



Family Service September 2008



The Franciscan

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St Francis of Assisi Parish Newsletter

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Foreword

The main focus of this issue is the family as our project 'Family Matters' begins to take shape, and several of the contributions adhere closely to this theme, such as the articles on Family Matters and the family Advent wreath or Megan's lyrical evocation of her mother. But others seem to have little to do with it, unless one understands 'family' in a broader sense, which is indeed the final purpose of Family Matters. Then the reports on the Youth activities, the parish retreat, the patronal festival and the flower arrangers (our parish family), on Synod and St Mary's Refilwe (our diocesan family) and even the Archbishop of Canterbury's lecture on the Christian Priest (the Anglican Communion and missionary outreach) all reveal their links to the theme.

Jill Daugherty, Editor

From the Rector's Desk

My dear Parishioners,



I have chosen to present the following lecture (as part of the Rector's letter) for the end of the year edition of *The Franciscan*, because I felt it so brilliantly sums up what we are as 'The Church' – for not only does it beautifully present the 'modern Priest' but implicitly points to the fact that we are all priests in the household of faith, as we all have this 'missionary dimension' in our pilgrimage.

May I wish you all a blessed Christmas and a prosperous New Year.
May God be in your road.

Father Timothy

The Christian Priest Today

**Lecture by Rowan Williams on the occasion of the
150th anniversary of Ripon College, Cuddesdon, 28 May 2004**

Some years ago, ACCM,⁽¹⁾ as it then was, embarked on a study designed to clarify the question, 'what ordained ministry does the Church of England require?' in the hope of assisting colleges and courses to focus on appropriate priorities. As these exercises go, it was fairly successful, and made theological educators do a bit more theology about their own teaching of theology and its goals; but the very phrasing of the question reveals a rather typically Anglican quirk, the tendency to approach theological issues by description. Another tradition might well say you ought to begin by asking what ordained ministry God requires (let alone what Church of England God requires), and sorting out all your theological priorities from first principles.

⁽¹⁾ ACCM = Anglican Consultative Council for Ministry(?)

But we should hesitate a little before assuming that the ACCM question shows us only a rather faded pragmatism. It is quite possible to come back and say, 'But it may be precisely in working out what the Church of England requires that we find out what God requires'; that is, we discover God's will for ordained ministry in the process of discovering what the Church needs in order to be itself, what the Church needs for its integrity, its mission, its intelligibility to itself. And this is just the process we see at work in the book commemorated in the title of today's lecture, Michael Ramsey's *The Christian Priest Today* – that book rightly described by Douglas Dales as 'the most treasured book that Bishop Michael ever wrote'. At the end of his immensely rich second chapter, he writes: 'In describing the priest's office...I have followed an empirical approach, beginning with the Church's practical experience and working back from this to an understanding of the ministry.' But he goes on to say that 'it is far from true that while the Church is our Lord's creation the ministry is only a device whereby the Church can be effective' (2 edn 1987, p.10). Looking at what in fact is needed ought to open up the whole question of what God requires – but also of what God has given: and any reflection on the Christian priest today has to be a reflection not just on what we find helpful but on what has been provided for the Church. This is Michael Ramsey's method, and it crucially reminds us that we are in trouble if we start thinking that ordained ministry is an idea developed by us to make things run more smoothly.

This isn't about going back into the deadlocked debates over whether Christ explicitly established one form of ministry to be valid for ever; even in the sixteenth century, Hooker was critical of those who claimed absolute certainty about this. But it is about getting away from a view of the Church that is very seductive and very damaging – and very popular. This is the view that the Church is essentially a lot of people who have something in common called Christian faith and get together to share it with each other and communicate it to other people 'outside'. It looks a harmless enough view at first, but it is a good way from what the New Testament encourages us to think about the Church – which is that the Church is first of all a kind of space cleared by God through Jesus in which people may become what God made them to be (God's sons and daughters), and that what we have to do about the Church is not first to organise it as a society but to inhabit it as a climate or a landscape. It is a place where we can see properly – God, God's creation, ourselves. It is a place or dimension in the universe that is in some way growing towards being the universe itself in restored relation

to God. It is a place we are invited to enter, the place occupied by Christ, who is himself the climate and atmosphere of a renewed universe.

