



A MOMENT WITH THE MINISTER

This story comes from the Little Flowers of St. Francis

"How St Francis Passed the Time of Lent on the Lake of Perugia, Where He Fasted Forty Days and Forty Nights, Eating No More Than Half of One Loaf."



St. Francis, on the day of Carnival, was near the Lake of Perugia, in the house of one of his devout children, with whom he had spent the night, when he was inspired by God to go and pass the time of Lent on an island in the lake. Wherefore St. Francis begged his friend, for the love of God, to convey him in his boat to an island uninhabited by man: that which he should do during the night of Ash-Wednesday, so that none might know where he was; and the friend, because of the great devotion he bore to St. Francis, agreed to his request, and conveyed him to the said island, St. Francis taking with him naught but two small loaves.

When they had reached the island, his friend left him and returned home; the saint earnestly entreating him to reveal to no one where he was, and not to come and fetch him before Holy Thursday; to which he consented.

St. Francis being left alone, and there being no dwelling in the island in which he could take shelter, entered into a thick part of the wood



(Continued on page 2)

SPIRITUAL ASSISTANT

The English author, G. K. Chesterton says: *"The soul does not die by sin, but by impenitence."* I think we, as Franciscans, agree with that. More deadly than sin itself is the refusal to acknowledge sin, and to repent of it. Repentance is at the heart of who we are as Franciscans. We are brothers and sisters of penance.



We begin every Lent by having ashes marked on our foreheads. We once again hear the words, *"Repent, and believe in the Gospel."* Every mass begins with an act of repentance. We cry out: *"Lord, have mercy."* In his reflection for Ash Wednesday Fr John Jay Hughes reminds us: *"We appeal to God that on our own we cannot overcome sin and so we ask for mercy. Sin is like addiction. Part of the reason for the success of Alcoholics Anonymous in dealing with the addiction to alcohol is the spiritual soundness of the first two of its twelve points"*.

1. We admitted we were powerless over alcohol - that our lives had become unmanageable.
2. We came to believe that a Power greater than our own could restore us to sanity.

As we begin Lent, we confess our powerlessness, and appeal to the only power that can make us whole. Of course that is so counter-cultural. Our society tell us that we are not powerless. We can do it on our own. We can get our act together. But of course that is not true. So we admit we are powerlessness. We appeal to our God to restore us to sanity.

So King David's prayer of repentance and help becomes our own prayer.

Psalm 51- *The miserere mei, Deus.*

*Have mercy on me, O God,
according to your steadfast love;
according to your abundant mercy
blot out my transgressions.
Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity,
and cleanse me from my sin.
For I know my transgressions,
and my sin is ever before me.
Against you, you alone, have I sinned,
and done what is evil in your sight.
Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean;
wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.*

(Continued on page 2)

(Continued from page 1)

*Create in me a clean heart, O God,
and put a new and right spirit within me.
Do not cast me away from your presence,
and do not take your holy spirit from me.
Restore to me the joy of your salvation,
and sustain in me a willing spirit.
Then I will teach transgressors your ways,
and sinners will return to you.*

Fr. Peter Knaapen O.F.M. Conv

(MINISTER... continued from page 1)

all overgrown with brambles and other creeping plants, and forming as it were a kind of hut. There he began to pray and enter into the contemplation of divine things. And there he passed the whole of Lent without drinking or eating save half of one of the small loaves he had taken with him, as we learned from his friend who, going to fetch him on Holy Thursday, found one of the loaves untouched and the other only half consumed.

It is believed that St. Francis ate this half out of reverence for our Blessed Lord, who fasted forty days and forty nights without taking any material food; for by eating this bit of bread he put aside the temptation to vainglory, and yet fasted forty days and forty nights in imitation of the Saviour.

In later times God worked many miracles, through the merits of the saint, on the spot where St Francis had fasted so wonderfully, on which account people began to build houses and dwell there, and little by little a town rose up, with a convent called the Convent of the Isle; and to this day the inhabitants of that town hold in great respect and great devotion the spot in which St. Francis passed the time of Lent.

As we journey through this Lenten Season may we experience the depth of prayer and love of our Saviour's Passion that St. Francis did on that island in the lake.

*Deus Meus et omnia.
Catherine Payne*



TREASURER'S TWO CENTS

"Health is God's great gift, and we must spend it entirely for Him. Our eyes should see only for God, our feet walk only for Him, our hands labour for Him alone; in short, our entire body should serve God while we still have the time."

— St. John Bosco.

