



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

## BONAVENTURE AND HIS LESSONS ON ST. FRANCIS:

### Some of the miracles which took place after St. Francis' death

#### III. Those Whom Francis Saved from the Danger of Death

9. One day a man named Nicholas from Ceprano fell into the hands of his enemies. They attacked him savagely and heaped injury upon injury until they were sure he was dead or at the point of death. But at the first blow Nicholas cried out, "St. Francis, help me. St. Francis come to my aid." A number of people heard him from a distance, but they could do nothing to help him. Eventually he was carried home, bathed in his own blood, and confidently asserting that he would not die from his wounds. He added that he felt no pain even then, because St. Francis had come to his aid and had persuaded God to give him time for repentance. Events proved that he was right; as soon as the blood was washed away, he was perfectly healed, contrary to all human expectations.



10. The son of a nobleman from Castel San Gimignano was seriously ill, so that there was no hope for his recovery and he was at his last breath. A stream of blood flowed from his eyes, just like the flow from a vein cut in a person's arm, and various other signs of approaching death could be seen in his body. They were sure that he was practically dead; his breathing was very feeble and all his strength was gone, so that he could not move and had lost the use of his senses. He seemed to be quite dead. The friends and relatives of his parents came to mourn with them as usual and could think of nothing but the funeral. However, the

boy's father put his trust in God and ran to the church of St. Francis in the village where he tied a rope round his neck and cast himself humbly on the ground. He redoubled his prayers and his vows and by his signs and tears he was found worthy to have St. Francis as his advocate before Christ. He went home and found his son restored to health so that his grief was changed to joy.

11. God worked a similar miracle through the intercession of St. Francis for a girl in a town called Thamarite in Catalonia, and for another in Ancona. Both of them were seriously ill and at the point of death, but when their parents confidently invoked St. Francis, he restored them immediately to perfect health.

12. A cleric called Matthew from Vicalvi had taken poison and was so sick that he could not speak; there seemed to be nothing to do but wait for the end. A priest tried to make him confess to him but he could not get a word out of him. However, Matthew prayed to Christ in his heart and begged him by the intercession of St. Francis to rescue him from the power of death. God gave him strength and the moment he pronounced the saint's name devoutly before those who were present, he threw up the poison and gave thanks to his rescuer.

Bonaventure—Major Life of St. Francis (1263)





## VISITOR'S MESSAGE

### Homily by Fr. Robert Altier, May 5, 2019

(Readings: Acts 5:27-32, 40b-41; Revelation 5:11-14; John 21:1-19)

In today's readings St. Peter has a central place and teaches us much. At the beginning of the Gospel, Peter is with the disciples at the Sea of Galilee says he is going fishing. Perhaps he just liked fishing, perhaps he needed to pay some bills, or perhaps he was not yet sure of what the future held after the death and resurrection of our Lord. One thing is for certain, Peter had no doubts about the resurrection of our Lord. St John tells us Jesus already revealed Himself twice to His Apostles after His resurrection from the dead.

The next thing we hear about St. Peter is that the Beloved Disciple tells him the Man calling to them from shore and advising them to cast the net over the starboard side is the Lord. Peter, undoubtedly remembering a similar miraculous catch earlier in the Lord's public ministry, immediately abandoned the net and the others in the boat and jumped into the water to be with Jesus. There is no hint of Jesus challenging the Apostles about their going fishing, so they were not fishing because they were lacking in faith or running from the ministry to which the Lord was calling them. Indeed, the Lord used this opportunity to ask the disciples to bring some of the fish they had caught and add them to the fish the Lord already had roasting over a charcoal fire on shore.

At this point we have to ask ourselves, if we are going about our daily duties and something happened that was clearly of God, how would we react? I do not assume Jesus would be standing there as He was in the Gospel, so we do not have to think about jumping into the sea to be with Him. But are we willing to take the time to pray, to thank Him, to seek His will in this situation, whatever it may be? Peter was willing to abandon everything to be with the Lord. Do we make time for prayer each day? Are we willing to go before the Blessed Sacrament to literally be with Jesus?

