

The Admonitions of St Francis

The Admonitions are a group of 28 short, deeply spiritual exhortations given by Francis to the brothers, probably during the celebration of General Chapters of the Order.

I. THE BODY OF CHRIST

1. The Lord Jesus says to his disciples: I am the way, the truth and the life; no one comes to the Father except through me. 2. If you had known me, you would also have known my Father and from now on you will know him and have seen him. 3. Philip says to him: Lord, show us the Father and it is enough for us. Jesus says to him: 4. Have I been with you for so long a time and you have not known me? Philip, whoever sees me, sees also my Father (Jn. 14:6-9). 5. Sacred Scripture says that the Father lives in inaccessible light (cf. 1 Tim. 6:16), and God is Spirit (Jn. 4:24) and, No one has ever seen God (Jn. 1:18). 6. Therefore he cannot be seen except in the Spirit since it is the Spirit that gives life; the flesh does not offer anything (Jn. 6:64). 7. But neither, inasmuch as he is equal to the Father, is the Son seen by anyone other than the Father [or] other than the Holy Spirit. 8. Therefore all those who saw the Lord Jesus according to [his] humanity and did not see and believe according to the Spirit and the Godhead that he is the true Son of God were condemned. 9. And now in the same way, all those who see the sacrament (of the body of Christ), which is sanctified by the words of the Lord upon the altar at the hands of the priest in the form of bread and wine, and who do not see and believe according to the Spirit and the Godhead that it is truly the most holy body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, are condemned. 10. [This] is attested by the Most High himself Who says: This is my body and the blood of my new testament [which will be poured out for many] (cf. Mk. 14:22, 24) 11. and he who eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life (cf. Jn. 6:55). 12. And so it is really the Spirit of the Lord, Who lives in his faithful, Who receives the most holy body and blood of the Lord. 13. All others who do not share in this same Spirit and who presume to receive him eat and drink judgment to themselves (cf. 1 Cor. 11:29). 14. Therefore, O sons of men, how long will you be hard of heart? (Ps. 4:3) 15. Why do you not recognize the truth and believe in the Son of God? (cf. Jn. 9:35) 16. See, daily he humbles himself (cf. Phil. 2:8) as when he came from the royal throne (Wis. 18:15) into the womb of the Virgin; 17. daily he comes to us in a humble form; 18. daily he comes down from the bosom of the Father (cf. Jn. 1:18) upon the altar in the hands of the priest. 19. And as he appeared to the holy apostles in true flesh, so now he reveals himself to us in the Sacred Bread. 20. And as they saw only his flesh by means of their bodily sight, yet believed him to be God as they contemplated him with the eyes of faith, 21. so, as we see bread and wine with [our] bodily eyes, we too are to see and firmly believe them to be his most holy body and blood living and true. 22. And in this way the Lord is always with his faithful, as he himself says: Behold I am with you even to the end of the world (cf. Mt. 28:20).