Peace,
Mark Rozario ofs



LENTEN MISSION

St. Philip Neri Parish 2100 Jane Street,
Toronto, ON M3M 1A1, 416-241-3101

March 16 & 30, 2019

guest speaker: Br. Ignatius Feaver, OFM Cap.

March 16:

"He set His Face to go to Jerusalem."

9:30 am to 12 pm in Hall #2:

Our Lenten journey is to go with Jesus to Jerusalem the place of His passion, death and Resurrection.

Register by March 14.

March 30:

Reflection on the San Damiano Cross

9:30 am to 12 pm in Hall #2:

The cross is a visual commentary of the Gospel of St. John of Jesus' death & Resurrection. Prayerful time before the Cross.

Register by March 28.

Br. Ignatius Feaver is a Franciscan Capuchin, an accomplished artist and a sought after retreat master and spiritual director.

Br. Ignatius's friendly personality and stirring reflections makes him easily relatable for all people especially youth and families as he guides all towards Gospel values.



Coffee, tea and muffins will be served upon arrival.

All are welcome to this FREE event.

For more information & to register by March 14 or 28, please call 416-241-3101.

VICE MINISTER

A little bit of Science:

***“He himself is before all things,
and in him all things hold together.”
(Col 1: 17)***



In God’s plan of Salvation, He sent His Son who said that He would be with us until the end of time.

Is the fact that the protein Laminin, that holds the cells of our bodies together and is shaped like a cross, a confirmation of His promise?

The argument will be that the body dies, and along with it the Laminin, but we also have God’s spirit within us which does not die, so He is with us until the end of time. *“For if we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord. So then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord’s.”* (Rom.14:8)

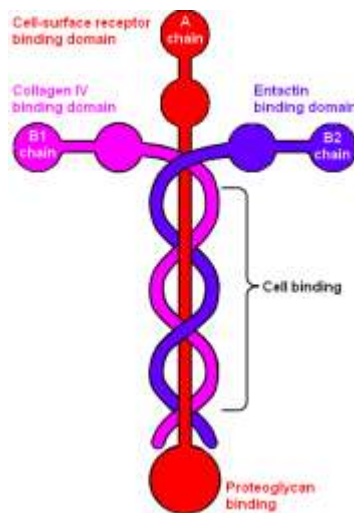
God the Father sent His Son to carry the cross for our redemption. We are the “body of Christ” and so belong to Him, therefore it should not be surprising that we carry the imprint of His mark within us: the cross which holds us together...and what a beautiful cross... He does all things beautiful. Just as we have Laminin in our bodies to hold our cells together, this “cross” that holds us together, we should remind ourselves that we can do nothing without Christ, *“For it is God, who works in you, both to will and to accomplish, according to His good will’* (Phil. 2:13).

We were marked with the Cross to show that we belong to God: whether we are with or without sin we are God’s children; just as He marked Cain and protected him after he killed his brother Abel, so He shows His love for us with His mark.

When we say to others “God be with you,” we do so without thinking of the reality of what we say; because whether in body or Spirit, He really is with us. If we can see with the eyes of our hearts, we will see the manifestation of God’s words in our lives.

Jesus carried His cross with love for us, and because we too carry His mark within us, we should remember, especially at this Lenten season, to reflect on His life, love, and compassion: To go from life to Gospel and Gospel to life.

Teresa Viechweg, ofs



VICE MINISTER



You haven't heard from me for a while, as I have been on medical leave.

I felt in good company to suffer with my Saviour and Francis, who some biographers suggest suffered PTSD following his military service.

I now am experiencing a 'day by day' conversion which is shedding new light on my future direction. With the aid of my Spiritual Director I am figuring this out.

Now we are in the season of Lent: a time of conversion for all of us. No one really cares if you eat chocolate or not; and you shouldn't either. Lent is an inward journey of self examination, without judgement but with renewal.

Lent is a time when Franciscans should examine their commitment to their vocation. Before Francis died He told his followers that he had done what God expected him to do, and they should do the same. Even though this wording is a paraphrase, the meaning is not lost.

My experience on Regional Council has been rich in many ways. Even the tough times were filled with moments of grace. I have learned, at a very deep level, that God means what He says when He warns that His ways are not our ways, or His thoughts our thoughts: another paraphrase. I can't seem to stop doing that!

So I ask you to search your heart. Follow wherever it leads you. Put your vocation **FIRST!!!**

Pax et Bonum!

John Francis OFS



REGIONAL FORMATION DIRECTOR

Every year we take a step back during the Lenten Season to reflect on ways to change so that we can become the person God calls us to be.

