



There are saints who seem to belong to a particular era. And there are others whose lives, the more time passes, the more uncomfortably relevant they become.

Saint Francis of Assisi belongs to this second group.

Eight centuries have passed since his death and, nevertheless, his figure continues to provoke admiration, questions, and even controversy. He is presented as a lover of nature, a friend of animals, a man of peace, a defender of the poor, or a precursor of a certain ecological sensitivity. All of this contains elements of truth. But if we stop there, we run the risk of losing the true Francis.

Because Saint Francis of Assisi was not, above all, an environmentalist, a social reformer, a modern pacifist, or a philanthropist.

Saint Francis was a man conquered by Jesus Christ.

And precisely because of this he was poor, humble, penitent, fraternal, a lover of those in need, a peacemaker, contemplative, and deeply united to creation.

His secret was not an ideology.

It was the Gospel.

His life can be summed up in a question that remains tremendously relevant today:

What would happen if a Christian truly took the words of Jesus Christ seriously?

Francis tried to answer that question with his entire existence.

1. Who was Saint Francis of Assisi?

Saint Francis was born in Assisi, Italy, around 1181-1182, into a prosperous family. His father, Pietro Bernardone, was a wealthy cloth merchant.

From a young age, Francis knew a comfortable life. He had financial means, social prestige, and an apparently secure future.

But God had other plans.



His youth was marked by a desire for glory, the pleasures of festivities, and also by his participation in military conflicts between Italian cities. He was eventually taken prisoner and later suffered an illness.

These experiences began to bring about an interior transformation in him.

What had previously seemed attractive to him began to lose its brilliance.

And what had previously repelled him began to acquire a completely different meaning.

Among the decisive experiences of his conversion was his encounter with lepers.

Francis himself would later recall that what had previously seemed bitter to him was transformed, by the grace of God, into sweetness.

Here we already find one of the keys to his entire spirituality:

Christian conversion does not simply consist in changing our ideas; it consists in allowing Christ to transform what we love, what we fear, and what we are capable of giving.

2. “The Lord granted me to begin to do penance”

Francis did not convert in a single day as the result of a passing emotion.

His conversion was a journey.

He began to seek prayer, solitude, penance, and mercy.

Little by little, he discovered that Christ was calling him to abandon an existence centered on himself in order to live the Gospel radically.

One of the decisive events took place before the Crucifix of San Damiano.

According to Franciscan tradition, Francis heard there the call:



“Francis, go and repair my Church.”

This phrase has been interpreted in many ways. But there is something fundamental that we must not forget.

Francis did not understand this call as authorization to create a different Church.

He did not want to found a new religion.

He did not want to separate himself from the Church.

He did not want to become an independent reformer.

His response was to live the Gospel within the Church.

Indeed, when the fraternity began to grow, Francis went to Rome to present his way of life to Pope Innocent III. Benedict XVI emphasized precisely this aspect: Francis understood that the charism he had received from the Holy Spirit had to be placed at the service of the Church, the Body of Christ.

This is particularly important for understanding the true saint.

Authentic Catholic reform begins with conversion and holiness, not with breaking away from the Church.

3. The decisive moment: listening to the Gospel

In 1208, Francis heard in the church of Saint Mary of the Angels the Gospel of the sending forth of the Apostles.

Christ sent His disciples to proclaim the Kingdom.

Francis understood that those words could also be addressed to him.

And he decided to live them.



Poverty.

Preaching.

Conversion.

Penance.

Absolute trust in Providence.

Fraternity.

Love for Christ.

For him, it was not a matter of admiring the Gospel.

It was a matter of **living it**.

Other men began to join him and a fraternity was born.

In 1209 Francis went to Rome with his first companions and presented the project of evangelical life to the Pope. The movement grew until it became one of the great religious families of the Church.

Here we find an extraordinary lesson for our own time.

We live in an age in which many people know Christian terminology, theological concepts, debates, and even ecclesial controversies.

But Saint Francis forces us to ask a much simpler question:

Am I truly living what I say I believe?

4. Francis and poverty: much more than living



with little

Probably no aspect of Saint Francis' life has been as misunderstood as his poverty.

Francis was not simply a man who possessed few things.

Franciscan poverty had a profoundly Christological dimension.

Francis wanted to resemble Christ.

And Christ, though He was rich, became poor for us.

