

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

BONAVENTURE AND HIS LESSONS ON ST. FRANCIS:

Chapter V—The Austerity of Francis' Life and the comfort Which Creatures Gave Him



6. He taught the friars especially to avoid idleness, the root of all evil desires, and he set them an example by curbing his lower nature, when it was given to revolt or laziness, by practicing continual self-discipline or devoting himself to useful work. He used to call his body "Brother Ass," as if it were fit for nothing more than hard labor and frequent ill-treatment with a whip, while having only the poorest type of food to live on. If he saw that a friar was given to standing about idle, waiting to be fed by the labor of others, he called him "Brother

Fly," because he detracted from the good done by others and did no good himself, so that he lost the respect and esteem of all. With reference to such friars, the saint once remarked, "I want my friars to work and to be kept busy. If they are idle, their hearts or their tongues will soon be occupied with unlawful subjects." He was anxious to see the friars observe the silence which is recommended in the Gospel, being careful at all times to avoid every thoughtless word for which they might be brought to account on the day of judgment (cf. Mt 12:36). He used to be quite sharp in correcting any friar who indulged habitually in gossip, declaring that a prudent reserve helped to maintain purity of heart and was an important virtue. Sacred Scripture tells us, "Of life and death, tongue holds the keys" (Prv 18:21), more because of its power of speech than because it can taste.

Bonaventure—Major Life of St. Francis (1263)



VISITOR'S MESSAGE Homily by Fr. Robert Altier... Woe to the disobedient!

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

In the Gospel reading, Our Lord speaks to us about the joy in heaven over one repentant sinner, and how much joy we would give to God and to the holy angels over our repentance. At the same time, when we look in the first reading, we see Saint Paul telling us that we belong to the Lord, and more than that, that each one of us is going to stand before the judgment seat of God. We are all going to have to answer, he says, for ourselves. We will each give an account of ourselves before God, therefore, he asks the question: *Why do you judge? Why do you look down on another?* – which is what we tend to do all the time. The Fathers of the Desert tell us that our desire to judge is the very last thing to go before perfection, which means that it

will probably be hanging on for most of us even when we are in purgatory because it is not an easy thing for us to overcome. We are constantly comparing ourselves to other people; and, almost universally, we like to judge ourselves as being better in some fashion or form. Even if we acknowledge that this person may be more intelligent or this person has more talent or whatever it may be than what we have, we will find something – it does not matter what it is – that makes us (at least in some way, shape, or form) just a little better or at least in some way that we can say, "But I'm equal with this person." There was no doubt about that anyway. There are some things we are going to be good at, some things we are not. As persons we are all equal, and it is not up to us to judge.

Remember that we can make judgments about actions. We

can say that this action is wrong or this one is right, but we cannot judge the person because we do not know what has happened in that person's life and why the person might be acting the way that he or she is. It is not for us to judge. One of the privileges, if you want to look at it that way, that a priest has is not merely hearing the confessions of people but sometimes to be able to sit down with that person in a counseling type of session. When you know the pattern that has been there in that person's life and suddenly they sit down and open up and tell you some of the history of their life, it makes perfect sense why the pattern of their sins is the way that it is. And every single time that happens, the exact thing that pops into my mind is what Our Lord said, *Judge not lest you be judged*, because all we can do is look at the actions and know that they are wrong, but once you hear what the person's life has been, it puts the whole thing into a context. It does not make the actions right, but it helps to explain why the person is having trouble in those areas. When you look at it from a perspective like that, you sit back and say, "Thank goodness God is the judge because He knows what has happened to this person. He knows that it may not be something this person is doing on purpose or that they want to be doing."

So we understand the brokenness. All of us have that within ourselves. We all have areas of habitual sin, and if we look back in our lives we can see where it started. We do not like it when someone else is judging us, so we need to be careful that we do not judge others. The reality of

