



Flowers for the Patronal Festival



Tidings

December 2017
St Francis of Assisi Parish Quarterly

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Foreword by the Editor

My thanks to all who submitted articles for this issue of *Tidings*. The Communications Committee discussed whether there was a need for the church to issue two newsletters, but decided that the new *Franciscan Monthly* (consisting of short news items) and the old quarterly publication (with longer articles on various subjects) were sufficiently different to warrant retaining the latter. In order to help parishioners distinguish between the two, it was decided to give them different names. However, it seems that the name change is causing some initial confusion – hopefully this will dissipate as we all get used to submitting articles for *Tidings*. Remember that the editor is not supposed to write the articles, but just to edit them. So please get writing for the next issue of *Tidings* in April 2018!

From the Parish Registers

Baptisms

Child	Date of Birth	Parents	Date of Baptism
Tumelo Masilela	16 June 1998	Tebogo Masilela & Sidney Maepa	08 October 2017
Leah Rebecca Jenkins	17 July 2017	Ivan & Mickaelé Jenkins	15 October 2017
Matthew Pieter Prinsloo	06 July 2017	Pieter & Catherine Prinsloo	22 October 2017
Alexandra Vashleigh Daniels	01 November 2016	Hanleigh Daniels & Jennifer Hardnek	22 October 2017
Aydin Craig Hawkins	04 March 2010	Michael & Bethany Hawkins	22 October 2017

The Faithful Departed

Date of Death	Name
06 September 2017	Beatrix Isabella EDWARDS
29 September 2017	Iris LYNCH
01 December 2017	Revd. June DE KLERK

Confirmations on 15 October 2017

Name	Surname
Craig	Hawkins
Chloë Michelle	Hawkins
Motsi Mmabatho	Maeheka
Natalia Awiti	Maina
Tumelo	Masilela
Leah Yvonne	Molyneux
Moeketsi	Nxumalo
Thebe Rorisang Sandile	Nxumalo
Avumile Chulumanco	Nyangintsimbi
Morwesi	Phayane
Sarah Claire	Trowsdale
Jon-Reece	Evans

From the Desk of the Priest-in-charge



Dear Franciscans,

The appointment as Priest-in-Charge at St Francis came as a surprise. I did not have time to reflect on the enormous responsibility and only realised the enormity when I landed at St Francis.

As I looked for inspiration from God, I was reminded of the words of Paul in 1 Thessalonians 2: 46: “We are not trying to please people but God, who tests our hearts”. I then had to ask for guidance from God. As I said in my sermon on 26 November, The King started to Reign. St Francis Church went through a period of resurrection with the King in control.

It was awe-inspiring to hear the King speaking through us, working through us, and healing the congregation at St Francis Church through us. I could just watch in awe as the King took central place in His Church.

I must express my appreciation to the family of St Francis, the Churchwardens and Parish Council, the Ministries and Leaders, the staff and everybody who assisted in this journey with me. God worked through all of us to make this year a success.

My parting recommendation to you all is keep up the good work. Never again allow your focus to wander from the cross. Never again try to please anyone but God. In Ezekiel 43:7 God says “The Temple is the place of my throne, and the place for the soles of my feet”.

I will keep you in my prayers and please do the same for me. Thanks for your kind words and beautiful gifts. I will always be reminded of your kindness and love.

Good luck for the future.

Father Danny



After the Carol Service on Sunday 3 December, a cheese & wine party was held to bid farewell to Fr Danny who will be leaving St Francis after Christmas. At this function the Church Wardens (Bruce McPhail & Rudi von Staden) each gave a short speech to express their appreciation for his leadership this year and several parishioners also gave impromptu thanks for his guidance from the pulpit on Sundays and Tuesdays, as well as during the week when he has always been available for anyone who wanted to ask his advice or just to chat. Zenobia presented him with a gift from the Parish, the beautiful cope that he is seen trying on in the above photos. This was a not so subtle hint that, although he is retiring from a year as priest-in-charge at St Francis, he should continue to serve the diocese in whichever church needs a good priest.

Jill Daugherty

Entering the Season of Expectation and Welcoming Jesus

So many of us long for a more meaningful, awe-inspiring Christmas. Advent is a time to wake up. To awaken is to live in a constant state of awareness and attentiveness so that we do not miss Jesus, who is ever-present and ever-active. It means living in expectancy that we may be surprised by grace and mercy breaking into our lives at any moment. The ordinary things are not to be taken for granted; rather they are places, as Rowan Williams, the former archbishop of Canterbury, pointed out, where we can always expect something new from our Master and Teacher that will touch our lives in some way. If we are sleeping, we may miss these Advent gifts.

