

FMA FOCUS

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

Missions in Guatemala - Honduras - El Salvador, Central America



Virtue: Praise

“From the rising of the sun to its setting,
the name of the Lord is to be praised.”
Psalm 113:3

The difference between the optimist and the pessimist is that the first sees the glass is half full and the second sees the same glass and says it is half empty. Christian optimists praise God for all His goodness: life, health, pleasure, pain, joy, sorrow, recognizing all are His gifts and all are sent for a reason, to draw us closer to Him. It is this joy, and this optimism that fuel the strongest and most effective evangelization efforts. Even in these difficult times we are wise to remember God offers us His love, and He is joy, and praising His name will bring us closer to Him. Be a Christian optimist this Lent. Praise God each day. ■

You are God’s chosen people



Many have left the church frightened, upset, or angry due to a variety of reasons and events. There was a grave concern that the recent pandemic would force churches to close their doors permanently. That did not happen, God sees us through and provides. And through every crisis many faithful have not left. They have stayed with the church, accepting Christ’s message and confident in His leadership. As it says in Deuteronomy (7:6) about God’s chosen people – “You are people sacred to the Lord, your God; He has chosen you, you have not chosen Him.”

In a time of isolation and fear, it is sustaining to recognize we do not need to reach out to the Lord, He is always reaching out to us. We do need to heed His word and the commandments.

“The first is this: ‘Hear, O Israel! The Lord our God is Lord alone! You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength. The second is this: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no other commandment greater than these.” (Mk. 12: 29-31)

How comforting. God has a path for us, one that allows us to be with Him for all eternity and one that also allows us a community of faith during our time on earth. It is offered, but not simply given to us. We need to do some spiritual work to sustain it. Lent is an excellent time to examine your personal relationship with God through prayer, penance, and the works of mercy, both corporal and spiritual. Often attention is paid to the Corporal Works, feeding the hungry, sheltering the homeless and visiting the imprisoned to name a few. And these are the focus of many school drives and fundraising efforts. The Spiritual Works are more difficult to pin down but equally as important in sustaining your spiritual self-worth and strength, and offering service to the community. Lent reminds us of one Spiritual Work in

particular, bearing wrongs patiently. Our Lord’s example during the Passion is one we will likely never have to imitate in full. As He suffered through the crown of thorns, the constant ridicule and torture and the final indignity of being forced to take up his own literal cross, Christ “did not refuse, did not turn away.” (Is. 50:5)

While we will likely never face the suffering our Lord took upon himself, we too must learn to “bear wrongs patiently” during Lent and always. In doing that we will draw close to God and He will draw close to us. ■

REMEMBRANCE

You can continue to carry on your own good work for the missions and the people they serve by remembering them in your will. To do so, simply make a bequest of whatever you wish to: FRANCISCAN MISSION ASSOCIATES, Mount Vernon, NY 10551. If you wish additional information about how to do this, please

feel free to contact:

**Father Robert, O.F.M.,
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THE OUR FATHER: PRAYER FOR OUR TIME



Our parents and grandparents, if we are lucky enough to have known them, are special people. They introduced us to life. Our Father in Heaven is special also because He not only created us but gives us the promise of life eternal.

Something only our heavenly Father can give us. We get a special feeling when we use a tool or dish or cup of our parents or grandparents. It is a moment that spans the time barrier as we see them in our mind's eye, doing simple everyday things as we also do. Isn't it startling that as Christians the Our Father has been said by generations and generations back to the days when Christ first taught it to His Apostles. Although seemingly far away, we know our ancestors are present in some special way to us. God also has told us, "I am a God who is near at hand, not a distant God." Like other deeply rooted and often repeated prayer, it is important to step back and really listen as we recite it. From the first words we are reminded the Lord's name is sacred "hallowed be thy name." In today's culture our Lord's name is often used so carelessly without showing any reverence. These words are a great reminder. Later in the prayer we ask God to "give us this day our daily bread,"

and consciously we know that it is not just relating to food. As a human we have earthly needs and hungers but also spiritual ones as well. Our relationship with God gives us spiritual sustenance as St. Augustine and St. Peter Chrysologus make clear and is detailed in the Catechism.

