



...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

### Chapter III. St. Francis' Outstanding Virtues

4. *Fourth lesson:* St. Francis was completely imbued with profound humility, the guardian and the crowning glory of all virtue. By the range of virtues which shone forth in his life, he stood head and shoulders above all others, but humility seems to have reached the highest degree of all in him, and he was the least of all. In his own opinion, he was the greatest of sinners, and he believed that he was nothing more than a frail and worthless creature; yet, in reality, he was an example of holiness, chosen by God and shining by his manifold gifts of grace and virtue, and consecrated by the sanctity of his life. He did everything he possibly could to appear worthless in his own eyes and before others; he would confess his secret faults publicly and hide God's gifts in the depths of his heart; he refused to expose himself to human praise, for fear it might be an occasion of falling. In his eagerness to practice humility perfectly, not only was he submissive to his superiors—he even obeyed his inferiors as well; he used to bind himself to obey his companion in his travels, no matter how ordinary a friar he was. St. Francis had no desire to wield authority like a superior; in his humility he preferred to obey those who were subject to him, as their minister and servant.

5. *Fifth lesson:* Sublime poverty is the companion of

humility and so, as a perfect follower of Christ, St. Francis espoused it in undying love. For poverty's sake he left his father and mother and abandoned everything he had. No one was so greedy for gold as he was for poverty; no one ever guarded a treasure more carefully than he guarded this Gospel pearl. From the first moment of his religious life until his death, his sole wealth consisted in a habit, a cord, and a pair of trousers. Destitution seemed to be the only thing in which he took any pride, penury his only source of joy.

If he saw anyone who seemed to be more poorly dressed than he, he immediately fell to reproaching himself and roused himself to imitate him. He was jealous of his poverty and it seemed as if his noble spirit was afraid of being surpassed in his efforts to practice it. He had chosen poverty as the

pledge of his eternal inheritance and preferred it to every temporal thing; he thought nothing of the deceitful riches of this world which are only loaned to us for a brief interval, and he loved poverty above any form of wealth. He was anxious to outdo everyone in the practice of poverty; and it was poverty that had taught him to regard himself as the last of all.

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*Bonaventure—Minor Life of St. Francis (1263)*



*Attributed to Andrea Sacchi, 17<sup>th</sup> century*





## VISITOR'S MESSAGE Homily by Fr. Robert Altier

### Sunday Sermon for May 29, 2022, the Solemnity of the Ascension

**Readings: Acts 1:1-11; Heb 9:24-28; 10:19-23; Lk 24:46-53**

In the Gospel reading today we are told that Jesus led His Apostles out as far as Bethany where He blessed them and, as He was blessing them, He was taken up to Heaven. St. Luke augments this description of the Ascension in the first reading from the Acts of the Apostles. There he tells us that the Ascension took place after forty days and that a cloud took Jesus from their sight. Two angels then appeared and instructed the Apostles that Jesus would return in the same way they saw Him going into Heaven.

The first thing we need to address is the location of the town of Bethany. This town, you will recall, is the town where Martha, Mary, and Lazarus lived. The town is on the Mount of Olives, about two miles east of Jerusalem. It has been long understood that the return of our Lord would not only be similar to the manner of His Ascension, but it would also occur in this same spot. Therefore, Bethany, and the Mount of Olives in general, is a place of great importance for us, not only in the past but also in the future.

The glory of our Lord being taken into Heaven might not seem very startling since we know He is God. As such, He came down from Heaven and so it makes perfect sense that He would return to Heaven when His mission of mercy to humanity was fulfilled. However, there are two points that, while they may not be startling, are of profound importance to us. The first is that our Lord's Ascension completes His work as our Redeemer. The Resurrection is the greatest event in human history, but if our Lord rose from the dead but did not ascend into Heaven, we could rise from the dead, but we could not enter into Heaven.

The second point may seem obvious, but it is absolutely critical: Jesus took our humanity with Him into Heaven. Prior to the Ascension, only the Trinity and the good angels were in Heaven. Fallen humanity was not only evicted from the Garden of Eden, but we were also barred from entrance into Heaven. Taking our humanity with Him into Heaven opened the way for us to enter into eternal life.