Saint Paul expresses this in an extraordinarily profound way:

"For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that by his poverty you might become rich."

2 Corinthians 8:9

Francis' poverty therefore arises from the Incarnation.

God became man.

The eternal Word assumed our nature.

The Son of God chose to enter into our human poverty.

Francis wanted to respond to this love through a life of detachment.

Therefore, his poverty was not contempt for matter.

Nor was it hatred of wealth.

And still less did it mean that material poverty was automatically a virtue independently of charity.



Christian poverty fundamentally means **not turning created goods into our god**.

5. Poverty as freedom

This teaching is tremendously relevant today.

Our age possesses an amount of material goods that Francis could never have imagined.

We have more objects.

More information.

More entertainment.

More possibilities.

More ability to travel.

More technology.

More forms of communication.

And yet contemporary man can find himself internally enslaved.

He can be a slave to approval.

To money.

To the telephone.

To social media.

To image.

To consumption.

To entertainment.



To the constant desire to acquire something new.

Saint Francis asks an uncomfortable question:

Do we possess things, or do things possess us?

Authentic Christian poverty does not necessarily mean living without anything.

It means being able to say:

“Everything I possess comes from God and must be ordered toward God.”

6. The encounter with lepers: loving Christ in those in need

Francis discovered something essential:

Christ is encountered also in the poor, the sick, and the marginalized.

But we must understand this statement correctly.

Francis did not love the poor simply because they were poor.

He loved them because he saw in them a person created by God and called to salvation.

Human dignity does not depend on economic usefulness.

It does not depend on intelligence.

It does not depend on beauty.

It does not depend on productivity.

It does not depend on social status.

Human dignity ultimately comes from God.



Therefore, Franciscan charity cannot be reduced to philanthropy.

Philanthropy can provide food.

Christian charity provides food, but it also recognizes in the needy a brother.

It can give money.

But it also looks into the eyes.

It can build institutions.

But it also touches the wound.

It can defend rights.

But it also proclaims the eternal dignity of the person.

7. Saint Francis and Christ crucified

If we want to understand Francis, we must look at the Crucified One.

Not the sentimental Francis.

Not Francis turned into a cultural symbol.

Not Francis reduced to a protector of animals.

Francis in love with Christ crucified.

In 1224, on Mount La Verna, Francis received the stigmata.

Benedict XVI explained that this event expressed his intimate identification with Christ crucified.

The stigmata are not simply an extraordinary phenomenon.



Theologically, they must be contemplated within the mystery of configuration to Christ.

Saint Paul writes:

*"I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but
Christ who lives in me."*

Galatians 2:20

Francis wanted to make these words a reality.

He did not merely seek to imitate certain external aspects of Jesus.

He wanted his entire existence to be configured to Him.

8. The stigmata: a life configured to Christ

Here we find a profound spiritual teaching.

All Christians are called to be configured to Christ.

But this configuration passes through the Cross.

There is no authentic holiness without conversion.

There is no conversion without renunciation.

There is no perfect charity without sacrifice.

There is no Resurrection without the Cross.

Therefore, Francis' spirituality is not a superficially cheerful spirituality.

His joy arose from having found Christ.



And precisely for this reason, it could exist even amid suffering.

Christian joy does not mean that we never suffer.

It means that suffering no longer has the final word.

The final word belongs to Christ.

9. “Perfect joy”

One of the great treasures of Franciscan spirituality is the teaching on **perfect joy**.

Francis explains to his brothers that true joy does not depend on external circumstances.

We can have success and not be happy.

We can have money and not have peace.

We can be recognized and feel profoundly empty.

We can possess many things and lack God.

Perfect joy has another foundation:

Christ.

Therefore Francis could accept misunderstandings, difficulties, humiliations, and suffering without abandoning hope.

Christian joy is not naivety.

It is the fruit of charity.



10. Saint Francis and humility

Francis understood something that our culture has enormous difficulty accepting:

we are not God.

It seems like an obvious statement.

Yet much of contemporary culture is built around the absolute autonomy of the individual.

“I decide.”

“I determine.”

“I am the measure.”

“I establish my truth.”

The Gospel proposes something completely different.

Man is a creature.

God is the Creator.

Man receives.

God gives.

Man depends.

God is absolute.

This dependence does not constitute a humiliation of man.

On the contrary.

Recognizing that we are creatures means recovering our true dignity.

Franciscan humility does not consist in thinking that we are worthless.



