

Francis of Assisi

Opening Liturgy

O Lord, let my soul rise up to meet you

As the day rises to meet the sun

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

What's Happening This Week

Want to be in the know? Text BUMCSM to 84576 for text alerts

No Programming on October 10th because of WCS Fall Break

October 17th and 24th – Recharge: a Series for the Tired

Scripture Reading:

O Word made flesh, speak through us : words that bring new life.

James 3:13-4:12

13 Who is wise and understanding among you? Let them show it by their good life, by deeds done in the humility that comes from wisdom. 14 But if you harbor bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast about it or deny the truth. 15 Such “wisdom” does not come down from heaven but is earthly, unspiritual, demonic. 16 For where you have envy and selfish ambition, there you find disorder and every evil practice.

17 But the wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all pure; then peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere. 18 Peacemakers who sow in peace reap a harvest of righteousness.

4 What causes fights and quarrels among you? Don't they come from your desires that battle within you? 2 You desire but do not have, so you kill. You covet but you cannot get what you want, so you quarrel and fight. You do not have because you do not ask God. 3 When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures.

4 You adulterous people, don't you know that friendship with the world means enmity against God? Therefore, anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God. 5 Or do you think Scripture says without reason that he jealously longs for the spirit he has caused to dwell in us? 6 But he gives us more grace. That is why Scripture says:

“God opposes the proud
but shows favor to the humble.”

7 Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. 8 Come near to God and he will come near to you. Wash your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded. 9 Grieve, mourn and wail. Change your laughter to mourning and your joy to gloom. 10 Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up.

11 Brothers and sisters, do not slander one another. Anyone who speaks against a brother or sister or judges them speaks against the law and judges it. When you judge the law, you are not keeping it, but sitting in judgment on it. 12 There is only one Lawgiver and Judge, the one who is able to save and destroy. But you—who are you to judge your neighbor?

Here's the Deal:

Francis di Bernardone was born to a merchant family in the Italian city of Assisi. As a young man, he was attracted to adventure and moved by a romantic tales of knights. When he himself became a knight, Francis met a leper while riding through the countryside. Overwhelmed by a divine impulse, Francis dismounted his horse, shared his coat with a leper, and kissed the man's diseased face. Captivated by this experience, Francis began to re-imagine his life in light of the gospel, renouncing his selfish desires and his father's wealth. A beggar for Christ's sake, Francis inspired thousands to walk away from worldly success and join the movement of friars who sought to renew the church in their day.

First, let's look at what is happening in this story. The Italian city of Assisi is a landlocked place that still an active city today. Assisi was the home of several saints: Agnes, Clare, Francis, Gabriel, Rufinus, Vitalis, and Sylvester. The point all of these saints have in common? Peace through communing with nature. In the beautiful Italian countryside, these saints and especially Francis were surrounded by the glory of God's creation. In relation to the leper, leprosy is a highly contagious skin disease that if left untreated can cause limbs to fall off. We now know that it comes from a germ. It was so contagious that if you were found to have it, you would be forced into quarantine with other lepers, usually called a colony. This isolation was not abolished until the late 1990s because of a cure found. Today, the American Leprosy Mission says that every two minutes, someone around the world is being diagnosed with leprosy. Even though it is curable, people are still crippled by the disease before they can receive treatment. Can you imagine kissing a face of someone with such a disease?

Imagine your life. Do you have the kind of wealth that allows you to dream and pursue almost anything? What can you do with such a wealth? Francis gave up everything in search of a place that was filled with the type of selfless love that Jesus gives to use everyday. What can you give up this week? Read the prayer of St. Francis of Assisi and see what you could give up this week and replace it with the opposite.

Prayer for Others:

Our Father

Jesus, as we repeat the Prayer of Francis of Assisi, let our hearts be opened to what it has to say:

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace:
where there is hatred, let me sow love;
where there is injury, pardon;
where there is doubt, faith;
where there is despair, hope;
where there is darkness, light;
where there is sadness, joy.

O divine Master,
grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled as to console,
to be understood as to understand,
to be loved as to love.
For it is in giving that we receive,
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned,
and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.
Amen.

May the peace of the Lord Christ go with you : wherever he may send you; may he guide you through the wilderness : protect you through the storm; may he bring you home rejoicing : at the wonders he has shown you; may he bring you home rejoicing : once again into our doors.

*Adapted from *One Minute Bible, Common Prayer*, and the CEB translation of the Bible