



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

## BONAVENTURE AND HIS LESSONS ON ST. FRANCIS:

### Chapter XI—Francis’ Grasp of Sacred Scripture and His Spirit of Prophecy

1. St. Francis had never studied Sacred Scripture, but the unwearied application to prayer and the continual practice of virtue had purified his spiritual vision, so that his keen intellect was bathed in the radiance of eternal light and penetrated its depths. Free from every stain, his genius pierced to the heart of its mysteries and by affective love he entered where theologians with their science stand outside. Once he had read something in the sacred books and understood its meaning, he impressed it indelibly on his memory; anything he had once grasped carefully, he meditated upon continually.

When the friars asked him if he would allow the learned men who were entering the Order to continue the study of Sacred Scripture, he replied, “I do not mind, provided that they do not neglect prayer, after the example of Christ of whom we are told that he prayed more than he studied. They should not study merely in order to have something to say; they should study so as to practice what they have learned and then encourage others to



do likewise. I want my friars to be true disciples of the Gospel and to progress in knowledge of truth in such a way as to grow in simplicity, without separating the simplicity of the dove from the cunning of the serpent, because our Lord himself joined them in one phrase.”

2. St. Francis was consulted at Siena by a religious who was a doctor of theology about a number of difficult questions, and he expounded the secrets of divine wisdom so clearly that the theologian was amazed and exclaimed, “His theology soars aloft on the wings of purity and contemplation, like an eagle in full flight, while our learning crawls along the ground.”

Francis was not an experienced teacher, but he had no lack of knowledge, so that he was able to resolve doubtful questions and bring all their implications to light. There is nothing strange in the fact that he should have been enlightened by God to understand the Scriptures; by his perfect conformity with Christ he practiced the truths which are contained in them and carried their Author in his heart by the abundant infusion of the Holy Spirit.

Bonaventure—Major Life of St. Francis (1263)



## VISITOR'S MESSAGE

### Homily by Fr. Robert Altier... All Souls Day

Reading I (Isaiah 25:6-9) Reading II (Romans 6:3-9) Gospel (St. John 11:17-27)

As the Church takes out this day to call to mind all of those faithful souls who have gone forth from this life and yet still await the

fullness of life in heaven, the souls who are being purified in the fires of Purgatory, it is incumbent upon us to first of all recognize that these are holy souls. These are people who cannot go backward; they can

only go forward. They cannot sin. They are people who died in the state of grace, they are all people who will go to heaven, and they are all people who are members of the Church, of the Mystical Body of Christ. Therefore, we are united with them and they are united with us, just as we are with the souls who are already in heaven.

This gives us an opportunity to practice charity because there is nothing that the souls in Purgatory can do for



themselves beyond what they are already doing. So it is a necessity for them that we pray for them, that we practice charity toward them to help them. Indeed, they are souls of the just who have been purified in this life to the point that they were able to die in the friendship of Christ. They are in a place where there is hope. They are happy in that way, but they are in a place of miserable suffering where all that is happening to them is that the effects of their sins are being purified from their soul. It is a purging; it is a burning that is going on, not a physical fire, but rather an interior burning that is taking place within their souls – and they want to get to heaven as soon as they possibly can. Now, because they are indeed holy souls who cannot sin, they can pray for us but they cannot do anything more for themselves. But we can. If we pray for them, we can be guaranteed that their gratitude will be overflowing and that they in turn will pray for us. It was Padre Pio who, whenever he needed something that was really major, always turned to the poor souls. They are suffering souls. They are souls who want to help. They are souls who want to do anything they can for us, but they are also souls who are dependent on us.

The tragedy is that most people do not think about them anymore. We do not hear about the poor souls; we do not have the devotion that we used to have. People used to say, "Offer it for the poor souls in Purgatory." You do not hear that very much anymore, but it is a necessity that we help them. Just think about the number of souls who lived a Christian life, who died repentant for their sins, but did not believe in Purgatory because they were not Catholic. That is where they are now (in the place they did not even believe existed!), and because in their life they did not believe it existed and they did not pray for anybody who was there, neither do they have anyone among their family and friends who believe that it exists and so no one is praying for them unless out of the generosity of our hearts we are willing to do so. Not only do we have our own family members and our own friends who are there, but there are many, many others who have no one to pray for them, forgotten souls because some people do not even believe. They need our help. As a matter of charity on our part, we need to pray for these souls; not just today, not just for this month that is dedicated to the poor souls, but every day we need to pray for the poor souls. We need to remember them regularly and offer up some of our sufferings and sacrifices for them. Ask for their help; ask for their intercession. These are holy souls. These are saints, not saints in the fullness of that yet (meaning that they are in heaven) but they are saints. They are in the state of grace; they are holy souls who want to pray, who want to help, who want to do what they can do for us if only we are willing to ask. That is the beauty of what the Mystical Body is about: We can help them and they can help us. We can help one another to get to heaven.

