



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

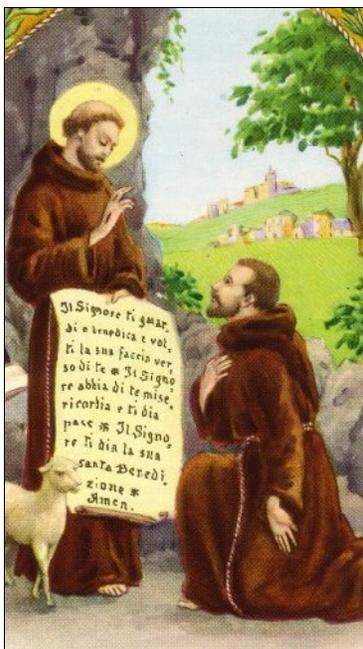
BONAVENTURE AND HIS LESSONS ON ST. FRANCIS:

Chapter IV—The Progress of The Order under Francis' Guidance and the Confirmation of the Rule

7. It was not just that the masses were stirred by the fervor of the moment; great numbers were seized with the desire to imitate the perfection of Christ and these followed Francis' footsteps, making light of the fleeting attractions of the world. Their number grew daily, so that the Order was spread all over the world in a very short time. Poverty, which was all they had to meet their expenses, made them ready to undertake any task, while giving them strength for any kind of toil and leaving them free to travel without difficulty. They possessed nothing that belonged to this world; they loved nothing, and so they feared to lose nothing. They were free from care, with no anxiety to disturb them or worry to distract them. Their hearts were at peace as they lived from day to day, looking forward to the morrow without a thought as to where they would find shelter for the night. In those parts of the world where they were unknown and despised they were often insulted, but they were so meek in their devotion to Christ's Gospel that they preferred to remain where they had to endure physical persecution, rather than return where their holiness was recognized and they might become proud of the honor shown them. Their very poverty seemed to them overflowing abundance as, in the words of the prophet, they "made much of the little they had" (cf. Sir 29, 30).

A Moslem took pity on some of the friars who had arrived in a pagan country and offered them money for the food they needed, but they refused to accept it. He was amazed, because he could see they were destitute. Then he realized that it was for love of God that they had become beggars and refused to take the money, and he felt so attracted to them that he offered to supply all their

needs, as long as he had anything left. What a priceless treasure poverty is! Its extraordinary charm could move even the savage heart of a barbarian to pity and kindness. And what a crime, what an unspeakable crime, that any Christian should trample underfoot the Gospel pearl for which a pagan showed such reverence.



8. At this time, too, a religious of the Order of the Crucigeri who was called Moricus was lying ill in a hospital near Assisi. It was a long drawn-out illness and his condition was so bad that the doctors had given up all hope, but then he appealed to St. Francis and sent a message to him, entreating him of his goodness to pray to God for him. Francis agreed immediately and said a prayer for him; then he took some bread-crumbs and dipped them in oil taken from the lamp which burned before our Lady's altar, making a sort of pill out of them. This he sent with one of the friars to the sick man saying, "Take this medicine to our brother Moricus. By means of it Christ's power will restore him to perfect health and when he is strong and ready for the fray once more, he will bring him into our company for the rest of his life." The moment the sick man took the medicine which had been prepared under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, he immediately recovered and was able to get up. God gave him such strength of body and soul that he joined Francis' company a short time afterwards and was able to keep the rule which allows only a single tunic. Under this he wore a hair-shirt next to his skin for years and never ate cooked food, contenting himself with herbs, vegetables, and fruit. For years, too, he never ate bread or drank wine and yet he remained strong and in perfect health.

Bonaventure—Major Life of St. Francis (1263)





VISITOR'S MESSAGE

Homily by Fr. Robert Altier...

Who Are We Going to Trust?

In the first reading today, we hear one of the most unfortunate statements in all of Scripture—unfortunate in the fact that it is absolutely true, but something that none of us like to hear—*More tortuous than all else is the human heart, beyond remedy; who can understand it?* The Lord is pointing to the fact that what happens is we do not trust. What happens with most of us is we get caught up in ourselves and we do not trust God. In fact, I think if we are honest with ourselves, we would probably admit that we trust human beings far more than we trust God. Now none of us really wants to admit to that, but the reality, if we look rather deeply at it, I think is there. We can see human beings; we can listen to them; we can touch them; they are flesh and blood; they are right in front of us or we can get them on the other end of a telephone or with a letter or whatever it might be. But with God, we cannot see Him, we cannot hear Him, we cannot touch Him, and so it requires far more to be able to put our trust fully in God. It is a lot easier to trust in other people.