"The Eucharist is our daily bread. The power belonging to this divine food makes it a bond of union. Its effect is then understood as unity, so that, gathered into his Body and made members of him, we may become what we receive.... This also is our daily bread: the readings you hear each day in church and the hymns you hear and sing. All these are necessities for our pilgrimage. The Father in heaven urges us, as children of heaven, to ask for the bread of heaven. Christ himself is the bread who, sown in the Virgin, raised up in the flesh, kneaded in the Passion, baked in the oven of the tomb, reserved in churches, brought to altars, furnishes the faithful each day with food from heaven." (CCC 2837)

Spend some time with the Catechism to review all seven petitions contained in the Our Father prayer. The Our Father can be a perfect meditation each morning as we reflect on what each phrase means and why God wants us to praise Him. ■

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. 3215,
Franciscan Mission Associates, PO Box 598, Mount Vernon, NY 10551-0598

Your letter from St. Francis

Did you know St. Francis wrote you a letter? And that it is about praising God?

“To all Christians, religious, clerics and laymen, men and women, to all who dwell in the entire world, Friar Francis, their servant and subject, (offers) submission with reverence, true peace from Heaven and sincere charity in the Lord.” (Fr. Kajetan Esser, 1999)

The letter was written in the thirteenth century and illustrates St. Francis’s love of our Lord. We do not have all his writings but his Letter to All the Faithful tells us we are to give him praise for all we have and all that we will have. The letter is available many places; this is an excerpt on the Vatican website.

“Let every creature in heaven, on earth, in the sea and in the depths, give praise, glory, honor and blessing To Him Who suffered so much, Who has given and will give in the future every good, for He is our power and strength, Who alone is good, Who alone is almighty, Who alone is omnipotent, wonderful, glorious and Who alone is holy, worthy of praise and blessing through endless ages.” (Vatican, 2020)

Many people have distorted views of what or whom they should praise. Young adults especially value likes, or positive posts on social media. Their need for superficial praise for superficial acts or looks takes away from the true meaning of the word.

This misdirected view is not a new one. In fact, Pope Pius XI in his writing reminds us that St. Francis began his young adult life “among the fashionable and pleasure-loving

young men of the town.” Francis was accustomed to a lavish life and certainly spent his time and energy praising those comforts that distracted him from growing in faith. It wasn’t until Francis was recovering after being imprisoned that he began down the correct path. Francis changed his outlook completely and began to truly praise only our Lord.

During this Lenten season when we begin to offer sacrifices of time or talent or offerings, we might notice what we are praising. How can we use our time looking critically at the passions we indulge in and ensure they are ones worthy of our calling as Christians. Note that Francis praises not only what Christ has done but in that magnificent confidence of a wholly committed Christian praises what Christ will do as well. Be sure to praise our Lord for all He has done for us, and He has done everything. ■



A STATION A DAY: A PRACTICAL LENTEN PLAN

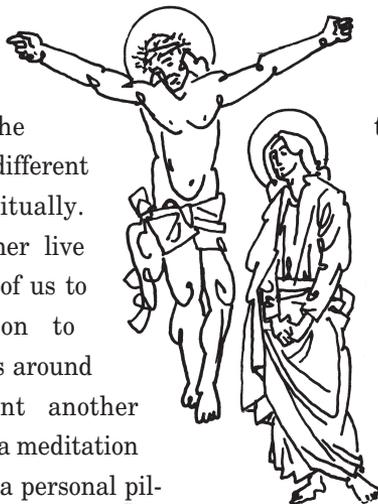
Even before the global pandemic, that made getting out of the house difficult, many of us couldn't get to Mass every day during Lent – though it is a pious practice much to be praised. Luckily for the faithful there are many different ways to grow spiritually. Podcasts, videos and other live streaming allowed many of us to maintain our connection to scripture and to holy sites around the world. During Lent another avenue is to commit to do a meditation on the stations each day, a personal pilgrimage through the 40 days of Lent. Our leaflet entitled *Your Way of the Cross* is a wonderful way to have a daily meditation that brings stillness and reflection on the true sacrifice our Lord made to save us. The opening prayer sets a reverent tone to begin the daily pilgrimage.

