



A Simple Prayer

Lord, make me an instrument of your
peace

Where there is hatred.. let me sow love

Where there is injury... pardon.

Where there is doubt... faith.

Where there is despair... hope.

Where there is darkness, light.

Where there is sadness... joy.

○ Divine Master, grant that I may
not so much seek

To be consoled..... as to console,

To be understood... as to understand,

To be loved..... as to love,

for

It is in giving..... that we receive,

It is in pardoning, that we are
pardoned,

It is in dying..... that we are born to
eternal life.

St. Francis.

Already in Our Hearts



A Simple Prayer

<i>Lord make Me an instrument of Your peace</i>	<i>1</i>
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<i>Where there is doubt, faith.</i>	<i>9</i>
<i>Where there is despair, hope.</i>	<i>11</i>
<i>Where there is darkness, light.</i>	<i>14</i>
<i>Where there is sadness, joy.</i>	<i>18</i>

O Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek

<i>To be consoled, as to console</i>	<i>20</i>
<i>To be understood, as to understand.</i>	<i>22</i>
<i>To be loved, as to love</i>	<i>25</i>

For

<i>It is in giving, that we receive</i>	<i>27</i>
<i>It is in pardoning, that we are pardoned</i>	<i>32</i>
<i>It is in dying, that we are born to eternal life.</i>	<i>35</i>



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From the "Crucifixion of Christ" by Pierre-Thomas de la Tour.

LORD, MAKE ME AN INSTRUMENT OF YOUR PEACE

Tattoos on the Heart: The Power of Boundless Compassion

Gregory Boyle SJ



My director of novices, Leo Rock, used to say, “God created us – because God thought we’d enjoy it.” We try to find a way, then, to hold our fingertips gently to the pulse of God. We watch as our hearts begin to beat as one with the One *who delights in our being*. Then what do we do?

We exhale that same spirit of *delight* into the world. This way will not pass again, and so there is a duty to be mindful of that which *delights* and keeps joy at the center, distilled from all that happens to us in a day. Jesus says, “My ways are not your ways, but they sure could be.”

In the utter simplicity of breathing, we find how naturally inclined we are to *delight* and to stay dedicated to gladness. We bask in God’s unalloyed joy, and we let loose with that same joy in whoever is in front of us.



We forget what a vital part of our nature this is... We breathe in the spirit that *delights in our being* – the fragrance of it. And it works on us.

Then we exhale (for that breath has to go somewhere) – to breathe into the world this same spirit of *delight*, confident that this is *God’s only agenda*. God says, “Be glad forever and rejoice in what I create ... for I create my people *to be a delight*.” God thinking we’d enjoy ourselves. Delighting is what occupies God, and God’s hope is that

we join in. That God's joy may be in us and this joy may be complete. We just happen to be God's joy. That takes some getting used to.

published by Free Press of Simon and Schuster, NY 2010

ART: P. Subercaseaux Errazuriz, Benedictine monk of Solesmes. 1925. *Edizioni Dacca, Assisi*



REFLECTION: What expression of God's own delight in you gives you a special PEACE?

CLOSING PRAYER

Loving, good and gracious God. Thank you for all the ways, even when we miss them, that you *delight* in us. Thank you *for every ordinary day* with the new opportunities to "just happen to be your joy." May your joy ever be in us, and this joy complete. Help us trust in difficult times. With the love that is your Spirit, may we be an instrument of your delight and peace. Amen.

A Consideration



Letting Go and Letting God

To let go is not to fix, but to be supportive.

To let go is not to judge, but to allow another to be human.

To let go is not to deny, but to accept.

To let go is not to adjust everything to my desires, but to take each day as it comes and appreciate myself in it.

To let go is not to regret the past, but to grow and live for the future.

To let go is to fear less and **to love more**.

Source: *The Enduring Heart* by Wilkie Au S.J. – Paulist Press, NJ

**Make Me an
Instrument of
Your Peace . . .
where there is
hatred, let me
sow LOVE**



The STORY of the Wolf of GUBBIO

from The Fioretti – The Deeds of Blessed Francis and His Companions #23

This story is meant to be read aloud. See color code – last page.

A remarkable, noble event, worthy of remembrance, happened in the city of Gubbio while our most holy Father Saint Francis was still living. There was a wolf in the vicinity of the city of Gubbio, terrifying in physical size and ferocious with rabid hunger.^a

This wolf not only destroyed other animals but even devoured men and women, keeping all the citizens in such danger and terror that when they went outside the town, they went armed and guarded as if they had to advance toward deadly battles. Yet, even armed,

they were not able to escape the deadly teeth or the **savage fury** of that wolf when they **accidentally** met. As a result, everyone was filled with such terror that hardly anyone dared to go outside the city gate.

But God wished to make known to the citizens the holiness of blessed Francis. When Saint Francis was staying there, having compassion for them, Saint Francis **decided to go out to meet that wolf**. Without the protection of a shield or helmet, but protecting himself with the sign of the holy Cross, he went out the gate **with a companion**, casting all his confidence on the Lord.

And while many were looking on from places where they had climbed in order to see, suddenly that **terrifying wolf, jaws wide open**, rushed at Saint Francis. Saint Francis confronted the wolf with the sign of the Cross, and **stopped it in its tracks**.

Finally he called the wolf to himself: "Come here, **Brother** Wolf. On behalf of Christ I order you not to harm me or anyone else." Surprising to say, at the sign of the Cross, the wolf closed those terrifying jaws! And as soon as that command was given, the wolf **immediately bowed its head, lying down at the saint's feet**, already like a lamb, not a wolf.

And as the wolf lay there, Saint Francis said: "**Brother** Wolf, you've done great damage in this area, and you've committed horrible crimes, mercilessly

destroying God's creatures. You've destroyed not only irrational animals, but have dared something more detestable, killing and devouring humans made to the image of God. Therefore, you deserve to be sentenced to a horrible death like a robber or vile murderer. Everyone is crying out the complaint against you, and this whole city is your enemy. But, **Brother** Wolf, **I want to make peace between you and them**, so that they no longer will be harmed by you, and they will dismiss all your past offenses, and both men and dogs will no longer pursue you."

The wolf gestured with its body, tail and ears, and **bowed its head, showing that it fully accepted what the saint said**.

Saint Francis then spoke again: "**Brother** Wolf, since you want to make this pact, **I promise you that as long as you live I will have your needs constantly provided for by the people of this city, so that you will never again suffer hunger, because I know that, whatever evil you do, you do because of the frenzy of hunger. But, my Brother** Wolf, for me to obtain this favor for you, **I want you to promise me that you will never harm any animal or person or dare to harm anything. Will you promise me that?**"

The wolf gave a clear sign by bowing its head that it promised to do what the saint demanded. Saint Francis then said: "**Brother** Wolf, I want you to give me a pledge so that I may confidently believe what you promise."



When Saint Francis extended his hand to receive this pledge, the wolf raised its right paw, and gently placed it on the hand of Saint Francis, giving its pledge with the only sign it could.

Then Saint Francis said: **"Brother Wolf, I command you in the name of Jesus Christ, come with me now, don't hesitate, so we can make this pact in the name of the Lord."**

The wolf obeyed and, like the meekest lamb, immediately went with Saint Francis. The people of the city who saw this were **completely astonished**; and the news immediately converged together on the town square, where Saint Francis was standing with the wolf.

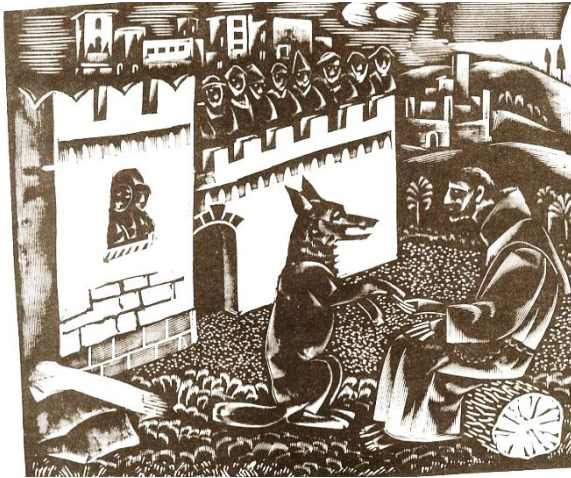
With this multitude of people gathered, Saint Francis got up and preached a marvelous sermon to them, saying, **"My very dear friends, return to the Lord and do worthy penance, and the Lord will free you now from the wolf, and in the future from the pit of consuming fire."**

Then he said to them: **"My dear friends, listen! Brother Wolf, who stands here before you, promised me to make peace with you, and he made a pledge of this promise: he promised never to hurt you in any way, if you promise to give him what he needs every day. And for this I give my word that he will faithfully observe this pact."**

Then everyone gathered with a great shout promised to feed the wolf consistently. In front of them all Saint Francis said to the wolf: **"And you, Brother Wolf, do you promise to keep this pact, namely, that you will not harm any animal or person?"**

The wolf, kneeling with head bowed, clearly showed to all by the gestures of its body, the wagging of its tail and ears that it would fulfill the pact as promised.