Of course, the one that it is most easy to trust—and the one who should be least trusted—is the self! We put all kinds of trust in ourselves even though, if we look historically at our own lives, we will have to admit there are probably thousands of times that we have failed. Not only have we failed in our word to other people and what they were trusting in us to do, but I suspect we have all probably failed ourselves plenty of times, as well as failing the Lord. And so it really makes one wonder what is wrong with us that we would put such trust in ourselves and such trust in other people, but yet we do not really put the trust in the Lord. It is not so much a matter that we are even really trying to trust; the problem is that most of us are so

caught up in our own selves that trusting God does not even enter into our minds because we never look beyond ourselves, or very rarely anyway.

Look, for instance, at the Gospel reading, and you see Dives, the rich man, dining sumptuously while there is a beggar sitting at his gate, not all that unlike many of us because Dives probably never thought twice about it. It was his money, after all, and he can do with it what he wants; he was caught up in himself. As long as he had what he wanted, that was all that really mattered. And, after all, it was a matter of justice: "If I made the money, I can spend it on myself if I want to." And so from the torments of hell, he cries out for help – and there is none. Then he begs that Lazarus would at least go and warn his brothers. And the Lord says in a totally prophetic manner, "If they do not listen to Moses and the prophets, neither will they believe if someone rises from the dead."

Well, we have Someone Who has risen from the dead, and most people do not believe Him either. We are held to an even greater responsibility than Dives and those of his time because we not only have what Moses and the prophets have written, we have God made man, Who suffered and died and rose from the dead for us. Still, we refuse to listen. Still, we refuse to trust. We trust ourselves far more than we trust Him, which is really sad because we have no reason to trust in ourselves and every reason to trust in Him. But the reality is we do not and that is something we need to look at. We need to pray about that because that trust is absolutely essential for where we are headed. Now that things have begun, it is time that we look at where we trust. Do we trust in airplanes and bombs and TV sets and whatever else? Or do we trust in God? *More tortuous than all else is the human heart, beyond remedy; who can endure it?*

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



ADMINISTRATOR'S MESSAGE...

In Pursuit of Christ

In this season of Lent we really are in pursuit of Christ. The same Christ that walked the earth 2000 years ago. His message to us is that we would suffer. His call has always been the same. "Deny yourself, take up your cross, and follow me."

What a call. What a message. Not so bad until you consider the last words. Follow me. How on earth do we follow the Son of God who became the Son of man? When you examine how he lived and suffered, all of his life. Not just the blows he received in his Passion, which is the real focus of the Triduum and Lent. The real blows he received

in his life at every turn from the very people he served. The people he came to save who didn't just reject him, they rebuked him and openly opposed his teaching and ultimately decided he was such a radical that he had to die.

He knew he was going to die. He was born to die. From his first day, the last day of his life was his focus, and being God he knew everything that was to happen. Hence in his life he often told his disciples that the **"The Son of Man must suffer greatly and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed and on the third day be raised."** (Lk 9:22) He told them he was going to rise from the dead. The total focus of Lent is to prepare us for his resurrection, for Easter, and

ultimately our own resurrection. The total focus of his life was to prepare his disciples for his resurrection because without the resurrection he was no Christ. Without the resurrection there would be no Church. No point in following Jesus.

Some years ago, when we were in the Secular Franciscan Order before we formed the BSP, Bruce was asked to coordinate a 'Consensus Planning' seminar for a large group of Midwest priests, in the Franciscan Order, who were trying to find ways to reach consensus on various issues. Bruce was a Human Resources manager and personnel trainer and knew how to do consensus management. So, it was a fun seminar for him.

The point of consensus management is to take a large group of people and get them to agree on a subject. It is a technique and can be learned. So Bruce began the seminar with a question the priests had to agree on. The question was "How do we destroy the Catholic Church?". A challenging question for a group of Catholic priests, and they liked it.