Heavenly Father, out of love for us you sent your own Son our Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior. In Him we are redeemed and saved. Despite our weakness and sinfulness, we wish to imitate Him. Send us your Holy Spirit, we implore you, to assist us as we make the way of the cross. We invoke the aid of our Blessed Lady, and that of all the other saints that we may be enabled to

follow Christ and to make His way of the cross our way of life and love. Amen.

A meditation on each station can be something personal, some way you personally connect to that particular station. When Jesus accepts His cross, for instance, perhaps say a simple prayer of gratitude understanding that our crosses, no matter how heavy, often pale in comparison to the one Christ took up to save our souls. “Strengthen us, Lord Jesus, to carry our cross with faith and trust and without complaining of its weight.”

Sometimes there are people waiting to bring us or take us to Church or we are rushed here and there. If we can say a simple meditation on each one when we go to Church that is ideal. However, if not, you can get a little leaflet for the Stations of the Cross and say one each day during Lent. If possible do it at the same time just before lunch or just after breakfast. It will make each day different, join you in union with Christ and his Blessed Mother and give you your own personal pilgrimage to Easter. ■



A CODE OF CONDUCT FROM THE TIME OF CHRIST

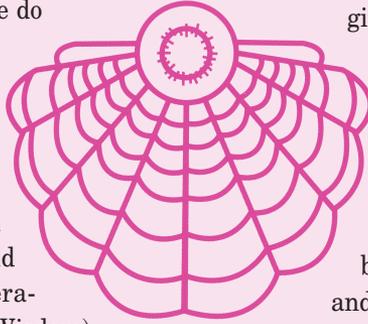
Lent is a time when we do more spiritual reading than the rest of the year. A good source for us this Lent would be the Bible and particularly the Letter of James. In the spirit of the Old Testament wisdom literature (Proverbs, Sirach, Wisdom) it concerns itself entirely with moral teaching, in effect, a code of conduct.

James begins his letter in chapter one by describing how as Christians we need to display perseverance in trial because during times of sacrifice and through our trials we find joy.

“Consider it all joy, my brothers, when you encounter various trials, for you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. And let perseverance be perfect, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.” (James 1: 2-4)

Chapter two begins with a discussion of partiality and a directive to ensure our deeds follow words. In a section headed – Faith and Works, James reminds the faithful that works not words alone, will change the lives of those we seek to help and move with us to our Lord.

“If a brother or sister has nothing to wear and has no food for the day, and one of you says to them, “Go in peace, keep warm, and eat well,” but you do not



give them the necessities of the body, what good is it?” (James 2: 15-16)

This is a good reminder that beautiful sentiments are beneficial but we need to be backed up by using hands and feet in service of others, even in a world partly shut down due to a global pandemic. James reminds us that “just as a body without a spirit is dead, so also faith without works is dead” (James 2: 26).

The last three chapters focus on human failings, hubris, division and vanity, gossip “consider how a small fire can set a huge forest ablaze” (James 3: 5) and the corrosive effects of wealth,

“your gold and silver have corroded and that corrosion will be a testimony against you; it will devour your flesh like a fire. You have stored up treasure for the last days.” (James 5: 3)

Interestingly enough, while it was written in the first century, it is still valuable reading for today. All these moral codes do not seem outdated in the least; in fact they are still painful reminders of how flawed we remain as humans, in need of the guidance of the Scripture to show us the true path of wisdom and ethical behavior. Take some time to read the entire Letter and then go live the Truth it contains. ■

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,

We as Christians, today, are encouraged to use actions rather than just words to strengthen our own faith and fulfill our baptismal responsibility of spreading the Word of God.

