



...IN THE WORLD, BUT NOT OF IT, FOR CHRIST!

## BONAVENTURE AND HIS LESSONS ON ST. FRANCIS:

### Chapter V—The Austerity of Francis' Life and the comfort Which Creatures Gave Him

7. Francis did his utmost to encourage the friars to lead austere lives, but he had no time for exaggerated self-denial which excluded tender compassion or was not tempered with discretion. One night a friar who had fasted too long was tormented with hunger and could get no rest. Like a good shepherd, Francis realized how badly he was faring and called him. Then he put some bread before him and advised him gently to eat it, and began to eat himself first, to avoid embarrassing him. The friar overcame his embarrassment and began to



eat; he was overjoyed at seeing the saint's exquisite tact which enabled him to relieve his material needs and gave him such a wonderful example. In the morning Francis called the whole community together and told them what had happened, taking the opportunity to tell them, "You should take an example from the charity involved, not from the fact that we indulged in food." He also taught them to practice prudence, not the prudence recommended by our fallen nature, but that practiced by Christ whose life is the model of all perfection.

Bonaventure—Major Life of St. Francis (1263)



### VISITOR'S MESSAGE Homily by Fr. Robert Altier... True God and True Man



Reading I (Numbers 6:22-27)  
Reading II (Galatians 4:4-7)  
Gospel (St. Luke 2:16-21)

In the second reading that we heard today from Saint Paul's Letter to the Galatians, he said, "In the fullness of time God sent forth His Son born of a woman." This is something that we will never be able to comprehend: that the Son of God, the Second Person of the Most Holy Trinity, would become man. The point of today's feast is to very clearly make the point to us that the child to whom Our Lady gave birth is God. This is something that many Christian people do not want to believe. They want to believe in something like the heresy of adoptionism, where it says that Jesus was born just like we are and then somewhere along the line, whether that would be the minute after he was born or whether that would be at the time of his baptism or whether it was at twelve years old, they will give you a variety of different time frames, but they want to say that at that point God looked down

upon Jesus and saw that he was so virtuous and upright that He decided to make him His son. Now that not only is the heresy of adoptionism, but what it would really do if we believe that is make Jesus two persons because we would be claiming that he was born as a human person and somewhere along the line he became divine. There is a man by the name of Nestorius who made that same point historically, saying that Jesus is God but He is also a man, so therefore He is both a divine person and a human person right from the womb. That would make Jesus a true and perfect schizophrenic but it is not our faith; in fact, it was condemned back in the 300's. So the point of this feast, which is celebrated on the octave day of Christmas, is to make very clear to us that the child born of Our Lady is a divine person. She is the Mother of God, and to say that she is the Mother of God means that the child conceived in her womb is not a human person. A person can only be one person and we cannot change to become another person. Therefore,

from the first moment of His conception, Jesus Christ is God because as a divine person He has existed from all eternity. There was never a time when He did not exist, yet what He chose to do was to take a human nature – not a human person, but a human nature – to Himself. Therefore, He took our human body, our human blood, a human soul just like ours, but He did not take a human personality to Himself because He is already a person. And so He truly was human but He was not a human person.

Now if this seems a little bit confusing, all we need to do is consider that for all eternity we will never be able to comprehend this mystery. We will believe it, we will even worship it, but we will never comprehend it. Even more wonderful is that for all eternity the human nature of Jesus Christ will never comprehend this mystery. In His divine nature, He has a divine mind. He is God; therefore, He understands it perfectly. In His human nature, He has a human mind which is finite. And because this is an absolute and infinite mystery, in His human mind He will never understand this mystery completely. So if even Our Lord in His humanness cannot understand it completely neither will we. But what that means is for all eternity we will be filled with wonder and awe as we look upon Our Lord and as we look upon the miracle, the entirely supernatural reality, of what took place in the womb of Our Blessed Lady.