In the Creed we profess that Jesus ascended into

Heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. St. Paul makes this same point in the alternative second reading from Ephesians where he also prays that we will know the riches of the glory of the Father's inheritance and the greatness of His power for us, the same power He showed in raising Jesus from the dead and seating Him at His right hand in Heaven. From this description one might think that our Lord has been given a well-earned rest and reward for what He did to save us!

However, St. Paul, in his letter to the Hebrews provides insight into what our Lord continues to do for us in Heaven. He tells us Jesus entered into the Sanctuary not made by human hands, that is, not a copy of the true Sanctuary, but into the true Holy of Holies, Heaven itself. More than that, St. Paul tells that in entering Heaven, our Lord appeared before God on our behalf. What He offers is not the blood of bulls and goats, as was offered in the Jewish Temple, but His own Blood.

The blood of the animals was offered daily to cover human sin. Since the animal no longer exists after it is sacrificed, the blood of the animal can only be offered once and, after that, its efficacy ceases. Jesus, on the other hand, because of His resurrection, continues to live. His human Blood that was shed for us continues to have the same ability, not to cover over sin, but to remove it completely. Therefore, while He was sacrificed only once in time, that is, on earth, His sacrifice has infinite and eternal efficacy because He is infinite and eternal as God, and also because He rose from the dead and entered into Heaven in His human nature. This means His humanity now has infinite and eternal life and, therefore, His human Blood has infinite and eternal power to save.

This is why His one sacrifice continues to be offered at Mass. Jesus is not just seated at God's right hand, but He is continually interceding before God on our behalf and offering the Blood He shed for us. This, as St. Paul tells us in the second reading gives us confidence of entering into the Sanctuary of Heaven, the place we could not enter until Jesus opened the way for us through the glory of His Ascension. Alleluia!

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## An Update from Head Chapter by Brother Justin Panlasigui



Pax et Bonum brothers and sisters,

In the last head chapter update, I mentioned several projects the interim administrators began working to accomplish. I am happy to say that great progress has been made overall. Here is the current state of things:

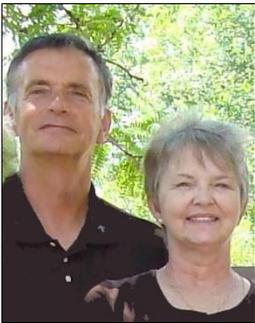
- **New Website:** A new website has been created and is currently hosted at [www.stanthonybsp.com](http://www.stanthonybsp.com). This will not be the final URL for the BSP website, this is just the location we used to create and edit the new site. Once all of the stress-testing is complete on the new site, we will migrate it to what will be the official URL for the BSP moving into the future: [www.stfrancisbsp.com](http://www.stfrancisbsp.com)
  - **Why are we changing the URL?** It came to our attention soon after becoming head chapter that [bspenance.org](http://bspenance.org) is owned by our Association, but [bspenance.com](http://bspenance.com) is owned by the Confraternity of Penitents. A dot-com address is much more commonly assumed by the public than a dot-org address. What this means is, over the years, people who heard about us by word of mouth and were told, “visit [bspenance.org](http://bspenance.org) for more information” likely typed [bspenance.com](http://bspenance.com) into their browsers and thus visited the wrong website! To ensure that inquirers wind up in the right place, we needed to use a new, distinct web address.
  - **Online inquirer form:** Potential members can now fill out an online inquiry form that our team at HQ can audit. Without advertising the form, we have already gotten three legitimate inquiries in the past month.
  - **Online learning portal:** We have updated all of our BSP lessons from Postulancy to Novice III and have uploaded them to a new membership formation portal. Once we launch the site officially at the new URL, formation members will be encouraged to complete their lessons online unless they absolutely cannot. The portal is mobile-friendly, allowing for great flexibility in lesson completion. In order to access the formation portal, one must be registered as either a teacher or a student, which is a process we still need to test. The portal link is under the formation dropdown on the new website’s main menu.
  - **Social media presence:** The St. Anthony Chapter has also started an Instagram account. The link is available on the website. The purpose of the account is to promote our Franciscan culture and attract inquirers to join our ranks.
  - **Podcast:** Brother Chris O’Donnell (St. Anthony Chapter Minister) and I started a podcast which we link to on the main website but is not an official sub-ministry of the Association. In it, we discuss things like Catholic teachings on spiritual warfare and the preternatural. We encourage you to follow our podcast on either YouTube or Rumble so you can access some entertaining and informative Catholic discussion.
- **Audit of the Association:** After reaching out to the latest chapter contacts in our archive, we have determined that the active chapters of the Association are St. Anthony of Padua (San Diego, California), Morning Star (Minneapolis, Minnesota), Divine Mercy (Edmonton, Alberta, Canada), and the Little Flower Prison Chapter. No other chapters in the archives responded to our many inquiries.
- **Canonical Status:** Concerning Archbishop Hebda, as of right now we are operating under the common premise of *qui tacet consentire videtur* (“he who remains silent seems to consent”) regarding the retention of the Association in the Diocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis. However, we have a plan in place to seek retention through an ordinary who is closer to head chapter. I don’t need to go into the details right now, but it is our hope to reestablish our private association through a local ordinary before yearend.