Saint Francis said: **"Brother Wolf, I want you to give me your pledge on this, just as you gave me your pledge when I was outside the gate. So here before all these people give me a pledge that you will observe these things, and will not abandon me when I have given my word for you."**



Then the wolf lifted its right paw and, in front of everyone standing there, gave its pledge on the hand of Saint Francis, who had given his word.

And everyone's great amazement **turned into rejoicing**, as much out of devotion for the saint as for the novelty of the miracle and, even more, for the peace between people and the wolf. They all shouted to the heavens, praising and blessing the Lord Jesus Christ.

From that day they kept the pact arranged by **Saint Francis**: the people with the wolf and the wolf with the people.

The wolf lived for two years and was courteously fed, going from door to door, harming no one and not being harmed by anyone. Finally, **Brother Wolf** grew old and died. **The citizens grieved greatly at his absence, because the peaceful and kindly patience of the wolf roaming through the city recalled to their memory the remarkable sanctity and virtue of Saint Francis.**

Thanks be to God.
Amen.

COLOR CODE: **yellow** – scary
Blue – actions of townspeople
Red – actions of wolf
Purple – St. Francis actions and words
Green – St. Francis respects wolf with a
TITLE!

REFLECTION

Naming how PEACE is lost and restored (injury . . . love)

1. Needs neither recognized nor met
2. Greed that blinded –
3. Exaggerated fear
4. Recognition of holiness in another
5. Seeking help
6. Trust
7. Giving dignity – BROTHER Wolf
8. Dialogue with the people
9. Acknowledgment of MUTUAL harm
10. Pledge in God's Name to repent
11. Gesture to seal the pledge – an action!
12. Faithfulness
13. Gratitude and praise.
14. Love exchanged . . . evidence in the sorrow when the wolf died

QUESTION: What is this story REALLY saying?
What might you need to hear?

Art: Lee Kowling, Singapore
www.franciscans.sg

Woodcut: Artestampa di Gastone Vignati, 06081 Assisi (PG) – Via S. Francesco, 10c.

LORD, MAKE ME AN INSTRUMENT OF YOUR PEACE ...

WHERE THERE IS INJURY,

PARDON



*“As we forgive those who trespass against us,”
and what we do not fully forgive, O Lord, make us
fully forgive, so that for Your sake, we may truly
love our enemies and devoutly intercede for them
with you, thereby rendering no evil for evil, but
striving in you to do good to all...*

– St. Francis’ Paraphrase of the Our Father

Reflection from Murray Bodo OFM,
***Surrounded by LOVE: Seven Teachings
from Saint Francis.***

PEACE is achieved more effectively by trying to bring out the best, not pointing out the worst in others. *And we bring out the best in others by being ourselves peaceful.* Our own peaceful presence will do more than trying to persuade others that we are right and they are wrong. *Peacefulness is its own persuasion.*

The Franciscan response to sin and division is to forgive myself and my neighbor, becoming peaceful in my own center, and then to reach out to others and “work mercy” with them, even with those whom I find difficult to love. We work together toward the good, or we perish as individuals, as societies and as civilizations.

Saint Francis began a new evangelization in his own time, not by trying to be a social reformer. He simply loved Christ and lived the Gospel, and he and his brothers became thereby catalysts for social change. Like Francis and his brothers, we all *can* learn to love again, even in the midst of division and war. And the map Francis gave us for learning to love is the Gospel and his own life of following in the footsteps of Christ. THIS MAP has been summed up beautifully in his **Peace Prayer**. It is a prayer that outlines everything that made Francis the peacemaker that he was, and the model for peace that he is today.

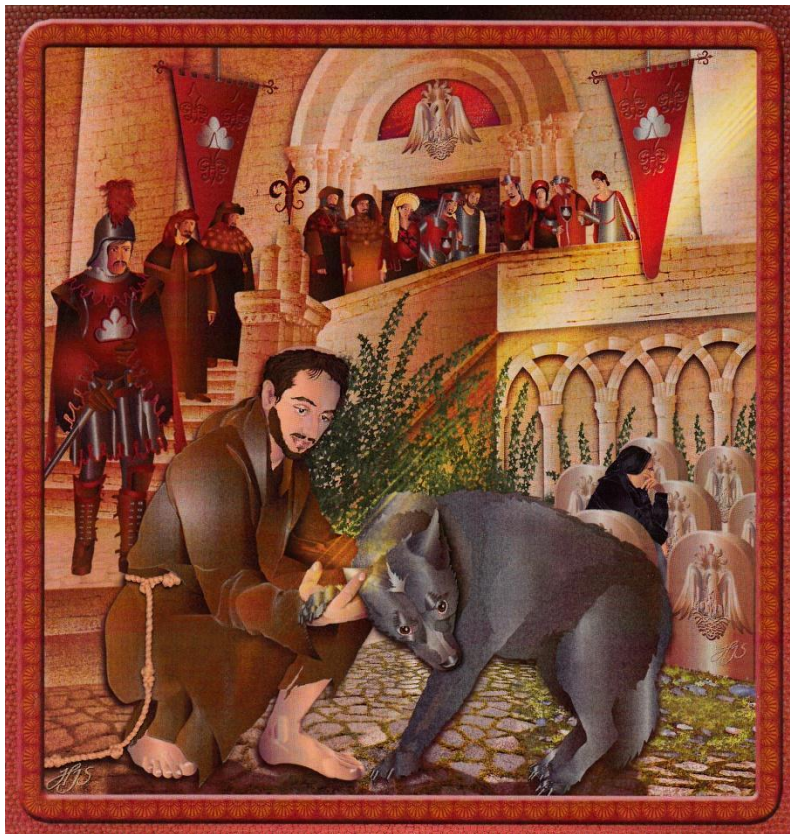
Building upon this prayer, on January 24, 2018, **Pope Francis** issued a new prayer for World Communications Day, May 13, 2018:

Lord, make us **instruments of your peace**,

Help us remove venom from our judgments,

Help us speak about others as our brothers and sisters,

You are faithful and trustworthy; may our words be seeds of goodness for the world:

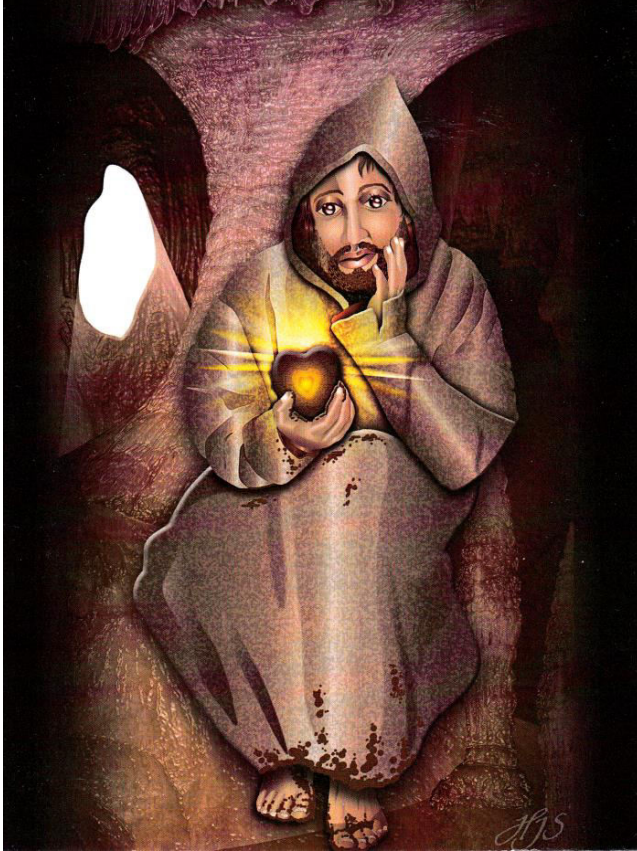


- Where there is shouting, let us practice listening;
- Where there is confusion, let us inspire harmony;
- Where there is ambiguity, let us bring clarity;
- Where there is exclusion, let us offer solidarity;
- Where there is sensationalism, let us offer sobriety;
- Where there is superficiality, let us offer real questions;
- Where there is prejudice, let us awaken trust;
- Where there is hostility, let us bring respect;
- Where there is falsehood, let us bring truth. AMEN.

Source: Franciscan Media, Cincinnati, OH pp 27, 34-37. www.FranciscanMedia.org

Art of Francis and San Damiano Crucifix: Norberto Proietti, Assisi.

