



The Franciscan Times

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

Lent 2014

The 45 Little Plays of St. Francis and How They Can Provide a Marvelous Experience for Fellowships, Convocations, and Public Presentations

With a Bit Added About the Author as well as Scene 2 of His Nunc Dimitis (1933)

R. John Brockmann

The *Little Plays* are 45 one-act plays dramatizing the life of Francis, Clare, Juniper and others. The *First Series* of 18 one-act plays appeared in 1922,

- followed by the 4 plays of the *Followers of St. Francis* in 1923,
- the 6 plays of *The Comments of Juniper* in 1926,
- *The Second Series* including the previous three volumes plus another 8 plays focusing on Brother Juniper in 1931,
- followed by the *Four Plays of Clare* in 1934 and
- 5 more plays for the three volume set published in 1935.

(Long out of print, *The First Series*, and the *Followers of St. Francis* are now available for free online for the downloading—see online downloadable books on our website TSSF.org, Third Order Library.) The author also wrote *The Little Plays Handbook* (1927) on how to stage the one-acts, which he had designed for amateur groups. This *Handbook* is now a part of our Provincial Library.)

How They Can Provide a Meaningful Experience for Fellowships, Convocations, and Public Presentations

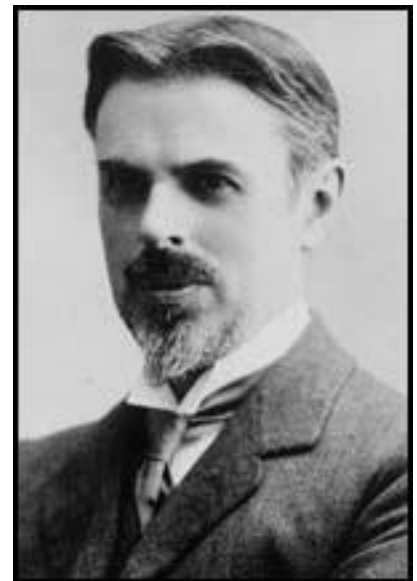
All the *Little Plays* are short two-act plays and they could make for an interactive study program in which the plays can be read in a short time as a “reader’s theatre” and then their implications drawn out in discussions. Costumes, curtains, and sets are superfluous, but hams are certainly welcome.

These plays could also have a part in Francistide celebrations to which the public is invited. The presenta-

tion of a short play along with the traditional blessing of animals would be an accessible and pleasant way to have people encounter St. Francis. Consider recording your short play and posting it to our website—this would be an excellent item to show at diocesan conventions.

Their Author—Laurence Housman

Many of us encountered A. E. Housman’s 63-poem cycle, *A Shropshire Lad* (1896), in college English Literature classes. Unbeknownst to us then, Alfred Housman had a younger brother, Laurence, who produced the 45 plays of St. Francis as a “dramatic biography”. Before World War I Housman held what for the time were controversial political views. He was a committed socialist and pacifist and founded the Men’s League for Women’s Suffrage in 1907. In 1909, Laurence, with his sister Clemence, founded the Suffrage Atelier, an arts and crafts society which worked closely with the Women’s Social and Political Union and Women’s Freedom League. (Wikipedia) He and his sister also helped found the Women’s Tax Resistance League and he was arrested during one of the demonstrations in 1911. When World War I erupted all international cooperation between suffragette movements ceased, and all domestic activism was voluntarily put aside in order to back the war effort of each country.



Laurence Housman

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Little Plays of St. Francis (cont.)

In his 1937 autobiographical book, *The Unexpected Years*, Housman explained how he found Francis in the aftermath of World War 1:

By that time my reaction from all that war stood for had become decided; and in that reaction I wrote the first of my Little Plays of St. Francis, Sister Gold. I had no idea when I wrote it that it would form the first of a long series, only to be finished nearly twenty years later. But in the serene sanity of St. Francis I found such blessed escape from a world gone mad, that before long others followed, though I think only four had been written when the War ended. The idea of presenting St. Francis in a play-cycle only came gradually, (The Unexpected Years, 321)

Housman regarded religion as an “ethical tool for moral development” and so only occasionally attended Quaker meetings. From this point of view, he wrote about what attracted him to St. Francis:

In choosing St. Francis of Assisi as a dramatic subject, I have already owned that I was more interested in him as an artist in human nature, than as an ecstatic visionary, or as a lover of holy poverty. It was the Franciscan method of dealing with fools and sinners which attracted me; and though I am not at all Franciscan in temperament, it was largely through him that I became a pacifist, convinced that, if rightly treated, human nature would respond to conciliation and non-violence. (The Unexpected Years, 334)

In November 1893 A French protestant clergyman and theologian, Paul Sabatier, published the first modern biography of Francis, *The Life of Francis of Assisi*. This book established him as one of the greatest living authorities on St. Francis, and the book also greatly stimulated the study of medieval literary and religious documents connected with the history of the Franciscan Order. [Author’s Note. The Boston Public Library’s Rare Book Collection has Paul Sabatier’s library and working documents including a very early breviary bound in wood.) In 1922, Sabatier asked for a copy of the *Little Plays of St. Francis* and, in turn, wrote this letter of appreciation to Housman:

Dear Sir,

It is a long, a very long time indeed, since I have read any book which has given me so much pleasure as this which you have so kindly sent me. I have read it from cover to cover with ever-increasing delight. I am not competent to pass judgment on verse, or play-writing; but after having spent all my life in trying to reconstruct the life of the Poverello, I feel that I have the right to give an opinion on the historic side of your work; and it seems to me that your insight into the Franciscan effort is marvelous.

Your Little Plays show us the milieu in which Francis

lived, and bring it to life for us once more with an accuracy that is unique; while it also reveals to us his interior life with a delicacy of touch that I have never found elsewhere.

You have avoided an error that took from the official legends, and from the later biographies, a great part of the reality that they should have emphasized, for you have not separated Francis from his companions. The important place which you have given to Brother Juniper, for example, conforms perfectly with strict historical truth . . . That you have been able to write your plays without having been to Assisi is something of a miracle, and I wish all the more that you could make its closer acquaintance.

You would find there people of sympathy, appreciation, and understanding, who would also be able to talk with you in English. There is one other point that interests me greatly, and that is what practical effect your Little Plays will have in England. I hope some Guitrys [great French stage actor of the time] will arise to give them representation so that we shall thus have a sort of resurrection of the “Joculatores Domini” [God’s minstrels] organized by St. Francis, and reconstituted to his memory, thanks to your chef d’oeuvre [a masterpiece of literature].

Votre bien reconnaissant et devoue. [your very grateful and devoted]

Paul Sabatier. (The Unexpected Years, 343-4)

In 1933, Housman thought he had completed his cycle of Franciscan short plays (while in fact he was still to write the *Four Plays of Clare* in 1934 and 5 more plays for the three volume collection published in 1935). He was induced to write his *Nunc Dimitis* as he explains:

The Epilogue [Nunc Dimitis] was a separate affair, it stands by itself.

I was persuaded to write it with Bernard Shaw held up to me as a model; he had written an Epilogue to St. Joan, so why should not I write one to my St. Francis? And as about

Portrait of Housman as St. Francis, drawn by his sister, Clemence. (Elizabeth Oakley, Inseparable Siblings (2009)



that time I had been asked by a newspaper to write my own obituary notice, it struck me that I might go a step further and write my own death-scene; which accordingly I did, and two years running acted the dying author to full houses. I was more popular in my death than in my life. (The Unexpected Years, 360)

The *Nunc Dimittis* was privately printed and is difficult to find (I found it in Housman's *Back Words And Fore Words: An Author's Year Book 1893 – 1945*, London, Jonathan Cape, 1945). Here is presented the second of the two acts both to give you a sense of Housman's intellectual and imaginative relationship with Francis and Juniper as well as to give you a taste of his *Little Plays*:

NUNC DIMITTIS

AN EPILOGUE, IN TWO SCENES

(Privately printed 1933)

(Wherein an Author says good-bye to his favorite character)

Dramatis Personae:

ST. FRANCIS	NURSE
BROTHER JUNIPER	DOCTOR
AUTHOR	
SCENE II	

The **AUTHOR**, for stage purposes, is lying in bed, preparing to die. And he prepares so well that the **DOCTOR** and **NURSE** are taken in by it, and act accordingly. The **DOCTOR** has just entered the room, and the **NURSE**, lifting a warning finger, tiptoes to meet him.

NURSE He's asleep, Doctor.

DOCTOR Then don't wake him. It's no good. One can't do anything.

NURSE How long do you think it will be, sir?

DOCTOR I doubt if he can last out the night.