Again, we must be very clear that to say she is the Mother of God does not imply in any way that Jesus became God. Not only did He not become God outside of the womb, He did not become God in the womb. He is God from all eternity and His divinity cannot change. So when He was conceived, He was conceived as a divine person, not as a human person. All that He took to Himself was our human nature. We see how much God loves us in this way, that He would desire to become one of us, that He would desire to experience everything that we experience rather than just simply saying, “Why don’t I come down into the world like Adam did, as an adult, spend a couple of hours on earth and die on the Cross?” He chose instead to live exactly as we do: to be conceived, to develop in the womb, to be born, to live a simple hidden life, and a life of one indeed who was rejected. And so as we go through our lives, we are able

in all things to understand, we are able to relate to what happened to Jesus. Or shall we look at it the other way: that He is able to relate to us? We cannot ever look at God and say, “You don’t understand,” because He did it all for us.

And out of love for us, He chose the single most incredible creature ever made. He created her for Himself, but He created her for us. We have to understand that as we celebrate this feast of the divine maternity of Our Lady – that is, Our Lady as the Mother of God – this has great implications for us because each one of us through our baptism has been made a member of Jesus Christ. And each one of us through our baptism has become a partaker of the divine nature. We do not become God *per se*; the difference between Jesus and us is not merely that He is God from all eternity and took a human nature to Himself, and we who are human have now taken a divine nature to ourselves, but rather in Jesus it is a substantial union. In us, it is an accidental union, which means that we do not actually become the Second Person of the Trinity; we do not become God but we share in His nature. And because we share in the divine nature, we have a share in the divine life, if indeed we are in the state of sanctifying grace. Then the only thing that we can say is that Our Lady is our mother too. She is our spiritual mother because she gave birth to the Head of the Mystical Body, and a mother does not give birth merely to a head, she gives birth to the fullness of the person. So it is with Our Lady. She gave birth to both the Head and the Body. She gave birth to God, and in a spiritual way she also gives birth to all of those who will be members of the very Son of God Himself – and that is us.

So when we hear those words from the Book of Numbers, that beautiful blessing of the Israelite people – “May God bless you and let His face shine upon you and be gracious unto you” – above all He has done that to Our Lady. But as I mentioned just a moment ago, it is not a mystery that is separated from us, but rather it is a mystery into which each one of us has been drawn. Each one of us shares in that blessing because as members of Jesus Christ His countenance is shining upon us. We are united with Christ.

*\* This text was transcribed from the audio recording of a homily by Father Robert Altier with minimal editing.*



## **ADMINISTRATOR'S MESSAGE...**

### **On Love**

And, so we begin. A new year that is. Perhaps the most difficult year in many of our lives here in America. We have only a few clues of what lies ahead based on

what we hear in the media, but we are in trouble as a nation. We are being led by national leaders who put no trust, or hope, or even belief for that matter in God or His call to us for goodness. Worse than that they can't seem to work together. They lack peace, which is not a

big surprise considering their focus. We can only pray God remembers us and saves us, from ourselves.

The simple fact is that we are all God's creatures. He created us, and He loves us. Evil is His absence, but evil is real, as without evil free will is unnecessary. He gave us free will, and it is a sure sign we have to choose between things to use it. Between evil and good. We know we need to choose good. Our society seems to care less, but we need to care, in every decision we make.

God doesn't make us choose anything. No different for us than for Adam and Eve, our first parents. They had the choice of the first evil in front of them from their first moment of existence. They were not to eat of the tree of good and evil, but we know what happened. They freely chose to eat from it. Yes, they got their encouragement from Mr. Evil himself, but they still had to say 'yes' to it. They did and all the evil now in our world is the fruit of that decision.

Yet, God moves in it. That is where He is today, and always. In the middle of His creation. He is powerful and mighty and in all things infinite. He is infinite in His Wisdom, infinite in His Power, and infinite in His Love.