- **Audit of the Rules and Constitutions:** This is the piece we need to complete before approaching any potential alternate ordinaries, and is the one major action item not yet accomplished. However, the Rules, Statutes, and Constitution of the BSP is very strong as is and were already approved by competent ecclesial authority during our founding. We don't foresee any significant changes to the governing documents of the BSP.

All of the leadership at head chapter is very grateful for the ongoing support and prayers of our brothers and sisters around the world. May the Lord bless you during this season of Ordinary Time and may the prayers of our Seraphic Father Francis be with us all as we continue to stand against the tide of secular culture and embrace daily penance with holy joy.

Peace and All Good!

Brother Justin Panlasigui  
Vice Minister, St. Anthony of Padua Chapter  
Brothers and Sisters of Penance of St. Francis



## ADMINISTRATORS (EMERITUS) Patience!



We all need patience. We don't think about it much unless we encounter, as we often do, impatient people. The call to be patient is first and foremost a personal one. We need to be patient ourselves before we expect it of others.

Patience is a necessity with children. Babies take time to develop, and we need patience to bring them through those years. Patience especially when they are just newborn. Children take patience too. Every step of their lives is marked with new adventure. There are no books to follow. Every life is different. As adults we know this if we think about it. If we think about it, we can be patient in how we approach every adventure of a new star, that is, a new child of God coming of age. If we don't think about it but just react, we might find we are impatient with it all. And guess what? It isn't going to change just because we get impatient. Very few things do. We need patience to guide children into their lives.

And we need patience to work with each other. We are all different. We all have a different mission in life. To the extent that our missions don't overlap it probably won't be a problem with respect to being patient. Who cares if it takes time for the paint to dry if you are not a painter? If you are one you know how long it takes and impatience doesn't make paint dry any faster, does it? When our lives overlap, that is where we get impatient. As soon as we have done what we are asking to be done we have knowledge based on our experience and if things don't progress as we think they should we get impatient. That might well be founded in pride. Thinking we are better than

others for instance.

It is interesting, but theologians say that angels don't get impatient. Being purely spiritual and perfectly united to the will of God they accept things as God gives them. That includes what God gives us, which they understand better than we do. We have bodies and the needs of our bodies and lives to cope with, and are not purely spiritual, so we have expectations and needs to deal with. To the extent these are not met we get impatient. We demonstrate our impatience in various ways. Impatience often reflects itself in unkindness to others, and torture to ourselves, as quite often we cannot change a thing we are concerned about, by just being impatient.

We need to find patience like the angels have. In the will of God. In knowing that all things are known to God, who is an expert in every subject, and all times and seasons as well. Surrender is a key tool to patience. If we are frustrated with how things are proceeding where we have done our part as best we can we need to surrender the outcomes to God. Then we give Him also the pain we feel as a penance, and for penitents—bingo! We have more penance to add to our lives.

The one area we can be impatient about is our sanctity. **"Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for holiness, for they shall be satisfied."** (Mt 5:6) So here we have the Lord calling us to impatience—about holy things! But these things do not happen overnight. So, it is a call to work at becoming holy which is for us a call to living the Gospel more perfectly. Like the Saints did. No one became a Saint overnight and no one became a Saint without the power of Jesus Christ moving in their

lives. So it must be with us. We must wait, patiently, on the Lord, but keep on striving to do the right and holy thing in every situation.