Our beloved Pope Francis at the beginning of his papacy showed he believed in action not just words by choosing Francis as his name to honor St. Francis, who willingly gave up all for the Glory of God. Pope Francis through continued acts of humility and forgiveness has demonstrated his commitment to deeds that follow up his words.

St. Anthony also spoke of the importance of not relying on mere words. “Actions speak louder than words: let your words teach and your actions speak.”

Often, we have such good intentions going into Lent. We are going to give up this, or that or spend more time in prayer, less time in fruitless pursuits. Those are wishes, and words. Let us work toward action, after months of imposed inaction due to the pandemic. Truly call that ailing relative or old acquaintance. Donate to a worthy cause making that an action based on the best of intentions. Do not be “full of words but empty of actions.”

May God bless you during this Lenten season,

Fr. Robert, OFM

Fr. Robert, O.F.M.

AGAPE'S SOLIDARITY PLAN BRINGS HOPE TO THE NEEDY

Fr. Jack, O.F.M.

The Association AGAPE of El Salvador distributes food to COVID affected communities as part of its Solidarity plan to support the poor and victimized individuals that would otherwise go hungry during this pandemic. As most the world is suffering from the effects of the coronavirus, El Salvador has not escaped the harsh reality of many sick and dying people from the COVID – 19. If there is any way that AGAPE can be of service to those who are feeling the stress and pain of this oppressive and worrisome reality we face, then you can count on the association reaching out with loving hands.

The gift bags contain food, clothing, hygiene products and other necessities. Distributing food is nothing new for AGAPE as every month approximate 1200 people, over a two-day period, are given enough staples until the next visit. However, thanks to strategic planning on the part of AGAPE's Operation Officer, Mr. Cuellar, a system of taking food and necessities to the various communities has been developed and it's called "rutas solidarias" (Solidarity Routes).

The plan begins with different members of the five areas of AGAPE (Social, Education, Hospitality, Communication and Spiritual) prepping the individual bags that will be loaded into transport pickups which then head off to be distributed to the communities along the "rutas solidarias." Some companies have even requested assistance in their own efforts to provide support for victims. AGAPE gladly provides these other institutions so that as many people that can be served is made possible by working in harmony, thus "solidarity in action."

Presently the project has prepared some 3,200 bags of food items and necessary hygienic toiletries that will reach approximately 16,000 individuals. Each day more and more bags are prepared for distribution during the week. This plan will continue, even if the pandemic subsides and vanishes. It is a genuine way to bring hope and love to those in need. What will not vanish is the integrity of the collaborators who have made this project a success. Theirs is a "family" commitment because every employee of this association knows that "we are all AGAPE."

Though we may be part of a distant culture in a faraway land for many of you who read these lines, know that your gift to the Franciscan Mission Associates office finds its way to the huts and lean-tos of the Salvadoran countryside, giving hope and love to the poor and destitute.



The friars of Central America are constantly developing projects with your help that will ease the misfortunes of many of your neighbors here in Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador. Please keep us in your prayers as we preach the Gospel by clothing the naked, feeding the hungry, educating the youth, comforting and healing the sick and burying the dead; in this way, you too are an extension of the Jesus' love and Gospel joy. ■

HISTORIC MOMENTS IN OUR MISSIONS

A GRATEFUL FRIAR LOOKS BACK AND AHEAD

Fr. Jack, O.F.M.

For seven plus decades, over 100 friars from the Franciscan Friars of the Immaculate Conception Province of New York have engaged in the apostolic activity of evangelization to the poorest of the poor of our Central American brothers and sisters in Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador. Scores of friars left the comforts of their native provincial communities in North America to endure (at the outset of their ministerial commitments) the hardships of a people whose customs, language and religious traditions weighed heavily upon them as they struggled to conform their lives to such challenges in order to share the message of God's love and mercy. In time however, it was the friar who learned of God's love and mercy showered upon him by a generous and grateful people.