It consists in knowing that everything good we have has been received.

11. “Blessed are the poor”

Jesus proclaims:

| *“Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God.”*

Luke 6:20

This phrase should not be interpreted as a glorification of misery.

The Church does not teach that material poverty is good in itself as suffering.

The Christian must combat poverty, injustice, and exclusion.

But Jesus reveals something much deeper:

the heart that recognizes its dependence on God is prepared to receive the Kingdom.

Francis understood this teaching radically.

His poverty was a form of availability.

By not living centered on possessions, he could give himself.

By not being concerned with accumulating, he could share.

By not seeking prestige, he could serve.



12. Saint Francis and the Church

This point deserves particular attention.

At times, Francis has been presented as though he were a kind of revolutionary opposed to the institutional Church.

He was not.

Francis deeply loved the Church.

He loved the sacraments.

He loved the priesthood.

He loved the Pope.

He loved preaching.

He loved the liturgy.

And he wanted his movement to remain within the Church.

His reform did not consist in saying:

“The Church is wrong and I have a better Church.”

It consisted in saying:

“I need to convert and live the Gospel.”

Here there is an enormous pastoral lesson.

The Church continually needs renewal.

But authentically Catholic renewal does not consist in inventing another Christianity.

It consists in returning to Christ.



13. Saint Francis and the Eucharist

Franciscan spirituality is profoundly Eucharistic.

Francis contemplated with immense reverence the mystery of Christ made present in the Eucharist.

His wonder before the Incarnation continued in his wonder before the Sacrament.

The same Christ who took flesh in Bethlehem becomes truly present under the sacramental species.

For this reason Francis urged priests and faithful to treat the Blessed Sacrament with immense reverence.

Here we find an important correction to a spirituality reduced to nature.

The center of Francis was not nature.

The center was Christ.

And Christ is truly present in the Eucharist.

Creation leads to the Creator.

Poverty leads to Christ.

Fraternity leads to Christ.

Charity leads to Christ.

Prayer leads to Christ.

And the Eucharist sacramentally introduces us into the mystery of Christ.



14. Saint Francis and the Virgin Mary

Francis had a profound devotion to the Blessed Virgin.

The Porziuncola, a decisive place in his life, was dedicated to Saint Mary of the Angels.

Francis saw in Mary the perfect model of a creature totally available to God.

Mary had said:

“Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word.”

Luke 1:38

Francis wanted to live this same availability.

Not placing himself before God.

Not imposing his own will.

Not seeking his own glory.

But saying:

“Lord, what do You want me to do?”

This should also be one of the fundamental questions of every Christian.

15. Saint Francis and Saint Clare

The story of Francis cannot be fully understood without Saint Clare of Assisi.



Clare was also born in Assisi, into a noble family, but she was deeply moved by Francis' preaching and example.

She renounced a comfortable life and began a path of consecration to God.

From this experience was born the Second Franciscan Order, the Poor Clares, later known as the Poor Clares.

The spiritual relationship between Francis and Clare constitutes one of the most beautiful examples of how a charism can give rise to different forms of vocation.

It was not a matter of mechanically copying a life.

It was a matter of responding to the same Christ through different vocations.

16. The Franciscans and evangelization

The Franciscan movement played an enormous role in the evangelization of Europe and later of the world.

The friars were sent to preach.

But Franciscan preaching was not supposed to be reduced to speeches.

Life itself had to become proclamation.

This is an extraordinarily relevant issue today.

The contemporary world does not need only Christians capable of arguing.

It needs Christians capable of living.

People who pray.

People who serve.

People who forgive.



People who are honest.

People who love their families.

People who know how to sacrifice.

People who know how to ask for forgiveness.

People who live their faith without shame.

Holiness is also a form of evangelization.

17. Saint Francis, peace, and the famous “Peace and Good”

Francis is deeply associated with peace.

But here we must make an important theological clarification.

Franciscan peace is not simply the absence of conflict.

Nor is it a kind of cosmic harmony.

Much less is it a pantheistic conception according to which God and nature would be the same reality.

Francis' peace is **the peace of Christ**.

Christ said:

| *“Peace I leave you; my peace I give you.”*

John 14:27



This is the peace Francis wanted to receive.

And this is the peace we also need.

18. Inner peace before external peace

It is impossible to build true social peace if the human heart is dominated by hatred, pride, greed, and resentment.

