



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

BONAVENTURE AND HIS LESSONS ON ST. FRANCIS:

Chapter XVI—Francis' Patient Endurance and His Death

4. His companions were overcome with sorrow and wept bitterly; one of them whom the saint called his guardian was inspired by God and took a habit with a cord and trousers, and offered them to Christ's beggar, as he realized this was what he wanted. "I am giving you the loan of these," he said, "as a beggar, and you are to take them in virtue of obedience." The saint was delighted and his heart overflowed with happiness; this proved that he had kept his faith with Lady Poverty to the end. Raising his hands to heaven, he gave praise to Christ for freeing him from all his burdens and allowing him to go freely to meet him. He had acted as he did in his anxiety for poverty, and he was unwilling even to keep a habit unless it was on loan. Christ hung upon his Cross, poor and naked and in great pain, and Francis wanted to be like him in everything. That was why at the beginning of his religious life he stood naked before the bishop, and at the end he wished to leave the world naked. In obedience and love he begged the friars who were standing by him to let him lie naked on the ground, when they saw he was dead, for as long as it takes to walk a mile unhurriedly.

Surely he was the most Christ-like of men! His only desire was to be like Christ and imitate him perfectly, and he was found worthy to be adorned with the marks of his likeness; in his life he imitated the life

of Christ and in his death he imitated his death, and he wished to be like him still when he was dead.

5. As the moment of his death drew near, the saint had all the friars who were there called to his side; he spoke to them gently with fatherly affection, consoling them for his death and exhorting them to



love God. He mentioned especially poverty and patient endurance and the necessity of holding to the faith of the holy Roman Church, and gave the Gospel preeminence over any other rule of life. The friars were grouped about him and he stretched out his arms over them in the form of a cross, because he loved that sign, and blessed all in the friars, both present and absent, in the power and in the

name of the Crucified. Then he added, "I bid you good-bye, all you my sons, in the fear of God. Remain in him always. There will be trials and temptations in the future, and it is well for those who persevere in the life they have undertaken. I am on my way to God, and I commend you all to his favour."

When he had finished his inspiring admonition, he told them to bring a book of the Gospels and asked to have the passage of St. John read which begins, "Before the paschal feast began" (Jn 13:1). Then as best he could he intoned the psalm, "Loud is my cry to the Lord, the prayer I utter for the Lord's mercy," and recited it all down to the last verse, "Too long have honest hearts waited to see you grant me redress" (Ps 141:1-8).

Bonaventure—Major Life of St. Francis (1263)



VISITOR'S MESSAGE

Homily by Fr. Robert Altier...

Reading (Romans 14:7-12) Gospel (Luke 15:1-10)

Saint Paul, in the first reading today, tells us that each one of us is going to have to stand before the judgment seat of God, and each one of us is going to have to give to God an account of our lives. So he asks, Why then do you judge your brother, because we have a judge, and the judge is the Lord. "Why do we stand in judgment with regard to other people?" is Saint Paul's question. Who are we to judge others? We can judge actions, but we are not to be judging the people.

The Lord makes clear to us in the Gospel reading what it is that we have to be doing. We need to be praying for the people. If there is somebody whom you find yourself judging, if there is somebody whom you do not like, if there is someone who just kind of gets under your skin, pray for that person. What we tend to do instead is stand in judgment of them. We tend to harbor anger against them, or bad thoughts against them, or sometimes we just plain and simply try to ignore them. But if there is going to be more rejoicing in heaven over one repentant sinner than over ninety-nine righteous people, if there is someone who is giving into some sort of sinfulness then we need to pray for them so that they would repent. What we would want is for them to go to heaven.