He took the priests through the exercise. First he listed all the various ways as given by all the priests on a blackboard. Then they voted on them. The one that they agreed on, to destroy the Catholic Church, was: "Find the body of Jesus Christ."

If we find the body of Jesus Christ he did not rise. If he did not rise from the dead there is no reason for a Church in his name. He isn't God. But, of course, there is no grave to Jesus on earth or we would certainly have found it by now. Neither is there a grave for Mary on earth. So her Assumption is a given.

This is the Jesus we pursue. The Risen Christ: the Son of God and Son of man. The real question is how do we do that?

Faith is important and without faith you would not bother

to pursue Jesus. If you don't believe in him why look for him? So, faith is a given and faith it is that saves us if we use that faith to pursue him. For if we pursue him we will always be looking for ways to grow closer to him and to find him. All who truly seek him will find him and he promised to reveal Himself to all who seek him. **"Whoever has my commandments and observes them is the one who loves me. And whoever loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and reveal myself to him."** (Jn 14:21) Confident in that we do well to seek him. How do we seek him?

Those of us that have faith and have been trying to live that faith know the answer to this question. We pursue, or seek that is, Jesus by loving him and our neighbor. Love coagulates around the pursuit of Jesus. Without love of God and neighbor, you will not find Jesus Christ. That love brings us to do things for the love of God to show God we are in pursuit of him. Some of those things are our Lenten sacrifices, which are designed to prepare us for Easter, his resurrection, and more importantly, for our own Easter, our own resurrection, which he has promised is the natural outgrowth of loving and pursuing him. Scripture is explicit here.

Jesus said: **"I am the resurrection and the life; whoever believes in me, even if he dies, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die."** (Jn 11:25-26) **"And I tell you, ask and you will receive; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you."** (Lk 11:9)

So, let us ask, seek, and knock until the Lord reveals Himself to us. It is in seeking him that we will find him. Direct your lives and your life under the Rule of 1221 towards finding Jesus Christ, and you will find him. Live the Rule and have a holy and happy Lent, and pursue the Lord.

Sincerely yours in Jesus Christ,

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



NO GREATER LOVE by Paul Beery BSP

"This people pays me lip service, but their heart is far from me."
(Matthew 15:8)

A frog and a scorpion both wanted to cross a river. The scorpion said to the frog, "Give me a ride across the river, for we are both going in the same direction." The frog answered: "Why should I give you a ride? You are a scorpion. You have a reputation." The scorpion responded, "You can trust me. I need your help; otherwise I cannot cross the river. Why would I do you any harm?" "But you're a scorpion!" insisted the frog. "Yes, but I'm a good scorpion with good intentions. You can trust me."

The frog couldn't decide what to do. It wanted to be accommodating, and could see that the scorpion was

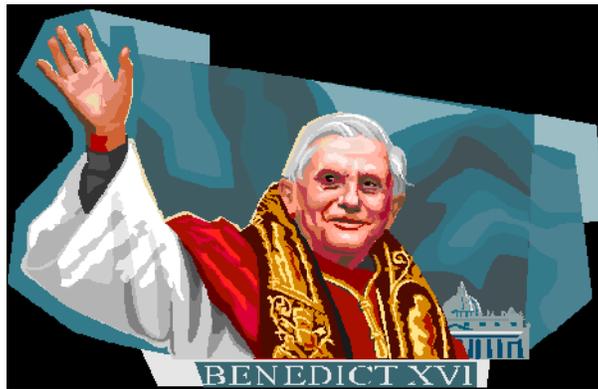
sincere, and really did need to cross the river. What could possibly happen? So the reluctant frog decided to take the scorpion on its back and swim across the river. Halfway across the scorpion stung the frog, inflicting a mortal wound. As both began to sink, the frog cried out, "Why did you sting me?" The reply came: "Because I am a scorpion."

