



Monthly NEWSLETTER

Secular Franciscan Order of Central North Carolina

PADRE PIO FRATERNITY ofscentralnc.org

OCTOBER 1, 2025

— *A Snapshot from the Life of St. Francis* —

COMPLETE SURRENDER TO GOD

With total self-abandonment to God, St. Francis found peace and joy, even amidst suffering

St. Francis of Assisi's life was a testament to his complete surrender to the will of God.

He completely renounced his family's wealth and fully embraced Lady Poverty, an act that exemplified his joyful obedience and great love for God and his desire to imitate Christ. His journey from a wealthy merchant's son to a humble, Christ-like figure exemplifies how he prioritized God's will above all else.

His ultimate surrender was solidified when he received his stigmata on Mount La Verna, where he ultimately gave his life as an act of love to the Father. This complete surrender is seen as an acceptance of God's will in all circumstances, a process of dying to self to embrace a new life in Christ.

Several key moments along St. Francis's journey with Christ reveal his path towards total surrender of self.



ST. FRANCIS GAVE HIS LIFE AS AN ACT OF LOVE TO THE FATHER. THIS COMPLETE SURRENDER IS SEEN AS AN ACCEPTANCE OF GOD'S WILL IN ALL CIRCUMSTANCES, A PROCESS OF DYING TO SELF TO EMBRACE A NEW LIFE IN CHRIST.

See FRANCIS, PAGE 4 ➡

— OUR HEAVENLY FAMILY: THE SAINTS —

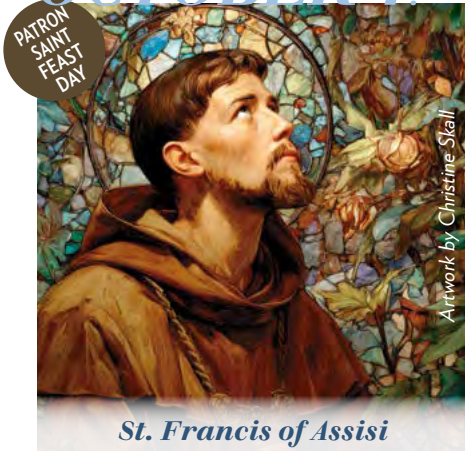
Saint of the Day // October 2025

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1 SAINT THÉRÈSE OF LISIEUX	2 FEAST OF THE GUARDIAN ANGELS	3 SAINT THEODORA GUERIN	4 SAINT FRANCIS OF ASSISI
5 SAINT MARIA FAUSTINA KOWALSKA	6 SAINT BRUNO	7 OUR LADY OF THE ROSARY	8 SAINT JOHN LEONARDI	9 SAINT DENIS AND COMPANIONS	10 SAINT FRANCIS BORGIA	11 SAINT JOHN XXIII
12 BLESSED FRANCIS XAVIER SEELOS	13 BLESSED MARIE-ROSE DUROCHER	14 SAINT CARLO ACUTIS	15 SAINT TERESA OF AVILA	16 SAINT MARGARET MARY ALACOQUE	17 SAINT IGNATIUS OF ANTIOCH	18 SAINT LUKE
19 SAINTS ISAAC JOGUES, JEAN DE BRÉBEUF, AND COMPANIONS	20 SAINT PAUL OF THE CROSS	21 SAINT HILARION	22 SAINT JOHN PAUL II	23 SAINT JOHN OF CAPISTRANO	24 SAINT ANTHONY MARY CLARET	25 SAINT ANTÔNIO DE SANT'ANNA GALVÃO
26 SAINT PETER OF ALCANTARA	27 BLESSED BARTHOLOMEW OF VICENZA	28 SAINTS SIMON AND JUDE	29 SAINT NARCISSUS OF JERUSALEM	30 SAINT ALPHONSUS RODRIGUEZ	31 SAINT WOLFGANG OF REGENSBURG	

— SOURCE: FRANCISCANMEDIA.ORG

OCTOBER 4:

OCTOBER 7:



St. Francis of Assisi

Artwork by Christine Skell

— SOURCE: WIKIMEDIA COMMONS



Our Lady of the Rosary

Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary Chapel in Lucky Chinatown in Binondo, Manila in the Philippines (right).

REFLECTION

Saint Pius V established the feast of Our Lady of Victory to thank God for the Christian defeat of the Turks at Lepanto—a victory attributed to praying the rosary.

Pope Gregory XIII changed the name to “Feast of the Holy Rosary”—originally celebrated on the first Sunday in October—in 1573. In 1913, Saint Pius X set the date for the feast that we know today of October 7. The purpose of the rosary is to help us meditate on the great mysteries of our salvation. Pius XII called it a compendium of The Gospel. The main focus is on Jesus—his birth, life, death, and resurrection. The constant repetition of words helps create an atmosphere in which to contemplate the mysteries of God. We sense that Jesus and Mary are with us in the joys and sorrows of life. We grow in hope that God will bring us to share in the glory of Jesus and Mary forever.

— SOURCE: FRANCISCANMEDIA.ORG

— COLUMN —

GUARDIAN ANGELS

(OCTOBER 2)



**DEACON PHIL
RZEWNICKI, OFS**
PhilRzewnicki@gmail.com

SHARING OUR BLESSINGS

Perhaps no aspect of Catholic piety is as comforting to parents as the belief that an angel protects their little ones from dangers real and imagined. Yet guardian angels are not only for children. Their role is to represent individuals before God, to watch over them always, to aid their prayer, and to present their souls to God at death.

The concept of an angel assigned to guide and nurture each human being is a development of Catholic doctrine and piety based on Scripture but not directly drawn from it. Jesus's words in Matthew 18:10 best support this belief: *"See that you do not despise one of these little ones, for I say to you that their angels in heaven always look upon the face of my heavenly Father."*

Devotion to the angels began to develop with the birth of the monastic tradition. St. Benedict, Abbot (~480-543), gave it impetus and St. Bernard of Clairvaux, Abbot and Doctor, (1090-1153), a great twelfth-century reformer, was such an eloquent spokesman for the guardian angels that angelic devotion assumed its current form in his day.

A feast in honor of the guardian angels was first observed in the



(Source: Saint of the Day, Franciscan Media)

Guardian Angel,
German Postcard, 1900

— SOURCE: WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

Catholics can foster a devotion to their guardian angels, praying for their guidance to make good choices and lead a life that leads to heaven.

sixteenth century. In 1615 Pope Paul V added it to the Roman calendar. Devotion to the angels is, at base, an expression of faith in God's enduring love and providential care extended to each person day-in and day-out until life's end.

— SOURCE: Saint of the Day, Franciscan Media



“MAY THE ANGELS LEAD YOU INTO PARADISE; MAY THE MARTYRS COME TO WELCOME YOU AND TAKE YOU TO THE HOLY CITY, THE NEW AND ETERNAL JERUSALEM.”

RITE FOR CHRISTIAN BURIAL

FRANCIS ††††††

➔ Continued from PAGE 1

PIVOTAL MOMENTS OF ST. FRANCIS'S SURRENDER

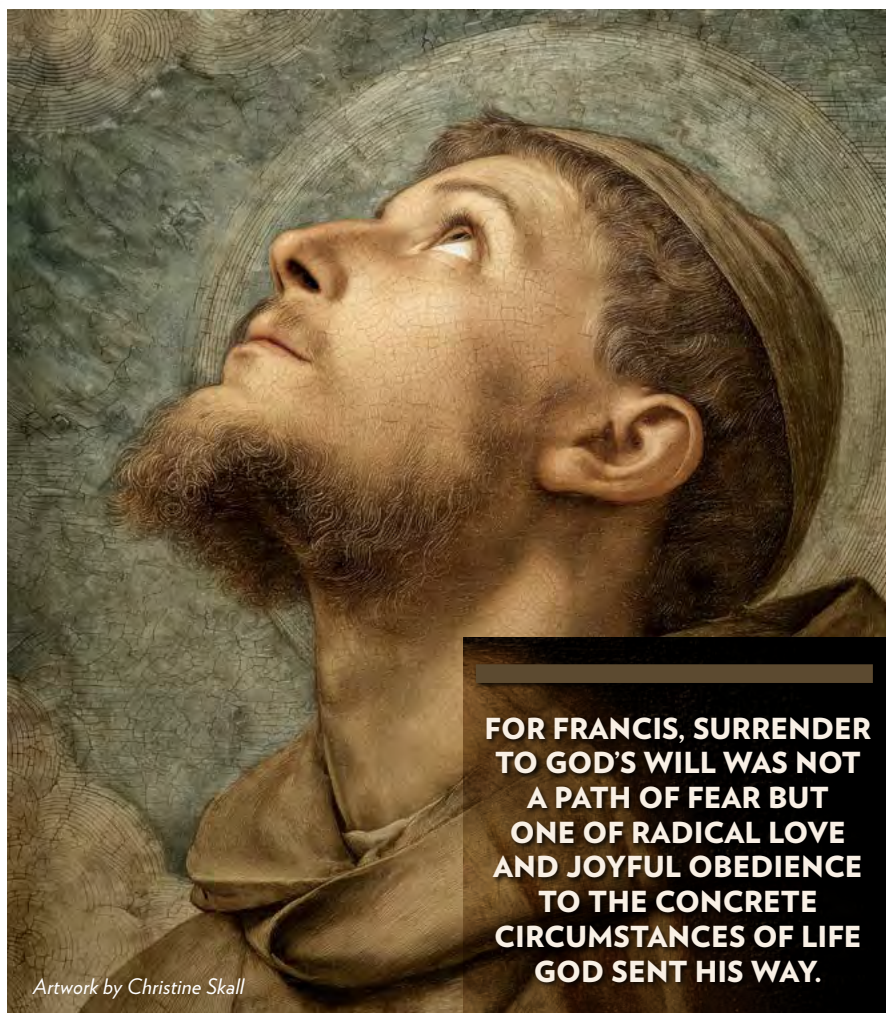
THE TURNING POINT ➔

▪ ENCOUNTER WITH THE LEPER:

Early in his conversion, Francis was repulsed by lepers. When he encountered one on the road, he was divinely moved to kiss the leper's hand, an act that conquered his personal revulsion. This moment marked his acceptance of God's grace to love the marginalized and poor. In overcoming himself and embracing the leper, Francis found true Gospel poverty; he found a poverty that was a new kind of immense wealth. Now he had only to rid himself of whatever else was keeping him from this hidden treasure he had found. He discovered what that was in the small chapel of St. Mary of the Angels, hidden among the woods and marshes of the plain where the lepers lived. It was February 24, 1208, and Francis was attending Mass; at the reading of the Gospel, he heard the Gospel passage that changed his life. It not only completed his vision of poverty, but it also gave him the lifestyle he was to embrace. And this is how it

“ Brother, I want whatever death God wants for me. ”

ST. FRANCIS



Artwork by Christine Skall

FOR FRANCIS, SURRENDER TO GOD'S WILL WAS NOT A PATH OF FEAR BUT ONE OF RADICAL LOVE AND JOYFUL OBEDIENCE TO THE CONCRETE CIRCUMSTANCES OF LIFE GOD SENT HIS WAY.

was, as his first biographer, Thomas of Celano, narrates it: *“But when on a certain day the Gospel was read in that church, how the Lord sent his disciples out to preach, the holy man of God, assisting there, understood somewhat the words of the Gospel; and after Mass he humbly asked the priest to explain the Gospel to him more fully. When the priest had set forth in hearing that Christ's disciples should not possess gold or silver or money; nor carry along the way scrip, or wallet, or bread, or a staff; that they should not have shoes, or two tunics; but that they should preach the kingdom of God and penance, he immediately*

*cried out exultingly: ‘This is what I wish, this is what I seek, this is what I long to do with all my heart.’”*¹

▪ THE SAN DAMIANO CRUCIFIX:

While praying in the dilapidated church of San Damiano, Francis heard the crucifix speak to him, saying, *“Francis, go and repair my house which, as you see, is falling into ruin”*. He initially thought God meant the crumbling church building, but he soon understood the deeper spiritual mission to rebuild the Church as a whole.

▪ RENUNCIATION OF WEALTH:

Francis famously stripped off his fine clothes in front of his

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➡ Continued from PREVIOUS PAGE



Artwork by Christine Skall

father and the townspeople, and publicly renounced his inheritance and worldly possessions in front of the bishop of Assisi to completely embrace Lady Poverty. The stripping of his fine clothes symbolized his complete break with his former life and his total dependence on God. He declared that he would now say, “*Our Father who art in heaven,*” and belong to God alone.

Francis's surrender was a willing and joyful embrace of God's plan, not a forced submission.

- **IMITATION OF CHRIST AND LOVE OF “LADY POVERTY”:** His entire life became centred around loving Jesus Christ and living a life of poverty, no matter the cost or the suffering involved. Francis chose to marry “Lady Poverty” for life, living

FRANCIS'S
SURRENDER WAS
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OF GOD'S PLAN,
NOT A FORCED
SUBMISSION.

in complete dependence on God's providence. His renunciation was not merely about doing without, but was a joyful expression of his trust that God would provide for all his needs.

- **PERFECT OBEDIENCE:** Francis's writings, known as "The Admonitions", taught that perfect obedience meant submitting one's will to a superior, and in turn, seeing the superior as an agent of God's will. This obedience is given freely out of love, even if a command is difficult. However, Francis also specified that one should never obey a command that is sinful.
- **EMBRACING SUFFERING AND A "THY WILL BE DONE" ATTITUDE:** Francis saw suffering as an opportunity to draw closer to Christ. When asked what kind of death he wanted—a quick one or a painful, lingering one—he replied, "*Brother, I want whatever death God wants for me*". This was a loving surrender to God's will in the ultimate act of his life.. a profound expression of his absolute surrender to The Divine Will.
- **DYING TO THE FALSE SELF:** This surrender involved a process of dying to his

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FRANCIS

➤ Continued from PREVIOUS PAGE

FOR FRANCIS, SURRENDER TO GOD'S WILL WAS NOT A PATH OF FEAR BUT ONE OF RADICAL LOVE AND JOYFUL OBEDIENCE TO THE CONCRETE CIRCUMSTANCES OF LIFE GOD SENT HIS WAY.



Artwork by Christine Skall

own will, ego, and desire for control, allowing for a spiritual death that led to a new, life-giving life in Christ.

■ A LIFE OF JOYFUL OBEDIENCE:

For Francis, surrender to God's will was not a path of fear but one of radical love and joyful obedience to the concrete circumstances of life God sent his way.

■ RECEIVING THE STIGMATA:

Two years before his death, on Mount La Verna, Francis received the stigmata, the wounds of the crucified Christ. This was the ultimate

seal on his lifelong surrender, confirming that he had truly emptied himself to live like Christ. It was a physical manifestation of his complete identification with Christ's suffering and his final surrender to God's will.

THE DEATH AND LEGACY OF ST. FRANCIS

Even in his final days, Francis maintained his posture of surrender. He embraced his own mortality, which he called "Sister Death," and asked his brothers to sing

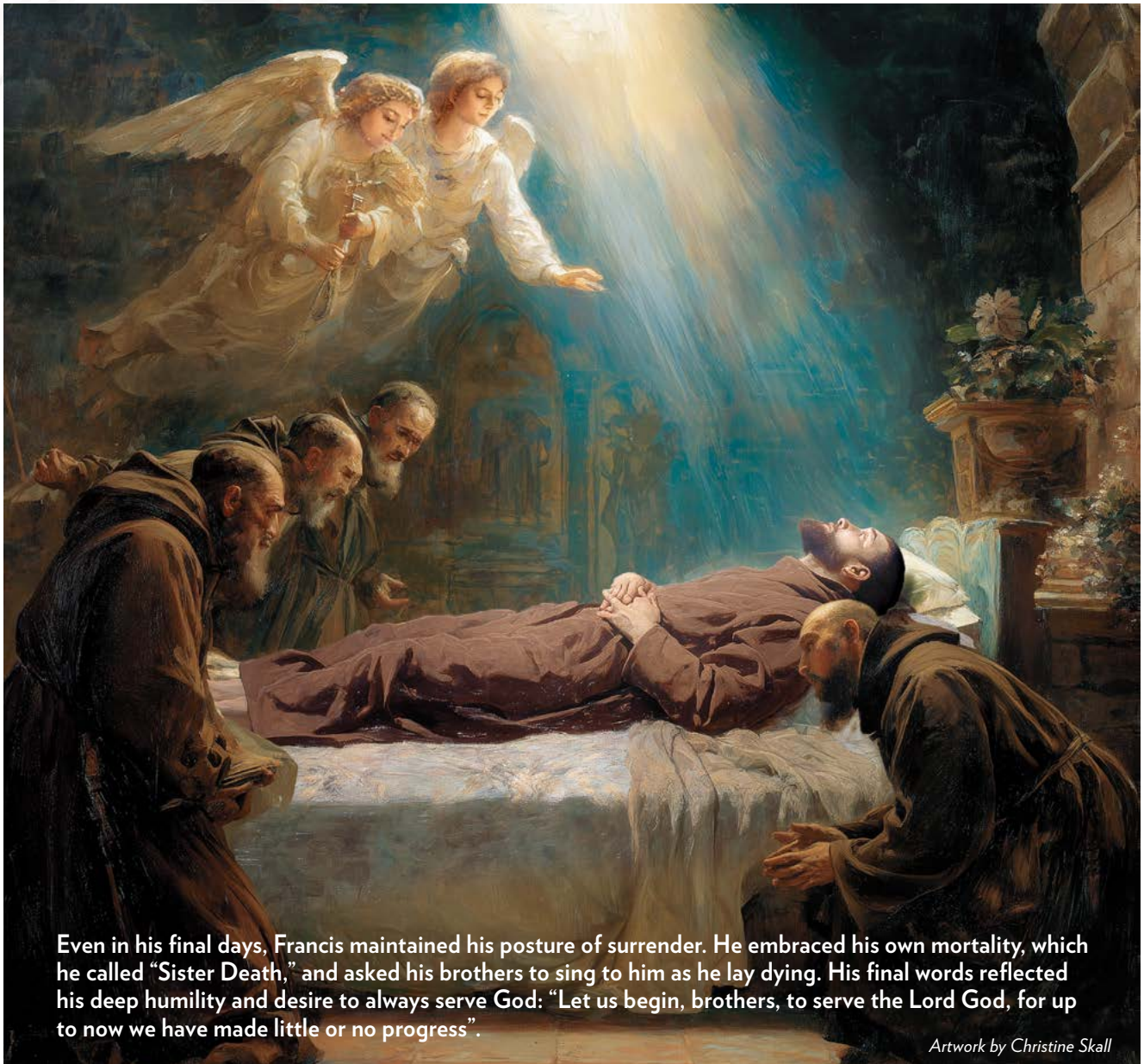
to him as he lay dying on the bare ground. His final words reflected his deep humility and desire to always serve God: *"Let us begin, brothers, to serve the Lord God, for up to now we have made little or no progress"*.