Peace begins within.

But it does not end within.

The Christian who has been given peace becomes a peacemaker.

Therefore Francis does not merely ask that there be no wars.

He invites us to ask ourselves:

Am I a cause of peace?

In my family?

In my marriage?

At work?

In my parish?

On the Internet?

On social media?

In political discussions?

In religious discussions?



In conversations with those who think differently?

It may be relatively easy to speak about peace in the abstract.

It is much more difficult to restrain a hurtful word.

To forgive.

Not to return an offense.

To acknowledge a mistake.

To ask forgiveness.

To give up always having the last word.

There true Christian peace begins.

19. Saint Francis and creation

Here we arrive at one of the aspects for which Francis is best known today.

The saint of Assisi contemplated creation with profound wonder.

The sun.

The moon.

Water.

Fire.

The earth.

Animals.

Everything could become for him an occasion to praise the Creator.



But it is fundamental to understand this spirituality correctly.

Francis did not worship nature.

He worshipped God.

Nature was creature.

God was the Creator.

Precisely because he loved the Creator, he could contemplate creatures with gratitude.

This point is theologically decisive.

The Catholic faith rejects both contempt for creation and its divinization.

Neither materialism.

Nor pantheism.

Creation.

God is God.

The creature is creature.

And precisely because it comes from God, it possesses a dignity and an order worthy of respect.

20. The Canticle of the Creatures

Francis expressed this vision especially in the famous **Canticle of the Creatures**.

“Laudato si’, mi’ Signore.”

“Praised be You, my Lord.”



It does not begin by saying:

“Praised be nature.”

It begins by praising **God**.

This difference changes everything.

The universe is not God.

The sun is not God.

The earth is not God.

Animals are not God.

Man is not God either.

Everything comes from God.

And everything should lead to God.

For this reason creation can become a true school of contemplation.

21. Saint Francis and integral ecology

In recent times, Francis’ figure has acquired even greater relevance because of the ecological question.

The encyclical *Laudato si’* explicitly presented Saint Francis as a model for caring for creation, connecting this care with concern for the poor, peace, justice, and sobriety.

And this connection is important.

Franciscan spirituality does not simply propose:

“We must protect the trees.”



Its vision is deeper.

It asks:

What kind of human being are we creating?

Because a person dominated by greed can destroy nature.

But he can also destroy human relationships.

He can exploit workers.

He can despise the elderly.

He can use others as instruments.

He can turn everything into a commodity.

Therefore, the ecological problem also has a spiritual root.

22. “Less is more”

Here we find one of the Franciscan teachings most needed in our time.

We do not necessarily need more.

We need to learn to **need less**.

Christian sobriety is not sadness.

It is freedom.

A person who constantly needs to buy, update, consume, accumulate, or display can become a slave to his own desires.

Francis shows another path:



receive, give thanks, use, share, and detach oneself.

Life is not measured by the quantity of things we possess.

It is measured by the love with which we live.

23. Saint Francis and the throwaway culture

Our society runs the risk of valuing people according to their usefulness.

As long as you are productive, you are important.

When you grow old, you can become a burden.

When you are sick, you can be seen as a problem.

When you are poor, you can become invisible.

When you do not produce, you can be discarded.

Francis' perspective is radically different.

The leper is not an object.

The poor person is not a nuisance.

The sick person is not a burden.

The elderly person is not useless.

The human being possesses a dignity that does not come from what he produces.

It comes from God.

Therefore Christian charity must begin precisely where utilitarian logic ends.



24. Saint Francis and death

Perhaps one of the most impressive aspects of his life is his relationship with death.

Francis called death:

“Sister Bodily Death.”

It may seem strange in a culture that tries to avoid even pronouncing the word.

But Francis did not contemplate death as an absolute defeat.

He contemplated it through Christ.

The Christian does not believe in death as the final destiny.

He believes in the Resurrection.

Saint Paul writes:

“If we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him.”

Romans 6:8

Francis died on October 3, 1226, at the Porziuncola.

He died lying on the bare earth, after blessing his brothers.

His death received in the Franciscan tradition the name of **Transitus**.

Not simply “death.”

Transitus.



Passage.

Entrance into eternal life.

25. When is Saint Francis of Assisi celebrated?

The liturgical feast of **Saint Francis of Assisi is celebrated on October 4.**

His Transitus took place on the evening of **October 3, 1226**, while the liturgical celebration of his feast corresponds to the following day.

