Community Routes

Learning the Spirit's ABC

For some years now all the brothers in the province have been called together at Hilfield to meet for a few days around Pentecost, but this year we met for the first time as an "Annual Brothers' Chapter" (ABC). Much of the work was carried out in small groups like the one shown, considering areas such as Finance or Pastoral, in which all the brothers - professed and novices - shared together in developing resolutions which were then welcomed and confirmed by a plenary gathering. Many expressed their enthusiasm and joy in a way of working which had given the opportunity for every brother to be heard and to have a genuine "say" in the decisions of the Chapter. Whilst for the time being the (elected) Provincial Chapter retains certain legal responsibilities, a wide range of brothers will meet together over the year ahead in similar small groups that will play a very real part in the governance and decision making of the province, in some cases replacing previous Chapter Committees. We all look forward to seeing how the Holy Spirit will continue to guide us when we meet together for the next ABC at Pentecost 2012.

Change of name

The province formerly known as the Australia - New Zealand Province had, in the beginning, brothers only in those two countries. Now it includes a brother living in Sri Lanka and four in Korea and has links with Polynesia which is part of the Anglican Church in Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia. The old name no longer fitted and so we searched for a new one. A name made up as a list of the countries in the province would be too cumbersome and there was no single geographical name which included all those countries without also taking in the other two provinces of Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands. We looked at saints names, but again, there was no single name which covered everyone. So we looked to the origins of the Anglican Franciscan revival and the Society of the Divine Compassion and chose to be "Province of the Divine Compassion." Our good news is that God loves us, and that this love is made incarnate in Jesus Christ. As Franciscans we are vowed not to hold to anything - and so, what we know of God's love is a gift to be given away in acts of loving kindness and as an outpouring of the Divine Compassion itself.

Korea revisited

Helen Julian writes:

I made my second visit to our sisters in Korea in May, staying for about a fortnight, and attending their Regional Chapter. It was very good to be present when they admitted Prisca (Gwon Hyekyeong) as a postulant, the first in their history, and so an important moment. It was also a pleasure to be back among the small congregation of St John's Church in Gumi, where the sisters worship, and which has nurtured them since their beginning.
We visited a piece of land which they have been given so that they can build their own convent; it is about one and a half hours north of Gumi, in a beautiful rural setting. And they also took me to visit one of the most historic areas of Korea, centre of the Silla dynasty, which ruled the country in the first millennium. As part of that day out we visited the small Benedictine community at Yangsan, where we were very warmly welcomed. At the end of the visit I spent two nights with the Society of the Holy Cross in Seoul, and was able to meet several of their sisters. It was good to have made and nurtured contacts with various parts of the Anglican religious life in Korea, and to have shared again in the life of our sisters there.

David Jardine in Colombia

Another member of the team of Divine Healing Ministries, Eric Lewis, and myself were invited to conduct a mission in the city of Cali, Colombia during the month of March. Cali has a population of two to three million people and is reckoned to be one of the most violent cities in the world. Our host was Pastor Hendrick, a Dutchman who has worked in Colombia for twenty-four years. He told us that recently in one year forty pastors were murdered. So we were always careful when we were out, to do exactly what our hosts told us to do.

Back home, this particular trip to Colombia really caught the imagination of people, and it meant we were surrounded by a volume of prayer. Every house in the Society of St. Francis was remembering us. That made an amazing difference. Eric and I knew every step of the way that we were being prayed for, and it just transformed the trip into a marvellous mission. Both of us had a great freedom every time we got up to speak, which was usually twice a day. I even found that right from the beginning I was completely fluent in the Spanish language, which was a great blessing.

The level of faith and expectancy amongst the Colombian people was very high. On the two Fridays that we were in Cali we went down to the centre of the city to pray for people in a busy thoroughfare. An amazing number of people accepted the invitation to receive prayer, right there in a public place. And we saw miracles happen. I personally prayed for a woman who was deaf and she got her hearing back.

The theme which seemed to really catch the imagination of people in our preaching was forgiveness. Many years ago I myself had to learn how to forgive, and I have been teaching people ever since how to do it. That seemed to make a big impact in all of the services we conducted, although I
have no doubt that the theme of forgiveness would be relevant in any church in any country in the world.

Pastor Hendrick will be making his annual visit to Belfast at the end of June and beginning of July, 2011. All these trips are building a very firm relationship between the churches in Colombia and Ireland. Sincere thanks to all of you who prayed for us when we were out there in March.

**Solomon Islands UPR**
*From Franciscans International*

The Solomon Islands came under review at the UN on 4 May for its human rights record, during its session under the Universal Periodic Review (UPR). During the session, 16 Member States referred to the key concerns and recommendations that Franciscans International (FI) had highlighted in their UPR Report and their lobbying activities.

FI informed SSF and the other Anglican religious in the Solomon Islands who had collaborated with FI in identifying human rights abuses at their workshops in November 2010, on the outcomes of the UPR report. They will continue to monitor the process to ensure that the recommendations made by the Human Rights Council are implemented by the Government of the Solomon Islands.

"Now where was the rocking horse...?"

More than twenty years before her house, ‘Lint Close’, was to become Alnmouth Friary, and even before she opened her doors for a soldiers’ club, Mrs Annie Scholefield was asked to take in child evacuees early in the Second World War. She specified "six healthy boys" and one of them, Arthur Holmes, visited the Friary in May with his son Barry as part of his 85th birthday celebrations. Arthur had very happy memories, not only of his old room and the rocking horse, but also of being taken out by Mrs Scholefield’s chauffeur in the Rolls Royce, on one occasion to be fitted out with all the other boys with a new set of clothes from Alnwick. Arthur is pictured (right) with Jason Robert.

**Round up**

Liz was elected to Life Profession at the CSF Pentecost Chapter, and the Bishop Protector received her vows on 29 July - there will be a photo in the next edition of franciscan. Benedict has moved to Cowgate (Newcastle) and John has moved to Alnmouth. Gerardo has moved to Canning Town and Barnabas Francis to Bentley. Vaughan is expected to move to Cowgate in September. Christopher Martin and Joseph Emmanuel are expected to move to Glasshampton in September. In June, Gwenfryd Mary moved to Gilfach, the hermitage where Patricia Clare lives, in Wales, where the two will continue to live their separate hermit vocations.