After the Apostles had eaten, we are made privy to a conversation between Jesus and St. Peter. Jesus asks Peter about Peter's love for Jesus. Having denied the Lord three times, it seems reasonable for Jesus to ask three times about Peter's love. But two times Jesus

asks Peter if he loves Jesus as Jesus loves him, that is, with agape love. Twice Peter answers that he loves Jesus as a friend with philia love. The third time Jesus comes down to Peter's level and Peter responds the same way as before, with philia love. Jesus then speaks to Peter about the death by which he will love our Lord the way the Lord loves him and glorify God.

How about us? How much do we love Jesus? Is He a mere acquaintance to us? Is He a friend to us? Is He the One we love with our whole heart and soul and strength? Do we love Jesus with a selfless love or do we love Jesus because of what we think we can get from Him?

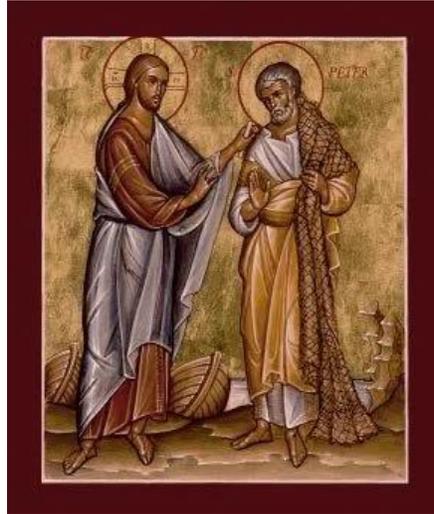
We see Peter again in the first reading standing before the Sanhedrin because of the preaching of the Apostles. Peter tells the members of the Sanhedrin that the Apostles would obey God rather than men. It is

amazing to see the swiftness of the transformation that took place in St. Peter. He went from being a good friend of Jesus, to being a witness to the resurrection of Jesus, to rejoicing that he and the Apostles had been found worthy to suffer dishonor for the sake of the Holy Name of Jesus.

Are we willing to suffer dishonor for the sake of Jesus? Are we willing to stand up for our Faith when someone is bad mouthing the Church? Are we willing to pray in public places before we eat? Are we willing to wear ashes on our heads in public on Ash Wednesday? Are we willing to be different from everyone else because

of our love for Jesus?

We are told in the second reading today that everyone in Heaven cried out regarding the worthiness of the Lamb, but then there is an astounding passage that says: "Then I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and in the sea, everything in the universe, cry out: 'To the One Who sits on the throne and to the Lamb, be blessing and honor, glory and might, forever and ever.'" Every creature in the universe, including those in Hell, will glorify God. We have an opportunity to glorify God now: love Jesus as He loves you and fall down in worship.



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## ADMINISTRATOR'S MESSAGE... THE BETTER PORTION



Jesus entered a village where a woman named Martha welcomed him to her home. She had a sister named Mary, who seated herself at the Lord's feet and listened to his words. Martha, who was busy with all the details of hospitality came to

him and said: "Lord, are you not concerned that my sister has left me all alone to do the household tasks? Tell her to help me."

The Lord in reply said to her: "Martha, Martha, you are anxious and upset about many things; only one is required. Mary has chosen the better portion and she shall not be deprived of it." (Luke: 10:38-42)

What was that 'better portion'? That is the question that is begged in this Scripture reading. On consideration all that comes to mind is that Mary has decided that it was more important to go to Jesus than to get the details of hospitality put together for her guests. There is a real message there for all of us who read this Scripture. We need to apply this consideration to our own lives.

Mary chose to be with Jesus rather than help her sister. What does that say to us? Several things.

Jesus was present to them. If Jesus were not present to them one can only assume that Mary would be helping Martha with her work. They were sisters. They lived together, and no doubt did much together. Certainly they would work together to get their house in order for company. That only makes sense. So when Jesus shows up and Mary goes to be with Jesus and sit at his feet and listen to him Martha gets perturbed. But Jesus says to Martha that Mary has chosen the better part and it shall not be taken from her.

No doubt Jesus would also say that to us today. The Gospel is for all ages and it is certainly for us too. So we need to choose Jesus. There are so many ways we do that and in doing that choose the 'better portion' for ourselves regardless of what others say.