To do this, we focus on self-denial and deprivation to help achieve a greater love and union with our God. If we are too busy and too satisfied with life, we may neglect to make room for God. Denying ourselves can help us create the space needed for our Lord to enter more deeply into our hearts.

Jesus “emptied Himself” when He came to earth. He emptied Himself of His glory and comfort. Above all, He emptied Himself of His human life when He died on the cross. Through this humility and emptying, God exalted Jesus above everything because of the way He chose to live. When we empty ourselves, may we make room in our hearts to live for Jesus and allow Him to draw us closer to Himself.

Remember, Jesus promised, “*whoever humbles himself will be exalted*” (Matt. 23:12). Hence during our Lenten Journey may we make ourselves hunger for God. This could involve choosing to eat less food or watch less T.V., or maybe giving up our free time to serve others. Whatever you choose to do, remember it’s not just about emptying ourselves but filling our time with things that will draw us closer to our God: praying and Scripture reading, meditation and reflection, Mass and Confession that help to open us to God’s grace.

May God bless you and your loved ones during this Holy Season of Lent.

Susan Luckasavitch, ofs



FORMATION WORKSHOP April 27, 2019

All formation directors and their teams are invited to St. Philip Neri Church on Saturday, April 27 from 9am – 3pm for a Formation Workshop presented by your Regional Council members.

Bring your own lunch and water bottle,

Tea, coffee and snacks will be provided.

If you want to have **The Franciscan Journey** book available to buy at the workshop, please let Teresa know ASAP so we can have them on hand: tviechweg@sympatico.ca

Please let me know by April 10 so that we can have an idea of how many seats to make available: bpayne@wightman.ca

Thank you! Catherine Payne ofs,

IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF ST. FRANCIS

A new church and mosque are to be built in Abu Dhabi in honour of the landmark visit to the UAE of Pope Francis and Grand Imam, Dr Ahmed Al Tayeb.

The places of worship are to be constructed in celebration of inter-faith relations.

On Feb 4, 2019, Pope Francis and Dr Al Tayeb signed the foundation stone to build the new places of worship, named the Church of Saint Francis and the Mosque of Grand Imam Ahmad Al Tayeb, alongside Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Deputy Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces and Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid, Vice President and Ruler of Dubai.



YOUTH ANIMATOR

"IN THE SILENCE OF THE HEART, YOU SPEAK" is a World Youth Day Reflection
by Samantha Nicole Goh



Christopher Elliott, ofs.

"IN THE SILENCE OF THE HEART, YOU SPEAK" (quoted from *You Speak*, by Audrey Assad)

I had a lot of unanswered questions before my trip to World Youth Day, but God answered questions I didn't even know that I had. The past year, I have been struggling to persevere, to continue to grow in virtue and holiness amongst the busyness of life. I felt like I was just doing what I needed to do and I couldn't feel or hear God... and that was really worrying me. I felt like a hypocrite going to Mass or adoration. Helping out at youth group and attending young adult events, I felt like I was just doing things.

In December of 2017, I had what one would call a *reconversion* during CCO's 'Rise Up' conference and was on this spiritual high. The adoration session was so powerful, that it really jump-started my process of healing from all the hurt of the past year. But that feeling, that wonderful feeling, eventually faded because it was just a feeling. Our love for our God isn't just a feeling; and it took me about a year to understand that I don't need that feeling to *know* that God loves me. I saw Jesus in the people around me, especially in each and every one of the pilgrims I travelled with. I saw God in all the little moments. It was like God was trying to tell me, "Be still, pay close attention. I want to show you my love in the little details around your life."

I hurt my ankle during this pilgrimage, and that experience taught me so much: I don't even know where to begin. It taught me patience, resilience, gratitude and most of all humility. All my life I have struggled with self-confidence which affected my acceptance of praise or affirmation and even acts of love and kindness. I never felt like I deserved it even though time and time again, people around me have showed me I did.

My pilgrimage group went from being strangers to being my family, my brothers and sisters in Christ, in a matter of days, and showed me love that I never thought I deserved. And it was so difficult to accept that love because I felt guilt and the shame, that I was slowing my group down and making this pilgrimage even more challenging because of one careless step. I was receiving all this special attention, constantly being asked how I was feeling, people jumping to my side to help me out and even offering to miss the catechesis sessions so that I didn't have to be alone while I rested in the hotel room. The love that rippled from these beautiful souls was overflowing and endless.