Now we also need to look at it and say, "If I am the one standing in judgment of others, maybe I'm the one who needs to repent. Maybe that is going to give far more glory to God and more joy to the angels than anything else that I could think of," because if we are standing in judgment of others, we are the ones who are sinning. The interesting thing is (probably like that lost sheep wandering around in the hills) we think we are doing just fine. We do not even realize we are lost because we are so caught up in self-righteousness that we think we are doing just fine and we are on the right path. It is the other ninety-nine sheep that are wandering aimlessly—we are the ones that are right, after all. It does not work that way. We have to look at our own selves in light

of Christ and we need to realize that we are the ones who need to repent, that we are the ones who are the sinners who need to change our lives. That is a humbling thing to be able to recognize.

So whether it is that we see somebody doing something that needs our prayers, or whether we look at ourselves and find ourselves judging others and therefore we recognize our own need to repent, it does not matter; either way the cure is the same: We need to pray. We need to keep our hearts and our minds focused on Christ. That is the only thing that is important. All we need to do is stop and think about what Saint Paul is telling us, that each of us is going to have to stand before the judgment seat of Christ. Do we really want to try to explain to Jesus why we thought it was okay for us to be a judge? why we thought it was okay to condemn somebody else? We have no business doing that. And if He is the judge, how do we think we are going to explain our own actions? It is not going to work very well because He knows what we did and He knows why we did it. We are not going to be able to weasel around

it and we are not going to be able to lie, so if we really look honestly at ourselves then we are going to have to ask, "Why did I do what I just did?" There ultimately is only one reason: "Because I myself am the sinner in this case." That is the one who then needs to repent.

So when we look at our own actions and we look at our own selves in the light of judgment and ask ourselves, "Now how am I going to explain to the Lord why I just did what I did," again, remember that there is not going to be any cutting corners, no neat little stories that we can lie our way through. He is the Just Judge who knows perfectly well what we have done. How are we going to explain ourselves? Since there is not any good explanation for why we do some of the things we do, there is only one option, and that is to repent. When we repent, not only do we save our own souls, but we will find ourselves being much more merciful to others, we will give God glory, and we will provide great rejoicing for the angels in heaven...

Why do we stand in judgment with regard to other people?

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





ADMINISTRATOR'S MESSAGE...

A phone call with Fr. Altier

On Wednesday of this past week we booked a phone conversation with our Visitor, Father Altier. He now has a pastoral residency in the diocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis. He is perfectly happy that we use his

homilies in our newsletter and is happy to remain our Visitor into the future. There were a number of subjects which we thought we should mention here for our members.

First, we thanked him for remaining our visitor through all these years. We began as a formal Association with Archbishop Flynn's letter of support in 1996 and Fr. Altier became our Visitor with, or very shortly after, our first formal professions as an Association in January of 2003. That is not when the BSP began but it was when the first members professed to Archbishop Flynn as we all had to complete formation before we professed. So we say that the BSP was formally started in January of 2003. It had actually begun some years before those first professions. At that time, Fr. Altier joined us, and Fr. Anthony Cirignani O.F.M., i.e. Father Tony, of Green Bay, Wisconsin. Prior to this Father Valerius Messerich O.F.M. had been our visitor, until a few years before his death in 2007. Father Tony has since disappeared into parish work in Wisconsin, so we now have only Father Altier to help us on our way and we are most grateful to him! Please keep him in your prayers!

That said, we updated Fr. Altier on the BSP briefly. Right now, we have 41 professed-for-life members in the Association, two new professions coming in the next year, and we have more than 1000 inquirers worldwide. We factually have inquirers from more than 33 different countries and we still get two or so new inquirers monthly. Most of these decide not to begin formation but all of them have received information from us on the Rule and the Formation Program. We have been told that this is not unusual with religious organizations and so we do not get discouraged by it. The Lord will lead us as he chooses and bring us who he wants. The Rule and Statutes have been translated into German and Spanish by two of these inquirers and have been put on the Internet.

Ninety-nine percent of our communications worldwide are via Internet. That history was shown to us repeatedly at prayer as we began the BSP and it is still very true today. Father Altier is comfortable

with that and so should we be. That said, we as Administrators are available also by postal mail and phone. We often receive phone calls from members, and we do some lessons by postal mail especially to prisoners in the U.S.A. All this is as it must be.

