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Rev. William P. Lucas, Pastor

Deacon Terrence Rumore

Deacon Serge Brazzolotto

Deacon E. Lee Robinson

Director of Religious Education
Music Director
Parish Secretary

Kelly Cardenas
Charmaine Welch
Shelly Hamman

MASS SCHEDULE

Saturday : 5:00 p.m. Sunday: 8:30 a.m. & 11:15 a.m.
Weekdays: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday: 9:00 a.m.
Wednesday: 7:00 p.m.

OFFICE HOURS: Monday—Thursday 9:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m.

CONFESSIONS:

Saturday 4:00 p.m. - 4:50 p.m. or
by appointment.

MARRIAGES:

Must be scheduled with the Priest
at least 6 months in advance.

MORNING ROSARY:

8:30 a.m. before Mass.

MONDAYS:

Miraculous Medal Novena following Mass.

EVERY FIRST FRIDAY:

Novena To The Sacred Heart
of Jesus - before 9 a.m. Mass.
Eucharistic Adoration 9:30 a.m.-11:00 a.m.

HOLY HOUR OF ADORATION:

Third Sunday of every month at 7:00 p.m.
Second Wednesday of every month— 7:30 p.m.
Exposición del Santísimo el segundo Miércoles
de cada mes @ 7:30 p.m.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION:

August through May. Ages 3 yrs. through
High School.

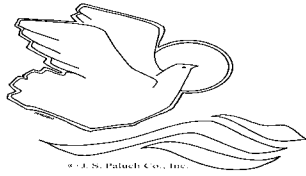
Our Lady of the Lake Catholic Church

Saturday, January 9, 2021
Mass 5:00 pm

Sunday, January 10, 2021
Masses 8:30 am & 11:15 am

The Baptism of the Lord January 10, 2021

He will baptize
with the
Holy Spirit



All you who are thirsty, come to the water!
—Isaiah 55:1



Jan. 11 - Jan.17

- Monday:** Joseph A. Yester by KOC 12270 †
Tuesday: Paul Boyle III by Susan Moseley †
Wednesday: Dick Wessel by Ken & Edie Otto †
Thursday: John Burgin Smith by Bob & Karen Hand †
Friday: Paul Boyle III by Bob & Karen Hand †
Saturday: Chrystal Welford by Susan Moseley †
Sunday: For the People
Lillie Rumore by Sam Catalino †

Please pray for the ill and shut-ins:

Paul Boyle, Jacky Johnson, Peggy Gessler, Gail Layton, Diana Markevich, Dorothy DiMattia, Walton Smith, Juanita Crowson, Kelly Dale, Toni James, Bob Walsh, Sarah Svetlay, Charles & Libby Lafleur, Fred Brown, Jan Bowman, Silvia Moten, Wayne Adams, Herb Kuntz, Bill Frost, Audrey Springer, Patsy de Victoria, Christine Jaks, Jeanie Reid, Joe Svetlay, Ruth Stanley, Nancy Ross

Please pray for all our loved ones who are ill and our shut-ins. To add a name, call the church office; or to add to the Prayer Hot Line please email Sharon Stice at sharonstice46@gmail.com or call 205-613-1053.

Weekly Readings ~ January 11—January 17

- Monday:** Heb 1:1-6; Ps 97:1, 2b, 6, 7c, 9; Mk 1:14-20
- Tuesday:** Heb 2:5-12; Ps 8:2ab, 5, 6-9; Mk 1:21-28
- Wednesday:** Heb 2:14-18; Ps 105:1-4, 6-9; Mk 1:29-39
- Thursday:** Heb 3:7-14; Ps 95:6-11; Mk 1:40-45
- Friday:** Heb 4:1-5, 11; Ps 78:3, 4bc, 6c-8; Mk 2:1-12
- Saturday:** Heb 4:12-16; Ps 19:8-10, 15; Mk 2:13-17
- Sunday:** 1 Sm 3:3b-10, 19; Ps 40:2, 4, 7-10; 1 Cor :13c-15a, 17-20; Jn 1:35-42

Today's Readings



First Reading — All you who are thirsty, come to the water! (Isaiah 55:1-11).

Psalm — You will draw water joyfully from the springs of salvation (Isaiah 12:2-6).

