



## Third Order, Society of St. Francis *European Province*

### Third Order News - July 2021

**“From henceforth call nothing thine own.”**

These words remain with me from many years ago while studying and writing about religious communities. This is what was said to each of the newly professed in the Kelham religious order. A long time later I became a Tertiary and could see how Francis was disturbed by the use of the possessive noun, ‘mine’ and ‘my’. It is said that when a brother spoke of a place where Francis prayed as ‘his cave’ he never returned to that place.

Gospel life for Francis unlocked the joy of no longer being possessed by possessions. So, whenever I hear myself say ‘my’ or ‘mine’ it sounds like a door slamming on that joy of Francis. In our public life the Covac struggle with vaccines illustrates this as a disability : the G7 pledge by the nations possessing the greatest in the world to give one billion vaccines before 2024 is placed alongside the eleven billion requested by the World Health Organisation for the poorest of the world.

This edition of Third Order News can be read for glimpses of a religious order offering a gospel vision of “....a fresh attitude towards possessions” [Day 10 Principles].

As a Chapter we have been inspired to hear 29 names for Election to Profession this at time, the most for years, to share a gospel vision, an Order of life shared.

Francis points this way to peace and all good.

*Tim Higgins. Acting Minister Provincial*

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### **June 2021 Chapter Digest**

Summary of the main topics covered at the meeting of Chapter held by Zoom video conference, 10 -12 June, 2021. The minutes will be posted on the website after they have been approved by the October Chapter.

#### *A Call To Re-focus*

Our TSSF Province is being encouraged to refocus its identity and its purpose by reflecting upon the Vows of Profession given by all Tertiaries.

On Friday Dr Peta Dunstan, writer on Franciscans religious life and representing the Independent Review, presented to Chapter a paper on why TSSF is more than a community of interest, “Because tertiaries make vows before God and in public, this is an Order rather than a community. “

However, although tertiaries may to live out their vocation in a variety of ways the Review Team is firmly of the view that those values and beliefs, expressed in the vows, are to be reflected in “a collective will and not a mosaic of individual opinions.”

“The Review Team believes that the affirmation of the obligations and responsibilities of the tertiary life can be seen as a significant foundation to any changes it recommends”

It is expected that a paper expressing these positions will be circulated to the Province as a focus for reflection.

#### *Increased number of professions*

Provincial Secretary, Martin Allen, reported that names of 29 Tertiaries were brought to Chapter and Elected for Profession since February, the most over four months for several years. Five tertiaries have been released from Vows and two people have requested leave of absence.

#### *New Bishop Protector calls in*

Martyn Snow, Bishop of Leicester and the new TSSF Bishop Protector was introduced to Chapter. He showed a four minute video of The Tree of Life youth community in Leicester which he helped to found. Bp Martyn has a deep interest in monasticism. He will be joining Chapter for a longer period at the October session, at Launde Abbey.

#### *General Chapter planning*

Co-ordinators Tony Ross and Karen Vincent said planning is going well. They stressed that the events being held from now until the final 800th anniversary celebrations, to be held in four separate cathedrals in October 2022 are all very much part of the overall event. "In the past General Chapter lasted three days, ours is being spread over a much longer period, culminating in the final day of celebrations," explained Tony. The next event will be a Day of Joyful Penitence on September 14. More details in TON and on a dedicated online page which will be accessible from July 1. It is hoped that the Networks and various interest groups will provide resources for the year beginning in September 2021.

It is planned to produce a one-off publication telling stories and highlighting the life of all the five Provinces to help tertiaries feel more part of a world-wide Order, and to inform our Franciscan life together.

#### *New Editor of Little Portion appointed*

Chapter was delighted to confirm Richenda Milton-Daws' appointment as the new Editor of Little Portion. Chapter recorded grateful thanks to Verena Tschudin who has shaped and nurtured Little Portion with the Editorial Team.

