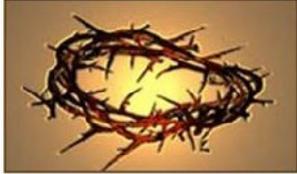


# "FOLLOW ME!"

Luke 9:23



## Monthly Newsletter of The BROTHERS AND SISTERS OF PENANCE of St. Francis

April 2011

### BONAVENTURE AND HIS LESSONS ON ST. FRANCIS:

#### Chapter III—The Foundation of the Order—the Rule is approved



renounce the world completely after his example, and he asked his advice about the best way to do it. Francis was filled with the encouragement of the Holy Spirit, when he realized he was being joined by his first follower, and he said, "We shall have to ask God's advice about this." In the morning they went to the church of St. Nicholas where they spent some time in prayer. Then Francis opened the Gospel book three times in honor of the Blessed Trinity, asking God to approve Bernard's plan with a

3. As the force of his teaching and the sincerity of his life became known, others were moved by his example to live a life of penance. They renounced everything they had and came to share his life and dress. First among them was Bernard, a worthy man who was called by God and became Francis' first son, both in time and holiness. When he had discovered Francis' holiness for himself, he decided to

three-fold testimony. The book opened the first time at the words, "**If you have in mind to be perfect, go home and sell all that belongs to you, and give it to the poor.**" (Mt 19:21). The second time they found the phrase, "**Take nothing with you to use on your journey**" (Lk 9:3), and the third time the words of our Lord caught their eyes, "**If any man has a mind to come my way, let him renounce self, and take up his cross, and follow me.**" (Mt 16:24) "This is our life and our rule" said Francis, "and everyone who comes to join our company must be prepared to do this. And so, if you have a mind to be perfect, go home and do as you have heard.

4. Within a short while afterwards five others felt the call of the same spirit and the number of Francis' followers grew to six. Third among those to join him was Brother Giles, a man who was full of God and in every way worthy of the great name he left behind him. He was a very ordinary, uneducated person, but he distinguished himself by the practice of heroic virtue, as St. Francis had prophesied, and he was raised to sublime contemplation. For years he never ceased to raise his heart continually to God and he used to be so often rapt in ecstasy that he seemed to live a life worthy of the Angels even when he was on earth, as I have seen with my own eyes.

Bonaventure—Major Life of St. Francis (1263)





## VISITOR'S MESSAGE

### Homily by Fr. Robert Altier: Easter Vigil

My dear friends, we celebrate this night the greatest of all the liturgies of the Church, and all of the symbolism that

we celebrate is packed into one Mass. We start, for instance, with that dichotomy between darkness and light, and we recall that Jesus is the light that came into the world that came into the darkness and the darkness was not able to overcome the light. The Easter fire was lit in the darkness and the light then spread throughout the entire church. We also, in a few moments, will bless the Easter water, and we recall in that, not only the Passover for the Jewish people, but our own Baptism. We recall also the Creation, when at the very beginning there was the waters, and the Holy Spirit hovered over the waters and brought order out of the chaos represented by the water.

We celebrate also tonight, not only the light and darkness, not only the order and the chaos, but we celebrate life and death. We celebrate today the greatest single event that humanity has ever known: the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, something which has never happened in its like, but something which is going to happen for each and every one of us on the last day.

We celebrate also tonight in a special way a new creation. If we think about the events of the last couple of days, yesterday afternoon we recalled the Passion and Death of Our Lord. Yesterday, we thought about how He was scourged and crowned, and how He was beaten and finally crucified. Last night at Stations, we spoke about how God in His mercy does this interesting twist and the irony which is there so that when we look at the human body of Jesus, that that is the mirror for our souls. And on what would have been the sixth day of Creation, we made, as humanity, an attempt to recreate God in our image: We scourged Him; we beat Him; we flogged Him; we crucified Him; we made Him marred beyond recognition in our own image.

But today we celebrate God's generosity and His recreation because today we will look once again at the body of Jesus and it will be, once again, a mirror for our souls. But today it is a glorified body and it reflects the glory of God that dwells within our souls when we are in the state of grace. And so today, as we celebrate the seventh day of Creation (for the Jewish people, Sunday began at the moment that the sun went down this evening, so it is now Sunday), the day when God rested from all of the work He had undertaken in Creation, we recall the last words of Our Lord from the Cross: It is consummated. His work was finished; today He rested. And we celebrate the

first day of a new creation, a recreated humanity made once again glorious in the image and likeness of God, sharing in His life and in His nature, united with Jesus in Baptism. That is the glory which is ours.

