

Interpreting St Francis and St Clare in a multi-religious society: from the middle ages to the present

YTU 20-21 November 2009 -- Abstracts

Jacques Dalarun (CNRS, Paris): *In the eyes of each other: Clare and Francis of Assisi*

Historiography and devotion have consecrated the two mystic lovers, Francis and Claire of Assisi. Close study of the sources relating to Francis and Claire prove that the reality was not exactly like this. It is striking that Francis never cites Claire in the writings that have been preserved and that he tends to mark a clear distance between the Poor Women of Saint-Damien and himself. If femininity interests him, it is much more because maternity offers him the metaphor of a government of service within a masculine community. As for her, Claire certainly does call upon Francis and subtly uses his authority in the debates which oppose her against the papacy. But he is only the ambassador of the only man in her life : Christ. Unlike Francis, however, Clare has no need to invert social or sexual categories to attain the simplicity of Christ. The relationship of Francis and Claire can not therefore be understood as that of a couple of lovers. It is rather the base of a triangle of love, of which the summit is Christ.

Michael Cusato ofm (St Bonaventure's, NY): *Turpe lucrum, stercor, capitale: The Evolving Relationship of the Friars Minor to Money in the Thirteenth Century*

The hallmark of the Franciscan Order, with its strict prohibition of the use of money, has been its profession of evangelical poverty. From the earliest days of the minorite fraternity, Francis and his brothers wrote into their *forma vitae* the absolute prohibition of any and all use of *pecunia et denarii*. The purpose of such a categorical prohibition, though often misunderstood by medieval as well as contemporary commentators, was a rejection of the rebirth of a money-based economy with its frequent debasing of the coinage which served as a cynical tool of exploitation of the poor by the imperial and civic authorities who controlled the mint. In solidarity with the exploited, Francis and his brothers chose to live as, among and for the poor. Money, in this framework, was not only *turpe lucrum* (shameful gain); it was a grave social *malitia* (evil). The socio-economic dynamics which drove this categorical rejection of money, however, were not well understood by the next generations of friars who entered the Order from well beyond the Spoleto Valley of central Italy, indeed from beyond Italy itself. For them, the prohibition of money served a more ascetical and more overtly spiritual purpose: deprived of the normal means exchange upon which life increasingly depended, the rejection of all money - both personal and communal - rendered the friar poor, kept him poor and, in conformity with the depiction of Christ (as the poor, Crucified One), made him virtuous. Franciscan hagiography, in the person of Thomas of Celano, began to reflect this secondary attitude towards money: as something not to touch or handle - as equivalent to dung (*stercor*). This virtuous attitude, coupled with the frequent interventions of the papacy to help legally define the parameters of Franciscan life in a series of famous bulls, set the Order on a rather different path in its assessment of money. This difference is evident in the way the issue of money was handled in the commentaries on the Rule (from the Exposition of the Four Masters forward). Moreover, what is particularly striking to modern historians is that, by the end of the century, most notably in the person of Peter of John Olivi, Franciscan writers actually had come to be the primary theoreticians for the use of money in society. Although the emphasis of these Franciscans was still very much on the socio-economic impact that all such business transactions (and related matters like money, credit and price) would have upon the poor, it is a startling fact that by 1300 money - while still very much an issue of contention among the friars themselves - had come to be legitimated for use in society by the very men who, 80 years earlier, had launched its most bitter critique. This article is an attempt to chart this evolution in attitudes among the friars.