So how do we wake up? A few simple practices come to mind. We can choose to receive each new day with gratitude and joy, so appreciate our early morning cup of coffee; to open our eyes to whatever is before us; to listen carefully to what is being said by those we are with; to taste the food we are eating; to give our attention fully to whatever task we are completing; to take time to appreciate the sounds and sensations around us, and to focus our attention on the present moment. And in whatever we do, we seek to be expectant – expectant that the Messiah, who has come, will come again and meet us in the here and now. Being awake is all about experiencing Jesus wherever we are, in whatever we are doing, and with whomever we find ourselves.

We met at the Mission House (former Rectory) for four evenings. As a guide to this Pre-Advent course, we used an Advent booklet by Trevor Hudson. With daily ‘Words of Wonder’ he encouraged us to reflect and deepen our experience of the Christ Child.

Monique Winn

Ezekiel 47 Group – Everyone belongs

Advent Reflection

Ad-vent
Com-ing
Wait-ing
Desir-ing

Worlds in turmoil
People rejoice
Zimbabwe's streets ring with shouts of jubilation
Our own hearts leap
With hope for ourselves
Chained by greed
Shackled by power- grabbing dynasties

Africa is not free
Africa groans
Like creation waiting for the Light to come into the
World
Yet WE are Light we are told by the Master

Europe shakes and shivers as terrorism lurks
Like a gigantic dark shadow
Genocide shames Myanmar

The world groans
The world seeks for hope
A sign
A star over a manger

Until we
Like the wise men, trudge along
On unclear paths
Until we fall down in awe and wonder
And say
We recognise you
We see you
We bow down
In hope and trust
The dawn has broken

Terry Brauer

My Water Feature

Heatherlynn and I have a Water Feature in our garden.

We love sitting on our stoep (often with some of you!) listening to the water bubble forth, watching the birds come to frolic and refresh themselves in the cool fresh water. It is not only lovely to **watch**, for there is the knowledge that the Water Feature is also providing a place of refreshment for any who would come and drink, or splash, or wash, or just cool off. Often the cascading water splashes out of the lower bowl, watering the nearby plants – having an unintended, but life-giving, consequence of being a Water Feature.

Being near our bedroom we can also hear the sound of the water splashing over, and I find a sense of peace that “all is well” with the Water Feature – it’s doing its job. But there are times when I lie in bed, or sit on the stoep, and I just hear a drip, drip, drip, instead of the merry splash, and I know that the water is just not gushing out of the top of the fountain as fast as it should - or could. I know then that not all is well with the Water Feature.

Sometimes, there is NO water flowing out of the top, and the water has gone green and slimy. The Water Feature then stops doing its job. There are no lovely sounds to listen to, the birds still fly in, but immediately turn away, finding nothing that will satisfy them. Then I know it’s time to attend to the Water Feature. More often than not it’s the pump that has got blocked. The pump lies deep under the water, out of sight, but this is really where all the action happens. Without a properly working pump, the Water Feature is really not a Feature at all. So, one has to reach deep into the sometime icy water, pull out the pump, and remove the debris that has clogged the filter. It’s quite a simple exercise, and soon the water is flowing freely again.

One often has to also remove some debris from the pool of water in which the pump lies – debris that has gathered because the Water Feature has been working – leaves and seeds from nearby plants, feathers that have dropped from visiting birds while they have been refreshing themselves. There is nothing that can be done to prevent this debris from getting into the Water Feature – it is a natural outcome of being a Water Feature, out in the open, and exposed to the elements, and allowing all and sundry to come and be refreshed in its life-giving water. I suppose one could place it indoors, cover it with a fine mesh to prevent the leaves from dropping into it but then the Water Feature would not really be as effective, would it? Sometimes the water dries up. You see, the Water Feature has no means of producing a continual flow of water by itself – it needs to be fed from an external source. Again, this is quite a simple exercise – just turn on the tap and allow the hose pipe to fill the bowl to the brim, and the Water Feature starts to flow again.

Sometimes, after a lengthy power failure, or if we have been away and have deliberately turned the power off, the water turns a slimy green colour, smells a bit (or sometimes a lot!) because the life-giving water has stopped flowing. The water has become stagnant. This requires more drastic measures. All the water should be removed, sometimes the bowl has to be wiped clean, and the pump requires “surgery”, taken apart to clean out the slime and the debris. But all is not lost – as one might initially think – it’s not broken forever. It just needs to be tended to, the power needs to be restored, and soon the Water Feature is back to doing its job.

Our lives are like the Water Feature – or should be. They need to be out in the elements, getting dirty, but being available to all and sundry to come and drink, be refreshed, be cleaned, providing joy and peace to those who watch and listen to us, and providing life to those that are near us as they feel the effects of the unintended splashes.

But it's our pump (our heart and soul) that really makes us tick. When they are blocked by the debris that comes from being continually exposed to the elements, they need to be cleaned out. It's not difficult – it just requires a little time to stop and be cleansed.