Thanks to our generous benefactors over the years so many different programs have been developed, focusing on care-given to the needy and underprivileged. Our missionaries tackled social, educational and media problems which led to the overall development of the infrastructure of certain communities, raising the level of human progress while complimenting their work with moral and Christian values for the inhabitants of those communities.

I remember the time I was so interested in being a friar missionary. I wanted to experience those challenges of God's Herald of Good News to the people of a foreign land. The Province gave me the opportunity as cleric entering my final years of formation to the priesthood to study in a land where I would later minister. I dreamed of being



another St. Juniper Serra, O.F.M., who traveled the mountains, valleys and shores of a new and different California: the lands of Guatemala, Honduras or El Salvador. But my dream, though very particular and personal, cannot compare to the colossal ministry established by so many friars before me. Many came with similar dreams, views and perceptions of what they could offer as modern day apostles in a world seemingly a century behind time in certain parts.

Notwithstanding that reality, many friars achieved outstanding results, if not necessarily through material successes, the likes of which clinical, educational and communication advances have generated to the highest norm and are the envy of even many govern-

mental programs, but through their humble and simple demeanor that has touched so many lives with affectionate devotion.

Sadly however, the days of numerous friar missionaries from our Province have dwindled so. Only a few of us are left to carry the burden of the constructive and progressive labors of our past heroic heralds of God's message. Please join us as we pray that the Lord, through the intercession of St. Francis of Assisi, inspires young men with the vocation necessary to follow in the steps of the disciples of Jesus, filled with the spirit of Francis and eager to enter the next and new frontier as apostles of the lands once impressed with the sandals and brown robes of our provincial history and legacy. ■



Words Worth Noting



Be faithful in small things because it is in them that your strength lies.
Saint Teresa of Calcutta

If God is for us, who can be against us?
Romans 8:31

There are far far better things ahead than any we leave behind.
C.S. Lewis

There is only one great evil in the world today. Despair.
Evelyn Waugh

While the world changes the cross stands firm.
St. Bruno

Everyone is born an original, but may die like photocopies.
Blessed Carlo Acutis

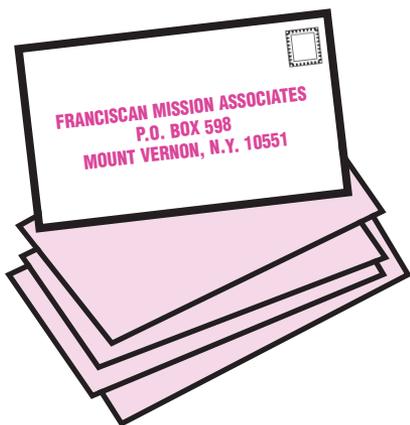
Kindness is the natural fruit of the goodness of the heart.
Saint Katherine Drexel

The past is never where you think you left it.
Katherine Anne Porter

Write about what you don't know about what you know.
Eudora Welty

A good archer is known not by his arrows but by his aim.
English proverb

Our Readers gladly write...



Dear Father Robert,

Thank you for remembering my birthday this year. It brightened my day and I very much appreciate your remembrance at your Mass and prayers. I wish you a blessed birthday whenever it occurs. Peace.

A. A.
Belleville, IL

Dear Father,

My gratitude to you and all those at the Franciscan Mission Associates for your continued prayers and good will. It has been a difficult year. One filled with sorrow but also great joy. Please accept this small donation as a sign of my gratitude. During Lent, especially know my prayers are with you and all the brothers who are ministering to those who have so little.

God bless,
L. D.
Albany, NY

Dear Father Robert,

I would like to publicly thank Virgin Mary, saints Jude and Anthony for the many favors received by all my family. Enclosed is a donation.

S.J.O.
England

Dear Father Robert,

Could you please publish a great huge thank you to St. Jude, The Sacred Heart, The Immaculate Heart and St. Anthony for the miracle of my little girl's surgery on her elbow. She has regained full range of motion. Praise God. May I please request once again God's Mercy in restoring her to health after another issue. Thank you for your prayers.