Anne M. Scott (English and Cultural Studies, UWA): *The enigma of 'Lady Poverty' – beautiful ideal or loathsome hag?*

The enigma of poverty, often figured by female representations of Poverty who is portrayed in literature and in art as being both winsome and loathsome, reflects the ambiguity inherent in attitudes to poverty from late antiquity through to the late middle ages. The socio-economic condition of poverty was shunned as the worst fate that could befall a person, but also widely interpreted both in sacred and secular literature as a state that brings an individual close to God, and, as such, lauded as a holy state. The early Franciscan text *Sacrum Commercium Sancti Francisci cum Domina Paupertate* (c1227) gives a rationale based on Scripture and the literary genre of allegorical quest for Francis's embracing of poverty. The text praises the pre-eminence of poverty, 'the foundation and guardian of all virtues'. Yet when Francis and his brethren meet the allegorical Lady Poverty, far from being seen as a beautiful consort to the Almighty as she once had been, Lady Poverty is now shunned and despised by humankind, a loathly lady whose only lover up to now has been Christ. This paper will argue that in spite of the outward loathsomeness of poverty as a state, the way Lady Poverty is represented in literary texts and visual images shows poverty to be a powerful force and one that the non-poor ignore at their peril.

Anne Holloway (Melbourne) and **Anna Welch** (MCD): *Fashioning the Founder: Constructions of Communal Identity in the Order of Preachers and Order of Friars Minor in the 13th and 14th centuries*

This joint paper will examine and compare the evolution of early founder stories (from both textual and visual sources) regarding SS Francis and Dominic, and contrast the ways in which such representations of founding figures were used by the two orders to construct and maintain their respective collective identities. The large volume of early textual and visual material about Francis testifies to the centrality of his unique and charismatic person to the Order's concept of itself, and yet it is also true that Francis's identity was malleable - changed and shaped in response to internal and external pressures on the Order in the century after his death (d. 1226). Representations of several key aspects of Francis's character, such as his intellectual authority as preacher and legislator for the Order and his status as *alter christus*, will be charted through sources of dating from the early thirteenth to early fourteenth centuries, particularly the *Vitae* by Thomas of Celano, the *Legenda Maiora* by St Bonaventure, the *Deeds of the Blessed Francis and His Companions* by Br Ugolino Boniscambi and the fresco life cycle of the Upper Basilica of San Francesco, Assisi. Comparatively, the relatively late and small volume of material on Dominic has always been used to demonstrate his lack of centrality to the identity of the Order of Preachers. Yet the links that Dominic's vita have with the foundation of the Order and his fellow brethren have made for an astoundingly malleable identity in the years after his death (d.1221), an identity that was to respond to external pressures on the Order. The role that Dominic's vita, and visual representations played in this construction of communal identity will be explored in Jordan of Saxony's *Liber Vitae Fratrum*, the *Vitae Fratrum Ordinis Praedicatorum*, James of Voragine's *Legenda Aurea* and the *Arca di San Domenico*. It is hoped that exploring the differing uses of similar material regarding Francis and Dominic and the different identities constructed by their respective orders will stimulate a discussion of the role of the individual in the formation of a group identity, and promote a deeper understanding of both Orders relationship to each other, and the wider religious community.

Laura Webb (Sydney): *Voluntary poverty – the path from Francis to heresy*

I am working on an MA thesis that is unpacking the relationship between Franciscanism and heresy. Within a century of Francis' death, one can spot several different religious groups being hereticised by the church, and in some cases by themselves, for their extension of Francis' spiritual programme of evangelical poverty. Taking Spiritual Franciscans, beguins, fraticelli (both *de vita paupere* and *de opinione*) and the Order of the Apostles (under both Gerard Segarelli and Fra Dolcino) to constitute a thematically-unified group in the broad and variegated spectrum of later medieval piety, my research project addresses a question which is often overlooked, or only dealt with summarily and cursorily: why did *any and all* groups who actually lived out Francis' ideal of the poor life, sticking doggedly to voluntary poverty as a lifestyle, end up mired in heresy? The only case not conforming to this pattern is that of the Conventuals, and their exception can be understood in terms of the relaxation of standards which attended the institutionalisation of the Order. Voluntary religious poverty becomes such an emotionally and politically charged issue for its practitioners and the church that by the early fourteenth century the papacy anathematises even simple ideological, intellectual adherence to the idea of evangelical poverty's special status as a form of piety – as in the case of the 'poverty controversy' and the heretical dimensions of the *fraticelli de opinione*.