This morning when I came into church to pray, I experienced what I experience every year on this day. I was the only person here early in the morning and there was something that was missing. I looked around the church and I saw all of the beauty, but the church was empty because the real Beauty of the church was not here – He was in the grave. But the hope that was there as I sat in prayer this morning, my heart, in essence, searching for the Lord and unable to make the connection that it is normally able to make when Jesus is Present in the tabernacle. I thought of Our Lady and I thought of the apostles. I pondered it, as you may have pondered it as well when you came into church tonight and the tabernacle was empty: the Lord is not present in His church. We all experienced that same thing.

But what dawned on me this morning is that the great gift God gave was to experience what Our Lady experienced not what the apostles experienced. In those intervening days after the Death of Jesus, the apostles locked themselves in the Upper Room and they did not believe that He was going to rise from the dead. Saint Mary Magdalene did not believe it either. Recall that she came early in the morning carrying all of the things to anoint the body of Jesus, fully expecting that she would find His body there. Our Lady, on the other hand, is the only person who had the hope and the faith that her Son was going to rise from the dead. She was not there with any spices; she was there with her heart - praying, waiting for the moment that her Son would rise from the dead. As I sat in prayer this morning, I knew that same hope. The emptiness in the church, even with all of its beauty, the emptiness - which I could feel in the depths of my heart - I knew tonight would be filled. And that is what we celebrate, not merely the Death of Jesus yesterday, but the glorious Resurrection of Our Lord and the way that He fills our hearts, the first day of a new creation, the first day of a new covenant where we are remade in the very image and likeness of God because we are united with His Son and made members of His Son, sharing His life.

And so now as we continue on with this Mass, we will recall and pray to all of the saints – those whose faith in the Resurrection brought them to share in its glory - to pray for us. Then we will bless the Easter water and each one of us will renew again our own baptismal vows; we will recommit ourselves to Jesus where we recall the Death and Resurrection that we

have already entered into in Baptism. We recall the darkness of sin and the light of God's grace that fills us. And we look forward to the day that our faith will

be fulfilled, our hope will be fulfilled, and our love will be complete when we share in the Resurrection of Jesus and behold Him face to face.

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



## ADMINISTRATOR'S MESSAGE...The Three Stairs

St. Catherine of Siena is a Doctor of the Church. She lived from 1347 to 1380 and was the twenty-fourth of 25 children. She died when she

was 33 years old and bore the stigmata, as did St. Francis, though it was only visible to herself at her request. St. Catherine wrote extensively at the prompting of God and her writings are what led to her being made a Doctor of the Church.

St. Catherine's principle work was her *Dialogue*, which is a summary of her ongoing conversations with God the Father. In this Dialogue she outlines all that God the Father tells her about souls and how they perish or rise to perfection. His words to her are very direct but very gentle. He makes us do nothing. We are each gifted for the things he wants us to accomplish in our life and we can choose to do them or not. God the Father refers often to Himself as 'the sea of peace'.

In the *Dialogue*, God the Father points out to St. Catherine that His Son, Jesus, is our Bridge to heaven, and we get to that Bridge by climbing three stairs, which we all have in us all the time. Once we get to the Bridge we can cross it to eternal life. The three stairs are the three powers of the human soul. These are: memory, understanding (intellect), and the will. It is a most worthy consideration to consider how we are each using these stairs to come to God.

Jesus said that "Wherever two or three are gathered in my Name there I am in the midst of them." God the Father tells St. Catherine that this gathering of the three powers of the soul draws Him into their midst. He becomes one with them by grace. As they gather they bring the soul to love God and to love their neighbor, and so the three stairs lead to a rich fulfillment of all the Lord asks of us.

The memory holds on to God's blessings and recalls His goodness to our souls. Understanding contemplates the unspeakable love God has shown us through the mediation of His only-begotten Son whom He has set before our minds-eye so we can contemplate the fire of His charity. The will, finally, is joined with the memory and understanding to know and desire God, our final goal. We desire to know God

and serve Him and we remember all He has done for us and this will of ours brings us to move in the direction of the Bridge to cross over, through Jesus, into the love of God. In this way the three stairs lead us to God.