M. N.
Manhasset, NY

Dear Fr. Robert,

I want to thank you for the beautiful Blessed Mother, St. Anthony chaplet you sent to me. What a beautiful surprise and your gift was so thoughtful. Your prayers are so appreciated. They help me carry on when the road seems long. You, Fr. Robert, and the Friars, will always have my prayers. I shall always cherish the Chaplet. I know you did not ask for this check but it is for whatever you need.

Sincerely,
B. I.
Dunedin, FL

Action speaks louder than words (St. Anthony)

St. Anthony was famous as a preacher, so much so that the Pope granted him permission to lay down an office he had been given in the community to go preach to the heretics and sinners. But in one of his sermons Anthony asks his listeners (and we are his listeners today) to act! "It is a living word when our actions speak for us. Put an end to words, then, I beg you, and let your actions speak." That's really what made Anthony a saint – not his penitents, but his prayer life, his knowledge of God in prayer, and his acting on that knowledge.

Live the faith is something said and something we as followers of Christ must do. It isn't enough to sustain our own prayer life, although it is the foundation of our faith. Often, we wonder "how can we act out our faith?" Here is where we have a handy roadmap for assistance; the Corporal Works of Mercy. Feeding the hungry, giving drink to the thirsty and sheltering the homeless are perennial needs in any area of the country. Prayers for anyone unfortunate is a welcome action, but in truly living our faith why not set a special box aside in your home that you add one

item to each week after you shop for your family. These items add up and once the box is full bring it to your local food pantry. It is acting on our faith and living our responsibility to care for others. During these cold months if you are handy, how about knitting or sewing something that can be donated to a shelter to comfort anyone who is homeless. Visiting the sick or those in prison might not be allowable with current restrictions but writing cards to anyone ill distributed through your local parish is something that can illustrate faith in action. Make sure to include families who might have recently lost a loved one. And lastly donating money to organizations that have the ability to serve a wider area. How about during Lent giving up that morning coffee and collecting that money to donate. You might miss the jolt of caffeine but think of all the good you will be doing.

Anthony was as good as his word. We too can imitate the saint by not only speaking about God to others but by demonstrating by our way of life, our deeds, that we are His 'living words' at work in the world today. ■

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. 3214, Mount Vernon, NY 10551-0598

Living together in friendship – The call from the Pope

“Let us all, brothers, consider the Good Shepherd who to save His sheep bore the suffering of the Cross” (Admonitions, 6, 1: FF155).

Pope Francis released his new encyclical last year, “Fratelli Tutti” on fraternity and social friendship. The title of the encyclical is a direct quotation from St. Francis, taken from the Admonitions. Pope Francis chose the words of St. Francis which were addressed to his friars, to initiate a reflection on fraternity and social friendship. The Encyclical is addressed to all men and women of the earth, everyone, inclusively. “Since it is a direct quotation from St. Francis, taken from the Admonitions, quoted above, the Pope has obviously not changed it. But the formulation of the title in no way intends to exclude women, that is, more than half of the human race,” wrote the editorial director for the Vatican Dicastery for Communication.

Pope Francis spoke on the relevance of St. Francis’ message: “St. Francis of Assisi used to say, ‘All brothers and sisters.’ Thus, men and women of every religious, we unite ourselves today in prayer and penance to ask for the grace of healing from this pandemic.”

In the midst of the pandemic, the pope sends a message about fraternity and social friendship.

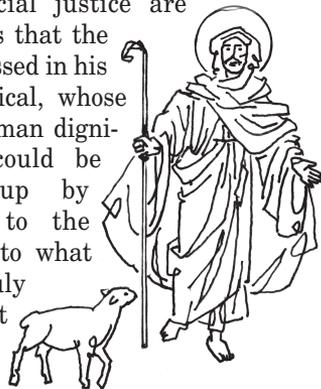
The Encyclical is a call back to the roots of Christianity. Archbishop Jose Rodriguez Carballo, O.F.M., Secretary of the Congregation for Institutes of

Consecrated Life as well as former Minister General of the Friars Minor, explained that fraternity is not only the identity of the Franciscan vocation; it is the identity of the Christian fraternity, as a constant service to others and that it leads to the roots of Christianity.