AUTHOR (*feebly, but cheerfully*) Hip ... hip ... hurray! (**DOCTOR** and **NURSE** exchange looks of consternation; and the **DOCTOR**, having thus given away a professional secret, which the patient was not supposed to know, makes a helpless gesture, and retreats from the room, leaving **NURSE** to deal with the situation. She approaches the bed cautiously, and, with diplomatic finesse worthy of a better cause, inquires)

NURSE Did you speak, sir?

AUTHOR (*whimsically*) Did I, Nurse dear?

NURSE I thought you were asleep.

AUTHOR Yes, so did I—till I heard you talking.

NURSE I'm very sorry, sir.

AUTHOR Why... Why?

NURSE I ought to have been more careful.

AUTHOR Good Lord! I don't mind. Dying is not so

comfortable that one should wish to prolong the process—more than one can help. Why shouldn't one be told the truth?

NURSE It's what most people don't like to be told.

AUTHOR Because they won't believe it. All my life I have been trying to tell people the truth ... *my* truth. But it isn't *their* truth. If it were, the world would be different.

NURSE Better?

AUTHOR Am I better, Nurse, than most people? No, but I am more amusing. So, if people would only believe what I do, the world would be more amusing too. But not less naughty—oh, no!

NURSE But *you* are not naughty.

AUTHOR When I was still quite small, Nurse dear, and had done something I should not, my old Granny said to me, 'Larry, if you do that, you will go to the Devil!' And I said, 'I 'ikes the Debbil'. It was a good, true answer; and my mother admired it so much that she wrote it down for me.

NURSE You began early, sir.

AUTHOR Being an author? Yes.

NURSE You have written quite a lot of books, someone told me.

AUTHOR In my life, more than I ought. My Brother used to say that I wrote faster than he could read. He wrote two books of poems—better than all mine put together.

NURSE But you wrote plays too, sir.

AUTHOR Oh, you know that, do you?

NURSE Why, yes. Last year I saw six of them, done by the students at University College.

AUTHOR Yes, poor dears! It's become a habit with them. They can't break themselves of it. What did you think of them?

NURSE Oh, very nice, sir...Very beautiful.

AUTHOR The *students*, I meant.

NURSE Oh, well, sir, of course they did their best.

AUTHOR They did ... They always do. They are excellent in parts, like the curate's egg.

NURSE Oh, not as bad as that, sir!

AUTHOR No? Well, I suppose it takes an author, or a God, to put all the blame on others, and none on himself.

NURSE Or a *what*, sir?

Continued on page 4)

Little Plays of St. Francis (cont.)

AUTHOR Oh nothing, nothing, Nurse dear! Isn't it time I had my beef tea, or something, to prepare me for the next world?

NURSE A little white of egg and whisky; will that do, sir?

AUTHOR I dare say.

NURSE Then I will go and get it. (*She goes*)

AUTHOR While I go on with my dying... dying! ... I wonder... Is there another side to it? Is there still a ST. FRANCIS living...anywhere? Or is it only an echo seven hundred years old, that one hears?...Little Father! ... Little Father! ... Ah! Not for the likes of me. Holy Mother Church would forbid.

(**ST. FRANCIS** *comes in, and stands by the bed*)

ST. FRANCIS Here I am, my son... You called me?

AUTHOR Yes, but I never expected you to hear—*me*.

ST. FRANCIS Why not?

AUTHOR Seven hundred years is a long time, Father.

ST. FRANCIS Have you found that such a difficulty?

AUTHOR To hear you? That's different. *Your* sound has gone out into all lands.

ST. FRANCIS And the bleating of my sheep also.

AUTHOR But am I one of them?

ST. FRANCIS Why not?

AUTHOR Perhaps you don't know what I've done?

ST. FRANCIS Don't I? What?

AUTHOR 'Little Plays'—about you?

ST. FRANCIS I know. Why shouldn't you?

AUTHOR But are they *true*? Are they in the least like you?

ST. FRANCIS Not a bit!

AUTHOR Then they are no good!

ST. FRANCIS Tut! Tut! Things don't have to be like *me* to be good.

AUTHOR Don't they? Oh! I thought they did.

ST. FRANCIS Then you thought foolishly, my son... Like *me*? Why should they be like me? A good piece of fiction is a great work of mercy.

AUTHOR For why, then?

ST. FRANCIS God has savored it, without making it true. Had I done all the things I am said to have done, I should have needed a hundred legs, or a hundred lives for it. Your tales of me are not all of them true—very few, indeed; but you are in good company, my son. When Father Bonaventura sat down to write my life

—the official version of it— he not only put in things that were not true, and left out things which were, but he burned everything he could get hold of which had the true things in it. Yet, in spite of all my miracles, I have managed to survive somehow.

AUTHOR Your miracles, Father? Why should miracles prevent?

ST. FRANCIS They weren't mine, or very few of them. Bonaventura, zealous for the faith, but not for the truth, found that I had not done miracles enough to justify my place in the world as Founder of an Order, and one in whose name Churches were being built. So he got hold of the life of St. Benedict, Founder of another Order, took all the best of his miracles, altered them, and gave them to me.

AUTHOR How did you find out, Father?

ST. FRANCIS St. Benedict told me himself. He was very nice about it, said they couldn't be in better keeping, and that Bonaventura had done wisely. And there is this to be said for it—we don't have property in Heaven, and the good works of one are shared by all. So if, like the loaves and fishes, they multiply miraculously, no one loses and everyone gains... So you think you are not one of my sheep, eh? Then what made you write plays about me? Did you do it for mischief?

AUTHOR No, Father—I'll tell you. There are (or were when I wrote them) two monsters going to and fro in the world seeking whom they might devour.

ST. FRANCIS Monsters?

AUTHOR Yes, Father. Not bad monsters, good monsters; but with a terrible appetite for getting hold of people and writing plays about them. One of them was called 'Drinkwater'—but didn't—except sometimes. And the other wasn't called Drinkwater, but did. And Drinkwater was always looking for real people—great and good people—to write plays about; because he thought that if the people were good and great, the play would be good and great also. And the other person, who wasn't called Drinkwater, but did -

ST. FRANCIS What was his name, my Son?

AUTHOR Shaw, Bernard Shaw, Father. He was afraid that Drinkwater would try to write a play about Joan of Arc. So, to save her from Drinkwater, he wrote it instead.

ST. FRANCIS Yes, well?

AUTHOR: Well, Father, that play about Joan was such a success that he began looking round for some other saint to write about. And so, for fear he would choose you, I wrote my *Little Plays of St. Francis*, to save you from Bernard Shaw.

ST. FRANCIS Well?

AUTHOR And I *did*, Father.

ST. FRANCIS And why should not Bernard Shaw have written plays about me?

AUTHOR Because, Father, had *he* written them, he would have made *you* Bernard Shaw.

ST. FRANCIS Even as Bonaventura made me Benedict. Why not?

AUTHOR Ah! Father, you know Benedict; but you don't know Bernard Shaw.

ST. FRANCIS What's the matter with him?

AUTHOR Matter? Nothing. He's a wonderful man. I love him. But he doesn't like fools—hasn't any use for them. So how could he have written plays about you and Brother Juniper?

ST. FRANCIS Ah! There was never a better or wiser fool than Juniper.

AUTHOR No; and it was your doing, Father.

ST. FRANCIS Indeed, how?

AUTHOR Because, by using his foolishness, you made him wise. If we used everybody as you do, Father, all the world would be a-building.

ST. FRANCIS And you, little Brother, a stone in it.

AUTHOR Yes, Father.

ST. FRANCIS When you called me just now, was it because you wanted anything?

AUTHOR Only to see you, Father.

ST. FRANCIS Then is there nothing else you want?

AUTHOR Many things that I ought to want, Father, if I were sure of them. Heaven—if there is Heaven.

ST. FRANCIS Heaven is not in my keeping, Brother.

AUTHOR No, Father; but isn't Brother Juniper?

ST. FRANCIS Well? and if he were, why?

AUTHOR I would like to see Brother Juniper. Somebody said that when I began writing my *Little Plays*, I wrote them for love of you, but that I went on writing them for love of Brother Juniper. That's quite true, Father. So—if I may—I would like to see Juniper.

ST. FRANCIS He is here, Brother.

(Indeed, hardly has the wish been expressed, than JUNIPER had begun to make his appearance, coming in gently and slowly, a little interrogative at finding himself 'wanted'. So

now ST. FRANCIS steps back, and makes way for JUNIPER to come forward; and after watching the encounter for a while with amused eyes, he goes quietly out of the picture, leaving the two alone)

AUTHOR Is it yourself, Juniper?

JUNIPER It is; what's left of me.

AUTHOR Is anything missing?

JUNIPER Sure! What was once the bigger part of me—my sins, Brother? At least, so they tell me. But it's not my doing; it just comes of being where I am now. On earth one always had to run away from sin, wasn't one? But up there, it's all the other way: sin runs from you, like water off a duck's back, and there's no catching it.

