

1: St Francis Of Assisi Quotes And Sayings |

The figure of Francis of Assisi () has always captured the imaginations of people from all walks of life: Christians and Muslims, royalty and prime ministers, rich and poor, intellectuals and workers, philosophers and theologians, poets and novelists, artists and filmmakers, historians and sociologists, peacemakers and environmentalists, people of all religions or none.

Francesco grew up in a middle-class home that engaged in the sale of fine cloth. Francis was a skilled merchant in the family business, but he enjoyed spending money more than earning it. He was a man about town, a leader among his friends, and well liked for his concern for others. He was also a failed knight. When he was twenty, Francis joined a civic-minded Assisi militia in a battle against a neighboring city. When the militia was routed, Francis was spared death and instead held for ransom due to his fine livery. He was held prisoner in a rank dungeon for a year before the ransom was paid. He returned to Assisi a more reflective man. Shortly after this turning point, Francis met a leper on the outskirts of Assisi. He initially recoiled, but then dismounted, gave the man some money, and kissed his putrid hand. This was the start of his frequent visits to leper houses and hospitals. Coming back to Assisi, he donated the proceeds to a priest at the church of San Damiano on the outskirts of Assisi. His son had sold cloth from the family store, and a horse, and had then given away money that was not his. This was stealing, and Francis was put in prison. A dramatic scene then unfolds between Francis and his father, in the presence of Bishop Guido of Assisi and his court seated in a church square. Pietro demands the return of his money, and the Bishop says the Church cannot accept stolen money. Francis returns the coins. But then Francis goes further. Francis was now cut off, disinherited, and on his own. Eventually, Francis begins to wear a rough smock which he ties around his waist with a cord. He lives alone in absolute poverty, prays, helps the sick, rebuilds nearby run-down chapels, and preaches and begs in Assisi. Men begin to follow his lead, and the first fire of the worldwide Franciscan order ignites. Saint Francis is the first great founder of a religious order since Saint Benedict in the s. By sheer allure of personality and holiness, not intellect, organizational skill, or vision, he imparted a mysteriously powerful charisma to his followers. He was ardent in his love for the Holy Eucharist and insisted that churches be well kept in its honor. Francis died in his forty-fourth year and was canonized just two years later, in Saint Francis may be the most well known person of the second millennium. Saint Francis of Assisi, you held the Holy Eucharist in such holy reverence you dared not be ordained a priest. Your love of the Word of God complimented your love of His creation.

2: Project MUSE - Francis of Assisi: Performing the Gospel Life (review)

Women also were fascinated by Francis's message, and when Francis received a rich young woman of Assisi named Clare, the Second Order of Franciscans was founded, also known as Poor Clares.

His dedication to prayer and repentance are traits that are held in high esteem by the Catholic faithful. For it is in giving that we receive. Francis of Assisi This saint was familiar with both wealth and lack of it. Born to a wealthy merchant, he grew up in a comfortable environment where he lacked nothing. Despite all this, he gave up his life of privilege to dedicate his life to God. By sharing his wealth, he got to experience the joy of giving. By denying himself the comforts that money could afford him, he experienced poverty and true humility. Where there is injury, pardon. Where there is doubt, faith. Where there is hatred, let me sow love. If God can work through me, He can work through anyone. You have no enemy except yourselves. If necessary, use words. Where there is hatred, let me sow love. Francis of Assisi Before he became a committed Catholic, St Francis had been kidnapped and held captive for a year. His captors demanded ransom from his wealthy family in exchange for his release. This painful experience changed him for the better and he decided to use love as his weapon. During this hard time, he realized that immeasurable wealth could not be greater than the power of love. This is a valuable lesson that many men of faith try to teach and live. Preach the gospel at all times. Use words if necessary. Francis of Assisi To Francis, the gospel was not just a message, but it was a lifestyle. He wanted his life to communicate his love and devotion to God just as much as his sermon. A life that reflects the gospel will reach more people outside the church than a sermon that will only touch those who are in church and are already converted. This quote was not meant to downplay the significance of preaching. Catholic factions who pledge allegiance to him, take a vow of poverty and they dedicate their lives to prayer. Ordinary people can also follow this example by living a life that is driven by love and commitment to prayer. A desire to live a holy life will also be a means of honoring the Saint. It is a truth that all faiths should acknowledge. Please follow and like us:

3: St. Francis of Assisi - My Catholic Life!