We do well to remember that Jesus is with us all the time. When he came to Martha and Mary he had not yet risen from the dead. He was the man, Jesus, whom Mary and Martha knew was an upright and wonderful teacher and friend but they did not know yet that he was God. We know he is God. We know as God he is with us all the time. So we are in that crossfire between the demands of our life and the demands of our faith all the time. In every situation in our lives. We need to remember Mary and her decision. We need to choose Jesus.

Certainly we need to remember Jesus as we live our

Rule. In so many ways it demands we spend time and make sacrifices for Jesus. That is why St. Francis gave it to us. To draw us out of the world and put us on a path towards salvation. We choose Jesus every time we decide to live our Rule, in any of its tenets.

We follow Jesus every time we decide to live our Faith too. Every time we go to Church, or to confession, or pray. In each of these situations we make the decision to choose the better portion. Not to do so would draw us away from the Lord. So many do that. And to follow Jesus causes us to reflect, every time even without trying, that we are going to do that. Follow Jesus.

It means we make time for the Lord. We need to keep our life in order and organized around this goal. We won't pray well unless we actually make time to pray. We can't always pray on the run although we certainly can pray on the run. We need to choose that 'better portion' to pray well. We need a place to pray, a time to pray, and a way to pray. Since we know now, and Mary did not know this, that Jesus is God and is ever with us, we know we can pray to him whenever we like. We know we need to make time to be with Jesus and that means we need to set a time when our focus is only on Jesus who is always with us. We need to choose Jesus all the time. When we make decisions it is good to consider 'what would Jesus do?'

Especially in this month of May, dedicated to Our Lady, and to help us in our decisions and prayers we do well to ask what would Our Lady do in the situations we have facing us in our lives. She is always the other Mary who always choose the better part. Do you think his Mother, Our Lady and Mother, ever did anything without considering how it related to God? Not likely. She is always the other Mary who always choose the better portion and in doing so, as a human being, set the example for us to always choose her son.

Finally we have to say that the better portion that Mary chose was also to contemplate the Lord in love. Now that is the very essence of contemplation. We need to learn to pray contemplatively. Contemplation is the key to mystical prayer and the secrets of the Saints and it should be a regular if not daily part of our life. To contemplate you simply sit and gaze at the Lord, in your heart of hearts, with love. One hour of contemplative prayer a day fulfills the prayer requirements of our Rule or is an easy and wonderful addition to the other prayers we say.

We do well to keep this little meditation in mind as we go through our day. Every day, and in every way. How do we choose the better portion? How do we better serve Jesus, and how do we put ourselves at his feet, gazing into his eyes with love?

## SEASONS

There are seasons to life, like the seasons of nature. In nature there is the Summer, Fall, Winter and Spring. We are fickle though. We wish it was Summer when it is Winter and it is 40 degrees below zero, or we wish it was Spring when it is Fall and it is raining all the time. Our life is like that too.

When we have problems we wish we didn't. We pray for something and nothing happens and we wish things would be different. We might even have lost patience with God and wonder where He is in the situations we face. We have problems in our family and they don't go away. We pray that they disappear and they don't. We have to cope with things we would rather not do. We wonder why. We wonder where God is in all this. In time things work out but we don't change. When problems come up we go through the same cycle again. We wish we could be rid of them. We wish we could be somewhere else. On and on it goes.

There are ways to handle this that for the most part escape us unless we get a little wisdom. We need to all realize God does things on his schedule, not ours. He sees all of history and the effects of the problems we face, on us and on others, and He acts in our best interest even if we don't know enough to wait for it.

Fr. Michael Schmitz, of Ascension Presents, on YouTube says there are four ways to handle this that everyone should know. They are well worth considering.

First Fr. Mike says we need to realize there are seasons to our life. That there are situations we are going to face that we cannot control. We know that if we wait things will change. They always do and knowing that we can wait on the seasons of our life just like we wait on the seasons of nature. Just like the seasons of nature we might like one season over another especially when we are in the season. We need to know the season we are in.