Then we discussed two key questions with Father Altier. One was a request we have had in the BSP to create a history summary and communicate it via the newsletter to all members. Father Altier recommended against communicating this in the newsletter as relates to any mystical history of the BSP, which does exist of course. He did say we could communicate our history as relates to the creation and administration in the BSP, and church blessings and approval, and this of course we have done via the Web page and handbook, and occasionally some of it in the newsletter.

The second thing we discussed is very important and that is the future of the BSP. We are a bona fide Private Association in the Church. That stands for the future. God willing, assuming an Order formally adopts us, we could become a Third Order, but that does not look likely right now. *Machts nichts*, we are what we are and we can live this life that St. Francis gave us as he gave it to us without concern and with the blessing of many in the Church. So, we are fine here.

Father Altier referred the future plans of the Association to our care as Administrators, being also the human founders of the Association, and so we will give this some serious thought and prayer and we will be in communication with key leaders in the Association, and Chapter heads, to put together some plans for our future. This will take some time but it is a priority as we are not getting any younger and we do have several Chapters operating across the country with which we can work. So, more on this later.

Finally, we discussed the best way to communicate with Fr. Altier and decided that for membership questions and questions on administration in the BSP those questions should go through us to Fr. Altier. He is busy as a pastor and so would prefer to deal with the BSP through us as Administrators, where questions arise.

It was a very good conversation with Father Altier, and he is perfectly comfortable with being our Visitor and that is very important to us. Chapters need to get their own spiritual direction from area priests where they are located and questions they cannot answer can be referred to us to review with Fr. Altier

for further clarification. Father Altier has authorized us to serve as spiritual directors to all in the Association on living the Rule. Therefore, questions on living the Rule can be referred to us. Chapter ministers and leaders play a key role in this regard also.

The bottom line is we are doing very well as an Association. In a recent letter received by Margaret Maines of Canada from Rome, which we read verbatim to Father Altier, we were advised that the BSP cannot become a Third Order within the existing Franciscan Third Order, the Secular Franciscan Order now referred to as the O.F.S., or Order of Franciscans Secular. We can however remain an Association in the Church according to Canon 298 with diocesan approval of the local Bishops, which of

course we have in our local relationship through Archbishop Harry J. Flynn, now retired, and Archbishop John Nienstedt, former archbishop of the diocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis, Minnesota, and several other bishops whom our Chapters have contacted in starting up. So, we are in very good standing in the Church. Praise God!

That pretty much summarizes our conversation with Father Altier. We did commit to regular, at least annual, future phone conversations, and he blessed us in parting which blessing is for all of us! If you have any questions on any of this please feel free to write us or email us and ask your questions.

May the Lord bless and lead us all!

Sincerely yours in Jesus Christ,

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



NO GREATER LOVE by Paul Beery, BSP

"My eager expectation and hope is that I shall not be put to shame in any way, but that with all boldness Christ will be magnified in my body, whether by life or death. For to me life is Christ and death is gain. If I go on living in the body, this will

mean fruitful labor for me. So what shall I choose? I am caught between the two. I long to depart this life and be with Christ, which is far better indeed." (1 Philippians 1:20-24)

As previously mentioned in this newsletter, on the third weekend of October Fr. Robert Young gave a series of conferences at Mary, Mother of the Church in Burnsville, MN. Donna and I were eager to go. However, instead of going to his talks on the Divine Will, we were spending most of the weekend experiencing that Will in a very different way. As in a visit to the hospital. Friday evening was the first conference. Friday morning brought a sudden and painful reversion to atrial fib despite my having a pacemaker.

These words could have been centered on the four last things: life, death, heaven and hell, for that's what went through my mind while a rather necessary organ was trying to decide what to do. I think that's a rather healthy outcome, to ponder on the next life in the midst of a distracted current one. But it makes the current life much more difficult due to longing for our ultimate goal, as Paul the Apostle says so well in the quote above. For to me life is Christ and death is gain.