In praying for them and in doing good things for them,

we will also shorten the time that we will have to spend in Purgatory, which hopefully we will not need to spend any, but we never know. It is not a pleasant place and it is not a quick place, so we need to spend our time here trying to make sure that we are not going to have to spend our time there. And we need to spend our time here trying to help those who are there to be able to get as quickly as they can to the Beatific Vision. That is the charity that we as good Catholics need to have toward our brothers and sisters who are in Purgatory, because they cannot help themselves but we can. It is a matter of charity on our part to do what we can to help those who can do nothing more. That is the opportunity God is giving to us, and as always with God if we are willing to practice the charity of helping them we will be repaid many, many, many times over. We will help them, we will merit things for ourselves, we will grow in charity, we will cut time off of our own Purgatory, and we will have a higher place in heaven. It is a win-win situation: They are helped and we are helped. But do not worry about what you are going to get out of it; that would be the wrong reason to do it. Just, out of charity, pray for the poor souls so that they will be able to give to God the fullness of glory of which they are capable by entering as quickly as possible into the Beatific Vision.

In the Gospel reading today, Our Lord looks at Martha and says to her, Your brother will rise again. And Martha, acknowledging the faith that not all the Jewish people had, was willing to say, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day." Now this is something that was relatively new for some of the Jews. In fact, to this day many of the Jewish people completely disregard the concept of a resurrection. Yet, at the same time, Martha is recognizing the promises that Our Lord Himself had made about the resurrection from the dead, but at this point she did not quite understand that Our Lord was the resurrection. And so Our Lord puts the question to her and says that anyone who believes in Him though he should die will live forever. He tells her, I am the Resurrection and the Life, then looks at her and says, Do you believe this? And she acknowledges what is the truth: "Yes, Lord, I have come to believe."

That is exactly what we have to be willing to do as well. We have to understand, number one, that our souls are immortal. It does not matter what we do to ourselves; we cannot kill our souls. They will live for eternity because that is the way God created them. They have a beginning in time and they will have no end. And we know that there are only two possibilities for eternity, and that is heaven and hell. Purgatory, again, is the place of purification. It is a temporary place and all the souls in Purgatory will go to heaven when their purification is complete. But we also have to understand that our bodies are going to live. Our bodies will lie in death until the day of the Lord, until His return. On the day of the Second Coming, when Our Lord calls all to Himself, that will be the day of the

resurrection. This very body that is sitting here – your body, my body – will rise from the dead. We are not going to get some new, little, sleek body; we are going to get a glorified body and it is going to be your own body, the one that God gave you, not another. That is critically important for us to understand, first of all, the dignity we have right now in both body and soul, and, secondly, it would not be you if it were not your body. God loves you for who you are, so He is not going to give you a fake body. He is not going to give you somebody else's body, He is not going to give you some sort of a replacement, but He is going to give you our own body because you are defined as a composite of body and soul. The fullness of who you are includes not only your soul but your body as well.

The souls in heaven, as well as those in Purgatory, await the resurrection of their bodies. Their bodies will rise and they will be reunited with them. They will live for eternity both body and soul in heaven. For the souls in hell, they wish that their bodies would not rise – but it will – and they will live in the absolute horror of the fullness of their humanity in hell, body and soul, for the rest of eternity. So we realize that in God's mercy He Who made us to be fully human is going to keep us that way. Because of our choice to choose death instead of life, our bodies and souls will be separated temporarily, but they will be rejoined and they will live together for eternity.