My paper focuses on *interpretations of Francis* – to talk in terms of the historical inevitability (or otherwise) of heresy, both popular and intellectual, which sprang from Francis and Franciscanism is to ask a series of questions about subsequent interpretations of Francis' religiosity after his death (and even before). Why were there divergent interpretations of his message to begin with? What made the more literalist interpretations so problematic for the church at large? Why were these dangerous interpretations so vehemently held to in the face of serious persecution?

Janice Pinder (Monash): *Interpreting Francis among the urban lay religious groups of thirteenth-century northeastern France*

This paper builds on my doctoral thesis on the the verse lives of St Francis in Old French. Having followed other directions for some time, I have recently been working on the vernacular religious literature that flourished in northern and north-eastern France and the Low Countries from the second half of the thirteenth century, closely associated with the beguines and often showing quite explicit Franciscan affinities. This is precisely the area from which the two continental French verse lives of Francis come: one from Picardy and the other probably from Lorraine – quite possibly from the cities of Amiens and Metz. This has made me want to look again at those two texts (which are among the earliest known narratives about Francis in a vernacular language) – now that I know more about the context in which they were probably produced – and to put them beside the slightly later beguine texts that refer to Francis. In this way, I think it will be possible to see something of both the interpretation and the reception of the figure of Francis in this area. The context for these works is the towns of the north-eastern French-speaking area (straying across political boundaries). These towns (Metz, Lille, Arras, Amiens, Liège, among others) were rich centres of trade and textile production with a lively vernacular literary culture. They also had a thriving religious culture, particularly welcoming of new religious orders, and marked by lay experimentation with new forms of religious life. In this sense (the presence of departures from more traditional and structured forms of religious expression) it was an area of religious diversity. Vernacular lives are important witnesses to the interpretation of Francis to a lay audience in north-eastern France. My starting point will therefore be two verse lives of Francis from the mid-thirteenth century (BnF fr. 19531 and 2094). Both of these are interpreting/translating Francis from the *vita* written for the community in Latin by Thomas of Celano (the *Vita Prima*). They transform the account from a prose, official biography to a verse narrative form that was frequently used in secular literature and vernacular hagiography, and follow a well-established set of conventions for telling the story of a saint's life in French.

Julie Ann Smith (Sydney): *Observing the Holy Gospel: The Formation of a Female Franciscan Vocation*

Clare of Assisi renounced her wealthy lifestyle in conformance with the ideals espoused by Francis. It would be her lifelong battle to achieve the right to fulfil her understanding of an appropriately female form of religious life that embraced Francis' ideals. Enclosure and silence were antithetical to the Franciscan apostolic vocation but Clare and her sisters accepted these constraints on their vocation with the understanding that they would still be able to establish a specifically female form of monastic life that realised the Franciscan spirit. The earliest form of life for Clare's sisters was formulated by Francis, and Clare refers to it in her own Rule. This is the only evidence for Francis' vision of the monastic life for the Poor Ladies. The sisters of San Damiano and of her daughter houses were placed under the Benedictine Rule complemented by constitutions devised by Hugolino of Ostia (1218-19) and Innocent IV (1247) that purported to accommodate conventional understandings of women's monastic life to Clare's ideals. Throughout these years Clare insisted that she would not compromise the vocation of the daughters of St Francis, and in her last days the rule she had devised as fulfilling her commitment to the Franciscan spirit received papal blessing. This paper will examine the constitutions of Hugolino and Innocent, and the Rule of St Clare as expressions of Franciscan ideals and as shaping the Clarissan vocation.