Second, he says we should be patient. We should realize that God is always with us, that He loves us, and that He always does things in the best way in our lives. Doesn't matter what we think we want. What matters is the solution and he is the God of all solutions, and all inspiration. So we do well to be patient. To offer our lives to God and then to live like we have made the offering. We need to be patient to see the finger of God moving in our lives.

Third, he says we should be active. We should be alive and moving, trying to do what we can to improve things but surrendering everything to God who is above all things and sees all things perfectly. We have to do our part. We have to keep on trying, and in trying we need to keep our minds always on considering what God might want from us.

Finally he says, from the writings of Fr. Jean-Pierre de Caussade in his book *Abandonment to Divine Providence*, that we must respect the 'sacrament of the present moment'. Fr. de Caussade even calls it a sacrament as it is a way to live your life that brings you through everything. Realizing that every moment is present to God and he knows at every moment what is best for us. So in any moment God will give us what we need to get through that 'present moment'.

These are some good things to remember in our lives when things get tough or we don't know what to do. Give the moment to God and move on in peace. Realize you are in a season in your life and don't be afraid to be active in trying to resolve the difficulties of the present moment all the time being patient in your dealings with others and certainly with yourself, and most certainly with God.

We all do well to keep these little lessons in mind as we move through our days.

May the Lord bless and lead us all!

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



## SUSTAINING THE WEARY WITH A WORD...

by Janet Klasson, BSP

**"The Lord God has given me the tongue of a teacher, that I may know how to sustain the weary with a word."** (Isaiah 50:4)

Jesus, the Word, knows well our weariness, the weariness that today oppresses us and threatens to crush our spirit.

Think of his weariness in the Garden of Gethsemane. As the weight of the sins of billions of souls crushed him to the point of sweating blood, the **word** that sustained

Jesus in the garden was the one he spoke to the Father in his agony, "Not my will but yours be done." The word was **fiat**. At that moment angels came and waited on him to sustain him, for it was not the end of his suffering. That **fiat** called down the graces he would need to complete his mission.

Indeed, Jesus is a Redeemer who knows our



weariness—but infinitely magnified. In his weariness, or perhaps because of it, he went on to embrace the cross and resolutely climb the hill to Calvary bearing in mind the glory that would be his—and ours—if only he would complete his mission. *Fiat*. His weariness of body and spirit ended with death, but his rising from the dead gave new life and glorious hope to all. He took his weariness to the tomb and left it imprinted on his [burial shroud](#) for all to see.

Mary, the Blessed Mother, whom Jesus bequeathed to us, and us to her from the cross, also endured unimaginable sorrow and crushing weariness. When they met face-to-face on the Via Dolorosa, what pain must have been in their eyes. Yet, what love and trust. Wordlessly their hearts beat as one, *fiat, fiat, fiat...* Here as in every moment of her existence, her will remained chained to the Throne of God.

There is astonishing power in that little word, *fiat*. It can sustain us in our weariness as it did for Jesus and Mary, but more than that it can propel us forward with new strength, fortitude, courage, and hope. Like a cosmic explosion, it is a word which, united to the divine *fiat*, dramatically transforms people and changes the trajectory of world events.

The cosmic importance of this little word is expanded upon in great detail in the Lord's teachings on the Divine Will in the writings of Luisa Piccarreta. In the Easter Vigil Mass we recall how God's *fiat*, "Let there be..." set all creation in motion. On Good Friday we hear Jesus re-echo his *fiat* of redemption in the Garden of Gethsemane, the Word he initially uttered in heaven when the plan of redemption was conceived, first in the Divine Will and then after her *fiat*, in the womb of the Virgin Mary.

It is almost inconceivable that our salvation hinged on one little word uttered by a humble Hebrew Maiden. Throughout her existence, that word was as constant in her as the beating of her heart, even in the unimaginable agony of her own Calvary.

She is a model of abject trust in the glorious power of God. At our Parish Lenten Mission the priest reminded us that none of the prophecies made at the Presentation of Jesus had been fulfilled by the time he

was crucified. No salvation, no light for the Gentiles, no glory for God's people Israel. Yet, even in the face of that, she trusted. Her heart never ceased to beat out the rhythm, *fiat, fiat, fiat...*

At the Annunciation, just before she proclaimed the *fiat* that changed everything, the Angel Gabriel called greeted by her title, "Full of Grace". Let us then beg her, by virtue of her continuous *fiat* to obtain from her Son every grace we need in our weariness, that we may navigate in trust the thick darkness that surrounds us, as we wait in joyful hope for the glorious dawn which has been promised.