Biography Early life. Francis of Assisi was born in late or early , one of several children of an Italian father, Pietro di Bernardone, a prosperous silk merchant, and a French mother, Pica de Bourlemont, about whom little is known except that she was a noblewoman originally from Provence.

By Lauren Caggiano Visit the photo gallery for more from this event. Bishop Luers High School in Fort Wayne recently completed construction on a new chapel and other improvements, thanks to the support of generous donors. The goal of Phase II is to complete several core infrastructure projects, including building renovations that focus on enhancing the student experience in media, technology, religion and the arts. According to Principal Tiffany Albertson, the recent improvements will better meet both the academic and spiritual needs of the students. For example, the previous chapel only seated 45 and did not promote a sense of community. Bishop Rhoades replaces a portion of the altar after installing a relic of St. From a practical standpoint, the amount of seating has quadrupled from 45 to The larger space, known as the Chapel of St. Francis of Assisi, was constructed in loving memory of Bishop John M. At a Mass with blessing and dedication ceremony Nov. Rhoades acknowledged the significance of the name. He is the patron saint of Bishop Luers High School. Some of the most striking artwork that will be placed in the new chapel, to direct those who visit the chapel in worship, have yet to arrive and be installed. A few key pieces are in place, however, and the bishop explained the relevance of one during the Mass. Saint Francis is an extraordinary model of discipleship. He was a troubadour of the Lord, filled with love for Christ and the joy of the Gospel. His poverty inspires us to remember that only Christ is our true treasure. Meditating on his life of evangelical poverty, simplicity, chastity, and obedience, his love for the Church and the Eucharist, and his care of creation, can help us to live and embrace the radical truth of the Gospel. Francis of Assisi altar by Bishop Rhoades, during the Mass. First Friday Masses, Masses for entire grade levels, adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and alumni Masses are all expected to be scheduled in the new space. Retreats will also move from the wrestling room to the chapel, giving them a more spiritual backdrop. Albertson said already the project has been a boon to Luers. The media center and library have been updated; a new, more-flexible space accommodates reference materials and includes updated technology that will better prepare them for college and the workforce. Delivered to your inbox. Subscribe to our mailing list today.

4: St Francis of Assisi: Writings for a Gospel Life - Armstrong, Regis J.

Francis of Assisi is counted among the most important personalities of history. The life and ideals of this humble, semiliterate medieval friar have had a shaping influence on the Christian church that has spilled over into Western culture at large. This biography by Lawrence Cunningham looks anew.

In lieu of an abstract, here is a brief excerpt of the content: Peterson bio Francis of Assisi: Performing the Gospel Life. Performing the Gospel Life, the tables are turned, for his biography becomes both history and theology. He brings Francis to life and plants him next door as our contemporary neighbor, a bit socially erratic, yet strangely magnetic. Neither his parents nor his friends are certain what to make of Francis. He manifests a mysterious quality from somewhere beyond this world. It is apparent from this biography of a larger-than-life saint that Cunningham has known Francis and the world of the sacred for quite some time. This is also evident in his historical sense of the medieval church. Yet the strength of Francis of Assisi is in its theological perspective, which Cunningham identifies in the introductory chapter as his primary lens. Cunningham draws us inside the world of Francis by observing his performances: The ecclesial tenets of the council and synods were enacted when Francis and his early companions chose the Gospel as a new way of life. In opposition to the dreaded heretical movements of the Middle Ages, Francis battled to defend "like the knight he dreamed of becoming" the sacramental teaching of the church, [End Page] especially regarding the Incarnation and the sacredness of all created things. Francis perceived the invisible God in the visible person of Jesus, lending spiritual eyes to those who were blind to the world beyond. Behind all Francis saw was the God in whom he believed and for whom he played his earthly role. The scenes from Francis life are visual and memorable: From such roller-coaster episodes Francis escaped into moments, days, even months of contemplative prayer where he faced the drama of his human limitations. He designed, produced, directed and engaged the townspeople of Greccio to enact that first Christmas in Bethlehem with its stable, manger, ox, donkey, and torches for lighting. When Francis held the Christ child in his arms, some of the witnesses believed they saw the child awaken. In the fifth of nine chapters, Cunningham addresses the authenticity of Francis stigmata, beginning with the historical question of what Francis actually experienced. You are not currently authenticated. View freely available titles:

5: Secular Franciscan Order - Wikipedia

Pope BENEDICT XVI - General Audience Wednesday, 27 th January St Francis. Dear Brothers and Sisters, In a recent Catechesis, I illustrated the providential role the Orders of Friars Minor and the Order of Preachers, founded by St Francis of Assisi and St Dominic de Guzmán respectively, played in the renewal of the Church in their day.

There is, then, a Franciscan doctrine in accordance with which God is holy, is great, and above all, is good, indeed the supreme Good. For in this doctrine, God is love. He lives by love, creates for love, becomes flesh and redeems, that is, he saves and makes holy, for love. There is also a Franciscan way of contemplating Jesus: Similarly, there is a method of loving Him and of imitating Him: From this arises a burning devotion to the Incarnation and the Passion of Jesus, because these mysteries allow us to see Him, not so much in His glory, in His omnipotent grandeur, or in His eternal triumph, as rather in His human love – so tender in the manger, so sorrowful on the cross. While every Christian believes this, Franciscans choose to emphasize it as Francis did. They devote themselves to living the Gospel according to the spirit of Francis, especially to careful reading of the Gospel and going from Gospel to life and life to the Gospel. As a summary of the elements of Franciscan spirituality, a Franciscan should live: Bonaventure[edit] Saint Bonaventure , the seraphic doctor, is regarded as deeply penetrated and imbued with the mind of Saint Francis of Assisi. Besides his popular writing, Bonaventure has written works of pure spirituality in strict dependence and vital application on Christ, because he felt that all knowledge that is not founded on Christ is vain. The work which sums up all his doctrine is the "Collationes in Hexaameron", a synthesis of all human knowledge, including spirituality. John Duns Scotus[edit] John Duns Scotus – The second of the Franciscan masters has produced no notable or well-known treatise on spirituality, but John Duns Scotus has systematized the primacy on which Franciscan spirituality is founded. He has given many suggestions and produced many texts such that his disciples and his commentators can be guided by him, and thus came to reveal Franciscan thought and its spirituality, though he differs notably from Bonaventure. Thus John Duns Scotus joined his predecessor Bonaventure on a similar interpretation of the function and mission of Jesus Christ given by Francis, that Christ is the highest grace God offers His creatures, and their response controls their attitude to God. Intimate union with Christ lies at the heart of the OFS vocation. Therefore, Secular Franciscans should seek to encounter the living and active person of Christ in their brothers and sisters, in Sacred Scripture, in the Church and in liturgical activity. They do this by studying, loving and most of all by living in an integrated way the human and evangelical aspects of their life. Firstly, they draw on the rich experience of Franciscan figures of the past, real men and women from the ranks of the Order, who were both contemplative and dedicated to so many activities as parents and single people, kings and craftsmen, recluses and people involved in welfare activities. Secondly, at the beginning of the third millennium, they face a test of their creativity when confronted by the new evangelisation. Thirdly, they cultivate a deep knowledge of Francis the prophet, an example from the past, leading them into the future. As times change, it has to adapt to the needs and expectations of the Holy Church. Thus from the outset, it is a group that is shaped by the Holy Church, and it is only in this context that the charism can thrive. The vocation of the Order is, therefore, a vocation to live the Gospel in fraternal communion. Members of the Order gather in ecclesiastical communities which are called fraternities. The Secular Franciscans commit themselves to live the Gospel according to Franciscan spirituality in their secular condition. The Secular Franciscan must personally and assiduously study the Gospel and Sacred Scripture to foster love for the word of the Gospel and help the brothers and sisters to know and understand it as it is proclaimed by the Church with the assistance of the Spirit. Secular Franciscans, called in earlier times "the brothers and sisters of penance", propose to live in the spirit of continual conversion. Some means to cultivate this characteristic of the Franciscan vocation, individually and in fraternity, are: Secular Franciscans should pledge themselves to live the spirit of the Beatitudes and, in a special way, the spirit of poverty. Evangelical poverty demonstrates confidence in the Father, affects interior freedom, and disposes them to promote a more just distribution of wealth. They must provide for their own families and serve society by means of their work and material goods. They have a particular manner of living