Forget this, and you're stuck with a faith that depends heavily on what individuals decide and on what goes on inside your head. But if the Church really is larger and more mysterious than this, if the Church is Christ's place, it is a reality shaped – not in the remote past, but daily, here and now – by Christ's action. And that action is most deeply the unbroken movement of self-forgetful love towards the one he calls Abba, Father: all Jesus is on earth is an expression of this – his forgiving, his healing, his parables, his shared meals, his death and his resurrection. In eternity and in time, Christ makes himself a gift; and in the turbulence and violence of human history, that gift is a gift that makes peace between humanity and God. It is a sacrifice; not in the sense of a bribe to persuade a hostile deity to overlook our failings, but in the sense of something given up, handed over, so that a mutual relationship may be both affirmed and recreated.

Being in the Church is being in the middle of this sacrificial action, the act of Christ's giving; it is being in the climate, the landscape, of priesthood. This is what is given to us as Christians, what we are rather incompetently trying to find words and structural forms for in our daily life as a human institution. The point is that the energy for this searching for words and forms is created by the fact of God's gift, not by any attempt to make a human community run better; it is an energy devoted to what will show the inner and prior fact. And this is where we turn again to the New Testament. When Christ calls, he calls, we are told, into a community with diverse roles and tasks, not into a mass of individuals vaguely looking for things to do; and one of those roles, from the beginning, is that of apostle. The apostle is given the task of witness, above all; the apostle has to point in word and action to the basic facts of the action of Christ, to witness to time spent in the company of Jesus, before and after his resurrection (Acts 1.21-22, 4.13). The apostle is the one to whom responsibility is given for connecting this or that context, this or that community, with the fact of Jesus – and so of connecting communities with each other also.

Thus when Christ calls human beings into the community where the new creation begins, he calls some, from the very beginning, to be simply witnesses of that community's character. Initially, they are those whose words connect the hearers with Christ; they make Christ contemporary with all who hear the good news. And as the immediate personal link fades with

the passage of time, the Church makes it clear that the task of witnessing to the contemporaneity of Christ is still essential to the Church's integrity in a twofold way – by the recognition of a fixed canon of Scripture as God's gift in the Spirit to the Church, a gift that is an act of divine speaking as it is read and received in the community; and by the recognition of apostolic ministry as a continuing element in the Church's constitution. The personal focus of worship and proclamation in the community is one who has publicly and demonstrably received, by a network and sequence of specific relationships, the word and power of the first witnesses.

The Church is therefore always a body which has built into its very structure a twofold measure of its honesty and fidelity, a twofold means of self-questioning and self-criticism, Bible and public ministry. The Church is never left to reimagine itself or reshape itself according to its own priorities of the moment; for it to be itself, it has received those gifts that express and determine its essential self as a place where the eternal self-giving of Christ is happening in such a way as to heal and change lives. The Bible and the ministry constitute the Church as literally a 'responsible' community, answering to what is there before it. And as the understanding of ordained ministry has developed, what this has come to mean is that this ministry is one of the things that renders every local community in its witness and worship responsible to the creative source of the Church's life.