The Rule will help us as it is a holy way of life given to us by a Saint, who got everything he gave others from the Lord. We need patience to live this life. Patience with ourselves in learning to live it and patience with ourselves in living it after we have learned it. This same patience we can apply to living the Gospel in our lives. It won't happen overnight

but it will happen for sure for all who keep on trying, as the Lord will make certain that happens, but perhaps not in our timing. In His. Ultimately, we will become the Rule if we keep striving to live it. Then it gets easy.

So let's make patience an objective in all things, especially in living our Rule, in dealing with others and in growing our own spirituality, with the grace of God.

Come, Lord Jesus, Come!

*Bruce and Shelley Fahey BSP Administrators Emeritus, Morning Star Chapter, Minnesota  
First printed in the May 2015 BSP Newsletter*



## Words...Time...Food...

by Janet Klasson, BSP

**"Be careful then how you live, not as unwise people but as wise, making the most of the time, because the days are evil. So do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. Do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery; but be filled with the Spirit, as you sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs among yourselves, singing and making melody to the Lord in**

**your hearts, giving thanks to God the Father at all times and for everything in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.** (Ephesians 5:15-20)

What do words, time, and food have in common? Sadly, we are prone to waste them all.

Pondering the uncommon value of these three common things may spur us to give proper thanks to God for them and pray for the grace to use them in a way that benefits all and properly glorifies the Giver.

### Words

I remember reading once that whenever St. Francis of Assisi saw a paper on the ground with words written on it, he would pick it up and preserve it because the letters on it could be re-arranged to spell God's name. Oh my! Words today have become a cheap commodity. The term, "paperless society" has become a mockery, and the electronic word has increasingly become a travesty. STOP THE PRESSES!

I heard someone say recently that years ago the Lord told him that **He elevates all words, that He fulfills all words because He is the fulfillment...The world uses words shallowly, but wisdom is higher than education.**

Reading that gave me pause to examine how I use the written and spoken word, to give more thought to the quality and quantity of the words themselves, to let every word bear its own weight and depth, and to pray for wisdom. After all, our Savior, Jesus, is

THE WORD, and He must be in all the words we think, speak, or write, for His glory. In other words, we must *hold every thought captive to Christ!* For us this is impossible but nothing is impossible for God—Lord, think in my thinking, speak in my speaking, write in my writing...

Sometimes we want to be the ones to "elevate" our own words, thinking if we just say something often enough, or loudly enough, they will have the effect we desire on the poor souls we want to change. There are many words I regret speaking, and many more I regret in the way that I spoke them. But, as Catholic author, Lin Wilder, states eloquently in her blog post: [People Don't Change Their Minds](https://linwilder.com/people-dont-change-their-minds/), the only thing that can change hearts and souls is Divine Love. (<https://linwilder.com/people-dont-change-their-minds/>)

Contrast that to the vitriol that spews onto our devices every day. In the Divine Will let us offer Our Lord in reparation his own Words, those of Our Mama, every reading or proclaiming of the words of Scripture and holy writings, every kind and loving word ever spoken, etc. It is our calling and our duty as penitents to offer reparation.

These days there is a lot of commentary about Pope Francis. I try to stay away from it. Whether we like him personally or not, he is God's anointed. When I



hear of someone criticizing him, I often think of David and Saul:

**But David said to Abishai, 'Do not kill Saul. He is the man that the Lord has chosen to be Israel's king. Anyone who attacks him will be guilty of a sin. I know that the Lord himself will kill Saul one day. Saul may die when he has reached the age to die. Or someone may kill him in a battle. He will certainly come to his end. But I ask the Lord to stop me from hurting him, because he is the Lord's chosen king. (1 Samuel 26:9-11)**

God has chosen Pope Francis for a reason. He too is "God's anointed" and according to this Scripture passage "anyone who attacks him (even verbally) is guilty of a sin." I think it is dangerous even to read the commentary. It changes nothing and might cause us to think sinful thoughts, to pick sides. Our time is better spent praying for him, for the Church and for the coming of the kingdom.

These are dangerous times. We must constantly examine our use of words, using them sparingly and prayerfully, in the aroma of Divine Love. Fiat!

For an excellent teaching on sins of speech by St. Padre Pio see [Article 9](#) of his series of articles on [Spiritual Formation](#), available on EWTN. In this series he is counselling someone who suffers from scrupulosity, but we can all learn from what is taught.

