

# THE GOLDEN THREAD



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 **THE  
GREYFRIARS**  
*The Order of Friars Minor Conventual  
of Great Britain & Ireland*

MARCH 2022

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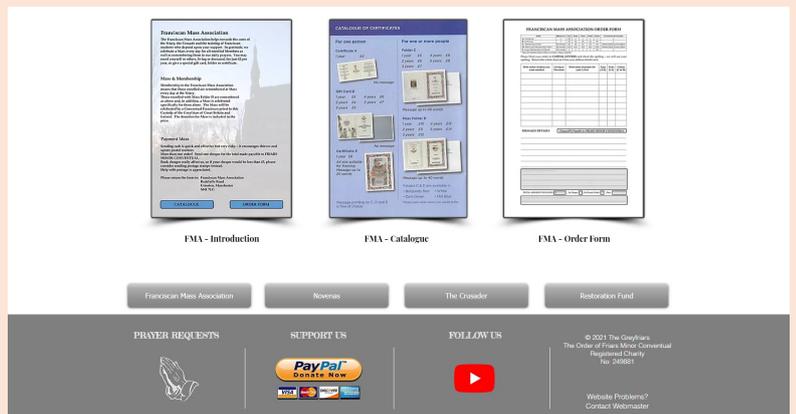
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**ARTICLE SUBMISSION**

If you wish to submit an article to The Golden Thread Magazine please write to:

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All Saints Friary,  
Redclyffe Road,  
Urmston,*

**Forms for the Franciscan Mass Association, Novenas (Including a new Novena for the Immaculate Conception) and the MI can be found by clicking on the following link: [FMA Forms | thegreyfriars](http://thegreyfriars.org) ([thegreyfriars.org](http://thegreyfriars.org))**



If you are unable to click on the link, please visit our website directly at **[thegreyfriars.org](http://thegreyfriars.org)**

On the grey meny bar below the page title, click on FMA. This will take you to the page where you will find all the forms, that you can print and send in to: **Franciscan Mass Association, Redclyffe Road, Urmston, Manchester, M41 7LG.**

MARCH 2022

## DEAR FRIENDS



Well here we are in our “new home” for The Golden Thread magazine. I sincerely hope that you have not encountered too many difficulties tracking us down. Also, I do hope that maybe some of you have found the time to help others to find us, especially those who might not be overly familiar with the world of computers. Please do also feel free to print out a “copy or two” to share around and/or spread the word about our website, [thegreyfriars.org](http://thegreyfriars.org)

Now, please do not think that you are experiencing a *deja vu* moment, but I would like here to reproduce a chunk of the last issue’s editorial, which I hope will be helpful to read again. As you will be aware, over the last few issues, the various forms for Mass offerings, Novenas etc, have made the transition from the pages of the magazine to our website here at [thegreyfriars.org](http://thegreyfriars.org) This has allowed us to maximise the available page space for articles, devotional prayers and so on. However, the on-going costs of producing and distributing a paper magazine are simply unsustainable for us as an order.

Thus, from now onwards, The Golden Thread has become an online magazine, which will always be available freely from this website. As we have previously noted, it is an important aspect of The Golden Thread that it is freely available, and the kind donations that so many of you have been faithfully and regularly making have helped greatly in off-setting some of the production and distribution costs of the magazine. As we will still incur some costs in the preparation of an online version, it will still be possible to help us with these and indeed other aspects of our order’s life and ministry by making use of our online “Donate” button and any donations will of course be greatly appreciated. The forms for the Franciscan Mass Association, Novenas and the MI will also continue to be available on this same website.

Once again, at this pivotal moment for the magazine, may I thank you all so much for the kind and generous support you give to this publication; we really couldn’t do it without you all! As with the

various forms now on our website, I sincerely hope that where necessary we might be able to lend

a helping hand with “pointing the way” to the online magazine. If you do find the opportunity to print a copy to hand on to someone else, this can in fact be a lovely way to share in a little evangelism and outreach; remember, that in the earliest days of our church, faithful souls would distribute news, apostolic letters and so on by word of mouth and by visiting in person with the “Good News”. I hope that similarly, we can find ways to share the joys of Mary’s Golden Thread with those around us.