My friends, I have long waited and prayed for this day, when clarity overtakes deception and removes all doubt that the scorpion—true to its nature—has finally stung the frog, and the poor frog is still in shock! I was searching for a way to apologize for being too "political," which is my nature, but I will take my cue from St. Francis and let the

Vicar of Christ explain the unprecedented situation American Catholics find themselves in today. Francis was called by God to rebuild His Church. He went to the visible head of the Church for clarification of that mission. Today I believe God is calling His faithful followers to defend Western Christian Civilization itself from one of the most deadly enemies it has faced in two thousand years: militant Secular Socialism, an evil within and without. Listen to the voice of Pope Benedict XVI, and see if he exaggerates the threat all people of faith and integrity face today, not just those of us in America. Following is his address to the American bishops, January 19, 2012. His words are so profound and right on the money his address is given almost in its entirety. (emphasis mine). Part II next month.

"One of the most memorable aspects of my Pastoral Visit to the United States was the opportunity it afforded me to reflect on America's historical experience of religious freedom, and specifically the relationship between religion and culture. At the heart of every culture, whether perceived or not, is a consensus about the nature of reality and the moral good, and thus about the conditions for human flourishing. In America, that consensus, as enshrined in your nation's founding documents, was grounded in a worldview shaped not only by faith but a commitment to certain ethical principles deriving from nature and nature's God. Today that consensus has eroded significantly in the face of powerful new cultural currents which are not only directly opposed to core moral teachings of the Judeo-Christian tradition, but **increasingly hostile to Christianity as such.**

"For her part, the Church in the United States is called, in season and out of season, to proclaim a Gospel which not only proposes unchanging moral truths but proposes them precisely as the key to human happiness and social prospering (cf. Gaudium et Spes, 10). To the extent that some current cultural trends contain elements that would curtail the proclamation of these truths, whether constricting it within the limits of a merely scientific rationality, or **suppressing it in the name of political power** or majority rule, they represent a threat **not just to Christian faith, but also to humanity itself** and to the **deepest truth about our being and ultimate vocation, our relationship to God.** When a culture attempts to suppress the dimension of ultimate mystery, and to close the doors to transcendent truth, it inevitably becomes impoverished and falls prey, as the late Pope John Paul II so clearly saw, to reductionist and



totalitarian readings of the human person and the nature of society.

"With her long tradition of respect for the right relationship between faith and reason, the Church has a critical role to play in countering cultural currents which, on the basis of an extreme individualism, seek to promote notions of freedom detached from moral truth. Our tradition does not speak from blind faith, but from a rational perspective which links our commitment to building an authentically just, humane and prosperous society to our ultimate assurance that the cosmos is possessed of an inner logic accessible to human reasoning. The Church's defense of a moral reasoning based on the natural law is grounded on her conviction that this law is not a threat to our freedom, but rather a "language" which enables us to understand ourselves and the truth of our being, and so to shape a more just and humane world. She thus proposes her moral teaching as a message not of constraint but of liberation, and as the basis for building a secure future.

"The Church's witness, then, is of its nature public: she seeks to convince by proposing rational arguments in the public square. The

legitimate separation of Church and State cannot be taken to mean that the Church must be silent on certain issues, nor that the State may choose not to engage, or be engaged by, the voices of committed believers in determining the values which will shape the future of the nation.

"In the light of these considerations, **it is imperative that the entire Catholic community in the United States come to realize the grave threats to the Church's public moral witness presented by a radical secularism which finds increasing expression in the political and cultural spheres. The seriousness of these threats needs to be clearly appreciated at every level of ecclesial life.** Of particular concern are certain attempts being made **to limit that most cherished of American freedoms, the freedom of religion.** Many of you have pointed out that concerted efforts have been made **to deny the right of conscientious objection on the part of Catholic individuals and institutions with regard to cooperation in intrinsically evil practices.** Others have spoken to me of a worrying tendency **to reduce religious freedom to mere freedom of worship** without guarantees of respect for freedom of conscience.

"Here once more we see the **need for an**

engaged, articulate and well-formed Catholic laity endowed with a strong critical sense vis-à-vis the dominant culture and with the courage to counter a reductive secularism which would delegitimize the Church's participation in public debate about the issues which are determining the future of American society. The preparation of committed lay leaders and the presentation of a convincing articulation of the Christian vision of man and society remain a primary task of the Church in your country; as essential components of the new evangelization, these concerns must shape the vision and goals of catechetical programs at every level.

