



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

BONAVENTURE AND HIS LESSONS ON ST. FRANCIS:

Chapter XIII—The Stigmata of St. Francis

6. In the province of Reiti a fatal disease had attacked cattle and sheep and carried great numbers of them off so quickly that nothing could be done for them. Then a devout man was told in a vision at night to go immediately to the friars' hermitage where St. Francis was staying and get the water with which he had washed his hands and feet and sprinkle it over the livestock. He got up in the morning and went to the hermitage and got the water secretly from the saint's companions. Then he sprinkled the sick cattle and sheep. The animals were lying on the ground exhausted, but the moment that a mere drop of the water touched them, they immediately recovered their normal strength and stood up and hurried off to pasture, as if there had never been anything wrong with them. The miraculous power of water which had touched the stigmata banished the disease and save the livestock from the fatal sickness.



7. Before St. Francis went to stay on La Verna it often happened that clouds would form over the mountain and violent hailstorms would devastate the crops. After his vision, however, the hail stopped, much to the amazement of the local people. The unusually clear skies proclaimed the extraordinary nature of his vision and the power of the stigmata which he received there.

One wintertime, because he was weak and the road was bad, the saint was riding an ass belonging to a poor man. It was snowing and the approach of darkness made it impossible for them to reach shelter, so that they had to spend the night under the lee of an overhanging cliff. Francis heard his benefactor grumbling to himself and turning this way and that; he was wearing only a few clothes and he could not fall asleep in the biting cold. He himself was ablaze with the fervor of divine love and he stretched out his hand and touched him. At the touch of his hand, which was warm with the heat of the coal used to purify the lips of the prophet Isaias, the cold disappeared and the man felt as warm as if he had been hit with a blast of hot air from an oven. He immediately felt better in body and soul and slept more soundly in the rocks and the blizzard until morning than he had ever slept in his own bed, as he used to say afterwards.

It is certain, therefore, that the stigmata were impressed upon St. Francis by God's power, because it is God who purifies, illuminates, and inflames by the intervention of the Seraphim. These sacred wounds purified animals of disease and granted clear skies, as well as physical warmth. This was proved more clearly than ever after Francis' death by the miracles which we shall describe in their own place.

Bonaventure—Major Life of St. Francis (1263)



VISITOR'S MESSAGE

Homily by Fr. Robert Altier...

Reading (Acts 2:14, 22-33) Gospel (St. Matthew 28:8-15)

As we see this point about the fact that Our Lord had risen from the dead – Mary Magdalene had seen the vision of the angels, and as she was going to tell the apostles,

Our Blessed Lord appears to her and to the other Mary; they bow down, they worship Him, and He instructs them on what to do – the interesting thing in juxtaposition is to see what happens with the guards. Like the high priest, rather than having faith, the guards run simply to tell what happened and then get caught into a lie. The point that is of great interest here is that only a few days earlier the high priest was willing to give thirty pieces of silver to put Our Lord to death; but when it comes to hiding the Resurrection, they were willing to give a very large sum of money. We are not told how big it was, just that it was large. And so Our Lord in life was worth thirty pieces of silver to them, but Our Lord in death was worth an immense amount.

First of all, they had put a guard at His tomb, the only person in history that we know of who had to be guarded so that he did not come out of the tomb! It did not work anyway. Then the fact that the soldiers would pocket the money, that they would buy into this lie, and that they would circulate this story so that people would not believe, we see the extent to which Satan is willing to go to try to undermine our faith. Money is not a problem for him. Power is not a problem for him. He uses anything that he can to try to lure us away, to try to put little ideas into our heads, or to play upon our selfishness or our greed so that we will not believe. What we have to be able to do is reject everything that is not of God.

