

Franciscan Angles

A Newsletter of Anglican Franciscans in Aotearoa New Zealand

2010 - 1

Korean Franciscan Brothers Join Society of Saint Francis



*Brother Stephen, Novice Brother Raphael, Brother Christopher John and Brother Lawrence
in the chapel at Friary in Chuncheon, Republic of Korea*

The brothers first came into contact with interested Koreans when Br Brian, as Minister General, visited Seoul in 1992 at the request of Bishop Simon Kim. Exploratory talks led to some visits by potential Korean brothers to Australia and New Zealand. Shortly afterwards our Provincial Chapter asked Br Christopher-John to go to Korea to assist in the formation of an incipient Korean Franciscan Brotherhood. After a lengthy and patient development the community in Korea has now become part of the Society of Saint Francis.

The Korean Franciscan Sisterhood, joined with the Community of Saint Francis, European Province last year.

The formal ceremony for the brothers will take place in the cathedral in Seoul during All Saint's-tide this year at the time when our Provincial Chapter is meeting there.

The Brothers Stephen and Lawrence will make their vows in Life Profession as part of that ceremony. We will be hoping for some photos then.

A Visit to Solomon Islands

-Br Bart ssf

The thought of spending Christmas among the religious orders of the Solomon Islands, in the recently established S.I. Anglican Franciscan Province, had been one that had excited me awhile, and at the end of last year, opportunity knocked. After the initial culture shock, nothing could have prepared me for how much fun and laughter amid real depth of experience these two months opened up.

The couple of months I spent there were eventful in the life of the island community. Just prior to Christmas, 6 new Brothers joined the Noviciate, from Islands as far away as Temotu, and as near as Guadalcanal, which is where I was mostly stationed.

The Island brothers are exceedingly practical, and tough bushmen. Both men and women skilfully wield bush-knives which find hundreds of uses: splitting coconuts, chopping firewood, cutting the tall grass, cutting trees. Cooking is over firewood in palm leaf kitchens, or using stones and banana leaves in a time tested way. Washing is in the river. Singing comes naturally, and accompanies everything. The Island life is one lived close to the elements, close to each other, and this in itself is unique.

Soon after I arrived, the old



The children are playing volley ball with a pig's bladder (while the pig was being prepared for sale - it had a lame foot). The brothers SSF and sisters CSM meanwhile cooked the tongue and tail over an open fire and ate them. We did this by the river where the brothers and sisters wash their clothes and swim. The football is at Little portion friary between the brothers. The children are local and very photogenic. Their father is a local priest.

and saintly Brother Colin Baura, who had long been in the SSF, and had in fact been the first indigenous Pacific Island Brother to make Life Vows fell sick and died in Honiara Hospital; so after no less than a three day wake, with much rich harmony singing full of feeling and beauty, late into each night around the coffin, following local custom, Colin's body then had to be returned to his village of origin, in the high mountainous regions of central Malaita. I counted being nominated as one of the brothers to travel on the small diocesan vessel accompanying Colin across the pacific seas to Malaita a tremendous privilege.

In the course of things, traveller's diarrhoea prevented me getting much

further than Auki, the sea port town of Malaita, so I stayed with our brothers at Auki Friary, while my fitter, younger and stronger Island brothers made the long journey carrying the coffin on foot up the steep mountain passes and eventually to his village. They did this barefoot and mostly in pouring tropical rain.

The islanders have noticeably retained a gentleness and really a sort of pre-lapsarian innocence that remains untouched by the outside world, which has much to learn from the Solomon Islands. It is a definite perk of religious life to have access to these learning opportunities.

Bits and Pieces

Simone has moved to Brisbane friary for three months as part of his time in formation. During this time he will also participate in a meeting of Franciscans from Asia being held in India.

Stephen Couling has joined the community as a novice in Stroud and now Brisbane. He also will participate in the meeting in India.

