

THIRD ORDER NEWS

2025 / Issue 2 : June



We adore you, Most Holy, Lord Jesus Christ,
here and in all your churches throughout the
world, and we bless you, because by your holy
Cross you have redeemed the world!

IN THIS ISSUE

- * Report from the latest Provincial Chapter meeting
- * News from around the Areas
- * News from Asia-Pacific Province
- * TSSF Compline
- * Franciscans International
- * Sr Paula OSC writes
- * Retreats
- * Professions
- * Released from Vows
- * Departed Tertiaries
- * Jubilarians
- * Thoughts and plans
- * Study Network
- * Spirit of Francis: Walking alongside
- * Creating Space this Advent
- * Who to contact



*Ss Francis, Clare, Elizabeth
and Louis, pray for us*

PROVINCIAL CHAPTER REPORT

Members of Provincial Chapter met at Launde Abbey 12 to 14 June, having transacted business by Zoom twice since the last residential gathering. Regular items included the ratification of elections to profession, noted below, and the release from vows requested by a number of Professed Tertiaries.

We have been considering how best to make use of our financial assets to fulfil the core purpose of Order, and how we might find ways of supporting our sisters and brothers in the First and Second Orders.

Much discussion took place in relation to the forthcoming commemorations of the 800th anniversary of S Francis death. There will be a year long event called **Francis 800**, and there will be a largely walking pilgrimage starting in Edinburgh, calling at each of our Society's Franciscan Friaries and Houses along the way. There is also to be some Formation material guiding our thinking, including a booklet to carry us through Advent.

It was noted that we are receiving many enquiries about possible membership, and a lot of these are from people much later in life, which begs the usual questions about how best to advertise ourselves to the younger members of our society at large.

There was also the very important business of our compliance with Safeguarding policies, and how we live together in dispersion, fulfilling the needs of all our members, not just those who can easily get to meetings, local or Area.

We bade farewell to two Link Tertiaries, who have come to the end of their terms of office: **Carol Robertson** of Scotland and Ireland cluster, and **Robin Minney** of NE and NW England Cluster. Carol's successor has already been elected, **Christopher Wren**; Robin's successor will emerge in the fulness of time.

We are also in the midst of arranging the call for nominations and election of our next Minister Provincial, in succession to **Pat Mossop**, who will relinquish office this coming Francistide.

The next full, residential meeting of Provincial Chapter is due to take place **16 to 18 October**.

NEWS FROM AROUND THE AREAS

The Editor of Third Order News will welcome news from the Areas. Do please make contact through comms@tssf.org.uk

SOLENT AREA *Christine Powne TSSF, AM writes:*

On 17th May, the Central South Cluster enjoyed a Cluster Day together, organised by Denise Easteal, our Link Tertiary, with Hilary Healey, Area Minister Winchester Area, and the Area Ministers of Berkshire, Guildford, Sussex, Channel Isles and Solent Areas.

Our venue was the lovely St Paul's church in Winchester, the theme of the day was "Affirming our Franciscan Spiritual life and journeys" and the keynote speaker David Walker TSSF, Bishop of Manchester who also presided at the Eucharist at the end of the day. There were workshops in the morning and repeated in the afternoon; The twelve steps of Al-Anon, Francis in Art, Peace and Reconciliation, Creation and Sharing Francis and the Order.

It was a day full of fellowship and joy, meeting with new Tertiaries, greeting old friends and enjoying warm hospitality in a lovely, peaceful spiritual setting.

CAMBRIDGE AREA *Jean Evans TSSF, AM writes:*

Area Day on 10th May. A celebration 800th anniversary of St Francis' "Canticle of the Sun,"

Our Area Novice Guardian, Sue Pitts, acquired a copy of the Stations of Creation from Brother Finnian SSF at Alnmouth. This compilation was originally authored by the late Colin Wilfred SSF.

To commemorate this occasion, the Area team decided to incorporate the Stations of Creation as the theme for our Area day. I challenged our small groups to create a visual illustration for each station however they wished. Each group was allocated two stations. Initially, there was some apprehension among the groups, but after a reminder that whatever they created would be perfect in God's eyes. They embraced the challenge wholeheartedly.