Dr. Eben Alexander, M.D., a neurosurgeon, had a near-death experience. He went into a brain induced coma a few years ago, in 2008 to be exact, due to an E. coli infection. He was agnostic in viewpoint before that experience, although he had Christian upbringing (not Catholic), but after it he became an advocate of promoting God, and heaven, and the afterlife, for he had experienced it. Dr. Alexander was given a tour of the afterlife and learned that not only was God real and fabulous beyond words, but that all He had created was beautiful beyond description and included numerous other universes with populated worlds in them. Dr. Alexander recorded all this in his book "Proof of Heaven:

A Neurosurgeon's Journey into the Afterlife", Simon and Schuster Paperbacks, Copyright: 2012, by Eben Alexander.\*

Dr. Alexander discovered, God is love. Pure and unadulterated love. He loves all things he created and He maintains all things in His Love. In the words of Dr. Alexander, "Love is, without a doubt, the basis of everything. Not some abstract, hard-to-fathom kind of love but the day-to-day kind that everyone knows—the kind of love we feel when we look at our spouse or children, or even our animals. In its purest and most powerful form, this love is not jealous or selfish, but unconditional. This is the reality of realities, the incomprehensibly glorious truth of truths that lives and breathes at the core of everything that exists or ever will exist, and no remotely accurate understanding of who and what we are can be achieved by anyone who does not know it, and embody it in all of their actions."

So, Jesus is pure Love, God in motion in our lives, and the universe around us. His life, and sacrificial death, is the truth of God's enduring, unconditional, love and it is this life he is calling us all to live, in Him, forever. We know that but we do well to keep this in mind as we go into the new year and the rest of our lives. Our Rule helps us to do that for we live a Rule given to us by a great Saint that is one of the narrow paths that lead to heaven. We need to live this Rule as our gift to God, out of love for Him. What a mission we have! What a joy!

May the Lord bless us all and lead us to Himself. Happy New year to all!

(\*While such anecdotes can be edifying for people of faith, the Doctor's story remains in the realm of private revelation. The BSP submits to the authority of the Church in these and all matters.)

Bruce and Shelley Fahey BSP Administrators, Morning Star Chapter, Minnesota



## NO GREATER LOVE by Paul Beery BSP

"In a loud voice Elizabeth exclaimed, 'Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb! But **why am I so favored that the Mother of my Lord should come to me? Blessed is she who has believed** that what the Lord said to her will be accomplished!'" (Luke 1:42-45)

Jesus looks for faith such as Mary exhibited at the Annunciation, and acknowledged by Elizabeth at the Visitation. He gives the ultimate compliment to those who follow Him long after He left the earth: "Blessed are those who have not seen, yet have believed." In this New Year as the world is engulfed in the darkness of unbelief, we need to be reminded that a certain spiritual warfare is the natural condition of life on earth for disciples of Christ. There are also super-natural virtues needed for this combat, such as a love for poverty, humility and

obedience as shown by our Blessed Mother.

Francis had a special insight into the human condition, favored by the Mother of his Lord coming to him. He gives a masterful account of his understanding of the Gospel by speaking through Lady Poverty, on the renunciation of attachment to worldly goods. Lay people shouldn't be spooked when Francis speaks of his love for 'Lady Poverty.' Obviously he was able to embrace material poverty in a measure not possible for us, but the





spirit of poverty, detachment and humility are essential for all of us. The work "Francis and His Lady Poverty," completed the year after Francis died, is so true to his spirit it could have been written by his own hand. It makes an excellent meditation.

There is a good explanation in the introduction to this work (from the Omnibus):

*"Francis came to resemble Christ so perfectly that the people spoke of him*

*as 'the Christ of Umbria.' One thing above all else in Christ caught Francis' attention, the total renunciation, the absolute poverty of Christ. 'The Word was with God. The Word was God.' But when the 'Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, He emptied Himself, taking the form of a slave,' our own human nature, He embraced poverty and took poverty to be His spouse. When Jesus came into the world at Bethlehem, He found His spouse, Lady Poverty, there in the cave to welcome Him. Throughout His life on earth, His Lady Poverty walked at His side. In His hour of disgrace, when He was abandoned by His chosen ones, when He was mocked, spit upon, and scourged, Lady Poverty was at His side. When He was hung upon the Cross, she remained with Him. Dante says (Paradiso, Canto XI) that even though His Mother Mary had to remain beneath the Cross, Lady Poverty mounted the Cross to hold Christ in her arms and consoled Him until He died. But when Christ left this world to return to His Father in heaven, Lady Poverty was left an outcast in this world. Francis resolved, therefore, to make her his own and take her for his bride as Christ had done.*

