

FMA

FOCUS



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Franciscan Mission Associates
Mt. Vernon, N.Y. 10551

Missions in Guatemala - Honduras - El Salvador, Central America



Virtue: Reconciliation

Children do it easily. They argue, they fight, they part, but tomorrow they play again forgetting the past. They practice the virtue of reconciliation almost unconsciously. It is more difficult for adults because we hang on to our pride, anger, hurt and self-love a lot longer. In so many of the epistles from early followers of Christ the message is to move past hurts and create unity.

“All bitterness, fury, anger, shouting, and reviling must be removed from you, along with all malice...be kind to one another, compassionate, forgiving one another as God has forgiven you in Christ. (Ep 4:31-32) God is always calling us. We must make the effort to respond to Him. He gives us the grace, we must act upon it and be reconciled. ■

Penance and reconciliation the message of salvation



To be reconciled we must overcome dissension, hatred and excessive self-love in order to be free to devote ourselves to building a more just and human world. In today's world of bitter resentments and polarized beliefs, it seems impossible to wade a path toward true love and peace. But in all eras, there have been deep pockets of hate, war and mistreatment of people. The way back to the Lord, back to a peaceful self and world, is one based on self-reflection and rejection of the hate. How blessed we are, as Christians, to have had Jesus die for our sins.

Christ came to reconcile us to the Father, to others and to ourselves. In sacrificing his only son, God has given us the chance to reconcile with him.

The other powerful method is confession. Often the post confession Christian will say he or she feels “brand new.” And in a way, they are. They have been given a new chance to move again toward God’s outstretched arms and receive the grace we all need to thrive. This gift also allows us to become forgivers and further spread God’s mercy to anyone who we have perceived has wronged us, truly living the words of the beautiful prayer of St. Francis:

*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.*

Taking the grace given to us during the sacrament of Penance and using it to allow mercy to flow from us allows reconciliation with others. In a sinless state we are also ready to receive another sacrament, Holy Communion, which we do with a community during Mass.

Reconciling to ourselves is often the hardest, in that we are faster to forgive others and harbor feelings of worthlessness or self-hatred when we fail. But God asks us to remember his love for us is infinite. We

need to but acknowledge our sins, repent and work to repair injury and the grace of his mercy is ours. “As the Lord has forgiven you, so must you also do.” This scripture passage from Colossians isn’t just about forgiving others – it is about forgiving everyone, including ourselves.

This threefold reconciliation, to the Father, our community and ourselves, is necessary if we are to achieve Christ’s intent for us. ■

Did You Know...

You can continue to carry on the work of the Missions and the people they serve by remembering them in your estate plans. These legacies of love can be made in many different ways to fit your individual circumstances.

Consider making a bequest of whatever you wish to: Franciscan Mission Associates, Mount Vernon, NY 10551-0598. Or, if you wish additional information about making a will, please feel free to contact:

**Franciscan Mission Associates
P.O. Box 598, Dept. 4202
Mount Vernon, NY 10551-0598**



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Please address all correspondence to Father Robert, O.F.M., at P.O. Box 598, Mount Vernon, N.Y. 10551. Please send changes of address six weeks in advance; if possible include your mailing label, and give both old and new address.

Padua and how St. Anthony changed it

St. Anthony took a long and winding road to his eventual work that made Padua a changed city. After being raised in a wealthy family, Anthony's religious life began at the age of 15 as an Augustinian. But that was not what Anthony felt was his true calling, so he began life again as a follower of St. Francis of Assisi, even meeting the great saint in Assisi and becoming enamored by his humble lifestyle. After a short time in relative obscurity, Anthony's gifts of preaching and evangelization were noticed and he began preaching in many cities in Europe including Bologna, Montpellier, Toulouse and Limoges. He drew large crowds leading many to repent their sins. Anthony was recalled to Italy when St. Francis died in 1226.

A year later, in poor health, he settled in Padua where he exclusively preached and dedicated the remainder of his time to inviting all to embrace the Lord's mercy. Even without all his strength St. Anthony was a force. His preaching converted many and led to an amazing reconciliation of the town. Long-standing quarrels were amicably settled. Prisoners were forgiven and liberated. Thieves with ill-gotten goods were reconciled to honest ways and made restitution, often at his feet. These stories illustrate how much we all search for forgiveness, and for a path back to our merciful and gracious God.