Art of Francis and Wolf: Howard Schroeder. www.PAINTEDPSALMS.com



*Lord, make me
an instrument of Your
PEACE
Where there is **DOUBT**
let me sow **FAITH***

Leader: Loving and all gracious God,
we thank you for your blessings:

1. For the faith that stirs and deepens in our hearts . . .
2. For all the persons who have been instruments of goodness in our lives . . .
3. For the moments when we have known the simple holiness of your presence in a special way . . .
4. For the times when Your goodness has been reflected through us . . .

Response: **You are our blessing and all your deeds are wonderful!**

5. When we doubt Your presence in the difficult aspects of our days . . .
6. When the busyness and schedules of our lives press upon us and create questions about Your goodness within us . . .
7. When emptiness, loneliness, and other struggles keep us from hearing Your words of blessing in ordinary ways . . .
8. When too many words, too many plans, too many lists blur the vision of a loving heart in life together . . .

Response: **God of goodness, help us to trust in you ...**

9. As we grow in believing in Your goodness . . .
10. As we welcome delight, wonder and gratitude deeply into our hearts . . .
11. As we humbly awaken to all that Your love has allowed to work through us . . .
12. As we strive to accept as mystery; yet, ever in Your Providence, all that goes unnamed and questioning, grateful for life in each new day . . .

Response: **Help us sow FAITH. You are all our riches, and You alone suffice for us.**

REFLECTIONS FROM BISHOP ROBERT MORNEAU

Faith

Some say FAITH comes and goes,
has a certain instability in the human heart,
sometimes “slips and laughs and rallies.”
But not so “caring,”
a love and concern for others,
meeting the needs of the poor and suffering.
Here is a constant,
once possessed,
that centers and anchors our lives.
No mood or season,
no weather front or fad,
can tarnish a caring heart.
Yes, pray for FAITH.
Even more, care and share
and God will be found.

RESPONSE

1. FAITH comes through the door of tender love and gracious hospitality, quietly slipping into the human heart and doing its work of transformation.

And so we pray: *Most High, glorious God, enlighten the darkness of my heart.*

2. What holds a life together (integrity) is a deep, abiding FAITH and trust in God who is truth.

And so we pray: *and give me true FAITH, certain hope,*

3. We long for intimacy with God and it is FAITH and trust that brings us to that door.

And so we pray: *and perfect charity, sense and knowledge, Lord,*

4. Two words that circle the heart of FAITH are trust and conviction. In the end, charity remains. But, until then, it is FAITH that unites us to God who is Love.

And so we pray: *that I may carry your holy and true command.*

Source: *A New Heart: Eleven Qualities of Holiness.* Robert Morneau. Orbis Books, Maryknoll, NY. (2008) pp.43, 45, 46, 49

ART: Howard Schroeder. www.PAINTEDPSALMS.com

LORD MAKE ME AN INSTRUMENT OF YOUR PEACE

WHERE THERE IS DESPAIR, LET ME SOW HOPE



An Hasidic Tale

As told by Elie Wiesel

When the great Rabbi Israel Baal Shem-Tov saw misfortune threatening his people it was his custom to go into a **certain part of the forest** to meditate. There he would light a **fire**, say a **special prayer**, and the miracle would be accomplished and misfortune averted.

Later, when his disciple, the celebrated Magid of Mezritch, had occasion, for the same reason, to intercede with heaven, he would go to the same place in the forest and say: "Master of the Universe, listen! I do not know how to light the fire **but I am still able to say the prayers.**" And again the miracle would be accomplished.

Still later, Rabbi Moshe-Leib of Sasov, in order to save his people once more, would go into the forest and say: "I do not know how to light the fire, I do not know the prayer **but I know the place** and this must be sufficient." It was sufficient and the miracle was accomplished.

Then it fell to Rabbi Israel of Rizhyn to overcome misfortune. Sitting in his armchair, his head in his hands, he spoke to God: "I am unable to light the fire and I do not know the prayer: I cannot even find the place in the forest.

***All I can do is to tell the story,
and that must be sufficient.”***

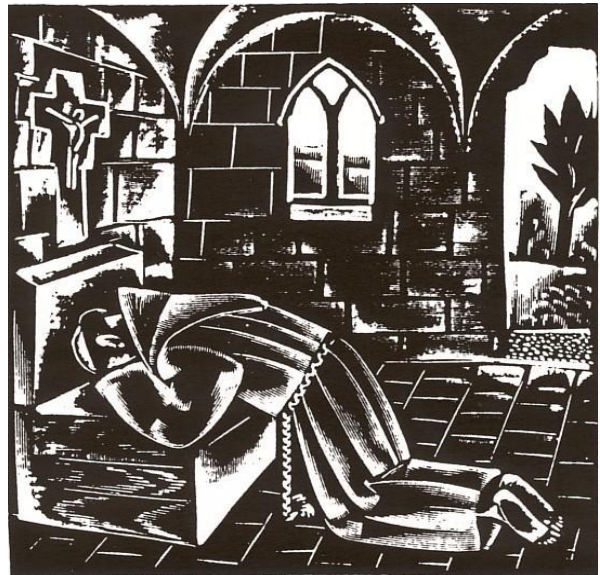
***And it was sufficient. God made humankind because God loves
the stories from a HOPE-filled, courageous heart!***

Source: *Elie Wiesel and the Art of Storytelling*. ED. Rosemary Horowitz. McFarland & Co.
Jefferson NC (2006)

.....
Might there be a **STORY you can share from your **OWN** “HOPE-filled,
courageous heart?”**

PAUSE for SHARING
We respond:

*Most High, glorious God,
cast your light into the
darkness of my heart.
Give me true faith,
Certain HOPE,
And perfect charity,
With wisdom and perception,
O Lord,
So that I may do what is
truly Your holy will.*



St. Francis' "Prayer before the Crucifix"
Art: Artestampa di Gastone Vignati, 06081 Assisi (PG) – Via S. Francesco, 10/c.

My little daughter, “My Little Daughter, HOPE” – Charles Peguy

This little sanctuary light, which burns forever in its faithful lamp –
A candle flickering amidst the darkness of the worlds,
A candle glowing across the length of ages,
A candle shining fitfully through the depths of the nights –
Since that first time when my grace flowed for the creation of the world,
For all the time what my grace has been flowing for the conservation of the world,
Since that time that the blood of my Son flowed for the salvation of the world,
A flame which is impossible to extinguish; even death cannot blow it out.

HOPE is what astonishes me, says God.
I can't get over it.
Little HOPE, whom one hardly notices,

My little daughter, Hope, she is immortal.

Source: *God Speaks*. Charles Peguy. Pantheon Books, NY (1962)

REFLECTION

Ilia Delio OSF

St. Francis learned compassion as an art of healing broken hearts by collecting the tears of the forgotten, the frightened, and the lonely in his hands and holding the wounded as his kin. ... If we are to live compassionately today, then we need to feel the pulse of life in the concrete pain of existence. We need hearts that feel for another and the patience of slowed time to be for another.

Sometimes the very struggles we try to avoid are the very blessings of our lives. Each day we are invited into love, to deepen our loves, and to renew ourselves in love. **Compassion** is accepting the limits of our humanity without asking why. It is letting others be without projecting onto them our demands and expectations.

Compassion is the ability to “get inside the skin of the other” in order to respond with loving concern and care. It is a deep connectedness to another; one breathes in the pain of the other and breathes out compassion.

Compassion is the feeling of love that rends the veil of the stranger and unites one human to another, heart to heart... it is a thread that binds together the deepest centers of life beyond the borders of race, gender, religion, tribe, or creature.

Source: *Compassion: Living in the Spirit of St. Francis*. St. Anthony Messenger Press, Cincinnati, OH, (2011) pp. xv, 102, 72, 70, 47, xiv, xv



Francis and the Sultan, Bardi Dossal, Santa Croce Church, Florence – 1245
Sultan wears *white* – sign of holiness.

Lord, make me
an instrument of
your peace . . .
where there is
darkness, let me
sow LIGHT

A Reading from Murray Bodo's
*The Way of St. Francis: The Challenge
of Franciscan Spirituality for Everyone.*

It was in the spring of 1224 that Francis
composed the final poem of his life,
The Canticle of Brother Sun. This is a
spontaneous outpouring of love and
praise that reveals ingenuously the pro-
found unconscious integration that the
love of God had effected in his life:



*Most high, all powerful,
all good, Lord!*
*All praise is yours, all glory,
all honour*
And all blessing.
*All praise be yours,
my Lord, through all that
you have made,*
And first my Brother Sun,
*Who brings the day,
and LIGHT*
you give to us through him.

