



The Chapter commences on Sunday evening 23 September and concludes on Friday afternoon 28 September. It will be held at the MacKillop Centre, North Sydney. As well as reviewing the life and ministry of the friars over the past three years and planning for the next term, a new Provincial administration team will be elected by the assembled friars. As this is an elective Chapter, the General administration of the Order in Rome has appointed a friar from another Province (General Visitor) to preside at the Chapter after having visited and spoken to every friar in the Province in order to make a report to the Chapter and to the General Council in Rome.

Tom Nairn OFM, General Visitor, arrives in Sydney on 18 June from Chicago USA and will participate in the Provincial Council meeting, 20-22 June. Soon afterwards, he will begin visitation of all the friars and communities of the Province in Australia, New Zealand, Singapore and Malaysia.

The Chapter Committee will meet in Melbourne on 4 June to continue preparations for the Chapter. The committee comprises Matthew Beckmann (chair), Peter Cantwell, Andrew Granc, Anthoni Samy Selvaraj, Paul Smith and Terence O'Neill (Secretary of the Chapter). Also present at the meeting will be Marist Brother Tony Clark who will be the facilitator for the Chapter.

Already, the Chapter Committee has met (30 April) to review material from community meetings and prepare the process for the first regional meetings which were held in the latter half of May. The next committee meeting will collate responses from the first regional meeting and prepare the agenda for the second regional meeting in July.

Franciscan Schools Australia

Franciscan Schools Australia is sponsored by the Missionary Franciscan Sisters (Kedron) in collaboration with Franciscan Leaders. Its purpose is (1) to assist in the sharing of resources, both human and material, in order to enrich Franciscan Spirituality within the schools and (2) to introduce Secondary/High Schools to Franciscan Youth International in order to involve them in the work of Franciscans International.

Membership is extended to schools which are linked to the spirituality of St Francis through Franciscan foundations or bearing the name of Sts Francis, Clare and Anthony, or through any other Franciscan relationship.

The inaugural FSA conference in Brisbane (1-3 August) will gather Franciscan educators from across Australia to address the Franciscan heritage which is common to schools inspired by Francis of Assisi and discuss how best to pass on that unique heritage to students. John Boyd-Boland OFM and Briege O'Hare OSC (Ireland) will be keynote speakers. More than two dozen schools will be represented at the conference.

Pauline Robinson MFIC (Kedron) is FSA co-ordinator and Matthew Beckmann OFM is one of the six committee members. The Conference committee says that its intention is "to showcase the wonderful wisdom of each of you, our delegates, who are at the coalface of Franciscan education, to dialogue and to explore with each other our experiences and knowledge ... We will investigate the way each of us is called upon to continue the work begun by those Franciscans who have gone before us."

The list of schools, resources and liturgies can be found at the website: www.fsa.asn.au

Padua College News

The College senior leadership team, in conjunction with the Board of Directors, is currently working on its Strategic Directions document for the next five years. The document focuses on strong educational and Franciscan values. It acknowledges the uniqueness of the Franciscan ethos as a basis for pastoral care of the students and staff, for a 'best practice' curriculum (breadth, excellence, cohesion) and for lifelong learning.

~ 'The Franciscan "feeling" at Padua is the end product of the decisions and actions taken at the school. For the feeling to be sustainable, we need to analyse what actions generate the feeling, nurture and develop these actions and plan to continue them in a sustainable manner'.
(Strategic Directions discussion document)

The new multi-purpose building is rising from the dust in the centre of the college. It also includes a new swimming pool and is being constructed [for those who know the school layout] in the general area of the old pool and extending a little further northwards towards the classroom block. The centre will be used for indoor sports and also for large gatherings such as college assemblies and Masses. The parish church cannot hold all students and staff. It is expected to be completed later this year. Unfortunately, many of Fr Alban Mitchell's trees, planted some decades ago, have had to be removed, but the area will be 're-greened' as much as possible after completion of building works.

During chaplain John Boyd-Boland's absence for the first half of 2007, the four annual House Eucharists have been shared among some of the old-boy priests. Former Paduans Mario Debattista and Paul Smith celebrated the Odoric House Eucharist and Grigg House Eucharist, respectively. On such occasions, it is not only the charism of Francis that is present, but the legacy of friars after whom the four houses are named (including Mitchell and Beirne houses) and the collective spirit of all friars associated with the college. Later in 2007, a sculpture and garden will be installed in the college forecourt, dedicated to all friars who have been associated with the college over fifty years.