For now, we must pray and we must seek to live the proper kind of life, recognizing that our body is the temple of the Holy Spirit. Saint Paul says, Do you not know that anyone who destroys the temple of the Spirit, God will destroy him? Your body is that temple. So it is not something where we can treat the body

badly and then say, "Well, it's no big deal because it's just going to die and my soul isn't." No, both body and soul are united. We need to recognize our dignity, the fullness of our dignity as human persons, and we need to live accordingly. If we have violated ourselves in either body or soul or both, then we need to get that taken care of, to get to Confession and be forgiven so that we can glorify God even now in the fullness of our humanity. That is just mere preparation for eternity. That is what the saints are awaiting. That is what the souls in Purgatory long for. And that is what we have an opportunity now to prepare for, to live a life of holiness in body and soul in preparation for a life of holiness for eternity in both body and soul; and, in the meantime, to use our bodies as Saint Paul says to glorify God, to offer them as a living sacrifice to God our spiritual worship so that our bodies share fully in what it is that we are doing here in our attempt to glorify God even in this world, because the more we glorify Him here, the more we will glorify Him in heaven. That is our opportunity now as we look forward to the reality of death to be able to know that death is merely a passage and that it is only – even for the body – temporary; for the soul, it is never even touched by death unless we have chosen it, unless we choose mortal sin over God and we choose to enter into eternal death. Even then the soul does not die; it simply is separated from God, which is the most horrifying thing we can imagine. So we live in this life, striving for perfect union with God, striving to live lives of holiness in body and soul, so that we have prepared ourselves then for what we will do for all eternity: to worship God, to glorify Him in the fullness of our person – both body and soul.

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



## ADMINISTRATOR'S MESSAGE...

### November

November is a busy month for us, in the Church and in our lives following the Rule of 1221. It is worth considering that as we approach it.

#### **November 1—All Saints Day**

November 1 is itself a Solemnity. As it falls this year it is a Sunday and so it gives no special relief from the regular fasting and abstinence of the Rule. It adds a day of fasting for us, at least until Easter, of course, pursuant to Article 8 of the Rule. From All Saints to Easter we fast on Wednesdays and Fridays, not just Fridays. RULE: ARTICLE 8

**From the Pasch of the Resurrection to the feast of All Saints they are to fast on Fridays. From the**

**feast of All Saints until Easter they are to fast on Wednesdays and Fridays, but still observing the other fasts enjoined in general by the Church.**

It also calls us to reflect on the lives of the Saints. All the Saints, which is everyone in heaven and the Church Triumphant. Also all of us here, in the Church Militant, struggling to become Saints. The call of the Church is certainly that we should all be trying to live holy lives. That calls us to keep the Church and each other in our prayers, and do all we can to help those around us lead holy lives.

#### **November 2 - All Souls Day**

St. Francis had a special love for All Souls day. He was very concerned about 'all souls', as his desire was that all people would find the Lord and be saved and he

moved through his life with a constant awareness of people and their need to be saved. His Rules were in fact drafted to provide paths to people to find eternal life, and the Rule of 1221, the Rule we follow, was given to the laity specifically to provide them with a way to live that would result in their salvation. Because of this special love for people he requested that his followers pray for the souls of others, living and dead, and for this reason he put Article 24 in the Rule.

#### **RULE: ARTICLE 24**

**In addition, every year, for the welfare of the brothers and sisters living and dead, each priest is to say three Masses, each member knowing the Psalter is to recite it, and the rest shall say one hundred Our Fathers with the Requiem aeternam at the end of each.**

This article of the Rule has been associated with All Souls day and so at this time of year we call everyone in the Association to pray for the living and dead as St. Francis requested. There is no actual deadline given as to when this must be accomplished but this date is the trigger that calls us to make this sacrifice and at least plan these prayers or even complete them.

There are more than 500 psalms in the Divine Office that we say over the four weeks, i.e. Weeks I, II, III, and IV, of the Four Week Psalter, so we must assume that St. Francis was simply calling people to pray the Divine Office for the day, i.e. November 2, for the brothers and sisters, living or dead when he mentions the Psalter. Otherwise, we should pray 100 Our Fathers with the Requiem aeternam (May the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen) at the end of each. Usually that is what

we do, in addition of course to saying the Divine Office as part of our daily prayer. The simple fact is that each penitent can decide how they want to pray to fulfill this element of our Rule.

#### **November 11—Feast of St. Martin of Tours**

This is a very important date. St. Francis had a special love for St. Martin of Tours, and used his feast day to launch the Christmas fast in his Rules. So, on November 12, the day after the feast on St. Martin, we begin our 40 day Advent fast. Each penitent can decide how they will fast during this very special and holy season. The fast ends on Christmas. Article 9 of our Rule covers this.