For Archbishop Carballo, the pope’s invitation to live in fraternity during the current difficulties is the key to building a post-pandemic society. It’s an issue that includes overcoming the virus of indifference in the face of social inequalities.

He said, “Once again, we have been able to see, and I hope that we are not blind to that reality that we are all equal. In the face of the virus, there have been neither rich nor poor, neither educated nor ignorant. The virus makes us all equal. But I hope that we react positively, and if it has made us equal in a negative way, that we now work for universal brotherhood.”

Society, ecology, economy, spirituality and social justice are some issues that the pope addressed in his new encyclical, whose focus is human dignity. This could be summed up by returning to the essentials, to what is truly important for a better society. ■



Learn more by visiting online franciscanmissionassoc.org
or follow us on Facebook
www.facebook.com/FranciscanMissionAssoc

MEDITATION ON THE EASTER CANDLE

If you attend the Vigil Mass on Holy Saturday you will witness the lighting of the Paschal or Easter candle. Last year as the pope blessed the fire and lit the candle in a dark St. Peter's Basilica, he called on Christians to "keep kindling sparks of hope, knowing that Jesus has risen and death will not have the last word." (Wooden, 2020)

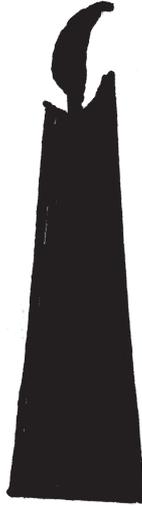
Every Catholic church gets a new Easter Candle that represents Christ, the Light of the World, on Holy Saturday. The candle is rich with symbolism and significance in addition to its beauty. The pure beeswax of which the candle is made represents the sinless Christ who was formed in the womb of His Mother. The wick signifies His humanity, the flame, His Divine nature, both soul and body. (Catholic News Agency, 2020)

Five grains of incense inserted into the candle in the form of a cross represent the five wounds in His hands, feet, and side. Other markings on the candle

also carry a special meaning. The cross represents Christ's great sacrifice, and the Greek letters Alpha and Omega represent Jesus as the beginning and end. Each year's candle is also inscribed with the current year, on all four sides of the cross, and sometimes the dates of the principal movable feasts. The current year is a reminder of God's presence here and now.

The Easter candle is lit each day during Mass throughout the Paschal season until Ascension Thursday (Catholic News Agency, 2020). Once the Easter season is over the candle is moved to the baptismal font and used throughout the year during baptisms and funeral Masses. The lighting of the candle at funerals is a sign of hope, a sign of light and it reminds families that their

dearly departed is now with Christ. This year observe and meditate on the symbolism and history of the beautiful candle, and on the Light it represents to us all. ■



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 3213, Mount Vernon, NY 10551-0598**

FMA Spiritual Exercises - Lent-Easter 2021

For the petitions and special intentions of all our benefactors, Franciscan Mission Associates will conduct this series of spiritual exercises during the Lenten and Easter season.

You are cordially invited to join us in prayer for your own needs and petitions, for those of our Franciscan Missionary Friars and their people, and for all who cooperate by prayer and sacrifice for the spread of the faith.

During the Lenten-Easter Season these Novenas of Masses have been arranged:

- January 1-9Holy Family Novena
- February 2-19Our Lady of Lourdes
- February 17 - March 28Lenten Masses (40)
- March 23-31Feast of Easter
- April 4-12In Thanksgiving for the Risen Christ
- April 13 - June 89 Tuesdays to St. Anthony

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

**Father Robert, O.F.M., Franciscan Mission Associates
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