the matter, as Saint Paul tells us, is that we will stand before the judgment seat of God. Each one of us individually will stand before God. We will have to answer for what we have done or failed to do, as will everyone else. But what is more important for us is we know that we are not supposed to be judging everyone else. We know that we are not supposed to be looking down at others, but rather we are supposed to build them up. And so rather than looking at everyone else and thinking, "What a wonderful day it will be when this person finally repents and stops doing all these things," maybe it is time that we start with ourselves and say, "Where am I judging? Where am I being condescending? Where am I being uncharitable? Where am I being arrogant or proud in whatever form?" Maybe it is not the other person who needs to repent because maybe the brokenness in that person actually renders the action morally neutral for them; but for us, we cannot have that kind of an excuse. Our pride, our judging, our arrogance, our selfishness, for that we need to repent. Rather than thinking of what a joy it will be in heaven when the other person repents, maybe we need to look just at ourselves and say, "There will be more rejoicing in heaven when *this* sinner repents than over those ninety-nine people who are broken and weak and doing all the things that they're doing out of their brokenness and perhaps in that way have no need to repent." That is a sobering thought when we look at it, but it helps us to put things in a perspective for ourselves and to constantly remind ourselves that the one sinner who needs to repent – more than any other – *is the self*.

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



ADMINISTRATOR'S MESSAGE...

A Plan

We attended Mass at Hinckley, Minnesota recently, on the Fifteenth Sunday in Ordinary time. Father Joseph Sirba, brother to our bishop, Paul Sirba, is the priest there. In his homily he

spoke of the decline of the body, the rise of the soul, and having a plan. It was a great homily and worth pondering.

His point in his homily is that there are parallels between the growth of the body and growth of the spirit. Physical life parallels spiritual life in that there is change over time. But, these changes are different for the body and the soul. The body declines as the time passes and grows older and weaker. The soul on the other hand increases as time goes on and grows stronger. So, at death, the body is at its lowest ebb and the soul is at its greatest. Whatever we are to become before we die we are when we die. The main thing he said was to have a plan on growing the soul stronger in the things of God before we die. He went into a plan that encompassed living our faith to the full, but he pointed out that this plan was why Saints wrote rules of

life for their followers.

So, in its simplest fashion it was a call to us to live our Rule to the full to prepare for our deaths. Our Rule of Life is the plan that God has provided us, and praise God we have chosen to become strong in the things of God and move into eternity in peace and ready for the gift of life the Lord is going to bestow on us there.

Also, this month has several other dates we should be aware of:

* All Saints day, November 1st, is a key date in that on that date, from then until Easter, marks the 'winter fasting season'. During this time, those of us that are through Novice 2 or Professed, should fast on both Wednesdays and Fridays.

RULE: ARTICLE 8

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

* All Souls Day, though not marked by the Rule in any special way, is a day we pray for all souls in a special way.

* November 12, the day after the feast of St. Martin, begins the Christmas Fast. We fast from then until Christmas to prepare for this most special day.

RULE: ARTICLE 9

9. They are to fast daily, except on account of infirmity or any other need, throughout the fast of St. Martin from after said day until Christmas...

So, let us keep these dates in mind as we strive evermore to live our Rule more perfectly and with great commitment and joy. Work on your plan, and prepare for your life with God.

ON UNIVERSAL PRAYER

We all know in this Association, just from the Rule, that we are called to pray. Our Statutes, given to us by our wonderful Visitor, Fr. Robert Altier, define five ways we can fulfill the Rule's call to pray. Primary, of course, is the Divine Office, but it is not the only way we can pray. It opens the door to other prayer, and pray we must.

We all know that. Scripture calls us always to 'pray always'. It is always a good meditation to ponder how we can do that. For all of our life. Every day. Just pondering it has the immediate value of becoming our ongoing prayer. Within our ponderings God will open our minds and hearts—to each of us individually for we are all different—in how we can pray always.

We do well to ponder our Lord's words to us:
"Then he told them a parable about the necessity for them to pray always without becoming weary. He said, 'There was a judge in a certain town who neither feared God nor respected any human being. And a widow in that town used to come to him and say, 'Render a just decision for me against my adversary.' For a long time the judge was unwilling, but eventually he thought, 'While it is true that I neither fear God nor respect any human being, because this widow keeps bothering me I shall deliver a just decision for her lest she finally come and strike me.'"

The Lord said, "Pay attention to what the dishonest judge says. Will not God then secure the rights of his chosen ones who call out to him day and night? Will he be slow to answer them? (Luke 18: 1-7)

One of the questions we might have is who do we pray for? We all have causes brought to us or that are

apparent to us from our lives and families. There is an endless, absolutely infinite, number of causes out there, within our families and within this Association. But, there is even more than that.