When we talk about the Resurrection, there is no doubt that Our Lord has risen from the dead. We have eyewitnesses who ate and drank with Him after He rose from the dead. We have the witness of the Gospels. Someone could say, "Well, these were written by Christian people, so there is really no idea that they are historical." It is funny that when we read pagan historians from the time, everybody bows down and says, "This is true; this is history," but when we read history that is inspired by the Holy Spirit, then we say, "Maybe that wasn't real." This is more historical and there is more evidence of the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead than there is of most historical personalities that have ever lived. No one would ever say, "Caesar didn't live because there isn't all that much

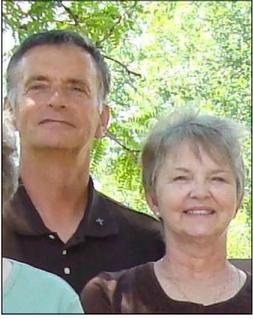
written about him," or this one or that one or whomever it may be. So there is no reason for us not to believe.

What that Resurrection means is not fully understood, and it will not be fully understood until our bodies rise from the dead. But we do know that the body of Jesus Christ was reunited with His soul, and His body shares in the glory of the eternal life of God. His body now is in a glorified form so that it is not held bound by any of the limitations that our bodies are. We cannot walk through the walls – He can. On the day of the resurrection, we will be able to as well. People wonder how we are going to get out of a grave that is six feet deep. Not a problem. Your body is not going to be held bound by any of the physical limitations. When you rise from the dead, all of the inherent weaknesses and problems of the body will no longer be a problem. The body is going to be freed from all of those things. The body is going to be freed from everything that keeps it bound, and it will share fully in the freedom of the children of God. Our Lord's Resurrection is the guarantee of that; it is the foreshadowing of what is going to happen to us.

While it is imperative that we never take our eyes off of the Cross, it is also imperative that we never forget that the Cross is not the endpoint; there is much beyond it. In fact, the Cross, in Our Lord's life and in ours, was very brief by comparison to the glory which is eternal. And so while we continue through our lives on earth, it is living in this vale of tears, it is sharing in the Passion of Christ, it is still to walk up Calvary; yet it is because we know that there is something that is beyond Calvary. As Saint Paul said, For the joy that lay before Him, Christ accepted the Cross, heedless of its shame. It is the Resurrection that is possible only through the Crucifixion. It is eternal life that is possible only through sharing in the death of Christ. For us, it is to be able to listen to the words of Our Lord when He told the man: Doubt no longer but believe, and to believe wholeheartedly in the Resurrection and to know that the life, the victory, that Our Lord has won for us is guaranteed to us as long as we remain faithful. So as we keep our eyes on the Cross, keep it focused on what the Cross leads to. The Cross is the key to heaven. The Cross is the opening to eternal life. We go to Calvary, we go to be crucified with Our Lord, not merely for the purpose of dying, but for the sole purpose of eternal life.

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





ADMINISTRATOR'S MESSAGE...

Fasting

We are in the process of reading a book given to us by our pastor. It is Introduction to the Devout Life by Saint Francis de Sales (1567 - 1622). This volume is both compelling and practical, as stated in its Foreword. It does take time to read though. So we will be reading it until the end of April!

To begin the book begins with a salutary admonition that it is worth pondering. It says, history says that if you write a word on an almond, and then place it carefully back in its husk, and plant it, all the fruit borne by that tree will be marked by the word so inscribed. The Saint says, "Therefore, my child, above all things you should write the precious and holy name of Jesus in your heart, certain that having done so, your life - like the almond tree in the fable - will bear the stamp of that saving name in every act and every member and part of you so that you will be able to say with Saint Paul, "it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me." (Gal. 2:20) But this heart needs to be trained in its external conduct. Fasting is one aspect of this training.

He, St. Francis de Sales that is, goes on to say, if you are able to fast you do well to observe some days beyond what are ordered by the Church, for besides the ordinary effects of fasting in raising the mind, subduing the flesh, confirming goodness, and obtaining a heavenly reward, it is also a great matter to be able to control greediness, and to keep the sensual appetites and the whole body subject to the law of the Spirit, and even though we may only be able to do little, the enemy nonetheless stands in awe of those he knows can fast. So fasting is very good for us, and right now, in Lent, we are in it to

the hilt and it is more than the Church requires but still is us living our Rule. A holy Rule and a holy OK to fast by Saint Francis and the Church.