What does this begin to mean for the priest today? If this account of the inextricable involvement of apostolic ministry with the very identity of the Church is right, the person exercising that ministry has one fundamental task which breaks down into a number of different responsibilities. The fundamental task is that of announcing in word and action in the middle of the community what the community is and where it is; it is telling the Church that it is the created universe insofar as that universe has been taken up into the activity of the eternal Word and transfigured by this fact, and that it is in consequence the place where Christ's self-offering continues to be most freely real and effective. The priest is therefore in the business of – as we could put it – immersing in Christ's action the gifts and prayers and love of human beings. These things, of themselves, are too weak and compromised to make peace, to sustain the loving relation of God with creation; so they are borne along by the one action that truly and eternally makes peace, the self-giving of the Word. In all this, we can perhaps see why and how the Eucharist is the central identifying act of the Church, simply because it is where our action towards God is taken up in God's

action towards God; where the making our own of Christ's prayer at his table opens us up to receive Christ's life so that our own self-offering may be anchored afresh in his. 'Although we be unworthy... to offer unto thee any sacrifice, yet we beseech thee to accept this our bounden duty and service.' [...]

© Rowan Williams 2004

The remainder of this lecture may be found on the Internet at the following address: www.archbishopofcanterbury.org/1185

There's a New Church in the East

The building project of the parish of St Mary's Refilwe was 'adopted' by the Parish of St Francis of Assisi Waterkloof (as part of our missionary outreach programme) and, although it has been a long time coming, the building is finally complete.

It was thought initially that all that was required was a roof on the structure which already stood on the site, but sadly this was not to be. It was discovered that the existing structure had been put up, not only without Diocesan permission, but also without Municipal permission. There were no plans and – to add to the problem – the building had no foundations. The result of all this was that an entirely new structure has been erected, funded in the main by the parish of St Francis of Assisi Waterkloof, with much appreciated assistance from the Trinity Parish in Lynnwood.

The parishioners of St Mary's have embarked on the project of painting the structure and, once that task has been completed and the grounds cleared of rubble, the next step will be to invite the Bishop to consecrate the building.

A special word of thanks must go to Clive Gardner (a layminister and member of our parish council), without whose unbounding enthusiasm and endless sacrifice (of time and a whole lot more in between overseas business trips), this project would probably not have been completed this year. It is exciting to see lay people take the initiative as never before.

Fr Timothy Lowes

(This article also appears in *The Kingdom*)



Another year has come and gone!!! 2008 has definitely been a full year for the youth! In the past two terms we have had many, many busy days! Our youth camp went amazingly well – Christ showed us all how to live a life for Him, how we can develop into flowers and how to pull the weeds out of our lives. The weekend was also filled with mud sliding, abseiling, Stalk the lantern, Orienteering (which was pretty tough without a GPS, wink wink), Boere-sport and great food, which was all supplied by Pride Rock! A huge thank you to all the Pride Rock staff who made the weekend unforgettable.

The Patronal Festival was a great day to just have fun and let your hair down! From guessing who you were, to story-telling about the items in your lucky packet (many laughs and heart string moments here), from flour-covered faces to tug-of-war – maybe the not so young should get together to practise for next year ☺ – it was a fun packed day!

Synod, this year, was a new experience for me as I was asked to get some young people to help for the duration. Wow, it was so awesome to see so many people of the Anglican Church so passionate for God and only wanting the best for Christ's family in the Church. I have so much more respect for the Laity and Clergy. It was an inspiration to see Bishop Jo co-ordinate, calm and help others understand what was discussed. His Turkish Delight Handouts were definitely energy boosters. I would also like to thank all my helpers, especially Craig Thistlewhite who was there every day all day! I am very excited to see the Anglican Church grow and strengthen.

Our theme for the past 9 weeks was on the Beatitudes Matt 5: 3-11, we had loads of fun discussing how they apply to our lives and then making crafts for each week. Surprisingly, the youth at the end could remember most of the 8 Beatitudes!! Our last evening, the youth were put into groups and asked to make a skit or a poem to help us remember the Beatitudes. Their poetic talent definitely surprised me.

Our Family services have just grown from strength to strength and the youth worship team would definitely like to thank Allen, Rob, Terry, Heatherlynn, Heather and Father Timothy for all the time and dedication which they have given to us!

From 6 – 11 December our leaders will once again go off to Port Shepstone for training, this year there will be 8 leaders going. Please could you keep us all in your prayers during those five days. Pray for protection, guidance and passion, that we may all come back refreshed and passionate about doing Christ's work in the youth next year.

