

**St Mary of The Angels Fraternity
Order of the Secular Franciscan
The Angelus * July 17, 2022**



JULY
Month of the Precious Blood



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**Glorify the Lord with me
Let us exalt his name together
Psalm 34:3**

I am very touched and grateful to be your guest minister for the July gathering.

Summer is here and we marvel at the beauty of nature. This is the season I enjoy the most. We enjoy all that God created for us.

This is the time of the year most people take vacation with their family, they visit friends, they travel, they go to the beach, go to pilgrimage, etc. In the midst of all the activities and events, do we praise the Lord, our Creator for the wonders of his creation? Let us take a pause to reflect on the goodness of the Lord. The blue sky, the sun giving us light, the air that we breath, the water we drink, the beauty of gardens with array of flowers of all colors, and so much more... lets not forget to thank and praise God for all these wonders and for our family and friends whom we are serving.

Scripture gives us a lot of benefits of praising God. Psalm 145: 2 invites us to praise God daily. “Every day I will bless you and I will praise your name forever”. Praise always brings God’s presence in our mist.

St. Francis recognized the beauty of creation, expresses his love for God by praising him in his canticle of creation.

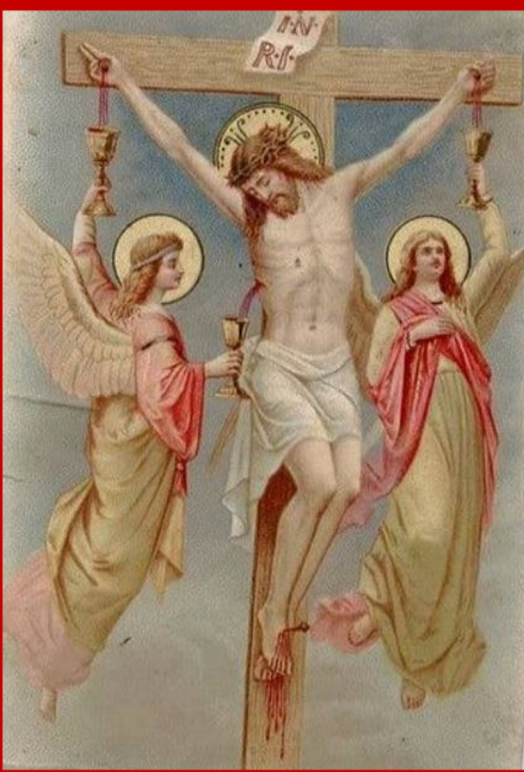
“Praised be You, my Lord, through Sister Mother Earth, who sustains us and governs us and who produces varied fruits with colored flowers, and herbs.....”



JULY
*is dedicated to the
 Most Precious Blood of
 Our Savior Jesus Christ*

THROUGH THE HOLY GHOST
 HE OFFERED HIMSELF
 WITHOUT BLEMISH
 TO GOD
 TO THE ONE WHO LOVED US
 WHO WASHED OUR SINS
 THROUGH HIS BLOOD
 AND MADE US KINGS AND
 PRIESTS OF GOD HIS FATHER
 TO HIM BE GLORY AND
 POWER. AMEN

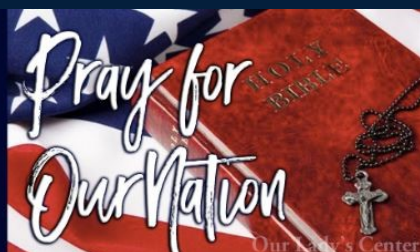
Facebook: Adoremus in Aeternum,
 a Catholic Tradition

**Prayer To The
 Precious Blood**

ETERNAL FATHER,
 I OFFER THEE THE
 PRECIOUS BLOOD OF
 JESUS CHRIST,
 THE MERITS, LOVE AND
 SUFFERINGS OF HIS
 SACRED HEART, THE
 TEARS AND SORROWS
 OF OUR IMMACULATE
 MOTHER, AS THE
 PRICE OF THE FAVOR I
 WISH TO OBTAIN, IF IT
 IS FOR THY GLORY AND
 MY SALVATION.

Amen



BLESSED IS
 THE NATION
 WHOSE GOD
 IS THE LORD.