In loving Christ, Francis realized that the servant is the Lord, and the Lord is the servant. More importantly, he realized that the penance he was to preach, and his brothers were to preach, is

See FRANCIS, NEXT PAGE ➤


FRANCIS

➡ Continued from **PREVIOUS PAGE**



the penance of conversion, of letting go of one's ego and surrendering to a love which to others seems madness, but to the true lover is sanity. True, even to a deeply committed disciple like St. Francis, the embrace of Christ can feel at times like annihilation, like death itself, because, in fact, one is dying to something.

One is dying to a false self that tries to be God, that tries to always be in control. But that dying is really life,

the new life Jesus promised to those who relinquish their own willfulness as he did when he said in the Garden of Gethsemane, *“My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will but as you will.”* That surrendering of his own will to the Father’s will was the beginning of Christ’s resurrection and our resurrection, for by accepting the cup the Father offers us, we accept death, but a death that is life-giving.² 

...DYING IS
REALLY LIFE,
THE NEW
LIFE JESUS
PROMISED TO
THOSE WHO
RELINQUISH
THEIR OWN
WILLFULNESS...

1. FranciscanMedia.org
2. FranciscanMedia.org

Important DATES

SEE WHAT'S HAPPENING IN AND AROUND THE PADRE PIO FRATERNITY. Take note of upcoming important events and remember upcoming Birthdays & Profession Anniversaries.

Upcoming EVENTS



OCT.
3

TRANSITUS Hosted by the friars at Immaculate Conception Church in Durham.

Transitus refers to the celebration of St. Francis of Assisi's passage from earthly life to eternal life. The word "transitus" is Latin for "passage" or "crossing". Transitus is a significant event marking the end of St. Francis's and will be observed on the evening of October 3rd at 7pm, the vigil of his feast day. At the end of the Transitus service, professed Secular Franciscans will have the opportunity to renew our commitment to the Gospel way of life. We will provide refreshments and assist in any way we can. We extend our gratitude to Fr. Hugh and the friars at

Immaculate Conception for hosting this observance. Special thanks to Ellen Ferrone who is making Francis's favorite almond cookies in the tradition of Lady Jacoba ➔ **Immaculate Conception Church, 810 W Chapel Hill Street, Durham, NC 27701, 919-682-3449**

OCT.
10

MASS IN HONOR OF "CANTICLE OF THE CREATURES" FOLLOWED BY JAZZ AND GELATO

St. Francis of Assisi Parish is hosting a Mass in honor of the magnificent prayer/poem Canticle of the Creatures, which St. Francis completed 800 years ago this year. Jazz and Gelato will follow immediately

afterwards in Clare Hall. We are invited again this year to help with Jazz and Gelato at St. Francis of Assisi on Friday, Oct. 10. All of those who came last year had a blast. We do not need to bring anything. We are asked to set up and serve gelato. Set-up is at 5:45pm in Clare Hall; the Mass of Creation is at 6:30pm in the church followed immediately by Jazz and Gelato. Please sign up to help. <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C054BA4AC23A0F85-58834948-mass> ➔ St. Francis of Assisi Church, 11401 Leesville Rd., Raleigh, NC 27613. www.stfrancisraleigh.org. 919-847-8205.

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Anniversaries of PROFESSION

10/9/1955



IDA IRWIN, OFS

10/13/1984



MARIE BIANCA, OFS

10/20/2004



JEANETTE
COTTONE, OFS



Happy BIRTHDAY

OCT
16



DOROTHY ANNE
PRIBISH, OFS

OCT
26



COURTNEY
CANTRELL

OCT
18



DEACON PHIL
RZEWNICKI, OFS

EVENTS ++++++

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VARIOUS
DATES
(ONGOING)

GATHERINGS

These are the upcoming regular monthly Fraternity gatherings on the 4th Sunday of each month. Note that there will not be a meeting in December for the Christmas week. UPCOMING DATES: **Oct. 26, Nov. 23** ➔ **St. Francis of Assisi Church**, 11401 Leesville Rd., Raleigh, NC 27613. www.stfrancisraleigh.org. 919-847-8205.

VARIOUS
DATES
(ONGOING)

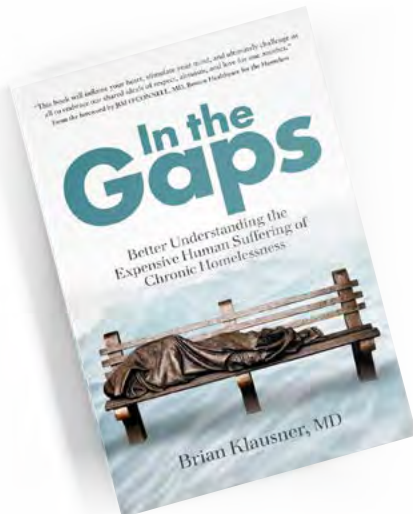
OAK CITY CARES

The Padre Pio Fraternity contributes to, and helps to serve, the Saturday mid-day meal for hundreds of clients of Oak City Outreach in the downtown Raleigh area. Fraternity members may sign up to bring food items, help to serve and converse with the outreach center's participants. This ministry is coordinated by Fraternity member Ellen Ferrone. UPCOMING DATES: **Oct. 25, Nov. 22, Dec. 27** ➔ **Oak City Outreach Center**, 215 S Person St., Raleigh, NC 27601. 919-847-8205.

VARIOUS
DATES
(ONGOING)

BOOK CLUB

Padre Pio Fraternity will read and discuss "In the Gaps" by Dr. Brian Klausner via Zoom on Tuesday nights at 7pm. The Zoom sessions will once again be led by Mike Evangelista, OFS. Contact Theresa Flynn, OFS, for more information at theresa.flynn41@yahoo.com. UPCOMING DATES: **Oct. 14, Nov. 18**. ➔ Meetings are via Zoom.



DEC.
6

ADVENT DAY-LONG

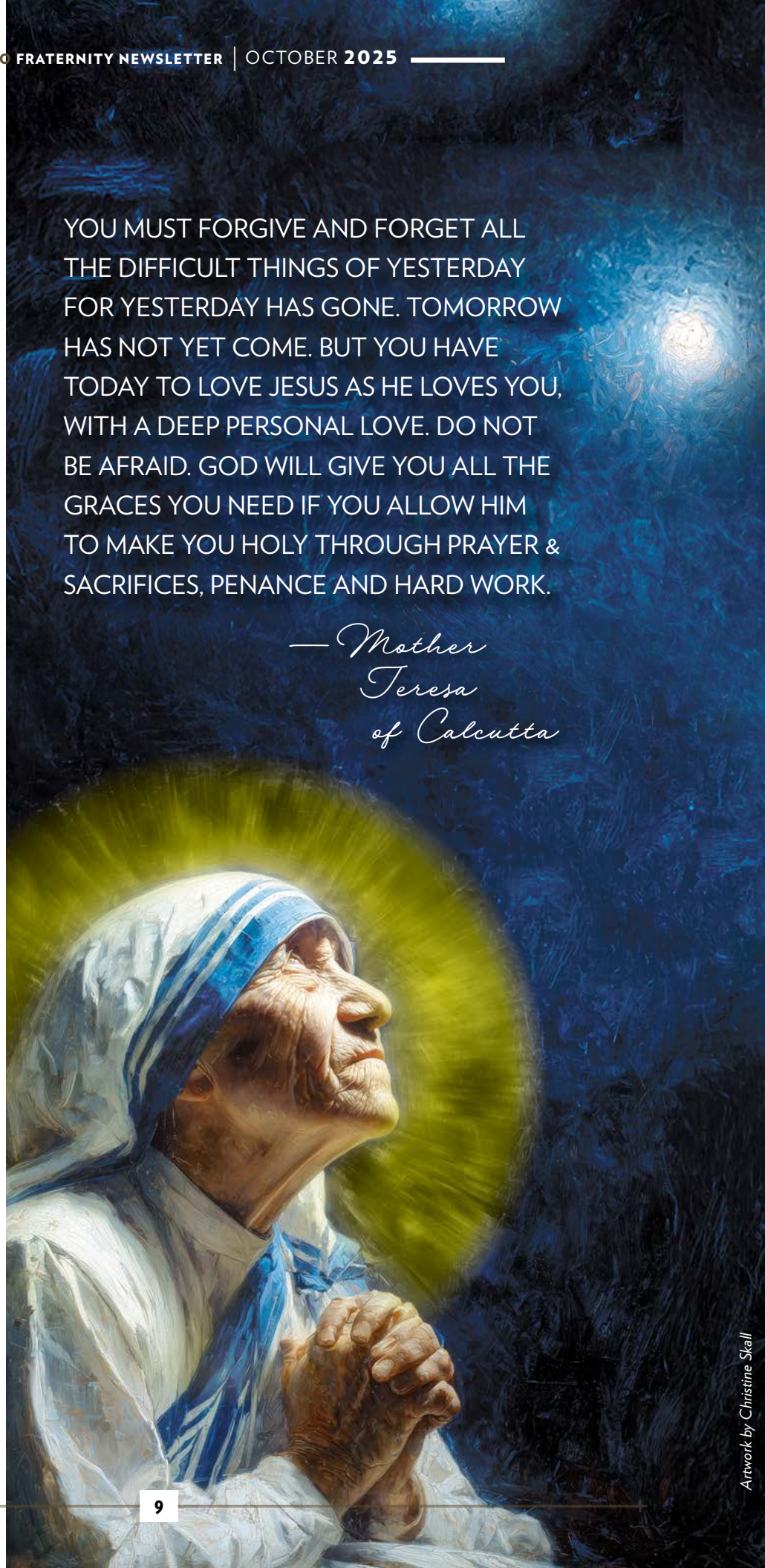
RETREAT

Fr. Tim Kulbicki, OFM Conv., pastor of the UNC-Chapel Hill Newman Center, will be presenting on the Incarnation. Don't miss this special time together with fellow Franciscans. ➔ **Newman Catholic Student Center**, 218 Pittsboro St, Chapel Hill, NC 27516, 919-929-3730



YOU MUST FORGIVE AND FORGET ALL THE DIFFICULT THINGS OF YESTERDAY FOR YESTERDAY HAS GONE. TOMORROW HAS NOT YET COME. BUT YOU HAVE TODAY TO LOVE JESUS AS HE LOVES YOU, WITH A DEEP PERSONAL LOVE. DO NOT BE AFRAID. GOD WILL GIVE YOU ALL THE GRACES YOU NEED IF YOU ALLOW HIM TO MAKE YOU HOLY THROUGH PRAYER & SACRIFICES, PENANCE AND HARD WORK.