Those who go under use the soul's powers to pursue the things of the world, not God, and seek to satisfy their selfish love, themselves, and that leads to eternal death. They do not use the stairs to climb to the Bridge, Jesus, and so they do not cross the Bridge. Those who cross the Bridge, using the powers of their soul, attain to eternal life. Without crossing the Bridge you cannot cross at all and so you perish.

Recalling all that God has done for us leads us to desire to find God and serve Him. Once you desire to serve God you have reached the first stair. Once we are stripped of selfish love we desire to serve God and we rise above the things around us and ourselves. In doing this we desire God and this desire is in fact the first step.

The second step is the enlightenment of our minds. We become aware, in our intellect and understanding, of the warm-hearted love with which God the Father sent the Son to be our Model and the Way. In that we find peace and quiet, and we fill our memory with the love of God, which naturally overflows to love of neighbor, for we cannot love God, who we do not see, without loving our neighbors who we do see. Even though the pleasures and attractions of the world still strike us they have no effect on us, for we are filled with the fullness of God.

The third step is our wills. At death the will of a human being is locked in place. Hence those who die in sin, without loving God or neighbor, cannot change the direction they have chosen after they die. Therefore their only recourse is towards selfishness and evil and they can have no place with God. Since our souls are eternal and infinite (our bodies are not) the reward or punishment of our souls by our just Judge, i.e. heaven or hell, is also eternal and infinite. If our wills recall the goodness of God as given by our memories, and we understand the place of God's love in us and our lives as held in our understanding, then our wills bring us to God, because we love God for

who He is. Our memory holds us to God, our understanding brings us to see his love for us, and our wills bring us to love Him. Since God is love He draws us forever to Himself.

Jesus is our Bridge to the Father. This theme was a central theme in what St. Catherine wrote in her *Dialogue*. The life of Jesus is the model for us all as we grow in holiness. Perfection rests in living his life materially and spiritually as fully as we each can. To the extent we can do that we grow deeper into perfection, and that alone explains why St. Francis was himself a model of perfection to us all. He

perfectly, materially, and spiritually, followed Jesus. The life he gave us, i.e., the Rule of the BSP, is a means to this end.

In the lives of all the Saints, but in different ways, we see that they followed the three stairs to God. It is up to each of us to do the same, and we will, if we seek to live for God. Our desire will bring us up the stairs, to the Bridge, and we will cross over the swift and violent river of the world, safely and without harm, to be with God.

**Come Lord Jesus, come.**

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



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

**"Jesus said: 'The time has now come when true worshipers will worship the Father in Spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.'" (John 4, 23)**

During Lent we are gifted with some spectacular treatises on how to worship God, from the Church's Treasury of Divine Grace. From the third century we begin with Tertullian: (Office of Readings, Thursday, Third Week of Lent)

*"Prayer is the offering in spirit that has done away with the sacrifices of old. God is spirit, and **so He looks for worshipers who are like Himself**. We pray in spirit, and so **offer in spirit the sacrifice of prayer**. Prayer is an offering that belongs to God and is acceptable to Him. It is the offering He has asked for, the offering He planned as His own.*

*"We must dedicate this **offering of prayer** with our whole heart. We must fatten it **on faith**, tend it **by truth**, keep it **unblemished through innocence** and **clean through chastity**, and **crown it with love**. We must escort it to the altar of God in a **procession of good works** to the sound of psalms and hymns. Then it will gain for us all that we ask of God. For since God asks for prayer offered in spirit and in truth, how can He deny anything to this kind of prayer?"*

*"In the past prayer was able to bring down punishment, rout armies, and withhold the blessing of rain. Now, however, the prayer of the just turns aside the whole anger of God, keeps vigil for its enemies, pleads for*

*persecutors. Is it any wonder that it can call down water from heaven when it could obtain fire from heaven as well? **Prayer is the one thing that can conquer God!** But Christ has willed that it should work no evil, and has given it all power over good.*