We live by the grace of God. How long will that be? How does one plan for the future when that future

on this earth may be very limited. Health problems that have already led me to give up the BSP Retreat, and slow down the pace of activities I have grown accustomed to. That in itself is a very difficult thing, to change one's behavior produced over a lifetime, an unpleasant aspect of growing old and feeble.

Talk about a perfect time to be reflecting on the Divine Will! Fr. Robert Young introduced us to this wonderful charism last year, and came again this year. Joanne McLaughlin helped with the transition from having him at our BSP Retreat at Prior Lake Franciscan Retreat Center last year to a parish church nearby where twice as many people could attend. She sent a note to me saying in part:

"We had 100 people and the conference was well received and beautiful. We had people from all over – Montana, Iowa, Missouri, Wisconsin, Arizona and Illinois. Many are wondering if there will be a next year. I know Fr. Young would be happy to come back. Thank you for 'gifting' Fr. Young to us. In spite of a lot of work it was worth it for the Glory of God in spreading this most important message."

That is exactly what I had hoped for, that Fr. Young



would come back to this area year after year and continue spreading the message of Divine Love through our living in the Divine Will. At the conferences, Fr. Young gave handouts which Joanne has passed on to me, which I would like to share. This month we will begin with "Points for Learning."

The Kingdom of the Divine Will

POINTS for LEARNING

1. Living in the Divine Will is a gift of God's grace. Jesus wants to give it to us even more than we can desire it. He says that the Will of God adapts to the capacity of each one and according to our desire for It to reign in us and we in It.
2. This way of life is the fulfilment of the 3rd work of God called "Sanctification" which is the mission of the Holy Spirit on earth in time to complete the work of the Father and the Son in Creation and Redemption.
3. It is also the fulfilment of the Lord's Prayer: "Thy Kingdom come, Thy Will be done on earth as it is in Heaven." For living in the Divine Will is the essence of life in Heaven.
4. The Blessed Virgin Mary is the Queen of this Kingdom. She is our great Advocate and is the One God has chosen to call us and prepare us to receive and live this Gift on earth.
5. The reading of Luisa's writings gives us the knowledge of how to live the Divine Will. It increases our desire and love for it, so that we will do our best to be faithful and attentive to doing all our acts each day together with Jesus and Mary and unite with

their acts done here.

6. We need to read something each day, but it does not necessarily have to be a great amount. We should read slowly and meditatively, always asking the Holy Spirit to inspire with His Seven Gifts to understand and retain what we read.
7. We can also ask the Mother of God to intercede for us each time we read and to help us to receive the grace to understand and most of all, put into practice what we come to know.
8. Every single act of our lives is important and necessary for living this way. In everything we do – every breath and heartbeat, thought, word, and deed – we have an opportunity to receive a new "act" of God's Eternal Willing which wants to be united with each and every act of ours on earth through the free giving of our human will to His Divine Willing.
9. This is what is called "original grace" in the Church. Adam and Eve possessed this grace in its fullness from the moment of their creation. It was lost by original sin and restored by Jesus through His life, death and resurrection. His Mother Mary cooperated fully and perfectly with Him in this restoring of the Reign of God's Will to be lived on earth as in heaven.
10. Many good and holy souls like St. Joseph have lived in the Divine Will to the extent they knew it was possible. But it is through Luisa Piccarreta, the little daughter of the Divine Will, that this way of life is made known as a "Divine Science" – that is, a whole body of knowledge that makes it possible for souls to learn once again how to live the life of heaven on earth in the Will of God.