The Franciscan tradition preserves in a special way the celebration of the **Transitus of Saint Francis** on October 3 and his feast on October 4.

Therefore:

October 3: Transitus of Saint Francis.

October 4: Feast of Saint Francis of Assisi.

The liturgical calendar thus places the remembrance of the saint immediately after contemplating his entrance into eternal life.

This is deeply significant.

The Church does not simply celebrate the biography of an admirable man.

It celebrates a Christian who completed his earthly pilgrimage and, by the grace of God, reached the heavenly homeland.



26. The spiritual meaning of October 4

October 4 should not be merely a date for congratulating those named Francis.

Nor should it become merely a day for animals.

It is an opportunity to contemplate one of the great Christian questions:

What does it mean to follow Jesus Christ?

Francis answers:

Poverty.

Humility.

Penance.

Prayer.

Charity.

The Eucharist.

Fraternity.

Evangelization.

The Cross.

Joy.

Peace.

Detachment.

Love of God.

Love of neighbor.



And hope of eternal life.

27. 2026: the Eighth Centenary of Saint Francis' Transitus

This year, 2026, has extraordinary importance.

It marks **800 years since the Transitus of Saint Francis of Assisi.**

The Holy See has established a special Jubilee Year from **January 10, 2026, to January 10, 2027**, on the occasion of the Eighth Centenary. The Apostolic Penitentiary has also granted the corresponding plenary indulgence under the established conditions.

This is not merely a historical commemoration.

The Church proposes that we look again to Francis in order to recover something essential:

the Gospel lived radically.

Pope Leo XIV, inaugurating this centenary, recalled that Francis found in Christ the source of true peace and presented him as a witness of reconciliation and concord in a world marked by conflicts and divisions.

Therefore, this Eighth Centenary constitutes a magnificent opportunity to rediscover the saint.

Not merely to admire him.

But to imitate him.



28. An indulgence is not a “reward” for visiting a place

In this context, it is important to explain something according to Catholic doctrine.

An indulgence does not mean that we can “buy” God’s forgiveness.

Mortal sin requires the grace of God and, when appropriate, sacramental absolution in the Sacrament of Penance.

An indulgence concerns the remission before God of the temporal punishment due to sins whose guilt has already been forgiven, according to the doctrine of the Church.

The decree of the Apostolic Penitentiary for this Year of Saint Francis establishes the plenary indulgence under the usual conditions, including sacramental confession, Eucharistic Communion, and prayer for the intentions of the Holy Father, in addition to the works indicated for this jubilee.

It is therefore an opportunity for grace.

But it requires conversion.

29. What can Saint Francis teach me today?

Here we arrive at the fundamental question.

Because we can study Francis for hours and change absolutely nothing.

The question is not merely:

“What did Francis do?”

The question is:

“What does God want me to do after learning about his life?”



First lesson: return to Christ

Francis did not begin by reforming the world.

He began by allowing Christ to reform his heart.

Holiness always begins there.

Before changing others, we must allow God to change us.

Second lesson: recover prayer

Francis was a man of prayer.

We live surrounded by noise.

Screens.

News.

Messages.

Social networks.

Opinions.

Videos.

Arguments.

Information.

But the soul needs silence.

A Christian who never remains alone before God will hardly be able to know deeply the will of God.



Let us recover silence.

Let us recover adoration.

Let us recover personal prayer.

Let us recover the Rosary.

Let us recover meditation on the Gospel.

Let us recover confession.

Let us recover the Eucharist.

Third lesson: learn detachment

We do not have to immediately abandon all our possessions.

But we do need to ask ourselves:

What am I a slave to?

What am I unwilling to surrender to God?

What thing occupies too much space in my heart?

What possession, habit, ambition, or need for recognition dominates my life?

Francis teaches that freedom begins when we stop needing so many things in order to feel that we are somebody.

Fourth lesson: look at the poor

Do not pass by.

Do not reduce the needy person to a number.



Look at him.

Listen to him.

Help him.

And, when possible, establish a genuine human relationship with him.

Charity is not merely giving.

It is loving.

Fifth lesson: make peace

Perhaps this is one of the most difficult practices.

Think of someone with whom you are in conflict.

Someone you do not forgive.

Someone who has hurt you.

Someone whom you have hurt.

