

GATHERING PRAYER—ASSISI THUR 26TH JANUARY

INTRODUCTION TO OUR DAYS OF PILGRIMAGE

- ◇ **INTRODUCING OUR BOOKLETS FOR REFLECTION**
- ◇ **Sacred Creation:** Sung together (words in booklet)



Our personal journey to wholeness, towards love, is reflected in the journey we are taking as a congregation.

In our ordinary lives, ***“we’re almost daily crossing thresholds of one kind or another that we take for granted or simply don’t notice, except perhaps as a marker on the way to wherever we’re going or coming from. And that is the natural, ordinary way it is with us.”***

In the journey to wholeness ***“we live with all kinds of borders, between the inner and outer, the material and spiritual; the past, present, and future. Borders happen in us and to us, and the art of living is the art of attentiveness to what is, what happens without us, what happens in and to us.”*** (Murray Bodo: *Enter Assisi*)

Our pilgrimage over the next 3 days reflects this attentiveness to the inner and outer, both personally and congregationally. We begin today within the walls of Assisi, the places of personal conversion, stripping, letting go, self-emptying and leaving behind for both Francis and Clare.

Tomorrow we journey outside the walls to the places of growth, contemplation, lives lived in poverty, where Francis and Clare learned to serve those who counted for nothing, those who lived outside the walls of Assisi. These are the places where Francis and Clare became what they so deeply desired.

“Francis was a man who seemed to erase borders, who walked back and forth between Assisi and the world outside its walls, thereby healing and reconciling different worlds and values, the outer and inner.” (Murray Bodo: *Enter Assisi*)

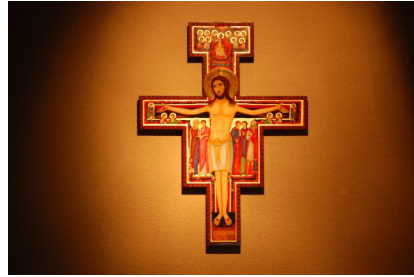
We recognise that the journey outside the walls was not possible until Francis and Clare began their inner conversion through the experience of their everyday lives in Assisi. For us too, the more we are at home in, and striving towards our truest self, the more we can live the gospel, the more we become Christ in the world and the more we become sister to all of creation.

On that journey to our true self, we come to see what we are, in order to become what we love.

Today as we walk the streets of Assisi and as we enter into the sacred spaces of Clare and Francis, we enter, too, into our own sacred space.

Mantra: Sung together

*Most High and Glorious God
Bring light into the darkness of
my heart
Give me right faith, perfect
hope and certain charity.
Lord give me insight and wisdom
so I might always discern your holy and true will.*



FROM TODAY'S SCRIPTURE:

...I am reminding you now to fan into a flame the gift that God gave you when I laid my hands on you. God's gift was not a spirit of timidity, but a Spirit of power, and love, and self-control. So you are never to be ashamed of witnessing to the Lord. (2 Tim: 1)

Jesus said to his disciples, 'Would you bring a lamp to put it under a tub or under a bed? Surely you will put it on the lamp-stand? For there is nothing hidden but it must be disclosed, nothing kept secret except to be brought to light. If anyone has ears to hear, let them listen to this.'

He also said to them, 'Take notice of what you are hearing. The amount you measure out is the amount you will be given—and more besides; for the one who has will be given more; from the one who has not, even what they have will be taken away.' (Mark 4:21-25)

St Francis' Admonitions: No. 27

*Where there is charity and wisdom,
there is neither fear nor ignorance.*

*Where there is patience and humility,
there is neither anger nor disturbance.*

*Where there is poverty with joy,
there is neither greed nor avarice.*

*Where there is rest and meditation,
there is neither anxiety nor restlessness.*

*Where there is fear of the Lord to guard the entrance,
there the enemy cannot have a place to enter.*

*Where there is a heart full of mercy and discernment,
there is neither excess nor hardness of heart.*



QUIET REFLECTION TIME

How do today's scripture and the Admonitions of Francis speak to you about the 'thresholds' and 'borders' of your inner and outer life experiences today?