AUTHOR (*meditative*) Sin . . . Anything else, Brother?

JUNIPER All my troubles, sorrows, fears; a heavy load they were. But I don't fear anything now—or anybody. All the things gone that got in the way of me being any use in the world.

AUTHOR And your foolishness, Juniper? That also?

JUNIPER No, no, God forbid! I couldn't do without that. 'Heaven's Fool' they call me. That's what I am now.

AUTHOR You always were, Brother.

JUNIPER Ah! 'Twas a good world, by God's mercy, needing fools.

AUTHOR And what do you do now, Juniper? Do they need you still?

JUNIPER Sure! More than ever. That's the comfort of it! I stay by the gate, watching for all them that come . . . and seeing that they don't go away from it.

AUTHOR How do you prevent them?

JUNIPER Tell them not to be afraid. 'Where I am,' I say, 'is good enough for anyone.' No! No! I mean—anyone's good enough for where I am, please God. Where Juniper the fool is, there's no fool that's greater. And those that don't love God, or think so—it's only foolishness, through not knowing.

AUTHOR But you haven't the Keys, Juniper.

JUNIPER (*dryly*) No, I haven't, Brother.

AUTHOR Then how do you get them all in? Do you?

JUNIPER Aye, all that I see. And if there's others, it's a mercy I don't see them, else it 'ud break my heart . . . Aye, if I see 'em, and if old Cockcrow see's 'em, we get 'em all in, by the head or the

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Little Plays of St. Francis (cont.)

tail.

AUTHOR Old Cockcrow?

JUNIPER Aye, Peter's Cock, I mean. He's there to remind him. For there is Peter: very good and holy he is now, and careful in his keeping of the Keys; but he wasn't always what he ought to be. So when I see him turning anyone away, I give a wink to old Cockcrow, and he gives me a wink, and starts crowing (with me to keep him company); and he doesn't leave off until Peter's remembered himself, and changed his mind. Oh! he's a wise bird, and a judge of character, and knows well when to crow, and when not to —me helping him.

AUTHOR And what does Peter say about it?

JUNIPER 'The fool's right!' he says. It's what I'm there for. And for that same reason I must be going back now, Brother; they will be missing me.

(Just then, from outside comes the singing of birds, as has been faithfully given on a certain gramophone record, which, for stage purposes, had better now be used. They both hear it. There is a short pause before the AUTHOR speaks)

AUTHOR What's that noise, Juniper?

JUNIPER It's the birds, Brother, singing. Dawn has come.

AUTHOR Draw—draw the curtains, Brother

(JUNIPER does so, twilight enters the room. The AUTHOR reaches out a hand, and switches off the light)

AUTHOR Welcome light! Oh, welcome light!

JUNIPER Aye, there it is, waiting for you!

AUTHOR What birds are those, Juniper?

JUNIPER So many kinds, one can't name them, Brother.

AUTHOR I don't hear any cockcrow!

JUNIPER But you shall! You wait! I'm going back now to tell him you are coming. He'll crow you in, Brother.

AUTHOR Then I, too, like one that was my better, shall owe a cock to Aesculapius.

JUNIPER To whom, then?

AUTHOR To Luke, the beloved physician—and you, Juniper.

JUNIPER *(listening)* Ah! they are calling me!

AUTHOR Then go, Juniper.

JUNIPER Aye, for a minute, to show you the way, just. And keep your ears sharp for the signal. 'Twon't be long. When you hear us cry 'cock-a-doo', you will know we've fixed it. *(Then, hearing himself called again)*

Yes, Brother, I'm coming!

(And back to Heaven goes JUNIPER. The AUTHOR lies listening to the birds. He is not at all sure that JUNIPER'S signal is going to reach him; and, being in doubt, he questions his own identity and fitness for taking on so large a matter)

AUTHOR Me? ... Me?

(The double 'Me' reminds him of something he wrote in a play a good many years ago, and being rather proud of the passage, he now recites it: a farewell to authorship, in this world at any rate)

AUTHOR Dawn, Mee-mee, Dawn!

Look how the hands of light reach up, and lift the covering cowl of night.

From the blush-blinded eyes of Heaven. And she, Heart-woken, and warm-footed o'er the sea,

Her face a fountain of desires long stored,

Goes kindling to the arms of her great lord! And lo, he comes rejoicing, and flings gold till all the earth is with his joy enrolled,

And every life—a mote in his glad beams—

Melts forth to meet him, and, wherever light streams,

Dance till it drowns! Ah! Look! The sun! The sun!

(The babbling of the birds thins out, pauses, and then ends. From far away comes a cockcrow, twice, thrice it repeats itself. Half incredulous, but putting his trust in Juniper's word, the AUTHOR sends out a feeble response)

AUTHOR Cock-a-doodle-doo!

(The door opens. Too late to administer it to her departed patient, the NURSE enters with the white of egg and whisky.)

CURTAIN

RIP: Gretchen Good-Pankratz

Obituary from Ithaca (New York) Times

Gretchen Good-Pankratz of Trumansburg (NY), formerly of Liberal, Kansas, passed away on February 25 at the age of 76.

Gretchen worked in the medical field as a technician before becoming a stay-at-home mother to her four children. Gretchen tested her vocation with CSF in San Francisco, but was professed in the 3rd Order of St. Francis in the late 1970's. She was ordained a Deacon in the late 1980's serving the Kansas communities of Liberal, Goodland, and Garden City.

(For more from Gretchen, see page 8)

Welcome The Newly Professed — Charmaine Hensley

As a young Episcopalian, I have found a spiritual home. Finding ways to serve has been such a blessing. I have come through the altar guild, chalice and acolyte service, and as a Eucharistic Visitor. I am currently blessed to serve as the LEV coordinator.

Each has brought me closer to the Lord through meaningful service with a servant's heart. Away from the parish, I have a service business that includes helping the elderly and shut-ins.

As a young Franciscan, I look forward to my continuing journey as a professed Franciscan. My studies as a novice have been life changing, I attend St. Stephen's Episcopal Church in Oak Ridge, TN.



— Ana Lúcia Machado

Meu nome é Ana Lúcia de Almeida Machado, eu tenho 37 anos e moro em Porto Alegre, no sul do Brasil. Sou professora de Inglês e frequento a Igreja Anglicana desde a minha infância, juntamente com a minha família. Conheci a Ordem Terceira através de um grande amigo meu, o Reverendo Dessórdi Peres Leite. Em 2005, ele teve a ideia de criar um grupo em Porto Alegre, e nós, com mais cinco amigos, criamos a fraternidade Grão de Mostarda. Inicialmente o grupo ia muito bem, nós nos reuníamos regularmente e também fazíamos retiros e encontros com outras ordens. Mas, depois de um certo tempo, o grupo começou a mostrar pouco interesse em se reunir, e isso se intensificou com a mudança do Reverendo Dessórdi de Porto Alegre para Berkeley, nos Estados Unidos. A partir daí, as reuniões tornaram-se cada vez mais raras, até que o grupo parou de se reunir. Hoje em dia, eu continuo lendo os Princípios da Ordem e participando dos retiros que me são proporcionados, como o que aconteceu em outubro de 2013 no Rio de Janeiro, mas infelizmente, não tenho me reunido com meu grupo de origem.

Eu espero que, nessa minha nova etapa como professora, eu possa me aproximar mais das pessoas do meu antigo grupo, e quem sabe convencê-los a retomar as nossas atividades como fraternidade. Também pretendo participar ativamente das atividades da Ordem Terceira no Brasil todo, e vir a entrar em contato com mais irmãos franciscanos. Pra mim, fazer parte da Ordem Terceira é uma grande alegria, e é um privilégio pra mim poder conduzir a minha vida no modo de ser Franciscano.

My name is Ana Lúcia Machado, I am 37 years old and live in Porto Alegre in southern Brazil. I am an English teacher and have attended the Anglican Church since infancy together with my family. I became acquainted with the Third Order through a dear friend, Rev.

Dessórdi Peres Leite. In 2005 he had the idea to create a group in Porto Alegre and we, with five other friends, created the Grain of Mustard Fellowship. Initially the group went very well, we met regularly and we also did retreats and meetings with other orders. But after a time, the group began to show little interest in meeting, still less with the departure of Rev. Dessórdi from Porto Alegre to Berkeley, in the U.S. From then on meetings became less and less frequent until the group stopped meeting altogether. Nowadays I continue reading the Principles of the Order and participating in retreats that are offered, as happened in October of 2013 in Rio de Janeiro, but unhappily I have not met with my original group.



I hope that, in this new stage as a professed member, I am able to approach again the members of my old group and, who knows, convince them to return to our activities as a fellowship. I also seek to actively participate in the activities of the Third Order in all of Brazil, and come into contact with more Franciscan brothers and sisters. For me, being a part of the Third Order is a great joy, and it is a privilege for me to be able to conduct my life in the Franciscan way of being.