Anthony's tireless work to spread the love of our Lord and reconciliation continued until his untimely death at the age of 36, June 13, 1231. Such grief followed in Padua and all who had followed him petitioned the church to declare Anthony a saint. Shortly after, he was canonized and his reputation continued to grow.

We can imitate the spirit of St. Anthony even when we don't have his learning power or eloquence. We can seek reconciliation with God and neighbor. It will change not only us but our neighborhood as well. You can even celebrate his feast day, June 13, with some special act of reconciliation to honor his many favors to us all. ■



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UNTOLD RICHES HIDDEN IN JUST ONE BOOK

This year Pope Francis declared the third Sunday in Ordinary Time the “Sunday of the Word of God.” In his Apostolic letter, Pope Francis described it as “the celebration, study and dissemination of the word of God.” In other words, a day dedicated to the Bible. Pope Francis in proclaiming this day said it would help the Church, “experience anew how the risen Lord opens up for us the treasury of his word and enables us to proclaim its unfathomable riches before the world.”

For many of us our experience with the Bible is limited to Mass. Even if we go to daily Mass, though we only experience the Bible in a curated way, instead of in its total glory and beauty. In his declaration, Pope Francis pointed to the unifying force of the Bible and the salve in a harsh world the readings can give. He talked of the book of Nehemiah and its depiction of the people assembling in Jerusalem after their return from exile.

“The people lent ‘attentive ears’ (Neh. 8:3) to the reading of the sacred book realizing that in its words they would discover the meaning of their lived experience. The reaction

to the proclamation was one of great emotion and tears.” (Aperuit Illis)

In this example where scripture brings a nation together, Pope Francis and other church leaders hope the Sunday of the Word will spark renewed interest in the everyday reading of the Bible.

“At times there can be a tendency to monopolize the sacred text by restricting it to certain circles or select groups. It cannot be that way. The Bible is the book for the Lord’s people, who listening to it move from dispersion and division towards unity.” (Aperuit Illis)

The good news for all the faithful is that there are so many ways to encounter the Bible. Summer vacation is a perfect time to take a hard copy or listen to an audio copy or even download an app that allows you to read on your phone. The Word of the Lord, the healing words of scripture can translate a summer trip into a life changing event. And continue to read after the trip is over, well into the fall. The Bible is so available, make it a priority this year to welcome its presence and grace. ■

VOCATIONS

Please pray for the young people at home and in the missions who are ready and eager to dedicate their lives to God and the spiritual welfare of His people.

Often all they really need is the special courage to hear God’s call and to answer Him. Please join us in daily prayer for God’s grace in providing devoted brothers, sisters, priests, and religious for Christ’s work in today’s world.

For further information please write Fr. Robert, O.F.M. at
Franciscan Mission Associates, P.O. Box 598, Dept. 4204, Mount Vernon, NY 10551-0598

Accepting our state of life: Reconciliation



The grass is always greener on the other side of the fence.

Why? Perhaps because we didn't have to plant it, water it and mow it.

This old say, however, has a ring of truth. Often, we are unable to reconcile ourselves to our 'less than green' life wishing ourselves a little better off, more like our neighbor or someone on

television or social media. When that happens, as it is wont to do, it would be a good time to pray to St. Dymphna for the grace of reconciliation to accept what God says is our lot. That doesn't mean we can't work to improve ourselves and our way of life. But to be bitter, despairing, hateful, always angry is a slow death of the spirit. Think of how often each day you are truly grateful for what God has given you.