evangelical poverty. To understand and achieve it requires a strong personal commitment and the stimulation of the fraternity in prayer and dialogue, communal review of life, and attentiveness to the instructions of the Church and the demands of society. They pledge themselves to reduce their own personal needs so as to be better able to share spiritual and material goods with their brothers and sisters, especially those most in need. They should give thanks to God for the goods they have received, using them as good stewards and not as owners. They should take a firm position against consumerism and against ideologies and practices which prefer riches over human and religious values and which permit the exploitation of the human person. They should love and practice purity of heart, the source of true fraternity. This conservation keeps in mind that the exploitation of the environment often puts disproportionate hardships on the poor, especially if they live in the affected areas. Social justice[edit] Secular Franciscans are called to make their own contribution, inspired by the person and message of Francis, towards a civilization in which the dignity of the human person, shared responsibility, and love may be living realities. They should firmly commit themselves to oppose every form of exploitation, discrimination, and exclusion and against every attitude of indifference in relation to others. They promote the building of fraternity among peoples: Secular Franciscans attempt to be in the forefront in the field of public life. They should collaborate as much as possible for the passage of just laws and ordinances. Work and leisure[edit] For Francis, work is a gift and to work is a grace. In the conviction that work is a right and a duty and that every form of occupation deserves respect, the brothers and sisters should commit themselves to collaborate so that all persons may have the possibility to work and so that working conditions may always be more humane. Leisure and recreation have their own value and are necessary for personal development. Secular Franciscans should maintain a balance between work and rest and should strive to make meaningful use of their leisure time. Peace[edit] Secular Franciscans are called to be bearers of peace in their families and in society. The renunciation of the use of violence, characteristic of the followers of Francis, does not mean the renunciation of action. Peace is the work of justice and the fruit of reconciliation and of fraternal love. While acknowledging both the personal and national right to self-defense, they should respect the choice of those who, because of conscientious objection, refuse to bear arms. However, the brothers and sisters should take care that their interventions are always inspired by Christian love. Family[edit] Secular Franciscans should consider their own family to be the first place in which to live their Christian commitment and Franciscan vocation. They should make space within it for prayer, for the Word of God, and for Christian catechesis. They should concern themselves with respect for all life in every situation from conception until death. Married couples find in the Rule of the OFS an effective aid in their own journey of Christian life, aware that in the sacrament of matrimony their love shares in the love that Christ has for his Church. The beauty and the strength of the human love of the spouses is a profound witness for their own family, the Church, and the world. Youth[edit] Out of the conviction of the need to educate children to take an interest in community, "bringing them the awareness of being living, active members of the People of God" and because of the fascination which Saint Francis of Assisi can exercise on them, the formation of groups of children should be encouraged. With the help of a pedagogy and an organization suitable to their age, these children should be initiated into a knowledge and love of the Franciscan life. National statutes will give an appropriate orientation for the organization of these groups and their relationship to the fraternity and to the groups of Franciscan youth. The Franciscan Youth is formed by those young people who feel called by the Holy Spirit to share the experience of the Christian life in fraternity, in the light of the message of Francis, deepening their own vocation within the context of the Secular Franciscan Order. Membership in the Order is attained through a time of initiation, a time of formation, and the Profession of the Rule. The journey of formation, which is expected to develop throughout life, begins with entrance into the fraternity. Those responsible for formation are: Elizabeth of Hungary "is the Patroness of the Order.

6: FMM - Feast of St. Francis of Assisi

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7: Francis of Assisi - His Life and History - A True Faithful Catholic

Today, St. Francis of Assisi is the patron saint for ecologists – a title honoring his boundless love for animals and nature. In , Cardinal Jorge Mario Bergogli chose to honor St. Francis by.