From their feedback, the groups had spent some time in deep and diverse discussions about the various elements of their Stations and their significance in our lives. They explored how closely we are intertwined with and within God's creation and our responsibility for it.

On the day of the event, the area members showcased an array of remarkable displays, including collages, embroidery, art, 'When death comes' and 'When I awake early hello sun on my face'-poems by Mary Oliver, the hymn 'Morning Glory Starlit Sky', a challenge from the story of the Good Samaritan and even a short film made by our Tertiary Malcolm Barrett. At each station, the group presented their display and shared insights into the creative process, followed with a Bible reading, a brief silence and prayer. It was a most moving experience that was thoroughly enjoyed by all attendees. One of the most common comments was that in their sharing together they felt a great sense of being a community.

Following lunch, the day concluded with a Celtic Mass which included a novicing and commissioning a new Area Formation Guardian.

To mark our celebration of the "Canticle of the Sun," a prayer card was created, featuring our illustrations.



LONDON WEST AREA

Neil Dalley TSSF, AM writes

We have been pleased to welcome Jane Palmer and Andi Chapman from other Areas in the past year whilst sending on Nick Mercer, and Hilary and Roger Parritt to new Areas as they have moved out of London.

At our meeting in June we are pleased to celebrate with Philip Ritchie who will be Professed. At our Area Days this year we have had a session of reflections on creation, some study and discussion on Brother Juniper and we look forward to welcoming Dr Claire Gilbert to speak to us about Blessed Julian of Norwich after the publication of her wonderful book "I, Julian". We continue to be grateful to Saint Barnabas Church, Pimlico for their kind hospitality to us.

DURHAM AREA

Fran Wakefield TSSF, AM writes:

We are so blessed to have Alnmouth Friary within easy reach, and we held a quiet day there during Lent, around St Cuthbert's Day. It was good to take the opportunity to explore the links between the life of Cuthbert, one of our most beloved local saints, and that of St Francis. Both had a deep sense of God's presence in Creation, and a call to contemplation in solitude, juxtaposed with their calls to spread the love of God to their communities and beyond. Both walked far and wide through the landscape, meeting people as they travelled. From one of the windows at Alnmouth Friary it is possible to see the cross where the King met with Cuthbert to plead with him to become Bishop. It is still a place where the boundary between earth and heaven feels thin, a place where it is easy to feel the presence of God.

We have recently welcomed a new postulant, and a new enquirer has also joined us. We currently have two small groups, one of which meets in person, and one on zoom. We are looking forward to joining with our wider Franciscan community at the Northern Cluster Day on 21st June, in Carlisle Cathedral.

PROVINCE OF ASIA-PACIFIC (*Australia and beyond*)

Jan Down TSSF, Provincial Communications Coordinator writes:

Dear brothers and sisters,

The Easter edition of Knit Together is now out and can be found here

<https://tssf.org.au/Newsletter/KT2025-1.pdf>

You will find all Mandy's (*Mandy Wheatley, Minister Provincial*) news and photos from her recent travels to PNG, including many novicings and professions.

There is a Conference update for those attending and a call from Sally Buckley for a new Lifelong Formation Coordinator.

We also have a report from Max Wu, a novice in the Hong Kong area, about his retreat at Glasshampton Monastery in England; an obituary for Winston Svenson; and a piece by Gemma Le Mesurier on caring for Brother Ass.

On page 6 you will find a 'taster' for Anne Kotze's longer study: 'Paths to God', which is continued on page 9. (Please note that the print edition finishes on page 8.)

I hope you find something to inspire and encourage you in these pages during Holy Week, and may this Easter bring new joy and peace in believing.

TSSF COMPLINE

John Wiltshire TSSF writes:

TSSF Compline is approaching its fifth anniversary. That's five years now of our nightly Complines which began during the lockdown.

Following a consultation we've agreed that the style of the last couple of years – using pictures and commentaries with the readings; long intercessory prayers – no longer suits the majority of current attendees and may be discouraging attendance by others.

As a result the new style TSSF Compline is much simpler, essentially as in the brown office book.