#### **RULE: ARTICLE 9**

**They are to fast daily, except on account of infirmity or any other need, throughout the fast of St. Martin from after said day until Christmas, and throughout the greater fast from Carnival Sunday until Easter.**

Also during Advent we are all encouraged to go to daily Mass when we can.

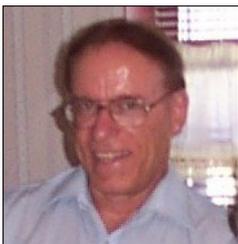
#### **November 26—Thanksgiving**

Enjoy your Thanksgiving, and November, and give thanks and praise to God for all His gifts.

In closing we would like to take this opportunity to notify everyone that another BSP member, Mark Spencer, who lives in Miami, Florida, completed formation and professed to his bishop, Fernando Isern, to live the Rule of 1221 this year. So, congratulations and God's blessing to Mark Spencer from all of us!

May the Lord bless and lead us all.

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



### **NO GREATER LOVE by Paul Beery, BSP**

**“Who may ascend the mountain of the LORD? Who may stand in his holy place? The man with clean hands and a pure heart, who desires not worthless things...” (Psalm 24:3-4)**

Our holy father St. Francis puts great emphasis on doing penance. He calls us the Brothers and Sisters of Penance. This can be especially fruitful during our second lent, from the day following the Feast of St. Martin November 11, until Christmas. There has to be a reason for that, especially for those of us who find various forms of penance distasteful. Yet it is an integral part of our life as followers of St. Francis, who has laid down in his Rule many specific forms of penance.

Fr. Robert Altier, our Retreat Master for several BSP Retreats, and our Visitor, gave perhaps the best talks

on penance I have ever heard. Providence has placed them once more in my hands, and now onto these pages. I'd like to present the following in the form of notes I took while listening to the conferences from his first retreat.

Father begins with giving an understanding of the proper essence of who we are. Most don't like the very notion of penance because it means giving things up, making sacrifices, all the things we don't like to do. "When I consider my sins, I realize just how much penance I have to do. I see how badly I have offended my Lord, and I owe it to Him to do this." Focus on God,

not on self. Who am I, why should I be doing penance? Recognize your dignity, made in the Image and Likeness of God, who is Love. "Love consists of this: not that we have loved God, but He has first loved us." Expiation for our sins. Demonstrated on the Cross. So we must love one another through the Cross, demonstrated only in suffering, in perseverance. Love is a virtue, of charity. The essence of penance is charity. Charity is the very nature of our being, what we are called to do.

The order God created has become chaos. Rise above by the New Covenant. Hebrews 12: draw near to God. How? As He drew near to us: His Mother and His Cross. On Calvary both were present. Can't get away from the Cross. In the Old Testament, all was at arms distance. We are now a member of Jesus Christ, drawn into the heart of God Himself – brings great dignity as a human person - that Jesus chose to become one of us. Being a Christian requires we do as Jesus did, follow in His footsteps. "Deny yourself, take up your Cross, and follow Me." That is our call, our dignity.

Recognize our sinfulness. Lord makes us worthy, has drawn us near to Himself. All His work. Redeemed, now can live as Christ. St. Francis: "you are the hands and feet and mouth of the Lord." Goal of penance: perfect conformity to Jesus Christ. Lives in us and through us. Is. 53: Man of suffering. Fitting for members of a Fallen Race to participate in their own redemption! Called to unite self with Jesus, our dignity. On the Sixth day of Creation, after making man, God said: "Behold, it was VERY good." Do you see yourself that way? How do we see ourselves? He took our human nature and raised it to a divine level and incorporated it into Himself. Think about that. A member of Jesus Christ. "You did not choose Me, but I have chosen you."

Focus on Jesus, not on self. Has to start there, but eventually be transformed (Romans 12, 1-2). Take on the mind of Jesus, the will of the Father, not self. Positive: out of love for God, I have the privilege of doing penance. Not negative: I am rotten and must do it to "earn" salvation. Pure intention, disposition of redeemed vs. unredeemed. Recognize who you are. The essence of penance is charity. Love of God and neighbor. Penance will repair for sins, but that's not the focus. Not about me. It's about Jesus, loving Him. Gift to share that love. Rejoice in it. Not easy, but a great privilege to participate in so great a calling.