— Mother
Teresa
of Calcutta



Artwork by Christine Skell

Padre Pio Fraternity GATHERING

NOTES

A RECAP OF THE MOST RECENT FRATERNITY GATHERING. Highlights and discussion points from the July Fraternity Gathering are noted below.

Gathering HIGHLIGHTS

— WRITTEN BY —
CHRISTINE SKALL



September's Fraternity Gathering focused on St. Francis's beautiful "**Canticle of The Creatures**", a great poem (and religious song) that sums up the whole of Francis' spirituality.

It is also known as "**The Canticle of the Sun**" and "**Laudes Creaturarum**", and was originally written in an Umbrian dialect of Italian but has since been translated into many languages.

HISTORY OF THE CANTICLE OF CREATURES

It is believed to be the first work of literature written in the Italian language with a known author and was composed in San Damiano, Assisi and in the Vescovado (for the last two stanzas).

MAIN TOPIC:
"MEDITATION ON THE
CANTICLE OF CREATURES"



Artwork by Christine Skall

The Canticle of the Sun in its praise of God thanks Him for such creations as "*Brother Fire*" and "*Sister Water*". It is an affirmation of

Francis' deep personal spirituality as he often referred to animals as brothers and Mankind to sisters, and rejected material accumulation

TABLE DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1 How has journeying with the secular Franciscans helped me to grow in my understanding of Francis's love for God's creation?
- 2 What have been any obstacles for me?
- 3 In what was shared, what resonated with me?
- 4 How am I being called to be a better steward of God's gift of creation?

and sensual comforts in favor of "*Lady Poverty*".

Saint Francis is said to have composed most of the canticle in late 1224 while recovering from an illness at San Damiano, in a small cottage that had been built for him by Saint Clare and other women from her order of Poor Clares. According to tradition, the first time it was sung in its entirety was by Francis

See **GATHERING**,
NEXT PAGE ➡

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*The Canticle
of Creatures*

**Yours are the praises, the glory, and the honor,
and all blessing, To You alone, Most High, do they belong,
and no human is worthy to mention Your Name.**

+ **Praised be You, My Lord**, through Sister Moon and the stars,
in heaven You formed them clear and precious and beautiful.
Praised be You, My Lord, through Brother Wind,
and through the air, cloudy and serene, and every kind of weather,
through whom You give sustenance to Your creatures.

+ **Praised be You, My Lord**, through Sister Water,
who is very useful and humble and precious and chaste.

+ **Praised be You, My Lord**, through Brother Fire,
through whom You light the night,
and he is beautiful and playful and robust and strong.

+ **Praised be You, My Lord**, through our Sister Mother Earth,
who sustains and governs us, and who produces
various fruit with colored flowers and herbs.

+ **Praised be You, My Lord**, through those who give pardon
for Your Love, and bear infirmity and tribulation.
Blessed are those who endure in peace
for by You, Most High, shall they be crowned.

+ **Praised be You, My Lord**, through our Sister Bodily Death,
from whom no one living can escape.
Woe to those who die in mortal sin.
Blessed are those whom death will find in Your Most Holy Will,
for the second death shall do them no harm.

+ Praise and bless My Lord and give Him thanks
and serve Him with great humility.

St. Francis

Artwork by Christine Skall

A popular legend notes that St. Francis did not physically write the Canticle, because of his

blindness from an eye disease; but he dictated it to his companions and he did it “looking at Nature through the eye of the mind”. (The legend frames his blindness as a way for him to see “with the inner eye of his mind”.) Father Eric Doyle wrote: *“Though physically blind, he was able to*

“THOUGH PHYSICALLY BLIND, HE WAS ABLE TO SEE MORE CLEARLY THAN EVER WITH THE INNER EYE OF HIS MIND. WITH UNPARALLELED CLARITY HE PERCEIVED THE BASIC UNITY OF ALL CREATION AND HIS OWN PLACE AS A FRIAR IN THE MIDST OF GOD’S CREATURES. HIS UNQUALIFIED LOVE OF ALL CREATURES, GREAT AND SMALL, HAD GROWN INTO UNITY IN HIS OWN HEART. HE WAS SO OPEN TO REALITY THAT IT FOUND A PLACE TO BE AT HOME IN HIS HEART AND HE WAS AT HOME EVERYWHERE AND ANYWHERE. HE WAS A CENTRE OF COMMUNION WITH ALL CREATURES.”

— FATHER ERIC DOYLE, O.F.M.
Franciscan Institute Publications

The Canticum of the Sun is first mentioned in the *Vita Prima* of Thomas of Celano in 1228.

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GATHERING

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A GUIDED MEDITATION

Gladys Whitehouse, OFS led a wonderful meditation on The Canticum of Creatures, with reflections on each stanza, and allowed time for silence and personal reflection after each stanza. Fraternity members are also invited to spend some time outdoors to prayerfully enjoy the beauty of nature, God's wondrous creation. We will include the guided meditation on the next page so that you can use it for your own prayer and meditation.



Gladys Whitehouse, OFS leads a guided meditation on “The Canticale of Creatures”.

ANOTHER BIG WELCOME

The Padre Pio fraternity joyfully welcomed 3 more aspirants at its gathering on Sunday, September 28. In a beautiful ceremony led by formation director Gladys Whitehouse, the following members were welcomed: **Rula Osta, Dale Zagiba** and **Lori Zagiba**. They were united with their sponsors who volunteered to accompany them on the journey. Formators for this group are Lee Cunningham, OFS; Rachel Bongiorno, OFS; and Victoria Romero, OFS.



As part of the meditation on “The Canticle of Creatures”, members were invited to spend some time in reflection outdoors, enjoying the beauty and sounds of God’s creation.

- Ceremony of Welcoming -



From left, aspirants Dale Zagiba, Rula Osta and Lori Zagiba were welcomed by the Padre Pio Fraternity at the September Fraternity gathering.

THE PADRE PIO FRATERNITY JOYFULLY WELCOMED 3 NEW ASPIRANTS AT IT'S GATHERING ON SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 28. THE MEMBERS WERE WELCOMED IN A BEAUTIFUL CEREMONY LED BY FORMATION DIRECTOR GLADYS WHITEHOUSE.

Photos by Christine Skall

GATHERING ++++++

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MEDITATION ON

The Canticle of the Creatures



In invite you to sit comfortably, perhaps close your eyes and simply listen to the words being spoken. There will be pauses for some silence and time for personal reflection.

(Read First Stanza)

— Pause —

Take a moment to praise God in our own words. How might you greet him?

(Read Second Stanza) BROTHER SUN

— Pause —

Imagine yourself to be standing in the radiance of sunlight. Brother sun reminds us that in God's light, we see light itself.

— Pause —

Most High One, May I walk in Your Light.

(Read Third Stanza) MOON & STARS

— Pause —

Now we are in the darkness of night and look up to the sky and see the brilliance of the moon, and in the sparkling of the stars.

— Pause —

May the brilliance of Your Presence Lord, awaken in me Your Wonder and Glory.

(Read Fourth Stanza) BROTHER MOON

— Pause —

Can you recall a time when the wind swept over you to refresh and sustain you?

— Pause —

Gracious One, sweep over me now and sustain me in Your Love.

(Read Fifth Stanza) SISTER WATER

— Pause —

O God, You are my God. For You my body yearns, for You my soul thirsts. When have I thirsted for You my God?

(Read Sixth Stanza) BROTHER FIRE

— Pause —

Imagine sitting by a fire in the evening, the warmth and glow of its flames removing the chill of the night, offering you renewed vigor.

— Pause —

Gracious One, enkindle in me the fire of Your Love.

(Read Seventh Stanza) MOTHER EARTH

— Pause —

May we care for this gift of Mother Earth who delights us with her beauty and nourishes our bodies.

— Pause —

Good Lord, teach me Your ways, that I might be a good steward of Sister Mother Earth.

(Read Eighth Stanza) FORGIVENESS

— Pause —

Recall a time when you have been forgiven.

— Pause —

All Powerful One, You have not dealt with me as my sins merit, nor requited me as my wrongs deserve. Your mercy is from age to age.

(Read Ninth Stanza) SISTER BODILY DEATH

— Pause —

May we welcome our bodily death as Francis did, trusting in God's goodness.

— Pause —

My soul rests in God alone, from Whom comes my salvation, my hope.

(Read Tenth Stanza) PRAISE

— Pause —

In the silence of our hearts, let us now offer praise to our God and thank Him for all of these gifts.