#### *Walking with people from Enquiry through to Profession*

Provincial Novice Guardian, Tony Ross said the Formation Forum has been doing a great deal of work in providing resources, support, and processes for people at all stages of their formation. He stressed the need for all Enquirers to complete and return the Enquirer's form to the Provincial Novice Guardian who begins the conversations with each person before inviting them to attend their first TSSF meeting. This includes getting a recommendation from their local incumbent. Normally, Enquirer's should only attend two meetings before it is decided with them whether they wish to become a Postulant. This safe practice was also endorsed by Mandy Hughes, Provincial Safeguarding Officer. Provincial Minister, Tim Higgins underlined the expectation that novices will complete at least a two-year novitiate before being brought to Profession.

Tony reported The Formation Forum will be looking at the training notes for Novice Guardians, and support for Convenors.

Martin stressed that Alan Williams, Membership Secretary, needs to know the precise date of when someone is Noviced, for Data Protection purposes. Olavi Heino (Finland) said there are plans to translate the Novice Guardian material into Finnish.

#### *Keeping in touch across the Province*

Sally Hastings, Communications Guardian, interim, set out for Chapter the channels through which we speak to each other and receive reports from. The Communications Team meets to keep all these in conversation and purpose.

#### *Website is being updated*

Deputy website editor Karen Vincent reported that it is hoped to have a revised website up and running by October. At the moment it does not work well for tertiaries and only a small number access it.

#### *Social Media Group*

A small group is meeting to explore this and take it forward.

#### *TSSF YouTube channel*

The Order now has its own channel and a small group will be formed to take that forward.

#### *Looking world-wide*

In his Minister Provincial's report Tim spoke of the five Ministers' Provincial privilege to meet regularly on Zoom thus catching the vision of a worldwide movement. We are sisters and brothers with all the life of creation aiming for the harmony addressed in our Principles "There is no substitute for talking and live communication. Email alone so easily escalates to misunderstandings!"

#### *Franciscans, Indigenous Peoples and Creation*

Tim reported that the five Provinces are planning to speak with a Franciscan voice taking ecological action. About 25 percent of ecologically intact landscapes are in the care of indigenous peoples. "Exploitation of these precious places perpetrates abuse against the very people whose relationship to land and Creation bears the wisdom from which we can humbly learn." The video will be used to promote discussion in a variety of forums, including The Lambeth Conference. It will cost around £6,500. Two provinces have already made contributions and an application for a funding contribution from Europe will be considered by Chapter's new initiative, 'Funding Our Purpose'.

This is part of a commitment by Chapter to be clearly accountable with all expenditure being in line with the Object and Principles of the Order and a chance to excite new pieces of work in our Areas and Province.

#### *Data Protection Changes*

Martin said he will notify Areas of data protection changes in the law due to Brexit, in due course.

#### *Provincial Elections Officer needed.*

There is a vacancy for a Provincial Elections Officer. If you are interested please contact Martin.

#### *2021 Budget*

Provincial Treasurer said The Order is in good heart and has donated some £52,000 to Franciscan causes.

*Two more Safeguarding Advocates needed.*

Provincial Safeguarding Officer, Mandy Hughes reported a busy year. She is working nationally and at all levels to strengthen links, processes and procedures. In order to share in running some of the processes and tasks in the Province Mandy is creating a small team. These will be Provincial Safeguarding Advocates, like a mirror of the Area Advocates. If you know of any likely candidate please let Mandy (safe@tssf.org.uk) or Martin know.

*May Heldal is recovering*

Christer Sall, Area Secretary, Sweden, reported that May Heldal, Area Minister, is still recovering from a serious fall, but is grateful for our prayers and good wishes.

*Farewells and Blessings*

Chapter prayed farewell with Wendy Scott, former Link Tertiary for East Midlands and Yorkshire Cluster and with Peter Thompson, former Link Tertiary for Central South England Cluster. Tim said how they would be greatly missed in Chapter.

We also welcomed and prayed Blessings in their new Link Tertiary roles for David McCormick and Lou Scot-Joynt.

*This Chapter Digest was compiled by Sally Hastings, Acting Communications Guardian on behalf of Chapter and the Provincial Secretary.*

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## **Tertiaries care about their Order**

The 2021 Survey of TSSF Membership, prepared for the Independent Review Team, was well supported. It showed that many tertiaries take a great interest in the Order and regard it with a good deal of affection.