You are welcome to join TSSF Compline on any night of the week, arriving for 8.00pm, and equally welcome either to leave at any time or to stay on afterwards for conversation.

The Compline Zoom link remains:

<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/6528770290?pwd=RjNSMWhjN1VrQkQwK3ZZZVJPL1ZKUTo9>

Meeting ID: 652 877 0290

Passcode: clare

FRANCISCANS INTERNATIONAL



The Canticle of the Creatures

800 years ago Saint Francis wrote his canticle of the creatures. He looked around him and was worried about the impact we were having on the natural world. In the 21st Century we have accelerated our impact on the natural world out of all proportions to what Saint Francis experienced. His desire to protect nature is as important today as it was in the 13th Century.

In praise to you, my Lord, for Sister Water who is useful and humble and precious and chaste. In Peru religious men and women use the idea of water to help young girls who are survivors of human trafficking and sexual violence. The “Kawsay Network – Consecrated Life for a Society without Human Trafficking” run workshops to help the girls to come to terms with the trauma they have experienced.

Read more at:

<https://franciscansinternational.org/blog/reflection/praise-be-to-you-my-lord-for-our-sister-water/>

Protecting biodiversity in the Philippines.

The government in the Philippines have already built the infrastructure to massively expand fossil fuel production in the Verde Island Passage. This is harming biodiversity and the livelihoods of local fishermen. In 2023 a tanker capsized and spilt its cargo of 900,000 litres of oil. The toxicity levels have yet to return to a safe level so it is still not safe to eat any fish caught there. The government is also not doing anything to clean it up and want now to develop the area into a major hub for liquefied natural gas.

Franciscans International has made a submission expressing concern for these projects which are having a profound effect on the local economy. Human Rights Defenders face harassment, threats or attacks. Global Witness ranked the Philippines as the most dangerous Asian country for HRDs in 2023, with 305 killings documented since July 2016.

Read the full article at:

<https://franciscansinternational.org/blog/cescr-new-fossil-fuel-infrastructure-threatens-biodiversity-and-livelihoods-in-the-philippines/>

Franciscans International are there to stand up for people and have our brothers and sisters on the ground gathering evidence that they can take to the UN. If you would like to submit feedback on this article or anything you have read you can do so at richardpeadencjp@gmail.com.

Richard Peaden TSSF
Franciscans International Promoter

SR PAULA OSC WRITES:

Contrary to any rumours which may have circulated, the Sisters of the Community of St Clare continue to welcome guests to the Old Parsonage in Freeland. Individuals or groups of around ten people can be accommodated overnight. Larger groups may come for the day. Contact guests@oscfreeland.co.uk"

RETREATS

Areas are invited to let the rest of the Province know of any retreat that they have organised. All retreats are open to all Areas unless noted otherwise.

RETREATS AT THE OLD PARSONAGE, FREELAND, OXFORD - 2025

Monday 7 July to Thursday 10 July

Led by Megan Daffern TSSF

Title: The Psalms and Christian Identity

Cost £210.00

Megan is a Tertiary living in Wells, where she is Chancellor of the Cathedral. She was originally in the Oxford Area when she was Chaplain of Jesus College. She is author of a book on the Psalms called Songs of the Spirit. Two places remain.

Monday 15 September to Friday 19 September

Led by Andrew Mayes TSSF

Title: Transfiguring Life

Cost about £200.00

The retreat will be based on Andrew's book by the same name, which Rowan Williams calls "a model of holding together tradition and contemporary challenge."

There are 3 spaces left. Please contact andrew.mayes@gmail.com

Friday 17 October to Sunday 19 October

Led by Brother Malcolm SSF

Title: Living the Gospel Today

Cost £ 175.00

A time of reflection on some Franciscan themes: Humility, Love and Joy. These are the foundations of our Franciscan Vocation. In this retreat we will consider what they might mean for us today, as we seek to follow Jesus Christ in the way of St. Francis.

Brother Malcolm is a Franciscan friar currently living at Hilfield. He has led many, well-attended retreats here at Freeland and other venues.

Booking forms and further details for these retreats are available from Jean King TSSF on oxfordretreat@yahoo.co.uk 32 Ambleside Drive, Headington, Oxford OX3 0AQ.