"In this regard, I would mention with appreciation your efforts to maintain contacts with Catholics involved in political life and to help them understand their personal responsibility to offer public witness to their faith, especially with regard to the great moral issues of our time: respect for God's gift of life, the protection of human dignity and the promotion of authentic human rights. As the Council noted, and I wished to reiterate during my Pastoral Visit, respect for the just autonomy of the secular sphere must also take into consideration the truth that **there is no realm of worldly affairs which can be withdrawn from**

the Creator and his dominion (cfr. *Gaudium et Spes*, 36). There can be no doubt that a more consistent witness on the part of America's Catholics to their deepest convictions would make a major contribution to the renewal of society as a whole.

"Dear Brother Bishops, in these brief remarks I have wished to touch upon some of the pressing issues which you face in your service to the Gospel and their significance for the evangelization of American culture. No one who looks at these issues realistically can ignore the genuine difficulties which the Church encounters at the present moment. Yet in faith we can take heart from the growing awareness of the need to preserve a civil order clearly rooted in the Judeo-Christian tradition, as well as from the promise offered by a **new generation of Catholics whose experience and convictions will have a decisive role in renewing the Church's presence and witness in American society.** The hope which these "signs of the times" give us is itself a reason to renew our efforts to mobilize the intellectual and moral resources of the entire Catholic community in the service of the evangelization of American culture and **the building of the civilization of love."**

Paul Beery BSP - Morning Star Chapter - Minnesota



Armed and Dangerous A MEDITATION by Janet Klasson BSP

From the First Reading, Fifth Sunday of Lent
"But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts; and I will be their God and they shall be my people." (Jeremiah 31:33)

I have a Bible on CD-ROM which allows me to search for words or phrases. Once I looked up the phrase, "... and I will be their God." I was amazed at how many times it occurs in Scripture.¹ It testifies to the deep longing of God's heart to be in covenant with his people.

The Old Testament readings of the first few Sundays of Lent give us an overview of God's covenant plan for fallen humanity. With Noah we marvel at the rainbow that signifies God's commitment to a covenant relationship with his children. With Abraham we rejoice at God's promise of an everlasting covenant. With Moses we receive the commandments of God, etching his laws on our hearts as he etched them on the tablets for Moses.

God's promises to Noah, Abraham and Moses culminate in the New Covenant—Christ. It pleased God to enter into a New Covenant with his children by sending his only begotten Son to the earth to seal the "new and everlasting

covenant" in his blood. The generations that have followed Christ have entered into this covenant relationship with him through the sacrament of baptism. We renew this covenant each time we celebrate the Eucharist. And this covenant relationship demands a response. It is a call to discipleship.

Recently I watched a YouTube video² of Marino Restrepo speaking on our calling as a Eucharistic people. If you have not heard of Marino Restrepo, or heard any of his talks, you are missing something! I encourage you to search his talks on YouTube. Marino was once a very worldly person, far from God. He lived in California and was involved in a great many practices that were offensive to God. One Christmas when he went home to Colombia for a family visit, he was kidnapped by rebels. He spent months as a hostage in the jungle, and at his lowest point, God revealed himself to him, illuminated his conscience, and called him to conversion. Now Marino speaks all over

¹ (*Gen 17:8; Ez 11:20, 14:11, 37:23, 37:27; Zech 8:8; Jer 24:7, 31:33, 32:38; Heb 8:10; 2 Cor 6:16)

² www.youtube.com/watch?v=nTmjf2P1Sjo&feature=related

the world about his experiences and has been given remarkable insights into our times, and what we are called to as Catholic Christians.

In the video I watched recently Marino explained that the highest calling of a Catholic is to be a Eucharistic warrior, to feed all of humanity through frequent reception of the Eucharist and through adoration. Merely receiving the Eucharist or adoring Christ in the tabernacle increases the love of Christ in the world and enhances the grace available to humanity. I once felt the Lord give me this prayer for after Communion: "Your Body in my body, your Blood in my veins, your love in my heart." If we "do" nothing else in our entire lives but receive the Eucharist daily, we are, like Mary, "choosing the better part." We are

enabling the unseen power of Christ to act through us. As Marino puts it: we are "armed and dangerous".

This, of course, does not sit well with the enemy. He creates all manner of diversions, distractions, and entertainments to draw us away from our Eucharistic mission. He knows that each Communion received is a vast defeat for him.