The annual general meeting of Padua College Limited, the company name of the incorporated body, was held on 18 May. Members of the company (i.e. Provincial Council) joined the Board of Directors, their spouses and college leadership team for dinner after the formal meeting. The generosity, dedication and commitment of the staff and Board assures that the Franciscan ethos is kept alive and developed throughout the college.

Friar Notes

- **John Boyd-Boland** returns to Brisbane from sabbatical leave on 10 June. John's final commitment before leaving USA is to supply for a week at the friars' parish in Raleigh (North Carolina) while the Holy Name Province gathers for a Chapter of Mats.
- **George Boggs** is spending two months at St Paschal friary (mid-May to mid-July) while Phillip Miscamble is away on jubilee leave. He is assisting with care for the senior and sick friars. His first days there were busy.
- **Christopher Gardiner** is taking advantage of his golden jubilee leave to attend an international course for seminary formators in Leggiuno, Italy. Good Shepherd Seminary (Sydney) has sponsored this trip. Christopher has also been invited to visit the friars in Russia and Kazakhstan. He will be away for six weeks from 17 June.
- **Romuald Green** has been invited to supply at a parish in New Orleans for five months from 6 June. He assisted in this parish on occasions when he resided in USA. He will also reconnect with colleagues involved in Franciscan research and translation work.
- **Martin Low** has accepted the role of chaplain to the Chinese Catholic Community in Sydney Archdiocese following the return of **Bonaventure Tung** to Taiwan. Martin lives at Gabriel Allegra friary, Ashfield.

- **Campion Murray** spent a few weeks back in Melbourne in May teaching at YTU. The return invitation is a sign of the esteem with which he and his courses are held.
- **Carl Schafer** is using his jubilee leave to attend various SFO meetings overseas (New Zealand, USA and Europe), as well as visiting friars, family and friends. He will be away 28 June to 20 September.
- **Paul Ghanem** and **Gerard Victor** will attend the Chapter of Mats for friars of less than ten years solemn profession. The Chapter will be celebrated in the Holy Land, mainly in Nazareth and Jerusalem, 30 June to 8 July 2007. Representatives of every Province in the Order will be present, approximately 100 friars.

Parish Committee meets in Townsville

The Province Parish Committee held its meeting in Deeragun, 25-27 May, and was impressed by the parish spirit and expanding facilities at St Anthony Catholic College. Since the Franciscan Parishes Gathering at Kensington in 2006 to which school principals were invited, the college leadership team has made a concerted effort to embed Franciscan history and traditions into daily school life. Specific inservices on the Franciscan charism are offered regularly to all staff. Giles Setter OFM is pastor of St Anthony's parish, Deeragun (Townsville).

The Parish Committee spent much of its time on preparing its report for the Provincial Chapter. There were other meetings with the bishop, with the parishioners and parish council. The North Queensland hospitality was at its best for the visitors.

SAAOC Meeting in Singapore

The Provincials and Custodes of the South Asia, Australia and Oceania Conference (SAAOC) will hold their annual meeting in Singapore, 10-14 June. Previously scheduled for Pakistan, the meeting was moved for reasons of civil unrest and the difficulty of some friars in obtaining visas for Pakistan. The meeting will address issues such as the outcomes of the Extraordinary General Chapter 2006 and the April 2007 meeting of Presidents of Conferences attended by Stephen Bliss. The General Curia's recently published guidelines on Sexual Abuse and Professional Misconduct will be studied. Formation and Studies will be addressed by a report from Mario Debattista, the SAAOC Secretary for Formation after his attendance at the International Council for Formation and Studies in Kenya in February. He has also prepared a proposal for a meeting of SAAOC Formation secretaries early in 2008.

Friars will attend from Australia, New Zealand, Singapore, Papua New Guinea, Sri Lanka, West Papua, Indonesia. The General Councillor for the Order in the SAAOC region, Ambrose Nguyen van Si (Rome) will also attend. Unfortunately, for reasons of commitments and visa difficulties, friars from India, Pakistan, East Timor and Thailand are unable to attend this particular meeting.

Poor Clares to relocate Monastery

The Poor Clares have decided to relocate their monastery to another site on the Maryfields (Campbelltown) property. Their decision came about after a community meeting in April which discussed a proposal put to them on behalf of the Franciscan administration and based on professional advice. Since the Poor Clares own the monastery land, the final decision was theirs to make.

The exact location of the new monastery has yet to be finalised and the process will take "a couple of years". The relocation of the monastery gives an opportunity to upgrade facilities for this and following generations of Poor Clares. The present monastery was designed by the

nuns after many months of planning meetings in the mid-1960s. Together with the architect for the new building, they will take the opportunity to capitalise on their experience of planning and living in the monastery over four decades and make changes which will enhance their life and ministry of prayer.