So, we move on in peace, and should, in the fasts of this season and of the whole year for that matter. We still each retain the right to decide how we are going to fast and if we are older we have the prerogative of falling back on the Church guidelines for fasting which says we do not have to fast after 60 years of age. After that it is up to us. We still can live by the Rule if we like, but don't have to if we feel we can't.

We can fast from food. That is the normal fast. The Church says we can eat two meals that don't equal a full meal for breakfast and lunch normally, and a regular dinner and no snacks. That is a good guideline but there can be others. We can fast as we wish and if we have questions on it we can bring it to our spiritual director, or confessor, or priest or religious, and obey their recommendations. Obedience is always holy.

We can fast from other things too. Even from salt at our meals. From speeding on the highway, or wearing gloves in cold weather, which is just about over for this season we might add. We can fast from speaking first in a family conversations, or giving a negative opinion, or even from going to bed early. Stay up and visit a bit longer than normal. We can be creative and find ways to fast in everything if we wish. All of it is holy if offered to Our Lord.

And in our fasts we prepare for the happiest day of our religious year, Easter!

Have a holy and happy Lent and Easter.

May the Lord bless and lead us always.

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



NO GREATER LOVE by Paul Beery, BSP

"Christ Jesus, who though He was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, He humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even death on a cross." (Philippians 2:6-8)

The following is based on an article titled: *Franciscan Churchmanship*, by George Weigel, from First Things, Jan. 2017

George Weigel has a lot to say about the "extraordinary originality" of St. Francis of Assisi in this article, which has led to many false portrayals which distort his life and teachings. For example, Marxists claimed him as an early supporter of their vision, as well as the hippies of the sixties. And "contemporary environmentalists transform Francis's biblical piety about God's creation into a prototype of their worship of a quite different god, Gaia."

After rejecting these false portrayals, Weigel insists Francis has much to teach us today: "how to be truly men and women of the Church today, he who was always and profoundly an obedient son of the Catholic Church." Obedience always first. And he gives the example of how Francis got down on his knees before the wayward priest to demonstrate one of his four important legacies for our times. Number one: obedience to Mother Church.

Second, "radically incarnational religious imagination. Because of the Incarnation, what lies between the ordinary and extraordinary is not a border, but a membrane, across which spiritual nutrients flow in abundance. The Incarnate Word conscripts the tangibilities of ecclesial life, and even creation itself, to draw us into the divine life."

Translation: "it is through material things – water, salt, and oil; bread and wine; marital love – that the Father of Our Lord Jesus Christ comes to the people the Son has made His own." Who brought us two very material ways to draw us into the divine life: the Christmas crib, and the Way of the Cross?

"The third Franciscan lesson for our time: Christian witness. It must be based on the experience of being saved by the radical self-emptying of Jesus Christ, who is our Savior, not just moral exemplar. Salvation is at the heart of the Christian proclamation." Weigel says that Christianity is not about ourselves, or feeling good about ourselves. "A Franciscan renewal will emphasize the works of charity and mercy as the entry point of evangelization. But that cannot make the Church into another non-governmental organization in the good works business. The Church

is about salvation or it is a fraud..."

I think this is the great error of our time, the attempt to make the Church into a social welfare organization, "another NGO in the good works business." For it means submitting to the dictates of a secular government which loves to force the Church into abandoning its witness to Christ to gain funding for its charitable works. Would Francis have done that? I don't think so. In many ways the state has taken over Christian works of mercy, and secularized them, making people dependent on the state, with all its strings attached, instead of on God. By accepting this "bargain," Christians are supporting the gross immorality of the state, and its dictates against Christian virtue, against the family in the Plan of God, and even life itself! I think that's a terrible deal. Where is salvation in this equation? The eternal life of countless souls is at stake. "Social Justice" has become a defining political issue, and generates strong emotions on both sides. It also seems to be an insoluble problem in a post-Christian world.