Francis of Assisi Feast of St. Francis of Assisi A saint for all! Today, October 4th, we celebrate the feast of St. Francis of Assisi, one of the most popular saints for Christians as well non-Christians. He is a saint for all! Francis has won the love and the admiration of so many generations, by living the Gospel and presenting poverty, chastity and obedience with the purity and strength of a radical, loving and personal witness. The ideal of love lived by Francis in simplicity, yet in fullness, also set forth a call and an attraction that transformed Assisi at the beginning of the 3rd millennium. From this place of peace and prayer, St Francis continues to spread his message in the world, still rich of teachings for our times as well. The central message of St Francis was to lead the Christians of his time and of successive generations the desire of Gospel lived "sine glossa", in an authentic manner, fully and sincerely, convinced that it is only to the one who strives to live integrally that he reveals his perfect happiness. Love of Francis for God becomes the source of the love for his brothers and all of creation. Francis wished to adhere deeply to Christ in imitating his life and death with such fidelity that he became a perfect image. He wished to follow the footsteps of Christ and to live as Christ. He searched for happiness in the search of Christ, in the possession of Christ, and in the transformation in Christ. This was the goal in the attempts to reproduce the actions of Christ and the scenes of his life. Thus, on Christmas at Greccio, he recreated the birth of Christ in Bethlehem in introducing the tradition of the manger, which will become a Christmas tradition throughout the centuries and throughout Europe. On the matter of his love for the Church, Francis took to heart the words that Jesus spoke to him from the crucifix of St Damiano: With his own hands, Francis rebuilt and restored the tottering walls of this church. But his mandate was much larger and much more demanding. At the time of Francis there were many who wished to be with Christ without having the Church as intermediary. Francis stayed away from these groups and their ideas. He was devoted to the Roman Church that he called "our mother": It is precisely for this fact that the reform was so fruitful. Without lording it over anyone, Francis set out on the path of imitating the poor and crucified Christ. Many will join him, wishing to follow him in this new Evangelical lifestyle. This teaching of Francis remains relevant more than ever today: It demands that we reform ourselves in following Christ in poverty, humility, in love, and in filial obedience to the Church. It strive to spread by word and witnessing the respect of all, of fraternal love, of serenity, and peace. Modern society, to a far greater extent than at the time of St Francis, is going through a very sharp conflict at the core of its peoples, socially, economically, politically, and religiously. At the international level, it is assailed by the bloody reality of terrorism, of war, and of violations of human rights. In the face of such a reality, St Francis once again proposes to individuals and to peoples that necessity and the urgency for an authentic dialogue in truth, in freedom, and in mutual love. May this great lesson of mutual respect, of fraternity, of love between all persons because they are created in the image of God continue to speak to the hearts of each man and woman of our times.

8: Chapel of Saint Francis of Assisi blessed - Today's Catholic

From Butler's Lives of the Saints: ST. FRANCIS, the son of a merchant of Assisi, was born in that city in Chosen by God to be a living manifestation to the world of Christ's poor and suffering life on earth, he was early inspired with a high esteem and burning love of poverty and humiliation.