Paul Beery BSP, Morning Star Chapter, Minnesota



Increasing penance... by Janet Klasson, BSP

From the Gospel reading for the Thirty-first Sunday of Ordinary Time

"Then Jesus said to the crowds and to his disciples, 'The scribes and the Pharisees sit on Moses' seat; therefore, do whatever they teach you and follow it; but do not do as they do, for they do not practise what they teach. They tie up heavy burdens, hard to bear, and lay them on the shoulders of others; but they themselves are unwilling to lift a finger to move them.'" (Matthew 23:1-41)

Do you notice how much more you have to pay for torn blue jeans these days? What used to be seen as a sign of abject poverty is now elevated to a status symbol, a fashion statement. I think this can be seen as a metaphor for the spiritual poverty of our age, a

sign of the times. It seems many are no longer ashamed of their spiritual poverty, but wear their spiritual dysfunction as a status symbol, a fashion statement. Their spirit may be in tatters, but they're too cool to care.



If we have to pay more for torn blue jeans, how much more, then, do we have to pay for a soul in tatters? Jesus rebuked the Pharisees for piling heavy burdens on others while refusing to lift a finger to help. Let's apply that to our own attitudes.

How easy it is to cluck our tongues at those who walk around with tattered spirits, who celebrate their sinfulness, who never darken the door of a church except perhaps to spit. As penitents, we are called to offer penance for these poor souls, that they might be clothed in eternity with the heavenly garment of purity and grace! It is the deep desire of God's heart that no one be lost.

There was recently yet another interesting discussion on the BSP Lifestyle Forum titled, "Admonished by a Peasant". It began with a reference to the time St. Francis was severely rebuked by a peasant, after which the Saint bent down and kissed the peasant's feet in gratitude. We cannot remotely imagine what this act of abject humility obtained in the spiritual realm. Indeed, its effects reverberate even centuries later as we read about it.

Do you feel increasing burdens lately? More complications? Misunderstandings? Mistakes? Confusion? Rebukes? Illnesses? I have noticed this personally, and I have heard of many people enduring much more than I am. I often feel as if I am swimming through mud! It seems that God is not leaving this call to increased penance to chance or to the caprices of our own self-absorbed wills. But God is calling us all—and especially penitents—to accept with love and gratitude these treasures of grace, these imposed penances, and use them as leverage to lift the burdens of those who do not even know their own poverty.

Let us always keep in mind that these tattered souls are not the enemy. They are as beloved of God as we are—if not more so! They are God's favorites; he longs for these prodigals with everlasting sighs. One of the other commenters in the above-referenced Forum discussion responded with an anonymous quote: "You cannot comprehend the deepest love God has for you until you realize that he has the same love for the person or people you most despise." Touché! As Bruce commented in the same discussion: "God uses everyone to help everyone."

In his letter to Proba, St. Augustine wrote:

From <https://pelianitoblog.wordpress.com>

Luke 14:22-23 And the slave said, "Sir, what you ordered has been done, and there is still room." Then the master said to the slave, "Go out into the roads and lanes, and compel people to come in, so that my house may be filled."

"In the kind of affliction, then, which can bring either good or ill, we do not know what it is right to pray for; yet, because it is difficult, troublesome and against the grain for us, weak as we are, we do what every human would do, we pray that it may be taken away from us. We owe, however, at least this much in our duty to God: if he does not take it away, we must not imagine that we are being forgotten by him but because of our loving endurance of evil, must await greater blessings in its place. In this way, power shines forth more perfectly in weakness."

The following prayer came to me as I strove to find new ways to offer my sufferings in the Divine Will.

"O my Jesus, in the Divine Will I offer you every shard of suffering ever endured from the time of the fall of Adam and Eve to the last man, especially my own. I offer them as a spiritual bouquet through the Flame of Love of our Immaculate Mother in reparation to the Holy Trinity for all sins ever committed, for the conversion of all those whose hearts are far from you, for the fire of pure love to be ignited in the lukewarm, and for all the intentions of those here and in my spiritual territory. Jesus and Mary, I trust in you. Take care of everything, and everyone. May your Kingdom come and come quickly! Amen."