Prayer needed. Detachment. How and why of penance: prayer needed to keep focus on Jesus, not self. All suffer. Christians suffer with and in Christ. That God is angry and we are being punished is a Protestant idea. Catholic: we are sharing in the sufferings of Jesus. The most dignified act in the history of humanity is Jesus on the Cross, what He did for us. Do we take on His perspective, or ours? We can share in that. Positive or negative. One has dignity, the other not. Penance is a gift, not punishment. "I will transform you through your

imperfect penance so you can love Me as I have loved you."

Are you willing to try? Do your best to take the focus off of yourself and put it on Jesus. Only through prayer and penance can love be made perfect. Do not fear. Don't count the cost for the joy it will bring. Penance is impossible without prayer. Dying to self.

Charity is essence of penance. Agape is highest form of love, loving God and neighbor with selfless love. More we seek ourselves, less we receive. Seek will of God and good of others. God is there for you, be there for Him. God is there only to love us. Are we there only for Him? We have needs, and our love is often compromised by self-interest.

How do we react? Mortification of external/internal faculties. Mortify the will, the imagination, and the memory. Don't waste time. Come back to reality and endure the pain. Simplicity. Take away some of the sensual things around us. Penance is yielding to others, not always demanding our own way. Deny self without drawing attention. The way you are going to live is not the way most people live. Strive for sanctity. This is the moment of decision.

When I heard the "M" word from Fr. Altier, I recalled a recent talk on "Curiosity" by Dr. John Boyle, head of the Catholic Studies program at St. Thomas University. He said an astounding mortification is custody of the eyes: harness curiosity, quoting St. Thomas Aquinas as saying "curiosity is a sin." He compared it to a wise man who orders his life well, versus a fool who does not know the Truth, and therefore cannot even understand reality. The fool is endlessly running after trivial and worthless, if not outright evil things instead of the "One Thing Necessary." Jesus lists these evil things:

"Wicked designs come from the deep recesses of the heart; acts of fornication, theft, murder, adulterous conduct, greed, maliciousness, deceit, sensuality, envy, blasphemy, arrogance, folly ('obtuse spirit'). All these evils come from within and render a man impure." (Mk 7: 21)

Boyle asked, "Why are there so many fools in the world?" Aquinas said because folly is the offspring of lust. Fully one third of the wicked designs Jesus enumerates that render a man impure fall under the heading of "lust." Is it any wonder then, that penance is required to overcome this most serious sin, which lures more souls to hell than any other sin? Lust is so popular today many are proud to define themselves by the sexual excess to which they are enslaved. A loss of the sense of sin. It's hard to repent when one is proud of his wickedness.

That's easy to see in others. But how attached are we to our own sinfulness? To temptations to impurity? Lust is all around us. A great way to discipline ourselves against temptations to lust is fasting. Welcome the fast before Christmas. Fr. Altier said we are not to try to

imitate the Saints in some of their penances, like St. Francis jumping into the thorn bush. But we can all fast in some way and discipline ourselves to fight against temptations where we are weakest. We can do penance

for the love of God. We can stand before Him with clean hands and a pure heart, and like Nathaniel, who instantly recognized Jesus as the Son of God, be "without guile."

Paul Beery BSP, Morning Star Chapter, Minnesota



## Meditation on the Beatitudes

by Janet Klasson, BSP

From the Gospel Reading, November 1 – All Saints Day

**Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted. Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth. Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.** (Matthew 5:3-5, 10)

The Beatitudes have been pondered by a great many souls over the centuries. They possess a richness that mystifies, confounds, and amazes. Recently a group at our church began watching the DVD series by (now) Aux. Bishop Robert Barron. The series contains 10 episodes that explain the faith in a way that is very accessible. In addition he takes the viewer to 50 locations in 16 countries. The series is very appealing in its presentation of the faith.

The second episode is titled "Happy Are We: The Teachings of Jesus". A good portion of the episode discusses the Beatitudes, arguably among the best-known teachings of Jesus. Bishop Barron explains that there are four of the eight Beatitudes that are described as negative or counterintuitive. How can one be blessed or happy when they are poor, mourning, meek, or persecuted? He had a take on these "negative" beatitudes that I had never heard before. That these four beatitudes are played out on the cross and signify above all—joy!