Pope Francis often reminds his followers to look to our gifts from God when we begin to wonder why we don't have what we expect. "Gratitude is a characteristic trait of the heart visited by the Holy Spirit; to

obey God we must first remember his benefits." When we do this, when we truly open our eyes what we notice and feel is God's true love. Our concentration on others distracts from our ability to strengthen our relationship with the one who loves us above all else. Once we accept all God has for us, good and not so good, we are on His true path for us. And we know, in our hearts, no matter the challenges He will be with us. Imagine young Dymphna when we look at our challenges. No one to turn to, a feared father and no mother. Facing this life, this terror, she did not succumb, instead she reached out to our Lord who embraced her. She, with the courage so beyond her years, had to accept the fact that she had to leave home, go to a far land, leaving all she knew and loved. She was reconciled to her fate and left. This was her life, one she chose with the help of her Lord. It was one that ended violently and early. We often face our own challenges with courage and fear at the same time as she likely did. When a challenge arises in our lives we need to pray to this beloved saint and ask for her intercession. Ask for the courage to meet our challenges head-on and know the Lord is with us. ■

ST. ANTHONY'S BREAD

Offerings in honor of St. Anthony, either in petition for a favor sought, or in thanksgiving for a favor received, are used to assist the poor. Thus, they have received the name, St. Anthony's Bread. Such offerings are also used to help educate priests and religious.

Fr. Robert will gladly send you a leaflet explaining the origin and purpose of this devout practice, now centuries old. Please write:

**St. Anthony's Bread, Franciscan Mission Associates
PO Box 598, Dept 4203, Mount Vernon, NY 10551-0598**

EDUCATING THE YOUNG IS THE ROAD TO PEACE

The wars of the world usually are fought because diplomacy has failed. Two nations or more could not reconcile their differences and war begins. We often use the phrase “war breaks out” as if it were a disease or an eruption like a volcano. Actually nations “go to war” because troops are ordered into battle. Could reconciliation have saved lives, countries, civilizations? Countries don’t reconcile, people do. When Pope Benedict XVI in 2012 released his message for the celebration of World Day of Peace, he focused on educating young people in justice and peace.

“Attentiveness to young people and their concerns, the ability to listen to them and appreciate them, is not merely something expedient; it represents a primary duty for society as a whole, for the sake of building a future of justice and peace.”

Pope Benedict wrote that students need to be educated in justice and in peace. He directed his words at both teachers in the traditional sense, in schools, but also to parents and to all adults who truly want peace.

“Peace for all is the fruit of justice for all, and no one can shirk this essential task of promoting

justice, according to one’s particular areas of competence and responsibility.”

He also spoke directly to the youth of today who will be carrying out any peace plan the current adults can piece together.

“To the young, who have such a strong attachment to ideals, I extend a particular invitation to be patient and persevering in seeking justice and peace, in cultivating the taste for what is just and true, even when it involves sacrifice and swimming against the tide. You are never alone. The Church has confidence in you, follows you, encourages you and wishes to offer you the most precious gift she has: the opportunity to raise your eyes to God, to encounter Jesus Christ, who is himself justice and peace.”

We can begin the road to peace by driving hate, anger, jealousy, envy, out of our lives. If we do this as adults, we show students and all children that we are not going to be the conduit for hate, and for the devil, but instead be an avenue of peace and justice. Every renewal begins with the individual. Peace, then begins with us as the song of St. Francis says. ■

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Father Robert includes a special remembrance for all Franciscan Mission Associates on their birthday if he knows when it is. To be remembered at his Mass on your birthday please send him the filled in form below at any time.

My name is _____

My Birthday is: Month and Day _____

My address is _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Fr. Robert, O.F.M., Dept. 4205,

Franciscan Mission Associates, PO Box 598, Mount Vernon, NY 10551-0598

Director's Letter

Fr. Robert, O.F.M.

FRANCISCAN FRIARS/P.O. BOX 598/MOUNT VERNON, N.Y. 10551-0598

TEL. AREA CODE: 914 664-5604



Dear Friends of the Franciscans,

June's seasonal awakening of plants and animals can be a good time to consider a spiritual awakening, a rebirth. This awakening can be a very personal one. One way to deepen our faith is to commit to praying a daily or weekly rosary. The repeated recitation, either alone or in a group, gives us time to meditate on the mysteries of our faith and the great sacrifices made for our souls. As you say the Rosary, you are offering up the sacrifice of your time to dedicate to deepening your faith. Pope Francis has spoken many times of his devotion to the Rosary, and its significance in our lives as Christians.