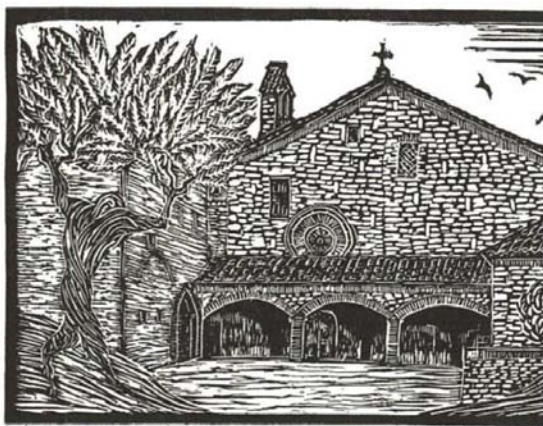
At every critical moment of his life
Francis had broken forth in song like the
troubadours he listened to and admired
as a boy. And in a sense *The Canticle of
Brother Sun* is more a song than a well-
crafted poem.

Like the life of Francis himself, this
canticle is not a self-conscious work of art.
It looks wholly to the Other with the eyes
of praise and adoration, *and that Other
is God revealed in all God's creatures*. It is
a summary of a soul open to everything
around it and everything deep within...
It is the song of a soul who has lived the
truth that only two things really matter:
the love of God and the love of God's
creation.... God dwells "deep down
things," and you find God when God finds
you loving the world he has created and
redeemed... Reverence for and joy over
everything and every person becomes the
sign of the love of God.

HOWEVER, this joy of Francis is not the popular notion of the great lover of birds who adorns bird baths all over the world. The circumstances in which Francis sang his great canticle should dispel forever the sentimental picture of Francis of Assisi as a happy “Romantic” skipping through the woods, talking to animals, with a cute little bird on his shoulder. On the contrary, Francis was a man who took quite literally Christ’s words, *If anyone would be my disciple, let him take up his cross daily and follow me (Mt 16:24)*

The rule and life of the brothers is following in the footsteps of our Lord Jesus Christ. Where those footsteps led Francis himself is dramatically drawn in the scene of his composing *The Canticle of the Sun*.

He has just returned from LaVerna, where he has been imprinted with the wounds of Christ. He is suffering what is probably tuberculosis and from a painful trachoma that causes his eyes to bleed and makes LIGHT unbearable. *He cannot endure the LIGHT of the sun or even a candle by night*, so he lives for over fifty days and nights in a darkened hut beside his beloved church of San Damiano.



Field mice run back and forth across his weakened body which hemorrhages from time to time from the wounds of Christ which Francis bears in his body. He is in deep depression over the betrayal of his ideals by those brothers who are becoming more like monks than poor, wandering mendicants. He feels, in his weakened condition, that God has abandoned him, that he is a lost soul.

It is out of this terrible darkness that the **Canticle** breaks forth from Francis’ soul. No sugary piety here, no ecstatic response to a rainbow, but a *celebration of what he himself can only dimly feel in his brokenness, a poem of faith, hope and love:*

... This acceptance of God’s will is why Saint Francis could sing a song of joy like *The Canticle of Brother Sun* in the midst of extreme pain and suffering. He was able to let go and give his suffering to God, because he saw in a vision that all of this misery was as nothing compared to the treasure buried inside it.

Published by St. Anthony Messenger Press,
Cincinnati, OH (1995) pp.123-126, 129

Art: Artestampa di Gastone Vignati. 06081
Assisi (PG) – Via S. Francesco. 10/c.

*All praise be yours, my Lord,
through all that you have made,
And first, my lord, Brother Sun,
Who brings the day; and LIGHT
you give to us through him.
How beautiful is he, how radiant
in all his splendor!
Of you, Most High, he bears
the likeness.*

And from The Song of The Dawn

The Canticle of the Sun is a song about LIGHT. But this song emerged from the darkest night.

This man, who bore the wounds of Christ in his flesh, sang about the fraternity of sun, stars, wind, water, fire, and earth. Never had such a meeting been produced between the dark night of deprivation and the splendor of the world, between the cross and the sun.

This poem was not a pure improvisation. Francis had borne it within him for some time. *To tell the truth, he had been humming it all his life.*

Source: Eloi Leclerc OFM, Franciscan Herald Press, Chicago, IL (1977) pp. 1, 7



"frat. solis" *St. Francis*

Art: Artestampa di Gastone Vignati.
06081 Assisi (PG) – Via S. Francesco. 10/c.

... a word from Leonardo Boff OFM

The Prayer of Saint Francis: A Message of Peace for the World Today

What does it mean to sow LIGHT where there is darkness? It means having a generative attitude, one imbued with kindness and compassion, able to cast a different LIGHT on open wounds. Sometimes it entails the life-witness of someone who has suffered a great deal, whose suffering has not been in vain, because it has been refined, has matured, and has pointed the way to a new route toward life.



*Lord where there is darkness, may
I bring LIGHT. You are the true
LIGHT that enlightens every person
who comes into this world. Enable
me through*

- *Inspired words*
- *Consoling gestures,*
- *And a warm heart*

*to relieve human darkness so that
your LIGHT may show us the way
and bring joy to life. Amen.*

Published by Orbis Books,
Maryknoll, NY. (2001) pp. 90-91.

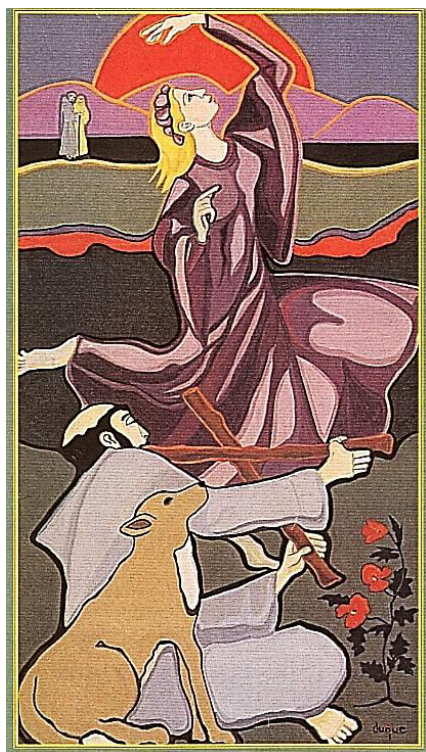
Art: Brother Sun: "Canticle of the Sun" p.1 -
Piero Casentini, Santuario di San Damiano,
Assisi. 2005

Francis and Friars caring for suffering persons,
p.4 – Legenda Maior di S. Bonaventura:
miniature dal codice pergamenaceo del 1457.
Roma Museo Franciscano, inv.nr 1266.

Lord, make me an instrument of Your PEACE

Let them not appear outwardly sad and like gloomy hypocrites but let them show they are joyful in the Lord, cheerful and truly gracious. St. Francis 1221 Rule, chapter 7:15

Where there is sadness – let me sow JOY



Dancing is an excellent metaphor for the spiritual life. God takes the initiative in leading through the various phases of our life. Our task is to respond faithfully to the slightest impulse and drawing, keenly aware that the pattern is always one of LOVE and union.

Herein lies our JOY: to embrace the present moment with our whole being.

Our God is the Lord of the dance. We are invited into the diving movement and spend most of our lifetime attempting to learn the beat. When we finally get it, there is indeed a sense of ease, a sense of timelessness, a sense of eternity. At last there is a sense of JOY.

Growing in JOY – Bishop Robert Morneau,
New City Press, 2006

Art: Sara Duque

Glimpses of the Franciscan Way – Francis Cotter ofm

Despite the chosen hardships of his own life and the frequent bouts of illness he faced, Francis is remembered by all his biographers as brimming with **joy** – something which found common expression in song. The troubadour of Assisi is portrayed as having a warm and cheerful disposition, often warming his brothers against adopting too serious an outlook.

But even for Francis, maintaining a positive outlook was not an easy task. During times of darkness and uncertainty, he could not manage it himself. It is said that for a short period of time he would not eat meals with his brothers because he could not show them

a smiling face. As he was clearly aware, the offering of hope and **joy** is an important dimension to communal living – an important part of a balanced and healthy spirituality.

As Pope Francis notes, “**Joy** adapts and changes, but it always endures, even as a flicker of light born of our personal certainty that, when everything else is said and done, we are infinitely loved.” (*Joy of the Gospel* #6)



Sometimes Francis used to do this: a sweet melody of the Spirit bubbling up inside him would become on the outside a French tune; the thread of a divine whisper which his ears heard secretly would break out in a French song. Other times he would pick up a stick from the ground and put it over his left arm, while holding a bent bow in his right hand, drawing it over the stick as if it were a violin, performing all the right movements, and in French would sing about God.

(*The Assisi Compilation* #38)

Response:

God of all creation, you who made the wolf and the lamb, the moon and the stars and all humankind, smile upon us with love and mercy.