Bishop Barron begins by defining what it is so many of us cling to in life: wealth, pleasure, power, and honor. Of course these things can never make us happy but can only drive us to more craving of them. Once we have enslaved ourselves to those things, we can never get enough. Jesus shows us a different way, that the way to true joy is the way of detachment, the way of the cross.

**Blessed are the poor in spirit...**What does this mean but to be detached from material possessions, from wealth. As St. Francis de Sales put it so well: *"So also you can possess riches without being poisoned by them if you merely keep them in your home and purse and not in your heart."* Christ on the cross epitomized this. What did he possess on the cross? His last robe was taken from him in a game of lots, and his greatest treasure, his own beloved Mother, he gave away in perhaps the most poignant of his final acts.



**Blessed are those who mourn...**What does this mean but to be detached from pleasure, from nice feelings, to accept all that happens, whether good or bad, as from the hand of a loving God, for his own good (if at times unfathomable) purposes. To say that Jesus was detached from pleasure on the cross is a gargantuan understatement. Yet he knew and trusted that the joy that would come from his pure sacrifice would infinitely outweigh the sorrow. And certainly those who mourned him, most especially his Mother, were more than comforted when he rose on the third day and paved the way to their eternal life with him, where "every tear would be wiped away."

**Blessed are the meek...**What does this mean but to be detached from power. Christ did not cling to earthly power, no matter how many of his followers expected and encouraged him to be an earthly ruler. Jesus did not grasp at power, not even the Divine power that was his by nature. As Paul said in his letter to the Philippians: **"Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness."** It was with unimaginable meekness that Jesus willed to remain on the cross. And his inheritance was to win back all the earth, everything that had been lost through the Fall of Adam and Eve.

**Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness sake...**What does this mean but that we are to be detached from honor. Who deserved more honor than Jesus, the very Son of God? Yet, no one was more dishonored than he was, reviled, spat upon, and horribly tortured by mere creatures. It was all for us, so that he could win for us the Kingdom of Heaven, while exemplifying what it means to be "obedient unto death" to the Divine Will.

Bishop Barron concluded by saying that Christ on the cross is the epitome of blessedness or happiness precisely because of his detachment from all that was not found in the Will of God. It follows that those of us who have embraced the penitential life, who, following the exhortations of St. Francis, who himself followed the example of Christ, that we who are taking up our crosses each day and following Him, must be blessed and happy! Does that show in our faces? It must be evident to all, even if we are suffering, that what God has promised through our sufferings linked to the cross, is far out of proportion to what it costs us. Our trust in the goodness of God must be a light that shines in us giving glory to our loving Father.

Blessed Maria Teresa of St. Joseph, who founded a religious congregation, the Carmel of the Divine Heart of Jesus in 1891 had this to say about the cross:

*"The good Lord will give you grace and his Holy Spirit and he will bless your humility; but I wish you would learn to love the cross with all your heart, in whatever form or manner it comes. Whether it comes from the outside or from within yourself, whether it comes from strangers or from our own*

*sisters; it is always handed to us by a holy and loving hand that you should kiss.*

*"Then, take the cross and press it to your heart and pray to the Holy Spirit, that you may be able to carry it to honour God. All that is needed is patience. You will learn that year by year; the science of the cross is a long course of study, and we are always beginners and novices."*

I love that she says we are always beginners and novices! I certainly feel that way in my sufferings, always feeling that I must "begin again", as St. Francis told his friars.

November is an important month for those of us who have completed our Novice 2 year. Those of us who have been following the rule for some time know very well how far we still need to go to do it well, without grumbling, without really even thinking about it. Let us pray for grace to carry with patience and joy the unending happiness of this penitential cross, for the sake of Christ and the souls he died to save, that our joy may be complete. Happy are we dear brothers and sisters!

From [www.pelianitoblog.wordpress.com](http://www.pelianitoblog.wordpress.com)

(Note: this web address has changed in the last month. If you have bookmarked this site, please update your bookmark.)