*"Looking upon poverty as especially dear to the Son of God, though it was spurned throughout the whole world, Francis sought to espouse it in perpetual charity. Therefore, after he had become a lover of her beauty, he not only left his father and mother, but even put aside all things, that he might cling to her more closely as his spouse and that they might be two in one spirit."<sup>1</sup>*

Francis was not the first to embrace Lady Poverty. Mary and Joseph realized very quickly that the Son of God embraced poverty at His very birth, being born in a stable. The Holy Family was forced to flee into Egypt in the utmost poverty. During His ministry Jesus said, "The Son of Man has no place to lay His head." There is a huge lesson in detachment from the things of earth here. "Every one of you who does not renounce all that he possesses, cannot be My disciple." As Jesus embraced

poverty, Francis was no doubt taught by Lady Mary to embrace "Lady Poverty" in imitation of Christ. In the following excerpt from "Francis and His Lady Poverty," **Lady Poverty is speaking** of the fervor in Apostolic times, through the Roman persecution, and down to the time of St. Francis:

*"The Apostles and all the disciples observed all the things they heard from their Lord and Master with the greatest diligence. They carried out the message of salvation themselves like the bravest of soldiers and like judges of the world. They were aflame with love, abounded in the spirit of piety, and devoted themselves to the needs of everyone. The truth of their words remained for a long time among many, as long as the Blood of the poor Crucified One was warm in their memory and the overflowing chalice of His Passion filled their hearts unto inebriation. I was always with them, always keeping alive in their memory the sorrows of the passion of the eternal King, so they willingly bore the iron that tore at their bodies. Enduring, this victory lasted for a long time, so that each day a thousand thousands were sealed with the seal of the Most High King. (Rev. 7:3)*

*"But alas! After not too long a time, "peace" was made, and that "peace" was more disastrous than any war. In the beginning few were sealed; toward the middle, still fewer; and at the end, very few indeed.*

*"And now certainly in peace is my bitterness most bitter when all flee from me, all drive me away; I am needed by none, I am abandoned by all. Peace was granted me by my enemies, but not by my own; peace from strangers, but not from my own children. Indeed, I have brought up my children, and exalted them: but they have despised me." (See how similar these words are to the sentiments of the Sacred Heart concerning the ingratitude of mankind)*

*"At that time, when the lamp of the Lord shined over my head, and I walked by His light in the darkness, the devil raged in many who were with me, the world beckoned to them, and the flesh was lusting in them, so much so that many began to love the world and the things that are in the world.*

*"But the consummation of all virtues, that is, the Lady Persecution, to whom God has given the kingdom of heaven, just as He has given it to me, was at my side, a faithful assistant in all things, a powerful helper, a prudent adviser; when she saw any who grew tepid in charity, or who forgot for a little the things of heaven and set their heart upon the things of this earth in any way, she immediately thundered forth, immediately moved up her army; and immediately shame covered the faces of my sons, so much so that they sought the name of the Lord. Now, however, my sister (Lady*

1 Celano, *Second Life*, #55.

Persecution) has left me, and the very light of my eyes has failed me, for while my children have rest from persecutors, they are torn even more cruelly by domestic and internal war, provoking one another, envying one another in the acquisition of riches and in an abundance of pleasures.