“Through prayer and meditation on the life of Jesus, Christ we see once more his merciful countenance, which he shows to everyone in all the many needs of life.

Many accompanies us along this journey, pointing to her Son who radiates the very mercy of the Father.”

Remember during the long summer days to carve out time for a Rosary. It will refresh your soul and recommit you to follow the true path toward salvation.

May God Bless you always,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "FR. Robert, ofm". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Fr. Robert, O.F.M.

AGAPE: LOVE THAT PROVIDES HOPE

Fr. Jack, O.F.M.

Words of Wisdom from one of our Missionary Friars

In Central America, especially in the countries that form the “Northern Triangle:” Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador, so often popping up in the daily news because of the immigration crisis in the US, AGAPE continues to offer a genuine source of HOPE for many to consider staying home and acquiring a skill or trade that will serve as a foundation for personal development and an opportunity for positive change in a country so desperate for transformation.

AGAPE has become the optimal source to which non-government organizations (and, in some cases, the government) have turned to seeking collaboration or assistance in the fostering of programs which will meet the needs of the underprivileged or those deprived of the possibilities to enhance their potential. Through AGAPE’s professionalism and vision, hundreds of young people have received training and educational development paving the way for a more positive outlook, not only for these individuals and their communities, but for the country overall.

AGAPE still does its charitable outreach with feeding the poor through the distribution of foodstuff and staple provisions on a weekly basis and with the soup kitchen which never closes offering three meals a day to some 70 to 80 people. Nevertheless, when it comes to feeding the soul of an individual, an education nourishes the mind so that the person can care for and ultimately sustain and cultivate his or her immediate surroundings.

Recently AGAPE began a program called “Puente para el Empleo” (A Bridge to Employment). USAID was in search of an organization to implement this program

and all eyes focused on AGAPE’s Center for Professional Formation in Sonsonate.

While the program bases itself in “couture” or tailoring with the use of motorized sewing machines, the students learn all the technology required for, and the maintenance of, the machines besides the ability and orientation to be able to establish a business.

This particular program has also opened the door not only to those who live in the Capital (San Salvador), but has necessitated the expansion of the “Center” itself, so that AGAPE can finally boast that it can receive students from the metropolitan area. The new site currently shares its own and particular space with AGAPE’s Catholic Communication Center (where AGAPE’s Radio Luz and AGAPE TV Channel 8 are housed). This new center is sister to the original Center located in Sonsonate.

As always, to our dear and faithful readers and donors, we are extremely grateful for your enormous love revealed through your contributions toward the work of the Franciscan Missionaries of the Immaculate Conception Province. Every dollar you send to the FMA office in support of AGAPE and other priceless endeavors in these foreign lands seems to





LEARNING HOW TO LOVE

Valley of the Angels

*An interview with volunteer
mission student*

Misty Dawn Francis Menis-Kyler

Looking back at your two years of being a missionary at Valley, what would you have done differently?

I would not have waited so long to really branch out and connect with people. It took me a year to really find myself and to find where I belong in Valley and really figure out what I felt I was called to do here. I was very much shy and scared and I let that kind of overtake me for another six months or so for sure. By my second year, I was able to find people who I could connect with and really help me grow as a person. I began to grow in my confidence and my Spanish and in my teaching ability.

What advice would you give a missionary who is just beginning?

I would say to definitely be open. It can be really easy to kind of close yourself off when you come to a new country and you don't know the language and you don't know anybody. Maybe you've never even been to the country before; it can be easy to kind of just stay within yourself, so to be open to:

- 1) meeting new people
- 2) to learning a new language
- 3) to gaining new skills.

multiply a hundred-fold and literally reaches thousands of elderly, impoverished families, destitute children and prospective leaders of this country because of the opportunities your donations provide for their education and their spiritual and moral development. That is the vision and mission of AGAPE and we whole heartedly thank and love you for your kindness and prayers. Be sure of ours! May the Lord continue to shower His blessings upon you for your generosity and sacrifice, because your LOVE also provides HOPE. ■

Describe if you could, what impacted you the most or what you learned from the children.