[Editor's Note. The elections to profession of Charmaine Hensley and Ana Lúcia Machado mark a couple of precedents in this Province. They are the first two to be elected by all of Chapter during a quarterly phone conference—a procedure approved at the last Chapter to improve the depth of discussion concerning elections.]

Second, Ana Lúcia Machado is the first to be elected to profession via the new arrangement with the Regional Chapter in Brazil. Our new arrangement now that Brazil has a Regional Chapter is that their Regional Chapter performs the analysis related to individuals requesting election to profession, and votes to elect or not. Those they vote to elect are forwarded to our Provincial Chaplain who then presents their vote and background materials to our Provincial Chapter for ratification. In our upcoming April quarterly phone conference, we hope to approve a parallel procedure for those who wish release from vows in Brazil when necessary.]

Jesus' Continuing Passion

Gretchen Good-Pankratz (Franciscan Times, May 1980) Died February 2014

Why do we traditionally refer to "The Passion" as the last week before the crucifixion, rather than all of our Lord Jesus Christ's lifetime on earth? I share a gift which was granted to me during Lent, 1979.

Somehow, all my life my perception of the Passion was in the very narrow sense of that very intense week of events from the hero's entry into Jerusalem to the Good Friday cross. Suddenly, by God's grace, that mold was broken, and I now understand the Passion as the whole of Christ's lifetime on Earth. This enables and enlarges my understanding of the totality of his ministry. Christ's manner did not cling or chase after people. It was simply an open-armed offering of himself and through him the way to know the Father. The manner of his life in which the joy of reflected love and companionship with the apostles, the faith of those healed, welcoming the little children and celebrating God's creation are interwoven with the taunting sarcasm of the scribes and Pharisees, the rejection and lack of faith of his own townspeople, and finally the ultimate murder by crucifixion by Roman soldiers, most of whom knew him not, but were carrying out orders by superiors. I now begin to realize that we are invited to share the Passion as we too live on this earth and become aware of the same sorts of joys



Three New Assistant Directors in 1984: (L to R) Gretchen Good-Pankratz, Terry Rogers, and Mary Ann Jackman

and love which are interwoven with the same sorts of rejection, sarcasm and yes, still, murder done by one human being against another.

It seems to me the ultimate sadness and agony is expressed when men and women are so deaf and blind that they don't even realize what they are doing. We have been many times blessed through the ages as God's servants, one being our brother Francis, have recognized and pointed out over and over again the absurd manner in which mankind behaves. As generations go on, there seem to be some who actually hear and live the Gospel—and for this I shout, "All thanks and praise to you, good Lord!"

RIP: Bo Chapman

From the Bishop's Office, Diocese of Maryland

It is with a very heavy heart that I announce that **Bo Chapman**+, rector of Emmanuel Church, Cumberland, since 1985, died yesterday February 16 at the parish while presiding at its annual meeting. The parish is reeling from the loss of a beloved pastor; his wife, Mary Ann and daughter, Jean, are mourning the loss of a cherished husband and father; and the entire Diocese of Maryland is suffering the loss of a faithful colleague and one of its very best leaders. Many of us knew Bo as a dear friend who could be counted on to provide a smile, a helping hand, and a healing word whenever it was needed, and we will miss him deeply.

*Borrowed from elsewhere but posted prominently on his parish's website—Bo's real epitaph**

"We extend a special welcome to those who are single, married, divorced, gay, filthy rich, dirt poor, yo no hablo Ingles. We extend a special welcome to those who are crying newborns, skinny as a rail or could afford to lose a few pounds.

We welcome you if you can sing like Andrea Bocelli or like our pastor, who can't carry a note in a bucket. You're welcome here if you're "just browsing," just woke up or just got out of jail. We don't care if you're more Catholic than the Pope, or haven't been in church since little Joey's Baptism.

We extend a special welcome to those who are over 60 but not grown up yet, and to teenagers who are growing up too fast.

We welcome soccer moms, NASCAR dads, starving artists, tree-huggers, latte-sippers, vegetarians, junk-food

eaters. We welcome those who are in recovery or still addicted. We welcome you if you're having problems or you're down in the dumps or if you don't like "organized religion," we've been there too.

If you blew all your offering money at the dog track, you're welcome here. We offer a special welcome to those who think the earth is flat, work too hard, don't work, can't spell, or because grandma is in town and wanted to go to church.

We welcome those who are inked, pierced or both. We offer a special welcome to those who could use a prayer right now, had religion shoved down your throat as a kid or got lost in traffic and wound up here by mistake. We welcome tourists, seekers and doubters, bleeding hearts....and you!"

Our Province's Third Order Members During the London Blitz

R. John Brockmann

In the last issue of the *Times*, I noted that our Founder, Father Joseph, visited England in 1914 and 1919, and that Father Morse-Boycott became very attracted to the Anglo-Catholic aspects of Father Joseph's American Third Order. By 1935, there were enough British TSFs to create a Custodia/Fellowship centered in London and led by Morse-Boycott.

Since the last issue I have discovered a number of interesting new elements. The archives of the Anglican Church in Lambeth Palace hold a few letters written by Mabel Julia Mary Pinco—Sister Mary Francesca, a member of Morse-Boycott's Custodia/Fellowship. However, the real treasure in the archives are six issues of the Custodia/Fellowship's *Tertiary Tiding* newsletter published between 1938 and 1941, and largely written by Sister Mary Francesca. Not only are these the **only** Custodia/Fellowship materials from the 1930's and 40's from anywhere in the Province of the Americas, but they they were also written between the time of August-September 1938 and Spring 1941....or between the time Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain waved the treaty with Hitler declaring "Peace in our Time," and the London Blitz and the Battle of the Atlantic. Electronic copies of these newsletters are now been posted in the Historical Documents section of our website. Each newsletter has a background history, i.e., when Sister Mary Francesca complains that she and Father Morse-Boycott have been moved you need to know that two nights before she writes this newsletter, 15,000 separate fires were set by incendiary bombs in London. It is truly remarkable to read how Sister Mary Francesca, the newsletter editor, keeps her Franciscan perspective and enthusiasm in the midst of such war.

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- Profession & Novicing Dates
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janet.fedders@gmail.com

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RIP: Rev. Doreth Sylvester-Brown*THE TRUE JOY FELLOWSHIP – JAMAICA*

Doreth died on December 19, 2013 after a very short illness. She was a true Christian, a true Franciscan, and a true friend.

She started her Franciscan journey some years ago while on a visit to New York, where she was invited by a friend to accompany her on a visit to the Little Portion Friary. She said that she experienced a calming peace during that day, and wondered what it would be like to be a member of the Franciscan Order.

A few years later she started studies to become an Anglican Priest at the United Theological College of The West Indies. As a student, she was assigned to the Church of St. Mary the Virgin [New York City] under the direction of Canon Ernle Gordon, Rector of that church, and a professed member of The Third Order of the Society of St. Francis.

Once, the *True Joy Fellowship* arranged a meeting at The Bishops' Lodge to celebrate The Stigmata. She heard of the meeting, and remembering her experience at Little Portion, accompanied Canon Gordon to the meeting. She was captivated by the experience and made the decision to investigate how she could become a member of TSSF

Doreth applied, went through the stages of Formation, and was professed at the TSSF Convocation at Endicott College in Boston on June 30, 2007. She subsequently became a Deacon and was later ordained a Priest. She was assigned as Curate in Cure of St. Mary's where Canon Ernle Gordon was the Rector.

Doreth endeared herself to the congregations and communities in that Cure and worked tirelessly with the various organizations of the church, especially in the Church of the Resurrection, which was her assigned

responsibility.

In the period between the departure of Canon Gordon and the appointment of the in-coming Rector, Doreth managed the Cure for approximately one year. She was appointed Priest-in-Charge of The St. Jude's Anglican Church (Stony Hill) in July of 2013 and was in the process of "Re-energizing the Church" when she was suddenly called home by her Maker.

Doreth lived the Franciscan Spirituality by preaching the Gospel in the way of St. Francis. She adhered to the appeal of St. Francis to live a life of daily conversion to Christ through prayer and works knowing that this is an important part of the life of a Franciscan—that is to preach the gospel at all times and if necessary use words. She knew that at the centre of her prayer life was the Eucharist, and she was obedient to Scripture and church teachings. She was a devoted wife, mother and grandmother, a loving sister and friend

Her unexpected passing has created a void in our lives.

May her soul rest in peace.