[MEET A FELLOW FRANCISCAN]

EACH MONTH WE GET TO KNOW ONE OF OUR FRATERNITY MEMBERS A LITTLE BETTER :)

Beth Lyon

A loving child of God whose love, trust, faith, loyalty and joy has never waivered

1 In two minutes or less, tell us a little about your background (family, occupation, heritage, etc.).

Originally from New England, I am the third child of a large Irish Catholic family. I have 5 siblings. I am a retired veterinary technician, after having worked in the profession 35 years.

I volunteer for three different animal rescues, specifically working with hospice and behavioral cases. I currently work as a nanny for 3 children, ages 7, 4, 2 and another due in February.

2 Tell us a little about your faith and your relationship with God.

My faith in God and the Catholic Church is a gift given me as a young child. Both my parents were devout and lovingly passed their joy and trust in God, Jesus, the Holy Spirit and Mary onto me. My trust, faith and loyalty has never waivered.

3 Why did you feel called to become a Secular Franciscan?

I began feeling a calling to Religious life in the 8th grade. Although paths and choices I have made led me in different directions, the calling remained. I have always felt a kinship with St. Francis and especially St. Clare, and so this is a natural journey at this stage in my life.

4 What stage are you at in your Franciscan journey? (Are you a visitor, orientee, inquirer, candidate or are you already professed and when?)

I began in January of 2025. I am an Inquirer with deep conviction to reaching candidacy and profession.

5 What do you feel you gain from being a part of the Secular Franciscan community?

A sense of fellowship and community service. My relationship and devotion to God has solely been me and Him. I am wanting to live through the Gospel by service to others daily.

6 What do you feel that you can offer to the Secular Franciscan community?

My desire to serve and listen, learn. I am a hard, loyal worker and enjoy serving in fellowship.

7 What do you feel, as a Franciscan, that you can offer to others out there?

My empathy, sense of humor and compassion. I have done several years volunteer work in the women's prison system which I really enjoy. I am eager to volunteer with the homeless



Beth Lyon displays her usual glowing smile :)



Along with 14 other aspirants, Beth Lyon was joyfully welcomed at the Padre Pio Fraternity gathering on Sunday, August 24 in a beautiful Welcoming Ceremony.

See BETH, NEXT PAGE ➡

BETH

➔ Continued from PREVIOUS PAGE



Martyrdom of San Lorenzo,
by Palma il giovane, in San
Giacomo dall'Orio (Venice)

— SOURCE: WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

St. Lawrence, martyred by being grilled alive. Before he died, it is said Lawrence bravely told his executioners, “Turn me over. I’m done on this side”

and have a world of experience and knowledge with animal rescue and rehabilitation.


8 We already know you love Saint Francis. Do you have another favourite Saint? Why does that Saint appeal to you?

St. Lawrence - his sense of humor captured me the instant I read about him.

9 If you would like to, please name some other favourite Saints.

St. Padre Pio, St. Elizabeth (cousin of Mary), St. Monica, St. John Paul II, St. Jude, St. Gertrude the Great, St. Joan of Arc, St. Katherine Drexel.

10 Share a favourite quotation from one of the Saints that has meant a lot to you.

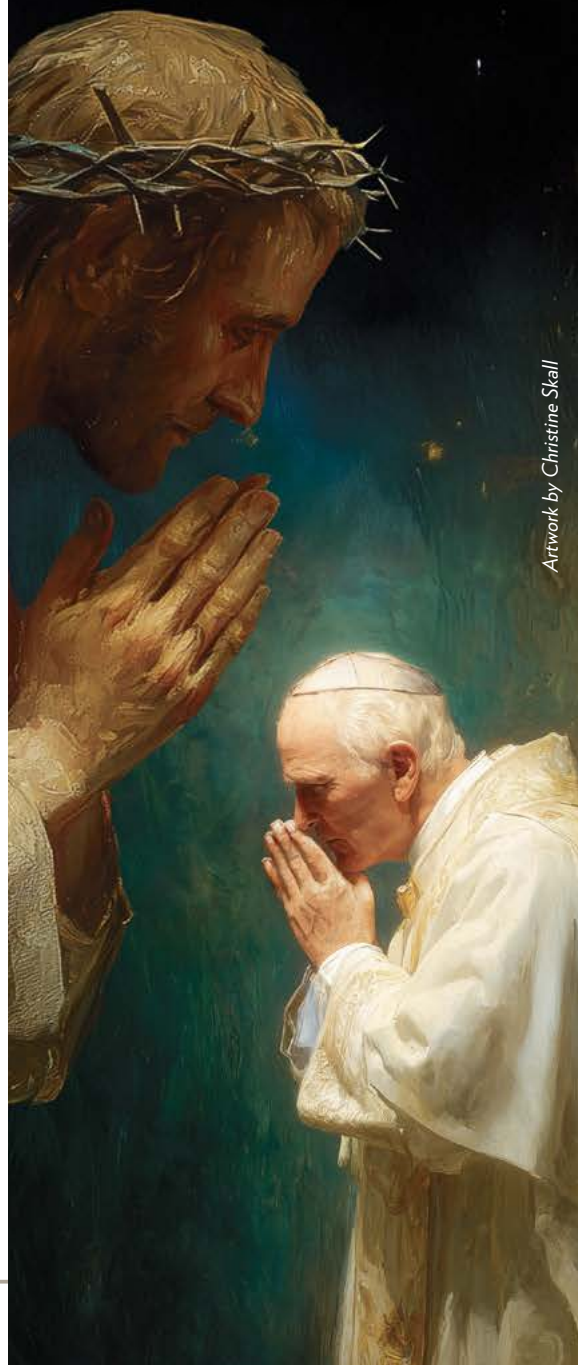
St. Lawrence, martyred by being grilled alive. St. Lawrence’s last words were “*It is well done. Turn me Over!*” 

“ BOTH MY PARENTS WERE DEVOUT AND LOVINGLY PASSED THEIR JOY AND TRUST IN GOD, JESUS, THE HOLY SPIRIT AND MARY ONTO ME.”

BETH LYON
CHILD OF GOD,
ANIMAL RESCUER

THE MORE READY
YOU ARE TO GIVE
YOURSELF TO
GOD AND TO
OTHERS, THE MORE
YOU DISCOVER
THE AUTHENTIC
MEANING OF LIFE...

— St. John
Paul ii



Artwork by Christine Skall

[PRAYERS & DEVOTIONS]

— HENRI NOUWEN SPIRITUALITY —



The Pope's PRAYER INTENTIONS

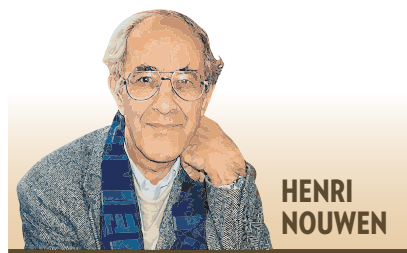
FOR COLLABORATION BETWEEN DIFFERENT RELIGIOUS TRADITIONS

Let us pray that believers in different religious traditions might work together to defend and promote peace, justice, and human fraternity.

— SOURCE: USCCB.ORG

LOVE THE MADONNA and pray the Rosary, for her Rosary is the weapon against the evils of the world today. All the graces given by God pass through the Blessed Mother.

A Prayer of
St. Padre Pio



DAILY MEDITATION

To relearn what praying for the world means, we have to realize that the burden of the world has become a light burden because of Jesus. When God saw how humanity's sin made the world an unbearable burden – a burden of painful birth and hard labor, competition and rivalry, anger and resentment, violence and war, sickness and death – God showed us infinite mercy in sending Jesus, not to take our burden. He destroyed its fatal power by offering it to God through his voluntary death on

the cross. Thus Jesus made an unbearable burden bearable. We now have a companion who has tasted the agony of humanity more fully and deeply than any other person in history.

— HENRI NOUWEN, *The Road to Peace*

**“ BUT GOD
DEMONSTRATES HIS
OWN LOVE FOR US
IN THIS: WHILE
WE WERE STILL
SINNERS, CHRIST
DIED FOR US. ”**

— ROMANS 5:8

“ Compassion asks us to go where it hurts, to enter into the places of pain, to share in brokenness, fear, confusion, and anguish. Compassion challenges us to cry out with those in misery, to mourn with those who are lonely, to weep with those in tears. Compassion requires us to be weak with the weak, vulnerable with the vulnerable, and powerless with the powerless. Compassion means full immersion in the condition of being human. ”

— HENRI NOUWEN

Litany of The Most Precious Blood

have mercy on us
have mercy on us
have mercy on us
You have made us a
kingdom to serve our God.

The Anima Christi

Amen.



SPECIAL
MONTHLY
SERIES!

[PRAYERS & DEVOTIONS cont.]

REFLECTIONS & PRAYERS from *Divine Intimacy*

[EDITOR'S NOTE. Baronius Press, the publisher of *Divine Intimacy: Meditations on the Interior Life for Every Day of the Liturgical Year*, has kindly given us permission to share some meditations from this beautiful book. I read this book daily and cannot express enough how it has impacted my spiritual journey in the most beautiful and deeply enriching way, and so I would love to share some of these meditations with you also. If you would like to purchase the book so that you can read it in its entirety it is available from www.baronius.com/divine-intimacy.html.]

Simplicity

PRESENCE OF GOD - O Lord, give me a simple heart, free from duplicity and deceit, a heart which goes to You with childlike simplicity.

MEDITATION

1. Simplicity is a virtue very much like sincerity, its indispensable foundation, but one which surpasses it when perfect, embracing man's whole moral life and reducing it to unity. Simplicity excludes every form of duplicity and complication stemming from egoism, self-love, or attachment to self and to creatures; hence it impels the soul in one direction only: to God, to live for Him, to please Him, and to give glory to Him. The whole spiritual

O Lord, would that I could go to You by the straight path of truth and simplicity! Grant to my soul that right intention, that simple gaze which desires to please You alone and pays no heed to the interpretations put on its actions by others.

