

LENT 2013

Dear Everyone,

Thank you for making last Saturday such a good occasion. For those of you who weren't able to join us here is a little outline of what we did.

After coffees and homebakes we warmed up with a medley of Negro spirituals, a fun burst of song, revealing we were all in good voice.

Then Mike and Susan led us in a meditation based on the gospel passage of the woman at the well to whom Jesus talked about worshipping in spirit and truth. We were encouraged to be mindful of the light within during the silence, which was started and ended by a clever app on Mike's phone, i.e. the sounding of a "meditation bell". It felt a spacious time and I'm sure made us more receptive for all that was to follow.

Brother Sam then came and talked to us about what excites him about being a Franciscan, which he did by sharing about an impending visit of the brothers from the Solomon Islands, who are expected on these shores around the 24th of March. He began by telling us how much he loves the liveliness of their faith and the simplicity of their life.

They are here for a 3 month mission which will take them right round Britain, but will begin with 2 weeks at Hilfield, which promises to be a most lively fortnight, with lots of colour, joy and laughter by the sound of it.

The mission is entitled "Simply Living", and that title alone inspires somehow, as the picture Sam was painting in our mind's eye was of a bunch of lovely enthusiastic Franciscans, who have so much to teach us by their very simplicity, which will involve living on housing estates around Britain, in the coming months.

We were let in on the welcome that Hilfield is preparing for them which sounds hilarious and a sight not to missed!

All I can say, I hope someone is taking lots of photos!

During the midday Eucharist Michael Oram and Jackie Deung made their professions, which as Brother Sam reminded us, is a special time for all of us.

Then we had a sit down lunch feasting on a selection of Michael Oram's amazing breads, served on tables beautifully adorned by Pam Golding's spring flower arrangements, and graciously waited on by members of the South group.

The whole meal had an air of celebration .....

Then, after lunch, we listened to Jonathan Herbert, telling us about his time in Palestine, which was all to do with being there alongside people in their struggles. He introduced it by sharing how the sense of what he was to be about in life, had been with him since he was a young lad, when he would sit on the doorstep outside his house (a rambling old vicarage), with the wayfarers, sharing a sandwich he'd made them. Fascinating how he ended up living this out at Pilsdon for all those years.

It encouraged me in the thought that there really is something that's just right for each of us to be about in this life. The Iona song, we had been singing earlier on says this too .....

"Take, o take me as I am, summon out what I shall be, set your seal upon my heart, and live in me"

As usual, we finished with the office during which we prayed by name for all those not able to be with us.

I'd think most of us came away inspired, after listening to these two people, who are so clearly living from their hearts, and it makes me feel so happy to belong to the Franciscan family, and also to have Hilfield in our midst, where we are always given such a warm welcome.

#### DATES

Saturday October 12th 2013. Renewals meeting at Hilfield 10.00- 4.00pm

August 12th 2013 - Summer walk. 7 pm at Swannery car park Abbotsbury

Saturday June 21st 2014 A cluster event in Crediton, Devon ( we will tell you more about this at the October meeting)

#### THE TEAM

First of all we want to say THANK YOU to two people who have come to the end of their time in office.

To Carol Hibbert, for being our most reliable secretary, and to Alan McIntosh, for being our wise Formation Guardian. We are so grateful to them for doing these roles so faithfully and pray for a good rest for them.

We also want to say thank you to John Reynolds, for offering to be our new Novice Guardian, we are so pleased about that. The post of Formation Guardian is currently vacant.

We have decided, in the absence of finding anyone to replace Carol, to do things slightly differently, and share the tasks between us.

Michael Oram will act as post box for Province and will send relevant info on to all those on email. Conveners will see to it that everyone in their group not on email receives this too (ie TON, annual renewal forms and any other communications from province) So Michael's role will be COMMUNICATION SECRETARY.

Susan Farley will be responsible for updating the address and intercessions lists, so any changes need to be sent to her.

Susan has also agreed to be our Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation (JPIC) coordinator. This is an exciting step for the Blackmore Vale group, and again, we will talk a bit more about that when we meet in October.

#### WEBSITE

Mike Farley is now in charge, not only of our BMV website, but also of the TSSF website.

The provincial website is an exciting treasure trove ..... e.g. you can download the office!

Also I encourage you to visit the Hilfield website so as to be aware of their forthcoming events.

FOR OUR PRAYERS

We continue to pray for all those with health needs .....

David Pedrick, who is not at all well at the moment (but had sent us all a lovely message for Saturday)

Barbara Fowler, caring for Bill.

Sally Carter, as she contemplates the possibility of a move nearer to her children.

A new Formation Guardian.

Rob and Helen, as they prepare for their marriage in April.

For encouragement for all those not able to attend meetings .

Giving thanks for Simon Brignall's special time in Sudan.

Also thanksgiving for the profession of Jackie Deung and Michael Oram.