Leo Anthony has moved from the friary at Little Portion on Long Island, New York, and is now in Berkley, California. His address is: St Clare's House, 1601 Oxford Street, Berkley CA 94709, USA

Brian had a fall on his way back from Chapter at Sydney airport and is recovering from a fracture to his shoulder and arm

Damian Kenneth has had some complications to his medical condition and is slowly recovering to a more usual state.

Clark Berge and **Simone** took part in the Holy Week celebrations at St Andrew's Cambridge and also at St Peter's School.

Douglas Pratt, a companion brother in the friary has just returned from a Fulbright Scholarship in Washington, DC, USA.

Alfred Boonkong, made a ten day visit to the friary in Hamilton and gave great assistance during Brian's and Damian's incapacity.

Margaret Bedggood, a regular tertiary visitor to the friary, was awarded an Honorary Doctorate from the University of Waikato for her work in Human Rights.

Clarke Berge, our Minister General has an interesting on-line newsletter (blog) which features life in SSF throughout the world.
www.brclarkberge.blogspot.com



Clark Berge and Simone at "Chapel" at St Peter's School, Cambridge during Holy Week this year.

Te Hurihanga, the Youth Justice Facility next door to the friary, has closed due to the removal of government funding as they see the project as too expensive. This is unfortunate as the programme was very successful.



Volley ball with a pig's bladder



Br Bart making food baskets

Cathedral Dedicated for Taranaki

On 6 March 2010 New Plymouth's St. Mary pro-Cathedral became a Cathedral. Please see here for more info: <http://www.stmarys.org.nz/>

Brian and I went there from Hamilton and it was certainly a great celebration for all the people who attended. Now, there would be so many things to say about today's event that I don't even know where to start. However, there is one thing above the others that struck me today: the great variety and diversity that make up the Anglican Church in New Zealand. It is like a mosaic of colours, a rich tapestry of languages, cultures and traditions. Today the intense Maori spirituality merged with the grandiose style of celebration of English heritage, bible passages were read in languages of Polynesia, senior members of the community prayed alongside little children, female and male clergy together with a congregation of different backgrounds and ethnicity offered an authentic and superb act of thanksgiving and worship to God. And in the midst of it all I thought how extraordinary this Church must be to welcome such diversity and offer it as a gift to glorify God who has created such a variety.

Diversity makes us all better, stronger and wiser in our Christian life. It is really sad that the Anglican Communion is going through such a hard time and it seems to have forgotten one of the main features of Anglicanism, i.e. "comprehensiveness". Maybe sometimes it can appear confusing to some

people. Some people might even miss a rigid structure or hierarchy where everything is in order. But why should the Church resemble more a military organization than a family? Families are not perfect and are sometimes very stressful, frustrating, chaotic or even dysfunctional. But it is still the place that is supposed to nurture us, let us grow and where we learn to give and receive love. I believe that the Church should be the place where everyone feels and is welcome as they are and people are helped to grow in their relationship with God and with the community, are supported to live their gifts and talents out in the world. I appreciate that the Anglican church retains traditions that come from the earliest days of the Church but I also appreciate the fact that it is ready to engage with the modern world. Also, many ways of worshiping are acceptable in the Anglican Church: I personally feel close to a particular strand of Anglicanism called Anglo-Catholicism and sometimes

to me it is quite challenging to come to terms with some strong Evangelical expressions of faith among some groups of Anglicans. But this is all part of the process of growth and development in faith and also a chance to learn and move beyond my personal limits and prejudices. We don't all think the same things and this is challenging as well as exciting. I believe the key is mutual respect, humbleness and a willingness to keep talking and listening to each other. As the Archbishop of York said in his sermon today: "We are to be stones built into one another, committed to one another. The unity of this spiritual building is vitally important. Party spirit, or some other sin can destroy it. If we are divided we can't join in Christ's work of making all people God's friends." And as we pray just before the communion "We who are many are one body, for we all share the one bread" so I pray that we'll never forget this important characteristic of Anglicanism worldwide, that there can be Unity in Diversity.



Members of the Melanesia Brotherhood, Fr Michael Bent and Brothers Brian and Simone at the Dedication of St Mary's Cathedral, New Plymouth

Romanian Orthodox Church Festival

The Romanian Orthodox congregation which shares the chapel at Te Ara Hou is dedicated to St George.