Second Reading — The Spirit is the one who testifies and the Spirit is truth (1 John 5:1-9).

Gospel — You are my beloved Son, with you I am well pleased (Mark 1:7-11).

THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD

This Sunday we observe the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord. It is the final day of the liturgical Christmas season. The major observances of the Christmas season are about the revelation of Jesus Christ in the Incarnation as truly human and truly God.

At the Christmas Mass we hear the passage from Luke's Gospel of the Angel revealing to the shepherds of the birth of Jesus, "who is both Christ and Lord." Jesus is the promised Messiah (Christ) of the Old Testament. He is also God (Lord). The shepherds share that message with Mary, Joseph, and everyone in Bethlehem.

At the Mass for Epiphany, the Gospel reading tells us that Magi came from the East (probably Persia) to recognize the baby Jesus as, "the newborn king of the Jews." One of the gifts they offer is frankincense, which is used for the worship of God. They give Jesus homage, which means they recognize Jesus as someone superior. These Gentiles worship Jesus as their Lord (God). Though it is unclear if they understand what they are doing, we should know what we are doing when we worship Jesus Christ.

In today's liturgy, we hear of Jesus' baptism by John in the Jordan river. After the baptism, the clouds part and the Holy Spirit appears in the form of a dove, while the voice of the Father reveals Jesus as the only begotten Son of God. Jesus is both human and divine. He is son of man and Son of God. We are witnesses to this reality.

The Christmas season is a time of the unfolding of our understanding of the Incarnation of Jesus, who is both Christ and Lord. The events of the birth, the visit of the Magi, and the baptism of the Lord are times the true nature of Jesus Christ was revealed. We contemplate, along with the Church, the coming of Jesus Christ, truly human and truly divine.

Offertory Collection

July 2020 — June 2021

	Actual	Needed
Jan 3 Offertory	\$6,235	\$5,558
Year to Date	\$165,091	\$150,066

Building Fund Collection

July 2020 — June 2021

	Actual	Needed
Jan 3 Offertory	\$585	\$678
Year to Date	\$25,391	\$18,306



Chair: Jennifer Rosato:

jrosato1972@gmail.com

Vice Chair: Bernie Funderburg

boxacarbern1@aol.com

Secretary: Gloria Raynor:

grodgers2010@gmail.com

Matthew Allor: mjallor.1969@gmail.com

Sonia Dale: wmksdale2000@gmail.com

Britton Falkner: brittonfalkner@gmail.com

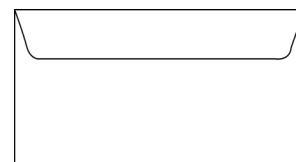
Debbie Gossett: debbiegossett@msn.com

Bart Perry: brpgep07@yahoo.com

Allen Ross: allentross5555@gmail.com

Council meetings are open to all parishioners, and are typically on the third Wed. of the month after Mass.

Offertory Envelopes



The 2021 Offertory Envelopes are in the parish hall and ready to be picked up.

If you don't see your name, please sign the sheet and we'll make sure you receive envelopes. Please contact the church office if you have questions at 205-525-5161.

The CHOSEN

Adult Education Series-THE CHOSEN

The final episode is scheduled Sunday, January 17th at 9:45 am (between Masses) or Monday evening, January 18th at 7:00 pm.



The Christian Love Pantry

The Christian Love Pantry is still trying to help the poor in the St. Clair County area. To assist them we are continuing to collect canned soup at the church. You can leave donations in the South vestibule. There is a box for cash donations in each vestibule.

If you prefer, you may drop your donation at the parish office during normal office hours.

Goal -100 cans/week.

Total cans last week – 50 cans.

Please consider donating \$1 per week!



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Our Lady of the Lake offers a secure way for you to support our parish offertory and second collections with Faith Direct.

Faith Direct enables parishioners to make contributions even when you can't make it to church. Now, through either direct debit from your checking/savings account or through your credit/debit card, you can apply the convenience of direct debit to your parish offerings in much the same way as you do for other expenses.

You may enroll by visiting our website, or logging in directly to faith.direct/AL1065.