Reveal to us the **joy** of your heart, and give us the **joy** of knowing your delight in us.

Thank you for the song of **joy**, thanksgiving and peace that your Spirit has placed in our hearts. Amen.

Source: ***Glimpses of the Franciscan Way***. Mark Davis & Francis Cotter OFM
Rockpool Publ, West Kirby, United Kingdom, 2012.

Art: Francis' joy: Marin Episcopal Youth Group. (WordPress.com)

Lord, make me an instrument of your PEACE



*Grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled
as to CONSOLE.*

Leader: Teach me sweet Lord, how to restrain the restless, comfort the discouraged, and support the weak.

All: I pray you strengthen what is weak in them, spurn not their frailty, heal that which is diseased, give joy for sorrow, kindle what is lukewarm. *prayer of Aelred of Rievaulx d.1167*

Reflection from Pope Francis

Our Father is attentive to the feelings that stir within us as we remember our loved ones, as we see the faith of others and their needs, as we remember both the beautiful things and the sad things that we have experienced during the year. God hears us. ... He not only hears; *he loves to listen!* God loves to give his attention and to hear about everything that is happening to us.

This is why Jesus says to us, *“Your Father knows what you need.”* There is no need to talk to him at length. A simple Our Father will suffice because he hears even our innermost thoughts.

Today, we come to pray for two special graces: the grace of “feeling heard” and the grace of “being ready to listen” ... *Listening* is a tremendous grace ... to help people you first of all have to listen – listen to what is happening to them and to what they need.

... How can it be that there are people who say that God does not speak, that they do not understand what God wishes to say? Of course, these are people who do not listen to the poor, the humble, to those in need.



. . . *Listening* is not simply hearing. *Listening* is being attentive. *Listening* is the desire to understand, to value, to respect, and to save. We must find the means to listen attentively so that each person may speak, and so that we are aware of what each person wishes to say.

May the Virgin Mary, our Mother, who is the beloved model both of God and his people in listening to and imparting messages of good news, receive our prayers and grant us **the grace of knowing how to listen.**

From *Pope Francis: Only Love Can Save Us*,
Translated by Gerard Seromik. 2013
Our Sunday Visitor, Inc. Huntington, Indiana 46750. pp. 62-65

ART: Tile from Assisi 1234; Our Lady of Angels, fresco.
St. Francis Basilica, Lower Church Assisi

Praying with St. Anselm

*My God, my mercy, I beg you through your beloved Son
to grant me all the works of mercy and zeal for piety.*

*May I show compassion toward the afflicted,
aid the destitute,
assist the poor,
counsel those who go astray,
comfort the sorrowful,
relieve the oppressed,
restore the poor to health,
strengthen the weak,
forgive debtors,
pardon those who have sinned against me,
love those who hate me,
render good to those who are evil. Amen.*

Anselm of Canterbury died in 1109



Lord, make me an instrument of
your Peace,

... grant that I may not so much seek to be
understood as to UNDERSTAND.

Leader: Let us always make a home and a dwelling place for the One who is the Lord God
Almighty: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

St. Francis' Rule of 1221:22.27

A Reflection from Pope Francis

The image of an open door has always been a symbol of light, friendship, joy, freedom and trust. How badly we need to rediscover these things! ... God knocks at the door of our hearts. ... We enter the door of faith and cross its threshold when the word of God is proclaimed and when we let our hearts be shaped by transforming grace. This grace has a concrete name. *That name is JESUS.*

Jesus is the door, and he knocks on our door so that we will let him cross the threshold of our lives... *Crossing the threshold of faith leads us to seek for each individual the same mind as Christ Jesus* (Phil 2:5) so that each one may experience a new way of thinking, of respecting one another, of being together as a family, of planning our futures, of living out our love for each other and our vocation.

Crossing the threshold of faith means that we work out of a sense of dignity and we see service as a vocation... It is giving thanks to the Lord because he is good and asking God not to forsake the work of his hands. (Ps 138:8).

Crossing the threshold of faith prompts us to forgive and know how to bring out a smile. It means approaching those who live on the outskirts of society and calling them by name. It means caring for those who are frail and weak, supporting their trembling knees with the certainty that whatever we do for the least of our brothers and sisters we do for Jesus himself (Mt 25:40).

Meditating on all these things, let us look to Mary. May she, the Virgin Mother, accompany us as we cross the threshold of faith and bring the Holy Spirit to our Church as she did in Nazareth, so that we may worship the Lord just as she did and go out to proclaim the marvels God has done.

From *Pope Francis: Only Love Can Save Us*. Translated by Gerard Seromik. 2013
Our Sunday Visitor, Inc. Huntington, Indiana 46750. pp. 15-19.



PRAYER: May we find pleasure and delight in the most holy words and deeds of the Lord and, with these, lead people to the love of God with gladness.

Admonition of St. Francis #20

SEEKING TO UNDERSTAND

COMPASSION – LIVING IN THE SPIRIT OF ST. FRANCIS by Ilia Delio OSF

Compassion blossomed in Francis' life like a seed on newly tilled soil. Love softened his heart to feel the pain of others whose pain became his own, in the same way that our pain belongs to God. He showed patience and kindness to those suffering because he felt something of his own suffering in theirs.

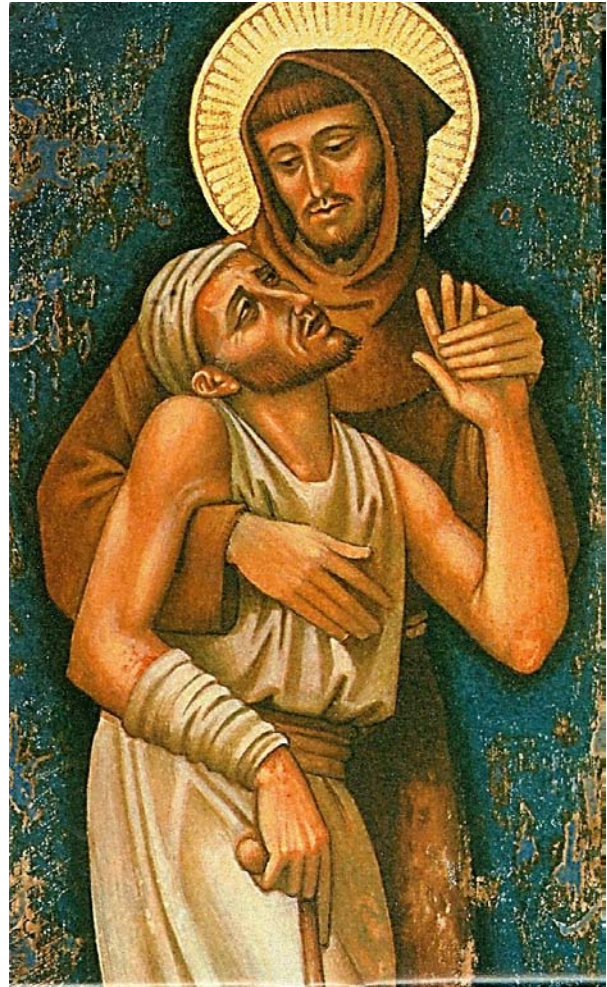
Compassion is realized when we know ourselves related to one another, a deep relatedness of our own humanity despite our limitations. It goes beyond the differences that separate us and enters the shared space of created being. To enter this space is to have space within ourselves, to welcome into our lives the stranger, the outcast, and the poor.

Compassion flourishes when we have nothing to protect and everything to share.

We have the capacity to heal this earth of its divisions, its wars, its violence and its hatreds. This capacity is the love within us to suffer with another and to love the other without reward.

When we lose ourselves for the sake of love, we shall find ourselves capable of real love.

Compassion flows best from a heart open, free, and deeply in love with life.