We all know our world is in trouble. Serious trouble. Thanks to modern technology the mind of the world and the public is always before our eyes. Listen to the news. To the programs. To the advertisements. Study them for even just a moment. Where do you see the world calling us to pray? Where do you see the world calling us to love God, or even our neighbor. How many are the false gods out there. Scripture says that man, in the end times, will worship gods of his own making. **"The rest of the human race...did not repent of the works of their hands, to give up the worship of demons and idols made from gold, silver, bronze, stone, and wood, which cannot see or hear or walk. (Rev 9:20)** What are these gods?

Cars, and boats, and golf clubs, shopping, and money, wow, money, and news about world events, and certainly electronic gadgets these days. Trips, and tours, and vacations, and time off. Anything, actually, that dominates our thinking and keeps us from considering God or replaces Him in our lives. Nothing, absolutely nothing, is as important as getting to heaven. Each of us is called there, and God wants us there, but He won't put us there unless we want it and seek it, and through His Son.

So, in our life within the Church and within our call in this Association we need to pray for everyone. We need to pray for every single human being on the planet. We need to make universal prayer part of how we pray, every day. Our God is a universal God. He holds in his hand every single human being and he wants everyone in heaven forever, BUT, he will not put us there unless we want it. He gave us free will, and it is a blessing and a curse. From our wills we will attain what we want. Do we want God? Or the things of this world? Scripture says, **"For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."** (ROM 6:23) and to live in the world deliberately without God, unless it is for no cause of our own, is to live in sin.

Let us be pillars of light and prayer in this age and let the Rule we all say we embrace, as we seek to live it, call us to pray for this age and everyone on the planet. Let us live lives of prayer.

Yours in Christ, and in this call, and please keep us in prayer even as we pray every day for you, your causes and needs, and the people of your hearts.

In Christ's love,

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





NO GREATER LOVE by Paul Beery BSP

"In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who will judge the living and the dead, and in view of His appearing and His Kingdom, I give you this charge: Preach the Word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke, encourage—with great patience and careful instruction. For the time will come when men will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear. They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths. But you, keep your

head in all situations, endure hardships, do the work of an evangelist, discharge all the duties of your ministry." (2 Timothy

Last month Janet shared the current situation in Canada, where "some pro-life MP's voted against their conscience...for political reasons...to simply open a discussion on abortion." She felt her country failed a test sent by God. "When the government of a country lacks the will and courage to protect its most vulnerable, it turns its back on the providential protection God desires to give to all world leaders on behalf of their countries. I have a sinking feeling that the freedom and security we have enjoyed...is about to be shattered."

In the United States, the most important election in memory is upon us November 6. We not only have a government that lacks the will and courage to protect its most vulnerable, the unborn, it is leading the attack on them! We have the most pro-abortion president in history, one who is even pro-infanticide. In addition, this same Administration has launched an assault on Religious freedom, singling out Catholics in particular, and the rights of conscience that is unprecedented. Several prominent "Catholics" are in charge of implementing these policies, and nearly half of the voting Catholic population continues to support a political party that is actively persecuting their own Church, and their own Christian faith!

Thank God our American Catholic bishops, both collectively and individually, have taken up the charge of the Apostle Paul, and have been actively correcting, rebuking and encouraging – with great patience and careful instruction – all people of good will who have ears to hear and a heart to understand. And a special tip of the hat to our local Ordinary, Archbishop Nienstedt, for his courageous leadership in promoting a Marriage Amendment to the State of Minnesota's Constitution that will enshrine the Sacrament of Matrimony as exclusively between a man and a woman as an integral part of God's Plan.

The following article first appeared in [The Daily Caller](#), and was titled: "Romney is the only candidate Catholics can support in good conscience."

American Catholics are at a Crossroads: Following is an article by *Joseph Petros, a graduate of the University of Notre Dame and the University of Notre Dame Law School, where he served as executive editor of the Notre Dame Journal of Law, Ethics & Public Policy.*

"In this first presidential election to feature a Catholic candidate on each major party's ticket, the media have been abuzz depicting the American Catholic voter at a

very difficult crossroads. The image is one of two competing, yet equally legitimate, versions of Catholicism, differing in the aspects of Catholic doctrine they emphasize in the public square. Each tugs at the voter's conscience: on one side are the Church's teachings on abortion and social issues; on the other is the Church's mission to care for the poor. The delicate task of the Catholic voter, so the narrative goes, is to weigh the interests represented by these two camps and select the presidential candidate who better reflects the nuances of the voter's own faith.