Founder of the Franciscan Order, born at Assisi in Umbria, in In , Pietro Bernardone returned from a trip to France to find out his wife had given birth to a son. The last thing Pietro wanted in his son was a man of God -- he wanted a man of business, a cloth merchant like he was, and he especially wanted a son who would reflect his infatuation with France. So he renamed his son Francesco -- which is the equivalent of calling him Frenchman. From the beginning everyone -- and I mean everyone -- loved Francis. He was constantly happy, charming, and a born leader. If he was picky, people excused him. If he was ill, people took care of him. If he was so much of a dreamer he did poorly in school, no one minded. In many ways he was too easy to like for his own good. No one tried to control him or teach him. As he grew up, Francis became the leader of a crowd of young people who spent their nights in wild parties. Thomas of Celano, his biographer who knew him well, said, "In other respects an exquisite youth, he attracted to himself a whole retinue of young people addicted to evil and accustomed to vice. He loved the songs of France, the romance of France, and especially the free adventurous troubadours of France who wandered through Europe. And despite his dreaming, Francis was also good at business. But Francis wanted more.. Francis wanted to be a noble, a knight. Battle was the best place to win the glory and prestige he longed for. He got his first chance when Assisi declared war on their longtime enemy, the nearby town of Perugia. Most of the troops from Assisi were butchered in the fight. Only those wealthy enough to expect to be ransomed were taken prisoner. At last Francis was among the nobility like he always wanted to be All accounts say that he never lost his happy manner in that horrible place. Finally, after a year in the dungeon, he was ransomed. He gave himself to partying with as much joy and abandon as he had before the battle. Finally a call for knights for the Fourth Crusade gave him a chance for his dream. But before he left Francis had to have a suit of armor and a horse -- no problem for the son of a wealthy father. And not just any suit of armor would do but one decorated with gold with a magnificent cloak. Any relief we feel in hearing that Francis gave the cloak to a poor knight will be destroyed by the boasts that Francis left behind that he would return a prince. There he had a dream in which God told him he had it all wrong and told him to return home. And return home he did. What must it have been like to return without ever making it to battle -- the boy who wanted nothing more than to be liked was humiliated, laughed at, called a coward by the village and raged at by his father for the money wasted on armor. Francis started to spend more time in prayer. He went off to a cave and wept for his sins. There was a business to run, customers to wait on. One day while riding through the countryside, Francis, the man who loved beauty, who was so picky about food, who hated deformity, came face to face with a leper. Repelled by the appearance and the smell of the leper, Francis nevertheless jumped down from his horse and kissed the hand of the leper. When his kiss of peace was returned, Francis was filled with joy. As he rode off, he turned around for a last wave, and saw that the leper had disappeared. He always looked upon it as a test from God His search for conversion led him to the ancient church at San Damiano. While he was praying there, he heard Christ on the crucifix speak to him, "Francis, repair my church. Pietro dragged Francis before the bishop and in front of the whole town demanded that Francis return the money and renounce all rights as his heir. The bishop was very kind to Francis; he told him to return the money and said God would provide. That was all Francis needed to hear. He not only gave back the money but stripped off all his clothes -- the clothes his father had given him -- until he was wearing only a hair shirt. In front of the crowd that had gathered he said, "Pietro Bernardone is no longer my father. And when robbers beat him later and took his clothes, he climbed out of the ditch and went off singing again. From then on Francis had nothing He begged for stones and rebuilt the San Damiano church with his own hands, not realizing that it was the Church with a capital C that God wanted repaired. Scandal and avarice were working on the Church from the inside while outside heresies flourished by appealing to those longing for something different or adventurous. Soon Francis started to preach. He was never a priest,

though he was later ordained a deacon under his protest. Francis was not a reformer; he preached about returning to God and obedience to the Church. Francis must have known about the decay in the Church, but he always showed the Church and its people his utmost respect. When someone told him of a priest living openly with a woman and asked him if that meant the Mass was polluted, Francis went to the priest, knelt before him, and kissed his hands -- because those hands had held God. Slowly companions came to Francis, people who wanted to follow his life of sleeping in the open, begging for garbage to eat. With companions, Francis knew he now had to have some kind of direction to this life so he opened the Bible in three places. He read the command to the rich young man to sell all his good and give to the poor, the order to the apostles to take nothing on their journey, and the demand to take up the cross daily. He was going to do what no one thought possible any more -- live by the Gospel. Francis took these commands so literally that he made one brother run after the thief who stole his hood and offer him his robe! Francis never wanted to found a religious order -- this former knight thought that sounded too military. His companions came from all walks of life, from fields and towns, nobility and common people, universities, the Church, and the merchant class. Francis practiced true equality by showing honor, respect, and love to every person whether they were beggar or pope. We call someone a lover of nature if they spend their free time in the woods or admire its beauty. The sparrow was as much his brother as the pope. The story tells us the birds stood still as he walked among them, only flying off when he said they could leave. Another famous story involves a wolf that had been eating human beings. Francis intervened when the town wanted to kill the wolf and talked the wolf into never killing again. The wolf became a pet of the townspeople who made sure that he always had plenty to eat. Following the Gospel literally, Francis and his companions went out to preach two by two. And they were right. Because soon these same people noticed that these barefoot beggars wearing sacks seemed filled with constant joy. And people had to ask themselves: Could one own nothing and be happy? Soon those who had met them with mud and rocks, greeted them with bells and smiles. Francis did not try to abolish poverty, he tried to make it holy. When his friars met someone poorer than they, they would eagerly rip off the sleeve of their habit to give to the person. They worked for all necessities and only begged if they had to. But Francis would not let them accept any money. He told them to treat coins as if they were pebbles in the road. Also, Francis reasoned, what could you do to a man who owns nothing? They were truly free. Francis was a man of action. His simplicity of life extended to ideas and deeds. If there was a simple way, no matter how impossible it seemed, Francis would take it. You can imagine what the pope thought when this beggar approached him! As a matter of fact he threw Francis out. But when he had a dream that this tiny man in rags held up the tilting Lateran basilica, he quickly called Francis back and gave him permission to preach. Sometimes this direct approach led to mistakes that he corrected with the same spontaneity that he made them. Once he ordered a brother who hesitated to speak because he stuttered to go preach half-naked. When Francis realized how he had hurt someone he loved he ran to town, stopped the brother, took off his own clothes, and preached instead. Once he was so sick and exhausted, his companions borrowed a mule for him to ride. When the man who owned the mule recognized Francis he said, "Try to be as virtuous as everyone thinks you are because many have a lot of confidence in you. Another example of his directness came when he decided to go to Syria to convert the Moslems while the Fifth Crusade was being fought. In the middle of a battle, Francis decided to do the simplest thing and go straight to the sultan to make peace. Instead Francis was taken to the sultan who was charmed by Francis and his preaching. He told Francis, "I would convert to your religion which is a beautiful one -- but both of us would be murdered. When he returned to Italy, he came back to a brotherhood that had grown to in ten years.