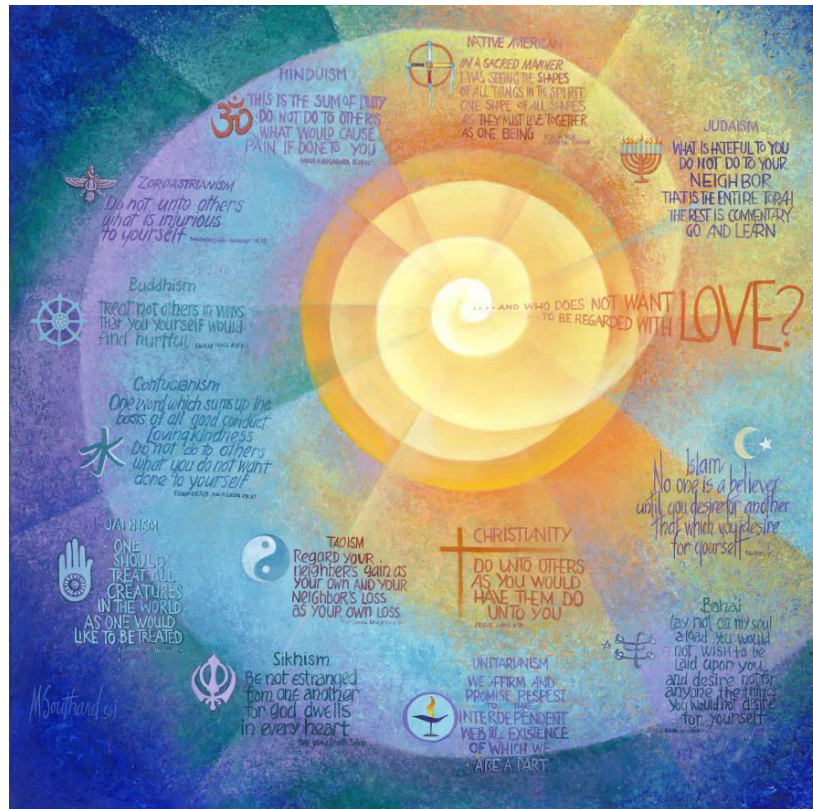


Sharing: What word or phrase in this part of the Peace Prayer genuinely reflects what is deepest in your own heart? Why?

Published by St. Anthony Messenger Press, Cincinnati, OH. (2011) p. 126

Art: Francis at prayer: Artestampa di Gastone Vignati, 06081. Assisi (PG) – Via S. Francesco, 10/c.

Francis with crippled person: "The Canticle of The Sun" – Piero Casentini, *Santuario di San Damiano*. 2005



*LORD, Make me an instrument of Your peace.
Grant that I may not so much seek to be loved as to LOVE*

Praying with St. Clare

- Leader: *May we love one another with the charity of Christ.*
 ALL: *May the love that we have in our hearts show itself in our actions.*
- Leader: *And may our love and example increase love of God*
 ALL: *and charity for one another in all places. Amen.* Derived from her **Testament** #15

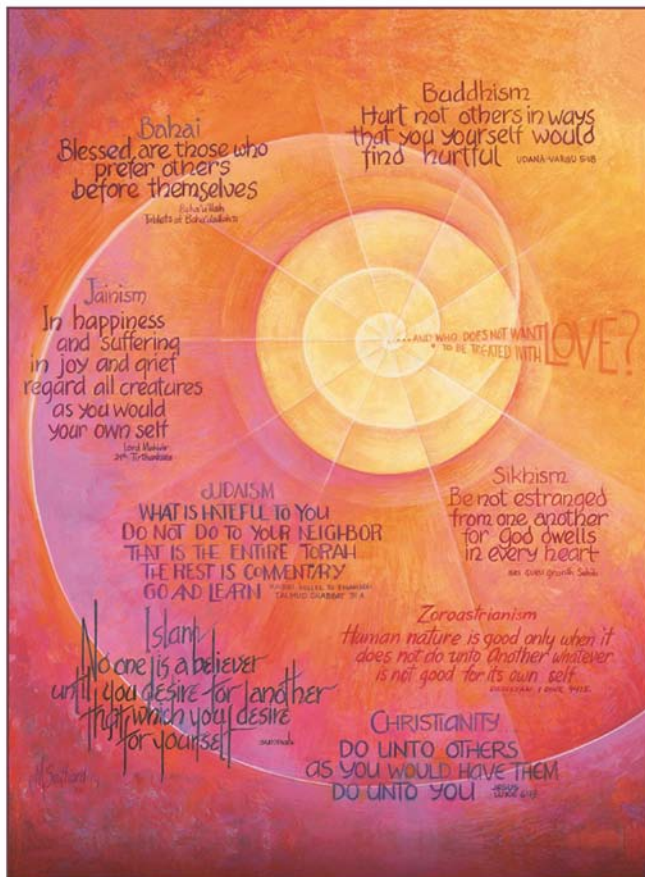
Reflection from Pope Francis

"Say yes to tenderness"

Our God is a God who is near, a God who makes himself present to us, a God who began to walk with his people and then became one of his people in Christ Jesus so that he could be close to us. But it was not some kind of metaphysical closeness. Rather, *it was the closeness* that Luke describes when Jesus goes to heal the daughter of Jairus, where people crowded around him, almost suffocating him, while a poor little old lady at the back of the crowd struggled to touch the hem of his robe. *It was the closeness* of the crowd that wanted to silence the blind man at the entrance to Jericho who was trying to make himself heard by crying out. *It is the closeness* that gave courage to ten lepers to beg him to make them clean. Jesus was into that kind of thing. Nobody wanted to lose that closeness, even the short little man who climbed the sycamore tree in order to see him.

Our God is a God who is near. He is the God who goes out to meet his people, the God who places his people in situations where they will meet him. ... *Say yes to tenderness*, especially toward sinners and toward outcasts, knowing that God dwells among them.

Source: *Pope Francis: Only Love Can Save Us*. Translated by Gerard Seromik. 2013
Our Sunday Visitor, Inc. Huntington, Indiana 46750. pp. 91-95.



PRAYER (ALL)

Lord, *give us tender hearts*. Let us do loving things that surprise even ourselves. Let us stop daily to talk to those who need a good word, to mend what is broken, and touch what needs to be loved. Make us aware of the tiny surprises that are scattered like secrets all around us. Let us notice such things as we have forgotten, and those people of whom we have grown weary. May we see them in a new way, so we have a new word for them. As we busily set out to do the larger tasks, may we find more time for small celebrations.

O Christ, give us the grace to live out each day as though it were a gift.
O Spirit, surprise us often, then let us show our great surprise.

Amen

Source Unknown

ART: Mary Southard CSJ www.marysouthardart.org



*Lord, make me an instrument of Your PEACE
for it is in GIVING that we receive.*

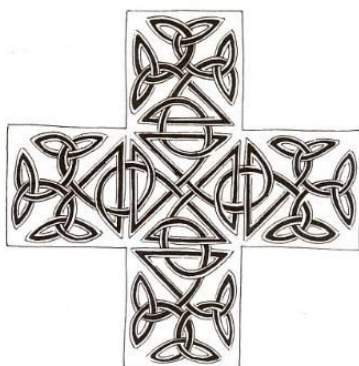
Being Grateful, Being Franciscan

A Reflection by Joseph Doino OFM, (RIP March 7, 1994)

Gratitude is at the very heart of the Franciscan charism. Francis almost shocks us with how *thanksgiving* pervades his everyday consciousness. **Gratitude** is not a virtue he cultivates alongside others; *it is more like a climate which enfolds and penetrates all his waking moments*. It is really impossible to understand or to genuinely enter into the Christian experience of Francis or of Clare except that our daily conscious hours be rooted in gratitude.

Because they are so precious, special experiences of **gratitude** (whether given or received) have the power to dwell within us and provide a constant source of hope and love.

This is at the very heart of the Franciscan life. One does not really know Francis without participating in the remarkable canticle of thanksgiving that possessed his inner heart and desire. In the very unusual twenty-third chapter of the Rule of 1221, Francis, with unbridled enthusiasm, reveals before the Church and the world the profound gratitude which rooted him and his brothers in their Gospel commitment. Francis, together with the brothers, issues a burning invitation to all to join them in a life wherein *thanksgiving and praise* prevail. “**We thank you**” is a recurring phrase in the first part of the chapter; it sweeps across creation, redemption, final judgment.



The opening words should not be overlooked: “**We thank you for yourself.**” These words immediately reveal to us the richly personal nature of the lived relationship of faith to which Francis had led the brothers. For them God is inconceivable except one’s faith be set afire with the recognition of one’s immeasurable and totally undeserved generosity. “*God has given and gives to us our whole body, our whole life ... God did and does every good thing for us. ... Gratitude is not only for the past; it springs from a consciousness of God’s activity in the entirety of every person’s history. Francis is passionately ablaze with thanksgiving to the God who has revealed God’s nature in the cruciform love of God’s Son.*”

The freedom that Francis experienced was a contagious flame that was fired by a gratitude that knew no limits. He was grateful for lepers, for his brothers, for creation, for sickness, for his brother and Lord, for knowing the God that he knew and loved. *This was the basic stance toward all of reality and experience... The generosity of God* spans past, present and future: “*God has given and gives to each of us ... will save us ... God did and does every good thing for us ...*” Neither time, nor place, nor circumstance, nor any created reality is to divert the rich energies of our hearts from that Franciscan gratitude that is so preoccupied with the “*Fullness of Good, all good, every good, the true and supreme good.*”

Francis calls all who would him to a **gratitude** that will consume our everyday consciousness ... Franciscan gratitude provides a basis for an incredibly balanced life.

The outpouring of the Holy Spirit brought the early Christian community to the realization that **in thanksgiving** we enter into the “Yes” of Jesus. He lived out our humanity and reached into the history of every human heart to empower us to be grateful and to give praise.