Tel 01865 768943 Mobile 07944 280 226

CAMBRIDGE AREA

Friday 19 to Sunday 21 September 2025

Led by Sister Maureen CSF

Silent Retreat

Cost £276, which includes conductor's expenses and a donation to CSF.

Chelmsford Diocesan House of Retreat, The Street, Pleshey, Essex, CM3 1HA.

One ensuite room remaining. www.retreathousepleshey.com

Contact: Katharine Ames-Lewis TSSF k.ameslewis@btinternet.com

LONDON EAST AND SOUTH EAST ESSEX AND EUROPE

Friday 17 to Sunday 19 October 2025

Led by Andrew Baker TSSF

Tuning the World: Francis and the music of creation

Cost: en-suite: £214; Shared bathroom: £196

Plus a share of the Leader's expenses

The House of Retreat, The Street, Pleshey, Essex, CM3 1HA.

It is open to Tertiaries from other areas and there are still places available.

If you would like to join us, please email Helen Mossop at hmossop47@gmail.com

PROFESSIONS

Simon Beaumont	Mersey Valley	During 2024
Angela Dickson	Mersey Valley	During 2024
Andy Jones	Mersey Valley	During 2024
Chris Lennie	Mersey Valley	During 2024
Olu Olojugba	Mersey Valley	During 2024
Gavin Wort	Durham	6 July 2024
Helen Harper	Solent	8 February 2025

RELEASED FROM VOWS

Kathryn de Belle	Mersey Valley
Michael Blake	Scotland
Lorna Crichton	Scotland
Johan Garde	Sweden
Thirza Hope	Cambridge
Will Ross	Midlands East
Edward Ward	Unknown

REQUIESCAT IN PACE

Kate Fruin	Canterbury	Last Autumn
Alan Cole	Cambridge	22 March 2025
Richard Ames-Lewis	Cambridge	17 May 2025
George Hacker	Cumbria & Lancs	May 2025

JUBILARIANS

We very much want to celebrate those who are celebrating significant **anniversaries** of their Profession as Tertiaries: eg, 10, 25, 40 and 50 years. More than that, even!

During 2025

Jan-eric Jonsgården	Sweden	50 years
Phyllis Hall	Sussex	45+1 years
Lesley Anne Di Marco	Sussex	40 years
Anne Holmes	Oxford	40 years
William Rowell	Wyevever	40 years
Gina Hardman	Sussex	35 years
Carol Collins	Sussex	35 years
Carol Smart	Solent	35 years
John Wood	Mersey Valley	30 years
Nick Mercer	Sussex	30 years
Anthony Hopkins	Guildford	30 Years
James Read	Mersey Valley	25 years
Peter Allcock	Mersey Valley	20 years
Pam Cowie	Mersey Valley	20 years
Jeurgan Bridstrup	Wyevever	20 years
Penelope Bridstrup	Wyevever	20 years

THOUGHTS AND PLANS

One long term aim is to develop a **Podcast** of relevance to the Third Order and beyond. So, we are looking for people who might have production and presenting skills (you know who you are). Please make contact with the Provincial Comms Guardian to have a chat about this. Contact details as below. **TWO willing volunteers since the last Issue!**

THIRD ORDER STUDY NETWORK

With another year comes another Study Network programme.

The webinar format has proved successful in reaching out and providing interesting Franciscan material to the wider Order. We hold this as our offering to encourage and enable tertiaries in their life-long formation.

We have recently been joined on the planning team by Br Michael Jacob SSF and rejoice in his

addition. However, we are still looking to recruit more Third Order members to bring fresh eyes and vision to the table. If you have an interest in Franciscan study or ongoing formation do get in touch.

Contact susanjshirdel@icloud.com for a role description or for a conversation re: the Study Network.

The TSSF Study Network plan is to present three webinars throughout this year, one each term. They will take place during the evening and a zoom link be sent out during the week before.