Jesus is himself the Word who sustains us in our weariness, and the word he gives us is a word that we can utter in any circumstance: "*Fiat*." Sometimes it is the only word that makes sense. I think of the few Christian souls remaining in the Holy Land, Bethlehem in particular. When the security perimeter (now a wall) went up in 2002, they were crushed in spirit for a time. But today, even though their situation is still dire, and they remain weary, they are not crushed. Their hope is alive because Jesus Christ is alive.

God is on the march dear friends. It may not look promising at this point, but neither did the crucifixion. He will not lose the battle that now rages for souls, and in the end his triumph will be more glorious than we can imagine.

We have now entered the Garden with Jesus. The passion is upon us. Let us not flee for fear of the wolves. Whatever our weariness, even if we feel crushed in spirit, if we but link ourselves to Christ in his passion, we may anticipate with great joy and hope a glorious day of triumph. Let our *fiat* be one with his and his Mother's as we place our unshakable trust in God's Holy Will, as they did.

Our Lady of Fatima: "In the end, my Immaculate Heart will triumph."

Heavenly Father, may Your kingdom come, and Your will be done on earth as in heaven. Come Divine Will to reign upon the earth!

*Fiat, fiat, fiat...*

## SEE, I AM MAKING ALL THINGS NEW...

From the Second Reading, Fifth Sunday of Easter

**"And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, 'See, the home of God is among mortals. He will dwell with them; they will be his peoples, and God himself will be with them; he will wipe every tear from their eyes. Death will be no more; mourning and crying and pain will be no more, for the first things have passed away.'**

**And the one who was seated on the throne said, 'See, I am making all things new.'"** (Revelation 21:3-5)

Maranatha! Come Lord Jesus, come and make all things new!

How broken the world is! The signs of the times are all around us, coming ever faster and more furious.

It is hard to be people of the † Good News when the bad news artillery relentlessly falls on our heads.

The past few weeks I have felt bombarded by bad news, Christian persecutions are up, Churches and those in them are being attacked, human trafficking, especially of children, is rising exponentially in EVERY country of the world, the anti-life forces are relentless.

Yes we must continue to fight ceaselessly against injustice, but in the face of bad news, we must keep the † Good News of Jesus Christ in the forefront. It is our only hope, and it is a sure hope! To quote St. John Paul II, "We are an Easter people, and Alleluia is our song!"

As if God wished to bolster the troops, he has also bombarded me with inspiring quotes and messages. God is on the march and he wants us to know that, as at the resurrection, the evil one will be supremely defeated. We must remain faithful and attentive to the Divine Will, that His Kingdom may come and His will be done on earth as in heaven. Come Lord Jesus, and make all things new!

I want to share with you a few of the inspirational quotes and messages that have come my way. May you also be inspired and encouraged in your particular mission, especially as a penitent in a desperately fallen world.

† A Dutch Christian, Andrew van der Bijl, a.k.a. "Brother Andrew", began in 1957 to smuggle Bibles into communist countries and everywhere Christians were being persecuted. In 1967 he published a book of his memoirs, titled *God's Smuggler*, which has sold more than 10 million copies in 35 languages. This eventually led to the formation of the organization, Open Doors, which is an organization devoted to helping persecuted Christians worldwide.

There is a lot more information on their website, <http://www.opendoors.org/>, but one simple quote that inspired me as a penitent was:

**"PRAYER IS NOT PREPARATION FOR THE BATTLE; PRAYER IS THE BATTLE."**

– Brother Andrew, God's Smuggler

God is on the march and the signs are all around us. The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church. As Jesus said, "If they persecute Me, they will persecute you too!" This too is † Good News! The Church has entered into the passion of Christ. Run the race before you and endure to the end. Rejoice and be glad for the Resurrection is near!

