

Dear Friend of the Missions,

The beginning of October is the time when all the Franciscan family celebrates St. Francis of Assisi. On October 3 we remember his passing and on October 4 we celebrate his feast day. We pray in a very special way for all our family, friends and benefactors who support us so generously. On October 11 the Church remembers Blessed John XXIII. His feast day is assigned to the day that he opened the Second Vatican Council in 1962. Keep the Church in



Your comments are welcome!



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your prayers. October 15 is the feast of St. Teresa of Avila, the Carmelite mystic and Doctor of the Church. October is also the month of the rosary. When you pray keep in mind the intentions of the Church in the United States. We are encouraged to pray for better respect of life and for vocations. Thank you for all your help and support. May the Lord bless you and those you love. Check out our website: www.hnp.org and click on FMU.

I didn't write that! But, thank you!

By Fr. Russell Becker, OFM

Some people are so well known and have such a great influence on our lives and the lives of the Church that many things are attributed to them which they did not do. Two of those people are St. Francis (feast day: October 4) and St. Teresa of Avila (feast day: October 15). Both these great saints have words associated with them that they probably did not write. These words associated with them are so typical of what these saints lived, preached and taught, that it was not hard for people to believe that they were the real words of the two saints. I would like to share with you one prayer associated with St. Francis and one with St. Teresa. Both are very beautiful. From those prayers many think they said I would just like to share some of their actual words which can also help us to understand them better and come to know them even more. When people think about St. Francis, they more often than not, think of the Peace Prayer.

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

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

Much of the work St. Francis did in the community and in the outside world could be described by the prayer. He sought at all times to be an instrument of God's peace. His visit to the Sultan, seeking peace, is but one example. He was quick to forgive and invite others to know the forgiveness of God. Through the whole process of identifying with the Lord, who emptied himself for our sake, Francis learned to put others always before himself. Here are some words which we have from Francis that may also help nourish your spiritual life.

Prayer before the Crucifix

**Most High, Glorious God,
Enlighten the darkness of my heart.**

**Lord, instill in me
a faith that is unerring,
a hope that is certain,
a love that is perfect,
a sensitivity and a knowledge
that I may accomplish your holy and true command.
Amen**

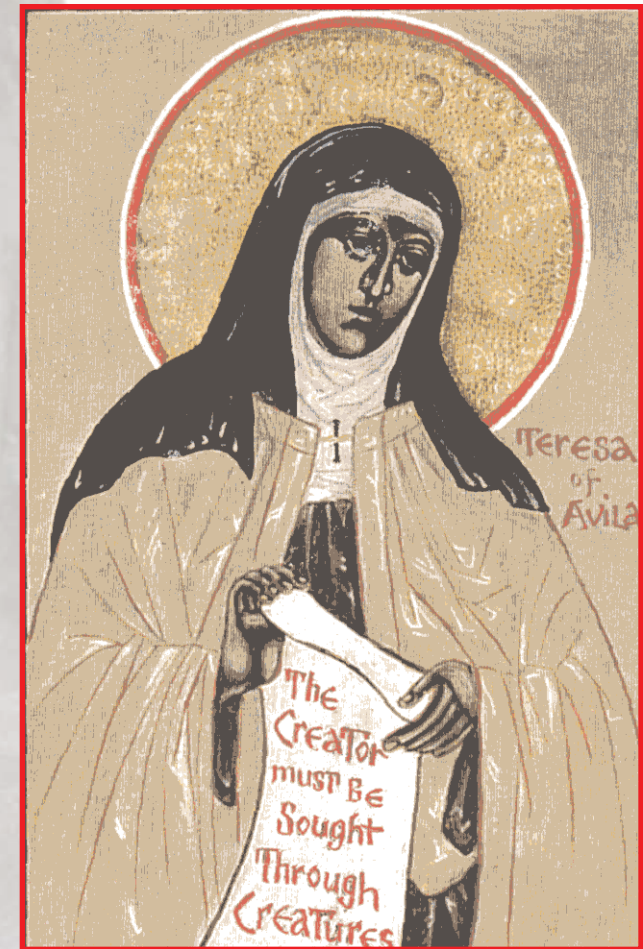
His **Canticle of the Sun** gives praise to God for all of creation. Francis celebrates not inanimate objects but brothers and sisters. His appreciation of creation is what we all need to embrace. If we are going to truly care for the gifts God gives us, we cannot selfishly use them up and destroy them. Francis spoke often of the Mystery of the Incarnation. Christmas was the time to come to know how much God loves us, he sent his Son who took on our lowliness:

If I knew the emperor, I would ask him to proclaim that on Christmas day everyone should throw out corn to the birds, especially to our sisters the larks, and that those who had beasts in the stable should give them specially good fodder, for love of the Child Jesus born in a manger. And on this day the rich should feast the poor.

Recently many who think of St. Teresa, think of this prayer which has been attributed to her:

**Christ has no body but ours.
No hands, no feet on earth but ours.
Ours are the eyes with which compassion sees the world.
Ours are the feet doing good in God's name.
Ours are the hands with which the world is blessed.
For Christ has no body but ours.**

St. Teresa of Avila (1515-1582), with St. John of the Cross, was the great focal point of Carmelite Spirituality. She was a mystic, whose prayer life offered her great insight into the mystery of God. She shared this with her sisters and through them with people of every age. Her teachings were often very practical and challenging. The early part of her life she felt a spiritual dryness and physical pain, then she came to life in her work of reforming the Carmelites. This could only be sustained by prayer. Through her prayer, her work was energized, and she was given the wisdom to guide her sisters to the most high God. Here are some words we have from St. Teresa that will also nourish our lives.



**Let nothing trouble you.
Let nothing make you afraid.
All things pass away!
God never changes.
Patience obtains everything.
God alone is enough!**

The Canticle of the Sun

—Francis of Assisi

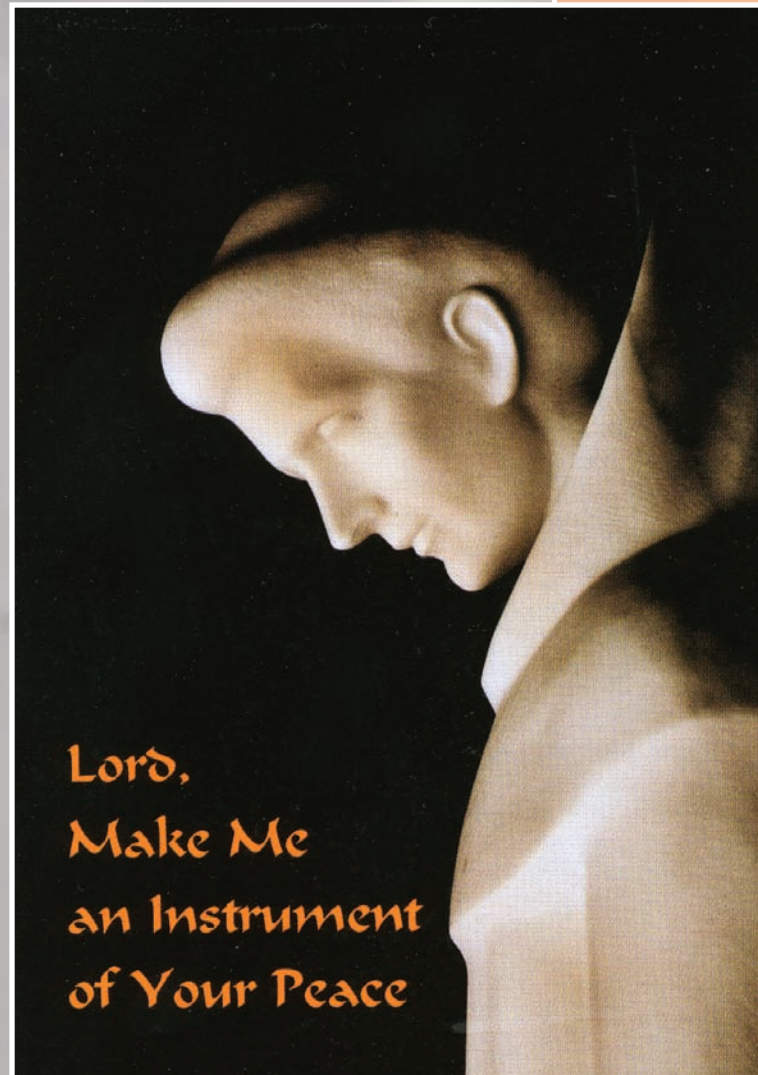
The Majesty could not grant us a greater favor than to give us a life that would be an imitation of the life of his beloved Son.