"Indeed, with the lapse of time, some began to breathe again and to walk along by their own will along the proper way, the way some had walked along earlier, compelled by necessity. These all came to me begging me earnestly with many prayers and tears to make with them a treaty of perpetual peace and to remain with them as I was with them of old in the days of my youth, when the Almighty was with me; and my servants round about me." (Early Franciscans imitating the early Christians) "They were men of virtue, men of peace, blameless in holiness

before God our Father, persisting in fraternal love so long as they lived in the flesh, poor in spirit, possessing nothing, rich in holiness of life, abounding in the gifts of the heavenly charismata, fervent in spirit, rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, meek and humble of heart, preserving cheerful unity in their associations with one another. Finally these men were devoted to God, pleasing to the angels, beloved of men, strict with themselves, gentle toward others, devout in deed, modest in walk, cheerful of countenance, earnest of heart, humble in prosperity, magnanimous in adversity, temperate at table, most simple in dress, very sparing in sleep, modest and reserved, and conspicuous by the splendor of their good deeds. My soul was joined fast with theirs, and there was one spirit and one faith in us."<sup>2</sup> (To be continued.)

2 Francis and His Lady Poverty, Paragraphs 32-37

Paul Beery BSP, Morning Star Chapter, Minnesota



## The age of Mary... A MEDITATION by Janet Klasson BSP

From the Gospel reading on the Solemnity of the Mother of God

**"But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart."**  
(Luke 2:19)

It is unlikely that anyone within the reach of this newsletter would disagree that the age of Mary is upon us. Long have we been waiting for the privileged time when Christ will once again reveal himself through the "Fiat!" of his most holy Mother. As I was preparing this newsletter I happened upon this quote from one of Fr. Altier's homilies:

*"Saint Louis de Montfort says that the kingdom of Mary must be established firmly on earth before the kingdom of Christ will come, and that as Our Lady came before Jesus two thousand years ago so it will happen again. The first time, for both Our Lady and Our Lord, it was very much hidden; this time, for neither will it be hidden. Our Lady is going to come to establish justice on the earth and that is going to be followed by a lengthy period of peace."*

Certainly this falls in line with the messages of approved apparitions such as Fatima, Lourdes, and Akita, and indeed with many of the messages from apparitions that have not yet been either approved or condemned by the Church. So we are filled with joyful hope, even though the messages often come with warnings of chastisement if the world does not repent. When we see the depths of sin into which the world has fallen without having given any credence to the Mother of God there is little else to do but pray that God will soon put an end to the reign

evil through the Triumph of her most Immaculate Heart. We look forward to the Sabbath rest that has been foretold to follow the time of correction that is coming to the world.

It is good for us to ponder Our Lady's messages on any feast day of Mary, but most especially at the beginning of a new year. She has given us an example to follow. She who pondered invites us also to internalize all that Jesus presents to us through her.

This is especially true for penitents. Mary herself was a silent penitent throughout her life, most notably when she had to endure so many years on earth without Jesus after his ascension. Imagine the loss that must have been for her! Her Heart was in heaven, while her body remained on earth. What agony! What she desired more than life itself, she set aside in deference to the holy, unfathomable will of God. What we owe to those years of suffering we will not know fully until it is revealed to us in heaven. What we do know is that in every moment of her life, Mary freely chose to die to self rather than live outside the will of God. Penitents and all souls would do well to ponder on and imitate the heroic virtue of our Blessed Mother.

In his "[Treatise on True Devotion to the Blessed Virgin](#)," St. Louis-Marie de Montfort explains how we need Mary in order to die to ourselves:

*"...In order to empty ourselves of self, we must die daily to ourselves. This involves our renouncing what the powers of the soul and the senses of the body incline us to do. We must see as if we did not see, hear as if we did not hear and use the things of this world as if we did not use them. This is what St. Paul calls "dying daily". Unless the grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single grain and does not bear any good fruit. If we do not die to self and if our holiest devotions do not lead us to this necessary and fruitful death, we shall not bear fruit of any worth and our devotions will cease to be profitable. All our good works will be tainted by self-love and self-will so that our greatest sacrifices and our best actions will be unacceptable to God. Consequently when we come to die we shall find ourselves devoid of virtue and merit and discover that we do not possess even one spark of that pure love which God shares only with those who have died to themselves and whose life is hidden with Jesus Christ in him."<sup>3</sup>*

The devotion to which St. Louis-Marie de Montfort refers is "total consecration" to the Blessed Virgin in the aspect

3 St. Louis-Marie de Montfort, *True Devotion to the Blessed Virgin*, No. 81

of holy slavery. He says, "we must choose among all the devotions to the Blessed Virgin the one which will lead us more surely to this dying to self. This devotion will be the best and the most sanctifying for us." He explains that while all approved Marian devotions are bound to bear good fruit, total consecration is a short-cut to holiness and the most expedient route to the Heart of Jesus.

