



## **Franciscan Friars** *Provincial Office*

Province of the Holy Spirit

*incorporating*

*Custody of St Anthony*

*Region of St Andrew*

[www.franciscans.org.au](http://www.franciscans.org.au)

Australia

Malaysia Singapore Brunei

Aotearoa - New Zealand

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Dear Brothers and Sisters,

As Advent approaches, our minds are drawn towards the birth of Jesus. He came to “bring the good news to the afflicted...to proclaim liberty to captives, sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free” (Luke 4:18). Yet more than 2000 years later the human family is still afflicted, oppressed and held captive in blindness. Cycles of social, political and economic inequality exist throughout the world and we all play a part in this, whether voluntarily or involuntarily. As Christians, we are called to walk in the footsteps of Jesus and to continue his mission. As Franciscans, we look to the example of Saints Francis and Clare who have taught us about mutual giving and receiving and demonstrated the importance of right relations with each other and all of creation.

Advent, the season of proclamation and anticipation, of invitation and preparation, calls us to think what needs changing in our lives as well as in the lives of the most vulnerable and poor.

This Advent, the invitation for your community is to *learn about the work of Franciscans International* (FI), the non-government organisation that belongs to all the members of the Franciscan family, as well as to learn about how – in the office of the United Nations – they work for profound change in the lives of the vulnerable and the poor.

For each week in the season of Advent, we have featured a case study of how FI works to confront the systemic problems in Extreme Poverty, the Environment, Human Rights and Peacemaking in developing nations. In tracing the work of FI as it bears witness to the teachings, values and ideals of Saints Francis and Clare, I hope that you too will be inspired to become instruments of change in the lives of the vulnerable, the poor and the oppressed.

*FI also needs your help.* Your contributions will further aid in the training of Franciscan friars and sisters and their partners in poorer nations as they tackle these issues. Please consider an appeal in your parish for donations during Advent for FI to continue this important work at local, regional and international levels. It is the voice that hopes to bring change to those suffering from injustices. The Franciscan Province of the Holy Spirit makes a donation on behalf of the Friars each year to assist with the ministry of FI. Donations from parishes will be greatly appreciated to support this important Franciscan work.

Information is attached for donations.

The weekly reflections and information are available at [www.franciscans.org.au](http://www.franciscans.org.au) for you to download and tailor for your parish or community.

May thanks for your support.

Kind regards

Sarah Menassa

*Animator of Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation*

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