For me, something I learned from the kids was how to love. I know that sounds a little vague but for me, they taught me how to love so deeply that all you really have to give His love is to give more love, if that makes sense because that's what the kids gave to me. Coming to know the situations that they come from, their backgrounds impacted me greatly. When you first see them, you would never realize they came from such poverty. The smiles on their faces and the amount of love that they give is nonstop. They don't forget how to love and that they still desire to love and obviously they desire that same love in return. Just witnessing it and being a part of that really helped me grow and learn how to love, not only others but myself. But I think for me, that was one of the biggest things I learned from the kids - how to love myself with all my flaws, with all my scars, from all my past experiences as well as seeing these kids and what they've gone through and how they still persevere, showed me that I could do it too and I actually started to learn how to love myself.

Tell me something about the Franciscan charism and how your understanding and experience of it has grown.

I've never actually done mission, where it was mission of presence so that in and of itself was something new. I discovered in it an amazing ability to connect with people just by simply being present; not coming to change anything or to leave them with something, but just being present. To witness their stories, their lives, their joys, their triumphs, trials and just being a part of their life. Being a missionary opened my eyes to so many different things. A lot of times people perceive missionaries as people who come and make

a change, to lead others but in fact it's so much more. When you open yourself up to the possibility of just being present and allowing them to show you what they need and also allowing them to kind of take the leadership role. That was the point of our mission; it was to be present so that they could take the leadership roles, so that when we do leave, they don't rely on us so much everything collapses or just ends. It's just us being present to them and helping to lead them; like holding your hand through the process.

And so what is in your future?

Right now I am going to the states and then I will be returning to Guatemala to continue working with students and a poor community, teaching English and a couple of others subjects. I hopefully will stay active with Valley by volunteering in different programs and so staying connected with the kids.

What would you say is your most deeply satisfying or fulfilling moment of your experience in the last two years as you step onto this plane?

The first thing that actually comes to mind is more of a selfish thing, it's the amount of growth that I've experienced, the amount of confidence that I have come into, the ability to now feel like I can do and accomplish a lot of things. This is for me right now the most fulfilling. ■



Words Worth Noting



Actions speak louder than words. Let your words teach and your actions speak.

Anthony of Padua

We become what we love and who we love shapes what we become.

Clare of Assisi

Those who cannot forgive others break the bridge over which they themselves must pass.

Confucius

Let no man pull you low enough to hate him.

Martin Luther King, Jr.

Rise above the storm and you will feel the sunshine.

Mario Fernandez

The summer night is like a perfection of thought.

Wallace Stevens

The truth does not change according to our ability to stomach it.

Flannery O'Connor

A light heart is a magnet for all that you love.

St. Germain

The future doesn't belong to the fainthearted; it belongs to the brave.

Ronald Reagan

In life all good things come hard, but wisdom is the hardest to come by.

Lucille Ball

Our Readers gladly write...

Dear Father,

I want to thank you with this personal note for all the booklets you've sent me over a long time. I didn't realize the spiritual and down to earth values in them until recently. They have really helped me accept and ponder. They have helped me absolutely believe that "God's Will" is the answer to all my personal problems. In the booklets you sent I am reaffirmed in this. I thank God we still have organizations like you to carry on God's work.

Very Sincerely,

C.V.T.

Manns Harbor, NC

Dear Father Robert,

Accept this donation as appreciation and gratitude for favors received. First, St. Anthony answered my prayers about my grandson, then St. Clare answered my prayers for another grandson. Thank you for recommending a church in Fairfield to get a St. Clare medal. I did and had it blessed. My grandson carries it on his neck always. He did very well in his studies this semester. For those petitions answered, please accept this donation. God bless you and the children of your missions.

In Christ,

A.H.

Norwalk, CT



Dear Father,

I am a Catholic Chaplin at a minimum-security male facility in Connecticut. This is a facility where all men will be returning to society and to their families within a time frame of several months to five years.

My job is to meet their spiritual needs and provide for spiritual growth and maturity of the 20 percent Catholic population, many of whom are very serious about changing their lives and improving their relationships with the Lord and their families.

Thank you for the material that you sent to our facility. The newsletters you sent are greatly appreciated and will be put to good use, I assure you. I know that the men appreciate what you have done for them. Thanks again, and may God continue to bless you in your ministry.