How important this Lent to remain focused on our mission, to reflect on our covenant relationship with God in the Eucharist so that we will be his people and he will be our God. That is God's promise to all his children: deeper union, a blending of the wills, a sharing in his power—the power of perfect love.

From www.pelianito.stblogs.com

1 John 4:4 You belong to God, children, and you have conquered them, for the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world.

"Beloved child, it is a great mystery that the Lord of Life makes his home in mere creatures. The angels are in awe of this, yet few of my children even acknowledge it. Your God lives in you my child! Ponder this. You who receive me in the Bread of Life have a greater responsibility not to take my presence within you for granted. The world is desperately in need of my presence. If those in whom I dwell do not carry my love to others, who will do it? If my light does not shine through you, then the darkness will be that much deeper. So I call you, dear children, not to let the presence of Christ within you be muffled or dimmed. Remove everything that obstructs the view so that all who see you will see Christ. I do not tell you this in a cerebral sense or in a superficial sense, but I want you to live this in every moment. Now more than ever before I want you, my children, to live my presence in the world."

Jesus, Lord of light and love, I repent for all the times I have failed to live your presence in the world. In your mercy remove from me all that muffles or dims your presence. May your light shine in us for all to see and may souls be drawn to the light. May your kingdom come and your will be done. Amen.

Janet Klasson BSP, Divine Mercy Chapter



FROM THE 'SPARROW' Franciscan Treasures

Peace dear little friends. I have been reading several writers' works, such as Thomas of Celano (First Life of St. Francis, II), Wayne Simsic (Living the Wisdom of St. Francis), St. Augustine (Confessions), and a some

thoughts from the Trappist mystic Thomas Merton. From all of that I share the following with you.

For many, a serious commitment to the spiritual path means losing our capacity to enjoy the world fully. Not so, not so for the little sparrows, because for Francis conversion did NOT diminish his passion for the world and for the people BUT heightened it. We are told:

"The beauty of the fields, the pleasantness of the vineyards, and whatever else was beautiful to look upon could stir in him (St. Francis) no delight. He

wondered at the sudden change that had come over him." —Thomas of Celano, First Life of St. Francis

Initially, Francis looked out at the Umbrian landscape, a landscape he loved deeply since his early youth, and he felt nothing. Instead, urgency arose in his heart. Old loves had deserted him, and he sensed a growing desire to amend his life. Even the beauty of creation only reminded him that he should seek Beauty herself.

He responded by leaving behind a life of financial security, parties, popularity, and personal dreams and began to follow a path of faith. Did he lose his passion for life and for friendship? Because his heart was cleansed of self-interest, freed of possessiveness, and opened to God's love above everything else, relationships with creation and people did NOT diminish but became even MORE dynamic and fulfilling. He revered the mysterious light pervading

the Umbrian landscape, and he witnessed Christ in the faces of the poor and lepers. He saw MYSTERY everywhere and reached out to embrace brothers, sisters, Clare, sun, rain, and sparrows (YES!) as radiant images of Divine Providence.

Do we, little sparrows, have access to the same passion and beauty in our own process of turning to God? Thomas Merton assures us, "We are living in a world that is absolutely transparent, and God shining through it all the time...If we abandon ourselves to God and forget ourselves, we see it sometimes, and we see it maybe frequently. God shows Himself everywhere, in everything in people and in things and in nature and its events."

Until we turn our lives over to God, though, beauty can be deceptive. It draws us toward God but, at the same time, leaves us feeling empty and estranged. Following Francis, we return to the SOURCE, that being the Creator, and discover a world that is holy in itself, and drenched in God's presence.

"Too late I have loved You, O Beauty of ancient days, yet ever new! Too late I have loved you! And behold, You were within, and I abroad." —St. Augustine, Confessions

May you abandon your lives to the Lord and in so doing may He bring His beauty, love and peace fully into your life!