“Dedicate yourselves to thankfulness.” Col 3:16

Source: The CORD May, 1993. pp. 146-157

AND SO WE PRAY:

Leader: All-powerful, most holy, almighty and supreme God, holy and just Father, Lord King of heaven and earth,

ALL: *We thank you for yourself.*

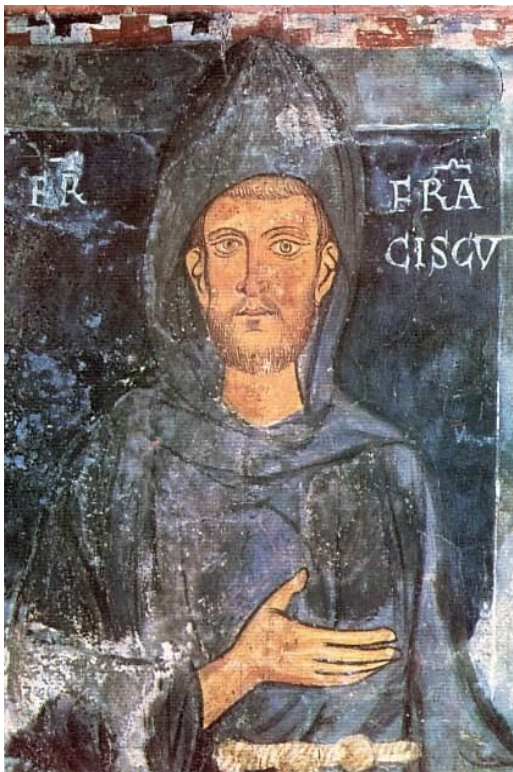
Side 1: We thank you for as through your Son you created us, so through your holy Love with which you loved us, You brought about his birth as true God and true human.

Side 2: With our whole heart, our whole soul, our whole mind, with our whole strength and fortitude, with our whole understanding,

Side 1: with all our powers, with every effort, every affection, every feeling, every wish and desire, let us all love the Lord God,

Side 2: who has given and gives to each one of us our whole body, our whole soul and our whole life.

Side 1: Who has created, redeemed and will save us by God's mercy alone, who did and does everything good for us.



Leader: Therefore, let nothing hinder us, nothing separate us, nothing come between us.

All: Wherever we are, in every place, at every hour, at every time of day, every day and continually,

- let all of us truly and humbly believe, hold in our heart and love, honor, adore,
- serve, praise and bless, glorify and exalt, magnify
- and give thanks to the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Chapter 23 of Rule of 1221.



Lord, make me
an instrument
of your Peace

... for it is in Giving
that we RECEIVE

*An approach
to Life in Fullness*

Brother David Steindl-Rast
with St. Francis of Assisi

Gratefulness is always wholehearted.

The greatest gift one can give is thanksgiving. In giving gifts, we give what we can spare, but in giving *thanks* we give ourselves. And gratefulness is the measure of our aliveness.

In moments of surprise we catch at least a glimpse of the joy to which gratefulness opens the door. We look with the eyes of our heart, are overawed by the wonders we see, and celebrate that vision by a gesture that taps the very source of life. But it can be said much more simply: *Prayer is grateful living*. We live in a “given” world. To this gift – character of all there is – the heart gives its full response in thanks and praise and thanksgiving. Those moments of deep gratefulness are, in fact, our moments of true prayerfulness, moments in which our heart is wide awake.

With all our powers, with every effort, every affection, every feeling, every wish and desire let us all love the Lord God who has given and gives to each one of us our whole body, our whole soul and our whole life. 1221 Rule 23.8

Starting with our first breath, every new encounter with the world implies *trust in the faithfulness* at the heart of all things. Everything there is in the whole universe exists for no other reason than to get this message across. In faith the heart intuits this secret. As we learn to give thanks for all of life and death, for all of this given world of ours, *we find a deep joy*. It is the joy of courageous truth. It is the joy of gratefulness in touch with the fullness of life.

In moments when we are truly alive, we experience life as gift. We also experience life as surprise. Faith is the heart's response to life as gift. The heart's response to life as surprise is *hope*. The more the insight that life is *freely given takes hold of us*, the more our life will be a *life of trust in the Giver*. Of course, that trust is a gift. The more the insight that life is surprising takes hold of us, the more our life will be a life of hope, *a life of openness for Surprise*. And Surprise is a name of God.

Let us desire nothing else, let us want nothing else except the only true God who is the fullness of good, all good, every good, who alone is good: who is gentle, lovable, delightful, and totally desirable above all else for ever.

1221 Rule 23.9,11.

Life itself will purify our hope step by step if we live with a passion for the possible. Sooner or later we realize that *the possible has no fixed limits*. What we mistook for a limit proves to be a horizon. And, like every horizon, it recedes as we move on toward fullness of life.

Only gratefulness, in the form of limitless openness for surprise, *lays hold of the fullness of life in hope*. The wisdom that begins with surprise is the wisdom of a grateful heart.

Most holy Lord, we thank you for yourself and we humbly ask our Lord Jesus Christ, together with the Holy Spirit to give you thanks for everything. Rule of 1221:23.5

Source: *Gratefulness, the Heart of Prayer*.

Brother David Steindl-Rast, Paulist Press, NJ (1984)

My Lord, my God enable my heart
to desire You by desiring to seek you,
by seeking to find you,
by finding you to love you.

My God, grant me the works of mercy,
the zeal of piety;
to have compassion for the afflicted;

To help the needy;
to advise those who are in error;
to console those who are sad;

To relieve the oppressed;
to restore those who are poor;
to cherish the tearful;

To spare those who offend me;
to forgive those who owe me;
to love those who hate me;
to render good for evil; to despise nobody.

Taken from a 16th century *Hymni et Collectae*
Greyfriars Review. 10:3. 1996. p. 243





*Lord, make me an instrument
of your PEACE
... for it is in PARDONING
that we are pardoned.*

“As you announce PEACE with your lips, make sure that greater peace is in your hearts. Let no one be provoked to anger or scandal through you. But may everyone be drawn to peace, kindness, and harmony through your gentleness. For we have been called to this: to heal the wounded, bind up the broken, and recall the erring.”

St. Francis. *The Legend of the Three Companions* #58

Art: Egino G. Weinert. Creator Mundi, Englewood, CO

A Reading from *Song of The Dawn* by Eloi Leclerc Chapter 7, *Beneath the Sign of Forgiveness*

Something would be missing from the *Canticle of Creatures* if God had not been praised by the most noble creature of all: the human person. ... The next-to-last stanza is explicitly consecrated to the praise of the merciful and peaceful person.

*Praised by you, my Lord, for those
who forgive out of love for you;
who bear trials and sickness;
happy are they if they endure in peace;
by you, Most High, they will be crowned.*

This couplet was not part of the original canticle. It was added by Francis when he sent his brothers to sing it before the bishop and the *podesta* of Assisi, to bring these two men to a reconciliation.

At first glance, the stanza is out of step with the rest of the canticle. It takes us into another world or so it seems. The cosmic praise of the rest of the hymn unfolds entirely under the sign of an unblemished fraternity. Yet here we are plunged into a world where tension, conflict, and suffering appear, where persons are confronted with others like themselves and with sickness and all sorts of trials as well.

And yet Francis wanted to incorporate this stanza into his **canticle of light**. By thus extending cosmic praise with that of the person of forgiveness and peace, not only did he complete his work, he revealed its profound meaning. This stanza, which first of all seems tailor made for an outside circumstance, is in reality the blossoming of the **fundamental inspiration of the canticle**. **The latter truly appears as the song of the person reconciled, merciful, sunlike, in the image of the Most High.**

... If Francis reconciled many persons between one another and with themselves, and if he radiated an apparently infinite light and gentleness on all people and things around him, it was because he was fundamentally involved in **an inner experience of reconciliation**. Yet this experience is always difficult. Truth to tell, it is impossible for a person who is dependent solely on the resources of one's own will.

One might be surprised, in reading the *Writings* of St. Francis, at the care he took to denounce agitation and anger as an obstacle to charity in oneself and in others. Agitation and anger, in fact, are for him the unmistakable sign of a possessive attitude – an attitude that is, moreover, most often unconscious. Francis rightly saw that at the base of the rupture between persons there is always a shrinking back on oneself, a secret desire for appropriation that makes one see everything in terms of oneself: one's personality, one's idea, one's project, or one's interest. And all this often under cover of the highest ideals. When the secret desire for appropriation is thwarted, agitation, irritation, anger, and rupture are the results. Francis rightly saw, too, that a person on one's own cannot overcome this desire and liberate oneself from this shrinking back on self and one's own works...