The fourth Franciscan lesson for our time is: reform. "Francis of Assisi was a reformer, even a radical reformer who sought to revitalize the Church through a reapportionment of its gospel roots. A Franciscan evangelical reform purifies the Church by returning to the eternal source of sanctity, Jesus Christ Himself." Weigel says that all authentic reform returns to the original 'form' that Christ gave the Church, which is the Deposit of Faith. He says we do not judge the Deposit of Faith, it judges us, and any attempts at reform. There is an obedience owed to the Church because of God's divine revelation, "in which we find the Church's constitutive 'form' which judges history, especially ephemeral contemporary history."

"The God-given dignity squandered in the Garden of Eden has been restored at Easter to men and women who could now be, again, sons and daughters of the Most High God, and thus truly themselves; yet the path to Easter, Francis knew, went up the rocky hill of Calvary." Amen.

Paul Beery BSP, Morning Star Chapter, Minnesota



Penance, the Way of Hope... by Janet Klasson, BSP

From the First Reading on Good Friday

"Out of his anguish he shall see light; he shall find satisfaction through his knowledge. The righteous one, my servant, shall make many righteous, and he shall bear their iniquities.



Therefore I will allot him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he poured out himself to death, and was numbered with the transgressors; yet he bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.” (Isaiah 53:11-12)

I used to dread Lent. But the longer I am with the BSP, the more at home I feel during the penitential season. I can even say that I prefer Lent even to the Octaves of Christmas and Easter where the precepts of the rule are relaxed. Don't get me wrong, I always look forward to the Octaves, but after a few days I find myself missing the discipline. For someone like me who has very little discipline by nature, discipline from an outside source is a great grace, as is the ability to live that discipline on a sustained basis.

But that's just me. Over all, certainly in the post Vatican II church, I would say that for most people penance has a negative connotation, when people think of it at all. That is a great misunderstanding. On the contrary, penance is the way of hope, not just for us poor souls trying to work out our own salvation, but for all those God has given us to pray for.

In his book, *Spirit of Penance, Path to God*, which I have quoted in the past, author Dom Hubert Van Zeller teaches in a clear and splendid way about this spiritual treasure called penance. Here are some quotes from the opening chapter that I think you will find enlightening, especially when overlaid on the Rule of 1221:

"The end of penance is God, not more penances. Thus the approach to penance has to be by way of love, not by way of steeling the will to toughness. Penance must have its roots in charity, not in austerity. Austerity may accompany its growth, but it will be a by-product rather than an essential fruit. A certain austerity will even be a sign of true penitence, but it will not be an infallible sign, nor the only one. The infallible signs are humility and charity." (P. 7)

"Far better than to say: 'I give you this, I give you that' is to say: 'Take all.' Admitting frankly that it is impossible for us to know what this invitation amounts to, at least we can protest our readiness to meet the consequences without complaint. Admitting also that to yield ourselves up to the process of purification that this voluntary oblation supposes is impossible without grace, we can confidently believe that when God takes us at our word, he will supply the strength necessary to support the outcome." (P. 10)

"Suffering is a work, not a display. The Passion is a darkness, not a floodlit presentation of a parade. There is nothing picturesque about

penance." (P. 11)

"True penance is self-forgetting the further effort to remember only God....There are traps enough in this matter of penance, but to spend time looking at the traps instead of at God is to fall into the worst of them." (P. 12)

"The penance that is inspired by grace and turned toward the fulfillment of the promptings of grace is as much a prayer as it is a penance....But even when the intention is left unformulated, the penance, having Him as its source and end, cannot but be praise to God. It is actual, and not only virtual, praise to God....Unless prayer informs penance, and penance expresses prayer, each is incomplete." (P. 13)