*"Prayer's only art is to call back the souls of the dead from the very journey into death, give strength to the weak, heal the sick, exorcise the possessed, open prison cells, free the innocent from their chains. Prayer cleanses from sin, drives away temptations, stamps out persecutions, comforts the fainthearted, gives new strength to the courageous, brings travelers safely home, calms the waves, confounds robbers, feeds the poor, overrules the rich, lifts up the fallen, supports those who are falling, sustains those who stand firm."*

And with this last paragraph of Tertullian St. Francis would have been proud to join in:

*"All the angels pray. Every creature prays. Cattle and wild beasts pray and bend the knee. As they come from their barns and caves they look up to heaven and call out, lifting up their spirit in their own fashion. The birds too rise and lift themselves up to heaven: they open out their wings, instead of hands, in the form of a cross, and give voice to what seems to be a prayer. What more*

*need be said on the duty of prayer? Even the Lord Himself prayed. To Him be honor and power forever and ever."*

From the fifth century a Doctor of the Church, St. Peter Chrysologus, reminds us of what goes along with prayer to guide our faith:

*"There are three things by which faith stands firm, devotion remains constant, and virtue endures. They are **prayer, fasting and mercy. Prayer knocks at the door, fasting obtains, mercy receives. Prayer, mercy and fasting: these three are one, and they give life to each other.***

*"Fasting is the soul of prayer, mercy is the lifeblood of fasting; they cannot be separated. If you have only one of them or not all three together, you have nothing. So if you pray, fast; if you fast, show mercy; if you want your petition to be heard, hear the petition of others. If you do not close your ear to others you open God's ear to yourself.*

*"Let prayer, mercy and fasting be one single plea to God on our behalf, one speech in our defense, and a threefold united prayer in our favor. Let us offer our souls in sacrifice by means of fasting. There is nothing more pleasing that we can offer to God: 'My sacrifice to God is a broken spirit; God does not despise a bruised and humbled heart.' (Ps. 51)*

*"Offer your soul to God, make it an oblation of your fasting, so that your soul may be a pure offering, a holy sacrifice, a living victim, remaining your own and at the same time made over to God. If you are to give Him yourself, you are never without the means of giving."*

I can testify to the truthfulness of St. Peter's words, especially the connection between prayer and fasting. So often when I pray, it seems like the Lord asks: 'So what are you going to **do**?' As in, what are you going to do to prove you are offering a **sacrifice of prayer**? Jesus said of certain demons: "These can only be cast out by prayer and fasting." Fasting has been a real sacrifice for me. I need to hear about the necessity of fasting to make prayer effective, and how to **do it!** St. Peter Chrysologus continues:

*"To make prayer and fasting acceptable, mercy must be added. Fasting bears no fruit unless it is watered by mercy. Mercy is to fasting as rain is to the earth. However much you may cultivate your heart, clear the soil of your nature, root out vices, sow virtues, if you do not release the springs of mercy, your fasting will bear no fruit." (Office of Readings,*

*Tuesday, Third Week of Lent)*

Finally from the twenty-first century, a few words from our beloved Fr. Valerius (d. 2007, R.I.P.), who helped bring the BSP into existence. He was and is the most Christ-like Franciscan I have ever met.

*"Becoming a Brother or Sister of Penance does not necessarily imply that you have done something bad in the past, and now you have to make amends for the way you have lived by mortifying and putting to death sinful desires.*

*"Instead you now have come to a spiritual awakening of something that has been missing in your life, namely, the fulfillment of the Good News of Jesus Christ. That news is turning away from even the good things of the world for those that last for all eternity. So give a new form or pattern of living to yourself based on the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The voice we hear is that of Jesus calling us to follow Him instead of seeking what gratifies self.*

*"In this way you will not be focusing on the negative elements of fasting and abstaining, but on being like Jesus Christ, a loving person at peace with one another, not concerned with what clothes you or your friends are wearing. Focus on what you and they are in the sight of God: a **child God created in His Image and Likeness.***

*"With such dispositions, a life of prayer opens up for you. The prayers you say are not a mechanical repetition of the Lord's prayer, but a prayer of the heart that reflects the thanks you owe to God for all the good things He continually places at your disposal. As you eat your meal saying the Our Father, as prescribed by Article 7 of the Rule, eating becomes more meaningful. You are enjoying God's gift to you, a gift that is as sacred as your life itself. Your life is sustained by the food that God gives you as refreshment for the soul and body.*