- **Tuesday 15 July at 7pm**
Bonaventure and the Cross
Presented by Thomas Sharp TSSF
- **Wednesday 15 October at 7pm**
Topic to be confirmed
Presented by David Walker TSSF

We hope you will be able to join us and that you might consider becoming part of the planning

forum to enable the continuation of this valued part of our Franciscan life together. As we mainly meet on zoom you do not have to be living in UK to be a member of the team.

Peace and Joy

Susan Height TSSF, Coordinator



SPIRIT OF FRANCIS: WALKING ALONGSIDE

A Franciscan Course in Spiritual Direction and Nurture

Are you called to walk alongside others on their journey with God?

The Spirit of Francis is a two-year formation programme in Spiritual Direction and Franciscan Nurture, created as a collaboration between the First Order C/SSF and the Third Order TSSF.

Rooted in the deep soil of Franciscan spirituality, this unique course combines contemplative listening, theological depth, and pastoral presence. It will equip participants to offer spiritual accompaniment, lead quiet days, and guide small nurture groups within and beyond Franciscan contexts. Delivered on weekday Thursday evenings every two weeks: 6pm- 8.30pm via Zoom.

The Training course includes:

- Interactive sessions with a range of experienced tutors and contributors
- Ongoing chaplaincy and spiritual accompaniment
- Practical skills development
- Integration of diverse Christian spiritual traditions

This Second cohort (November 2025–2027) is open to members of the Franciscan family and those with a keen interest in the Franciscan Charism. Places are by discerned application and sponsorship.

Cost £700 per year (can be paid in monthly instalments). Grants are available. Optional mid-way Retreat at Hilfield

To request a course pack or express interest, contact: Sian Yates – formation@tssf.org.uk Applications open July 2025 Let the Spirit of Francis shape your listening heart.

“CREATING SPACE” THIS ADVENT

An Advent Journey of Hope and Joy

In preparation for the 800th anniversary of St Francis’s death (2026)

This Advent, journey with the wider Franciscan family through 25 days of reflection, prayer, and creative engagement, inspired by the radical simplicity of St. Francis and the courageous “yes” of Mary.

Developed by the European Province of the Third Order Society of St Francis (TSSF) in partnership with the First Order, “Creating Space” draws on the richness of Franciscan theology to invite individuals and communities into a deeper encounter with the mystery of the Incarnation.

Contributions include Franciscans across the world

Each day includes

- A scripture reading and short reflection
- A quote from Christian or Franciscan tradition
- A global or cultural insight

- Short prayer and journaling prompt
- Art and music suggestions
- A daily meditation on Christ growing in the womb

With additional intergenerational worship resources and a crib-making activity, this is a resource for individuals, households, parishes, schools, and community groups alike. There will also be a simple Advent study course for small groups.

Each member of the First Order and the Third Order will be offered two copies of the Advent resource – one for ourselves and one to give away.

Available in print and online from Autumn 2025

For more information or to register interest, contact: formation@tssf.org.uk

Create space for Christ.

Create space for others.

Create space this Advent.

#CreatingSpace #Francis800 #AdventJourney
#TSSF #FranciscanAdvent #MakeRoom

WHO TO CONTACT

Membership Secretary	Mary Plank TSSF	memsec@tssf.org.uk
	<i>for changes of address or email address (which is particularly important if you want to continue to receive electronic communications):</i>	
Webmaster	John Lovatt TSSF	webeditor@tssf.org.uk
	<i>for any issues relating to the website:</i>	
Communication Guardian	Alan Williams TSSF	comms@tssf.org.uk
	<i>for issues related to communications of any kind, including TON:</i>	
Provincial Treasurer	Robert Dimmick TSSF	treasurer@tssf.org.uk
	<i>for donations and gift aid:</i>	
Knox Dick Fund	Hilary Healey TSSF	knoxdick@tssf.org.uk
	<i>for Retreat Fund applications:</i>	
Safeguarding Advisor	Rebecca Faal	safe@tssf.org.uk
	<i>for any matters of safeguarding concern, but please contact your Area’s Safeguarding Advocate in the first instance:</i>	
Franciscan Aid	The Secretary	secretaryfaf@gmail.com
	<i>for information and to donate, and to receive information about how to gift aid if you are a UK taxpayer:</i>	