RIP: John Francis Walker

Skye K. Richendrfer, reprinted from Celtic Arts Foundation Blog

Originally from Philadelphia, John Walker served in the US Navy from 1950-1954 during the Korean Conflict, after which he returned to academic pursuits receiving degrees from Temple University and the Philadelphia Divinity School of the Episcopal Church. John was ordained into the priesthood on November 5, 1960. He entered the US Navy Chaplain Corps in 1962, with duty assignments in many parts of the world, including Vietnam. His final assignment was as Senior Chaplain, Naval Air Station, Whidbey Island, WA, retiring from active duty on November 1, 1981 having achieved the rank of commander. John continued to provide pastoral care for three parishes in Washington State for several years, including Saint James Church in Sedro Woolley, WA where the 40th anniversary of his ordination service was held November 5, 2000. John was surprised at that retirement service with some Highland Pipe tunes—a perfect tribute for someone who so loves all things Celtic!

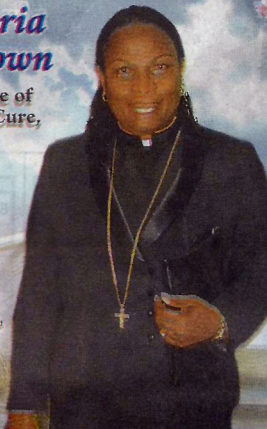
DEATH NOTICE

Doreth Victoria Sylvester-Brown

Late Priest-in-Charge of Saint Judes Anglican Cure, St. Andrew.

Died on December 19, 2013 leaving husband Rev. Dr. The Honourable Garnet Brown, son Norval Adam West, daughter Lilieth (Lisa) West, sister Ruby (Hope) King, grandchildren Matthew, Nathian, Victoria, stepdaughters, other relatives and friends.

Funeral arrangements will be announced later.




RIP: Steven A. Wright*Rebecca Goldberg*

The New Umbrian Fellowship is grieving the loss of our dear friend and brother Steve Wright, who died on January 20, 2014 after a 6 year struggle with cancer. Steve was a faithful and active member of our fellowship for 21 years. He was professed for 18 years. He served many terms as fellowship convener during that time, and helped organize several Western Convocations. In addition, he also started a beloved fellowship tradition of retreats at St. Dorothy's Rest in Camp Meeker, CA, where he graciously worked to help us enjoy a time of rest, reflection, and renewal.

Steve enjoyed life wholeheartedly and enthusiastically. He loved God and our brother Francis passionately. In Fellowship meetings he would always encourage folks to talk more about Francis, to tell Francis stories, and to share how our Franciscan rule helped everyone live their Christian vocation in the world. From him, I learned to look at the world through a Franciscan lens, and to be challenged to live out the Gospel values of simplicity, peacemaking, and thankfulness.

Steve also had a deep fondness for all things British. He liked nothing better than to relax on retreat and talk enthusiastically about the latest thing he read about English history or the doings of the queen. Before the cancer recurred, he was able to take another trip to England and he thoroughly immersed himself in London life. He also enjoyed playing a competitive game of Scrabble and just sitting for hours talking about politics, theology, the Church, or one of his favorite musical groups, the Supremes.

Some of my best memories of Steve were the times we spent driving from San Francisco to Sonoma County on the way to retreat. We listened to music and talked about everything under the sun and the time and traffic passed quickly.

Steve was always honest and direct in his dealings with people. He didn't dissemble, or try to please people, or wear a mask. What you saw with Steve was what you got, and I really appreciated that about him. He also had a generous spirit that reached out to people and changed them from strangers into friends, and drew them deeper into the life of the fellowship. One time, when he shared with me his fears his cancer would recur, he told me that one of things about dying that was



the hardest was that he "didn't want to miss anything." That really tells a lot. Steve was always engaged with life, listening, absorbing, learning, and savoring. This, I know, was a gift to all of us.

We will miss you greatly, dear brother, and we are glad that you are at peace and no longer suffering. We rejoice in the knowledge that you will not "miss anything" and are now in the nearer presence of Christ our Lord, our brother Francis, and all the saints forever.

Those Who Walk Among Us*Diana Turner-Forte*

Two thousand years ago, the ancients used the Hebrew word, "anawim" to describe lepers, prostitutes, the lame, the destitute, and those afflicted in some way. This generalized category excluded parts of the population considered unfit to intermingle with the rest of society. In a deeper sense "anawim" were those living totally dependent on God because no one else cared. Today, they are the people we either look down upon to make us feel better about ourselves or look up to discovering holiness.

In our self-righteous, technologically advanced, self-centered age, our sensibilities somehow have gotten skewed as we classify people with an assortment of words, like disadvantaged, disabled, illegals, autistic, at-risk, and addicts. To justify our distorted sense of compassion, the labels are said to be politically correct. Calling any of our fellow brothers and sisters anything but children of God says more about us than those we disrespect. Our ignorance is further demonstrated by sideways glances and dismissive actions. Even without words, we say, "you don't belong here, you are not part of us."

This is the way our so called civilized society pushes people to the fringes. And, we do this every day. The people who bag our groceries, clean our houses, offices and cars, manicure our lawns, repair our clothes, serve our dinners, could be "anawim." With their gentle spirits and courage they walk among us and our lives intersect if we dare to witness the sacredness of their presence.

At the grocery store, some months ago, my groceries were painstakingly and neatly packed by one of those outsiders. That incident may not have stayed with me, had I not been approached the next day by the same person who packed my bag, inquiring if my groceries were okay. A bit startled, I replied, "Yes, yes, of course—thank you." I had never really paid much attention to how my groceries were packed. Thinking

(continued on page 12)

Those Who Walk Among Us (cont.)

back, however, there was something different. They were loaded by someone who moved in an unhurried manner, one item at a time, intensely focused on the task at hand. When he was done, my recyclable bag was clean around the edges, there weren't any bulges or sharp corners sticking out. Rather than collapsing from internal disarray, my bag was standing up, like a set of blocks and the bagger (smiling) was holding the straps, enabling me to more easily pick up and carry my package. I knew the face from somewhere else.

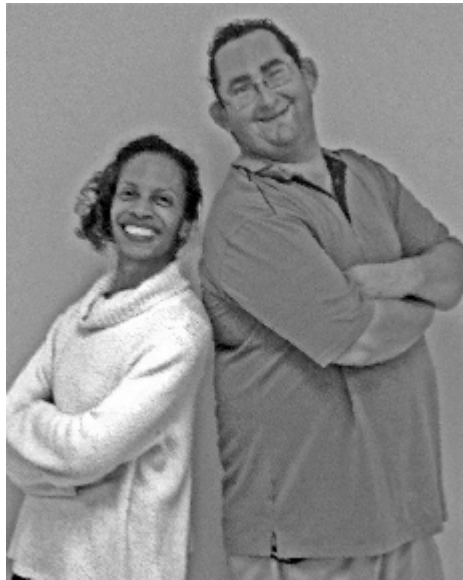
Packing groceries, organizing grocery carts in the parking lot and driving them inside is just one of his jobs. His evening work, was where we had originally met. He cleans the 4,000 sq. ft. facility where I teach dance classes. The tasks are done meticulously: commodes, sinks, and floors are sparkling after his labors. When I greet him with a smile, his face lights up, his eyes sparkle behind the horn-rimmed glasses, he removes the headset from his ears, we chat about his other job. He is kind, respectful and listens in between sentences as we engage in dialogue. I have met an authentic human being.

Arriving quietly in the evenings, he promptly engages in the mundane, often dirty duties, bringing cleanliness and freshness to a building that has been well-used during the day; enduring a lot of foot traffic, mishaps and messes. He vacuums, fills the oversize bucket with water and mops the floor, cleans the commodes, washes the sinks, stacks chairs and tables in their proper places, removes from the hall dust bunnies, shoe streaks and paper bits; all with the efficiency and precision of a finely-trained engineer. With an easy, sauntering walk and quiet dedication, he goes about his work.

My life is different from interacting with him. Whether bagging groceries, mopping floors, picking up trash, or loading carts our lives are affected in ways that we may never know by that outsider who provides services that we may have taken for granted. The economy, government shutdown, the latest movies, updated iPhones and iPads, pales when meeting the person who has done a simple deed. And it is just that recognition, the gratitude of those moments that makes the beauty of "anawim" so profoundly moving.

I can be assured that when I arrive at my space on Sat-

urday mornings, the front door mat will be set squarely at the entranceway; the hallways, chastened by mops and detergent will be glistening; the bathrooms spotless with mirrors finger print-free, all the hard labor of a human being working late into the night. No titles or accolades befall this person. He is attentive to the duties assigned him. His name is Daniel. When I say "Hello, Daniel" his face brightens into a glowing smile and I ask how he is, he responds "Fine." At the end of the evening, hours later, I say, "Goodbye, thank you," and he replies, "Have a nice evening." My life is richer, appreciating the work he does and telling him so. We part, my soul has been lifted up, my heart has been opened. I have received the gift of his presence in my life.