Then at Mass during the Preparation of the Gifts, I pray: "Eternal Father in the Divine Will, I place every shard of suffering ever endured, from the time of the fall of Adam and Eve to the last man, into the wine, which will become Our Lord's Precious Blood. This alone can offer you perfect reparation for the great and many sins of humanity." In this way, **in the Divine Will**, every shard of suffering in history becomes linked to the perfect offering of Jesus at the Last Supper, so that in the Divine Will God may be consoled in every age by every person, for his glory.

We are in extraordinary times. And where sin abounds, grace abounds all the more, praise God! May God keep us humble, grateful, and always willing to persist in His work of helping the innumerable tattered souls for whom he pines, no matter the cost. Our weapon in this spiritual battle is the sword of penance.

Jesus, Mary, Joseph, we love you! Save souls!

"Beloved, so many who were called by my name have spurned me. So many who I called by name have rejected me. Never have prayer and sacrifice, oblation and reparation been more needed. Those who have spurned and rejected me have need of many prayers and offerings, more so than those who have yet to hear the Good News. Do you wonder why you suffer? Do you not know? You are participating in the labor of the Cross. Pray for strength, and above all remain hopeful. Your suffering is not fruitless, but in the Divine Will, it shall bear abundant fruit, and your consolation will be beyond imagining. Shalom, dear children."

Eternal Father, in the Divine Will grant us every grace we need to bear these sufferings with hope and joy. We are Simon of Cyrene yoked with you to the glorious Cross. In your abundant mercy, save souls! 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/>.)



FROM THE 'SPARROW' The Armor of Little Birds

Peace my dear little sparrows! What kind of armor would a little bird (like us) be able to wear? This requires a bit of feathery introspection (just so happens that includes us), so let us delve off into this question.

Every Christian is involved in serious spiritual warfare. Indeed, there are many battles to be fought and won in and with the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Satan and his fallen angels are out to contaminate the human race with all kinds of wickedness. Their unholy goal is to destroy individuals and thereby gain victory over the Church. It is imperative then that we have a clear focus on who the enemy is! Our attack must NEVER be on other humans, knowing that our Captain, Jesus Christ, has a deep love and concern for each of them.

Every soldier in this war must be aware of the methods that the enemy uses for our destruction. Among them are various temptations Satan uses to appeal to the carnal nature through our physical senses and our natural pride ("pride cometh before the fall..." -Proverbs 16:8). The Bible refers to these as "the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life" (1 John 2:16). Satan makes the allurements of this present world as attractive as he can.

Victory over the enemy is possible if the Christian puts on the whole armor of God (Ephesians 6:10-24). This includes being "girt about" with the belt of truth and wearing the breastplate of righteousness. There are sturdy shoes for effectively carrying the Gospel of peace. The shield of faith is so versatile that it can defend against all attacks, and the helmet of salvation affords excellent protection for the soldier's mind.



The offensive weapon is the sword of the Holy Spirit, which is the Word of God—ever potent and trustworthy in battle. Besides all these, God's supernatural power is always available through fervent prayer. With this power and with all this spiritual armor, the Christian soldier (mighty sparrows!) is well equipped to overcome the enemy and gain ground against satanic strongholds. "Onward Christian soldiers, marching as to war."

St. Francis was a warrior of the Word. He was devout in the way and use of the armor of God. The teaching and writings about him are complete with various Scripture verses and he was truly a soldier of the Lord. We sparrows are no less called than he was to put on the armor of God and take up the sword of the Spirit—the Word of God. That Word can be found in us having several ways to enter our sparrow hearts—the Liturgy of the Word, the reading of the Bible, the spoken word of Gospel-led Christians, Christian music are just examples—as well as the beauty of nature and created things which spoke unwritten Words of God's creation to St. Francis. We, as little sparrows, will never be wanting to find and experience the Word of the Lord if our hearts stay open to the influence of the Holy Spirit who brings us the will of the Father with Divine inspirations poured out upon us day by day!