The first Franciscans, including St. Francis, often had some very unique spiritual insights that they were able to sum up in just a few words...this could be Divine economy at

its best! Here are a few that you might like:

"Above all the grace and the gifts that Christ gives to His beloved, is that of overcoming self." —St. Francis of Assisi

"What you hold, may you always hold. What you do, may you always do and never abandon. But with swift pace, light step, and unswerving feet, so that even your steps stir up no dust, go forward securely, joyfully, swiftly, on the path of prudent happiness, believing nothing which would dissuade you from this resolution or which would place a stumbling block for you on the way, so that you may offer your vows to the Most High in the pursuit of that perfection to which the Spirit of the Lord has called you." —St. Clare's Second Letter to Agnes

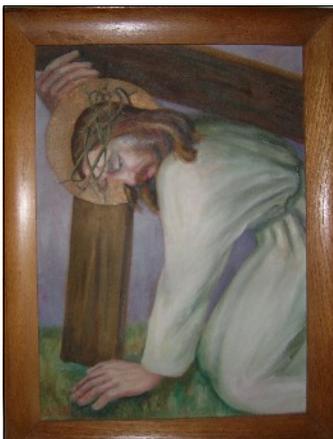
"When you are proclaiming peace with your lips, be careful to have it even more fully in your heart." —St. Francis of Assisi

"Holy Spirit, fire of love, come rest over each of us, make our tongue ready to confess our sins, that in revealing everything and concealing nothing, we may attain heavenly life to sing eternal praise with the angels. With your help, you who live and reign through all ages. Amen." — Saint Anthony's Prayer to the Holy Spirit

I have been all things unholy. If God can work through me, He can work through anyone." (a sparrow favorite quote!) —St. Francis of Assisi

All good and holy things of God be yours!

Bob Hall BSP, Little Flower Chapter



MEDITATION ON THE PASSION by Dawn Usak, BSP

Seventh Station: Jesus Falls for the Second Time

**We adore you oh Christ and we praise you.
Because by Your Holy Cross, You have redeemed the world.**

Oh my Jesus, have mercy on us, as once again You fall under the weight of our sins. Strengthen us with Your grace so that we may persevere in abstaining from sin and that we may continue to atone for those sins we have committed. Merciful Jesus, our sorrow for Your pain is great, but not as great as the love You poured out for us. Our Father..., Hail Mary..., Glory Be..., Amen.

(Stations of the Cross. Painted by Sister Mary Leo Hergarten, SSND (1900-1959). Born in Milwaukee, Sr. Mary Leo studied art in Munich, Germany (1930-1934) and later headed the art department at Mount Mary College in Wisconsin. Suffering poor health, witnessing her mother's chronic illness and saddened by the premature deaths of siblings, Sister found her comfort in the Passion of Jesus. This set of Stations, painted in 1953, was first erected in the old St. Francis Hospital in Shakopee, Minn. When the Sisters of St. Francis made major modifications to the Chapel they gave the set to Fr. Robert Bayer, who mounted them at the Franciscan Retreat Centre, Prior Lake MN.)

Turn away from sin...  ...and believe the Good News...

"TO LOVE AND TO SUFFER", THE SCIENCE OF THE SAINTS

Saint Gemma Galgani, letters

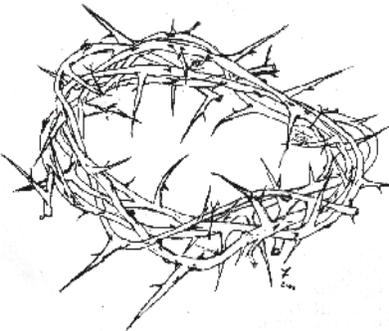
Jesus spoke these words; "My child, I have need of victims, and strong victims, who by their sufferings, tribulations, and difficulties, make amends for sinners and for their ingratitude."

Ven. Mary of Agreda, Mystical City of God, Book VI, Chp. V

Words of the Queen: "I remind thee that there is no exercise more profitable and useful to the soul than to suffer....Therefore, my daughter, embrace the cross, and do not admit any consolation outside of it in this mortal life. By contemplating and feeling within thyself the sacred Passion, thou wilt attain the summit of perfection and attain the love of a spouse...I find so few who console with me and try to console my Son in His sorrows..."