"In order to keep alive physically, you have to breathe in and out; in order to keep alive spiritually, you have to pray and do penance....In some form or another, everyone must deny himself and take up his cross and follow Christ." (P. 14)

"If a man would approach penance, he must do so humbly, on all fours. He must begin from his knees—in prayer. The grace that comes to him in prayer will give him the light to know both what to do and how to do it. If he stands up too soon upon his own feet and tells God how strong he is to suffer, and what particular sufferings he is ready to undertake in proof of it, and how unfortunate it is that all do not feel as well disposed as he, his penance will come to nothing. There is only one approach to penance, and that is the way of complete surrender to the will of God." (P. 15)

So we can see by just the first chapter of this book, how beautifully our rule dovetails with this inspired text. Our formation makes sure our prayer life is in order before we begin the fasting. Many have tried to live the rule on the first day of formation and have found it too difficult. They did not let the rhythm of the formation work its grace upon them. They stood up too soon. It is not that the rule is too difficult, it is that the grace is not given, except in God's timing.

Penance is a great grace and the way of hope. The mission of the Church is the salvation of souls. Our Father's business is souls. Penitents, indeed all Christians, are called to offer prayer and sacrifices for souls, to participate in God's own merciful acts.

Therefore, our main business must also be souls, and even in our daily duty—often a penance in its own right—we do our part to further the family business.

I have recently heard of a book that I think I want to get, called, *St. Faustina Prayer Book for the Conversion of Sinners* by Susan Tassone. (<http://susantassone.com/books>) Here are some excerpts from the foreword by Father Andrew Apostoli, CFR*:

"In her latest book, St. Faustina's Prayer Book for the Conversion of Sinners, Susan Tassone clearly explains the nature of conversion and the dynamics involved. Jesus wants all of us, each of us, to be involved in his mission of universal salvation. In other words, we must help bring souls to him by our prayers, sacrifices, good example, works of mercy, and efforts at evangelization. This, along with growth in personal holiness, has always been a major focus in living our Christian lives. The famous saying of St. John Bosco, founder of the Salesian Congregation, sums this up: 'Give me souls; you can have the rest!'

[...]

"Conversion has never been very easy, but it's always been crucial. The soul of the person converted will be saved from eternal death and

punishment. And! The one who helps the sinner convert will share in his or her glory in heaven. Above all, God himself will be glorified by those who have been saved. As Jesus told St. Faustina, 'I want a vast crowd in Heaven to praise my mercy for all eternity.'"

Wow! If we are struggling with our Lenten observances in these last days, let us read those two paragraphs again and run down the path of penance to the land of hope! Hope for ourselves and for all those in need of our prayers. If we offer our prayers and penances in the Divine Will through the Flame of Love, there is no telling what extraordinary graces God will grant. We don't have to understand it to pray in this way. God is showering infinite graces upon us, for where sin abounds grace abounds all the more. God wants us to be bold in prayer, for all things are possible with God. Then let us be bold! Jesus, Mary, Joseph we love you. In the Divine Will, through the Flame of Love, save souls!

(*To read the entire foreword see http://www.renewamerica.com/columns/abbott/17_0326. I have not vetted the entire site, but only cite it so you can read the entire foreword, printed with the permission of Fr. Apostoli. As for purchasing the book, I have been to a few sites including Amazon, and while it is in their catalogue, I am not certain it been released yet, so there may be a delay. It is also listed for sale on [Spirit Daily](#).)

From www.pelianitoblog.wordpress.com

Revelation 19:5-6 And from the throne came a voice saying, 'Praise our God, all you his servants, and all who fear him, small and great.' Then I heard what seemed to be the voice of a great multitude, like the sound of many waters and like the sound of mighty thunder-peals, crying out, 'Hallelujah! For the Lord our God the Almighty reigns...'