Teach me to see with the eyes of FAITH...

Teach me to go straight to the inmost depths of my soul, where You abide...

Teach me to go directly where YOUR WILL calls me, without any curiosity or distraction...

Teach me to follow the straight path of LOVE, which knows no delay; of SIMPLICITY, which knows no deviation; of TRUTH, which knows no deceit; of OBEDIENCE, which knows no objections; of PURITY, which knows not the fascination of creatures; of RECOLLECTION, which knows not distractions...

This is the path which pleases You, O Jesus, the one You wished to call the straight path...



Artwork by Christine Skall

See DIVINE INTIMACY, NEXT PAGE ➡

DIVINE INTIMACY+++++

➤ Continued from PREVIOUS PAGE

life consists in this progressive simplification which proceeds at an equal pace with interior purification. When a soul is perfectly purified from every passion and attachment, then is it reduced to perfect simplicity, that simplicity which makes it live only in God and for God. To reach this goal, we must, during our whole life, let ourselves be guided in everything by one light alone; we must rely on one power alone, and seek but one end: God.

A soul who wishes to acquire holy simplicity accepts no light but that which comes from God, which is God Himself; therefore, it puts aside its selfish and egoistic point of view; it rejects the deceptive voice of the passions and the blinding but false maxims of the world, knowing that all is darkness and illusion except the light of truth which can come from God alone, from His law, from the Gospel. It judges all things in the light of faith, seeing the hand of God in every circumstance and happening, even the most painful. It makes use of everything to go to Him, without wasting time in reasoning about the conduct of creatures, for to do so would complicate its life and create obstacles to the practice of virtue. Nothing holds it back in its rapid pace, because it finds in God, not only the light by which to see the right path, but also the strength to pursue it. A simple soul leans on God at every moment, at every step of its life, seeking in Him its sole support and strength. In whatever difficulty it finds itself, it immediately looks to God for help, and with complete confidence, convinced that only in Him will it find the strength necessary to sustain its weakness, and

Simplicity...

*impels the soul
in one direction
only: to God, to
live for Him,
to please Him,
and to give glory
to Him....*

Artwork by Christine Skall

**“O LORD, WOULD THAT
I COULD GO TO YOU BY
THE STRAIGHT PATH OF
TRUTH AND SIMPLICITY!
GRANT TO MY SOUL
THAT RIGHT INTENTION,
THAT SIMPLE GAZE
WHICH DESIRES TO
PLEASE YOU ALONE
AND PAYS NO HEED TO
THE INTERPRETATIONS
PUT ON ITS ACTIONS BY
OTHERS... TEACH ME TO
GO DIRECTLY WHERE
YOUR WILL CALLS ME”**

**SR. CARMELA OF THE
HOLY SPIRIT, O.C.D.**

that this strength will never be refused. It is not prevented, however, from seeking the help of wise, prudent persons, but it does so with detachment, and does not become troubled or disturbed when God permits it to be deprived of this help.

2. In everything, a simple soul considers but one end, God, and has but one intention, to serve God and to please Him. Therefore, it watches very carefully lest any secondary intention arising from self-love ever insinuate itself into its actions, as, for example, a desire of making a good appearance, of procuring the esteem of others, or of satisfying its own curiosity

See DIVINE INTIMACY,
NEXT PAGE ➤

DIVINE INTIMACY+++++

➔ Continued from PREVIOUS PAGE

or love of ease. These secondary intentions are like the little foxes of which the Cantic of Canticles speaks; they stealthily penetrate into the blossoming vine of the soul and destroy the flowers and fruits of our good works. How many good actions begun out of love for God, lose at least half their value because, before they are completed, they are contaminated by some secondary intention not sufficiently suppressed or rectified! And how many others which also began well are transformed into evil by lack of rectitude in the intention. The simple soul has declared war on all such deviations and repeats with St. Francis de Sales: “My God, if I knew that even one fibre of my heart did not beat for You, I would tear it out at once and throw it far from me.” Purity of intention makes all its words and actions simple, clearly reflecting its thoughts and intentions. Its language is simple: “Yes, yes; no, no” (*Mt 5,37*); its conduct is simple: it does what it should without pretense or dissimulation. It fears nothing because it is seeking only God and His approval, it acts with the holy liberty of the children of God, without human respect, without preoccupying itself with the judgment and approval of creatures: “He that judgeth me is the Lord,” it says with St. Paul (*1 Cor 4,4*), and continues on its way, looking only at God. Thus, free from all cares and useless preoccupations, the simple soul goes straight to God, as rapidly and as directly as an arrow. The one light, the one strength, the one end of its life is God, and because of this, its whole life attains a purity, a strength, and an enchanting unity—a pale reflection of the divine perfections.

**“MY GOD, IF I KNEW
THAT EVEN ONE FIBRE
OF MY HEART DID
NOT BEAT FOR YOU, I
WOULD TEAR IT OUT
AT ONCE AND THROW
IT FAR FROM ME.”**

ST. FRANCES DE SALES



COLLOQUY

“O Lord, would that I could go to You by the straight path of truth and simplicity! Grant to my soul that right intention, that simple gaze which desires to please You alone and pays no heed to the interpretations put on its actions by others.

“Teach me to see with the eyes of faith, to see You alone in my superiors, so that my relations with them will be marked by frankness, respect, esteem, confidence,

obedience and docility. As for myself, grant that I may go right to the center of my nothingness and remain there without preoccupations about myself, eliminating all scruples and melancholy, all disturbance. Teach me to go straight to the inmost depths of my soul, where You abide.

“Grant that, when dealing with my neighbor, I may always follow the straight path of the love of pure benevolence, loving You in him and not seeking any natural satisfaction.

“In the midst of the vicissitudes and unexpected events of life, teach me to go directly where Your will calls me, without any curiosity or distraction. Teach me to follow the straight path of love, which knows no delay; of simplicity, which knows no deviation; of truth, which knows no deceit; of obedience, which knows no objections; of purity, which knows not the fascination of creatures; of recollection, which knows not distractions.

“This is the path which pleases You, O Jesus, the one You wished to call the straight path: ‘Ego sum via rectissima,’ I am the straightest way (*Imit. III, 56,1*). This is the way which leads to the Father, for You have said, ‘No man goes to the Father but by Me.’ ‘This is the way by which the Holy Spirit guides us, for Wisdom leads the just man by straight ways!’

“Therefore, I beseech You, O God, with a fervent, trustful desire, to create in me a pure heart and to renew in me Your Spirit. May Your good Spirit guide me by the straight path!” (Sr. Carmela of the Holy Spirit, O.C.D.)

— SOURCE: FROM DIVINE INTIMACY: MEDITATIONS ON THE INTERIOR LIFE FOR EVERY DAY OF THE LITURGICAL YEAR, pp. 828-830. Translated by the Discalced Carmelite Nuns of Boston from the original Italian edition INTIMITÀ DIVINA DEL P. GABRIELLE DI S. MARIA MADDALENA. © Monastero S. Giuseppe – Carmelitane Scalze. Published by Baronius Press, www.baroniuspress.com. Used with permission.

[PRAYERS & DEVOTIONS cont.]

THE POWERFUL *Five First Saturdays* DEVOTION

The Five First Saturdays devotion is one of the principal points of the Fatima message. It centers on the urgent need for mankind to offer reparation and expiate for the many injuries that the Immaculate Heart of Mary suffers from the hands of both impious and indifferent men.

ON THE FIRST SATURDAY DURING 5 CONSECUTIVE MONTHS, THE DEVOTION CONSISTS OF:

1. GOING TO CONFESSION:

If you are not able to go to confession on the First Saturday, you can fulfill this part of the Five First Saturdays devotion by confessing within eight days either before or after the First Saturday, provided you are in the state of grace and have the intention of making reparation to the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

2. RECEIVING THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

By going to Confession you will also ensure that you receive Holy Communion worthily, in a state of grace.

3. SAYING FIVE DECADES OF THE ROSARY:

You also gain a Plenary Indulgence for this! A plenary indulgence is granted for reciting five decades of the Rosary in a Catholic church or in a family group, religious community or pious association.

4. MEDITATING FOR 15 MINUTES ON THE MYSTERIES OF THE ROSARY:

Keep Our Lady company for at least 15 minutes, meditating on the mysteries

See ROSARY, NEXT PAGE ➡



ROSARY

➡ *Continued from* **PREVIOUS PAGE**

of the Rosary, following the Rosary. These actions, offered with the intention of making reparation, are meant to console the Immaculate Heart of Mary and to obtain the promise of assistance at the hour of death with the graces necessary for salvation.

NOTE: If you miss doing one of these (Confession, Holy Communion, 5-Decade Rosary, 15-Minute Meditation on the Mysteries) during this period you must start the entire five-month series again.

WHY FIVE SATURDAYS?

Sister Lucia's confessor questioned her about the reason for the five Saturdays asking why not seven or nine. She answered him in a letter dated June 12, 1930. In it she related about a vision she had of Our Lord while staying in the convent chapel part of the night of the twenty-ninth to the thirtieth of the month of May, 1930.

The reasons Our Lord gave were as follows:

- Blasphemies against the Immaculate Conception
- Blasphemies against her virginity
- Blasphemies against her divine maternity, at the same time the refusal to accept her as the Mother of all men
- Instilling indifference, scorn and even hatred towards this Immaculate Mother in the hearts of children
- Direct insults against Her sacred images

Let us keep the above reasons firmly in our minds. Devotions have intentions attached to them and knowing them adds merit and weight to the practice.