We end the year saying farewell to two of our members who will be moving to Australia. To Mitchell and Nicole Wood, we are going to miss you both so much – your absence from the youth worship team and on Sunday evenings will be felt, but we wish you all the best in your new home!

The very existence of youth culture places teenagers at cross-purposes with their own development. They need to leave the world of youth, but during their teenage years they are indoctrinated into a culture that functions to maintain their attachment to it.

(DeVries, M. 2004. *Family-Based Youth Ministry*. Illinois: Inter Varsity Press)

The Family Matters project is very near to my heart and next year is going to be a year with many new and adventurous events. I am so excited for what Christ is calling us to do in our families and how together we can all fight for the Glory and Fame of Christ. I feel that I have really been challenged by God to start a mentorship programme next, year but this is going to take lots of prayer and careful planning – please keep this in your prayers. If you can get your hands on Mark DeVries's book *Family-Based Youth Ministry*, it is an excellent read and has a really positive and encouraging message.

My prayers for you: protection and blessing over the Holiday season. See you in 2009!

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Megan Winn

The Hand of an Old Friend

"Mother is the name for God on the lips and hearts of children."⁽²⁾

She walks draped in velvet, soft footsteps on a wooden floor... She shines when the sun has disappeared, and she laughs with the moon. She kisses me ever-so-gently and my childish fears escape my troubled mind. She whispers to the stars and they keep me company... How strange it is! My mother; I am turning into her.

I watch her in awe... She applies her make-up so delicately, like a gardener tending the roses, her hands playing melodies softly over her face; her beautiful face. I watch her spray her perfume onto her soft, poised neck, her skin laughing at the tickle of the scent. I watch her stroke her long, brown hair and the shine twinkles in my eye. She walks with pride and sturdy steps and I smile at my mother, and she sees herself in me, and we embrace our twin souls.

She walks in grace, and has taught me to do the same. Mother, how kind the Angels were to bring you to me so that I may live a valued life. You cradled me in your arms and helped me with my fumbling feet, and this is now impressed in my soul... When my daughter comes, she will see you in me and she will smile – the Angels have told her of your brilliance, and she feels safe. You have protected the future of so many women, you do not realise.

She walks in beauty, a sensuous beauty that runs deep in her spirit. She has shared this beauty with me and I will protect it for her. The rolling hills feel her spirit amongst them, and they stand firm in honour of her. God has given her her womanhood so that she may fulfil His duties on earth, and she shared this secret with me... Now I must continue the legacy. She has made me into the woman He wants me to be and I accept the privilege with honour.

I am in her hands when she turns the pages of a book; I am in her lips when she sips champagne; I am in her voice when she prays; I am in her pitch when she laughs; I am in her tears when she cries; I am in her eyes when she sees magnificence; I am in her heart when she loves... How strange the good fortune we are showered in, that God decided to keep my mother alive forever – within me, and the fruits of my womb. My mother is immortal.

⁽²⁾ Quotation from *The Crow* (feature film 1994)

Mother, know that when I sing, you sing too. Know that when I dance, you move beside me. Know that when I help, your voice speaks wisdom into my mind. Know that when I dream, our values keep me soaring.

So never stop smelling roses, never stop trying to help, never stop reading, never stop asking my opinion, never stop kissing me, never stop staring at me, and never stop loving me. Mother I love you. You are my angel on earth.

Megan Lowes

Two Poems on the Beatitudes

The poor in spirit hold the key to the kingdom of heaven
and those who seek comfort shall be the ones to mourn.

Those who are meek will inherit the earth
and shall one day be reborn.

Fill your soul with the thirst for righteousness.

Blessed are the pure in spirit for they will seek God
and their mercy will be shown in Mercifulness.

Peacemakers will be called the sons of God
and their persecution for righteousness
shall be their kingdom of Heaven.

