



Associates ?

Tertiaries ?

Third Order ?



# Who/What Are They?

St Joseph's Priory

Queens Park





“...seek peace and pursue it”.

***“The first reason for which we come together is to grow in unity of mind and heart on our way into God”***

(Rule of St. Augustine)

## **COMMUNIO, CONTEMPLATIO AND ACTIO**

“Where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them” (Mt 18:20). Many of us who participate in common prayer with the Norbertine community of Queens Park have felt that there is something very special about it. The liturgy is celebrated in an authentic and God-centred manner, those who pray come together in his name. Whether there are two or many who gather in his name, Jesus has made a promise to be among them. So it is absolutely correct to say “Where two or three pray in Jesus' name, there he is among them”.

It is correct, but it is not complete: Jesus is also with us when we spend parts of our days together in his name, even though we may not be praying: When we are truly “Christian” towards one another, when we talk to each other about the deeper meaning of life, God's creation and our place in it. When we think about the rights and wrongs that are happening in the world and when we form Christian opinions about what can be done to make this world a better and fairer place for everyone, one step at a time. When the God-centred dialogue is alive between us then his promise resounds: “Where two or three have come together in Jesus' name, there he is among them”.

Praying together and being together are key elements of “gathering” in Jesus' name. But the question that remains to be asked is this: If we spend time together and think about what it takes to honour God's creation more fully and to make the world a better place, if we spend time taking our thoughts to prayer, should we then not go and do something about it? Absolutely! We can serve the poor, we can minister to those who are in need of help and assistance, we can be a stronghold to the fragile, and we can be of service to our parish. There are countless things we can do to follow Jesus example “to serve, and not to be served”. And when we do this, we will hear Jesus' promise in yet a different way: “Where two or three are serving in my name, there am I among them”.

Gathering in Jesus name is what the Norbertines call “communio”. Praying in Jesus name is what they call “contemplatio”. And serving in Jesus name is what the Norberties refer to as “actio”. These are the three pillars of Norbertine life and they apply to the lives of Norbertine Canons Regular, who take vows and live in community, and it applies to Norbertine Tertiaries, who promise a life of spiritual communio, contemplatio and actio, and who live “in the world”.



## What does a Tertiary need to BE or DO?

Now that you have an idea of what *communio*, *contemplatio* and *actio* are all about – from a Norbertine Tertiary point of view. You might think that you need to have a lot of time in order to participate in Norbertine *communio*. You might also think that you need to be very “holy” in order to take part in Norbertine *contemplatio*. Lastly, you might think that you would have to be in full-time ministry in order to share in Norbertine *actio*. Well, in fact it is quite different!

If you are someone, who begins most mornings with a prayer thanking God, then you might already be a good Tertiary. If you are someone, who is “prepared for all good works” and tries to spend the day being a blessing to others, you might already be a good Tertiary. If you are someone, who likes to spend time with friends – either in person or on the phone – you might already be a good Tertiary.

Being a Tertiary means putting much of what you do under the big Christian umbrella called “Norbertine life”. Isn't it much nicer to know that when you pray, others – both near and far – are praying with and for you? Doesn't it give you more energy to know that others are also trying to do good works – either at home or at work? And is it not comforting to know that there are friends whom you can always phone or meet?

We are pretty sure, that quite a few of you are already Norbertine Tertiaries – you just don't know it yet. Learn more about who we want to be, help to decide how we can do it, and let's become a group of friends who think of one another and the Norbertine Community of Queens Park every day and who get together at least once per month.