In a ***Letter to a Minister*** Francis reveals to us the depth of his soul; he lets us see clearly that **his inner universe** is one of **forgiveness and reconciliation**:

I should like you to prove that you love God and me, his servant and yours, in the following way. There should be no friar in the whole world who has fallen into sin, no matter how far he has fallen, who will ever fail to find your forgiveness for the asking, if he will only look into your eyes. And if he does not ask forgiveness, you should ask him if he wants it. And if he should appear before you again a thousand times, you should love him more than you love me, so that you may draw him to God.

... This new presence to the world placed wholly under the sign of reconciliation, inspired Francis' ***Canticle of Brother Sun***. ... Such a spiritual experience touches the deepest part of the soul. ... This poem was not a pure improvisation. Francis had borne it within him for some time. ***To tell the truth, he had been humming it all his life.***

The Song of The Dawn. Eloi Leclerc pp. 41, 42, 45, 46, 47, 48.
Franciscan Herald Press, Chicago. 1977 (out of print)

A PRAYER

Leader: In the presence of our God
who awakens us to receive all
of LIFE as a blessing:

All: we stand **humbly**.

Leader: In the presence of our God who
makes forgiveness the measure
of sincere love:

All: we beg for the **grace**.

Leader: In the presence of our God
who endured scorn, pain and
denial:

All: we seek **courage and understanding**.

Leader: In the presence of our God who lifted up the unloved
and forgotten:

All: we hope for an **open heart** and an **unselfish spirit**.

Leader: In the presence of our God who rebuked anger and agitation:

All: we seek **forgiveness and peace**.

Leader: In the presence of our God who emptied Himself for our sake:

All: we seek to be conscious of the ways we rupture **peace** by **our blindness**
and need for control.

Leader: In the presence of our God who is the fullness of all GOOD:

All: We pray: Loving, good and gracious God, to you alone belongs all
honor, all praise, all glory. With Francis, we pray, "**You are all our riches**
and you alone suffice for us." Thank you for your Spirit deep within us,
leading us to understand forgiveness and to seek to love with all our
hearts. Amen.



LORD, MAKE ME AN INSTRUMENT OF YOUR PEACE

. . . FOR IT IS IN DYING THAT WE ARE BORN



TO ETERNAL LIFE.

Be praised my Lord, for our sister bodily death.

How can a man who loves the sun look death in the face without a shiver of fear?

Francis sings of death as a sister, but in doing so he continues no less to celebrate the splendor of the world with the same enthusiasm. And it is because he believes in the value of the person and of life even in death that he can see something shining beneath the somber door. On that side, too, is light. The same light as that which was a sign for him in the splendor of the sun.

DEATH for Francis appears as the decisive step in the long march toward being. It is the supreme act of this letting go of self that gives us wholly over to the splendor of being and life.

This is how Francis saw his own death. He did not undergo it; he welcomed it.... Following the example of his Lord and Master, he made death the expression of total love and an absolute trust. And this is why he hailed it as a sister, beneath whose gaze he saw everything blazing with light.

REFLECTION *"Loved into Being"*

We are **loved into being**.

This first, perfect and totally free act of love

Is that God gratuitously chooses us to exist.

Each person is created by God **as unique and irreplaceable**.

I am precisely the gift God wants – in full and loving surrender.

All love, goodness and holiness is a reflected gift.

We first receive the **gift of being** without having been consulted.

As we receive the gift of being at birth, so we are called to receive

The consummation of that gift in a **future that transcends death**.

Our theology of creation begins with the conviction that our very being

Is a pure gift from a loving, creative God.

To be created is to exist in absolute dependence on the free, loving

Creativity of God.

Created existence, therefore, in the deepest sense **is pure gift**.



***The gift of being that flows from God as creator
Is laden with the promise
Of yet fuller, richer being in the future.***

And what of St. Clare?

... "Go calmly and in peace Clare tells herself. You will have a good escort, because he who created you has sent you the Holy Spirit. He who created you has made you holy and loved you with a tender love. It is pleasing to God that I depart."

After Clare's death, her sisters wrote a letter to tell the brothers and sisters around the world:

"We tell you – not without tears – that the mirror of the morning star has vanished. The Lady Clare, our leader, mother and teacher, has left our sight. Even though physically a violent pain wrenches our hearts, yet we stretch out our right hand to the glory of praise ... for we understand the dance of joy with which the holy spirits are going to meet her..."

Sources: *The Song of the Dawn* – Eloi Leclerc ofm. pp. 53-54; selected teachings of Zachary Hayes OFM and Richard Rohr OFM; *This Living Mirror*, Frances Teresa Downing OSC, 150-154

And beautifully – A tribute to a Friar by **Thomas Merton**

Philotheus Boehner ofm, Founder of the Franciscan Institute, St. Bonaventure University, NY.

Died: May 31, 1955.

Dear Father Thomas (Plassmann) (President of St. Bonaventure University), Thank you for letting me know of the death of Fr. Philotheus, my good friend.

Fr. Philotheus was, I think, one of those for whom no death is “sudden”. His unassuming simplicity covered what was a real and deep holiness. I am sure, like a true Franciscan, he was one who dared to be perfectly himself with our Lord.

And we pray with a beloved Friar and Scholar from Canterbury, England

Eric Doyle OFM. [Eric died August 25, 1984, age 46]

Lord of my origin, draw me closer to You.

Lord of my existence, direct all my ways.

Lord of my calling, give me strength to go on.

Lord of my faith, preserve me from doubt.

Lord of my hope, keep me from despair.

Lord of my love, let me never grow cold.

Lord of my past, may I never forget you.

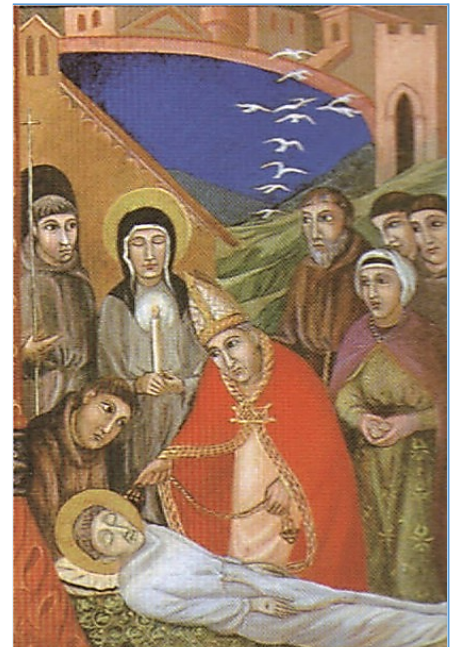
Lord of my present, be near me always.

Lord of my future, keep me faithful to the end.

Lord of my life, let me live in your presence.

Lord of my death, receive me at last.

Lord of my eternity, bless me forever. Amen



Source: **St. Francis and the Song of Brotherhood and Sisterhood**. Eric Doyle ofm.
The Franciscan Institute, St. Bonaventure, NY, 1997. pp. 185, 186.

Art: “The Canticle of the Sun” – Piero Casentini, *Santuario di San Damiano*, Assisi – 2005
Tavola of St. Francis, Jenifer G. Holmes, Assisi 1992-3



**“Lord, make me an instrument of your peace.
Where there is hatred, let me sow love.
Where there is injury, pardon . . .”**

What is commonly known as the “**Peace Prayer**”, has been used everywhere even in speeches by Mother Teresa, Margaret Thatcher, Bill Clinton, and at the funeral of Princess Diana. But even while naturally embodying the spirit of St. Francis’ simplicity and humility, this prayer has been mistakenly attributed to him since 1912. In that year an anonymous prayer was printed in the French spiritual magazine, *La Clochette*. In 1915, the same prayer was offered to Pope Benedict XV by the Marquis La Rochethulon, believing it to have been inspired by the testament of William the Conqueror (although the style also reflects prayers written by Sts. Benedict, Aquinas, Loyola, etc.). The pope published the gift in the *L’Osservatore Romano* on January 20, 1916 as a prayer for peace in the midst of the First World War. The attribution of St. Francis as the author probably came about shortly afterward when the Capuchin visitor of the Secular Franciscans of Reims, France, Fr. Etienne, had the prayer printed on the back of a holy card of St. Francis and then distributed it widely. The text was only called “A Prayer for Peace,” but it is easy to understand how people would attribute the authorship to the saint pictured on the reverse side of the holy card. Even German prisoners-of-war carried the holy card home with them, and were sure by then that St. Francis was the author. And in 1949 when Cardinal Spellman of New York distributed millions of copies of the prayer, the attribution of St. Francis’ mistaken authorship would be forever imprinted in people’s minds.

Egidio Picucci. L’Osservatore Romano, Jan. 19, 2009

Frieder Schulz. Greyfrairs Review, 10.3, 1996



A Simple Prayer: Already in Our Hearts

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