

☞ CELEBRATE ☞

Franciscan Federation's *Spirit and Life* offers this introduction to help you begin to discover the depth of this gift, *Franciscan Morning and Evening Praise* book of the Third Order Regular calling us to "celebrate the Liturgy of the Hours in union with the whole church." (TOR R&L 9) *Franciscan Morning and Evening Praise* is not Franciscan prayer in itself but will help us pray as Franciscans.

"It is essential [for Franciscans] that we keep our prayer vigil in the presence of the mystery of the Incarnation. *Incarnation prayer* is grounded in a contemplative way of life that sees and hears the cyclic pattern of flesh made Word and Word made flesh repeated over and over again in the ebb and flow of one's own life experience." (Clare D'Auria, OSF. *Stirrings of the Spirit: The Incarnational Prayer of Clare of Assisi*)

In the manner of Francis and Clare of Assisi, let us place ourselves in God's presence saying,

"With a clean heart and spirit,

-Let us adore and serve God, living and true."

(Franciscan Morning and Evening Praise)

☞ Prepare a space in which you can "gaze" upon the goodness of the Lord, and "preserve peace of mind and body." (Admonition 15)

☞ Quietly consider burdensome distractions in order to "remove disturbances." (Admonitions 8, 11, 13, 14)

☞ Let your prayer focus on our contemplative goal: to "adore and behold the living God." (Admonition 16)

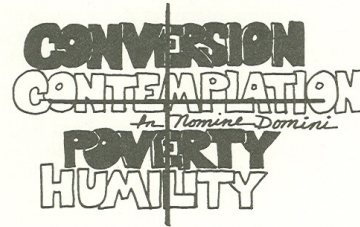
☞ Pray with songs of praise, giving thanks "to God to whom every good belongs." (Admonition 7)

☞ Before departing, consider that we are called to "live the words" of our prayer as we reach out to the world in peace. (Admonitions 18, 20)

☞ FRANCISCAN PRAYER ☞

Franciscan prayer "is decisively incarnational..."
(Ilia Delio, *Franciscan Prayer*, 2)

From the depths of their inner life let them love, honor, adore, serve, praise, bless and glorify our most high and eternal God who is Father and Son and Holy Spirit...we should pray always and not lose heart" (*Lk 18:1*): this is what God desires. (*TOR Rule 9; ER 23:11; ER 22:29-30*)



...Gaze,
consider,
contemplate,
desiring to imitate Your Spouse. (2LAg 20)

Thus he [Francis] would direct all his attention and affection toward the one thing he asked of the Lord, not so much praying as becoming totally prayer. (2C 95)

☞ *How do you love, honor, adore, serve, praise, bless and glorify the Triune God?*

☞ *In what ways are you imitating your Beloved?*

☞ *Ponder ways you are becoming your prayer.*

☞ *What is your heart's desire as you pray?*

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Franciscan
MORNING · AND · EVENING · PRAISE

Reflections and quotes included in this brochure are taken from the Franciscan Federation Annual Conference keynote addresses of Sr. Clare D'Auria OSF and Fr. Edward Foley OFM Capuchin held July 2006 in Rochester, New York. Keynote articles are available on the Franciscan Federation website at www.Franfed.org, Annual Conference, '06 Keynote Articles.

☞ COMMUNAL/ACCESSIBLE ☞

Francis' vision of prayer among his followers was that of a shared, accessible event that contributed to the building up of the community. Francis lived in a period marked by the growing privatization of the Church's liturgy, increasingly shaped for execution by the ecclesially elite. On the contrary, in a full embrace of poverty and simplicity, Francis led his followers in a prayer style that required no books, no building, no liturgical artifacts and little learning. Clearly it was accessible to all. Francis consistently seemed to value communal over individual prayer for the brothers. (Edward Foley, OFM Cap, *The Contribution of Francis' Prayer to the Church's Communio and Missio*)

From: General Instructions

The Liturgy of the Hours, and by extension this *Franciscan Morning and Evening Praise*, is not private prayer but unites the praying community to the whole body of the Church. Wherever and whenever possible these prayers should be prayed communally.