We also need to tap into the water supply from time to time, to be filled up, because we are constantly giving out our water, and we do not have an internal supply. We cannot stand alone and we need to input from others.

But we also need to be **constantly attached to a power supply**. Without that power supply our heart stops, the water becomes stagnant, and those who would normally come to us for refreshment are repulsed and go elsewhere for nourishment.

How is YOUR Water Feature?

Rob Lewis

**WELLNESS DAY + JUMBLE SALE
ON SUNDAY 17 OCTOBER 2017**

The Wellness Day was a great success with a good turn-out of parishioners and people from the neighbourhood. Our Health Team, consisting of a psychologist, doctors and a gynaecologist, did exceptionally well; while the Tumelong Mission team took care of the Voluntary Counselling and Testing for HIV. We were also joined by a dermatologist on site, Tarryn Brits, and her husband Bradley, who is a physician. The Beauty Spa ladies gave head, neck, shoulder, and full body massages for a donation.

Total number of attendees	64	Referrals to clinics	Blood pressure above 130/90	Blood sugar above 7mmol
Males	19	2	4	1
Females	45	6	12	4

EXCLUSIVE JUMBLE SALE: Fund-raising for Maboloka Haven

Cash received and banked: R 5 253.00
Money collected month end: R 1 811.00
GRAND TOTAL: R 7 064.00

The money is banked in a Tumelong Mission bank account, reference Maboloka Haven.

The control systems were much better than last year because:

- the church hall was a more convenient venue than the pavement outside;
- the Radebe family from Corpus Christi assisted us on the day.

We thank all parishioners who supported our call by giving us good items to sell and even some brand new ones. We thank in particular Olga Warambwa, Heatherlynn Lewis and Diana Higgs for assisting with the preparation and pricing. We also thank Rob Lewis for organizing the display of the items and our verger, David Ntswane, for all his hard work in the preparation. Lastly my thanks to all team members for their commitment to this ministry.

It was a great success, taking into account the present economic situation in our country. **We pray and hope for better living conditions for the Maboloka Haven children.**

Dorah Semanya

More Friends of Tumelong News

Besides the Wellness Day + Jumble Sale, the Franciscan Friends of Tumelong organised two other Tumelong events recently – the Clean-up of the Waterkloof Spruit on Saturday 4 November and the Christmas Party for the children at the Day and After School Care Centre in Ga-Rankuwa on Friday 14 November – see reports on both these events in the December issue of the *Franciscan Monthly*.

The annual clean-up is organised by the church, but most of the support on the day comes from Waterkloof Primary. However, this is due to Jane Shee, a member of St Francis and a teacher at the school who enlists the support of the children, parents and fellow staff members. Other faithful St Francis Earth Keepers who join me at the spruit every year are Peter Raymond and Vincent Taylor. There are always a few other Franciscans who attend, so it remains a church event. The fact that it is a community effort is appreciated by the Tshwane Council. In his reply to my email reporting on the event this year, Philip de Beer wrote: “Actions like these do make our city a cleaner place for every citizen and a better place to live in as nature and water conservation are of the utmost importance for human survival.”

The school again advised SAPS about the event, so a police patrol ensured the safety of the children. One of the officers, standing on the bridge on Giovanetti Street, pointed out to me that soil erosion is taking place in the spruit. Because of the vegetation (that has not yet been thinned out this year) and the rubbish (which we were thankfully removing), the water has had to dig a deeper bed in the soil. He wondered whether he could enlist the help of the local scout troop to help clear the vegetation more frequently. What always amazes me is that the spruit does always flow, no matter whether it rains or not. Waterkloof is indeed a kloof that supplies water to the city.

The Christmas party at the Bishop Jo Seoka Centre in Ga-Rankuwa was greatly enjoyed by the children. Besides a gift from Santa and a Wimpy treat of hotdogs, juice and yogisip, they enjoyed a concert that they provided themselves. The Day Care little ones performed the Nativity play, while the bigger ones and a few of the boys from WHPS did break dance numbers. After the meal and concert inside the hall, they went outside where the little ones enjoyed a jumping castle, while the older ones had fun on a blow-up slide with foamy water. The boys on the slide were soon wet, so they took off their clothes, dropping them where they stood, and got back on the slide in their boxer briefs. Some of the girls had swimsuits under their clothes, so they had obviously come prepared. We left the happy throng to drive back home, grateful that we did not have to stay and sort out the shoes and clothes dropped in the red mud. Tshego and her team of volunteers certainly deserved the gift vouchers presented to them by Diana!

