

St Francis of Assisi- October 4 2023

Acknowledgment of Land, Seas, Skies and Waterways

We acknowledge the First Nations peoples as the first inhabitants of the nation and the traditional custodians of the lands where we live, learn and work. We pay our respect to the Elders past, present, and emerging, for they hold the memories, the traditions, the culture and hopes of First Nations peoples across the nation. We acknowledge the deep spiritual attachment and relationship of First Nations peoples to this country and commit ourselves to the ongoing journey of Reconciliation.

Context- St Francis of Assisi

Francis was born into a wealthy Italian family in the twelfth century. At the age of nineteen, he sought out a life as a knight and joined the war between Assisi and Perugia. He spent nearly a year as a prisoner of war before his father could raise enough funds for the ransom. After his release, illness and the effects of his imprisonment left him seeking the Gospels for comfort, however, instead of comfort, he found himself feeling challenged by the values of Christian discipleship. After a second attempt at being a knight was thwarted by illness, Francis had a vision that marked the beginning of his conversion. While praying at a neglected field-chapel, San Damiano, Christ spoke to Francis and asked him to rebuild the Church. Francis repaired the chapel and took a deeper meaning from this. He gave up all his possessions and dedicated his life to rebuilding the Church through sharing the Gospel. Francis is most well-known today for founding the Franciscans, his reverence for all of God's creation, and his devotion and loyalty to the Church during times of upheaval.

Scripture: *Responsorial* † *Psalm 15:1-2.5.7-8.11*

You are my inheritance, O Lord.

Preserve me, God, I take refuge in you.

I say to the Lord: 'You are my God.'

O Lord, it is you who are my portion and cup;
it is you yourself who are my prize.

You are my inheritance, O Lord.

I will bless the Lord who gives me counsel,
who even at night directs my heart.

I keep the Lord ever in my sight:
since he is at my right hand, I shall stand firm.

You are my inheritance, O Lord.

You will show me the path of life,
the fullness of joy in your presence,
at your right-hand happiness for ever.

You are my inheritance, O Lord.



Scene 2 Francis gives away his clothes
Scenes from the life of St Francis by Benozzo Gozzoli

Reflection by Kirby Will Project Officer Identity and Outreach.

Even though St Francis lived over 800 years ago, his life has parallels with many in the modern world today. Often, we are caught up in the extravagant lifestyle society tells us we must enjoy, and it can be difficult to imagine giving it all up as Francis did to follow the Lord. Yet, there are changes we can make to be more like Francis and his faithfulness. He remained devoted in his conviction to follow Christ even when his friends and family abandoned him, and this can pose another challenge for us today in our convictions to follow Christ. Society challenges us when we actively follow Christ and share our love for Him with others and it can be difficult to persevere in spite of this. Nevertheless, the psalm for today reminds where our true wealth and inheritance lies though, and we are called to follow Francis' example to rebuild Christ's church through sharing the Gospel. St Francis' Prayer for peace also reminds us that we should be more giving in our actions and we ask for Francis' intercession to help us follow his ways and be giving of ourselves.

Prayer:

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace.

Where there is hatred, let me sow 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.

Amen.



Lord, make me an instrument of your peace design by Hugh Griffith.

Call to Action:

- Watch the [Story of St Francis of Assisi](#).
- St Francis wrote hymns in praise of nature. As a family, think of things in nature that you are grateful for and compose a poem or song about them.
- Choose one or two of the [ideas to celebrate](#) St Francis.

