

December 2015

Dear Friends of the Monastery

At the beginning of Advent, in the midst of a world wracked by pain, we pray “Come Lord Jesus”. Come into your reign; come into the hearts of the unloved and flood them with love; come into the lives of the oppressed and set them free; come and heal our inner wounds; come to the refugees and guide them to a safe haven; come Lord Jesus! breathe your cooling peace into the fiery violent hearts of warmongers and all who have given themselves to hatred. Come; come Lord Jesus, and restore the earth!



Teresa of Avila wrote in the 16th century...

*Christ has no body but yours,
No hands, no feet on earth but yours,
Yours are the eyes through which he looks with compassion on this world,
Yours are the feet with which he walks to do good,
Yours are the hands, with which he blesses all the world.
Yours are the hands, yours are the feet,
Yours are the eyes, you are his body.
Christ has no body now but yours,
No hands, no feet on earth but yours,
Yours are the eyes through which he looks with compassion on this world.
Christ has no body now on earth, but yours.*

So we enter Advent 2015 doing our small deeds of conservation, compassion and justice, waiting in hope for the birth of the Holy Child of Bethlehem, waiting in hope for positive action from the Climate Change Summit in Paris, waiting in hope for the day when finally every human heart will have united itself to Love, and fear is finally driven away forever.

At the recent FMS AGM we enjoyed two speakers on environmental issues. One of the things that struck me about Robin Fry's talk was her 'take' on Love Your Neighbour/ Love the Earth. She advocates that we should simply give a good example, doing our very best in

our own circumstances to reduce our carbon footprint and protect the Earth. It reminded me of St Clare's 'mission statement' for herself and her Sisters "*We praise God by our lives*" Both she – who lived a simple and very enclosed life – and Francis – leading a mostly active life of service – were determined to give the best possible example to their Brothers and Sisters in every little thing – and their influence is still reverberating around the globe 800 years later!

Patsy Nagle did a lot of preparatory work in identifying habitat on the Stroud site, and seeking out burrows and nests and creatures of all kinds. Patsy has given us a list of the endangered and vulnerable species either definitely present on site or likely to be found within 10 kilometers of it. These are:

Endangered: Giant Barred Frog, Magenta Lilly Pilly. *Vulnerable:* Glossy Black Cockatoo; Powerful owl; Masked Owl; Sooty Owl; Tiger Quoll; Brush-tailed Phascogale; Koala; Yellow Bellied Glider; Grey-headed Flying Fox; Eastern Freetail Bat; Little Bentwing Bat; Eastern Bentwing Bat; Southern Myotis and Large-footed Myotis and the Slaty Red Gum.

We were astounded by the number of creatures that were identified as living here on site, and informed re ways to improve habitat for those creatures mentioned above, whose numbers are rapidly dwindling due to various threats, including roads, land clearing, dirty creeks, feral animals, weeds, pathogens, fragmentation of habitat, distance to food and nesting sites, too frequent burning and lack of dead wood [tree hollows for nests].

Patsy spoke about improving habitat generally; such as pruning trees rather than removing them, building rockeries and providing waterholes, linking isolated patches of habitat, increasing nesting opportunities, planting fodder trees and less flammable species such as the endangered Magenta Lilly Pilly and providing a multi-layered habitat. As an island of bush in cultivated land, the Monastery site is a haven for many species, she said. Patsy left us with 20 of the Magenta Lilly Pilly to be planted in the grounds.

We are very grateful for the time and effort both speakers generously gave to the Friends. May the seeds of knowledge and understanding planted in their hearers be fruitful!

In [other AGM news](#) we farewelled two members: Rosemary Christmas, who has been especially active in organizing our archives, and finding a place for them in the Mitchell Library, and Fr. Chris Garland, the Rector from Stroud Parish, who is moving at the end of

the year. This leaves us with a vacancy, so if anyone would like to join the team or would like to know what being on the Committee entails, please contact one of the Committee.

Your Committee until the next AGM is:

President, Jill Gumbley: jillgumbley@swiftdsl.co.au

Vice-President, John Blakemore: Vashon@optusnet.com.au

Treasurer, Jane Noller: jane@tenton.com.au

Jan Garnsey: jangarnsey@gmail.com ;

Elizabeth Corah: elizabeth.corah@gmail.com

tosiac@bigpond.com .

for Stroud Parish remains vacant until a new incumbent is appointed: other ex-officios are

Jane King [Bishop's representative]: jane.king.counselling@bigpond.com

Br. Bruce-Paul [SSF representative] ssfstrd@bigpond.com

Rosemary Bradford [tssf representative, also Booking Officer]

oldmonasterystroud@gmail.com and

Pirrial Clift [Resident Priest] pirrial@exemail.com.au.

Secretary,

Ordinary Members

and Tosia Cribben

The ex-officio position

Remember our special offer for Friends of the Monastery during December and January – mention your membership when booking and you will pay only \$35.00 per night for you and your companions!



A Christmas Blessing.

May your Christmas celebrations be filled with love and laughter, and may your hearts be filled with holy awe at the coming of the Christ Child.

God's peace be with you. Pirrial