IT IS IN DYING THAT WE ARE BORN TO ETERNAL LIFE

This is the eleventh of my articles on the Peace Prayer of St. Francis of Assisi, based on the book: "Instruments of Christ: Reflections on the Peace Prayer of St. Francis of Assisi" by Albert Haase, OFM. We will take a look at the fourteenth and final line of the prayer.

Among the many requirements of being a true disciple of Christ—and a Franciscan, of course—is penance and asceticism. "Asceticism" has a Greek word root of "ascesis" meaning "to practice" and it comes from the ancient Greek world of athletics. Its meaning suggests that there is a goal to our penitential and ascetical actions. St. Paul reminds the Corinthians of this: "Athletes exercise self-control in all things; they do this to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable one" (1 Corinthians 9:25). This imperishable "crown", received after winning the event, is peace and everlasting life with the Risen Christ. Winning here is no easy feat. St. Paul tells us that by it we are mortals on the way to immortality (1 Corinthians 15: 42-57). We die two distinct deaths.

The grace of asceticism gives us the first of these deaths. It involves the denying of oneself in the attempt of meeting the challenge of Jesus (Matthew 16: 24-25). This challenge involves the three traditional penitential practices of the Church—prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. They are used to train ourselves to walk in the footsteps of Christ.

Making a commitment to these is hard work, especially for clergy, religious, and laity within the many Orders, including Franciscan. In prayer, we focus upon God and God's will and let go of ours. By prayer, we surrender to God's will as did Jesus: "Father, if you are willing, remove this cup from me, yet, not my will but yours be done" (Luke 22:42). Fasting challenges us to go beyond the demands of our bodies, training us in self-control and moderation. This, as we may already know, involves not only the abstaining from foods we like, but practices and activities we like as well: using both the money and time saved to give to the poor or to give service and assistance to others. We should also need to be mindful that our sacrifices are never to show ourselves off: "And whenever you fast, do not look dismal, like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces so as to show others that they are fasting. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, so that your

fasting may be seen not by others but by your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you. (Matthew 6:16-18).

Almsgiving, likewise, is not to be confined to just money. Rather, it is our opportunity to share the abundance of God's gifts that we have. We see the needs and empty ourselves in the generous sharing of our time, advice, and skills.

The three traditional penitential practices along with asceticism help us to suppress the temptation to live a self-centered life unaware of the needs of others: a "dying to ourselves". But what of the second death?

Needless to even say, and especially in these current times, we are faced with death. Whether it is a loved one who has passed or contracts a terminal illness, or we see countless instances of it on the nightly news, we feel the fear of it and realize the true reality of our mortality. We refer to it as the Grim Reaper coming to us at the end and termination of our existence. But as Christians and Franciscans, we all must come to grips with the reality of making peace with death. As much of a garden of agony as Gethsemane was for Christ, He went beyond it and said, "Not my will, but yours be done" Jesus, confronting the reality and overcoming the fear of death, surrendered to everything from Judas's kiss of betrayal to the soldiers' mockery while he hung on the cross. In the final hour, He still interceded for others as He said, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing" (Luke 23:34). His dying moments were not an end but a continuation of what He had been doing all his life. His last words, "Father, into your hands I commend my spirit" (Luke 23: 46), were His final act of going beyond Himself and surrendering to God. For His life so well lived, God raised Him up. With the Resurrection came the beginning of Christian spirituality and the foundation of our hope.

Next month, we will conclude this series with a summary of what it meant for Francis and ultimately what it means for us.

Peace,

Mike

LET'S CELEBRATE OUR MONTHLY SAINTS!



THE LIFE OF ST ANNE AND ST JOACHIM

Though the dates of their births and deaths are unknown, Anne and Joachim lived in Nazareth, a small village in Galilee.

During their lifetime, many of the people in this region made their living by growing grapes, olives, and grains on the hills surrounding the town. Grandparents, parents, and children lived and worked together. At harvest time, the entire village would pitch in to help pick the crops. They would also keep watch in one of the stone towers erected to guard against thieves. At night they might pass the time and entertain the children by playing musical instruments or telling stories.

Anne (whose name means "grace") was born in Bethlehem but settled in Nazareth after she and Joachim were married. Joachim was a shepherd, and the two lived happily together for many years. Their one great sorrow was that they had no children.

<https://www.sadlier.com/religion/blog/catholic-saint-feast-days-in-july-celebrate-with-children>