Assignments—Jan 13~ Jan 17

WEDNESDAY MASS 1/13/2021 7:00 PM

Lector: Charmaine Welch

Ministers: Deacon

SATURDAY MASS 1/16/2021 5:00 PM

Greeters: Connie H/Gisela S,
Tammy McRae

Lectors: Sonia Dale

Ministers: Deacon

Ushers: Mark McRae, Amy Carreker

SUNDAY MASS 1/17/2021 8:30 AM

Greeters: Patrick Cowart/Patsy L
Anna Emerick

Lectors: Teri Gagliano

Ministers: Deacon

Ushers: Michael Gagliano, Bill Bethell
John Cardenas, Carly Sadler

1/17/2021 11:15 AM

Greeters: J & J Bluhm, C & E Bluhm

Lectors: Bernie Funderburg

Ministers: Deacon

Ushers: Chris Gallegly, Andy Payant,
Emily Bluhm, Jerrold Bluhm

If you are unable to keep your assignment, please find a substitute.

This is my beloved Son,
with whom I am well pleased.

Matthew 3:17



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at home try...**

Our parish code is JRQNH8



**WELCOME
BACK**

No Nursery at this time

January 10—RE at 9:45am/Adult Education continues after the 8:30 am Mass with Episode 7 of *The Chosen*

January 11—First Reconciliation at 6pm / Adult Education Encore Presentation, Episode 7 of *The Chosen* at 7pm

January 12—RCIA at 7pm

January 17—RE at 9:45am/Adult Education continues after the 8:30 am Mass with Episode 8 of *The Chosen* (*Last session*)

January 18—Adult Education Encore Presentation, Episode 8 of *The Chosen* at 7pm (*Last session*)

Youth Group
Grades 5th -12th



Saturday, January 16th is the March for Life in Birmingham. Group transportation is not available, but families are encouraged to attend. Message Kelly for more information.

Youth Meeting

Sunday, January 17th from 5:30pm until *7pm

**Families are invited to attend Holy Hour immediately following the Youth meeting.*

(Follow Us on Facebook and Instagram!)

ONE VOICE

Your offertory envelopes for January contain an envelope marked "One Voice." Subscriptions to the One Voice are not free. The parish is assessed \$17.00 annually per subscription and all registered parishioners are required by the Bishop to be subscribed. If you do not pay the subscription price, the money must be taken from other parish accounts to pay the diocesan assessment. If you are unable to pay the full subscription price, please give what you can to offset this expense to the parish. Thank you!

Annual Respect Life Mass and Witness for Life Saturday, January 16, 2021

Respect Life Mass
9:00 AM · Our Lady of Fatima
708 1st St S, Birmingham, AL

Prayer Vigil and Witness for Life
10:45 AM · Planned Parenthood
1019 1st Ave. North, Birmingham



Pandemic Protocols Encouraged
Contact: 205-447-8796

Calendar for Jan 10 -Jan 17, 2021

Sunday - January 10

Mass-8:30 and 11:15 am
RE 9:45-11:00 am
Adult Education 9:45 am

Monday- January 11

Mass 9:00 am
First Reconciliation- 6:00 pm
Adult Education- 7:00 pm

Tuesday- January 12

Mass 9:00 am
RCIA- 7:00 pm

Wednesday- January 13

Mass 7:00 pm
Holy Hour/Adoration 7:30-8:30 pm

Thursday- January 14

Mass 9:00 am

Friday- January 15

Mass 9:00 am

Saturday- January 16

Reconciliation 4:00-4:50 pm
Mass 5:00 pm

Sunday- January 17

Mass 8:30 & 11:15 am
RE 9:45-11:00
Adult Education 9:45 am
Holy Hour- 7:00-8:00 pm
Youth Group- 5:30-7:00 pm