Diana Turner-Forte and Daniel

RIP: Agnes Hewitt, Associate

Brenda Stewart, Regional Associate Secretary, Jamaica

Agnes Golden Lyon-Hewitt died on January 28, 2014. She was ailing for some time but was always happy and thankful to God for her life of service to others. She was a nurse and, after her retirement, continued to take care of the sick and elderly people.

She loved gardening and would be heard talking to her plants. She was always at fellowship meetings and loved to talk about Sts. Francis and Clare.

She was a true Christian, a caring Associate of TSSF, friend, mother, and grandmother. We shall miss her.

May her soul rest in Peace



Four Questions for Sister Jean Lait, CSF

Elaina Ramsey

Published in *Sojourners Magazine* (January 2014)

1. Why did you decide to stand up against drones?

During WWII, I experienced the bombing of Coventry in England. As a child of 9 years, I slept under the stairs, anxiously waiting for the bombs to drop. Toward the end of the war, flying bombs known as "doodle-bugs" were used. These were very similar to drones and were sent from Germany. They were aimed anywhere. These were bombs where you heard a whistle and then it was silent before the bang.

Thinking back on the fear and anxiety I experienced, the whole idea of drone warfare is just immoral to me. No child should ever be that frightened. No child should have to live in a war zone. That kind of trauma affects you, one way or another. You either use that experience for good or otherwise.

2. What do you and your community do to protest drones?

My Order is committed to peace and justice. At one time, my community and I would be out there marching in the streets and protesting. But as one gets older, there are other ways of speaking out against injustice. I'm in my 80s, so the best thing I can do is just be myself and share my story in hopes that it brings awareness to the horrors of drones.

3. After all that you've witnessed in your lifetime, where do you find hope?

The fact that young people are concerned about social issues such as poverty and world peace is one thing that gives me hope. I also find hope in this new wave of faith that seems to be emerging. People are speaking out more about their faith and how it informs their views on peace and justice. And my own personal experience of being a sister—living a simple life and a life of prayer—gives me hope, too.

4. Any final thoughts for our readers regarding drones?

Something being sent off from somewhere else to destroy homes and lives is just abhorrent to me. The fact that Americans are using drones is such a tremendous disappointment. I always thought the U.S. was leading the way in peace, justice, and democracy, but we just got caught up using these methods. It's horrific.

How to join the TSSF Listserv

Clint Hagen

The TSSF Listserv is an email list that allows members to send messages to the whole group easily. If you're not a member, here's how you sign up.

First you'll need to go to: <http://justus.anglican.org/mailman/listinfo/tssfamericas-L.justus>. On that page,

you'll see the following screen (it's the third tan bar from the top):

Enter your email address and your name in the top two fields. You can also pick your own password, but that's not required (and, indeed, you will almost never need a password for this site).

The last question is important. There are two ways to get emails from the list. The default (what happens if you choose "no" on the last question) is that you get every email sent to the list as they are sent. Most days this is just a few emails; some days, it can be a lot. Thus, many people like to receive the emails from the list as a "daily digest." By selecting "yes" here, you will receive only one email per day which will contain all of the messages sent to the list for that day.

Click "subscribe" and you're done!

When you want to send something to the group, just email TSSFAmericas-L@justus.anglican.org

A few more items:

The list will not accept the following items:

- Items with attachments (they are automatically stripped from the emails)
 - Items that have multiple recipients (for instance, if you send an email to TSSFAmericasL@justus.anglican.org and a whole bunch of other people, the list will think it's spam. You'll need to send a separate message to TSSFAmericas-L.)
 - Messages that are larger than 60 KB.
- Please be mindful of good etiquette when using the list and especially remember the following:
- When you reply to an email, please delete the text of the original email. Failure to do so can mean that emails eventually get too large, and when they reach 60 KB the server will reject them.
 - Sometimes, it's better to reply to the original sender instead of the whole list. For instance, if someone has a prayer request and you just want to send them a short message to let them know they are in your prayers, you might consider sending that message just to the person who made the request, rather than the whole list.
 - And, of course, treat everyone on the list with respect and dignity, seeking to serve Christ in one another.

Celebrating Our Centennial of the Third Order in the Western Hemisphere Provincial Convocation 2017 in Puerto Rico

Beverly Hosea

After our Provincial Convocation in June of this last year, I was asked by Chapter to chair the planning committee for our next Provincial Convocation. I am totally amazed that even though this won't be until 2017 immediately we already have seven members who volunteered to be on the committee without even being asked. We also have a location, although not a specific site at this time - Puerto Rico. There are all sorts of exciting possibilities for meeting there, besides its centrality for travel from all parts of the Province. The main theme of this convocation will be *Celebrating Our Centennial of the Third Order in the Western Hemisphere*.

To begin, for all members to prepare for this historic event, the following prayer from our Devotional Companion is offered. We suggest using this prayer at local fellowship meetings and regional convocations as well as for personal prayer. I invite you to do some inner reflection on the words of the prayer as we look at our history, both as an order and as individuals called to this order, and consider and pray for vision for the future.

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

I will be giving periodic updates on the planning process. In that planning we are taking into consideration feedback and suggestions from PC 2013, and your ideas, offers of help, prayers and interest are joyfully accepted.

An Unfettered Heart: A Lenten Meditation

Anton A. Armbruster

We are exhorted by our teacher to be transformed and become again like little children: "Amen I say to you, unless you be converted, and become as little children, you shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 18:3, Douay-Rheims Bible).

Play, simplicity, fascination, and imagination are the qualities that spring to mind. In the smallest of things, such as a stone, a twig, a leaf, a seashell, or a tree, the young child sees entire worlds. The ordinary is en-

chanted by unseen possibility.

The perception of time's passage is another difference between youthful and older minds. To live simply is to live in full appreciation of the blessings of each moment. To be attentive to the beauty right in front of us requires an unfettered heart: a heart aroused more by presence than by reflection on history and formulas.

For the young, sight is not filtered through so many layers of assumption, belief and experience. They are spontaneous and speak from their hearts. There is no guile and few agendas are hidden. Transparency of thought, immediacy of experience, feeling-centered language, the birth of metaphor and love of story all mark the earliest years. These are the very same qualities that are increasingly in demand among leaders who would credibly navigate the challenges of the 21st century.

What is the opposing state that Our Lord suggests is of lesser merit as we continue on our spiritual journey?

It is the imprisoned state of attachment coupled with the memory of frustrated dreams. We witness the idealism of youth give way to pessimistic realism and cynicism: the carbon monoxide of joy. We see an insatiable thirst for amassing things that create the illusion of individual prowess made evident by ever-larger landfills cluttered with the discarded treasures of our plastic and digital age.

Busyness is the norm and many decry the tyranny of impossibly long to-do lists. Stress and anxiety disorders are correspondingly rising as quickly as the shelf life of must-have products are falling. We cling to our understanding of things and are potentially blind to how things "really are."

Post-modern humanity craves the antidote for this prison of attachment and Lent is an annual opportunity for some rehab: let go of stuff, de-clutter, and be freed from the excesses. We need to relearn to travel light—more like a child: strip away the habits that smother the spirit much as so many vines sap the strength of trees.

This excess is so much more than the outer things that we may choose to temporarily "give up" for Lent. Much tougher to shed are our self-comforting ways of thought. We hug tried and true ritual; routines that provide a sense of predictability. According to much psychological research, so strong is this attachment that we fight hard against any data, however robust, that challenges our deeply held interpretations. We are, in essence, wired to prove true what we hold to be true, rather than to search for that one disconfirming instance that would require us to go back to the drawing board.

This is not the way of the child who experiments with things, tries on the new, and rides the waves of the possible. Our mind's aging, left unchecked, leads with seeming inevitability to rheumatoid-like thought: a condition by which we discard alternative worlds that are distasteful simply because they are foreign. At one extreme, we see the march of fundamentalisms where-in metaphor is mistaken for the Real that our poetry yearns to describe. On the other, we see materialism and scientism.

Lent is a time to drop more than our favorite foods. It is time to examine our attachment to ways and means, rituals and formulae, and favorite explanations that have become auto-reflex. Our hearts and minds become bloated by all the ideas that build for us cognitive cocoons built up around our presumption of true knowing and certainty. As a result, we relinquish the child-like capacity to attend to the living Call of the Holy Spirit, rising up in an instant that beckons to us to pay attention.

While our religious and spiritual traditions offer inspired and inspiring discipline for the Soul's journey, we must also be wary of reluctance to embrace our evolving consciousness. Opening ourselves up to new poetry and metaphors enlivens the soul. When we pay attention to the still small voice, we can catch a fleeting image of a simpler way, a fresh breeze that inspires open heart and mind: the spirit of the child.