Update on the Wheelchair Project

This year Elizabeth Bojé managed to collect and deliver enough bottle tops and bread tags to receive 15 wheelchairs. The collecting is done by 10 churches, 4 schools and 3 social groups. It takes her between 6 to 8 weeks to collect a load of 450 kg tops or 50 kg tags, the amounts needed to receive a wheelchair. Sometimes she gets a huge donation from one source, which can rapidly boost the amount. Her work is done under the auspices of Tumelong (who provide the paperwork) because an individual cannot apply for a wheelchair – the request must come from an NPO. It is also a Tumelong employee, Lucas Mthembu, who takes the loads from her garage to Germiston and brings back the wheelchairs in the Tumelong pickup or trailer. However, he sometimes bypasses her, taking loads he has fetched from some organisation straight to Germiston. Consequently she is not sure of the exact number of wheelchairs Tumelong has received, which could exceed 15.

Jill Daugherty

Eulogy for Trix Edwards

Trix – always known to us at St Francis as just Trix, but named Beatrix (the origin of which means *she who makes happy*). I experienced that so often – Trix wanting to make people happy. She struggled so with suffering, especially as she grew older. She just wanted to fix it all –for her children, Dougie and others whom I know she prayed for every day.

I am going to start more than 50 years ago in 1968, when a young timid girl called Terry approached Mrs Edwards with the view of joining the choir. I will confess here and now that my motivation was not very spiritual, but the fact that there were very good-looking boys in the alto and tenor line, one of whom was Trixie's son.

I had a rather torturous audition, in which I was informed I really could not sing very well. And so began a very long and loving, but firm relationship, in which my choir mistress disciplined, taught, patiently rehearsed and drew out of me a gift I would never have had and which for 40 years I have exercised (many of those years in a leadership role) in this church. That's all thanks to Trix and her excellent grounding in music theory and singing.

I am not the only one who will testify to this training in the Royal Schools of Church Music tradition – Ann Thistlewhite and Andre Mare were both under her tutelage as youngsters and she drilled and examined us and we entered all the exams and achieved our red ribbons as choristers.

Trix was fanatical about being tidy and we had uniform inspections to see that our ruffs and collars were starched and pristine. Harsh words ensued if there was an untidy head of hair or a dirty robe. Woe betide us if we whispered a single word during a service – choir

members of today, perhaps we need to look at our decorum sometimes?

Anyone who knows Trix will remark upon her immaculate hair, always in a perfect bun, and in those years pinned with a black velvet ribbon. Trix was simply beautiful as you will notice in the photograph of her next to the organ. A couple of parishioners mentioned to me after the news of her passing that their fathers couldn't take their eyes off the vision at the piano and organ!

My first serious romance was with her son Bill, whilst still at school, and I was always welcomed into the home where Trix would make tea (or coffee) in china cups and we would chat in the lounge on Charles Street. She adored her children and any suffering they underwent became her suffering.

She loved Dougie and missed him every day after his death. She would often say how much she missed him, when we chatted every Sunday between the services. Rose, let's face it, I think Dougie's den with all his military memorabilia at the back of the house was his hideout from her rather perfectionist standards at times, but I always think of them as a couple. Yes, she was a perfectionist and a strong disciplinarian in terms of doing things with excellence, but never without great love. She found change hard too I believe, but served faithfully under several priests.

One her favourite stories was about Father Adrian, a very difficult Franciscan priest we had very briefly, who stopped a service and shouted "That's appalling singing! Do that again!!" Not once, but a few times. Trix was horrified at his lack of decorum and I think I heard that story more than 10 times over the years. It makes me smile as I'm not sure he ever earned her forgiveness.

Elegant, beautiful, talented and so dedicated to service

Trix did the reading for Psalm 23 at my wedding, which is why I was so happy to include it in our songs today. You might find it strange that I have left, until last, her love of the Lord, but I have deliberately done that here because that was her *raison d'être*. Trix loved her Lord and served him faithfully in this church until her last independent step. She was in that pew every single Sunday and loved all our priests. She would see me between services and say “You are in for a treat. That was an EXCELLENT sermon.”

She prayed every day and shared her passion for Jesus openly always – I am here to say thank you to a role model, an example, a mentor and a friend. Thank you on behalf of St Francis for the most loyal dedicated service with not a single cent of recompense! Thank you Trix.

I know for certain that not only Dougie is welcoming you, but our Lord has opened the gates with a huge embrace saying, “Well done, good and faithful servant, enter into the joy of your Master.”

Rest in peace – I will miss your Sunday embraces, as will many here, and we know your alto voice is singing with the angels.

Terry Brauer

The flowers on the front cover, depicting St Francis in a garden, were arranged by Jerice Doeg and Beryl Chantler. Jerice is the leader of a team of talented and dedicated ladies who provide and arrange the flowers in the church. They do this according to a roster throughout the year, except for Lent and Advent, when traditionally no floral arrangements are allowed in the sanctuary. They welcome new members to the team. Gentlemen are also invited to join!