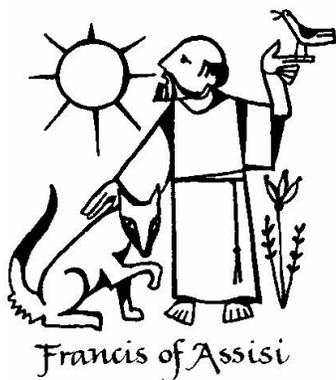
"When the enemy troubles me, I behave like a soldier. Knowing that it is cowardly to fight a duel. I turn my back upon the enemy. Then I turn to my Jesus and tell Him that I am ready to shed every drop of my blood to confess that heaven really exists."

-St. Therese, the Little Flower
(aka "Warrior Par Excellence")

pax et bonum, Bro. Sparrow
Bob Hall BSP, Little Flower Chapter, N. Carolina



LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR.....LOVE YOUR ENEMIES.....



We have heard that the story about St. Francis and the Wolf of Gubbio is legend. However it has been confirmed by the Franciscans of the Renewal USA, that the story is a true account which took place in the life of St Francis of Assisi.

There was a ferocious wolf living near the town of Gubbio and the people

being aware of him, were very afraid avoiding encounter. One day, when Francis was out walking, he came into the territory of the wolf and the wolf was preparing to attack. Francis held out his hand to the wolf, who gently rested his paw in Francis' hand. Francis spoke gently to the wolf who quickly became tame and followed Francis back into the town of Gubbio. The wolf continued to live there and the people fed him and cared for him as a town pet! A loving hand, a kind word, a little food shared means, "A little love goes a long way..."

Submitted by "Penitent"

MORNING STAR: NEWS ON THE ASSOCIATION...

NOVEMBER BEGINS INCREASED FASTING



STATUTES: ARTICLE 8

a. All Fridays are days of fast for penitents throughout the year unless a Solemnity in the Church. **From the Feast of All Saints until Easter, penitents are to fast on Wednesdays as well as Fridays.** Monday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday are always days of abstinence, following Article 6 unless a Solemnity in the Church.

b. Fasting guidelines shall follow current Church law and are listed in Appendix A although the penitent may fast more and in a different manner if they wish. Questions should be referred to the penitent's spiritual advisor or director.

c. The amount of food eaten on fast days will be particular to the individual penitent who may feel hungry but should not feel debilitated, drowsy, or ill. The penitent should consult a spiritual director or confessor, or, if needed, a physician regarding the amount of food to be eaten.

STATUTES: ARTICLE 9

a. **Penitents are to observe a pre-Christmas fast from November 12, the day after the Feast of St. Martin, until Christmas** and a pre-Easter fast from Ash Wednesday until Easter.

b. Penitents who are guests in the homes of others, or who have been invited out to eat, are permitted to eat what is set before them unless that day is a day of fast and/or abstinence enjoined by the Church.

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.

d. Penitents are permitted to celebrate birthday parties, anniversaries, baptisms, confirmations, marriages, and other special occasions unless these would fall on a fast day enjoined by the Church. Fasting and abstinence is not required at these events, but is permitted if kept invisible to others.

e. Additional exceptions to the fasting provisions of this Rule are listed under Articles 6, 10, and 11 and in Appendix A, or may be designated by an individual's spiritual director or confessor.

STAY CONNECTED...PLEASE!

If you wish to connect with your Brothers and Sisters in the BSP, please remember that the **BSP Forums** on our website are set up specifically for that purpose. It is a wonderful place for those who have lived the Rule for some time to give encouragement to those just starting out. You don't have to post long messages, but post and respond as the Spirit leads you. If you have something edifying to share, especially on living the life of penance, you will find a very appreciative audience.

Remember too that there is also a prayer forum. Don't underestimate the prayers of a few poor penitents under the patronage of Father Francis and St. Clare!

Hope to see you on the Forums! <http://bspenance.org/forum/>

HANDBOOK OF THE ASSOCIATION...