### COMING ATTRACTIONS!

One of the benefits of being an online magazine, is that we can be a little more generous with the amount of content we can include. Here are just a few of the new features that we have planned for future editions:

**FRANCISCAN MEET’N’GREET:** A chance to encounter some key figures from our Franciscan family, past and present. Find out about the lives and experiences of such people as, St. Francis, St. Clare, St. Maximilian Kolbe, Blessed Miguel and Zbigniew and many others.

**GRILL A FRIAR:** Your opportunity to submit questions on a range of topics connected with our faith and faith journeys. We will do our very best to answer your questions or, at the very least, steer you in the right direction!

**“REEL” TIME:** The Gospel message can be encountered in all sorts of unexpected places, and not a few times, in the plot of a good movie! Familiar favourites and surprising suggestions for some celluloid catechesis!

**Gosh...we’d better get scribbling!**

**May the Lord give you peace and all good.**

*Fr. Maximilian Martin OFM Conv.*

## PSALM 107: *Confitemini Domino*

**T**he **attitude of gratitude** can be found in the heart of every biblical woman or man. Like a thread, indeed a golden thread, the Scriptures reveal a growing awareness of the loving action of God among the Old and New Testament figures with their response of thanksgiving. First and foremost among them is our Blessed Lady who glorified the Lord for what God had done for her and through her for the sake of us all. Indeed, when any of our holy ancestors recognized that he or she had been the recipient of God's favour a response of thankfulness welled up within their hearts and overflowed to all who were ready to hear the story of their blessing received.

*The book of Psalms records numerous songs of praise and thanksgiving, mostly from unidentifiable persons reflecting real moments of "grace received" and "acknowledged." Often their thanksgiving is a response to a situation of need; it follows a cry for help and a divine response to their anguished cry. These "anonymous" psalmists were much like ourselves, caught up in the day to day demands of life; sometimes of overwhelming proportion. Their prayerful "shouts" for God's help and then thanksgiving, whether individual or communal, continue to serve believers in every age, teaching us to give voice to our own consciousness of grace*

*received as we come to know the loving hand of God also at work in our lives. Psalm 107 is a particularly helpful example.*

*Commentators on the Bible remind us that each of the psalms has a "backstory"; in other words real life circumstances that were the occasion for their original composition. This is especially true when considering those psalms that have thanksgiving as a theme. While the original circumstances of composition may be foreign to the situations of readers of another time or place, the fundamental message of a psalm remains applicable across ages and cultures.*

The first words of Psalm 107 immediately alert us to who God is: kindness and mercy itself – God is enduring love for those who desire to encounter Him and call upon Him in need. "O give thanks to the Lord for he is good; for his love endures for ever."

As the psalm unfolds we begin to see a picture developing. Four groups of persons are finding their way into the sanctuary of the Lord and, in turn, each begins to offer testimony to the saving grace of God in their lives. A grace that was sought in earnest when confronted by real life and death misfortunes and sufferings.

In these verses we find the first group coming to give their witness to the goodness of God who saved them from certain death in the desert. They were a group of people, perhaps on pilgrimage to the Holy City or perhaps returning from a "business trip". They got lost! Could it be they were trying to take a shortcut across the wilderness to quicken their journey; to make a faster profit? Whatever the case, it didn't work. They found themselves in unfamiliar territory without signboards or sat-navs indicating the way to go. The hunger and thirst they

experienced were not the gentle growling of the stomach that a cup of tea and a biscuit could satisfy. They had no idea from where their next meal or sip of water would be coming. It was life and death. In the midst of their plight, however, they had the presence of mind to cry out to the

Lord who, miraculously, gave them a direction to safety.

### **PSALM 107: 4-9**

***Some wandered in the desert, in the wilderness,  
finding no way to a city they could dwell in.  
Hungry they were and thirsty;  
their soul was fainting within them.***

***Then they cried to the Lord in their need  
and he rescued them from their distress  
and he led them along the right way,  
to reach a city they could dwell in.***

***Let them thank the Lord for his love,  
for the wonders he does for men:  
for he satisfies the thirsty soul;  
he fills the hungry with good things.***

The experience of losing our bearings, geographically or morally/spiritually, and getting hopelessly lost is certainly one profoundly human in any age. Our moral compass can become confused or, even more tragically, be simply switched off with unforeseen and dire consequences. By our choices we find ourselves moving about day to day in a life without direction, meaning and satisfaction. Questions arise:

"Where am I? How did I get here? Why did I make that choice? Why did I listen to that advice? What was I thinking? How can I get back to the relative safety and security I once enjoyed? What am I to do now?"