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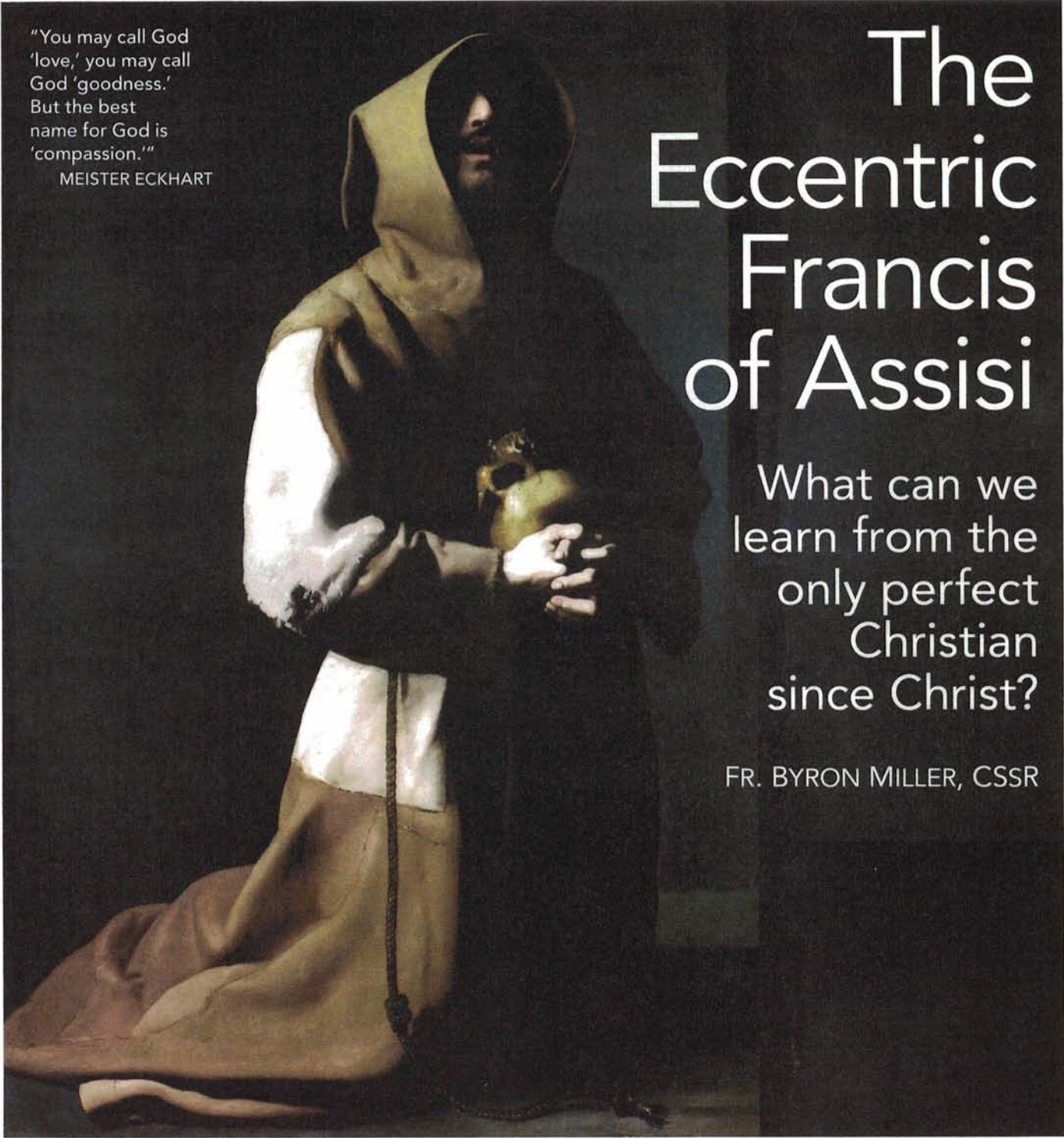
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JANUARY 2021

"You may call God
'love,' you may call
God 'goodness.'
But the best
name for God is
'compassion.'"

MEISTER ECKHART



The Eccentric Francis of Assisi

What can we
learn from the
only perfect
Christian
since Christ?

FR. BYRON MILLER, CSSR

At the turn of the thirteenth century, there lived a diminutive figure whose sizable impact on the world and Church extends to this day. In the nearly 800 years since his death in 1226, “Rembrandt painted him, Zeffirelli ‘filmed’ him, Chesterton eulogized him, Lenin died with his name on his lips, Toynbee compared him to Jesus and Buddha, and Kerouac picked him as the patron of the Beat Generation,” according to Fr. Roy Gasnick, OFM. To this impressive list we add that, for the first time, a pope named himself after him.