The text follows a modified cathedral style of prayer, simple while inviting full participation of the faithful.

This project was carried on by almost eight hundred individuals from forty congregations.

REFLECTION

- a. In light of the communal dimension, what can I do to invite a conversion of my heart from individualism and elitism to a more socio-centric celebration of prayer?
- b. In planning prayer, when and how can I be more faithful to Francis' vision of prayer that is distinguished by a noble simplicity accessible to all?
- c. What can I now do to engage in a holy newness with those I pray in full, conscious and active participation?

☞ PASSIONATE /LYRICAL ☞

Francis' passion, lyricism and drama were not simply random genetic traits, but a mature choice intimately wed to his incarnational instincts fueled by his commitment to Lady Poverty. His whole life was about inscribing the cross on his body so, as he progressed in the complete abandonment of self to Christ crucified, the drama eventually played itself out on his own body in the stigmata. For Francis, feelings were a potential for grace, so passion did not translate into anything dour as though his only passion was for misery. Rather, his fundamental grateful stance sustained him in joy. While Francis' prayer was certainly characterized by "right belief," he seemed more concerned with "right practice" and "right feeling," encouraging continuity between the way he and his followers prayed and the way they lived. Never theatrical, Francis'...passionate lyricism is a gesture of hospitality to peoples and cultures that value the public expression of affect in worship. (Edward Foley, OFM Cap, *The Contribution of Francis' Prayer to the Church's Communio and Missio*)

From: Second Reading Week 1 Sunday Evening

One day, as he was riding near Assisi, [Francis] met a leper on the road. He felt terrified and revolted...the leper stretched out his hand...received both money and a kiss. (2C 5:9)

REFLECTION

- a. Francis' whole life was about inscribing the cross on his body and so the natural conclusion was the Stigmata. What is my life about; what sign might be its outcome?
- b. How do I view *feelings* in the context of prayer and worship? Do I see them as grace that enhances prayer?
- c. What would happen if I really abandoned myself to my feelings? Would my prayer be different?
- d. What is going on in me right now *exteriorly* that is reflecting the *interior* passion and song of my life?
- e. How is my prayer, both personal and communal, a gesture of hospitality? Who would feel welcome in my prayer? Who wouldn't? Who do I need to kiss and embrace more deliberately?

☞ INCARNATIONAL/ECOLOGICAL ☞

To assert therefore that Francis' prayer reveals an incarnational-ecological bias does not mean it is in any way narrowly focused on Christ's own incarnation, but more broadly embraces the incarnational mystery of God's action in the world throughout the whole of salvation history, that culminates in the living, dying and rising of the Son of Man. (Edward Foley, OFM Cap, *The Contribution of Francis' Prayer to the Church's Communio and Missio*).

From: Intercession Week 1 Sunday Morning

You have brought us to the dawn of a new day.

-Teach us to reverence the earth and all forms of life.

REFLECTION

The twenty-first century has begun with violence across the globe, in Palestine, Israel, Lebanon, Dafur, Kenya, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Iraq, Afghanistan among other conflicts. Hundreds of thousands of lives have been disrupted or lost, and entire populations displaced. Often the U.S. has been slow to call for immediate ceasefires or to promote peacekeeping efforts. In all cases Earth herself has been damaged, either as a cause or result of human conflicts.

- a. How do I bring the world and her people into the embrace of the incarnational mystery of God's action in the world? Where do I see the action of God's presence in these situations?
- b. How does the Franciscan spirit move my heart in prayer and response? How do I experience the position of the UN, Vatican, U.S. and people on all sides of the conflicts?
- c. Where in my own life do I experience the life, death and resurrection of Christ? What aspect of this incarnational mystery dominates in my life right now? In the spirit of Francis, can I praise and give thanks for whatever happens each day.