This first group of witnesses enters the temple full of gratitude not only because God, through their trial “woke them up” and “heard their cry”, but also for showing them the error of their ways. In the testimony of this first group we can almost hear them recounting every aspect of their painful experience; perhaps summarised by words like: “What were we thinking? Yes, we were goners except for the mercy of our God!”

#### **AS I MAKE MY LENTEN JOURNEY QUESTIONS ARISE,**

- 1. Can I identify with members of this first group of temple witnesses?**
- 2. Have I lost my way? My hope? My trust and confidence in others? My confidence in God?**
- 3. What happened? What went wrong?**
- 4. What made me cry out from the depths of my being, “Help me, O God!”**

Lent is a moment when we can beg the Lord’s help for ourselves and for others particularly if the experience of loss looms high. We need not have to be in a wilderness place to lose our way; can we not feel lost even in the most familiar of circumstances, especially when relationships break down?

**LET YOUR HOLY SPIRIT BE MY GUIDE, O LORD.**

**LET YOUR WORD BE A LAMP FOR MY STEPS AND  
A LIGHT FOR MY PATH.**

A second group of witnesses to God’s favour now makes their way into the temple. They tell us of their experience of “darkness and gloom” and “misery and chains”. They also humbly confess that they very much had a part to play in the unfolding tragedy, for they had “defied the words of God” and “spurned the

counsels of the Most High.” Yes, they well knew that the experience of becoming a “prisoner” was largely their own fault.

Prisons are sometimes made of thick walls and iron bars. Chains are linked coils of iron. We all know, however, that there are other things that can “a prison make”; that can hold us bound. Chains can take on the form of emotions gone out of control; resentments, hostilities that lead to anger, outbursts of rage, compulsive negativity. Addictions and behaviours related to addictions are particularly imprisoning. We experience the lack of freedom to say “NO” to what we know to be unhelpful and wrong, and to say “YES” to what we know to be the better way. Holding on to hurts, not being able to forgive are very personal shackles. Holding on to prejudicial views about others can bind us more firmly than the hardest of metals. Depression linked to past failures or false choices can close us in more securely than high and thick walls. The experience of being bound up leaves us in a most pitiful state; unfree, without peace and joy.

This second group of thankful temple witnesses reminds us of the weakness of our human condition. Weakness is itself part of being human as Saint Paul frequently reminded his listeners. But weakness can also remind us that we do not have to journey alone. There are others who love and care about us and upon whom we can depend.

Our God is overflowing in compassion for all who turn to Him for help.

Overwhelmed by our personal weaknesses we recall the merciful desire of Jesus who came to “set people free” from all that could imprison them. Not even the most powerful of demons could resist His word.

#### **PSALM 107: 10-14**

***Some lay in darkness and in gloom,  
prisoners in misery and chains,  
having defied the words of God  
and spurned the counsels of the Most High.  
He crushed their spirit with toil;  
they stumbled; there was no one to help.***

***Then they cried to the Lord in their need  
and he rescued them from their distress.***

***He led them forth from darkness and gloom  
and broke their chains to pieces.***

**AS I MAKE MY LENTEN JOURNEY QUESTIONS ARISE:**

1. Have I ever experienced the feeling of imprisonment, cut off from others, cut off from God, and cut off even from my own self?
2. Have I ever felt enslaved due to my inability to choose freely what I know to be the better path?
3. What are/were the circumstances?
4. Did I, in the depths of my soul, have the presence of mind to cry out, "Lord Jesus, save me?"
5. Is there someone I know and love who is suffering from the bonds of addictions, compulsions, hurts, prejudices or an inability to forgive, seemingly without hope?
6. Can I become their intercessor, crying out on their behalf, "Lord, have mercy?"

**GOD LEADS US FORTH FROM DARKNESS AND GLOOM AND BREAKS CHAINS TO PIECES.**

**CAN I BE LIKE JESUS' OWN MOTHER MARY WHOM WE INVOKE: "PRAY FOR US SINNERS NOW AND ALWAYS!"**

Of the different groups presented in Psalm 107 this third is one with which we can most easily identify and perhaps, even more so, as we continue to live in the shadows of the Covid-19

pandemic. Bodily sickness is part of our human condition and though not directly a punishment for sin we can see that often there is a link between unhealthy lifestyle choices and illness.