I remain yours in Christ,
Deacon R. L. Chaplain
Enfield, CT

ST. FRANCIS - THE CANTICLE OF THE SUN

Reading any of the writings of St. Francis is a glorious exercise. The prayer of peace is one all know and can sing. But as impressive and critical to our day-to-day life is his **Canticle of the Sun**. This ode to creation and nature is one that resonates with all ages. In this beautiful piece, St. Francis first looks to the skies and praises Brother Sun who he says bears the likeness of our Lord and is “beautiful and radiant with great splendor”. Next St. Francis praises Sister Moon and the stars, exulting that God himself made them “bright, precious and fair.”

Next Francis turns his attention toward earth and praises Brothers Wind, Air and Fire – calling fire “playful robust and strong,” and Sister Water “so useful, humble, precious and pure.”

St. Francis completes the creation picture with his praise of Mother Earth “who sustains and governs us producing varied fruits with colored flowers and herbs.”

Once all creation are praised, St. Francis calls out Sister Death – “from whom no-one can escape.” Reminding all to follow the Lord’s path and repent sins before she arrives.

All these beautiful familial references make the unknown, even death more of a comfort. Not a specter. Today so often, we take our natural miracles for granted. How often do we sit at a sunset, on a beach with calming waves and really understand the origin of all of this gorgeous splendor? We also use the resources unwisely at times, without common sense, gratitude or praise.

In his Encyclical Letter, *Laudato si’ – On Care For Our Common Home* - Pope Francis reminds us of our responsibility to care for God’s creation. Pope Francis insists we are causing harm to the mother who only gives to us. “We have come to see ourselves as her lords and masters, entitled to plunder her at will.” In his letter, Pope Francis calls on us to repair the damage we have inflicted on Mother Earth, and to use St. Francis as a guide. “St. Francis, faithful to Scripture, invites us to see nature as a magnificent book in which God speaks to us and grants us a glimpse of his infinite beauty and goodness.” Let us know we are not alone in this world and that it is our right and responsibility to cherish and sustain the world God has created for us. ■

DONATING ONLINE IS SIMPLE

Each day families in the poorest and most dangerous nations see hope and light because of your donations. And now you can offer your financial support online. The link below will direct you to our website. You can read about our work and see how a small sacrifice from you can make life-changing differences for so many.

<http://www.franciscanmissionassoc.org>

Accepting God's will for another

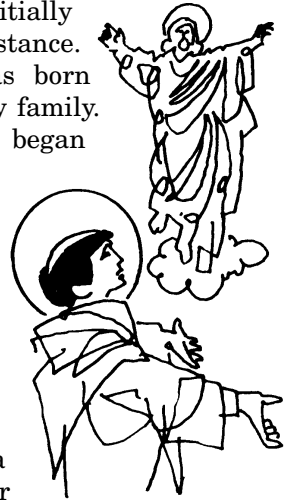
Sometimes the most difficult reconciliation and acceptance we must make is when God lays a special claim on a loved one, even when it is a path we support. Usually when we read the lives of the saints we identify with the saint. But we should read them identifying with the parents who had to accept the unknown and be reconciled to God's will. Fortunately, so many families of saints welcomed and even encouraged their child's leanings toward a life for God. Consider the family Louis Martin and Marie-Azélie Guérin, 19th century saints and parents of five nuns including Saint Therese of Lisieux. Both Louis and Marie-Azélie were rejected from religious life for different reasons. They had nine children, five of whom survived infancy, and all joined the religious life. The fervor and devotion these two had in their life was joyfully given to their children who dedicated themselves to God.

Another example, an American saint, St. Katherine Drexel's mother died shortly after Katherine's birth. Her father's new wife showed Katherine how true generosity can change lives. The Drexel household would distribute food, clothing and other material goods to the poor routinely. Once both parents were gone, Katherine used her multi-million-dollar inheritance to start schools and hospitals for the poor. Continuing her parent's way that saved many a soul.