Robert Curry (Sydney): *Clarist double monasteries in East Central Europe*

The phenomenon of double monasteries is not one commonly associated with the Franciscan Order. Amongst architectural historians, however, it is well known that a special group of aristocratic Clarist foundations, namely, 'Na Frantisku' of Agnes of Prague and a number of its daughter-houses in East Central Europe, were women's monasteries that accommodated a resident community of non-mendicant friars under the authority of the abbess.

The paper examines this phenomenon in the context of the vicissitudes which surrounded the various 13th-century Rules of the Second Order of St Francis and, in particular, the ramifications of St Clare's privilege of seraphic poverty that was also granted to Agnes' foundation in Prague.

Peta Hills osc (Campbelltown): *Poverty and Franciscan Identity in the Form of Life of Clare of Assisi: Bethlehem Monastery as an example*

The form of life of the Order of the Poor Sisters, which blessed Francis founded, is this: to observe the holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, by living in obedience, without anything of one's own, and in chastity. (Clare of Assisi, Form of Life)

In the thirteenth century Clare of Assisi was amongst the early followers of Francis of Assisi who espoused a Gospel way of life lived in simplicity and without property. Shaped by her understanding of franciscan Gospel living, Clare developed an entirely new concept of religious life that is encapsulated in her Form of Life of 1253. Sharing its spiritual basis with the Rules of Francis, it highlights what is of vital importance to Clare: the 'Privilege of Poverty' as pivotal and the relationship of the Poor Sisters to the Franciscan fraternity. This paper explores poverty and Franciscan identity as the keynotes of Clare's model of religious life. In particular it examines the similarities and differences between Clare's sisters and Francis's friars in relation to poverty, and the cloister. Clare's vision of an inclusive and outward looking community of sisters living a contemplative life will be set in the context of the wider Franciscan story. The flexibility of the Form of Life both in Clare's time and in our own, including the capacity to identify and incorporate the essence of the lifestyle while not being afraid to modify traditions, will be explored through the lens of the Bethlehem community in Campbelltown, NSW.

Rina Lahav (Monash): *Experience in Between – Mystical Instruction from Gilbert of Tournai ofm to Isabelle of France*

Mystical discourse was a central issue in the late middle ages. Unlike at any other period it widely spread and pertained as much to the court as to the most devout and anchoritic monk. Sometime between 1253 and 1255 a letter was written by a Franciscan Gilbert of Tournai to Isabelle of France, a sister of Louis IX and daughter of Blanche of Castile. Traditionally in mystical journeys of women the logical component was not essential. What constituted their mystical journey was the feeling. Understanding, even if occurred, was not aimed at. I would argue in this paper that Gilbert's treatise reflected a political ambition of the Franciscans as well as a mystical tradition, which started with St. Augustine's writings and was articulated further by the Cistercians. Needing a spiritually aware person inside the inner circles of the court, but not one to fall into an emotional abyss, losing all connection to the social/political surroundings, they found her in the princess. This need produced this treatise as it is, a coalescence of two major roads to God, love and Logic, which are present in all mystical treatises to some extent, but more apparent in the *Letter* and in *Itinerarium Mentis in Deum* by St. Bonaventure.

Judith Collard (Dunedin): *Matthew Paris and the Franciscans*

Matthew Paris (d. 1259) was both a prolific chronicler and opinionated commentator on his times. This is certainly the case with his discussions of the Franciscans and their presence in England. In this paper I will explore both the historical and visual accounts found in his chronicles, and compare them with his depictions of other orders. The illustrations complicate the written accounts and include one of the earliest representations of St Francis preaching to the birds, as well as the impact of a Franciscan friend, Brother William, on Paris's work.