This week I read a disturbing [document](#) written by Rebecca Oas, Associate Director of Research for the Center for Family and Human Rights (C-Fam) in

Washington, D.C. The article outlines how the United Nations "population" funding is often based on the skewed metric of "lives saved". It is a metric that essentially boils down to preventing maternal deaths by preventing pregnancy, or preventing child deaths by aborting them so they can't die as children!!! Huh? You can't make this stuff up! Ms. Oas's excellent article ends with this chilling paragraph:

**"The claim that the best and cheapest way to save a child's life is to prevent that child's existence is indefensible. Those who would make such a claim tend to rely on the fact that they will not be called upon to defend it. While the pro-life movement must regularly contend with the brazen assaults on the rights of children in the womb, we cannot ignore the subtler attempts to redefine human life in global health policy that lead to funding for the abortion agenda. Taking a stand against "therapeutic nonexistence" in lives-saved analyses is ultimately a pro-life position. There is no life saved without a living survivor."**

Upside-down world! Archbishop Fulton Sheen further illustrates the principle at work here:

*"Suppose a family had five children but they had enough money to buy only four hats. Do you think they would be permitted or should be permitted to cut off the head of a child in order to bring the economic to the level of human and the human to the level of the economic? Suppose a husband says that he can no longer support his wife. Ought he be entitled to shoot her?"*

According to the UN metrics, that would be the most economically viable solution.

† C-Fam is † Good News for the pro-life army, but not surprisingly they are under constant attack by the anti-life forces in the UN. Please pray for them.

**"The light has come into the world, and people loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil. For all who do evil hate the light and do not come to the light, so that their deeds may not be exposed. But those who do what is true come to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that their deeds have been done in God." (Jn 3:19-21)**

Come Lord Jesus, and make all things new!

And here's some devastating news from my own country, Canada. On June 17, 2016, euthanasia became legal in Canada. That's not the worst of it. According to a recent [government report](#), **one in every 100 deaths in Canada is now administered by doctor!** The statistic is likely higher because some of the areas are not yet

reporting. All in the name of "mercy"!

✠ In the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus was "sorrowful unto death" as he saw the sins of mankind whose guilt he took upon himself. His anguish was so great that his sweat became as drops of blood falling to the ground. The ✠ Good News is that His *fiat* to his Father, his obedience unto death, death on the cross, won for all who would repent of their evil, **immersion in the ocean of Divine Mercy.**

Come Lord Jesus, and make all things new!

✠ St. Athanasius died in the year 373. He fought courageously against the Arian heresy and was an outstanding defender of the true faith. As I was reading one of his writings in the Office of Readings, it occurred to me that without the heresy we would not have the writings. It encouraged me to believe that God is working in all this bad news. **"We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose."** (Romans 8:28) God is not silent in all this turmoil. He is working to make all things new! Maranatha! With God it's all ✠ Good News. His justice and mercy will triumph.

✠ April 30 Feast Day of St. Marie of the Incarnation, first missionary woman of the New World. She was a mystic born in France in 1599 who received revelations concerning the Incarnation, the Sacred Heart and the Blessed Trinity. She joined the Ursuline order and sailed to Quebec with two other Ursulines

in 1639 where they opened a school. It was a difficult life as we can only imagine. But her interior life sustained her. She once said:

*"If we could, with a single interior glance, see all the goodness and mercy that exists in God's designs for each one of us, even in what we call disgraces, pains, and afflictions, our happiness would consist in throwing ourselves into the arms of the divine will with the abandon of a young child that throws himself into the arms of his mother."*

✠ All this is ✠ Good News for penitents. Our Lady has called us to offer all we can for the souls she and Jesus love so dearly. If we are consecrated to Our Lady, then all our spiritual goods belong to her and they are in the best of hands. Our marching orders are to live the Rule and keep repeating our *fiat* in all things.

✠ I leave the last word to Fr. J.P. de Caussade:

*"There is not a moment in which God does not present Himself under the cover of some pain to be endured, of some consolation to be enjoyed, or of some duty to be performed. All that takes place within us, around us, or through us, contains and conceals His divine action."*

— Jean-Pierre de Caussade, [Abandonment to Divine Providence](#)

Come Lord Jesus, and make all things new!