The Montfortian 33 day consecration is meant to end on a feast day of Our Lady. The next possible consecration day is February 11, the feast day of Our Lady of Lourdes. The pre-consecration preparation period would begin on January 9. If you would like to order a free booklet outlining this devotion please visit this website: <http://www.myconsecration.org/>. Otherwise the booklet in its entirety is available on various Catholic websites including this one: <http://www.fisheaters.com/totalconsecrationmontfort.html>.

So I encourage all who have not already done so to make this important act of consecration to Our Blessed Mother. The Montfortian consecration is probably the most profitable one available and was credited by Blessed Pope John Paul II to having been the reason he devoted his papacy to Our Lady. Once we have made our consecration we too can take as our own the motto he chose for his papal crest: "Totus Tuus". Mary, most holy Mother of God, we are totally yours! Amen.

## From [www.pelianito.stblogs.com](http://www.pelianito.stblogs.com)

### **Song of Songs 6:1 Where has your lover gone, O most beautiful among women? Where has your lover gone that we may seek him with you?**

*"My child, my beloved, seek me, desire me, draw me down to earth as my Mother did, the most beautiful of all women. There was never an instant of her life in which she did not yearn for me—even before she knew whom she yearned for. And how, as a child, could she have imagined the way in which the object of her yearning would come to her? Yet it was her sweet yearning, unknowing and innocent, that drew me down, attracting me like the strongest magnet. I longed to make myself fully known to her who desired me above all else, she who wed herself to me even in her mother's womb. Oh, to describe such a love to mere creatures—it is beyond words! My children, how singular was this love that drew me down! Singular, unrepeatable, and yet I make available to you its merits and graces. Unite yourself to her in consecration and in the Divine Will. Give me again her desire. What joy it will give me to once again have a little child offering me that singular gift! And if many do so, I tell you all of heaven will come down as it did on the night of the Nativity, to see the love that drew God from heaven to earth. Ponder this, my children. What can you not do when such love is within your grasp? You will have the Infant King in your womb and in your heart."*

O Jesus! Beloved! What grace! What glory! In the Divine Will I offer you the pure desire of the Blessed Virgin, her yearning, her perfect love. In me, O Lord, I want you to find your Mother at every stage of her life calling you down as Savior and Lover. Marantatha! Come, my Beloved! I yearn for you! Come!

Janet Klasson BSP, Divine Mercy Chapter, Canada

(The messages on the Pelianito Journal blog are the fruit of Janet's *lectio divina*. She submits all messages to her spiritual director, a Catholic priest. You may read his remarks here: <http://pelianito.stblogs.com/on-private-revelation/>.)





## FROM THE 'SPARROW'

### The Choice...

The peace of Jesus be yours. In the time of St. Francis of Assisi the world to him was rich, diverse, and colorful. So much so that he knew he needed reliable help for his journey through it and for this he relied on Christ alone. If we also do not wish to lose our way and roam around without direction then we too must rely on Christ and Him alone.

As Christians, Franciscans, and little sparrows we will find our greatest help in Christ. Only He can sort out this puzzle of our modern day world and put the pieces of our live in the right places. I trust Him and I know there is no other like Him and there is no other choice for me or any other sparrow...it is Christ and Christ alone.