When a life is not in balance the whole person suffers: body, mind and spirit. Furthermore, the presence of an unsettled conscience, although not directly causing an illness, is experienced as a real obstacle to healing and wholeness.

Sickness of any form has

consequences in the life of a person far beyond what a medical professional can treat. Often with sickness comes a certain experience of isolation from loved ones: family, friends, neighbours and associates. Frustration and helplessness is not only true for the one who carries the cross of illness but at times even more for the one who must watch their beloved suffer. It conjures up fears of the unforeseen. Any type of physical unwholeness could lead to self-absorption, exaggerated concern for personal well-being often making one too demanding or unsatisfied with the care offered by others. One can lose hope: in themselves, in their fellow man and even in God. Faith too may come into question,

**AS I MAKE MY LENTEN JOURNEY QUESTIONS ARISE:**

1. Where is God in all this?
2. Why do I have to suffer?
3. How long, O Lord?
4. Why have you turned your face from me?

In the midst of their suffering we have the witness of those who trusted in the Lord crying out to Him in their distress, begging for his help. In conditions that could have been crushing, accompanied by fears and anxieties, uncertainties, of self-pity and an inability to trust, they did not fail to turn to the Lord in their need as did the many who sought Him out during His earthly mission. The blind, the lame, the outcast, the sinner came to Jesus crying out, "Have mercy, O Lord!" These men and women not only knew of the Lord's power to save but of His compassion that knows no end.

Un-wholeness in oneself, or in a beloved friend or family member, can become the occasion to turn to God in prayer to ask for His healing mercies!

**PSALM 107: 17-22**

*Some were sick on account of their sins and afflicted on account of their guilt. They had a loathing for every food; they came close to the gates of death.*

*Then they cried to the Lord in their need and he rescued them from their distress. He sent forth his word to heal them and saved their life from the grave.*

*Let them thank the Lord for his love, for the wonders he does for men. Let them offer a sacrifice of thanks and tell of his deeds with rejoicing.*

This last group coming into the temple was not lost, neither had they experienced imprisonment, nor illness, but they were still very much overflowing with gratitude. This group of people faced trial and distress in the midst of the demands of daily life. We might see them as ordinary men and women who were not attempting to do anything out of the ordinary; they were only trying to get on in life as best they could, trying to provide for their loved ones through their daily work. They only wanted to put food on the table, a roof over heads and the possibility of a better future for those for whom they cared deeply. They were average workers, in this case seafarers-sailors, who because of their work, had come to be very skilled.

It was always dangerous to cross the sea; to be at the mercy of wind and wave. But these mariners were not novices; the waters had tested them many times and they learned to handle every crisis. Confident, they were; and perhaps a bit too self-reliant. But then the “perfect storm” arose, one the likes of which they had never before experienced. They threw themselves into the challenge with all their expertise; but it was not enough in the face of this storm, “They staggered, reeled like drunken men, for all their skill was gone.”

No longer able to depend upon their own abilities they cried to the Lord. To some it may seem to have been a last resort appeal, but like the woman in the Gospel who suffered of haemorrhages for decades and who had exhausted her resources seeking healing, she stretched

out her hand to the Lord who was ready to intervene in His merciful love.

### PSALM 107: 23-32

*Some sailed to the sea in ships  
to trade on the mighty waters.  
These men have seen the Lord's deeds,  
the wonders he does in the deep.*

*For he spoke; he summoned the gale,  
tossing the waves of the sea  
up to heaven and back into the deep;  
their souls melted away in their distress.*

*They staggered, reeled like drunken men,  
for all their skill was gone.  
Then they cried to the Lord in their need  
and he rescued them from their distress.*

*He stilled the storm to a whisper:  
all the waves of the sea were hushed.  
They rejoiced because of the calm  
and he led them to the haven they desired.*

*Let them thank the Lord for his love,  
for the wonders he does for men.  
Let them exalt him in the gathering of the  
people  
and praise him in the meeting of the elders.*

Like Jesus' disciples in the boat making a crossing of the sea, a “perfect storm” can arise at any time in our lives too. It could be in our place of work, or our communities; it could be in our homes or our churches. Faced by a life-tempest one may come to think that everything is falling apart if not completely lost, or that there is no hope and that all we hold dear will be taken away. Our response to such a tempest could be a simple, “Lord, do something!” “Let it stop!” Or it could be more personally challenging, “Lord, show me what I have to do!” This prayer is profound because it recognizes that hope and trust reach beyond our personal abilities and “skills sets” to resolve the storm-at-hand or at least to cope with it. It is profound because we call Jesus to come into our boat to help and save making up for our limitations which alone cannot help us win the day. This fourth group of witnesses invites us to reflect on the storms that blow up in our lives.

