

Passio



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Issue 1

Newsletter of the Passionist family—St. Josephs Province

www.passionist-uk.org



EDITORIAL

Welcome to the very first edition of 'Passio', our quarterly Passionist Family Newsletter.

This is very much a work in progress and, because we were keen to circulate our Spring issue before Easter, the content on this occasion will be necessarily limited. Our hope is that the Summer issue will be 'riper' than this initial attempt!

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That said, the newsletter is only informative to the extent that we make it so.

There will be regular features in each issue, but if you have any of the following that you would like to share through this new means of communication then please do not hesitate to contact us here at the Passionist Office.

Passionist spirituality (prayers/reflections/saints), news from the Province (what's going on in your community), photographs and updates on the work being done by our Partners and grant recipients.

These are just a few examples of the type of items we would more than happily post in this newsletter.

In the Passion,

*Paschal and
John*

We Preach Christ Crucified

*The passion of Jesus belonged to the whole of his life. Passionists are called to be a disturbance. Quite simply we are very passionate about the suffering of Jesus in the light of, and giving meaning to, the suffering of the world. To be passionate implies some kind of articulated inner passion in the market place of this world. Deep down in the experience of Jesus was the experience of extreme exclusion (**'Mersey Vespers'** by **Austin Smith CP**)*

NEWS FROM AROUND THE PROVINCE

Passionist Conversation Day

On Saturday 17th February 2018 twenty five members of the Passionist Family gathered at St Mary's Convent in Birmingham for a Conversation Day at the invitation of St Joseph's Province and in response to the Passionist Chapter resolution concerning strengthening the Curia through wider participation, the fundamental concern of which is to keep alive the Memory of the Passion for the future.



NEWS FROM AROUND THE PROVINCE

Passionist Conversation Day (continued)

At the last Province Conversation Day in November 2017 the decision was taken to open up such meetings by inviting others into the process of discerning the future direction of travel.

This discernment process involves four constituent parts of the Passionist Family from whom those in attendance in Birmingham were drawn: The Community of the Passion, the Passionist Partners, The Cross and Passion Sisters and The Passionist Fathers and Brothers.

As a consequence of informative sharing and lively exchanges there was acknowledgment of the responsibility to pass on the Passionist inheritance as a *shared ministry*.

Therefore, it was decided to commission a group of eight people representing the constituent parts to consider in more detail the concrete steps required in allowing new growth at the same time as sustaining what already exists.

The main objective of this new 'focus group', which convenes in April, will be to discern and to propose specific actions in response to the question:

“How do we keep alive the memory of the Passion?” The group will report back on its work in December 2018.

Sacred Words...

Love your brother and sister in God.

Love God in your brother and sister.

Share with others.

Be with them in their sufferings, their joys, their hopes.

May your favorite brothers and sisters be those who are poor.

May all creation bring you to love God. Amen.

St. Paul of the Cross



Novena Prayer for the Canonisation of Blessed Dominic Barberi

O God who so lovingly raised Blessed Dominic Barberi to the heights of holiness, learning, apostolic zeal and made him a powerful minister of your mercy, listen to our humble request.

We pray that you will in your goodness, grant a miracle through the intercession of Blessed Dominic, so that the Church may further honour him on earth and that many more people will come to know and invoke the help of this faithful servant of the Church.

We ask this through Christ Our Lord,
Amen.

Mary Mother of Holy Hope: **Pray for Us.**

Blessed Dominic Barberi: **Pray for Us.**

Blessed John Henry Newman: **Pray for Us.**

Elizabeth Prout: Servant of God. **Pray for Us.**

ROME: General Chapter 2018

The 46th General Chapter of the Congregation of the Passion will begin on Sunday, September 9, in Rome at the Passionist Generalate of Sts. John and Paul.

Eighty five religious will represent, in various categories, all the Passionist religious Provinces scattered throughout the world.

The theme of the Chapter is: *“The Passionists living in solidarity and mission”*. The three words associated with this are *“thanksgiving, prophecy and hope”*.

It is expected that the role of laity will be affirmed at the General Chapter.

It has also been recognised that *Digital Communications* also needs to be developed across the Congregation.



SPOTLIGHT ON.....

Richard Solly

Richard Solly, Co-ordinator of London Mining Network, author of ‘Bright Wings’ and member of the Community of the Passion.

What is one word that you would use to describe yourself?

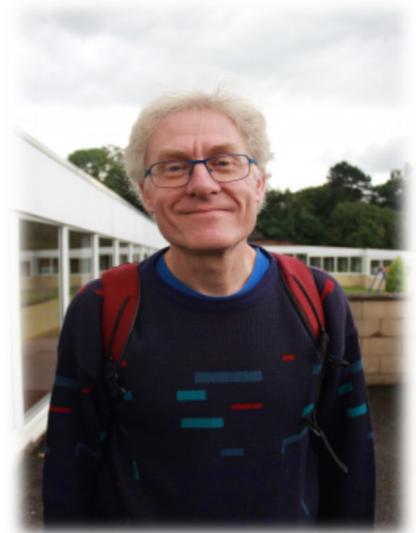
Human

What one memory do you most treasure?