When we claim our identity as Christians, we continue to receive evidence from Him that there is no other way. To be Christian in today's world is not easy. Every day we must choose between the way of Christ and all other paths. We know, and are assured, that finally Christ will gain the victory over all His enemies and that it will be a victory of love. This hope encourages us to endure to the end, when we will share the final victory of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Until that time, alas, failures and sufferings will continue to be part of our path. But, my dear little sparrows, it is worth our sacrifice to walk on the way of Christ. This is worth more than all the money in the world, more than the world itself. May you be found at the close of life to have made "the choice for Christ."

May you be graced with the blessings of our good and gracious God!

### Sad news from the Sparrow...

The peace of Jesus to each of you. I am sad to relate, that for the time being, I must take my leave of writing to you.

This is a medical holding prison. The actual prison hospital is about a mile away. I was sent here five years ago for treatment of failing kidneys and liver, along with five other conditions, including insulin dependent diabetes. I did not receive any treatment whatsoever for the failing organs other than to tell me that they were indeed failing.

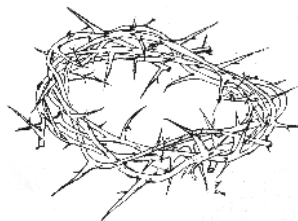
Recently I was supposed to see the doctor here for him to tell me that I was getting worse but that got canceled twice. That in itself was not so bad, for you become used to indifference by the medical staff. Many people die here all the time without much compassion or consideration. However, all my prescriptions were allowed to expire. After several days of no medications, I was able to obtain some of them. Although one of the most important ones were left out and as I've taken it for many years I've started into a withdrawal state and my become very toxic. Without this medication and with failing kidneys and liver I do not have presence of mind nor physical strength to continue.

As you have been my little family for so long I would ask you to pray for me as I enter into this very trying part of my walk....You've all been very special to me these last few years and I look forward to seeing you in the Kingdom.

*Casus non datur.* (There is no such thing as chance.)

Bob Hall BSP, Little Flower Chapter, N. Carolina

**Please remember to keep Bob and his sister Anne in your daily prayers. The Little Sparrow has been a great blessing to very many souls, and certainly the BSP has been richly blessed by the prayers and sacrifices of this holy brother. May Father Francis and St. Clare enfold him in their loving embrace, now and forever.**





# Excerpt from “THE SECRET OF THE ROSARY”

by St. Louis-Marie de Montfort

MONTFORT PUBLICATIONS, New York  
*Nihil Obstat and Imprimatur, 1954*

## FORTY-SIXTH ROSE: GROUP RECITATION

THERE ARE SEVERAL ways of saying the Holy Rosary, but that which gives Almighty God the greatest glory, does the most for our souls and which the devil fears more than any other, is that of saying or chanting the Rosary publicly in two groups.

Almighty God is very pleased to have people gathered together in prayer; the angels and the blessed unite to praise Him unceasingly. The just on earth in several communities join in communal prayer night and day. Our Blessed Lord expressly recommended common prayer to His Apostles and disciples and promised that whenever two or three were gathered together in His name He would be there in the midst of them. (Cf. Matt. 18:20)

What a wonderful thing to have Jesus Christ in our midst! And the only thing we have to do to get Him to come is to say the Rosary in a group. This is why the early Christians often gathered together to pray in spite of all the Roman Emperor's persecutions and the fact that assemblies were forbidden. They preferred to risk the danger of death rather than to miss their gatherings, at which Our Lord was present.

This way of praying is of the greatest benefit to our souls because:

1. Normally our minds are far more alert during public prayer than they are when we pray alone.
2. When we pray in common, the prayer of each one belongs to us all and these make but one great prayer together, so that **if one person is not praying well, someone else in the same gathering who prays better may make up for his deficiency.** In this way those who are strong uphold the weak, those who are fervent inspire the lukewarm, the rich enrich the poor, the bad are counted as good. How can a measure of cockle be sold? This can be done very easily by mixing it up with four or five barrels of good wheat.
3. Somebody who says his Rosary alone only gains the merit of one Rosary, but **if he says it together with thirty other people he gains the merit of thirty Rosaries.** This is the law of public prayer. How profitable, how advantageous this is!
4. Urban VIII, who was very pleased to see how devotion to the Holy Rosary had spread in Rome and how it was being said in two groups or choirs, particularly at the convent of Santa Maria Sopra Minerva, attached one hundred days' extra indulgence, *toties quoties*, whenever the Rosary was said in two choirs. This was set out in his brief "*Ad perpetuam rei memoriam*," written in the year 1626. So every time you say the Rosary in two groups you gain one hundred days' extra indulgence.
5. Public prayer is far more powerful than private prayer to appease the anger of God and call down His Mercy and Holy Mother Church, guided by the Holy Ghost, has always advocated public prayer in times of public tragedy and suffering.