This year they held their festival on Sunday 25th April with visitors from the Auckland and Wellington churches.

After the service in the chapel they all moved to the friary lawn for the feast in a joyful atmosphere. The weather stayed fine for the more than 50 guests.



Combined Christian Foodbank Volunteer's Lunch



Once again the friary lawn is transformed into a party venue for the annual 'Thank You' lunch for the many volunteers of the Hamilton Combined Christian Food Bank

Douglas Pratt—Fulbright Scholar

Douglas Pratt has recently returned from a period of residency as a Fulbright Scholar at the Center for Australian and New Zealand Studies at Georgetown University, Washington DC. Whilst there he was invited to join a seminar series run by the Jesuit Woodstock Theological Center and he was able to attend, in his last week, part of the ninth Building Bridges Seminar.

Of his overall time there, Doug writes that "The experience of five months residency in the US enabled me to get a deeper sense of the rich diversities, potentialities and problems of the US and to gain a more nuanced appreciation of the cultural mentalities that compete for prominence, or even simple space to be.

There is no place quite like America – even in America! For America is no one place. It is a montage of works-in-progress. It is open to the world and yet obsessed with itself; it is magnanimous and generous with aid on the one hand, and punitively militaristic and imperialist on the other. And in Washington all tendencies converge".

"The 'Building Bridges Seminar' is a high-level Christian-Muslim dialogue series initiated by the Archbishop of Canterbury in 2002 and held annually,

alternating between a Christian and a Muslim hosting venue. This year was the third time the event has been hosted by Georgetown University, thus demonstrating the commitment of that institution and its President, John DiGioia, to this important process. I was privileged to be able to attend the first day of public lectures and the closing public discussion chaired by Rowan Williams, together with being specially invited to the closing dinner. The whole event was most worthwhile and gives evidence of an ongoing commitment to a wide-ranging ecumenical engagement with Islam, involving as it did Christian scholars from across the Church spectrum – Anglican, Catholic, and Orthodox among others – together with a range of Muslim scholarly participation."



Douglas Pratt, PhD, DTheol

- ◆ *President, Australian Association for the Study of Religions*
- ◆ *Adjunct Senior Research Fellow, School of Political and Social Inquiry, Monash University, Australia*
- ◆ *New Zealand Associate, UNESCO Chair in Interreligious and Intercultural Relations - Asia Pacific*
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Christopher John at Woodford House School, Havelock North



Is God Calling You To Be A Franciscan Friar ?

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Franciscan Angles is published by the First Order of the Society of Saint Francis in Aotearoa New Zealand.

The Society of Saint Francis is a religious order in the Anglican Communion. It is involved in the contemporary world, seeking to promote unity and reconciliation and in caring for the marginalised. The Society is committed to the spiritual search in the Christian tradition and seeks to follow the way of St Francis of Assisi in humility, love and joy.

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The Church and Other Faiths

*The World Council of Churches,
the Vatican and Interreligious Dialogue*

Douglas Pratt

ISBN 978-3-0343-0454-2

This book investigates the coming-to-be, principal features and theological outcomes of interreligious dialogue as an activity of the World Council of Churches and the Roman Catholic Church. The embrace of dialogical engagement represents a dramatic departure from almost two millennia of hostile Christian regard, by and large, for the validity of other faiths. The development of this phenomenon is outlined and explored, with research focussed on the work of relevant offices of the WCC and the Vatican during the final four decades of the 20th century.

A principal task has been to construct a comparative narrative that provides the basis for a close analysis and assessment of policy and practice, together with theological reflection and critique. A hypothesis of three dimensions, or moments, constitutive of a theology of dialogue – theology for, in, and after dialogue – has both informed and been tested by the undergirding research. The conclusion suggests that the more inclusive term 'interfaith engagement' today better encapsulates the ongoing field of concern, action, and theological reflection with respect to Christian relations to other religions, and that a model of transcendental dialogue is now requisite for the future of this engagement.

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