Other people expressing love for me – thankfully that is not only one memory, but it is one kind of memory.

What advice would you give to your younger self?

Don't worry so much – it'll give you grey hairs.





If you could go anywhere in the world right now where would it be and why?

Well, right now I would choose to go to bed, because it's late and I'm tired, but generally I'd choose either (a) my mother's, because I love her and we get on well, (b) the woods near where I used to live in Peasmarsh, East Sussex, because whatever the season and whatever the weather I always feel better walking in those woods, or (c) the Northern Cheyenne Reservation in Montana, USA, because living with the Northern Cheyenne people transformed my life and way of looking at the world, and I love that place and those people very dearly.

What is the most important thing you have learnt in the past year?

Mutual forgiveness is one of the most beautiful and life-giving experiences we can have.

SPOTLIGHT ON.....(Continued)

Which person (living or dead) would you most like to meet and why?

Pope Francis, because he brings me delight and inspiration and reaffirms my faith that God is present in the Church. (Before March 2013 I was beginning to think God had given up and moved elsewhere.)

Brown sauce or red sauce?

Red: it's a choice between communism and bourgeois democracy.

When did 'God' become more than a word to you?

When I was a toddler and experienced something 'more' in everything around me.

How does your faith shape your work?

My faith compels me to work for justice and the protection of the Earth, and to do it in a way which is respectful of other people, even those whom I oppose. It means I have to try to do everything in a loving way, being kind and forgiving. Of course, the strain of attempting that is a total wind-up and leads to sleepless nights, bouts of melancholy and explosions of ill-temper when people try my patience, but then I fall back on the joy of mutual forgiveness. (It's not as difficult as the year I spent trying to follow the advice of the wonderful Buddhist mystic Thich Nath Hahn, who advised maintaining the half-smile of beatific serenity at all times. Every time I lost my cool, it was twice as bad, because I was not only angry anyway, but was also thinking, "Oh £!&*@#! Now I've failed to maintain the half-smile of beatific £! &*@#!ing serenity!")

If you were about to be castaway on a desert island, what three items would you take with you?

Apart from the Bible and the complete works of Shakespeare (which I assume are provided) I would take a solar-powered short-wave radio, the complete works of Thomas Merton, and a good friend (but I assume that's not allowed).

Thanks to Richard

Joking Apart

Two nuns are running away from a bear, who is gaining on them.

“Do you think we’ll be able to outrun him, Sister?” one of the nuns asks the other.

“I don’t have to outrun him, Sister. I only have to outrun you,” said the other nun.



James Trewby



‘Hope is the virtue of a heart that doesn’t lock itself into darkness, that doesn’t dwell on the past, but is able to see a tomorrow.’ **Pope Francis**

TALKING WITH....James Trewby

James Trewby, the *Columban Justice and Peace Education Worker* recently came to talk to the Curia about engaging with young people. James has undertaken research into the pedagogical aspects of gap-year experiences and the life-stories of young activists.

James spoke about working in the niche between people involved with faith and people living working for justice. James commented that young people and adults do care about justice issues, but many do not know how to “act.” They often need “*guidance and challenge*” to help them actively develop their faith and passion.

A challenge for many faith-based organisations is how to help young people develop deeper engagement for justice and not just charitable responses. James described this as “*education for action and justice and not an education for charity.*”

James also noted that many young people are asking themselves the question: “*what will give me life and create positive outcomes for the world*”. There are a number of key considerations which underpin a response to this question:

Learning through encounter – create opportunities to bring faith activists to meet young people and share their personal stories. For example, there is now an on-line ; interactive resource which enables young people to talk with missionaries all over the world meetamissionary.org.uk

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Focus on values and not specific actions – Many faith activists are engaged with more than one challenge because many challenges are inter-linked. For the Passionists we would be looking at supporting “*faith formation through the eyes of the crucified.*”

Collaboration with friends and partners – Working in partnership with others to support faith formation and faith in action is very important. Possible partners include CYMFED, peace and justice networks, Diocesan Catholic Education Services, Association for Catholic Chaplains in Education (ACCE), plus similar organisation for University Chaplaincies and Cathedral Chaplaincies, Student Christian Movement (SCM), etc

Deliver opportunities for “Faith in Action” and challenge young people to ask “if not me, then who?” – Practical faith in action formation programmes are important. For example, a gap-year or intern programmes can help young people develop their discipleship and skills for action..