Abiding in the moment is the exhortation of Brothers Francis and Lawrence. Doing so opens us to the Deep that calls incessantly in every breath we take. Being vigilant for its movement places us squarely on the road to Emmaus. As we walk with humility, the One speaks to us from infinite perspective and guides our expectant and wondering finitude. At the event horizon, where finite meets infinite, divine light fills our every cell, and so we are transformed.

Resting in the simple and unvarnished moment calls us to be truly still which in our time is exceedingly rare. Our minds are ever active, anticipating, worrying, rehearsing the next moment and sharpening our plans for action. As a counter-force to this feverishness, Lent invites us to immerse ourselves in appreciative witness, deeper listening, and disciplined emptying.

In these days of spiritual preparation (recognizing the duress under which we labor in challenging times), let us practice the art of waiting, watching and listening. Whether unaided by method or with support from such practices as contemplative photography, journaling, drawing, etc., let us slow down to go many fathom deeper.

The quest for the simpler way is the epitome of Franciscan spirituality. Paying keen attention is the gift of consciousness, a gift worth opening in the seemingly ordinary moments to reveal its beauty: e.g., the velvet silence in the time just before sleep, the first light moment upon rising, the periods of quiet in between the sounds around us during a walk around the block, the scene of blackbirds fully present in their competition for suet on a small tree, the quiet space between two breathes, the blank page before a thought is shaped by language, the hidden story of an old tree, the play of light and shadow as the sun moves across the sky, and the moment of nightfall.

Watching, waiting and listening for the gentle whisper on the wind, we are called to suspend belief and constructs long enough to be truly present. Beliefs are our delicious adornments placed on the surface of deep mystery and their beauty has a place. We just need to be balanced so that mental chatter of our own invention doesn't drown out the Living Christ, the matrix on which rests the Cosmos.

Rising from a time of thorough de-cluttering, our theology and scholarly dialogue and ritual can be authentically prayerful. Silence acts as a healing elixir for our attachments to both stuff and thought. We are thereby reconditioned for humble reflection and the joyful, liberating play of biblical, liturgical and spontaneous poetry.

In practicing true kenosis in this Lenten Season, we restore the deep resonance between our reason and the Call of the Holy Spirit. In unburdening ourselves of inner attachment, we become psycho-spiritually lighter. Only then can we truly soar with hearts aroused and just drop everything when asked by the Paraclete to come out and play. Ephphatha -Be Opened!

Brother Clark Berge SSF, *The Vows Book: Anglican Teaching on the Vows of Obedience, Poverty and Chastity*

January 2014, 142 pages. (from \$14.36 Amazon)

Reviewed by Ted Witham (Australian TSSF Lent 2014 Newsletter and review on Amazon)

The late Abbot of New Norcia Dom Placid Spearritt OSB once claimed that Franciscans invented the idea of 'vows': Benedictines, he said, only had 'promises'. I don't know enough history or canon law to evaluate Abbot Placid's statement, but as a Franciscan, I take the point that we should treat our promises with the least complication we can. Let our "yes" be "yes" and our "no" be "no". (see Mt 5:37)

(continued on page 16)

The Vows Book (cont.)

Brother Clark Berge, currently Minister General of the Society of Saint Francis, explores what it means to be a vowed person. All of us are vowed persons, as promises were made in our baptisms, and *The Vows Book* speaks to all Christians about the discipline and constraints inherent in following Christ. "The vows protect in us deep down the courage and strength to live for God, to help God create a world we want to live in, a world of love."

Vowed persons are counter-cultural. We have promised to make the world a different place than it is now. For those called to "give their lives to God in a special way" as brothers and sisters in religious orders, the vows of obedience, poverty and chastity structure their lives to have the freedom to tell out the Good News.

Obedience means listening – listening to the Scriptures, to the Founders, to each other, to one's inner voice and to nature. It means living as a responsible adult. Poverty is a free choice to follow Christ in a sharing lifestyle clarifying one's social vision and helping those who are poor not through choice.

For members of religious orders like SSF chastity implies celibacy, which sets brothers and sisters free to love in new ways without the ties of family. Brother Clark is brutally honest about the difficulties of celibacy and gives practical advice on what to do with 'sexy thoughts'.

Br. Clark has printed his book in long thin columns. Each line of text has three or four words only in the style of the Catholic Workers' Peter Maurin's *Easy Essays*, making his ideas accessible to all members of the Society who have a very wide range of educational levels.

Br. Clark's ideas are also profitable for Tertiaries, as we too are vowed people, promising obedience, poverty and chastity as appropriate for our life-situation. He challenges us to use our promises as a framework to follow Jesus more closely, to find more joy in our life in Christ and to find more freedom in telling the Good News. These Franciscan values are ours too, and while our life-situations are not the same as the brothers and sisters of the First Order, our call to be Christ-like is.

It is challenging to be reminded to be responsible adults in listening to the wisdom of those around us and so learning to be more mature in our obedience. When we have so much materially our vow of poverty should cause us difficulty, and Br. Clark asks us to reconsider if we are serious about sharing our resources with the whole community. Do I have the purity of heart I promised in my vow of chastity and what

impact does that purity have on my ability to love as Christ would have me love?

Br. Clark's teaching about the vows may have started from his life-situation as a brother, but his wisdom, simplicity and depth is for all of us.

The Vows Book has a Foreword by Archbishop Roger Herft, SSF's Bishop Protector-General of the Order and the cover is graced by one of Br. Clark's own paintings, a reflection inspired by the words of Ephrem the Syrian on baptism. Br. Clark's book will help us say our 'Yes' with greater conviction and with joy and simplicity. It will help us bring our promises to life.

Assisi of the Heart

David Burgdorf

I had been to Assisi before. Back then, I wandered from San Francesco to Sta. Chiara Basilicas. I even saw the little Porziuncola and had lunch at the Piazza Comune. It was great seeing the places associated with Sts. Francis and Clare. While it wasn't a long stay, I went to Eucharist with the Anglicans and saw what I could see before the tour bus left. Assisi got into my eyes and legs.

Then came another opportunity. SSF was revising the Assisi Chaplaincy due to Br. Tom, the long term Chaplain needing to return to the UK. The new model involved rotating Chaplains at three-month intervals. It sounded like a good deal. I was retired and back to work on a part-time basis but essentially free. When I became aware of the opportunity, it took me fully thirty seconds to decide to apply. Fortunately I had met both the retiring minister, Br. Sam, and his successor, Br. Benedict, during my SSF years. The application process was prolonged due to the necessity of the Archbishop of Canterbury being part of it during the changeover between Archbishops Williams and Welby. One month before I was scheduled to appear in Assisi, word came that the official permissions had been given.

At first, it seemed necessary to revisit all the places I'd seen before, to get Assisi in my eyes

*Francis and Failure
as a Knight Statue
in Assisi*





Francis and the Leper Statue in Assisi



Francis and the Wolf of Gubbio



Francis and the Birds

and legs again. Up to the Rocca Maggiore and San Rufino, down to Rivo Torto and Porziuncola. My body memory of Assisi was like that of cardio conditioning, huff and puff. I found a small place to pray in, San Stefano, a twelfth century church that St. Francis is said to have prayed in (and whose bells started ringing without human intervention when he died). Happily, it was mostly off the tourist track. There were other places I found to be worth repeated visits- the San Damiano Cross in Sta Chiara, St. Francis' tomb at the basilica bearing his name, San Damiano, the original Poor Clares' convent and now a friary, and a parish church, Sta. Maria Maggiore, with its nightly Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament.

What starts off as charming soon becomes habitual. The bells, for instance. The bells of Sta. Chiara sound over this part of town. They announce the daily and Sunday masses. Initially, my response was "Oh, how beautiful!" Soon afterward, though, they became part of the aural atmosphere, like the flower lady in the streets with the loud "Ciao!" to everyone, and the eighty-ish tenor who wows the passers-by with his operatic rendition of plainsong "Ubi Caritas." In time these voices get tuned out.

Not too long into my Assisi pilgrimage, I found that the new was displaced by my old familiar voices: "What do you think you're doing here anyway, you fraud?" "Are you trying to pass yourself off as some sort of pious pilgrim? We know different, don't we?" "What makes you think you're so special?" "You're not going to be up to the high standards of these English ex-pats, who are just waiting for you to commit an American-

ism." O Crap! Those voices followed me to Assisi, the shame voices of one my friend calls her "Sneering Creep," the old inadequacy tapes.

A road sign that got my attention as I recently walked up from Sta. Maria degli Angeli said "Assisi: City of Peace." My initial reaction was that Assisi has displaced Jerusalem, and maybe it has. Jerusalem is certainly just the eye of the storm in the Middle East as the Arab-Israeli conflict blows around it. Even so, three religions- Judaism, Islam and Christianity- claim it as their home. Assisi is essentially a town of Italian Roman Catholics, though others are drawn to the holy places associated with the Assisi saints. There is less immediate need for peace to be waged here in this place, so perhaps it gives a safe space to reflect on what makes for peace generally.