But as renowned as he is, Francis of Assisi’s unabated appeal lies elsewhere. His magnetism is founded upon the glaring corollary that the life of Francis truly imitated the life of Christ. The relationship of Francis to Jesus is at the core of the saint’s persona, prompting nineteenth-century historian Ernest Renan to declare that St. Francis was essentially the only perfect Christian since Christ. A 2013 *New Yorker* article supports this assertion and says the Christ/Francis relationship merits attention because we can and must do what Francis did. Each of us—by virtue of our baptism—is called to imitate Christ and work toward being saintly.

By all social standards, Francis may be referred to as the eccentric, hippie, activist, or radical of the 1200s. He possessed characteristics that we use to describe those types of people. Yet Francis may be termed eccentric because he chose as his model one who was more eccentric than he: Jesus Christ portrayed in the Gospels!

Before proceeding, let’s qualify our terms. *Eccentricity*, says *Wikipedia*, means “unusual or odd behavior on the part of the individual....The eccentric’s habits are incomprehensible not because they are illogical or the result of madness, but because they stem from a mind so original that it cannot be conformed to societal norms.”

To be sure, in the 1200s there was a social standard, a norm of appropriate behavior. One either fit the norm or not. Francis clearly did not. But his defiant, risky behavior—subject to condemnation—emanated from a complete self-surrender to Christ. His life, modeled after Christ’s, expressed conspicuous withdrawal from and indifference to social values and norms. His unconventional conduct, dress, and appearance was due to a self-emptying like that of Christ—which, of course, cannot be said of all hippies, eccentrics, or any of the other names coined over the centuries for such people.

Francis was called *pazzo*, the Italian equivalent of “crazy” by the townsfolk of Assisi, who wrote off the eccentric son of Pietro and Pica Bernadone as a hereditary degenerate. Were they afraid of his radical behavior? Or were they more fearful of allowing themselves to be as uninhibited and unconventional as he was?

Likewise, Francis may have been considered a “religious nut”—another pejorative name we use—when he renounced all his possessions to accept whatever God deigned to give him. He was regarded as a “madman” when he shaved his head and heaped his clothing before his earthly father, so that he could be fully detached to interpret what Jesus said: “The kingdom of heaven is at hand. Do not take gold or silver or copper for

your belts; no sack for the journey, or a second tunic, or sandals, or walking stick” (Matthew 10: 7, 9–10).

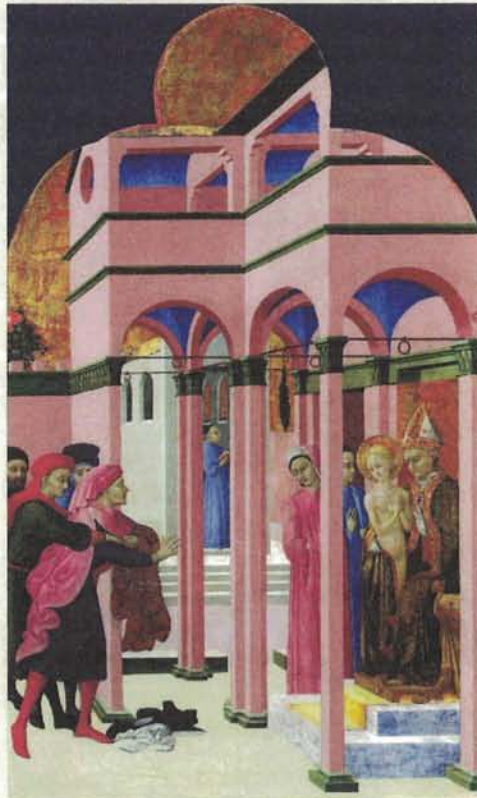
Undoubtedly, Francis was also dismissed as a fanatic when he asked to have his clothes removed near the end of his forty-four years of life so that he could expire lying naked on earth. Yet, this odd request only typified his ardent desire to personify an exact imitation of Christ *in extremis*.