### AS I MAKE MY LENTEN JOURNEY QUESTIONS ARISE:

1. Am I surprised that that they blow-in at all?
2. What form do they take?
3. What happens within me when they arise?
4. What fears do they evoke?
5. What degree of stubborn resistance do I find within myself hindering me from calling out for His merciful help?

During the season of Lent, all Christians are invited to look deeply into their lives and to take stock how they are unfolding; of what needs attention and where the mercy of God has touched us. Lent is a time when we all can come before God in complete honesty, asking His help to find our way, to be set free, to become whole again and to weather the storms. If there are any words that could be on our lips during this joyful season they might very well be “help” and “thank you.”

# A Meditation for the Annunciation

## Every day the same

**“It’s every day, the same thing...”** Is a phrase that can often be uttered with a sense of exasperation. Events of life can so often take on an air of the repetitive or the mundane; the same tasks, the same responsibilities, the same routine.

Of course “Every day the same...” can also refer to joyous experiences of life as well. Either way, what we do know is that God breaks into all these experiences, good and not so good, and infuses them with His Incarnate love. We know this because of the events that we recall every year when we celebrate the Annunciation. In one incredible moment, God entered into our world in the human person of Christ. Humanity and divinity united in a way that meant life would, despite its often repetitious nature, never be the same again. From that moment onwards, our opening phrase could now be extended to say, “It’s every day, the same thing.....but it is always as new and bathed in the light of Christ!”



*was deeply disturbed by these words and pondered what this greeting could mean, but the angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favour with God. Look! You will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his ancestor David; he will rule over the House of Jacob for ever and his reign will have no end. Mary said to the angel, “But how can this come about, since I have no knowledge of man?” In answer the angel said to her, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. And so the child will be holy and will be called Son of*

Perhaps you might like to take some time to just “pause” the everyday activity of life, and reflect upon the ways that the Lord might be speaking to you? Does God have a message explaining a particular way that He would like to involve you in the constantly unfolding pattern of His love? Let us allow the events of the Annunciation to be our guide in this. Try to put aside some time (20 minutes or so) where you will not be disturbed. If possible, have an image of The Annunciation to hand, that you might look upon. Now read slowly and attentively the Gospel passage from St. Luke:

*In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man named Joseph, of the House of David; and the virgin’s name was Mary. He went in and said to her, “Rejoice full of grace! The Lord is with you.” She*



*God. And see, your cousin Elizabeth also, in her old age, has conceived a son, and she who was said to be barren is now in her sixth month, **for nothing is impossible to God.**” Mary said, “Here I am, the Lord’s servant, let it happen to me as you have said.” And the angel left her.*



NOW TAKE SOME TIME TO CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING POINTS:

*BEGIN BY SIMPLY OFFERING THIS TIME TO THE LORD IN THESE OR SIMILAR WORDS*

**Lord, in these moments, help me to see and hear any message of your love that you would want to speak into my life; help me to be open to your guidance in my life each and every day.  
Amen.**

**CONSIDER MARY IN THIS SCENE.** A young woman taken up with the every day cares and concerns of life, whilst also thinking of her future marriage and family life. Call to mind your daily activities. What are the many and various occupations that take up your time? Are they joyful? Are they demanding? Are they sometimes difficult or tiresome? Do they bring you contentment and fulfilment? Reflect on all that makes up your days.

**CONSIDER WHAT MARY IS DOING IN THIS SCENE.** She is reading the Scriptures. Mary is being, in the midst of all that makes up her day, attentive to the Word of God. Do I take the time each day to pause from my tasks and consciously invite God into the midst of my activity? Do I ask God to help me with challenging tasks and busy days? Do I thank God for the good and joyful experiences of the day? Do I take moments to reflect further during the week on the readings from Sunday Mass? Do I take the time to open up my bible and prayerfully read from it?

