

Andrew Schuman - Sabbatical Report

September to November 2017

My sabbatical mostly involved my exploration into becoming a Franciscan tertiary and exploring Franciscan theology and life.

It begun with a week at Hillfield Friary in Dorset where I joined in community life and I spent some time exploring the writings of the great Franciscan theologian Duns Scotus and modern interpretations such as Richard Rohr's ***Eager to Love***. It was tremendous to be exploring such theology while relaxing into the sabbatical, albeit in a sometimes busy Friary.



At home I continued to rest and study and a key highlight God took me through was reading Ian McGilchrist's amazing book ***The Master and the Emissary***, a book exploring the interface between theology and neuroscience and very Franciscan in Character.

The next key event was the highlight of the sabbatical, a weeks trip to Assisi, to see where it all began.



I did a walking pilgrimage around all the major sites including the Church where Francis received his call from God to go and rebuild his church. The cross shown above was the one Francis sat under while hearing God speak. I stayed in the Society of St Francis House in the middle of Assisi and was wonderfully looked after by the resident chaplain there.



Returning to the UK i had some more time at home reading a whole variety of books and beginning to do some more writing - the sabbatical has certainly changed me into journalling a lot more!.

During this time it was wonderful to have more time with the family and I gave Asa, Thea and Jonty a special challenge to one special thing with me. Asa got me to take him to a Southampton football match, Thea shopping in London and Jonty to watch a superhero film at the cinema. It was a great joy to offer them at least once in my life, undivided attention!



I marked the end of sabbatical by returning to Hillfield Friary prior to starting work on 1st December. Where had it left me with God? Well - convinced of a call to become a Tertiary Franciscan and refreshed and alive in ministry.

Thank you!

To all that have made any part of my sabbatical possible I am so very thankful - for those who covered by absence in the parish, and the various groups and individuals who made possible through kind donations my travelling and living. The week in Assisi in particular will stay with me for the rest of my life.

With much love

Andy