**James 1:2-4 Consider it all joy, my brothers, when you encounter various trials, for you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. And let perseverance be perfect, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.**

*"My beloved children, practice now to be joyful in all things. If you cannot be joyful today, what will happen when your faith is tested? Children I do not ask you to enjoy suffering, but to transcend it by living in the joy of heaven, even while on earth. Let the joy of the Lord be your strength (Neh. 8:10). This is no platitude, but a guarantee, a promise, a sure help in time of trial. Say, 'Lord, I give you my sufferings; I ask for your joy.' I tell you, my children, you will be strengthened. Persevere, my children, and be at peace. Shalom."*

Sweet Jesus, beloved, give us your joy at all times. Help us to transcend our suffering and to live in the joy of heaven at all times. Jesus we trust in you. Amen.

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: <https://pelianitoblog.wordpress.com/about-2/on-private-revelation/>.)



## FROM THE 'SPARROW' The Unlovely...

Peace my little sparrow friends! What would St. Francis do with the "unlovely" people of our modern day world? How would he treat them?

This brings to mind the question of are we, as Christians and Franciscans, actively seeking all who are lost, or do we limit our search to those who meet our criteria?

We need to see every person as a candidate for Our Lord's and St. Francis' love and forgiveness and thereby most acceptable to our Heavenly Father's plan for those to gain salvation and enter His Kingdom. Every person, regardless of race, culture, or social status is made, by the Father's plan, for the Kingdom. That should be a sobering thought to anyone who needs direction as to what he should be doing to build the Kingdom of God.



The question of "who" has already been resolved by the great God Himself as stated above.

It is easy to tell someone we love or appreciate, "Sit yourself here in a good place" (James 2:3). But when a person appears disheveled and unclean, we tend to see the dirt and not the need of the soul. Jesus was accused of eating with sinners. Peter was accused of going into the house of the Gentile Cornelius. In both cases the focus of the accusers was wrong. Our focus needs to be on helping souls come to Christ and experience changed lives regardless of who they are.

We tend to show special favor to those who are well dressed and in good standing in society. St. James says that if we do this, we are guilty of respect of persons and come under condemnation (James 2:9). We must

## WOW GOD!

Peace my little sparrow friends. Now it is time to get the "righteous Catholics" out there ready to hang me for the following liberal remarks that I shall make in reference to evangelization here in prison.

Have you ever considered how you or anyone you know might try to talk about Jesus and our faith to the average homeless street person or prisoner or any of the other less fortunates in our society? If you haven't thought about what you would say then you haven't really thought about spreading the Gospel to everyone you meet. But I know you are mostly Franciscan, at least in the spirit of the Gospel, so, yes, you should have thought about the words or way you would talk to these mostly uninformed people.

Before I make my point about the vernacular to use to reach these kind of minimal believers I would make this self-serving comment about my own "PRIDEFUL" vocabulary and knowledge of spiritual matters. Yes, I read and study Scripture and have done so for years. I am NOT a casual reader of the Bible for I own several (seven!) different translations. I keep many resource study aides such as concordances, Catholic Dictionaries, Encyclopedias. I worked on a Bible translation for a well-known Catholic Priest who himself was a linguistic expert who spoke twelve (12) languages. So with all the forgoing facts you should be able to ascertain that when I tell you I know our faith's correct words of praise and worship that you can believe it.

Now with all of this knowledge at my disposal and use, it would surprise you to find out that, for the most part, those words and ideals are lost on most of the common street people and prisoners. Most of us have heard the actual words of faith since childhood (cradle Catholic right?) such as "Alleluia" and "Hosanna" etc. But when

not be like the Pharisees, who were concerned about their own image and failed to see the real issues as God does.

If our focus is on self, we will not be useful in kingdom work or effective in reaching souls. May God help us poor little sparrows to see needy souls regardless of their wealth or position.

The question of what would St. Francis do with today's unlovely people is already answered in your heart...isn't it?

*"If we are too exalted to help sinners, we are too exalted to be in God's kingdom."*

(Author unknown)

you get down and talk with street people or prisoners, who were not exposed to these type words and ideas, they will most likely nod their heads that they understand, when they really don't. So your words and ideals are falling on deaf and un-comprehending minds. After all not many Catholics do not understand the real meaning of some of these Greek, Hebrew, or Latin words!

I have found that in talking with these street people and prisoners that I often use their words and ideas to make the ideas of "praise and worship" much more understandable to them. For instance, and this is an example, if I'm sharing the Gospel with someone and they have a limited exposure to faith and I see that they are impressed by something in the Gospel story that Jesus or God had done they will often say, "Wow, that was neat." I realized that they were impressed with what God had done and giving Him praise in their own words. That, I tell them with conviction, is praising God! Yes, they were saying something positive in reference to the work of God and that, my dear sparrows, is praise!