Hugh Hudson (Melbourne): *From Assisi to Melbourne: Fra Pietro Teutonico's Nativity; Crucifixion reliquary diptych in the National Gallery of Victoria*

A small *verre églomisé* diptych in the collection of the National Gallery of Victoria was identified in 2000 by the leading historian of Italian Medieval art, Cristina de Benedictis, as one of a large number of reliquaries produced by the friar Pietro Teutonico, a native of Freiburg (hence the appellation 'Teutonico' meaning 'the German'), who joined the Franciscan order at Assisi in 1288. This paper will examine the work's materials and technique, and the characteristics that distinguish it from the similar diptychs by Pietro Teutonico now to be found in the Collegiata di Santa Maria Assunta, Alviano, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, and the Walters Art Gallery in Baltimore. While closely comparable in format and style, the Melbourne diptych differs in the inclusion of a small depiction of Saint Francis at the Crucifixion, as can be determined by the kneeling man's tonsure, robes, cincture, halo, and the stigmatum on his hand. The two coats of arms painted on the work's frame are original and show that it was made for a patrician patron—the arms on the right wing are identified for the first time as being identical with those of the Scalini family of Florence. The Melbourne diptych demonstrates the degree to which ostensibly mass-produced items could be tailored for an individual patron. This paper will also examine the diptych's iconographic program to interpret how it might have functioned as a devotional object in a Franciscan context.

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patron. This paper will also examine the diptych's iconographic program to interpret how it might have functioned as a devotional object in a Franciscan context.

Cal Ledsham (CTC, MCD) and Constant Mews (Monash): *After Aquinas: Franciscan thinking on charity, practical theology, and salvation 1280-1320*

The contribution of Franciscan order to the movement of university scholasticism, from its the second generation through to the early modern period is truly remarkable. By the 1280s the Franciscans were by far the largest body of religious at the universities of Oxford, Paris and Cambridge. Through their *studia* and university chairs, they constituted a distinctive theological school. The school's more distinctive doctrines were disputed by the Dominicans with intensity from the 1280s and eagerly made use of by the university seculars, despite their resentment over the Franciscans' special institutional privileges. This paper briefly overviews the profound contributions of the Franciscan order from its second generation to the 1320s, noting its intellectual profundity, its distinctive emphases, and, finally, its impact on the history of ideas through to modernity. It does this by focusing on the major projects of Franciscanism as epitomised in its two major figures: Bonaventure (1250s-1260s) and John Duns Scotus (early 1300s). Bonaventure is most remarkable for the style of his works: his works have an imagistic, metaphorical and strongly biblical-literary character by contrast with the dry, analytical style of standard university teaching. His doctrinal project was to integrate Catholic Theology with an emphasis on the eschatological significance of Francis. This included a critique of the use of Aristotelianism and Neoplatonism in the universities, and a hallmark of the Franciscan school came to be a very nuanced and reserved use of Aristotle. Indeed, in contrast to the cliché of scholasticism as baptising Aristotle, the Franciscans were extremely troubled by his pagan philosophy, and took great pains to ensure that the truths of Christianity were not compromised when it was taken up as a theoretical scaffolding in theology (this can be seen in its most intense form in the radical Franciscan, Peter John Olivi). Another significant figure is John Duns Scotus, whose works come to be recognised as the culmination of the Franciscan approach to theology, and came to be constitutive of the Franciscan theological school until the emergence of Ockhamism in the 1320s. The emphasis of the theology of both Ockham and Scotus is the exaltation of the freedom of God, the contingency of creation, and the gratuity of salvation history. This stands in contrast with the residues of necessitarianism evident in the pagan philosophies of Aristotle and the Neoplatonists, a necessitarianism which was embraced by the major Dominicans.