"This narrative is nothing new, and it has always been wrong. It has been recited in every presidential election since abortion became a prominent national issue in 1973, when the Supreme Court in *Roe v. Wade* forbade the states from democratically legislating on the issue. Based on this narrative, pro-abortion Democrats have garnered roughly half of the Catholic vote in every presidential election over the past three-plus decades, despite the Catholic Church's clear opposition to legalized abortion. Yet in this election, this narrative is more clearly wrong than ever before. Not only is the incumbent the most pro-abortion president ever to occupy the office, but he has also deliberately picked a fight with the Catholic Church by requiring Catholic employers to participate in the provision of abortion-inducing drugs, contraception, and sterilization to their employees — all things the Church teaches are **intrinsically evil**. This divisive and unnecessary infringement on religious liberty by President Obama drew criticism from conservatives and liberals alike, and it prompted bishops, priests, and deacons in nearly every Catholic church in America to take to the pulpit in protest — an unprecedented event in American history. All allegedly Catholic arguments in favor of President Obama rely on gross misconceptions of Catholic doctrine. Given the magnitude of this election, it is worth addressing three of the most common misconceptions.

"The **first** was on display in this year's vice-presidential debate. When asked about his Catholic faith and the role it plays in his position on abortion, Vice President Biden responded that he accepts in his "personal life" the Church's teaching that "life begins at conception," but that he refuses to "impose it on equally devout Christians and Muslims and Jews." Contrary to Mr. Biden's characterization, Catholic doctrine on abortion is not limited to the simple premise that "life begins at conception." Nor is it directed only at the individual to accept in his or her "personal life." Rather, the Church

teaches that citizens and their representatives must, by force of law, forbid the intentional taking of any human life, born or unborn. In the words of the American bishops: "A Catholic cannot vote for a candidate who takes a position in favor of an intrinsic evil, such as abortion or racism, if the voter's intent is to support that position. In such cases, a Catholic would be guilty of formal cooperation in grave evil."

"If Mr. Biden's explanation were sound, then one could also say: "While I accept in my personal life the Church's teaching that disabled persons are human beings having a right to life, I refuse to impose it on others," or "While I accept in my personal life the Church's teaching that persons of different ethnic backgrounds are all deserving of equal human dignity, I refuse to impose it on others." The Church's teaching on abortion is clear. Pro-choice Catholics like Mr. Biden simply choose not to follow it.

"The **second** major misconception is that, while life issues such as abortion may be important, they can be outweighed by other concerns, such as government programs for the poor. The Church specifically denounces this **moral equivalency**. Intrinsic evils such as legalized abortion are categorically forbidden by Catholic doctrine, while questions of how best to care for the poor are left to human judgment. Again, the American bishops have been clear: "The direct and intentional destruction of innocent human life from the moment of conception until natural death is always wrong and is not just one issue among many. **Abortion must always be opposed.**"

"The **third** and perhaps most widely held misconception is that, abortion issue aside, Mr. Obama and the Democrats are indeed closer to Catholic Social Teaching regarding the poor than Mr. Romney and the Republicans. Quite the contrary is true: while the Church does not take official positions on how governments should go about helping the poor, it does teach that governments should perform only those tasks that cannot be

performed effectively at a more immediate or local level. Catholic Social Teaching is built upon two core principles.

"The first is **Solidarity**, which holds that it is essential to act in favor of the well-being of all, particularly those who are most poor and marginalized from political influence. It recognizes that humans are created to live in community, and as such have affirmative duties to one another.

"The second principle, which the left conveniently forgets, is **Subsidiarity**. This provides that social tasks ought to be handled by the smallest, lowest, or least centralized competent authority. The reasoning behind this principle is twofold. As a practical matter, the needs of the poor are better served by those closer to them than by a national government — especially in a nation like ours that spans an entire continent. Often, top-down approaches to poverty only serve to perpetuate the problem. We see this today, with growing numbers of Americans on food stamps and record numbers living in poverty - on President Obama's watch.

"**Subsidiarity** is also essential to protecting liberty. According to the Catechism of the Catholic Church, "Excessive intervention by the state can threaten personal freedom and initiative." There is no better example of this than the Obama administration's "contraception" mandate. The enactment of a top-down government approach to health care enabled this infringement on the religious liberty of Catholic individuals and institutions, many of which have played a far more integral role in caring for the poor than the federal government ever will.