So I've come a long way today in telling you that because you and I don't speak the same words of praise and worship as these other "least brothers of the Lord" does NOT mean or infer that they are not heard by the Lord. In fact I have this deep down in my heart feeling that the Lord is well pleased with their simple "Wows" and that is "Neat, God."

With that in mind I thought that you would like to know how a real dyed in the wool sparrow would say,

\*\*\*WOW GOD\*\*\*

Pax et bonum  
Brother Sparrow

Bob Hall BSP, Little Flower Chapter, N. Carolina

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

### BSP MEMBER WEBSITES

[Brothers and Sisters of Penance of St. Francis](#) facebook page by Lisa Drago, BSP  
**The Joy of Penance** by Janet Klasson [www.joyofpenance.wordpress.com](http://www.joyofpenance.wordpress.com)

### 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.

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.



## NOVEMBER, AN IMPORTANT MONTH FOR SOULS: SPECIAL GRACES AVAILABLE THROUGH THE FLAME OF LOVE

On June 6, 2009, his Eminence the Archbishop of Esztergom-Budapest and President of the Council of Episcopal Conferences of Europe, Cardinal Peter Erdö, granted his Imprimatur number 494-4/2009 to the Hungarian original Spiritual Diary of Elizabeth Kindelmann, authorizing the publication of the messages given to her by the Lord Jesus and the Blessed Virgin Mary.

The devotion to the **Flame of Love of the Immaculate Heart of Mary** finds its origin in the revelations of the Lord Jesus Christ and the Virgin Mary to Elizabeth Kindelmann, a Hungarian mother of six, between the years 1961 and 1982. Elizabeth died on April 11, 1985. Through her, the Virgin Mary placed into our hands a new means to blind satan: the Flame of Love of Her Immaculate Heart.

The Virgin Mary wants the devotion to the Flame of Love of Her Immaculate Heart to spread throughout the whole world so that the greatest number of Her children may respond to Her request. Through the Flame of Love, we are all invited to take part in the Work of Salvation by blinding Satan, source of all evil, and thus help the Lord Jesus Christ and the Virgin Mary to save souls. This is what the Flame of Love wants to accomplish!

The following is an excerpt is a post from the [Divine Antidote Blog](#) by Anthony Mullen, United States National Coordinator of the International Movement of the Flame of Love of the Immaculate Heart of Mary (used with permission).

### NOVEMBER: THE MONTH OF GIVING OF OURSELVES FOR THE SOULS IN PURGATORY

*The overarching message given to Elizabeth Kindelmann by our Lord and our Mother is that all passes away and "only our work for souls remains." At its core, reparation is suffering patiently endured, and voluntary sacrifices made out of love for God and our neighbor. We offer reparation in order to help God (who desires our cooperation in His Divine Work) to release Grace to souls in order for them to repent and convert, and to help mitigate or shorten the time of suffering in Purgatory for the souls detained there.*

*As November approaches, the month of the Holy Souls, we should be preparing to give of ourselves more out of love for God and for them. Our Lord promised through His Mother that for every Hail Mary prayed with the petition: "spread the effect of*

*the Grace of thy Flame of Love over all of humanity", our Lord would release 10 souls from Purgatory in November. Thus, over the month of November, we can release 530 souls each time we pray the Rosary! If we persevere over the whole 30 days of November with a daily Rosary with the petition in each Hail Mary, we will free 15,900 souls! Now think about if you pray an extra Rosary a day, and you have your prayer cenacle join you. You could free over 100,000 souls with just 4 people praying two rosaries a day! Please commit to this act of love and imagine the joy of these souls and of our Lord! These souls will then pray for you in earnest if you ask them to do so! If you wish to join a group committed to praying two Rosaries a day in November, please email [marysflameoflove@aol.com](mailto:marysflameoflove@aol.com).*

To find out more about the Flame of Love or the diary of Elizabeth Kindelmann, please see <http://www.flameoflove.us>, or <http://www.theflameoflove.org/> or <https://pelianitoblog.wordpress.com/flame-of-love/>.

# 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. 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)



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of St. Francis

65774 County Road 31  
Northome MN 56661