**CONSIDER THE ANGEL GABRIEL IN THIS SCENE.** What does the angel look like? What is the angel saying? Listen to the words as you hear them. Mary is being called to play her part in an unfolding event that is of cosmic proportions. The whole of time and space forms the backdrop to this momentous message. Mary is to become a key instrument in the revealing of God's love in Christ to the world. Jesus Christ, through Mary's "Yes", will become present in the very midst of the world around her. Know that your life, too, is very much a part of God's continuously unfolding engagement with the world. Know that each aspect of your life; the words you say, the deeds you perform, the tasks you undertake, can all be vehicles of the Gospel message of love and compassion to the world around you. Your part in God's plan is as broad and expansive as the cosmos and as near and close as your very self and all those around you.

**CONSIDER THE RESPONSES OF MARY.** "How can this be?" "I am the handmaid of the Lord, let it be to me as you say." These two statements blend together. Mary asks the angel how exactly is she to play her part in this momentous event. Having been told how by Gabriel, Mary readily agrees and immediately gives her assent to the Lord's Will for her. I, too, should never be afraid to ask the Lord how exactly can I play my part? Take a moment to reflect on the ways that you could practically assist in sharing the Gospel message of love. Is there someone or a situation that I could regularly pray for? Do I know someone who might appreciate a phone call or a visit, just to see how they are, or have a chat, or lend an ear? Can I check if someone I know might need any items of shopping, or prescriptions picking up for them? No action, however small, is lost against that cosmic scale of God's presence.

**As you come towards the end of your reflective time, know that you can always return to this space, join in with this momentous meeting and attentively reflect on the Lord's Word into your heart. Conclude by thanking God for this opportunity to meet with Him, and acknowledge the prayerful companionship of Our Lady:**



# “Look out” with Saint Bonaventure

**F**rom the earliest of ages, I've been an absolute space nut! Anything and everything to do with space flight, the solar system, distant galaxies...I love it all! I have a cousin who is a lifelong fellow enthusiast, and in conversation one day, he said that he sees humanity generally separated into two groups; those who look down at the earth and those who look out into the depths of space. The former group he further suggested, tend to look down at the earth and become engrossed in a very narrow "me first" kind of perspective; the peripheral vision is seldom employed and awareness of needs outside of my immediate space are often missed. The second group, those looking up and outwards, default to a sense of awe and wonder at what exists outside of the immediate frame of self-

reference and more than that, alerts me to the smallness and fragility of the environment around me, therefore also to an attentiveness to it and the needs and requirements of caring for that space. You see? Astronomy and cosmology is good for you! Good for each other! Good for the planet!



## ST. BONAVENTURE SAID:

***“Since happiness is nothing else than the enjoyment of the supreme good and the supreme good is above us, no-one can enjoy happiness, unless he rises above himself.”***

## HAPPINESS, IS LOOKING OUT!

Looking out, is a two-way process, both for us and for God. It is through the spirituality of St. Bonaventure that I have received and continue to contemplate an astounding image of God. God reaches out from God's very self, emanating outwards in pure, creating love into the heart and soul of all that God has created. I, the creature, in turn reach out to God as my entire life, my very soul, reaches out through that same love, back into the very Heart of God; of Love itself! I can also, through God's extreme generosity, personify that two-way journey, because God personified that love in the person of Christ Jesus. Jesus is, for Bonaventure, the crowning moment of creation, the point at which creation this side of eternity became as perfect as it can be for now, because God in Christ has now physically interacted with it! God, born into the flesh of the world and indelibly seared into the soul of us all, thus igniting our deepest desire and purpose to find, as Bonaventure put it, that supreme goodness and happiness that comes from above!

So, just a little about Bonaventure the man! He was born in 1221 nearby to Viturbo in Italy, in a little town called Bagnoreggio and he joined the Order of Friars Minor when he was 20 years old. He made his studies in Paris, eventually going on to teach Theology and Scripture whilst still there. In 1257, Bonaventure was elected as Minister General of the Order. We can assume that amongst Bonaventure's gifts, his devotion to Francis would have been readily apparent to his fellow friars. It is almost certain that Bonaventure never met Francis, but in his Biography of the Saint, he does make mention of a serious childhood illness he had, when, "my

*mother made a vow on my behalf to the Blessed Father Francis. I was snatched from the very jaws of death and restored to the vigor of a healthy life.”*