Being clear about our Charism – For the Passionists, this means being with the crucified of today. Clarity about this vision and opportunities to help young people engage with “the crucified” provides a platform for changing values, not just with young people themselves but also with wider Church and society.

Thanks to James

WALKING WITH THE CRUCIFIED

St. Joseph's Province provides support for initiatives that expose and resist misuses of power and that deliver practical responses to relieving the effects of poverty and exclusion. This reflects our belief that the death of Jesus resulted from confrontation with systems that oppress and marginalise, **and that His Resurrection gives us hope.** We have recently supported the following projects:

Nugent Care

Nugent Care in the North West will be delivering the *Community Sponsorship Scheme* to bring Syrian families into the UK from refugee camps in Lebanon or Jordan.

This scheme, launched by the Home Secretary and the Archbishop of Canterbury, enables community groups including charities, faith groups, churches and businesses to take on the role of supporting resettled refugees in the UK.

This project reflects the Province priority of "*Welcoming the Stranger.*"



Faiths4Change

Faiths4Change works to support the conservation, protection and improvement of the physical and natural environment in the North West.

The charity brings together different faith communities and no religious faith, settled residents and those seeking asylum and refuge to work towards improving the environment of disadvantaged communities.

This project reflects the Passionist commitment to "*crucified creation*".

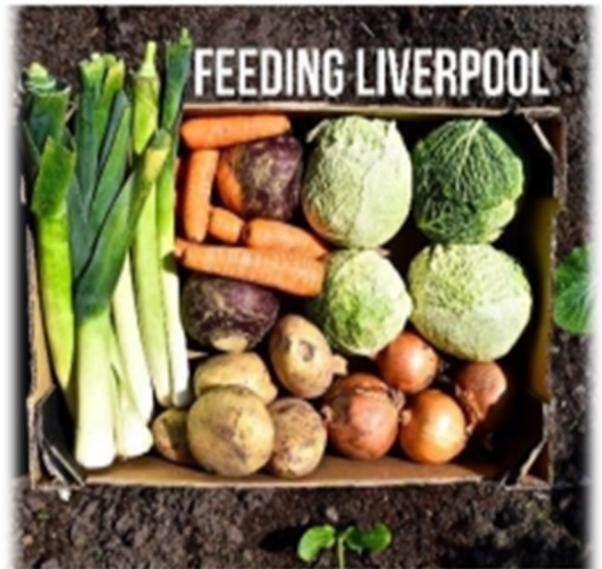


Feeding Liverpool

Feeding Liverpool is a project which aims to create an arena for practitioners to share good practice about emergency food provision and routes out of food poverty.

It is one of a growing network of local projects following the Report of the All-Party Parliamentary Inquiry into Hunger in the UK published in December 2014 and called *Feeding Britain: A strategy for zero hunger in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland*.

This project also aims to raise awareness and develop greater public understanding of food policy and related issues.



Mental Health First Aid Lite Course

This project is a one-day Mental Health First Aid Lite Course for key people involved in pastoral ministry in the Archdiocese of Liverpool.

It recognises that those who are living with mental illness are sharing in the passion of Christ in ways that often go unnoticed.

Voices for Creative Non-violence

Voices for Creative Non-violence (VCNV) are a UK peace group which formed in 2012 to work in solidarity with Afghan peace makers who are non-violently opposing war.

VCNV regularly visit Kabul to stand in solidarity with Afghan peace activists, as well as being eyewitnesses to the ongoing conflicts. Their campaigning activities include organising conferences, creative campaigns, protests, giving talks, writing articles and creating education materials.



PEACE AND THE PASSION:

Fr. Martin Newell in Court

Martin appeared before Birmingham Magistrates Court on 28th February 2018 for refusing to pay a fine against the arms trade in 2009.

He was one of a group of protesters from the London Catholic Worker at that time who poured red paint representing the blood of the victims of the arms trade on a sign advertising the DSEI arms fair.

Martin was fined but has refused to pay the fine.



Martin said in court: *"My action was one of conscientious objection to the arms trade, which is a trade in death. I am continuing the objection by refusing to pay this fine. I appeal to the court to use your conscience and common sense to remit this fine.*

However, if necessary I am willing to go to prison for this. I see it as an act of solidarity with all those who suffer injustice and violence in our world, and an act of witness, of faith in God and humanity, a way of following Jesus who was arrested and brought before a court for standing up for the truth and for right."



Provincial John Kearns and members of the Community of the Passion: Paschal Somers, and John Thornhill came to support Martin in court, as well as members of the Faith and Resistance Network.

Passionists supporting the Faith and Resistance Network

At a recent meeting, the Curia reflected that peace and non-violence is an important part of the experience of the Passion. St. Joseph's Province has supported *the Faith and Resistance Network* since 2015; and since then Pope Francis has written in his World Peace Day Message 2017 about non-violence as an expression of the Gospel and as part of a politics for peace and justice.