For some parents their child's

choice was initially met with resistance. St. Clare was born into a wealthy family. But she soon began to shun the luxurious wealth and instead embraced a love of poverty and piety. Her parents went so far as to find a wealthy suitor

for Clare – hoping she would turn back toward their life but she would have none of it. Acceptance is not always easy when you know your child's path will be one of pain and challenges. Imagine our Blessed Mother, knowing even before her son was born that He would live a life filled with suffering. And allowing, even at a young age, Him to follow that path. How difficult it must have been, the agony of his last days. That, hopefully, is nothing we will have to endure. God knows the path for not only us, but also for those we love. It is up to us to use prayer and contemplation and faith to “let go” and come to a place of peace, understanding and finally joy. ■



Visit us on the web
franciscanmissionassoc.org

THE BEAUTY AND GLORY OF THE FEAST OF CORPUS CHRISTI

The Feast of Corpus Christi also called Solemnity of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ this year will be on June 11, 2020. This Feast truly focuses on the manifestations of the Body of Christ during the Mass.

This Holy Day of Obligation originated in France and was officially added to the church liturgical calendar in the thirteenth century and is celebrated on the Thursday following Trinity Sunday.

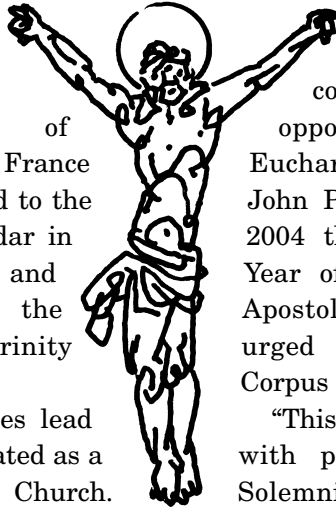
Two separate miracles lead to this day being celebrated as a Feast by the Catholic Church. First it is said that young St. Juliana of Mont Cornillon had a vision of the Church under the appearance of a full moon which had one dark spot. She understood it to mean the church calendar was missing a solemnity. Because of her dedication to the Holy Eucharist she immediately believed it was God asking for a Feast to commemorate his Body and Blood. St. Juliana told her interpretation of the vision, that a Feast honoring the Blessed Sacrament was missing from the liturgical calendar, to Bishop Robert de Thorete, who was then Bishop of

Liège, and to Jacques Pantaléon, who became Pope Urban IV. They both worked until their death to get the Feast added to the calendar.

In many parts of the world the Feast of Corpus Christi is commonly used as an opportunity for public Eucharistic processions. Pope John Paul II declared October 2004 through October 2005 a Year of the Eucharist. In an Apostolic letter that year he urged for the procession on Corpus Christi.

“This year let us also celebrate with particular devotion the Solemnity of Corpus Christi, with its traditional procession. Our faith in the God who took flesh in order to become our companion along the way needs to be everywhere proclaimed, especially in our streets and homes, as an expression of our grateful love and as an inexhaustible source of blessings.”

The procession has many discrete directions and often has children dressed as angels. Whatever the custom of the particular country, the focus is on the Lord made Flesh and the love we have as Christians and the joy we share with all. ■



Special Novena Schedule Summer 2020

All year round Franciscan Mission Associates conducts a regular schedule of spiritual and devotional exercises in which all benefactors are invited to take part. During the summer months the Special Novena schedule is:

- May 7-15 and May 16-24.....Feast of St. Dymphna (May 15)
- May 30 - June 7 and June 8-16Novena of the Holy Spirit
- June 5-13 and June 13 - 21.....Feast of St. Anthony (June 13)
- June 11-19Feast of the Sacred Heart
- July 18-26.....Feast of St. Anne
- August 2-10 and August 11-19St. Anthony (in Padua)
- August 7-15Assumption of Our Lady
- Sept. 2-10 and Sept. 11-19St. Jude Novena

Holy Mass is offered each day for all Franciscan Mission Associates benefactors and for the special intentions they request. Kindly forward your petitions for the Novenas scheduled to:

**Father Robert, O.F.M., Franciscan Mission Associates
PO Box 598, Dept. 4201, Mount Vernon, NY 10551-0598**



Our friars in Rome pose with Pope Francis. The occasion was an informal gathering before Mass in St. Peter's for Religious on Consecrated Life Day (2/2/20).