"Beloved, do you not know that when you pray in the Divine Will, that the 'voice of a great multitude' resounds in heaven? Ponder this, my child. Can so great a multitude praising God be ignored in heaven? I tell you it cannot. Do not be afraid to use this unimaginable grace. Be bold and courageous. It has been given for your time to bring about the victorious reign of the Divine Will, to bring heaven to earth in a more abundant way. My child, ponder this, but do not wait until you understand it before you begin to use it. The truths are so sublime that your beginning would be delayed indefinitely. Trust that what I have revealed to my servant Luisa is true, and that it is true for you. Do not discount yourself, for that is to discount this gratuitous gift that no one is worthy of. Trust. Pray. And let your little voice be multiplied 'like the sound of many waters.' Child trust!"

O my beloved Father! What glory! In the Divine Will, in the name of everyone from Adam to the last man, in the Flame of Love, I thank you and praise you for this unimaginable, undeserved gift and I pray: May your glorious will reign on earth in all hearts. May your kingdom come and come quickly. Lord God, Father, Son and Spirit, I trust in your promise. I love you! Amen.

(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/>.)



PURGATORY defined by an ancient Asian mystic:

I asked one of the angels what the end of this man would be, and he replied:

"If this man's life had been altogether bad, then he would at once have joined the spirits of darkness, but he is not without a moral sense, so for a very long time he will wander blindly round in the dim light of the intermediate state, and keep on bumping his philosophical head, until tired of his foolishness, he repents. Then will he be ready to receive the necessary instruction from the angels appointed for that purpose, and, when instructed, will he be fit to enter into the fuller Light of God in the higher sphere."

CRUCIFIED IN POVERTY



Br. Thomas of Celano explains how the Brothers understood "Living in Poverty."

As followers of most holy poverty, since they had nothing, they loved nothing and so they feared losing nothing. They were satisfied with a single tunic often patched both inside and out. Nothing about it was refined, rather it appeared lowly and rough so that in it, they seemed completely "Crucified to the World." They wore crude trousers with a cord for a belt. They held firmly to

the holy intention of remaining this way and having nothing more.

They were safe wherever they went. Disturbed by nothing, the Friars distracted by no cares, awaited the next day without any worry. Though frequently on hazardous journeys, they were not anxious about where they might stay the next day. Often when they needed a place to stay in extreme cold, a baker's oven would receive them, or they would hide for the night humbly in caves or crypts.

(Excerpted from: *Francis of Assisi Saint Early Documents Vol 1*)

Submitted by "Penitent"



FROM THE 'SPARROW' Chaplet of the Flame of Love

(The "sparrow", Bob Hall BSP put this chaplet together using excerpts from the Diary of Elizabeth Kindelmann, which has an imprimatur.)

To be recited using rosary beads.



Sign of the Cross

Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be for the Pope's and Bishop's intentions

On the large Our Father beads say:

"My Most Holy Mother, by the love which the Holy Spirit granted you, save me from falling into sin. Make me live and die in your blessed company."

On the small Hail Mary beads say:

"Our Mother, spread the effect of grace of thy Flame of Love over all of humanity."

At the close say:

"O Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to thee. Please spread the effect of grace of thy Flame of Love over all of humanity! Amen."



Praise and Thanksgiving Increase the Gifts and Discernment of Inspirations of the Holy Spirit

Posted on March 26, 2017 by Anthony Mullen on his blog <https://divineantidote.wordpress.com> (Used with permission.)

(I felt a strong inspiration to remind us as we hit the halfway point of Lent that what follows below is the main reason why we don't make the spiritual progress we so desire. Take note especially of what St. Therese has to say on thanksgiving).