9: St. Francis of Assisi: Living Simply, Simply Living | Busted Halo

Franciscans today try to emulate Francis' spirit of community with the rest of the world. The majority of them live together in simple communities, still respecting nature and living a life full of the teachings of Jesus Christ.

As part of a rich family his father was a cloth merchant Francis lived a carefree adolescence and youth, cultivating the chivalrous ideals of the time. At age 20, he took part in a military campaign and was taken prisoner. He became ill and was freed. After his return to Assisi, a slow process of spiritual conversion began within him, which brought him to gradually abandon the worldly lifestyle that he had adopted thus far. Three times Christ on the Cross came to life, and told him: This simple occurrence of the word of God heard in the Church of St Damian contains a profound symbolism. At that moment St Francis was called to repair the small church, but the ruinous state of the building was a symbol of the dramatic and disquieting situation of the Church herself. At that time the Church had a superficial faith which did not shape or transform life, a scarcely zealous clergy, and a chilling of love. It was an interior destruction of the Church which also brought a decomposition of unity, with the birth of heretical movements. Yet, there at the centre of the Church in ruins was the Crucified Lord, and he spoke: Francis at San Damiano

Rebuilding the church This event, which probably happened in , calls to mind another similar occurrence which took place in In it, he saw the Basilica of St John Lateran, the mother of all churches, collapsing and one small and insignificant religious brother supporting the church on his shoulders to prevent it from falling. On the one hand, it is interesting to note that it is not the Pope who was helping to prevent the church from collapsing but rather a small and insignificant brother, whom the Pope recognized in Francis when he later came to visit. It was St Francis, called by God. On the other hand, however, it is important to note that St Francis does not renew the Church without or in opposition to the Pope, but only in communion with him. The two realities go together: Authentic renewal grew from these together. Francis renounces his father Let us return to the life of St Francis. When his father Bernardone reproached him for being too generous to the poor, Francis, standing before the Bishop of Assisi, in a symbolic gesture, stripped off his clothes, thus showing he renounced his paternal inheritance. Just as at the moment of creation, Francis had nothing, only the life that God gave him, into whose hands he delivered himself. He then lived as a hermit, until, in , another fundamental step in his journey of conversion took place. Other companions joined him, and in he travelled to Rome, to propose to Pope Innocent III the plan for a new form of Christian life. He received a fatherly welcome from that great Pontiff, who, enlightened by the Lord, perceived the divine origin of the movement inspired by Francis. The Poverello of Assisi understood that every charism as a gift of the Holy Spirit existed to serve the Body of Christ, which is the Church; therefore he always acted in full communion with the ecclesial authorities. In the life of the Saints there is no contradiction between prophetic charism and the charism of governance, and if tension arises, they know to patiently await the times determined by the Holy Spirit. It is also true that initially he did not intend to create an Order with the necessary canonical forms. Rather he simply wanted, through the word of God and the presence of the Lord, to renew the People of God, to call them back to listening to the word and to literal obedience to Christ