Janet Klasson BSP, Divine Mercy Chapter, Canada



## FROM THE 'SPARROW' "Lite" Easter Tale

Peace to my dearest sparrow friends! Yes, a "lite" story which came about in meditation during Lent and has now finally come to culmination of thought in the Easter season. Now this tale, or flight of fantasy (whichever you chose) came about in the most innocent of ways of introspection to be found in the School of Sparrow Logic (smile).

Meandering backward in time and musing over previous dispatches of "Follow Me" there came a bit of discrepancy in one the articles written by the First Class Sparrow known to me as "Sister Donkey" (aka Janet Klasson, BSP). Now Sister Donkey is a well qualified contributor to the newsletter and we've enjoyed her many spiritual writings for years. But, alas, she allowed a controversy to arise in one of her



recent dispatches. Let me explain because I know you are waiting in almost breathless expectation.

Recently she gave us the delightful submission entitled "JESUS I SURRENDER MYSELF TO YOU" which was a spiritual saying attributable to Don (Fr.) Dolindo Ruotolo. In the article heading it stated, "Padre Pio once said of this priest (Fr. Dolindo) from Naples, Italy, 'The whole of paradise is in your soul.'" This recommendation from the most notable Franciscan stigmatic of modern times is quite exceptional! This gives credence to Fr. Dolindo's words in recommending ourselves to the Lord with the simple prayer, "Jesus, I surrender myself to you, take care of everything."

I shared Fr. Dolindo's prayer with others here at the Federal Medical Center (FMC). The "others" included inmate patients, staff (such as nurses, etc.) and other Catholic volunteers. Without exception the

prayer has met with acceptance by all...the onus comes in that "all" are those in need, or those giving assistance, and placing it squarely upon Jesus' shoulders...where in all actuality it has always belonged in the first place. Very simple and direct prayer where one surrenders and let's Jesus take over. This goes hand in hand with the second 8" x 11" sign above the first one (Fear Not, Be Not Afraid, No Fear) on my hospital room wall..."LET GO-LET GOD."

Now we are at the juncture where Sister Donkey flips the script on the foregoing quote and submitted her own variation of Fr. Dolindo's "surrender prayer" without an explanation for the difference between the original and her new adaptation which reads:

"O my Jesus, I love you, I trust you, I surrender to you, please take care of everything and everyone in my spiritual territory. Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, I love you, save souls."

Great balls of fire! Good grief Charlie Brown! Every good Catholic Franciscan Sparrow who has looked down the arm of a Catholic Sister at school holding a ruler or pointer in her hand knows, or should have known, that one cannot just take liberties with rote or ejaculatory prayers "without good cause shown..." (See Sparrows Handbook at Article 3, subpart b.).

Now, according to the premises in the Handbook, we sparrows must examine in detail the structure of Sister Donkey's informal submission...to be on the safe side...(remember the ruler and pointer...!)

We take her prayer apart piece by piece to see what makes it made of. The first we notice it the prayer's overall description is best summarized as as "Short exclamatory prayer" which contains, "ejaculations, aspirations, and/or pious invocations." This kind of prayer would also be known in Catholic circles as "affective prayer."

The first part of the invocation "O my Jesus..." is also found in the Morning Offering and in the Fatima Prayer at the end of each decade of the

rosary...thus, so far so good! The phrase (Jesus) "I love you" is an all-inclusive phrase found or implied in all Catholic prayers...thus, this too is good. (Jesus) "I trust you" not only is a well-known quote from the Divine Mercy picture but is inferred in Scripture and Catholic prayer as well...this too is acceptable. Finally, we come to Fr. Dolindo's "Jesus, I surrender myself to you. Take care of everything." We have certainly travelled a long way from this original "short" and "direct" petition. Now Sister Donkey adds to and closes in a most flamboyant flare (sparrow smile) by adding "and everyone in my spiritual territory!" This is typical Franciscan overkill of the devil in that she is leaving nothing left to chance in the inclusivity of "all" the possible avenues on which this prayer is to travel on...this too is all well and good. The close of the age-old aspiration "Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, I love you, save souls," is well known and well used through out the Catholic Church.