Evidently, Francis paid little attention to others’ opinions of him or to the derogatory names they gave him. Instead, he may have even delighted in the derision so he could heed the words of Jesus and share vicariously in the ridicule of his Redeemer. Recall what Jesus said in his Sermon on the Mount: “Blessed are you when they insult you and persecute you and utter every kind of evil against you falsely because of me. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward will be great in heaven” (Matthew 5:11–12). Recall, too, how the eccentric actions of Jesus led the scribes to conclude: “He is possessed

by Beelzebul.” Even some of Jesus’ own relatives “set out to seize him, for they said, ‘He is out of his mind’” (Mark 3:21–22).

“If Jesus Christ had been indicted in a modern court,” wrote George Bernard Shaw, the British dramatist, “he would have been examined by two doctors, found to be obsessed by a delusion,...and sent to an asylum.” Historian Thomas Carlyle penned a similar opinion: “If Jesus were to come today, people would not crucify him. They would ask him to dinner, hear what he had to say, and make fun of it.”

Aside from people with clinically diagnosed mental illnesses, how do we describe those whose behavior strikes us as eccentric because of the way they live out the gospel message of Christ? “An apparent victim of abnormal psychology,” “clearly a religious lunatic,” “obsessed by a delusion,” “should be committed to an asylum.”



Fear is likely a cause for dismissing people whose behavior is different from our own because of their radical Christian lifestyle. Admittedly, it's discomfoting to allow others to be unconventionally Christlike. It's even challenging to permit ourselves to be as well. There's an expectation that Christ will demand more from our complacency if we did. The dangerous lesson exemplified by Francis is that if we conform ourselves to Christ—rather than be a distortion of his image—nothing less than a fundamental transformation will suffice.

Hence, to truly live in imitation of Christ often means deviating from what is considered by society to be normal. At times, it means differing conspicuously in behavior, opinion or appearance. If we choose an eccentric lifestyle, then the only name-calling deservedly given to Christ's followers is "Christian." That's a supreme compliment, with all the immensity of riches and risks that bearing his name implies!

Saint Francis of Assisi is deservedly a model Christian par excellence! The distinction G. K. Chesterton aptly makes about him is crucial: "Even among the saints, [Francis] has the air of a sort of eccentric, if one may use the word of one whose eccentricity consisted in always turning toward the center."

Thus, it matters not that Francis was eccentric. What matters is that he was Christocentric in his eccentricity! The 800-year-old Francis phenomenon hasn't been simply to marvel at this barefoot beggar for being the only so-called perfect Christian

since Christ. On the contrary, it's a revolutionary call for so-called Christians to accept the radical summons of Jesus to "be perfect, just as your heavenly Father is perfect" (Matthew 5:48). That perfection has a twofold dimension: It's attained through loving obedience to God and loving service to others. One dimension finds concrete expression through the