The Lord does not look so much on the greatness of our works as at the love with which they are done.

There are many other beautiful things that St. Francis and St. Teresa wrote that I hope you will look up. But perhaps they are happy to be associated with the prayers attributed to them. They might be happy that through these two prayers that I shared—which they did not write--people might actually come to understand what they lived, and what they wished for all to embrace as they journey through life.

Reflection Questions:

1. How can we be instruments of peace following the example of St. Francis?
2. How do we allow Christ to touch our world through us as St. Teresa did?



Most High, all-powerful, all-good Lord,
All praise is Yours, all glory, honor and blessings.
To you alone, Most High, do they belong;
no mortal lips are worthy to pronounce Your Name.
We praise You, Lord, for all Your creatures,
especially for Brother Sun,
who is the day through whom You give us light.
And he is beautiful and radiant with great splendor,
of You Most High, he bears your likeness.
We praise You, Lord, for Sister Moon and the stars,
in the heavens you have made them bright,
precious and fair.
We praise You, Lord, for Brothers Wind and Air,
fair and stormy, all weather's moods,
by which You cherish all that You have made.
We praise You, Lord, for Sister Water,
so useful, humble, precious and pure.
We praise You, Lord, for Brother Fire,
through whom You light the night.
He is beautiful, playful, robust, and strong.
We praise You, Lord, for Sister Earth,
who sustains us
with her fruits, colored flowers, and herbs.
We praise You, Lord, for those who pardon,
for love of You bear sickness and trial.
Blessed are those who endure in peace,
by You Most High, they will be crowned.
We praise You, Lord, for Sister Death,
from whom no-one living can escape.
Woe to those who die in their sins!
Blessed are those that She finds doing Your Will.
No second death can do them harm.
We praise and bless You, Lord, and give You thanks,
and serve You in all humility.

**Please remember the following
missionary friars on their birthday**

Oct. 1: Fr. Joseph Ehrhardt, O.F.M. (Kenya)
Oct. 6: Fr. Paul Breslin, O.F.M. (Peru)
Oct. 7: Fr. Mariano Gagnon, O.F.M. (Peru)
Oct. 9: Fr. Alfonso Guzman, O.F.M. (Puerto Rico)
Fr. Khoa Nguyen, O.F.M. (Vietnam)

May God
give them many
years of
health,
peace

Fr. Champion Lally, O.F.M. (Japan)
Fr. Clement Healy, O.F.M. (Jamaica)
Fr. Thomas Fox, O.F.M. (Brazil)
Br. Rosario Vieira, O.F.M. (Brazil)
Fr. Finian Riley, O.F.M. (Africa)
Br. Rosario Vieira, O.F.M. (Brazil)
Fr. Robert Nee, O.F.M. (Brazil)
Fr. Arthur Murray, O.F.M. (Southern U.S.)

May God grant them health and peace!

**Blessed are the peacemakers,
for they shall be called
children of God.**

—Mt. 5:9

*Photos and layout
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