"This presidential election is a moment of truth for American Catholics. When they go to the polls, they will decide what truly lays claim to their hearts and minds: Catholic Christianity, or modern liberalism. The crossroads is real. But only one of those roads is the Catholic road."

Paul Beery BSP, Morning Star Chapter, Minnesota



The sign of "crazy"... A MEDITATION by Janet Klasson BSP

From the First Reading, Thirty-second Sunday in Ordinary Time

"But she said, 'As the Lord your God lives, I have nothing baked, only a handful of meal in a jar, and a little oil in a jug; I am now gathering a couple of sticks, so that I may go home and prepare it for myself and my son, that we may eat it, and die.'" (1 Kings 17:12)

One word I find myself saying a lot these days is "crazy". At work, there seems to be a crisis around every corner. Sadly, I have also heard of many suicides lately, including recently, a family member. The same weekend I heard that tragic news, it was announced that that our parish priest was being sent to serve in a different parish in a matter of

weeks, and that he would not be replaced in the foreseeable future. And that is not even to mention the "perfect storm" that has wreaked havoc in eastern North America. It seems the term "perfect storm" is a metaphor for what is happening all around us these days. It's crazy!

I am reminded of something that happened about two

years ago. Once, during the night I felt the Lord's presence and saw an image. It was like multi-colored pieces shifting and overlapping. The image seemed to have no order to it. It was very chaotic and hard to figure out. These words came to me: *"Things will happen in rapid succession."* In the image it seemed like things were happening all over the place that were seemingly unconnected, but really, they were all connected in the big picture. Still, I could not make sense of it. It was like a living "crazy quilt". (There's that word again!) I felt a strong urge to tell people to prepare, both practically with emergency kits and contact plans, as well as spiritually with prayer and fasting. The feeling has never left me.

Like the widow in the Scripture passage above, there is an undercurrent of desperation to world events today. Humanly speaking, there is little reason for hope. Christians, however, have every reason to hope. The Scripture story concludes this way:

*"Elijah said to her, 'Do not be afraid; go and do as you have said; but first make me a little cake of it and bring it to me, and afterwards make something for yourself and your son. For thus says the Lord the God of Israel: "The jar of meal will not be emptied and the jug of oil will not fail until the day when the Lord sends rain upon the earth."' She went and did as Elijah said, so that she as well as he and her household ate for many days. The jar of meal was emptied, neither did the jug of oil fail, according to the word of the Lord that he spoke by Elijah."*¹

Even in the dream, I had the feeling that even though things appeared chaotic to me, even though I could not make sense of them, that God certainly could, that indeed, God's plan always looks like this to us. We just don't get it.

The good news is, we don't have to understand. We just have to do what God puts in front of us every day, and trust in him for everything. He has given us so many

1 1 Kings 17: 13-16

blessings and so much assistance by way of devotions and prayers. He has opened the floodgates of mercy. We have nothing to fear.

This excerpt from the Diary of St. Faustina is a stunning reminder of the power God has given us in these devotions:

*"When a great storm was approaching, I began to say the chaplet. Suddenly I heard the voice of an angel: 'I cannot approach in this storm, because the light which comes from her mouth drives back both me and the storm.' Such was the angel's complaint to God. I then recognized how much havoc he was to have made through this storm; but I also recognized that this prayer was pleasing to God, and that this chaplet was most powerful."*²

An important point to remember in all this is that the widow in the Scripture passage gave the best of all she had left to the man of God. And she trusted. Jesus tells us: "Seek first the kingdom (of God) and his righteousness, and all these things will be given you besides." We need give God first place in our lives and then place all our trust in him. He will not disappoint us, even though we may for a time have to endure trials. Let us remember what St. James tells us:

*"Consider it all joy, my brothers, when you encounter various trials, for you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. And let perseverance be perfect, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing."*³

So, it may look crazy out there. It may not make sense. But God is most definitely in control, and all will end in his triumph and glory as Our Lady promised at Fatima. "In the end, my Immaculate Heart will triumph." Blessed be God forever!

2 St. Faustina, Divine Mercy in My Soul, #1791

3 James 1:1-4

From www.pelianito.stblogs.com

Haggai 2:6-7 For thus says the LORD of hosts: One moment yet, a little while, and I will shake the heavens and the earth, the sea and the dry land. I will shake all the nations, and the treasures of all the nations will come in, and I will fill this house with glory, says the LORD of hosts.