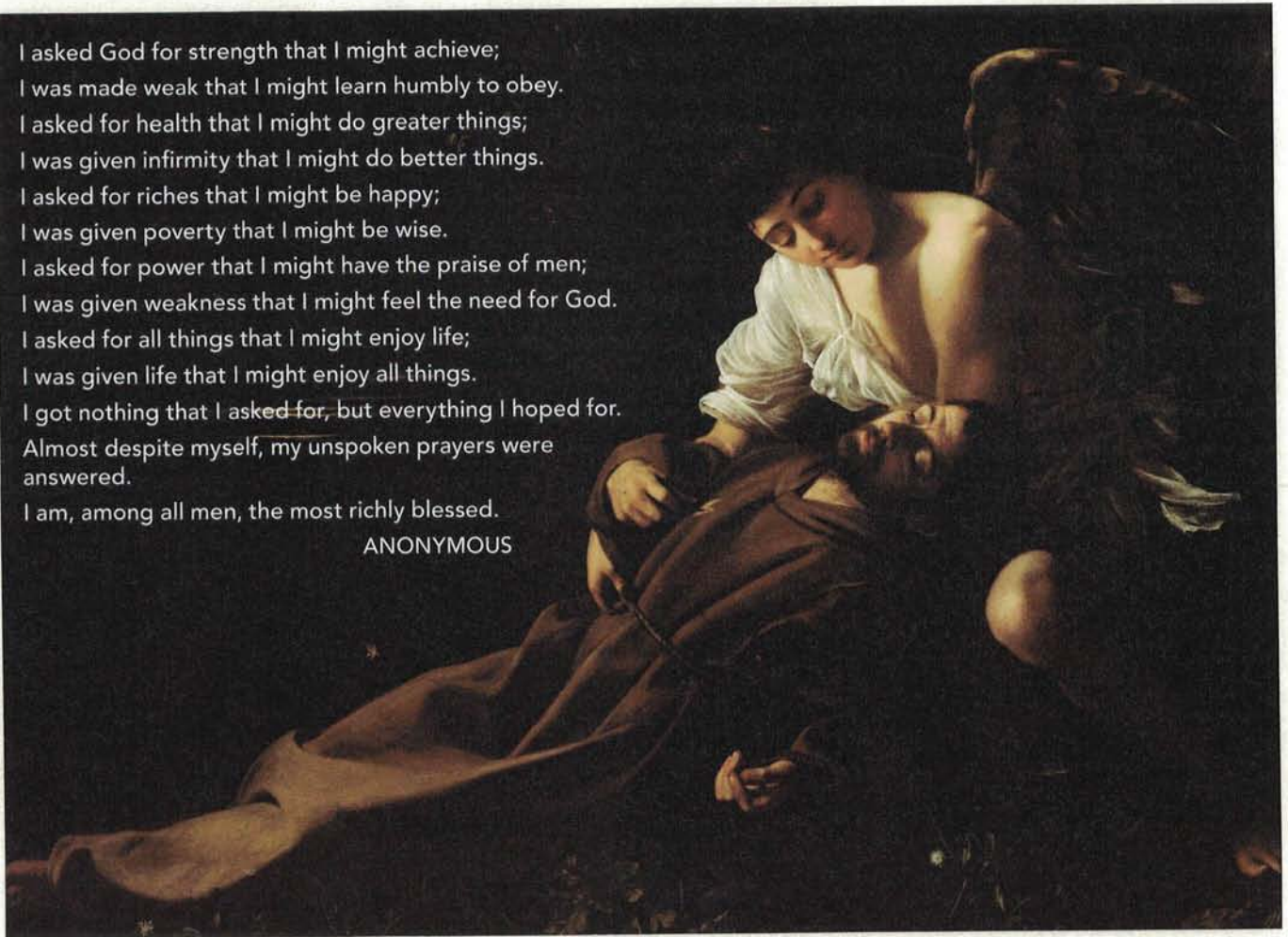
other; both inseparably involve our interior transformation and our commitment to earthly transformation.

According to the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church [*Lumen Gentium*], holiness "is expressed in many ways by the individuals who, each in their own state of life, tend to the perfection of charity" (LG 39). Striving for "perfection of charity" is the synthesis of the Christian life: "The true disciples of Christ are noted both for love of God and love of their neighbor" (LG 42). In other words, our undying passion for God is also concretely expressed in our unwavering commitment to the unfed, unsheltered, undocumented, unborn, unemployed,

It matters not that Francis was eccentric. What matters is that he was Christocentric in his eccentricity!

I asked God for strength that I might achieve;
I was made weak that I might learn humbly to obey.
I asked for health that I might do greater things;
I was given infirmity that I might do better things.
I asked for riches that I might be happy;
I was given poverty that I might be wise.
I asked for power that I might have the praise of men;
I was given weakness that I might feel the need for God.
I asked for all things that I might enjoy life;
I was given life that I might enjoy all things.
I got nothing that I asked for, but everything I hoped for.
Almost despite myself, my unspoken prayers were answered.
I am, among all men, the most richly blessed.

ANONYMOUS



and unjustly treated. As St. Francis reportedly said, “Preach the gospel at all times. Use words when necessary.”

In aiming for Christian perfection, it’s ill-advisable to be stripped naked in public, like Francis. Instead, stripping one’s self of an oversized ego is preferred. Likewise, Christian perfection may also require us to meet the blessed leper in our life, as did Francis. However, that “leper” might be whatever repugnance we have from within that prevents us from embracing today’s outcasts with compassion.