Diary of Saint Faustina

"Jesus says; 'My daughter, I want to instruct you on how you are to rescue souls through sacrifice and prayer. You will save more souls through prayer and suffering than will a missionary through his teachings and sermons alone. I want to see you as a sacrifice of living love, which only then carries weight before Me. You must be annihilated, destroyed, living as if you were dead in the most secret depths of your being. You must be destroyed in that secret depth where the human eye has never penetrated; then will I find in you a pleasing sacrifice, a holocaust full of sweetness and fragrance. And great will be your power for whomever you intercede. Outwardly, your sacrifice must look like this: silent, hidden, permeated with love, imbued with prayer. I demand, My daughter, that your sacrifice be pure and full of humility, that I may find pleasure in it. I will not spare My grace, that you may be able to fulfill what I demand of you.'"



Saint Teresa of the Andes, on Religious Life, (age 15), Letters p.121

"Her sacrifice is perpetual, without mitigation, from the time her religious life begins until she dies as a victim according to the example of Jesus Christ. And she does all this in silence with no one aware of it. Yet how many are there who think of this life as useless. Nevertheless, she (*the religious*) is like the Lamb of God. She removes sins from the world. She sacrifices herself to bring back to the sheepfold those sheep who have gone astray. But just as Christ did not know the world, neither does she know it. This abnegation enchants me completely. There is no room for self-love. She doesn't even see the fruit of her prayer. In heaven alone will she know this."

Saint Therese of Lisieux, Story of a Soul, p.27

"I understood that to become a saint one had to suffer much, seek out always the most perfect thing to do, and forget self. I understood, too, that there are many degrees of perfection and each soul was free to respond to the advances of the Our Lord, to do little or much for Him, in a word, to choose among the sacrifices He was asking. Then, as in the days of my childhood, I cried out: 'My God I *choose all!*' I do not want to be a *saint by halves*, I'm not afraid to suffer for You, I fear only one thing: to keep my own will; so take it, for I choose all that You will!"

Padre Pio, Secrets of a Soul, p.47

"Jesus said to me; 'How many times would you have abandoned Me, my son, if I had not crucified you. Beneath the cross, one learns love, and I do not give this to everyone, but only to those souls who are dearest to Me.'"

Taken from http://www.religiousvocation.com/redemptive_suffering.html

MORNING STAR: NEWS ON THE ASSOCIATION...

PRAYERS FOR OUR NEW CARDINALS

As we are all aware, the Holy Father recently named 22 new cardinals. In addition to American cardinals Dolan and O'Brien, the Holy Father also incardinated Archbishop Thomas Collins of Toronto. What is significant about this particular elevation is that Cardinal Collins—when he was Archbishop of Edmonton—gave permission for a member of his Archdiocese to join the BSP and to introduce others to it. That is, he is one of the Bishops that has specifically supported the BSP, and is therefore worth a special mention in our prayers. Let us keep all the Cardinals and especially the Holy Father in our prayers as the days darken.

CONTINUED PRAYERS FOR ANNA FERONI

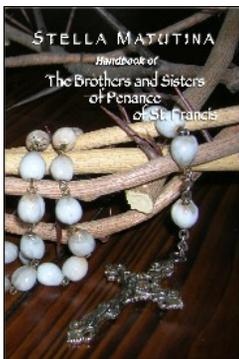
Dear brothers and sisters in Christ, Anna Feroni is a sister in the BSP who is seriously ill. She is the original webmaster and has been a dear friend to Bruce and Shelley and many in the Association for a number of years. Please continue to keep her in your prayers.



“But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD. I will place my law within them, and write it upon their hearts; I will be their God, and they shall be my people. No longer will they have need to teach their friends and kinsmen how to know the LORD. All, from least to greatest, shall know me, says the LORD, for I will forgive their evildoing and remember their sin no more.”

(Jeremiah 31:33-34)

HANDBOOK OF THE ASSOCIATION...



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

There is a link to the ordering page on our BSP Homepage. You will need a credit card or a Paypal account to order. Cost is \$10.00 plus shipping (\$3.99 for a single book).

Bruce and Paul also have copies available.

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

Bruce and Shelley Fahey, Administrators

The BROTHERS AND SISTERS OF PENANCE OF ST. FRANCIS

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

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

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

Bruce and Shelley Fahey BSP, Editors

Welcome to the Brothers and Sisters of Penance!

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



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



**The BROTHERS AND SISTERS OF
PENANCE**



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