A parallel decision has been made that a suitably sized friary will be built on a site nearby for the friars to provide pastoral care for the Poor Clares and perhaps as a base for prayer ministry or other apostolates in the Campbelltown area.

The moves are part of a long process initiated when the Campbelltown Council asked the Order, over a decade ago, to become part of an Urban Development Project for the Maryfields property.

The Franciscan Brotherhood in Numbers

As at 31 December 2006

Novices	435		
Temporary Professed	1632		
Solemnly Professed	13189	7	Cardinals
		101	Bishops
		10314	Priests
		70	Permanent Deacons
		478	Cleric candidates
		2219	Brothers
TOTAL	15256		

This total is 340 less than at 31 December 2005. 300 friars died in 2006.

The Friars Minor are present in 107 countries in the following geographical areas (**increase/decrease over previous year*):

Africa/Middle East	1076	*(+8)
Latin America	3726	(-104)
North America	1632	(-46)
Asia/Oceania	1272	(+11)
Western Europe	5046	(-163)
Eastern Europe	2504	(-46)

There are 104 Provinces, 6 Autonomous Custodies, 12 Dependent Custodies, 20 Foundations.

The Province of the Holy Spirit numbers 124 friars (Australia 88, Singapore/Malaysia 24, New Zealand 12).

Secular Franciscan Order National Chapter

The elective Chapter of the national fraternity of the Secular Franciscan Order in Oceania was held at Kensington, Sydney, 27-29 April. International guests at the Chapter included Friar Ivan Matic (SFO General Assistant from Rome) and Ms Lucy Almiranes from the SFO International Council.

Fifty Chapter members and many regional spiritual assistants were present. Several Friars Minor attended. Carl Schafer OFM gave a presentation on the spiritual and pastoral assistance of the SFO on the national level. The text of the new national statutes, which require ratification by the International Council, were approved by the assembled members.

Helen Britton was re-elected as National Minister and Sandra Tilley was elected as International Councillor.

Sydney will host the international meeting of **You.Fra** at the time of the World Youth celebrations in 2008 and many Franciscan Youth are expected to attend this meeting from around the world. Ivan Matic gave a report on the present status of the Franciscan Youth Movement.

Franciscan Missionaries of Mary: New Provincial

Carmel Bennett has been elected as Provincial of the Franciscan Missionaries of Mary in Australia. Carmel is presently a Provincial Councillor and lives in Brisbane. As well as overseas missions, she has worked at Marymead Childrens' Home (Canberra) and for the Brisbane office of Caritas Australia. She succeeds Judy Dynan and will take up duties on 23 October.

Pilgrimage Reunions



*Left: Auckland 2007
Right: Townsville 2007*

Twenty-two of the 37 participants from the May 2006 Franciscan Parish Pilgrimage to Assisi gathered for a long weekend reunion in April at Mt Roskill Retreat House. Franciscan hospitality was enjoyed, photos were shared, memories rekindled, bonds of friendship strengthened and promises made to gather again.

A similar reunion was held in Townsville with the large contingent that travelled from there in 2006.



Pope to visit Assisi

Benedict XVI will visit Assisi on Sunday 17 June to meet with young people, priests and religious, and have time for private prayer. He will be welcomed by Archbishop Domenico Sorrentino of Assisi and by various civil and religious authorities.

At 9.30 am, Pope Benedict will go firstly to the Church of San Damiano and then to the Basilica of St. Clare for a brief visit and private prayer. He will celebrate Mass at 10.30 am in the lower Basilica of St. Francis, followed by the recitation of the Angelus. At 1 pm, Benedict XVI will lunch with bishops from the region and the Franciscan community. At 4.30 pm, in the Cathedral of St Rufino, he will meet with clergy and religious.

The day's events will conclude at 5.30 pm in the Basilica of St Mary of the Angels where the Pope will pay a private visit to the Portiuncula. Afterwards, he will meet with the local young people in the piazza in front of the basilica.

Pope Benedict is also scheduled to meet with all Franciscan cardinals and bishops in Rome, 18-20 June. Papua New Guinea Franciscan Bishops, Brian Barnes (Port Moresby) and Austen Crapp (Aitape) will attend.

Pentecost Blessings

The Church celebrated the Feast of Pentecost on Sunday 27 May. The Franciscans of Australia, New Zealand, Singapore and Malaysia (The Province of the Holy Spirit) wish you every blessing and every gift of the Holy Spirit wherever you are. May the Spirit which hovers everywhere be present in your hearts and homes always and all ways.