We know from our Faith that God will grant us the Grace to respond to the inspirations of the Holy Spirit for our sanctification, but only if we truly love God and correspond with the effort of our free will to His Grace. St. Frances de Sales, Doctor of the Church, states: "...if we do not resist God's Grace, He gives each of us the inspirations we need in order to live, act and maintain ourselves in the spiritual life." It is the Gifts of the Holy Spirit placed in our soul at Baptism and strengthened at our Confirmation and further strengthened with each worthy Holy Communion, which allow us to hear and respond consistently to the inspirations of the Holy Spirit. St. Thomas Aquinas, the great Doctor of the Church, states that the Gifts of the Holy Spirit "prepare the soul to follow promptly the impulse of Divine inspiration." So, since the Gifts and Virtues of the Holy Spirit are essential to our growth in holiness, it is a matter of the greatest importance that we learn and practice all we can about the Gifts and how they open our faculties to the inspirations of the Holy Spirit. But how do we activate and grow the Gifts of the Holy Spirit?

Our guide in this matter, Fr. Jacques Philippe, from "In the School of the Holy Spirit", explains that the main reason that we do not receive the necessary Grace is: **WE FAIL TO THANK GOD FOR THE GRACES HE HAS ALREADY GIVEN TO US** (emphasis added). He quotes St. Therese of Lisieux, another Doctor of the Church: "What most draws down graces from our dear Lord is gratitude, for if we thank Him for a gift, He hastens to give us ten more, and if we thank Him again with the same sincerity, what an incalculable multiplication of graces! I have experienced this; try it and see."

Fr. Jacques asks us to see and understand that our subtle ingratitude, our failure to recognize our nothingness and that everything...every single thing we have is Grace...pure Gift...is indeed what stifles Grace, especially since we do not consistently thank God for all the blessings and benefits of each moment of each day and simply take them for granted (our Faith, Hope, Love, talents, skills, parents, country, occupation, house, food). Why is

it that we are one of every three people in the world who believes in Christ? Why are we not in the two of every three people who do not know or believe in Christ? Why is it that we are a Catholic and not a Protestant? How is it that we know and believe in the Most Blessed Sacrament? How is it that we are in the 1% of all people who actually can and do take advantage of this Gift of all Gifts on a daily basis? How is it that we were chosen to know and receive the Extraordinary Flame of Love Grace? All is Pure Gift of an All-Loving, Infinite God! All we have is a gratuitous Gift! Yet, we take these incredible Gifts of God for granted...or certainly we do not thank God often and profusely for these incredible Gifts of His Love.

So, what must we do? We must change by begging for more Grace to be truly thankful each day and seek to practice praise and thanksgiving each day throughout the day, especially with formal prayers of praise and thanksgiving added to our daily prayer time; and with short bursts of praise and thanksgiving throughout the day..."Lord, I praise and thank you for everything You have given me!" Next, we must give more time and effort devoted to praising and thanking God from our free time. Worthily attending daily Mass with Holy Communion is the greatest way to thank and praise God! If we are already doing that...then making a Holy Hour each week would be the next gift of praise and thanksgiving! We must continue to give God more of our free time, which is now wasted on foolish things like TV, Internet and too much talking and entertainment. Instead, we must use this wasted time to especially praise Him and thank Him for the Graces we have received.

Once we become consistent at this praise and thanksgiving, we will begin to see and feel new Graces bestowed and we will begin to be more patient and docile in listening for the inspirations of the Holy Spirit at each moment of the day. We will then find we are growing closer to God and beginning to act more like His Mother and He would act in each situation of the day. We will see our bad habits and laziness begin to change! Come Holy Spirit, come into my daily life in a new and more powerful way with Your Gifts, and let me hear and act on all Your inspirations, so I may be Holy as You are Holy for Your Glory and the salvation of souls! I praise and thank You for all the Graces I have ever received and will ever receive! Please, I beg You to do this through

the power of the Flame of Love of the Immaculate Heart of Mary! By trusting in our Mother and taking and living the Flame of Love Grace, this process of gratitude for Grace is accelerated and made much

more secure! She is the Spouse of the Holy Spirit, Mediatrix of all Grace and Mother of perfect thanksgiving! Fiat!

MORNING STAR: NEWS ON THE ASSOCIATION...