So, is summary of the validity of Sister Donkey's rendering of her submission when held up to the dictates and promulgations and ordinances found in the Sparrows Handbook under the provisional exception paragraph "without good cause shown" that in fact good cause was shown and thereby and herein our illustrious Sparrow Council finds that Sister Donkey and all Franciscan sparrows would do well and blessed by thereby incorporating either of the "surrender prayers to Jesus" into their lives. Exceptional insight and job well done Sister Donkey!

We started our "lite" Easter Tale on a humorous note (after all it is a sparrow who pokes fun at a donkey...that should make you smile...) and now close with a special quote about the Poverello himself:

But St. Francis gave up all riches save these:

A love of the beautiful,  
a sense of humor,  
and a habit for courtesy and praise!

Happy Easter!!

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



## **I AM NOT ALONE, THE FATHER IS WITH ME...** **By Donna Kaye Rock, Postulant, BSP**

Sometimes in life, we have to do things by ourselves. We get lonely and feel alienated, because a friend or someone we care about cannot do or go to activities with us.

We feel strange going to a restaurant alone, movies, shows, concerts etc. But if we keep the attitude like

Jesus telling His Disciples: "I am not alone, the Father is with me," we will be happier. If we hold on to a positive and friendly attitude in reaching out to our neighbor, and meeting and greeting people when we are alone; we will be imitating Jesus. I have noticed that when I go to a function alone, I always end up

making friends and talking and laughing with everyone...The goal is to reach out as Jesus commanded us to do, and not go inward on ourselves selfishness, self pity, and self consciousness etc.

How can we be alone in the Father's beautiful universe? After all, we are all Brothers and Sisters in The Natural

Order and the Spiritual Order. We have Guardian Angels to help us on our Journey. We, as Catholics, have the Communion of Saints, and devotion to Our Lady, and Angels so that we are not alone. Let us go forward and proclaim to the World, that we are never alone, the Father is with us.

Donna Kaye Rock, Postulant, BSP



### *From the Desert Fathers*

*One of the elders said:  
"Remaining contentedly in the cell  
fills the monk full of good things." "*



Submitted by: Philothea

## **MORNING STAR: NEWS ON THE ASSOCIATION...**

### **WEBSITE**

Pax et bonum dear Brothers and Sisters. The BSP website was initially designed and built by Anna Feroni (Italy) in 2003 using html code. Anna became ill and I took over from her in 2010. Sadly, Anna passed away not long after that. Unfortunately, I have only a basic knowledge of html code and have difficulty making any but the smallest changes to the site. Technology has improved exponentially since 2003 and I would now like to upgrade to a Wordpress format, which I am quite familiar with. As most of our members come to us through the website, I think it is important to keep it as current as we can.

More details are in the April newsletter. Please direct questions to [webmaster@bspenance.org](mailto:webmaster@bspenance.org).

Thank you for considering this. If the needed funds (around \$600) are not raised before the end of May I will take it as God's will not to proceed. Fiat!

Janet Klasson BSP

### **STAY CONNECTED...PLEASE!**

If you wish to connect with your Brothers and Sisters in the BSP, please remember that the **BSP Forums** at <http://bspenance.org/forum/>. Hope to see you there!

### **HANDBOOK OF THE ASSOCIATION...**

The BSP Handbook, titled *Stella Matutina: Handbook of The Brothers and Sisters of Penance of St. Francis* is now available for order. There is a link to the ordering page on our BSP homepage. You will need a credit card or a Paypal account to order. Cost is \$10.00 plus shipping.



*Holy Mary, Mother of God,  
pray for us sinners,  
now and at the hour of our death.*

# 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 [minncc03@gmail.com](mailto:minncc03@gmail.com). Feel free to share this newsletter with your friends or neighbors. It is intended to be the primary monthly communication of the Association, and ongoing formation for all members and friends. And if you can find it in your heart and in your budget remember that donations to the BSP are used strictly to promote the lifestyle and are tax deductible.

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

*Bruce and Shelley Fahey BSP, Administrators*  
[minncc03@gmail.com](mailto:minncc03@gmail.com) ~ [www.bspenance.org](http://www.bspenance.org)



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

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



The BROTHERS AND SISTERS OF  
PENANCE



of St. Francis

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