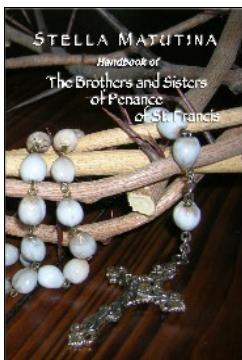


## MORNING STAR: NEWS ON THE ASSOCIATION...

### HOW TO DONATE TO THE BSP...

From time to time we get a question on how to donate to the BSP. Statute Article 15 says in part: "Since the penitent is to financially support their home chapter of the Brothers and Sisters of Penance of St. Francis and the work of this Association, a portion of one's tithe may go to this cause." Should you wish to make a donation to the Association, you have a few choices. You may mail a check or money order to Bruce Fahey at the following address: **65774 County Road 31, Northome, Minnesota 56661**. Or if you like you may submit using Paypal by sending a money transfer to Shelley Fahey at [jasp102577@aol.com](mailto:jasp102577@aol.com). The Paypal option works well for those outside of the USA. Donations to The Brothers and Sisters of Penance of St. Francis are exempt from tax in the USA.

### HANDBOOK OF THE ASSOCIATION...



The BSP Handbook, titled ***Stella Matutina: Handbook of The Brothers and Sisters of Penance of St. Francis*** is now available for order. We have used a print-on-demand service at Lulu.com to print the book. This means we do not have to keep a stockpile of books, but customers order directly from Lulu, which prints them as they are ordered and ships them directly to the customer. This simplifies the ordering process for the administrators.

There is a link to the ordering page on our BSP Homepage. You will need a credit card or a Paypal account to order. Cost is \$10.00 plus shipping.

**Bruce and Paul also have copies available.**

May the Rule of 1221 lead many souls on the path to holiness.

Bruce and Shelley Fahey, Administrators



## The BROTHERS AND SISTERS OF PENANCE OF ST. FRANCIS

A.k.a. BSP, is a non-profit Private Association of the Faithful, which is dedicated to renewing the ancient way of penance as contained in the First Rule of the Third Order of St. Francis of 1221 for lay people in our modern world. We have the blessing of the Catholic Church to do this through several of its Archbishops, Bishops, and priests. If you are bound by another Rule of life in another profession of the way of St. Francis that does not permit you to enter other religious families you are nonetheless invited to add the elements of this beautiful way of life that Saint Francis of Assisi gave us to the lifestyle of your profession.

All members, and Franciscans, are welcome to submit articles for consideration for inclusion in this newsletter if they are directed towards the spiritual formation of members or are the outgrowth of the lifestyle of the Association. Just send them to the BSP at [minncc@aol.com](mailto:minncc@aol.com). Feel free to share this newsletter with your friends or neighbors. It is intended to be the primary monthly communication of the Association, and ongoing formation for all members and friends. And if you can find it in your heart and in your budget remember that donations to the BSP are used strictly to promote the lifestyle and are tax deductible.

We remain, always, sincerely yours in the love of Jesus Christ!

*Bruce and Shelley Fahey BSP, Editors*



**Welcome to the Brothers and Sisters of Penance!**

***In the world, but not of it, for Christ!***

**[Website: www.bspenance.org](http://www.bspenance.org)**



**The BROTHERS AND SISTERS OF  
PENANCE**



**of St. Francis  
65774 County Road 31,  
Northome, Minnesota 56661**