Megan, Leigh, Kieran, Sianie, Mitchell and Luke

Those who in Spirit are completely depleted in the Kingdom of
Heaven they will be whole and completed.

Blessed are those who Mourn

for they will never be tormented and torn.

Blessed are those who are Meek for they are far from being weak,
for the Earth they will seek and it will be theirs to keep.

Those who for Hunger and Righteousness thirst will be the ones to be
Filled first.

Gifted are the Pure in Heart for with the Lord they will never part.

Merciful will show Mercy, Pure of Heart will see his face;

Peacemakers will be the Sons of the ultimate grace.

Persecuted are the Righteous as theirs is the blessing of Heaven.

Tlhabi, Robert, Nicolai, Nicole and Marek



The Girls



The Boys



Abseiling



Boere-sport



Mud!

Youth Camp Photos



Stalk the Lantern



Mitchell & Nicole Wood with Megan

St Mary's Refilwe



Family Matters – A Journey in Faith

From Advent to Easter

We have together embarked on a journey in faith
with the following objective :

To re-establish the family unit and Christian values so as to counter external threat – firstly at the level of the individual family and concurrently within the family of the parish; thereafter to reach out to the broader community from a position of strength.



Symbolically, at the first meeting of the Family Matters working group, a candle was lit to represent the bringing of light to the families of our community. Since that day, it has burnt at each service next to the lectern. In its present format (as shown in the photo), the big candle is surrounded by four smaller candles representing family members.

At this time of the year, the Anglican Church is on a liturgical journey, moving to Advent and beyond to the birth, life and work of Jesus, till the time of His betrayal, Passion and – gloriously – his Resurrection.

Family Matters will be following this liturgical calendar closely in the focuses and inputs it will be making over this period.

The parallels are:

Advent is the period during which Mary and Joseph prepare for the arrival of their first born. It is the period of the establishment of the family. In this period we will be focusing on Marriage and Family building, including interpersonal relationships, and will provide information for the guidance of families in the parish. Part of this process is social activities, such as those held around the Patronal Festival. We will interact with the House Groups, the Children's Church and the Youth Group, and contact those who are not frequently exposed to the worship activities of our parish. For those who do attend services, we aim to build on the welcoming process at the door of the church.

After Christmas we take a leap of some 30 years liturgically and, in the activities we undertake, we will work, much as Jesus did, with the people in the community – in this case, our St Francis community, establishing areas of pain and concern, and building processes to alleviate these.

During this period, the ills and threats of society and their impact on our parish will come to the fore, and we aim to develop support systems to help families strengthen their current efforts to counter these.

The joyous time of the Resurrection we see as the time when we reach our goal of the Rebirth of the Families in the parish, when they will enter a period of strengthening family ties on the basis of forgiveness, love for one another and those around them.

Hank Doeg

**If you want to offer yourself to work with us in this effort,
please contact Hank on 082 683 5681**

Family Matters Prayer

Father, we pray, teach us and all families, including the family of the Church, to know and love your will and your word. We thank you that you have shown us how you intended us to live, speak and behave.

We pray for the families where there is worry, fear, bitterness, disobedience or unfaithfulness.

Father, we pray that you will teach our family and all the families to begin to think less about themselves, and more about the world for which Christ died. We pray for our own family, the family of the Church and the family of the human race. May we seek opportunities of love and service, of caring and concern for others, that we may be open to every opportunity you provide to serve, care for, help and love those in need.

Family Advent Wreath

The Church's year begins at Advent. Advent starts four Sundays before Christmas and is the season in which we prepare ourselves for celebrating the birth of our Saviour at Christmas.