I also saw that love in the Panamanians. As we walked to the sessions every day, cars would be honking, welcoming us to their beautiful country. The streets and the subway trains were all filled with people representing their country, waving and cheering for our Lord. During our walk to the vigil site, we had to cut through a neighbourhood, and the families that lived on that street were greeting us, waving at us, giving and offering everything they could for us pilgrims. People were hosing us down with water because it was a long walk under the blazing sun. There were others offering free water, sun screen and even to use their washrooms in their homes. Seeing this love gave me the strength I needed to complete the journey. I still had crutches when we were walking to the vigil site and this lady that saw me had ran up to me to give me an ankle brace. She didn't speak any English and I barely spoke any Spanish but she saw me in need and offered me that ankle brace even though I already had an ankle wrap on. Her genuine generosity and the simplicity of that gesture really touched my heart. I could tell that these families did not have much to give and yet they were giving everything they could to us. Jesus was so present during that journey, I honestly would not have been able to do it if He did not show himself to me through the kindness of everyone around me that day.

I don't believe in coincidences anymore; it was God's plan for me to meet this wonderful group of people to go on a pilgrimage with. I loved that I was able to share some of the most special moments of this trip with them: like meeting Pope Francis as he drove by on his Pope mobile, not once but four times. It was truly a blessing.

His message to... young people during the opening ceremony was so beautiful.

"It is the quiet love of a hand outstretched to serve, a commitment that draws no attention to itself."

(Continued from page 5)

His message to us young people during the opening ceremony was so beautiful. *“It is the quiet love of a hand outstretched to serve, a commitment that draws no attention to itself.”* And I felt that quiet love: during our small group discussions, in the laughter we shared, and especially in the relationships that we formed. This experience was the perfect example of the theme for this year’s World Youth Day. *“I am the servant of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word.”* - Luke 1:38.

I said my yes to attend this pilgrimage and the gifts I received have been abundant and so full of joy.

Samantha Nicole Goh

A MODEL FOR THE WORLD

(Catholic Register Editorial, January, 2019)

“Young people are not the future of the Church, they are the present.” Pope Francis delivered that message to an estimated crowd of 600,000 young Catholics who packed a park outside Panama City for an all-night vigil and early morning Mass that closed World Youth Day on Jan. 27.

Indeed, much of the current discourse around the Church centres on youth. The news is often unpleasant: from endless stories of young people dismissing Church teaching in favour of secular values to disheartening accounts of clerical sex abuse and cover-ups that have ruined thousands of young lives. But every three years World Youth Day is an opportunity to celebrate Catholic youth and the joy and hope they represent for a Church desperately needing an infusion of both.

World Youth Day lets young people command the stage as living examples of faith in action. Watching them interact with each other and with their faith is so unlike watching the institutional Church and a hierarchy that is widely depicted as closed, humourless, bureaucratic and political. By the hundreds of thousands, young people descend every three years on WYD and portray a Church that is happy, alive, engaged and faithful.



Young people flocked to Panama for an encounter firmly rooted in Catholic faith... with little evident shyness ... that Catholic values are fundamental to who they are and how they will live their lives.

Typically, the event is all but ignored by the world’s secular media. That’s a shame. Few events can bring together like-minded people from all parts of the world in peaceful assembly like WYD does time after time. If it were a rock concert with half-a-million ticket-goers it would be front-page news. But because Panama is a magnet for pilgrims, not fans, it barely registers beyond Catholic circles.

Also, at a time when much of the population self-identifies as spiritual but not religious, WYD shouts “not so fast!” Young people flocked to Panama for an encounter firmly rooted in Catholic faith. They arrived with little evident shyness about proclaiming that Catholic values are fundamental to who

they are and how they will live their lives.

All Catholics could learn from the confident, active way these young people express their faith. Of course they are horrified by abuse scandals that, for them, hit so close to home. Most victims of the clergy crimes are teenagers and young adults. But, to their credit, the pilgrims refused to let those nightmares stop their pursuit of what Pope Francis described to them as a “dream called Jesus.” In many ways, WYD models the Gospel in how it gives life to Christ-like virtues in a joyful and hopeful faith-filled environment. At a time in its history when the Church spends considerable energy on matters that divide Catholics, WYD puts the focus on what unites us. It is a model that should instruct all Catholics. The Pope is right. Rather than regard this as the future Church, it should be the Church of today.



Excerpts from Jean Ko Din's January 29, 2019 article in the Catholic Register titled,

WYD LEAVES BEIND A WEALTH OF MEMORIES

Everyone has reasons to take part in a pilgrimage like this. Again and again, I heard pilgrims say they wanted to see what a universal Church truly looked like. They wanted to attend Mass and Adoration with the Pope. They wanted to meet young people from different parts of the world who shared the same faith. But at the same time, I think each pilgrim also has a very personal reason, something negotiated between God and themselves. It might be about discerning their vocation or a relationship. Some were taking the next step in the deep dive of their faith and some were just trying to test the waters.