It also confirmed that Tertiaries hold a wide range of views regarding the Mission of the Order and the role of Chapter. There was almost complete agreement that The Third Order should help tertiaries embody Franciscan convictions in their service to the Church and the world.

Tertiaries felt that Chapter should find ways of consulting more strongly with them, with decision making by consensus. Most felt that Chapter should serve resources and lead the Order and maintain its structures, but were unhappy with the notion that Chapter should “set the direction.”

Most tertiaries felt the Minister Provincial should be regarded as the leader of the Order within the Province but were unclear about how much autonomy they should have. Around 56 percent of the Order is over 70 years old.

The full survey will be distributed to The Order via Area Ministers and MailChimp .

*Sally Hastings, Acting Communications Guardian*

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## General Chapter

At the recent Severn Area Day, in addition to two professions, there was a presentation and discussion on Susan Pitchford's book, 'God in the Dark' which highlights the double meaning of the word Passion – Desire and Suffering. During the breakout rooms I was reminded of a phrase that ministers sometimes hear after a service – 'I didn't get anything out of that service.' The temptation is to respond with 'what did you put into the service?' The same might be said of General Chapter. Its success will depend on how much we all put into it rather than what we get out of it.

The next General Chapter will be different in that it is spread over a year from September 2021 culminating in Regional Celebrations on 8th October 2022. One of the reasons for this extended Chapter is to celebrate the 800th anniversary of the Founding of The Third Order by St Francis. Anniversaries, like birthdays, are celebrated with the giving of presents. What present can we offer to celebrate this anniversary to show our gratitude for all that we have received from following Francis and Clare? How about prayer and by getting involved?

Those who took part in the Province Quiet Day on 28 April will remember the 'Padlet' noticeboard used by Constantina Alexander. The General Chapter Planning Team is in the process of setting up a similar noticeboard. Watch this space!

*Tony Ross - General Assembly Coordinator*

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## Third Order Distribution

Third Order Distribution is pleased to be open again and we look forward to receiving your requests for items from the stocklist. We receive requests through the Internet using the online form (payment direct to TSSF by BACS) or on paper with a cheque through the post, using a printed version of the same form.

STOP PRESS: There is a new Assisi booklet 'Franciscan Praying', a simple guide to prayer based on Francis' own life and words, available from Third Order Distribution for £4.50!

*Chris McLeod - Third Order Distribution*

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## Study Network News

In April/May, the Study Network was delighted to host an online series on the newly published book Seeing Differently: Franciscans and Creation. Over 90 members of the Order came together on four evenings via Zoom to listen to the book's authors Simon Cocksedge TSSF, Br Samuel SSF and Br Nicholas Alan SSF and to discuss the issues raised. Recordings of the sessions are now available on YouTube. The links are included in a separate article towards the end of this TON and will also be available on the website.

A second online series is planned for the week before Advent - Monday 22 to Friday 26 November – on the theme of Incarnation. The exact format is not yet decided, but there will be one or more sessions on each of the five days, possibly available with alternative daytime or evening time slots. If you think you might be interested, please email [study@tssf.org.uk](mailto:study@tssf.org.uk) putting 'Incarnation' as the subject, and you'll be contacted as

soon as more information is available. To help our planning, please also let us know if you can do mornings/afternoons/evenings.

The first Study Network residential event for some time will be at Hilfield Friary, Tuesday 3 to Saturday 7 May 2022. Full information will be available later this year, but we expect to have around 15 places available for a programme which will take as its starting point 'Relationship and Reconciliation' (the title of the final chapter of Seeing Differently).

If you would like to be certain of receiving information about Study Network events as soon as it becomes available, we invite you to join the Network by signing up to our email contact list. Please email [study@tssf.org.uk](mailto:study@tssf.org.uk) with 'Subscribe' in the subject line.

*Helen Hood - Study Network*

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## **TSSF Study Online Event 2021 "Seeing Differently" (15, 22, 29 April and 6 May)**

These are 'unlisted' videos and can only be accessed via the links below. The recordings were made with agreement that they would not be shared outwith TSSF and SSF - please observe this restriction.

