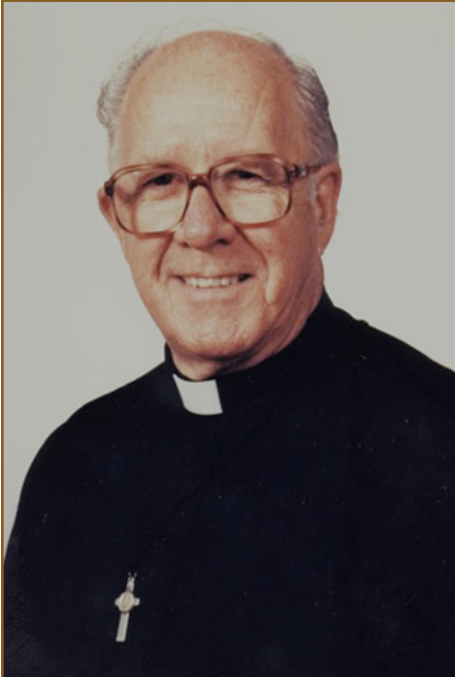
Amen.



Rest in Peace

Kale King  
Provincial Guardian 1980-81

Professed 52 Years



***Editor's Note:*** As we were wrapping up production of this issue, we learned that The Rev. Kale King had died today on July 15, the Feast of St. Bonaventure. Kale was a significant figure in the history of the Third Order; he was our second Provincial Guardian, from 1980 to 1981, succeeding The Rev. John Scott. We include this excerpt from Chapter 5 of the *First 100 Years in the Americas: 1917-2017: Third Order, Society of St. Francis (Amazon)* and we invite your photos and remembrances from his 52 years with us for a fuller portrait of the man, his life with Amory, and his ministries to be published in our Advent 2021 issue.

From "My Franciscan Journey" created by members of the Land of Sky Fellowship (1993)

While in seminary—though having met no members of a religious community—I was being drawn to find an Order with whom I could associate in some fashion. I was looking for "Anglican" and "American," but I was also attracted to the kind of itinerancy one finds in the life of Francis of Assisi. Having just married the love of his life, Amory, friary life lost its appeal. At the time, the Order of the Poor Brethren of St. Francis (OSF), the Greyfriars, were very much rooted in Fr. Joseph's monastic life at the Friary of Little Portion, Long Island. I had inquired about some kind of association, but there was nothing attractive.

Three years later I wrote for the American Third Order Manual [*The Little Book of the Rule*]. It required assent to "Our Credenda as a treaty of peace and basis of the spiritual life." While I had no difficulty with most of it, several points put me off despite that they were to be taken as "pious opinions" rather than *de fide*. I did not follow through with the Third Order but, instead, became a Priest Associate.

### Present from the Early Days of the Order

In early 1966 Br. Stephen OSF visited Idaho and assured me that the Credenda was no longer adhered to, and so I applied to be admitted as a postulant of the Third Order. I was made novice by Br. Michael Thomas, a member of the same class as Br. Mark Francis, and I was given the name in religion of Boniface by Br. Paul, who directed the tertiaries. A year later Br. Paul succeeded Fr. Joseph OSF, the father founder, and my first formation director. The American and English Franciscan bodies merged to create a Franciscan body for the entire Anglican Communion.

The merger of the First Order brothers led to the merger of the Third Order, and its first gathering at Little Portion. At Br. Paul's invitation, I attended the 1970 chapter-in-the-making and was somehow appointed or elected to the body and was a member for the next ten years. I was even elected Guardian in 1979, but, a year and a half later, I resigned as the result of unrecognized stress and tension that grew out of serving the Church in Montana.

***...this was a religious body I truly needed and wanted to associate with.***

However, I was fortunate, as Guardian, to attend the second Interprovincial Chapter, at Hilfield Friary in 1981—the "Gospel Now Conference" called by Br. Geoffrey SSF. I had also attended the 1976 Interprovincial Chapter at Bishop's Ranch in California, and met representatives from the African, New Zealand, Australian, and English provinces. All the association over the years with the many American friars, and, later, the English friars, thoroughly convinced me that this was a religious body I truly needed and wanted to associate with. ♦



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## ENDING POEM & PRAYER

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### Buonadonna

*By Mary Tarantini*

Buonadonna pray for us  
Soothe our deep and darkest fears  
Shine your light into the night  
Whisper words we long to hear

Buonadonna sing the song  
Of morning birds who greet the dawn  
Of swallows gliding through the trees  
Then flying off across the seas

Buonadonna tell us true  
Who allotted you a name so fair

That every cell within your being  
Feeds a life that few would dare

Good woman, somber and sublime  
A beacon for the ages  
Stand among the grieving masses  
Gather all the spurned and faceless

Buonadonna the time is nigh  
We feel it in our bones  
Look as far as the eye can see  
How does one live who cannot breathe?



### *Prayer to the Mystical Rose*

*O Mary, Mystical Rose,  
the petals of my heart,  
fragrant with prayer,  
unfold with love for thee.*