Claire Renkin (YTU, MCD): *Visualising Spiritual Intimacy in the Franciscan Tradition: An Image from a German Fifteenth-Century Life of St. Clare*

Students of the iconography of Clare and Francis are struck by a puzzling disproportion between the many images of Francis and the many fewer of Clare. Thus an illuminated life of Clare dating to the late fifteenth-century stands out as an exceptional source. The manuscript known as Thennenback 4, resides in the Badisches Landesbibliothek, Karlsruhe. Celano's *Life of St. Clare* composed in 1253 appears in a German translation. The thirty-four illuminations are attributed to Sibylla von Bonsdorf, a nun of the Clarissan community of St. Klara auf dem Wörth, Strasburg. The manuscript is dated 1480-92. In the manuscript Clare appears in conjunction with Mary Magdalen. What can the unusual pairing of these female saints reveal about the ways in which a follower of Clare visualized intimacy between a Biblical saint and a foundress? Here eucharistic union emerges from the parallel between Clare holding a monstrance and the Magdalen holding her familiar ointment jar (often represented as a pyx). This combination serves to reframe both saints. The Magdalen's anointing of Christ symbolises eucharistic devotion, and this eucharistic role is reinforced by Clare's display of the monstrance, an action for which she was renowned. This image draws the over-problematised Magdalen into Clare's spirituality. Traditions about the two saints collide to suggest fresh options for the reception of their stories.

Patrick Colbourne ofm Cap.: *The Change of Heart in John Pili of Fano, Capuchin Friar (1496-1539)*

The present rapid transition to a religiously pluralistic world is reflected in the interpretations of the Franciscan ideals exemplified in reform tensions between the “community” and the “spirituals”, the Conventuals, Observants and Capuchins. In this presentation the life and works of John Pili of Fano (1496-1539) are examined as giving an insight into the psychological reasoning, spiritual motivation and adjustment to legal interpretation expressed by John to justify his change of conscience from being violently opposed to anything but reform from within the Observants to becoming a member of the Capuchin Order in 1534. Evidence is gathered from his *Dialogue of Salvation* (1527) when he was Provincial of the Observant Province of the Marches of Ancona and compared with a second and expanded edition of the same work (1535 -1536) after he had joined the Capuchins. While these works show what adjustments were required in the interpretation of law, his work *The Art of Union* (1536) supplies evidence in the area of spirituality.. The study will attempt to identify the sources from which John of Fano drew his ideas. Whereas friars of the Observance may have been satisfied with Papal declarations on the rule as safe interpretations, John wished to discover Francis’ intentions and so drew upon evidence contained in the *Testament*, the tradition of the early companions, such as Leo, and commentators such as Hugh of Digne, John of Pecham, Bartholomew of Pisa, Alvarus Pelagius, Peter John Olivi, Ubertino da Casale, Angelo Clareno and Saint Bonaventure which he accessed through the *Speculum Minorum* and *The Book of Conformities*. Although his knowledge of the champions of the Franciscan Spirituals is through anthologies he shares with them the image of a crucified Christ and the purifying effects of trials and tribulations.

Maurice Carmody (Nelson, NZ): *The Franciscan Brotherhood: Reform, Division and the Observant Path to the Antipodes*

I: a brief summary of the way in which the Franciscan Rule was interpreted after 1517 -- leading to the formation of Capuchins, Riformati, Discalced/Alcantarines and Recollects in addition to the Observants.

II: The effects of a changing world order on these different groups following the French Revolution with particular reference to Italy and Ireland.

III: The arrival of Franciscans in New Zealand from Italy and in Australia from Ireland.

IV: A reflection on the Franciscan Rule and its interpretation in the light of this background.

Jim Fitzgerald ofm (Melbourne) and **Dianne Reilly** (Melbourne): *The Influence of St Francis in early Melbourne through the Irish Franciscan – P.B. Geoghegan ofm*

In response to the cry of the early Catholic settlers in what is now Victoria, an Irish Franciscan, Patrick Bonaventure Geoghegan, came from Sydney to be Melbourne’s first priest, May 1839. There were only 500 Catholics, in a population of some 4000 people. Influenced himself by a Franciscan from his earliest youth, he displayed his love for St Francis and the Franciscan tradition in the names he chose for three important churches which he named: *St Francis Church* in the heart of Melbourne, *St Mary of the Angels* in Victoria’s next largest city, Geelong, and *St Mary of the Immaculate Conception* in Williamstown, which was at that period the port for Melbourne. In 1848 he began the required procedure to obtain another grant of land for a second church in Melbourne, on which Bishop Goold later built St Patrick’s Cathedral, and in which Geoghegan is commemorated by the great western window.