HISTORY, IMPORTANCE & PROMISES OF THIS DEVOTION

During the third apparition on July 13, 1917, Our Lady revealed that she would come to ask for the consecration of Russia to her Immaculate Heart and for the Communion of Reparation of the Five First Saturdays. Consequently, she asked for the devotion in 1925 and the consecration in 1929.

While staying at the House of the Dorothean Sister in Pontevedra, Spain, Sister Lucia received a vision on December 10, 1925 where the Blessed Mother appeared alongside a Boy who stood over a luminous cloud. Our Lady rested one hand on the Boy's shoulder while she held on the other hand a heart pierced with thorns around it.

Sister Lucia heard the Boy say, *“Have pity on the Heart of your Most Holy Mother which is covered with thorns with which ingrate men pierce it at every moment with no one to make an act of reparation to pull them out.”*

Our Lady expressed her request in the following words...

“SEE, MY DAUGHTER, MY HEART SURROUNDED WITH THORNS WITH WHICH INGRATES PIERCE ME AT EVERY MOMENT WITH BLASPHEMIES AND INGRATITUDE.

YOU, AT LEAST, MAKE SURE TO CONSOLE ME AND ANNOUNCE THAT ALL THOSE WHO FOR FIVE MONTHS, ON THE FIRST SATURDAYS, GO TO CONFESSION, RECEIVE COMMUNION, SAY FIVE DECADES OF THE ROSARY AND KEEP ME COMPANY FOR 15 MINUTES MEDITATING ON THE MYSTERIES OF THE ROSARY, WITH THE PURPOSE OF MAKING REPARATION TO ME, I PROMISE TO ASSIST THEM AT THE HOUR OF DEATH WITH ALL THE GRACES NECESSARY FOR THE SALVATION OF THEIR SOULS.”

– **OUR LADY**, December 10, 1925

The first official sculpture of Our Lady of Fatima, known as the "International Pilgrim Virgin Statue," was sculpted by José Thedim in 1947, following the descriptions of the seer Sister Lucia dos Santos. This statue has traveled the world to spread the message of Fatima, while another significant statue, also by Thedim, was created in 1920 for the Chapel of the Apparitions at the Fatima Shrine, incorporating the bullet from the 1981 assassination attempt on Pope John Paul II in its crown.



— SOURCE: WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

See **ROSARY, NEXT PAGE ➡**

ROSARY

➡ Continued from PREVIOUS PAGE

A few days afterward, Sister Lucia detailed this vision in a letter addressed to Monsignor Manuel Pereira Lopes, her confessor when she resided in the Asylum of Vilar in the city of Oporto, Portugal.

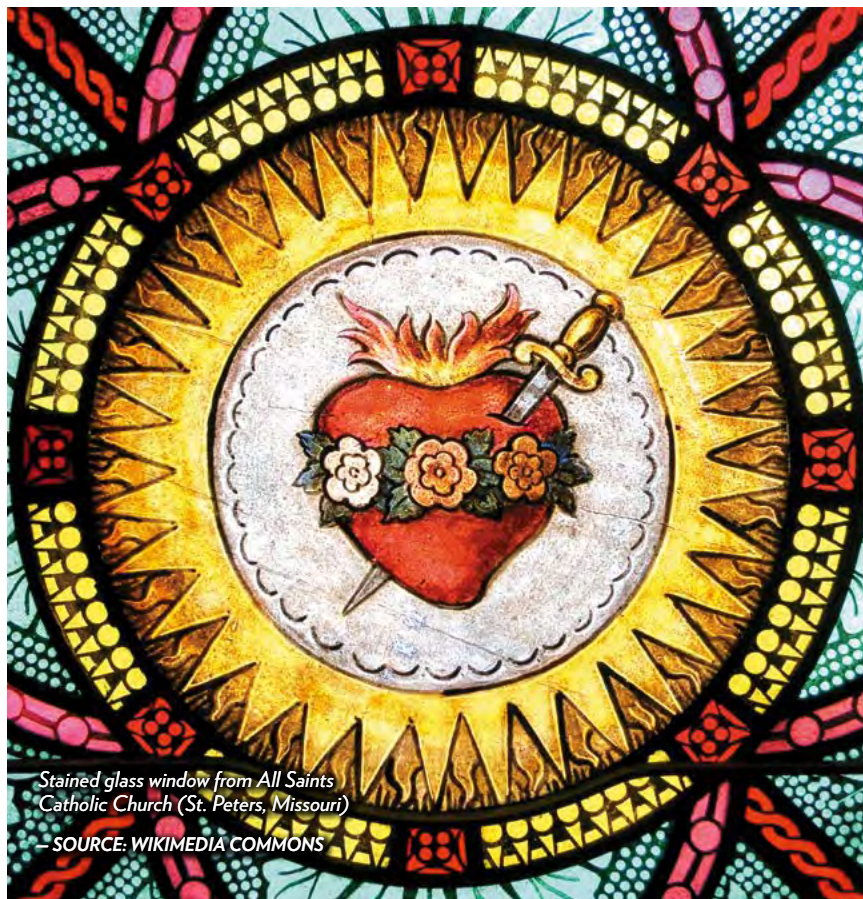
MODIFICATIONS TO THE FIVE FIRST SATURDAYS DEVOTION TO FACILITATE ITS OBSERVATION

The original request of Our Lady asks one to confess and receive Communion on five consecutive first Saturdays; to say five decades of the Rosary; to meditate during 15 minutes on the mysteries of the Rosary for the purpose of making reparation to the Immaculate Heart of Mary in reparation for the sins of men.

In subsequent private visions and apparitions however, Sister Lucia presented to Our Lord the difficulties that devotees encountered in fulfilling some conditions. With loving condescension and solicitude, Our Lord deigned to relax the rules to make this devotion easy to observe:

- Confession may be done on other days other than the First Saturdays so long as one receives Our Lord worthily and has the intention of making reparation to the Immaculate Heart of Mary.
- Even if one forgets to make the intention, it may be done on the next confession, taking advantage of the first occasion to go to confession.
- Sister Lucia also clarified that it is not necessary to meditate on ALL mysteries of the Rosary on each First Saturdays. One or several suffice.

With much latitude granted
by Our Lord Himself, there



*Stained glass window from All Saints
Catholic Church (St. Peters, Missouri)*

— SOURCE: WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

is no reason for the faithful
to hesitate or delay this
pious practice in the spirit of
reparation which the Immaculate
Heart of Mary urgently asks.
Promises and Indulgences:


THIS DEVOTION IS SO NECESSARY IN OUR DAYS

The culture of vice and sin remains unabated even as one reads this. Abortion, blasphemy, drug abuse, pornography, divorce and bad marriages, religious indifference, the advances of the homosexual agenda and others are just some of society's many plagues that cut deeply into the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

We must console Our Lady
amidst all these insults and
injuries to her and her Divine

Son. She asks for reparation, she pleads for our prayers, she hopes for our amendment of life. Let us listen to her maternal pleas and atone for the ingratitude of men.

The First Five Saturdays devotion stimulates the spirit of reparation; it instills a tender love for the Holy Sacraments of Confession and the Blessed Eucharist. It nurtures a holy affection for the Immaculate Heart of Mary and the Rosary. Above all, it is an excellent means to maintain one in the state of grace while immersed in the daily spiritual battles and prosaic existence in the neo-pagan world that we live in.

Let us not delay in observing this devotion for it too gives us hope for eternal salvation. 

— SOURCE: *America Needs Fatima*

[BOOK STUDY]

FRANCISCAN VIRTUES THROUGH THE YEAR

52 Steps to Conversion
from St. Francis of Assisi

[EDITOR'S NOTE. "Confraternity of Penitents", the publisher of "Franciscan Virtues Through The Year", has kindly given us permission to "republish" this book in our newsletter. We are publishing "one virtue" (one chapter) a month in each newsletter until we have completed the book. If you missed Part One please feel free to go back to the Fraternity's August Newsletter so that you can catch up. If you would like to purchase the book so that you can read it in its entirety it is available from Amazon.com and franciscanthirdorderpenitents.com.]



PART 3:
COURAGE



Artwork by Christine Skall

REGARDING COURAGE...

SCRIPTURE: "Wait for the LORD, take courage; be stouthearted, wait for the LORD!" (*Psalms 27:14*)

WRITINGS OF ST. FRANCIS

The Lord says: "*Behold I am sending you like sheep in the midst of wolves.*"

Therefore, be prudent as serpents and simple as doves."

That any brother, then, who desires by divine inspiration to go among the Saracens and other nonbelievers, go with the permission of his minister and servant. If he sees they are fit to be sent, the minister may give them permission and not oppose them, for he will be bound to render an accounting to the Lord if he has

proceeded without discernment in this and other matters. (*The Earlier Rule, Chapter XVI*)

INCIDENT FROM THE LIFE OF SAINT FRANCIS

Although at the time battles were being fought between the Christians and the unbelievers every day, trusting in the Lord he was

See COURAGE, NEXT PAGE ➡➡

[BOOK STUDY cont.]