An Advent wreath can be used as part of these preparations. The **circle** of the wreath symbolises the **eternity of God**, and the **evergreen branches** (eg ivy) making up the wreath are a reminder of the **eternal life of God in Christ**. Three **purple candles**, placed in the wreath, remind us of **God's royalty**, and also remind us of the spirit of **penance and prayer** in Advent. A **pink or rose candle** in the wreath is a symbol of **joy**. A single **white candle** stands in the centre of the wreath, and symbolises **Christ** as the **Light of the World**. The lighting of the candles each Sunday in Advent, as well as the readings and prayers, should take place at some time when the family is all together, and the wreath should be placed in a prominent place in the home eg on the dining room table.

First Sunday of Advent:

The first candle is lit. It is the candle of **HOPE**. It reminds us of Old Testament times when God's people hoped and waited for the Saviour God had promised to send.

READING: John 1: 1 – 5, 14, 16

PRAYER: Father, we await the dawning of your Light, Jesus Christ. May his coming dispel the darkness of selfishness and greed, and show us the way to your peace. We ask this in the name of Jesus, your Light to the world.

Come, Lord Jesus! AMEN

Second Sunday of Advent:

The first and second candles are lit. The second candle is the candle of **PEACE**. It reminds us of the peace Jesus gives us.

READING: Mark 1: 2 – 8

PRAYER: Father, the day of the Messiah's coming draws near. Make us a people of compassion and forgiveness. May all that we do and say make ready the way of the Messiah, Jesus Christ.

Bless us with your Spirit, O Lord! AMEN

Third Sunday of Advent:

The first, second and third candles are lit. The third candle is the candle of **JOY**.

It reminds us of the joy we feel at Jesus' birth.

READING: Philippians 4: 4 – 9

PRAYER: Father of all, so great is your love for us that you gave us the gift of your Son. He healed our infirmities, forgave our shortcomings, and showed us the way to you. May we always know the joy and hope of his presence among us. We make this prayer in the name of Jesus, our Lord.

Lord, hear our prayer! AMEN

Fourth Sunday of Advent:

The first, second, third and fourth candles are lit. The fourth (pink) candle is the candle of **LOVE**. It reminds us of God's love for us, and of our love for God.

READING: Luke 1: 26 – 38

PRAYER: Father of Light, you have fulfilled your promise of old: The Virgin has given birth to your Son, Emmanuel. As he shared our life in this world, may we share his life in your kingdom to come. We make this prayer in the name of Jesus, Emmanuel.

Hear our prayer, O Lord! AMEN

Christmas Eve:

All four candles are lit, as well as the one white candle in the centre of the wreath. This is the **Christ** candle. It reminds us of Jesus' birth, and reminds us that Jesus is the Light of the World.

READING: Isaiah 9: 1 – 7

PRAYER: Father of all goodness, we await the dawning of your Light to the world, Jesus Christ. With gratitude, we remember his compassion and love as he walked among us. May his life with us and for us bring us to the new life of his resurrection. We make this prayer in the name of Jesus, the Christ.

Child of Bethlehem, bless us with your peace! AMEN

Heather Napier

Retreat Weekend with Jeremy Jacobs – Reflections Three Months Later

It is valuable to reflect back on an event after some time has elapsed and so keep alive the valuable things one gained from an experience such as the retreat weekend held in early August (or perhaps that is just me rationalising the fact that I have only now got down to putting this on paper!). I know that many people found the weekend very hard, but Fr Jeremy did, after all, warn us on the Friday evening that he was not setting out to make us feel comfortable and cosy, but that he would do quite a bit of provoking! I am struck though with how many of the concepts, stories, challenges and inspiring thoughts he raised are still resonating strongly in my life and journey of faith. It is not possible in an article like this to cover all the content covered over the weekend, so I will simply highlight some of those things that stood out for me and that I continue to grapple with. Perhaps this will trigger things for others who participated in the retreat, or give those who did not attend a taste of some of the amazing teaching that they missed out on:

- The distinction between Religion, Spirituality and Mysticism was vividly illustrated with a wonderful analogy of the church, the stained glass window and the open window through which unmediated light streams. This analogy will always remain with many of us. He also usefully distinguished between the 'active', the 'interior' and the 'contemplative' life.
- He described the purpose of the spiritual journey with such simplicity and clarity as being 'to realise and live our union with God in Christ'. The Salt Man story illustrated that we are already one with God, as the Salt Man discovered when he launched himself into the ocean. This was a challenge not to be dualistic in our thinking and approaches to our faith.
- In response to the question 'Who am I?' he gave the response 'I am possibility'. Some would find this evasive, I find it liberating! He explained that as we hold all possibility with an open hand we will find freedom. This is abandonment into God-ness for God's sake and is the ultimate goal of our spiritual journey – how far I for one am from that! He went on to explore how, when we stop

wanting, we will be free and likened this to the experience of crucifixion, of carrying our cross as Christ did.

- The parable of the pilgrim on the beach hearing the bells illustrated for me how often we can 'meet' God when we are immersed in the ordinariness of everyday life. Tools and techniques for contemplative prayer have their uses, but should not become the ultimate focus. Many of his stories from his travels around the world, where he worked in religious communities often in menial jobs of gardener or cook, illustrated this point vividly. He told of two experiences he had with children, one in India with an impoverished child on the street, and the other with a young Irish boy reciting the Eucharistic prayer and administering communion where he 'met' Jesus in those children. This incarnational view, that we must not look up into the sky for Jesus but see him right here on earth in the people we come into contact with, can revolutionise the way we live our lives.
- In talking about the 'active' life, he emphasised how every moment is holy ground and how we need to savour every moment for its bitterness or its sweetness. How we should not separate the sacred from the ordinary, but see the sacred in the ordinary. Those who attended will remember the stories from his life experiences which he used to illustrate this point.
- He stressed the need for us to take responsibility for our spiritual journey. If we have a yearning for God and for reaching a place of freedom and equanimity, then we need to pursue this journey. He suggested that we do this by reading about mysticism and mystics, by using some of the tools available, by having a spiritual mentor and by actually embarking on the journey.

There was so much more, and I probably have not conveyed even what is here in a manner that does justice to the retreat experience and the depth of the teaching, which obviously took on different dimensions for different people.

Cathy Meiklejohn

SAY IT WITH FLOWERS

'Say it with flowers' is an often heard expression – and this is what the members of the flower team at St. Francis do every week in the church. This dedicated group of ladies (and one gentleman) put their talents to use, in the service of God, to bring a bit of nature into the sanctuary. They each have their own style, choose their own flowers and quietly, on a Friday and Saturday, spend an hour or two on the weekly arrangement.

For Easter and Christmas it is not so quiet, but always there is a feeling that the Lord is watching and making sure that each flower is placed with care. Our task is very special at these major festival times, when one of the organists is practising, or the choir is in rehearsal, thus adding another dimension. There are times when we are asked to do the flowers in memory of a loved one – and this person's name will be with us as we do the arrangement.

I would like to thank each member of the flower team:

Sally Bayliss, Stella Butler, Beryl Chantler, Brenda Damp, Jill de Klerk, Maureen Erasmus, Silvia Gouden, Averil Hearn, Liz McDougall, Jeanette McKenna, Paula Pretorius, Graham Walters and Mei Walus for the time and the talent they give to this part of the worship at St Francis. Thank you, also, to the members of the congregation who so generously give donations so that we can have a special celebration at Christmas and Easter.

If anyone feels s/he would like to join the team, please contact Shirley in the office. You would be very welcome.

Jerice Doeg

DIOCESAN SYNOD

This year the Diocesan Synod was held at St Francis of Assisi. It was well organised by Father Timothy, who received accolades and praise for his hard work. It was a sacrifice of time for all concerned, but the experience was well worth it.

It was truly an amazing experience to be seated with so many clergy and other learned people. Bishop Jo was so focussed – he knew what he intended to achieve, so set his goals. He was open to argument and even encouraged people to debate. He also knew how to motivate and praise. We learned a lot from him and he in turn received our love and respect.