So what is my answer to that? What makes for peace generally? The ceramic sign I often see on houses is: "Ubi Deus Ibi Pax," literally, "where God [is], here peace [is]." I have to say that if charity begins at home, so does peace, and that includes the racket of accusing voices, "sneering creeps," within. I have to believe God "allows" my voices to emerge in this place so that they may be healed. Listen to these—is this really what you want to attend to and base your life on, to use as your script? It doesn't matter where you learned them. It doesn't matter how they got there or how powerful they seem. They are not the final truth, which is the truth of your baptism: "You are sealed by the Holy Spirit in Baptism and marked as Christ's own forever." That is who you are. It is destiny and identity all rolled

(continued on page 18)

Assisi of the Heart(cont.)

into one. Anyway, that's my calm after the inner storm. In the town square here, the Piazza Comune, there are frequent and loud demonstrations of Italian musical interest (not to say skill). They seem to have their place; they create some excitement. The drums, probably relics from a martial past, can be intimidating. Then the racket fades and all reverts to the City of Peace. It is like a rhythm of life here, and I don't think the tourists get to see this, although they may experience the loud days OR the quiet days, but not both. The advantage of living here is to experience both the aggressive and the peaceful. This is the rhythm I believe I am part of now, having lived here a while.

To me, this is the difference between the "Tourist Assisi" and the "Assisi of the Heart", which is more like a calm after a storm. The heart displays what needs to be healed (like the wolf in the Gubbio story) and there is the little man Francis to tame and heal. How does this happen? I don't know, I really don't, but I've experienced that graceful touch often enough to want that peace to counter anything that my mind can conjure. I suppose there will be more voices and more healings, but that will not be because I have gone to Assisi but because Assisi has come to me.

Election/Re-election of Minister Provincial About To Begin April 1st

According to the Statutes

The Statutes make clear that all professed persons are eligible to nominate and be Minister Provincial. However, when it comes time to elect, only Chapter members may narrow down the field to three, and then only Chapter members may elect the Minister Provincial. Here are the relevant the Statutes:

- Any professed brother or sister is eligible to be elected to the office of Minister Provincial. The term of office is 3 years. No person shall serve more than 3 full consecutive terms. [Our current Minister Provincial is in his first term.]
- By the first of April of the year of the second annual chapter meeting following the election of Chapter [2014], a dated nomination form shall be sent to each professed member to nominate persons to stand for election. The nominee must have been contacted beforehand to make certain that the nominee is willing to stand for election. In addition, the Standing Committee may nominate 2 candidates.
- Nominations will close on the 1st of July [2014]. The list of all nominees will be electronically forwarded to all members of Chapter who will each vote for

three candidates. The candidates receiving the top three number of votes will be invited to Chapter, and any candidate not on Chapter will have their expenses covered. Local Fellowships and other Third Order groups shall undertake a full discussion of the nominees, and every effort shall be made to include all brothers and sisters of the Order in the discussions. [The meeting of Chapter will take place in Boston, October 8-11.]

- At the second annual Chapter meeting following the election of Chapter [October 8-11, 2014], the Minister Provincial shall be elected by ballot by Chapter at its annual meeting. The candidate receiving the highest number of votes shall be Minister Provincial. In case of a tie, a second ballot, with the names of those tied, shall be circulated. An unresolved tie shall be referred to the Bishop Protector for decision.

The Minister Provincial shall take office at the termination of the Chapter meeting [October 11, 2014] at which he or she is elected.

New Prayer Line Has Begun

Stu Schlegel

I am beginning a new service for TSSF members, which might be useful to you.

I am asking any of you who have a prayer request which they would like the members of the Province to pray for, to please email that request to me at <schlegel@cruzio.com>. I will send them out each week to all who have informed me that they would like to receive them.

You may have seen an announcement in the *Hot News* that just went out about my wanting to start a prayer group. This is what was being referred to. Not so much a "group" as just a regular notification to those who wish the prayer requests I receive.

So, please let me know if you would like to get those, and I will put you on the list. Anyone, whether on that list or not, who has a prayer request is encouraged to send it to me.

Deaneries Get Going This Year

All Fellowship Conveners and Area Chaplains (AC) are going to be heavily encouraged to attend their regional convocations over the next year to create the Fellowship Deaneries and the AC Deaneries. If financial help is needed, the convener or AC can apply for scholarship money to the Fellowship Coordinator or Chaplain.

ALL regional convocation program designers should leave about two hours for these groups to meet during the convocation.

From the Bursar

Tom Johnson

Help Wanted

Over the last few years, as the Order has grown and Chapter responsibilities have become more complex, efforts have been made to "spread the work" among willing hands. A couple of years ago, Associate Formation Directors were added to assist the Formation Director. More recently, an Assistant Chaplain was added to the ranks and there soon may be an assistant or two to help the Provincial Secretary.

Now, we are seeking to share out the tasks that are involved in the Bursar's responsibilities. One area I am looking for help does not require extensive financial experience, and that would be an **Assistant to the Bursar** and handle such things as the printing and mailing annual statements and periodic reminders.

In addition I am looking at ways to share the fiscal work of the Provincial Bursar with an **Associate Bursar**. This may involve having one person handling all receipts and another handling the disbursements and would require sharing the QuickBooks data base of the Order's financial records.

And, finally, we will be looking to appoint a **Special Bursar for Provincial Convocation** who will have the responsibility to work with the Planning Committee to develop a budget for the convocation and then manage that budget under the direction of the Planning Committee Chair and the Provincial Bursar.

For the latter two roles, a knowledge of or willingness to learn QuickBooks is essential. Experience in bookkeeping or accounting would be a real help. For the Assistant, access to a computer and printer and the willingness to run off letters and fold, stuff, seal, stamp and mail is all that is required.

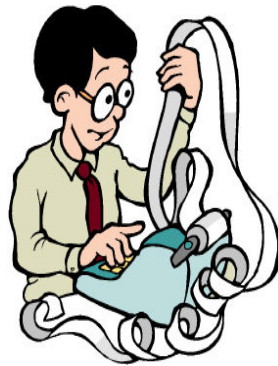
Please contact me if you are willing to serve the Order in any of these capacities. I can be reached at tjohnsonret@gmail.com or 916-987-1711.

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2014 Profession Milestone Anniversaries:
20th, 25th, 30th, 35th, 40th, 45th
(name, anniversary, day of month)

January

Nick Pijoan-20th (10)
Joan Fouts-25th (12)
Betty Melfa-25th (16)
Gerald & Kay Sevick-25th (26)

February

Rebecca Thomson-20th (5)
Will Drake-45th (9)
Thelma Charles-30th (24)

March

Michael Ramsey-Musolf-20th (12)
Carol Tookey-35th (17)

April

Donna Fuller-20th (9)
Pat Shelton-20th (10)

July

Gary Ost-30th (7)

August

Barbara Baumgarten-25th (6)
Linda Watkins-20th (6)
Anne Vellom-25th (12)

Margaret Ibara-40th (15)
Bill Haynes-25th (26)
Bruce Hanger-20th (27)

September

Donna Slack-25th (9)
Gretchen Wood-35th (15)
Ann Harris-35th (16)
Dorothy Hawkins-20th (17)
Elsie Amos-25th (30)
Alice Wright-25th (30)

October

Charles Palmgren-30th (4)
Hunt Peacock-20th (4)
Mary Mobert, 40th (6)
Brenda Cummings-20th (12)
Amory King-35th (20)
Elaine Schofield-25th (29)

November

Darlene Sipes-40th (3)
Kale King-45th (5)
Beverly Hosea-30th (17)
Paddy Kennington-30th (17)

December

Lynn Herne-20th (3)
Roy Mellish-35th (16)
Anne Osborne-25th (22)
Barbara Wilbur-30th (28)
Allen Hall-30th (30)

Forthcoming from Susan Pitchford: THE SACRED GAZE: CONTEMPLATION AND THE HEALING OF THE SELF Release date: March 2014

Eight hundred years ago, Clare of Assisi advised a correspondent to gaze into the mirror of the crucified Christ, and study her own face within it. A hundred years ago, sociologist Charles Horton Cooley said we can know our self only as it is reflected to us by others. Contemplation finds our reflection in the divine Mirror. In *The Sacred Gaze*, Susan explores how a false self is created by distortions in the mirrors around us. Drawing from the mystical and sociological traditions, and with practical suggestions for how to begin, Pitchford shows how gazing into the face of Christ can reveal to us who we really are. When the true self is known, and known as God's beloved, the way is opened to radical freedom and joy.

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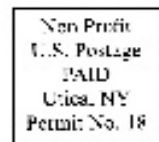
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Address Services Requested

Send in your contributions for the Summer 2014 issue by June 1

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