

## Hilfield Friary - An Update

Over the last year we have seen a number of changes, not least among personnel. We've had the funerals of Geoffrey and Bernard; Martin John and Amos have moved to other houses; Kentigern John and Oswin Paul arrived; Benedict came as the new Guardian; and Peter joined the community and was noviced on 4 October. As most readers will be aware, the brothers are now living in Francis House and Giles House adjoining the courtyard and have Leo House as guest accommodation, and the properties 'north of the road' are being cared for by the recently-established Peace and Environment Project. How the Project and Friary live and work together is a "work in progress": relations between the two are very good and there are obvious common gospel and Franciscan aims, and we see these as positive directions for the future. Each relies on the other to a large extent.



The Friary is keen to build on its guest ministry so that people can enjoy the peaceful surroundings and community life, as well as it being an important part of our income - the bills don't stop coming in! Bart is a very keen Guest Brother. Kevin was ordained priest this summer and continues his curacy in Cerne Abbas. With John at Westcott House for the autumn term prior to his ordination to the diaconate anticipated to be on 22 December, Oswin Paul is temporary bursar as well as the "odd jobs" man of the house. Kentigern John has done marvels in the kitchen, with creativity and a cool head. Vincent gently tends his "Secret Garden" and turns his hand to the occasional habit-making, and Raymond Christian looks after the chapel.



*John with tray of 'sticky cakes'; Bart in conversation with a visitor; The Chapel of St Francis' Day*

After all the changes and two deaths, we are also aware of our own fragility and needs, but look to the future with courage and hope. We've maintained the annual Families and Youth Camps and had a very successful and happy Stigmata Festival, helped by a brilliantly sunny day, the congenial presence of the Bishop of Sherborne, and sticky cakes for tea! We preach regularly in local parishes, counsel, listen and look after a stream of visiting groups and individuals. "Down (in number) but not out" is a good catch-phrase for us this year! **f**