OCTAVE OF EASTER

Statutes Article 9

c. Sundays and Church Solemnities are never days of fast or abstinence. These include the Octave of Christmas, the Feasts of New Year's, Epiphany, Annunciation, the **Octave of Easter**, and the Feasts of the Ascension, Assumption, All Saints, Immaculate Conception, and all other Solemnities of the Church.

HANDBOOK OF THE ASSOCIATION...

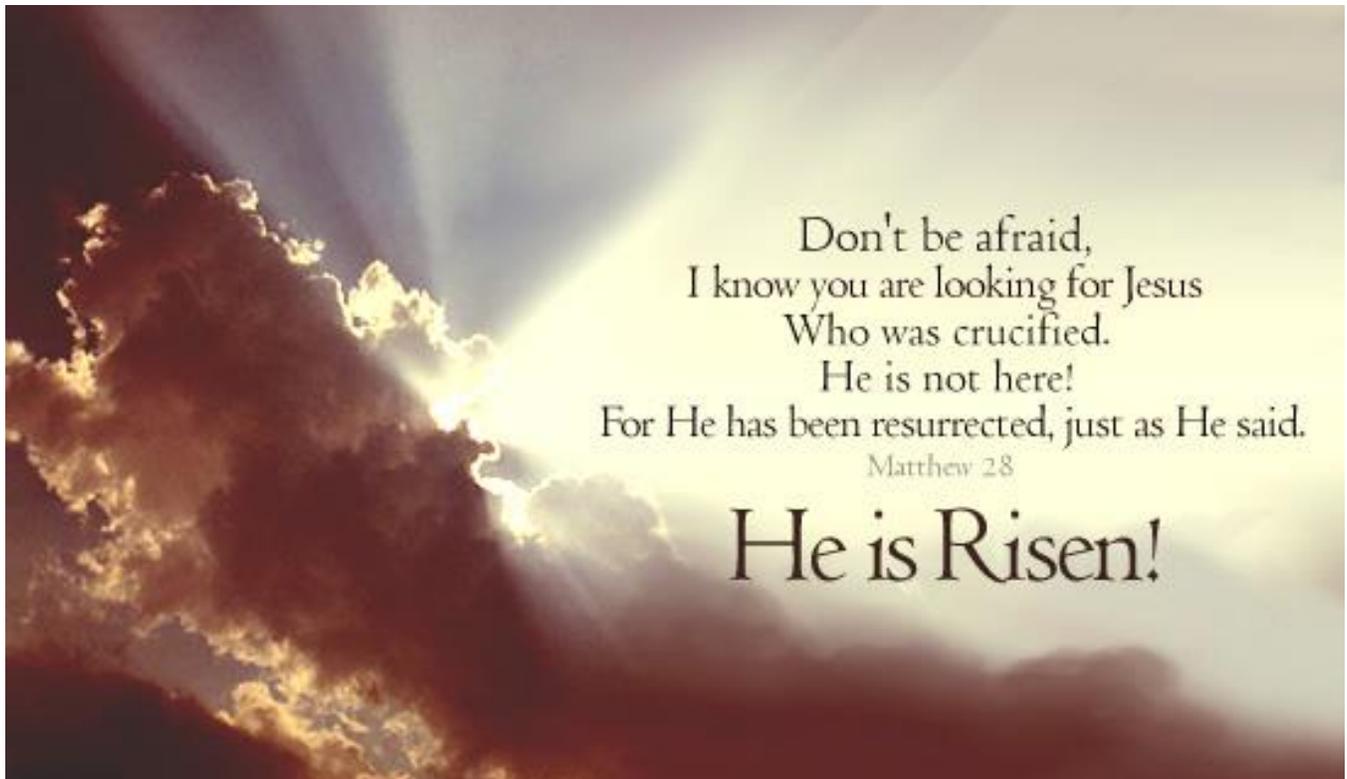


The BSP Handbook, titled *Stella Matutina: Handbook of The Brothers and Sisters of Penance of St. Francis* is now available for order.

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.

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



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, Administrators



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

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