Francis placed himself fully, with his heart, in communion with the Church, with the Pope and with the Bishops. He always knew that the centre of the Church is the Eucharist, where the Body of Christ and his Blood are made present through the priesthood, the Eucharist and the communion of the Church. Wherever the priesthood and the Eucharist and the Church come together, it is there alone that the word of God also dwells. The real historical Francis was the Francis of the Church, and precisely in this way he continues to speak to non-believers and believers of other confessions and religions as well. Francis and Clare of Assisi Francis and his friars, who were becoming ever more numerous, established themselves at the Portiuncula, or the Church of Santa Maria degli Angeli, the sacred place par excellence of Franciscan spirituality. Even Clare, a young woman of Assisi from a noble family, followed the school of Francis. This became the origin of the Second Franciscan Order, that of the Poor Clares, another experience destined to produce outstanding figures of sainthood in the Church. In Francis obtained permission to visit and speak to the Muslim sultan Malik al-Kmil, to preach the Gospel of Jesus there too. In an age when there was a conflict underway between

Christianity and Islam, Francis, intentionally armed only with his faith and personal humility, travelled the path of dialogue effectively. It appears that later, in , Francis visited the Holy Land, thus sowing a seed that would bear much fruit: It is with gratitude that I think today of the great merits of the Franciscan Custody of the Holy Land. For his part, the Founder, dedicated completely to his preaching, which he carried out with great success, compiled his Rule that was then approved by the Pope. In , at the hermitage in La Verna, Francis had a vision of the Crucified Lord in the form of a seraph and from that encounter received the stigmata from the Seraph Crucifix, thus becoming one with the Crucified Christ. It was a gift, therefore, that expressed his intimate identification with the Lord. The death of Francis his transitus occurred on the evening of 3 October , in the Portiuncula. After having blessed his spiritual children, he died, lying on the bare earthen floor. Two years later Pope Gregory IX entered him in the roll of saints. A short time after, a great basilica in his honour was constructed in Assisi, still today an extremely popular pilgrim destination. It has been said that Francis represents an alter Christus, that he was truly a living icon of Christ. Indeed, this was his ideal: In particular, he wished to ascribe interior and exterior poverty with a fundamental value, which he also taught to his spiritual sons. Truly, dear friends, the saints are the best interpreters of the Bible. As they incarnate the word of God in their own lives, they make it more captivating than ever, so that it really speaks to us. The witness of Francis, who loved poverty as a means to follow Christ with dedication and total freedom, continues to be for us too an invitation to cultivate interior poverty in order to grow in our trust of God, also by adopting a sober lifestyle and a detachment from material goods. In this Year for Priests, I would also like to recall a piece of advice that Francis gave to priests: Francis always showed great deference towards priests, and asserted that they should always be treated with respect, even in cases where they might be somewhat unworthy personally. The reason he gave for this profound respect was that they receive the gift of consecrating the Eucharist. Dear brothers in the priesthood, let us never forget this teaching: This too is an extremely timely message. As I recalled in my recent Encyclical *Caritas in Veritate*, development is sustainable only when it respects Creation and does not damage the environment [cf. Francis reminds us that the wisdom and benevolence of the Creator is expressed through Creation. He understood nature as a language in which God speaks to us, in which reality becomes clear, and we can speak of God and with God. Dear friends, Francis was a great Saint and a joyful man. His simplicity, his humility, his faith, his love for Christ, his goodness towards every man and every woman, brought him gladness in every circumstance. Indeed, there subsists an intimate and indissoluble relationship between holiness and joy. A French writer once wrote that there is only one sorrow in the world: Looking at the testimony of St Francis, we understand that this is the secret of true happiness: May the Virgin, so tenderly loved by Francis, obtain this gift for us. Let us entrust ourselves to her with the words of the Poverello of Assisi himself:

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