The Faith and Resistance Network seeks to offer support to Christians engaging in nonviolent direct action. There are a number of groups which make up the network which includes:

Put Down the Sword - a small group of Christians and Quakers who take nonviolent direct action together against the causes of war, nuclear weapons, and climate change in the UK.

Christian Climate Action - a community of Christians supporting each other in following Jesus Christ in the face of climate change, in acts of non-violent direct action.

London Catholic Worker – an ecumenical, pacifist Christian group living and working in the spirit of gentle personalism, hosting destitute asylum seekers who are often fleeing wars, and resisting the wars at their source.

A Prayer for Holy Week and Easter

At the heart of our prayer is the Crucified Christ. We meet him in the crucified of today and in our creation, crucified.

Father in heaven, the love of your Son led him to accept the suffering of the cross that his brothers and sisters might glory in new life. Change our selfishness into self-giving. Help us to embrace the world you have given us, that we may transform the darkness of its pain into the life and joy of Easter.

In the Name of the Risen Lord Jesus, **Amen.**

DATES TO REMEMBER

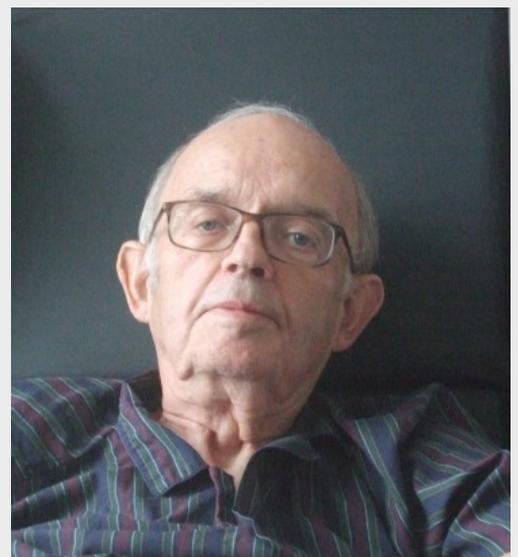
Over the coming weeks and months the Province will celebrate a number of important events.

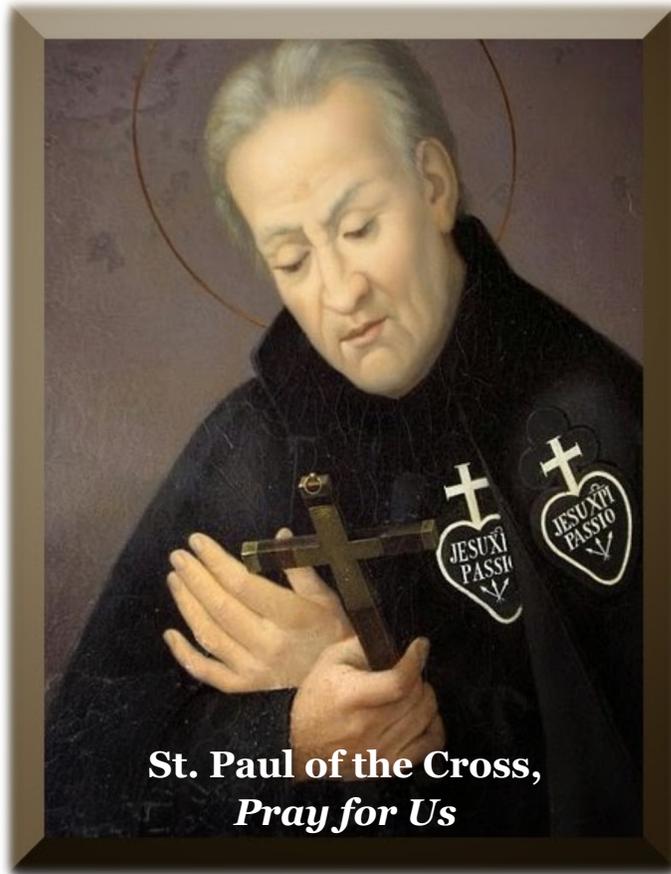
It's hardly believable, but true, that **Fr. Mark White CP** will be 70 years of age on 30th March. **Mother Regina CP**, at Minsteracres, will be 90 years of age on Good Friday, 30 March *Many happy returns!*

April is a significant month for various reasons: **Fr. Patrick McKeown CP** will turn 80 on 1st April, **Fr. Christopher Kelly CP** will be 99 the very next day and **Br. Francis Welsh CP** becomes a nonagenarian on 19th April.

'Ad Multos Annos' to all three!

Finally, on 8th April we will remember our departed brother in Christ, **Fr. Charles Owen CP**, when we





**St. Paul of the Cross,
*Pray for Us***

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