### *Session 1: Francis and Creation*

Part 1 <https://youtu.be/h1Wrfc0Y1Hk>

Talk: Simon Cockledge TSSF; Chaired by Susan Height TSSF

Part 2 <https://youtu.be/-XJHm-UgFso>

Comments and Questions: Simon Cockledge TSSF with Br Samuel SSF + Br Nicholas Alan SSF  
Chaired by Susan Height TSSF

### *Session 2: Franciscans and Creation – past*

Part 1 <https://youtu.be/akCAFhjprMg>

Talk: Br Nicholas Alan SSF; Chaired by John Bennett TSSF

Part 2 <https://youtu.be/DKSPA9IaYd0>

Comments and Questions: Br Nicholas Alan SSF with Br Samuel SSF + Simon Cockledge TSSF  
Chaired by John Bennett TSSF

### *Session 3: Franciscans and Creation – present*

Part 1 <https://youtu.be/vHWroaqBaks>

Talk: Br Samuel SSF; Chaired by John Bennett TSSF

Part 2 <https://youtu.be/iMVf9PbuPUM>

Comments and Questions: Br Samuel SSF with Br Nicholas Alan SSF + Simon Cockledge TSSF  
Chaired by John Bennett TSSF

### *Session 4: Acting Differently – where do we go from here?*

Part 1 <https://youtu.be/1Nh4DrMvQFw>

Panel Speakers: Jan Benvie TSSF; Paul Alexander TSSF; Susan Hill TSSF

Chaired by Susan Height TSSF

Part 2 <https://youtu.be/kOI9uK3ppgY>

Panel Conversation: Simon Cockledge TSSF; Br Nicholas Alan SSF; Br Samuel SSF; Jan Benvie TSSF; Paul Alexander TSSF; Susan Hill TSSF  
Chaired by Susan Height TSSF



Thanks to all who participated, and especially:

Authors: Simon Cocksedge TSSF, Br Nicholas Alan SSF, Br Samuel SSF  
Panellists: Jan Benvie TSSF; Paul Alexander TSSF; Susan Hill TSSF  
Session Facilitators: Susan Height TSSF, John Bennett TSSF  
Series administrator: Helen Hood TSSF  
Recordings made and edited by Andrew Baker TSSF

*Helen Hood Study Network*

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## The G7 In Cornwall

When the G7 were due to descend on Carbis Bay, the Cornwall Area decided to formulate a response which would be prayerful but, we hoped, challenging too – primarily to ourselves. We organized a Quiet Day led by our CJP lead, Peter Bonsey, but with COVID restrictions not many people from our Area, let alone more widely, could attend in person. So, we decided to make the event available on line.

On Saturday 12th June, as the G7 leaders gathered, around 100 tertiaries joined our event via Zoom and 34 stayed for the informal break out discussion groups at the end. The first talk was live-streamed from Truro which made a special connection between those attending live and 'virtually'.

It was wonderful to feel part of the larger Franciscan family and the event was a great blessing to us in Cornwall and we hope for others. Particular thanks are due to Peter Bonsey for his work putting the talks together – many have found them stimulating and challenging.

We will make both videos of the talks and the text of the talks available, so please check the TSSF website in the coming weeks for details of how to access these resources.

*Andy Harris - Area Minister for Cornwall*

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## Towards a Franciscan ecological ministry



Prompted by a growing sense of ecological emergency, a group of Tertiaries in the Midlands East Area have glimpsed the potential for a shared, visible ministry in our Province. We'd like to open out the invitation to you to join us. We think it could encompass the following elements:

- **Prayer and discernment:** this is where it all starts and is rooted. We meet fortnightly for half an hour on Zoom. You are most welcome to join us – more on that below.

- **Franciscan sources for change:** we want to understand the wisdom we've inherited, and offer it in our churches and humanity at large
- **Common cause:** we might include ecological disciplines in our personal Rule, and support each other to live them out
- **Kinship and loss:** knowing our fellow creatures as sisters and brothers, we sense a call to tend grief in ourselves and others
- **Economic change:** the example of Francis calls many of us to challenge the economic system which is driving environmental breakdown
- **Political advocacy:** we want to support each other in pressing government to safeguard Creation and those most vulnerable worldwide
- **Ecological Principles:** we believe our worldwide TSSF Principles should name the ecological crisis and its claim on us.