***"The Eucharist is a manifestation of God's love and goodness for us, rather than a penitential concern with self so characteristic of Lent. Live the Gospel. Reform your life, as one following in the footsteps of Jesus Christ. Jesus became a brother and sister to us that we might truly become a brother and sister to one another. During this season, live on in the peace and love of Jesus Christ that fills us with joy, and frees us from preoccupation with trials and difficulties." (From "Follow Me," by Fr. Valerius Messerich)***



## A MEDITATION by Janet Klasson BSP

From the Gospel of the Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ:

**"My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me; yet not what I want, but what you want."** (Matthew 26:39)

I have read that the cross is the inheritance of Christians, the great treasure he has left us in his Last Will. Yet, being human as he was, when faced with our own Gethsemane, we most often echo his words that this cup of suffering might pass us by. Sometimes, the Lord answers our prayer and removes our trial. But there are times, as with Jesus, when the Father asks us to enter into his will, to trust him on this, that there are bigger things at play than we know about. It is at these times that we are asked to embrace suffering as a gift, as a measure and promise of our "sonship".

St. Catherine of Genoa, in her "Treatise on Purgatory" has given us much food for thought on the issue of suffering. While what she is referring to in her Treatise is the suffering we endure after death in order to be purified of "the rust and stain of sins", I believe it may be applied as well to the sufferings we are asked to endure here on earth. In Chapter XVI she has this to say about the souls in Purgatory:

*"For if his goodness did not temper justice with mercy (satisfying it with the precious blood of Jesus Christ), one sin alone would deserve a thousand hells. They suffer their pains so willingly that they would not lighten them in the least, knowing how justly they have been deserved. They resist the will of God no more than if they had already entered upon eternal life. [...] They see all things, not in themselves nor by themselves, but as they are in God, on whom they are more intent than on their sufferings. For the least vision they can have of God overbalances all woes and all joys that can be conceived."*

So often I have resisted suffering, prayed ceaselessly to have this cup pass me by, without in the least desiring

that God's will be done. I did not fully realize that what God was offering me was a gift, the mitigation of a portion of my suffering after death, or the accomplishment of a great good for another.

Instead of being *intent on my sufferings*, I need to see all things *as they are in God*, who only desires our ultimate good, which culminates in total union with him. He wants none of the delays that sinfulness throws up as roadblocks to perfect union. In accepting the suffering that he wills for us, we are saying, "Lord, neither do I want to delay our eternal union. Do with me as you will."

A lifetime of penance seems a small thing to offer in light of St. Catherine's statement that one sin alone would deserve a thousand hells. It is God's mercy alone that makes our small efforts bear fruit so far out of proportion to the effort involved.

In the book *Spirit of Penance, Path to God*, author Dom Hubert Van Zeller makes this statement:

"Few things are so uselessly squandered as the riches of pain. Leave the Passion (of Christ) out of account, and suffering is not a good but an evil; take the Passion as the foundation and principle of Christian penance, and suffering is of infinite worth."

Lent is a time to ponder the sufferings of Christ and our own call to penance. It would be good to come back often to these familiar words of Christ in the Garden and ponder them deeply: "Not what I want, but what you want."

May the Lord grant us all the grace to remain in his Holy Will now and forever. Have a blessed Easter dear brothers and sisters!

(Reprinted in part from a previous newsletter.)

From [www.pelianito.stblogs.com](http://www.pelianito.stblogs.com) February 9, 2011

**But the Lord is faithful; he will strengthen you and guard you from the evil one.** (2 Thessalonians 3:3)

*"My children, be not afraid. I have given you access to many graces, and many more I pour over you while you sleep. Those who surrender to my will also surrender to my ministrations. Those who accept the cross are also given many gifts. There is no limit to what I will give in the order of grace, so do not place limits on what you will receive. I assure you there is nothing on this earth that*

*can compare with the smallest of God's gifts. Use everything on earth in the service of God, but strive for the greater gifts. Where your treasure is, there also will your heart be."*

Jesus, give us grace upon grace so that your kingdom may come to the world in all its glory. Amen.

Janet Klasson BSP - Divine Mercy Chapter - Canada



# Retreat 2011



Plans are proceeding for our retreat this year. If you can make it we would love to have you there! The announcement for the retreat follows.