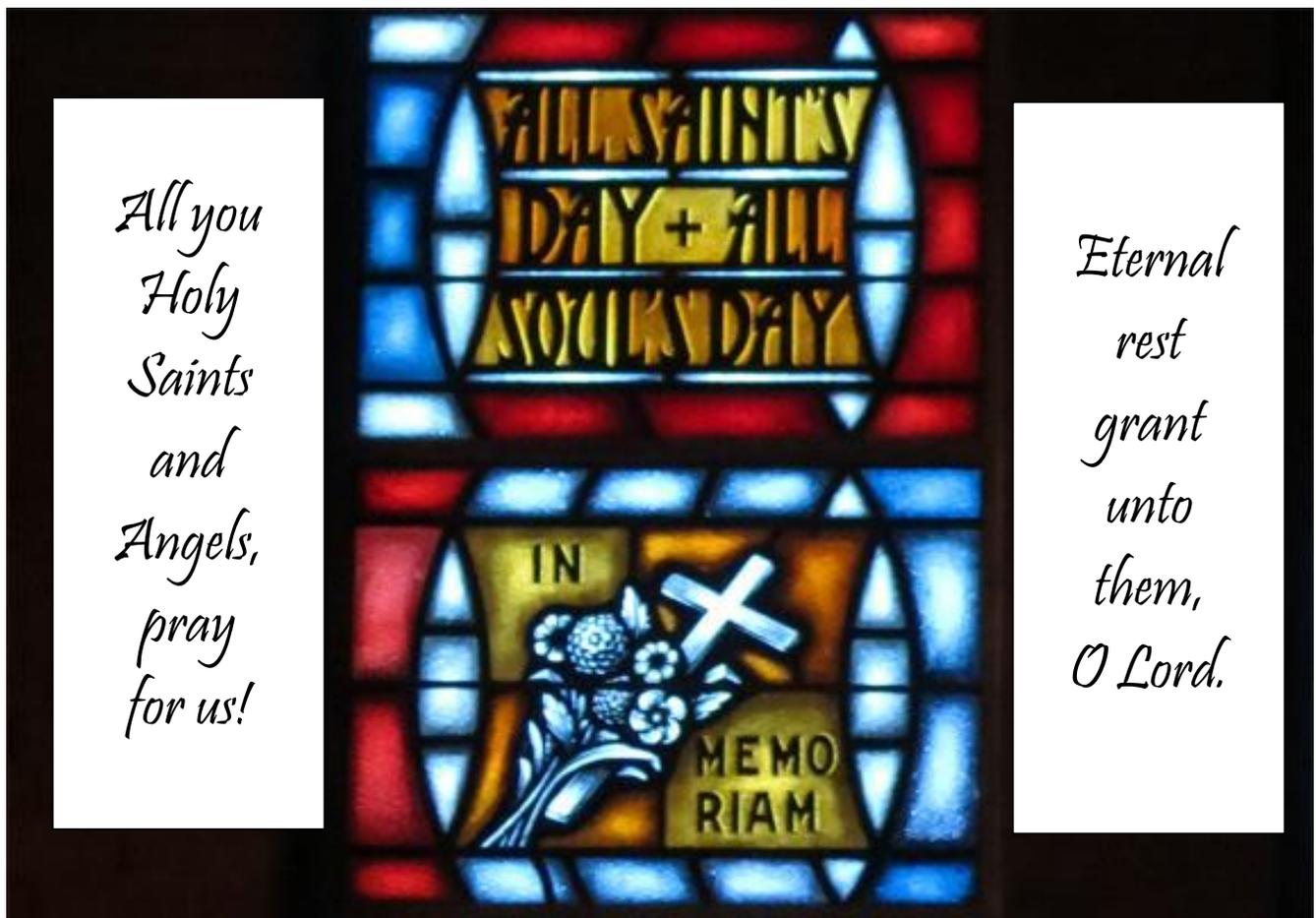


The BSP Handbook, titled *Stella Matutina: Handbook of The Brothers and Sisters of Penance of St. Francis* is now available for order.

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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