At the point Bonaventure was made Minister General of the Order, things were in somewhat of a state. Francis had already become such a charismatic saint that the young Order was expanding rapidly and far and wide. Inevitably, this brought many differences of opinion as to how the life should be lived, what it meant to live a life of simplicity, poverty, and so on. Bonaventure was both a pastor and an organiser. He travelled around the Order extensively and listened to the friars. He had the gift of brokering peace amongst squabbling factions, and he was well able to bring about a degree of Order, without hampering the vision of St. Francis to live in the fullness and simplicity of the Gospel. With good reason, Bonaventure has been referred to as "The Second Founder" of the Order. Bonaventure resisted any kind of preferment in the wider church, turning down being made Bishop of York in 1265. However, he did eventually become Cardinal Bishop of Albano in 1273, and amongst his duties, became instrumental in working to unite the churches of East and West.

Legends grow out of true facts, and a lovely legend that illustrates the humility of Bonaventure that he most assuredly possessed, is how when the papal delegates arrived to present Bonaventure with his Cardinal's hat, he was midway through washing the dishes, and asked the delegates to be so kind as to hang the hat up in a nearby tree until he had finished!! Bonaventure died in 1274 on the 15th July, aged 53. I think that what has survived best of all through his legacy, is the awareness that each of us is the sum of all our parts, body, mind and spirit. We know God because God reaches out to touch us, intellectually through our minds, spiritually through our heart and soul, physically through the Incarnate Word; and all this, located in the person of Jesus Christ. As Bonaventure would title one of his greatest works, our life, as followers of St. Francis yes, but as beings in general, is all about, **[THE SOUL'S JOURNEY INTO GOD.](#)**

## WE WOULD LIKE TO LEAVE YOU WITH A MESSAGE FROM THE TWO FRANCISES



*“Blessed are you poor. Jesus says two things to his people: that they are blessed and they are poor; indeed, that they are blessed because they are poor.*

*In what sense? In the sense that disciples of Jesus do not find their joy in money, power, or other material goods; but in the gifts they receive every day from God: life, creation, brothers and sisters, and so on. These are gifts of life. They are content to share even the goods they possess, because they live according to the logic of God. And what is the logic of God?*

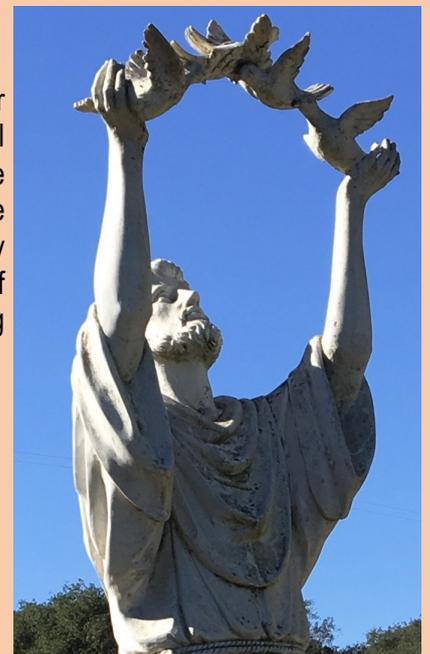
*Gratuitousness. The disciple has learned to live in gratuitousness. This poverty is also an attitude towards the meaning of life, because Jesus’ disciples do not think about possessing it, about already knowing everything, but rather they know they must learn every day. And this is poverty: the awareness of having to learn every day. The disciple of Jesus, since he or she has this attitude, is a humble, open person, far from prejudice and inflexibility.”*

**Pope Francis**  
**Angelus. Saint Peter’s Square. Sunday, 13th February, 2022.**

*Your will be done on Earth as in Heaven*

That we may love You with our whole heart by always thinking of You, with our whole soul by always desiring You, with our whole mind by always directing all our intentions to You, and by seeking Your glory in everything, with all our whole strength by exerting all our energies and affections of body and soul in the service of Your love and of nothing else; and we may love our neighbour as ourselves by drawing them all to Your love with our whole strength, by rejoicing in the good of others as in our own, by suffering with others at their misfortunes, and by giving offence to no one.

**Author: St Francis of Assisi**  
**A Prayer Inspired by the Our Father.**



**PRAY FOR  
UKRAINE**

At this time we may think of and prayerfully remember all the people of the Ukraine whose lives have been turned upside down by the blind ambitions of a few. For those whose homes are ruined, whose livelihoods are destroyed, who have been forced into exile, who are separated from family and friends, who living on the edge of despair we cry, “Lord, have mercy!”