Joan Jones

Impressions from Synod (sigh-nod)

There I was: squeezed into a back pew amongst black-clad hot, sweating clergy and equally hot and bothered laity as the afternoon sun poured through the glass doors at St Francis. I was **not** wondering what on earth I was doing there, as I knew that God would fill me in eventually. As a colourful procession preceded by billowing clouds of incense settled down, delegates from numerous different denominations brought greetings from the Catholic, Presbyterian, Greek, Hatfield Christian and even Muslim congregations. I had a wonderful sense of belonging to a community of believers, no matter how diverse, all working together (and showing their appreciation for Bishop Jo's efforts). A present of Turkish Delights served as a very useful treat to reward those who 'pleased' Bishop Jo during the three days.

Each day brought new insights to my limited understanding of how the Church manages its business. Moments of consolation presented itself when hurt from past pain and forgiveness met one another and bridges were mended with courage and bravery. Humour and laughter brightened dull moments as we sigh-nodders struggled to stay focused – it helps to have an experienced synod 'go-er' like Heatherlynn at your side to point out the Addendum no 236 of item 356 on Agenda point 52!!! (thanks H).

A sense of expectancy allowed me to find God in moments: like the brilliant addresses of the charismatic Bishop of Botswana, moments of stillness in the communion each day, spontaneous songs of worship (albeit all in Sotho). I proudly watched the St Francis youth assisting the speakers diligently and competently, humbled too to know that God was at work and I was a part of it!

Monique Winn

ST FRANCIS OF ASSISI PATRONAL FESTIVAL

Our patronal festival began with a combined service for both the 7:30 and 9:30 congregations. The church was beautifully decorated with white flowers from John and Maria's wedding that had taken place the day before. All the clergy, several lay ministers and five young servers took part in the procession and filled the sanctuary. The festival choir (the permanent members augmented by others) sang an anthem and led the singing of the hymns. The family, in particular the parish family, was the theme of the service.

Afterwards a family picnic was held in the grounds of the Pretoria High School Old Boys' Club. This turned out to be the best celebration ever. No one sat out: parents, grandparents and clergy played games with the children. Many people had fun playing bowls. It was truly a festival. For the meal, each person placed their contribution on the table and all shared and ate together. No one was left out. At the end of the day everyone left feeling that they could enjoy the experience again.

Joan Jones

From the Parish Registers

Baptism

19 October	Antonella del Fabro
19 October	Jessica Loubser
04 November	Robert Ratcliffe
23 November	Karibu Khechane

Marriage

11 October	John Bishop and Maria Wijayanti
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Faithfully Departed

18 August	Richard Upton
01 September	Stella Martin

IF YOU KNOW YOUR HYMNS, IT IS A HOOT !

The Dentist's Hymn..... Crown Him with Many Crowns
The Weatherman's Hymn.... There Shall Be Showers of Blessings
The Contractor's Hymn..... The Church's One Foundation
The Tailor's Hymn..... Holy, Holy, Holy
The Golfer's Hymn..... There's a Green Hill Far Away
The Politician's Hymn..... Standing on the Promises
The Optometrist's Hymn..... Open My Eyes that I Might See
The IRS Agent's Hymn..... Surrender All
The Gossip's Hymn..... Pass It On
The Electrician's Hymn..... Send the Light
The Shopper's Hymn..... Sweet Bye and Bye
The Realtor's Hymn..... I've Got a Mansion, Just Over the Hilltop
The Massage Therapist's Hymn..... He Touched Me
The Doctor's Hymn..... The Great Physician

AND for those who speed on the highway - a few hymns :

45 mph..... God Will Take Care of You
65 mph..... Nearer My God To Thee
85 mph..... This World Is Not My Home
95 mph..... Lord, I'm Coming Home
100 mph..... Precious Memories

Give me a sense of humor, Lord,
Give me the grace to see a joke,
To get some humor out of life,
And pass it on to other folk.

AUTHOR UNKNOWN
Submitted by Father Tim