"My dear ones, if you knew with what joy I anticipate the glorious fulfillment of my plan, you would cease to be afraid. For what is the treasure of the nations but the beautiful souls who will flock to the Church after being shaken to the core? The shaking must come before the souls will be ready. Then rejoice with me that the time is near! Fulfill your mission in these last days—your mission to pray for souls. It is only when my house is filled with the treasure of the nations that my heart will find rest on earth. My Spirit hovers over the earth seeking a resting place. Open you hearts my children! Let your Beloved find rest in you. Then your mission will be fulfilled in peace and joy. Open you hearts my children! I am so very near."

O Beloved Holy Spirit, may your grace open my heart wide so that you may find a resting place in me. Blessed Mother, St. Joseph, please remove from my heart anything that does not give glory to God, so that the perfect Trinity of Love may find rest in me. Come Holy Spirit. Come by the means of the powerful intercession of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, your well-beloved Spouse. Amen.



Janet Klasson BSP, Divine Mercy Chapter, Canada



FROM THE 'SPARROW'

God's ways are not our ways...

The peace of Jesus to each of you. Most of the direction that St. Francis of Assisi (and other Saints as well) took in his walk with the Lord, came from his reading and

acting on the words (Word!) of scripture. As he read and interpreted these sacred words he then integrated them into action in his life. Literally at times...so much so...that he seemed to disappear at times and the Lord Jesus appeared to those who had spiritual eyes to see Him in the lowly Poverello (the Little Poor Man).

When I read the Scripture, especially some of the great prophets, I am struck by how as God drew near to some of them, the differences between Him and the writer became very distinct (in direct opposite contrast to what happened with St. Francis). In Isaiah we read where God speaking through the prophet states, "My ways are not your ways...your thoughts are not my thoughts..." I am very impressed with statements like that by the Lord!

God's thoughts are not our thoughts, nor are they even LIKE our thoughts. We are not even in the same category! We think to save the body. God is thinking save the soul. We think about a pay raise. God thinks about raising the dead. We avoid pain and look for peace. God uses pain to bring about His peace. We say, "I'm going to live before I die." Yet God says, "Die to yourself so you can live." We love things that pass away. He loves the eternal and endures. We rejoice when we succeed. He rejoices at our confessions. We show those close to us, all the famous people of the world, and encourage our friends to be like them. God points to the crucified carpenter with bloody wounds and pierced side and says, "Be like Christ." St. Francis heard this in the Scriptures and he did it. That's the difference.

How to pray without ceasing...

The peace of Jesus to each of you. In conversation last night with a man who has an interest in spiritual growth but does not have a developed range of prayer I explained to him about the "prayer of desire" of which St. Augustine spoke. I would like to share that, as a small feather of the sparrow, with you because it is a most helpful insight passed along to us by the great Saint concerning prayer. St. Augustine wrote:

"The desire of your heart is prayer itself. And if the desire is constant, so is the prayer. The Apostle Paul had a purpose in saying, 'Pray without ceasing.' Are we then ceaselessly to bend our knees, to lie prostrate or to lift up our hands? Is this what is meant in saying pray without ceasing? There is another, interior kind of prayer without ceasing, namely, the desire of the heart. Whatever else you may be doing, if you but fix your desire on God your prayer will be ceaseless. Therefore if you wish to pray without ceasing, do not cease to desire. The constancy of your desire will itself be the ceaseless voice of your prayer."

--Saint Augustine

Now, my fine little feathered friends, isn't that unique to know that all the times you felt frustration at not being able to formulate a prayer, due to time and daily pressures but had the desire...that you were actually praying all along! Now doesn't that just put a smile on your little face? Is not our God good at finding ways to reach us even when we don't know He's doing it!!

Casus non datur (nothing happens by chance...)

Bob Hall BSP, Little Flower Chapter, N. Carolina

Quotes from St. Clare of Assisi:

"Place your mind before the mirror of eternity! Place your soul in the brilliance of glory! And transform your entire being into the image of the Godhead Itself through contemplation."

"He Christ is the splendor of eternal glory, "the brightness of eternal light, and the mirror without cloud."

"Gaze upon Him, consider Him, contemplate Him, as you desire to imitate Him."