Francis teaches us that his eccentricity was always oriented “toward the center.” He earnestly prayed, “O Lord, I beg of you two graces before I die—to experience personally and in all possible fullness the pains of your bitter Passion, and to feel for you the same love that moved you to sacrifice yourself for us.” By all accounts, both requests were granted in the form of the stigmata and in the grace of a compassionate heart. To make this prayer of Francis our own means we have to be willing to fully accept our Lord’s pain in the form of personal sickness, tragedy, humiliation, and so forth. Moreover, when Francis begs for the “same love” in the second grace of his prayer, he asks far more of Christ than to receive his actual wounds! Francis seeks to imitate Christ by capturing his motivation—his compassion—for the agony he willingly endured on the cross.

While the stigmata of Jesus given to Francis has been the subject of much fascination over the centuries, his latter prayer request for the force behind our Lord’s passion is equally spectacular! It’s precisely one of the secrets to Francis’ timeless appeal: In desiring and presumably receiving our Lord’s motivation (namely, compassion), Francis demonstrates that humanity is capable of becoming a mirror-like reflection of God’s image.

A quintessential element of Francis’ spirituality is that humanity is created in God’s image, which is synonymous with compassion. “Be conscious, O human being,” he said, “of the wondrous state in which the Lord God has placed you, for he created you and formed you to the image of his beloved Son,” who reflected God’s compassion. Medieval mystic Meister Eckhart said, “You may call God ‘love,’ you may call God ‘goodness.’ But the best name for God is ‘compassion.’”

The compassion and spirituality of Francis invite us to love Christ, humanity, and all of God’s creation. “The Son of God, by becoming flesh, summoned us to the revolution

of tenderness,” wrote Pope Francis in his 2013 apostolic exhortation the Joy of the Gospel (*Evangelii Gaudium*, 88).

But, “every revolution, even Jesus’, is subject to the ravages of aging and, with each generation, loses something of its youthful enthusiasm,” Fr. Edward Hays asserts. “The original intoxicating freedom and boldness is diluted until finally the new becomes old and the radical becomes conservative.”

Many people think today’s world is growing too accustomed to a new reality that makes compassionate behavior so scarce, the practice of it sounds almost radical. They point to an alarming diminishment of civility, lack of human decency, and loss of respect for others. Examples abound all around us.

Social media—created in part to help people connect—has also contributed to an asocial, antisocial culture. Some young people are becoming “social hermits” who risk alienating themselves completely from society,” Pope Francis warned. The anonymous digital environment and polarized media outlets have the potential to breed hatred, divisiveness, intolerance, violence, and bullying by many who call themselves Christian.

Plus, scientific evidence shows unequivocally that our habitat is more inhospitable now and will get worse because of certain human activities unless we dispassionately do our part to protect God’s creation. Pope Francis stated plainly in his 2015 encyclical On Care for Our Common Home (*Laudato si’*) that our only good choice is to act to care for our planet.

In the Pope’s encyclical On Fraternity and Social Friendship (*Fratelli Tutti*), released on St. Francis’ feast day, October 4, 2020, he calls people to be compassionate to one another and urges us to stay strong in making the world better: “The pain, uncertainty and fear, and the realization of our own limitations, brought on by the pandemic have only made it all the more urgent that we rethink our styles of life, our relationships, the organization of our societies, and above all, the meaning of our existence” (FT 33). May Jesus give us the grace to respond radically as he did—and as Francis of Assisi would.

Fr. Byron Miller, CSSR, a Redemptorist priest since 1990, is president and publisher of Liguori Publications. He formerly was director of the National Shrine of Blessed Francis Seelos and vice postulator of the Seelos canonization cause. Fr. Byron served on Liguori’s board (2006–08) and on the Extraordinary Council of the Denver Province of Redemptorists (2005–07).

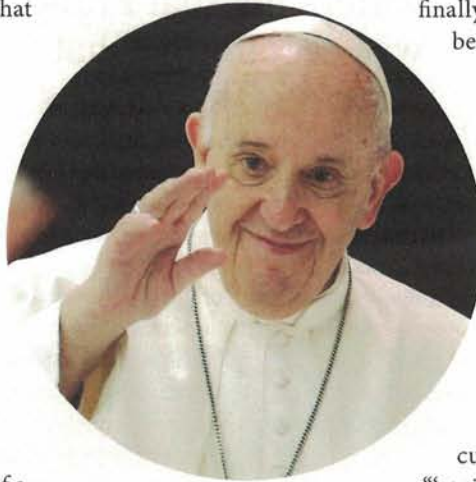


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