## Time

We are **out of time**, friends, which is 1) good news and 2) the very best news. First the good news: this era of death is **out of time**, having written the script of its own demise. It's going down. The Lord never lets sin reign forever.

The very best news is that those of us learning to live in the Divine Will through the writings of Luisa Piccarreta, are also out of time, meaning **outside of time**. *Where sin abounds, grace abounds all the more*. We have been given a stunning assignment, by grace, to live **outside of time**, in the Eternal Now, doing our Acts and Rounds **in time** for the salvation of the greatest number of souls, past, present, and future, all for the love and glory of God, and the salvation of souls.

I find the Gift of Living in the Divine Will and the life of penance were made for each other. The Rule prepares my soul to receive the Gift, which in turn empowers me to participate more truly in the sufferings of Christ for the sake of the world and for the coming of the New Era.

So let's keep that in mind and try to make every

moment count. We all need leisure but we don't need to spend copious amounts of time poring over news and opinions that only serve to disturb our peace. *This world (as we know it) is passing away*. We have nothing to fear—God is completely in control, and he only creates, he never patches. He only knows how to *make all things new!* Come Divine Will, come to reign upon the earth!

## Food

For most of my life food was the guest of honor at every emotional banquet I hosted. It was my idol—thoughts of breakfast are what got me out of bed in the morning. It has taken years of prayer, penance, and the sacraments to smash that idol. The Lord has been very patient and resourceful!

Once, in prayer as an adult, I asked for the gift of temperance. Immediately I heard these words in my heart, "I gave you that gift at your Confirmation." Then he added wryly, "You haven't opened it yet." *Mea maxima culpa!*

The Lord chides with an embrace—he did not leave me orphaned. For my part I was hoping to become miraculously temperate in eating, but no, he called me to a life of penance, which gave me a rule of life, including structured prayer and regular fasting and abstinence.

Seriously, I would have voted myself "least likely to succeed", but I gave the Lord my *fiat* and entered formation in the BSP in 2002. It was a bumpy road but by God's grace, I persisted and professed to live the Rule for life in 2007.

God is SO patient! And inventive! A few years later, to further exterminate the last vestiges of my attachment to food, he brought out the big guns—food intolerances and digestive issues. All my favorite foods went out the window. To paraphrase scripture: *If peanut butter causes you to sin...throw it out!* What really surprised me was how, by grace, I reached a point where the more he took away, the less I minded, and the freer I felt. God be praised!

When I think of how much reparation we owe to Our Lord for the ways we in western society idolize food, and the ways we have wasted it while most of the world has gone hungry, I can see why Our Lord has called this little rabble to a life of penance.

That is especially true in the Divine Will. We can even give him "his own things" as Luisa Piccarreta has said, for "the poor must receive from the rich". Our small offerings can be elevated to the infinite by fusing it with Our Lord's own fasting in the desert, with Our Mama's fasting, with Luisa's decades-long and continuous fasting on the Eucharist alone.

So in the Divine Will, we give Jesus our paltry loaves and fishes and by his unfathomable grace he saves an infinitude of souls. Through our penances done in the Divine Will, the common gifts of words, time, and

food are elevated beyond imagining to reach their intended uncommon value, for the Glory of God, the salvation of souls, and for our own good too. Fiat!

*Janet Klasson BSP, Divine Mercy Chapter, Canada*

## **NEWS ON THE ASSOCIATION...**

**NEW BSP COMMUNICATION CENTRE EMAIL ADDRESS: [stanthonybsp@gmail.com](mailto:stanthonybsp@gmail.com)**

## **THE WRITINGS OF ST. FRANCIS IN A FREE DOWNLOAD**

All are welcome to download a pdf of the writings of St. Francis made available at the Online Library of Liberty.

[https://oll-resources.s3.us-east-2.amazonaws.com/oll3/store/titles/1172/StFrancis\\_0535\\_EBk\\_v6.0.pdf](https://oll-resources.s3.us-east-2.amazonaws.com/oll3/store/titles/1172/StFrancis_0535_EBk_v6.0.pdf)

## **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.

**THE NEXT BSP NEWSLETTER WILL BE PUBLISHED IN SEPTEMBER 2022.**



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of St. Francis