You can find more details in [this document](#). We know the scope is ambitious, but this is a time for courageous aspirations. We can achieve far more together than on our own.

So we invite you first of all to join us for prayer, 7.00 – 7.30 p.m. approx. on the second Thursday each month for silent prayer, and the fourth Thursday for shared prayer. [Sign up here](#) and we'll send you the Zoom link. We can then let you know of our next monthly planning meeting where we will move from prayer into action.

*Catherine, Chrissie, David, Helen, Julia, Paul, Saxon, Tim and Tim - Midlands East Area*

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## **TSSF Retreats organised by the Oxford Area**

Residential retreats at the Old Parsonage, Wroslyn Rd, Freeland, Witney OX29 8AJ,

### **Friday, 15th - Sunday, 17th October 2021**

Theme of Retreat: creativity and spirituality. Conductor: Revd Dr Anne Holmes TSSF, Cost £120 including the Conductor's expenses.

I serve as an SSM Associate Priest in a central Oxford benefice. I work as a group analytic psychotherapist, psychodynamic counsellor and supervisor. I work privately and with NHS teams. I have a particular interest in the role of the creative arts in restoring the energy expended in pastoral care and have a doctorate in practical theology. I review books on pastoral care and mental health for the Church Times. I have been a Tertiary for almost 40 years.

### **Friday November 5th – Sunday November 7th 2021**

Theme of Retreat: Rejoicing in the Sabbath - Wisdom for a post pandemic world, Conductor Br Sam SSF  
Residential retreat at the Old Parsonage, Wroslyn Rd, Freeland, Witney OX29 8AJ. Cost £120 including the Conductor's expenses.

Bookings: contact Revd Geoffrey Clement, [oxfordretreat@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:oxfordretreat@yahoo.co.uk) The Vicarage, Church Street, Shipton Under Wychwood, OX7 6BP. 01993832514



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## Walking for Climate Change

The Devon Area would like to bring the “Young Christians Walking for Climate Change” to the broader attention of the Third Order, and offer the information given in their own Diocesan newsletter:

The ‘Relay’ of [Young Christian Climate Network](#) walkers, taking the ‘Pilgrim’ boat from Cornwall to Glasgow (for COP26 in November), is getting close! See recent short [BBC video](#). It will come into Plymouth on 23 June, travel through Dartmoor, and then stop in Exeter from 29 June for a series of services, and events.

*Ann Leigh - Devon Area Secretary*

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## Liz Meynell Art and Franciscan Aid

In the last issue of TON Liz Meynell announced that she was supporting Franciscan Aid by selling some of her pictures. Several Tertiaries have already responded and so far over £600 has been raised for Franciscan Aid.

So here’s an Idea! Donate to Franciscan Aid, by buying a picture via TON. It’s all so simple, painless & happy. Just visit [lizmeynell.net](http://lizmeynell.net), to see her Gallery & make your selection.

*Liz Meynell, Norfolk Area*

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## The Contemplative Network

Contemplative prayer is an important ingredient of Franciscanism. The Carceri magazine aims to enlighten the membership about the practice of contemplation and to encourage people to participate. It is freely available to all members. Contact the membership secretary, Tony Ross at [tonyrosstsf468@gmail.com](mailto:tonyrosstsf468@gmail.com) if you would like to join the contemplatives and receive the bi-yearly edition of The Carceri.

*Wild Contemplative Camping at the Bullaven Hermitage.*

If any tertiaries or tertiary families are looking for somewhere to have a summer holiday Bullaven Hermitage wild camping site will be available from August onwards. Contact Paul at [plalexander@yahoo.com](mailto:plalexander@yahoo.com).