Brieger O'Hare *osc Poor Clares: From Australia to Bandit Territory*

This presentation gives a simple account of the experience of 5 Poor Clares who set out to explore an alternative form of Poor Clare life based on the earliest Franciscan eremitical tradition.

The Poor Clares of Waverley, Australia, founded the Poor Clare Monastery in Faughart, Dundalk, Ireland. The monastery is situated right on the border between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland on a network of narrow roads, which crisscross the two States. The area is known as bandit territory because it is notorious as a hideout for the IRA – and remains so. When Cardinal Brady, Armagh Archdiocese, gave to the Waverley Poor Clares his permission to found the monastery, he expressed the hope that it would be a sign of reconciliation between the two peoples on the island of Ireland, the Catholic Nationalists and Protestant Loyalists. The mission was to bring a Franciscan witness to a troubled area and a troubled people through a form of Poor Clare presence. The inspiration for the monastery came from two sources, the Franciscan eremitical tradition and the (older) Celtic monastic tradition. Marco Bartoli states, “There is no need to underline the fact that life at San Damiano was eremitical.” (Clare of Assisi, p.85.) This eremitical form seemed an appropriate enculturation of the Poor Clare life in Ireland, as it so closely resembles the earlier Celtic monastic model, which is still familiar to the Irish people. The hope of the Sisters was that the witness of their lives would in some way be a spiritual force for good in the area. N. B. See website: www.poorclaresireland.org. The presentation will examine the following questions:

- What arose for the community as a result of living this form of life?
- How did the experience impact the Sisters and also the local people?
- How were the Sisters led to make the transition from a spiritual idealism (which can so easily mutate into spiritual mind games in an attempt to find meaning) to discovering the dynamics of the gospel experience of Francis and Clare?
- How are the essential principles of Clare’s model for women’s Franciscan life to be re-imagined in a 21st. Century consciousness?

In what way is the Sisters’ form of life, “...a mirror for those living in the world.” (Testament of St. Clare).

Josephine Rush *mfc Contemporary Interfaith Experience in a Franciscan Context: St Clare’s School, Heliopolis, Cairo*

Sister Josephine Rush is a Missionary Franciscan Sister who for the last four years has been Principal of St. Clare’s School on Heliopolis, a suburb of Cairo, Egypt. St. Clare’s College is an interfaith English language College, with a population of nearly 1000 students, 50% of whom are Christian and 50% Moslems. Sister Josephine holds a Bachelor of Science degree (Math) and a Master of Science in Education. She shares out of her experience of working and living in Egypt over the last four years.

Ted Witham (TSSF) *How St Francis provides a basis for the spirituality of contemporary Anglican Tertiaries*

There have been Anglican Tertiaries in PNG and Australia for the past 50 years. They have been shaped by their history, firstly as the Third Order was generated by the First Order friars, and then in the struggle to become an independent, then interdependent Order. The vast distances of the Australian landscape have created small groups and individuals isolated from one another. This isolation is evolving into both familiar similarities and regional differences. This paper will access the voices of Tertiaries themselves, to explore their distinctive perspectives on St Francis and the spirituality produced in our unique context. In particular, the paper will examine:

- Tertiaries’ understanding of Franciscan spirituality;
- the ways in which they practise the Franciscan value of poverty;
- their engagement with social issues as an expression of their Franciscan spirituality;
- and finally their responses to believers in other traditions in our multi-religious society.

Sarah Menassa (JPIC, Sydney): Contemporary interpretations of the Franciscan message: Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation

Sarah Menassa is Sydney based promoter of Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation, and a core activist of the Franciscan movement in Australia.