God called us all to be together with each other and with Him. He chose to use the blistering heat, the arduous walks, the lack of bathrooms and the cheap street food in the name of His glory. They all became small crucibles that helped us prove to ourselves that He mattered more than any suffering we could endure. Without fail, His consolation flooded over our tiredness and weariness. This is why people walk out of WYD like they've been changed forever. They realize that when we rely on God for consolation, everything else is cheap distraction.

Working as a journalist at something as large and unpredictable as WYD was some of the hardest work I've ever done. Finding stories across the city was difficult when traffic was a mess and road closures seemed to be random. Chasing down interviews and arranging meetings became almost impossible when phone service was unreliable. But even in the busy-ness of my work, God found a way to punch through and give me moments to encounter Him.

In between getting home from the Saturday vigil at 10:30 p.m. and waking up again at 1:30 a.m. to get on a media bus for the Sunday closing Mass, I found my physical limit. I was exhausted and couldn't think straight. But then around dawn, I decided to walk out into Metro Park where pilgrims were beginning to stir from a sticky night sleeping outdoors. They looked just as exhausted as I was but they were still excited to be there.

It lifted my spirits to know we were all going through the same thing. It reminded me that we were there to celebrate together because God called each of us to be there in that moment, to be with Him.

... One memory I'll carry is from the day I followed the pilgrim group from St. Justin Martyr Parish in Markham, Ont. I first met them on the plane to Panama City but, after landing, hadn't seen them until bumping into the group two days later on my way to the commencement Mass. It was awkward at first. I tend to be shy around new people but thankfully, they were talkative. I didn't have to do any of the work. The commencement Mass started at 5:30 p.m. but if the welcoming Mass from the day before was any indication, we knew we had to get there four hours early to avoid being turned away. It was about a 30-minute brisk walk, hot, sweaty and sticky. When we arrived, all the shaded grass areas were taken so we settled on a paved area with some shadow from the top of a nearby tree. With about four hours to kill, I decided to annoy them with riddles and brain teasers. We played card games. We shared snacks and sun block. The four hours flew by.

I spent my 28th birthday (Jan. 25) with some friends at **Catholic Christian Outreach**. This pilgrim group was so happy to be serving fellow pilgrims and not be just mere participants... When they found out it was my birthday, it was like they'd known me their whole life. In normal circumstances, I would have felt like a turtle that wanted to retreat into my shell but because I knew I would not be celebrating my birthday with my normal crowd, I appreciated their generosity. They sang "Happy Birthday" outside a subway station and other pilgrim groups that were walking by joined in. The love and generosity I felt from strangers is a memory I will carry forever.

Local Fraternity Bulletin Board

OBITUARIES

We pray for the souls of our recently departed Secular Franciscans:

Richard Juneau: the first Minister of the Trillium Region, a member of St. Clare of Assisi Fraternity in Midland and passed away on December 12, 2018.

Yolanda Cortes – a member of St. Anne's Fraternity in Windsor/Tecumseh, who passed away on January 21, 2019.

Toni Piccarz- a member of St. Clare of Assisi Fraternity in Midland who passed away on February 3, 2019.

Colin Herring – a member of St. Clare of Assisi Fraternity in Midland



The Trillium Region will celebrate the Canonical Establishment of St. Damian Fraternity in London and St. Benedict the Black Fraternity in Mississauga this spring.



The Good News Report

is the newsletter of the Secular Franciscan Order, Trillium Region. We aim to publish it between the middle and end of: March, June, September, and December.

Opinions expressed by individual contributors do not necessarily reflect positions of the Trillium Regional Fraternity.

Any items you wish to include are warmly welcomed and will be considered, space permitting. Articles may be sent by the 8th of the month of publishing, to *deacon maurice Prindiville, ofs*, mprindiville@golden.net

Note: If you no longer wish to receive the newsletter, please let us know as above.

Other Secular Franciscan Publications

JPIC Newsletter-The Common Good
<https://www.franciscanvoicecanada.com/the-common-good.html>

The National Bulletin of Canada
http://www.ofsnational.ca/PUB_Index_EN.asp

Vox Franciscana-CIOFS
<http://www.ciofs.org/portal/es/libreria-2/circulars/799-en-vox-franciscana-winter-2018-2019/file>



Do you need a certificate for a newly professed member or for a special anniversary for a fraternity member?

Please contact:

Clelia Malerba at:
malerbac@yahoo.ca