*Paul Alexander Contemplative network*

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## **Member News**

*Please pray for all these members.*

I have included the full list of names submitted to the Chapter which may include people mentioned before. Please let me know if anyone is missing. (Ed)

## **Profession**

Thomas Sharp (Newcastle), Caroline Lee (Cornwall), izzie Whitbread (Winchester), Edith Hockin (Berkshire), Christine Thorn (Berkshire), Chris Lawton (Yorkshire North & East), Karen Baxter (Scotland), Jennifer C Rayner ( Newcastle), Leanne Carr (Midlands West), Jeremy Dillon ( Midlands West), Steve Allen ( Severn), Noel Sharp (Severn), Andrew Broadbent (Wales), Pierre Cornlouer (Wales), Nosheen Anjum (Wales), Emma Wylie (Essex), Martin Abend (Brussels), Margaret Wells (Canterbury), Laurence Tuck (Canterbury), Maureen Franke (Kent West), Kitty Raj (Kent West), Charlotte Walker (Kent West), Anna Sundgren (Sweden), Camilla Prenning (Sweden), Barry Mather (Devon), Anthony Lane (Devon), Jane Palmer (Wessex), David Trayler (Wessex), Tamsyn Moreton Trayler (Wessex).

## **Release from Vows.**

Andy Doig (Scotland), Jean Pullens (Ireland), Angela Thompson (Chiltern), Martin Shaw (Devon). Kristine Mc Kale (Scotland)

## **Leave of Absence**

Donald Orr (Scotland), Heidi de Gruchy (Wales)

## **In Memoriam**

Bob Bell (Lincolnshire), June Winfield (Chiltern), Pam Dibb-Smith (Cornwall), Ann Kinmont (Wyevever), Tony Andrews (London), Melvyn Wise (Avon Vale), Laurence Martin (Lon E & Esx S), Elsie Hallett (Cumb & Lancs), Peggy Pike (Cambridge), Valerie Page (Devon), Martyn Hill (Mersey Valley), Lesley Cunningham (Winchester).

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## Who to send things to:

Changes in address, telephone number, e-mail address, TSSF Office held  
Alan Williams, Membership Secretary, 4 The Holloway, Amblecote, Stourbridge, DY8 4DL  
T: 01384 394057 E: [memsec@tssf.org.uk](mailto:memsec@tssf.org.uk)

TSSF Website and IT Services  
Karen Vincent E: [webmaster@tssf.org.uk](mailto:webmaster@tssf.org.uk)

Other Communications Matters E: [comms@tssf.org.uk](mailto:comms@tssf.org.uk)

Contributions and letters about finance (Please make cheques out to "Third Order Society of St Francis ").  
John Lovatt, Provincial Treasurer 8 Small Acre Park, Mortimer's Cross, Leominster, HR6 9TQ  
T: 07576 941 052 E: [treasurer@tssf.org.uk](mailto:treasurer@tssf.org.uk)

Enquirers interested in joining the Order E: [novguard@tssf.org.uk](mailto:novguard@tssf.org.uk)

Formation E: [formation@tssf.org.uk](mailto:formation@tssf.org.uk)

All other enquiries about the Order  
Minister Provincial E: [ministertssf@tssf.org.uk](mailto:ministertssf@tssf.org.uk)

Matters Concerning Little Portion E: [editor@tssf.org.uk](mailto:editor@tssf.org.uk)

Contributions for TON  
Jeremy Cole, TON Editor, 1 Hood Walk Kettering Northants NN15 6PZ  
T 07 596 85 25 85 E: [ton@tssf.org.uk](mailto:ton@tssf.org.uk)

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## TON Notes

The next TON is due to be published in November 2021. The deadline for contributions is 6th Nov 2021.

TON is seen as a newsletter not a magazine. Items are expected to be short and informative. Contributions should be no more than 200-300 words. Please try to be concise, remember the editor reserves the right to edit your contribution! Advertisements for profit will not be accepted.

An audio copy of TON is available. If you would like to receive this please send your name and address to the editor. A simple layout version (no images, no formatting, suitable for screen readers) is also available in docx or pdf format, again by request from the editor.

Articles submitted may be read by tertiaries in all provinces of TSSF.

Any views and opinions expressed in TON are those of the writer and not necessarily those of the TSSF.

*Jeremy Cole TON editor [ton@tssf.org.uk](mailto:ton@tssf.org.uk)*