"I come, O Lord, unto Thy sanctuary to see the life and food of my soul. As I hope in Thee, O Lord, inspire me with that confidence which brings me to Thy holy mountain. Permit me, Divine Jesus, to come closer to Thee, that my whole soul may do homage to the greatness of Thy majesty; that my heart, with its tenderest affections, may acknowledge Thine infinite love; that my memory may dwell on the admirable mysteries here renewed every day, and that the sacrifice of my whole being may accompany Thine."

"Totally love Him, Who gave Himself totally for your love."



MEDITATION ON THE PASSION by Dawn Usak, BSP Thirteenth Station: Jesus Is Taken Down from the Cross

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

Dear Jesus, finally Your agony is over. You have paid the ultimate price for my sins. May I forever keep Your sacrifice in my heart and before my eyes. Help me to avoid the temptations of sin.

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.)

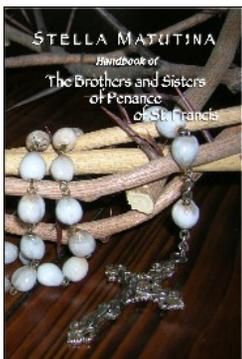


MORNING STAR: NEWS ON THE ASSOCIATION...

HOW TO DONATE TO THE BSP...

From time to time we get a question on how to donate to the BSP. Statute Article 15 says in part: "Since the penitent is to financially support their home chapter of the Brothers and Sisters of Penance of St. Francis and the work of this Association, a portion of one's tithe may go to this cause." Should you wish to make a donation to the Association, you have a few choices. You may mail a check or money order to Bruce Fahey at the following address: **65774 County Road 31, Northome, Minnesota 56661**. Or if you like you may submit using Paypal by sending a money transfer to Shelley Fahey at jasp102577@aol.com. The Paypal option works well for those outside of the USA. Donations to The Brothers and Sisters of Penance of St. Francis are exempt from tax in the USA.

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.

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

*Remembering in our prayers all those affected by Hurricane Sandy.
May God send holy angels to see to their needs.*



And one more from The Sparrow...

The peace of Jesus to each of you. I have been reading a work by Christian Feldman which was translated by Peter Heinegg on the life of Mother Teresa (a sparrow of the First Order!). His insights are keen and help bring the Gospel centered life of this wonderful religious woman into focus for us.

As Mother Teresa saw it, a little bit of charity would not do much good for those who have come to grief in society's battle for jobs, money, and living space. As Mother saw it, the worst sickness wasn't hunger or TB, BUT the feeling of being UNWANTED--a sickness for which there is no medicine except authentic devotion based on love.

That is why Teresa tried not to pity people living in filth and misery, but to respect them. Under the crust of wretchedness she discovered their dignity: "You can occasionally skip a meal," she would remind her listeners in the prosperous West, "but what about them? Day after day they suffer hunger. They all die alone. They have no place to stay. Thrown out on the street, they wander around, just trying to survive from day to day. This struggle, this ENORMOUS COURAGE is their GREATNESS."

The strength of the poor, Teresa, said, could teach you a great deal, as could the dignity that they show dying: "They radiate joy," she told a surprised audience, "when they return to the source they came from: to the one person who loves them. The people who own a lot of goods and wealth are owned by them. They think the only thing that counts is property and riches. They have a hard time leaving everything behind. The poor have NOTHING; and so they are FREE, and this freedom allows them to leave the world behind joyfully.

On one especially bad day Teresa found, as the hours went by, around forty sick and dying people on the streets of Calcutta. Among them was a woman covered with dirty rags, whose life was all but extinguished: "So I just held her hand and tried to comfort her. I have never seen such a beautiful smile on anyone's face. She said only one thing: 'I thank you.' Then she died...what she did was so beautiful. This woman WAS MORE WORRIED ABOUT ME than I was about her."

What Mother Teresa did St. Francis did as well...should we not then as fellow Christians, who follow the same Crucified Savior, be found with the same love and concern for the lost and little ones of the world around us? St. Francis was fond of saying: "Let us begin again...for up to now we have done nothing."

Bob Hall BSP, Little Flower Chapter, N. Carolina

The BROTHERS AND SISTERS OF PENANCE OF ST. FRANCIS

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

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

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

Bruce and Shelley Fahey BSP, Editors



Welcome to the Brothers and Sisters of Penance!

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

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



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PENANCE**



**of St. Francis
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Northome, Minnesota 56661**