**Retreat: July 29-31, 2011**

**Franciscan Retreat Center, Prior Lake, MN**

**The Brothers and Sisters of Penance, of St. Francis**

**Father Randal Kasel – Retreat Master**

**THEME: "Imitating Our Lord in prayer and penance."**

Fr. Kasel serves as Parochial Administrator at the Church of St. Charles in Bayport, MN. He is also the Archdiocesan Director of the Legion of Mary. Father will speak on imitating Our Lord Jesus in the practice of prayer and penance. Emphasis will be given to the meaning of redemptive suffering as practiced by St. Francis of Assisi, and other Franciscan Saints. Sunday Mass at the retreat will be celebrated by Bishop Lee A. Piche' of the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis.

**Franciscan Retreat Center—Prior Lake, Minnesota**

**Cost: \$150.00. Donation for stipend.**

**To reserve a place send \$25 to:**

**BSP Retreat**

**c/o Paul Beery BSP**

**2108 Pleasant Ave, #114**

**Minneapolis, MN 55404**

**For further information call: 612-871-2852 (Home); 612-730-4500 (Cell)**



## Our Handbook

Two years ago, i.e. February 2009, we submitted the first drafts of a Handbook for the BSP to the Censor Liborum of the Archdiocese of St. Paul/Minneapolis for approval. We have since re-submitted that draft five times with changes. We were asked to submit it by the Archbishop so that we can receive his Imprimatur before we publish the work.

We received word yesterday that the final draft of the Handbook is on its way to us and with a few final corrections it will be ready to receive the Imprimatur. Please keep this in prayer. We hope to have this project completed and the book published by the retreat, but the Imprimatur is essential. Praise God it is near! :)

Thank you, and May the Lord bless us all!

Bruce and Shelley



### FROM THE 'SPARROW'...Trust in God

It makes a tremendous difference in life when we come to realize that we are NOT sovereign over our lives—nor are we expected to be. God is—God alone. We, like St. Francis, need to come to a place where

we resign ourselves to trusting in God and letting Him be the Sovereign Lord of our lives. The following is a litany for the "Someone" who has the right to be God and deserves my trust. He would be: "One who is absolutely powerful, infinitely wise, and completely objective."

I think you will find that only God qualifies here. What makes God qualified? (Glad you asked!) Well, anyone who is sovereign must see the end as perfectly as the beginning, must have a clear, unbiased perspective at all times, and must never operate from prejudice. He must entertain no fears, possess no ignorance, have no needs, and experience no frustration, limitations, or restrictions. He must have no match or rival on earth or in heaven. He must always know what is best and pursue that goal consistently, never making a mistake. He must be invincible, immutable, omnipotent, and self-sufficient. His judgments must be unsearchable. His ways unfathomable, and His will unchangeable. He must be able to create rather than invent, direct rather than wish, control rather than

suggest, guide rather than guess, fulfill rather than dream, and then bring everything to a perfect conclusion rather than close His eyes and hope for the best.

Do you know anybody who qualifies??? Not a soul!!! That's why God alone has the right to be trusted as the sovereign of our lives. Our all-wise, all-knowing God reigns in realms beyond our comprehension, to bring about a plan that is beyond our ability to hinder, alter, or stop. God alone is qualified to be God. He alone, is worthy of our worship and praise. He is in charge of all life! God will be all in all. God will have His way. The book He is writing has many, many chapters. St. Augustine was correct when he said:

*"We count on God's mercy for our past mistakes;  
"We count on God's love for our present needs;  
"But we count on God's sovereignty for the future."*

We are not in the hands of blind fate. We are in the hands of God, whose purposes are very clearly set forth and whose goals fit perfectly into His plan. Our all-wise, all-knowing God is in charge. He has all the answers for he is the enforcer of His Word and will and the provider to His children. To Him, then, belongs all the glory.

God, alone, is deserving of our perfect trust.

Bob Hall BSP - Morning Star Chapter - North Carolina





**And the soldiers wove a crown out of thorns and placed it on his head, and clothed him in a purple cloak...**

(John 19:2)

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

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

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

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

*Bruce and Shelley Fahey BSP  
Editors*

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

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



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