➤ Continued from PREVIOUS PAGE

VIRTUE **3**
COURAGE Cont.

not afraid to approach the Sultan even at clear peril to his life. After being afflicted with numerous heavy blows and insults, he finally gained a personal audience with the Sultan. (*The life of St. Francis by Julian of Speyer, Chapter VII*)

COURAGE IS NOT FOOLHARDINESS

Courage is the ability to do something that frightens one, and to react with strength in the face of pain or grief. Courage makes difficult things bearable. With courage, we can find a certain joy in the midst of suffering or fear when we acknowledge that God is with us. St. Francis recognized that his Friars would have to have this sort of courage if they were going to go into dangerous situations. Sometimes, we find ourselves

See COURAGE,
NEXT PAGE ➤

WITH COURAGE, WE
CAN FIND A CERTAIN
JOY IN THE MIDST
OF SUFFERING OR
FEAR WHEN WE
ACKNOWLEDGE
THAT GOD IS WITH US

[BOOK STUDY cont.]

COURAGE ++++++

➔ Continued from PREVIOUS PAGE

in dangerous or trying situations which come upon us without our consent. In these times, our courage comes from waiting for God's grace and trusting in His mercy.

YOUR PERSONAL EXERCISE:

† Spend a minimum of five minutes meditating on the Virtue of Courage. Do not write anything during this time. Merely begin your time by praying, "Lord, help me to understand the Virtue of Courage and where I need it in my life."

† At the end of your meditation time, ask yourself: *Do I consider myself a courageous person? Why or why not? Do other people consider me to be courageous? Why or why not? Who do I see as courageous? Why would I call that person courageous? How can I imitate their virtues? Do I want to imitate them? Do I want to be courageous? If not, why not?*

† Find another section in Scripture which illustrates the Virtue of Courage.

† Find a statement of Jesus or an incident in His life that deals with the Virtue of Courage. Write these into your journal.

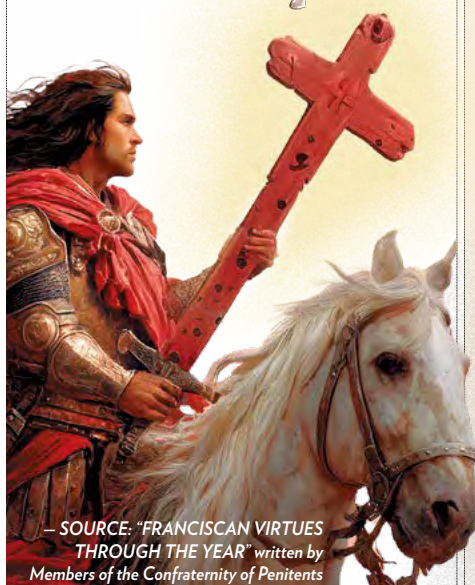
† If you are a member of a Religious Order, find one place in your Rule or Constitutions which

calls for the Virtue of Courage. Explain why you chose this section.

† Practice the Virtue of Courage this week. Record in your journal any memorable insights or happenings.

† Each evening, examine the day for the opportunities you had to show courage. If you cannot remember any opportunities, ask God to show you. Pray, "Lord, I am not as courageous as I would like. Please develop the virtue of courage in me. Please help me to keep my eye on You, and not on myself. Help me to know that You walk with me and that You are holding me up through my day. Let me lean on Your strength and take courage from that. Amen."

† At the end of the week, record in your journal what you have learned from this exercise. ✚



— SOURCE: "FRANCISCAN VIRTUES THROUGH THE YEAR" written by Members of the Confraternity of Penitents

SAINTS OF GREAT COURAGE

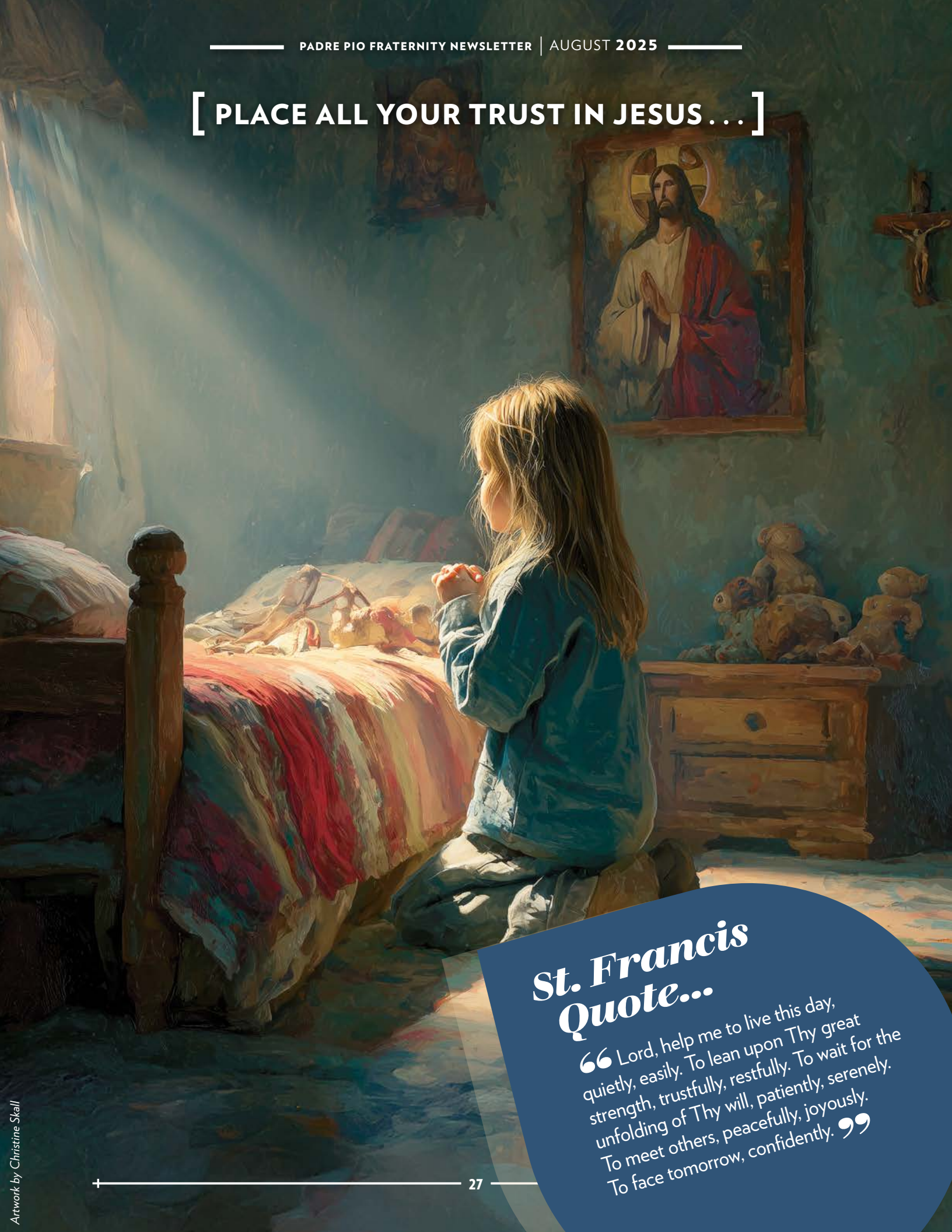
A great saint known for courage is **Saint Michael the Archangel**, the angelic warrior and protector against evil forces, who inspires courage and resolve in facing fears. Michaelmas was recently celebrated September 29 to honor St. Michael, who is recognized as a powerful intercessor and the leader of the heavenly host, symbolizing the triumph of good over evil.

Other examples of courageous saints include **Saint Joseph**, though often silent, showed great courage through his steadfast trust and perseverance in caring for the Holy Family amidst uncertainty; **Saint George**, a soldier who endured torture for his faith; **Saint Joan of Arc**, a teenage leader of armies who faced martyrdom; **Saint Maximilian Kolbe**, who showed profound self-sacrifice in the face of the Holocaust and **Saint Catherine of Siena** is recognized as a powerful voice of courage and faith, advocating for truth and reform. ✚



Artwork by Christine Skall

[PLACE ALL YOUR TRUST IN JESUS...]



St. Francis Quote...

“ Lord, help me to live this day,
quietly, easily. To lean upon Thy great
strength, trustfully, restfully. To wait for the
unfolding of Thy will, patiently, serenely.
To meet others, peacefully, joyously.
To face tomorrow, confidently. ”

[WHO'S WHO]

GET TO KNOW WHO'S WHO
IN OUR FRATERNITY.

EACH AND EVERY MEMBER IS
AN INTEGRAL PART OF OUR
"FRATERNITY UNIT" AS A WHOLE :)

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WEBSITE: OFSCentralNC.org

FACEBOOK: Padre Pio Fraternity
Secular Franciscan Order of
Central North Carolina

Padre Pio Quote

“A single act of love for
God in times of aridity is
worth more than a hundred
in moments of tenderness
and consolation.”

Padre Pio during a mass in Italy

— SOURCE: WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

[JOIN US]

We welcome those who would like to learn more about the
Secular Franciscans. Join us for our monthly gatherings on the
fourth Sunday of each month, beginning at 2:30 p.m.

LOCATION:

Clare Hall at St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church,
11401 Leesville Rd., Raleigh, North Carolina.

DO YOU WANT TO BE MORE INVOLVED IN FRATERNITY LIFE?

Your Fraternity Council is organizing mini committees based on the Four Pillars! Sign up today and have your ideas be heard! Contact Sharon or Rachel for more information. swinzeler@gmail.com or rchlrbnsn@gmail.com



THE FOUR PILLARS OF
SECULAR FRANCISCAN LIFE

ATTENTION!



Is there something you
would like to have shared
with our Fraternity? Send your
articles, photographs and non-
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featured in our monthly newsletter.
Email it to me! talyiana@gmail.com
Any and all content must be submitted
by the 15th of each month at the
latest, to be included in the
next newsletter.