Ask God:

“Lord, what can I do so that reconciliation may begin?”

It may be necessary to speak.

It may be necessary to ask forgiveness.

It may be necessary to forgive.

It may be necessary to remain silent for a time.

But the Christian cannot love inner warfare.



30. We must also learn from his love for creation

We can recover something as simple as giving thanks.

Giving thanks for water.

For food.

For the sun.

For rain.

For the countryside.

For animals.

For a conversation.

For a family.

For life.

But above all:

giving thanks to God.

Because the Christian does not stop at the creature.

He rises from the creature to the Creator.

As Scripture reminds us:

“His invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the



| *world, in the things that have been made.”*

Romans 1:20

Creation can thus become a silent catechesis.

31. Saint Francis was not a sentimentalist

This point deserves emphasis.

At times Francis has been turned into a lovable, pleasant, almost childlike figure.

The saint who spoke to the birds.

The saint who loved animals.

The smiling man who loved nature.

All of this is attractive.

But it is incomplete.

The real Francis was much more radical.

He was a penitent.

A man of fasting.

A man of prayer.

A man who embraced lepers.

A man who renounced wealth.

A man marked by the Cross.



A man who received the stigmata.

A man who suffered.

A man who preached conversion.

A man who wanted to obey the Church.

A man who desired to imitate Christ to the extreme.

For this reason, we must not domesticate Francis.

The real Francis makes us uncomfortable.

Because he asks us what we are willing to give up for Christ.

32. The Francis the world needs today

We live in a technologically advanced but spiritually disoriented society.

We have extraordinary instruments, but we do not always know what to live for.

We can communicate instantly with someone on the other side of the planet and, at the same time, feel incapable of speaking with the person beside us.

We can store immense amounts of information and yet not know how to answer the fundamental questions:

Who am I?

Why do I exist?

What do I live for?

What is good?

What is truth?



What happens after death?

Francis offers an extraordinarily simple answer:

God.

God is the beginning.

God is the end.

Christ is the way.

The Church is the spiritual family.

Charity is the way of living.

The Cross is the path.

The Resurrection is hope.

33. Saint Francis' authentic "revolution"

Francis was revolutionary, but not in the modern ideological sense.

His revolution consisted of something much deeper:

taking the Gospel seriously.

In a world obsessed with possession, he chose poverty.

In a world obsessed with prestige, he chose humility.

In a world marked by violence, he proclaimed peace.

In a world that rejected the leper, he embraced him.

In a world centered on power, he chose to serve.



In a world dominated by concern for tomorrow, he trusted in Providence.

In a world that could turn religion into a social issue, he placed Christ at the center.

That remains revolutionary.

34. What does it really mean to be “Franciscan”?

It does not simply mean loving animals.

It does not simply mean dressing poorly.

It does not simply mean defending the environment.

It does not simply mean speaking about peace.

It does not simply mean working with people in need.

All of this can form part of an authentic Franciscan spirituality.

But the foundation is something else:

following Christ poor, humble, crucified, and risen.

If we remove Christ, what remains is an aesthetic.

If we remove the Gospel, what remains is an ideology.

If we remove the Church, what remains is a cultural movement.

If we remove the Cross, what remains is sentimentalism.

But when Christ remains at the center, everything acquires its true meaning.



35. A prayer inspired by Saint Francis

On this day we can offer a very simple prayer:

“Lord Jesus Christ,

make my heart poor and free.

Teach me not to live enslaved to things.

Give me humility to recognize my sins.

Give me strength to convert.

Give me charity to serve the poor.

Give me patience to forgive.

Give me courage to ask forgiveness.

Give me love for Your Church.

Give me reverence before the Eucharist.

Give me love for the Blessed Virgin.

Give me respect and gratitude for Your creation.

Make me an instrument of Your peace.

And when my hour comes,

grant me to receive death

not as a defeat,

but as the passage toward You.



Through the intercession of Saint Francis of Assisi,
grant me to live the Gospel
with humility, joy, and fidelity.
Amen.”

36. Conclusion: returning to what is essential

Saint Francis of Assisi died eight hundred years ago.

But he does not belong to the past.

He belongs to the Church of all times.

His life continues to speak to us because the Gospel he wanted to live has not grown old.

Christ continues to say:

“If you would be perfect, go, sell what you possess and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me.”

Matthew 19:21

Not all of us are called to reproduce Francis’ life materially.

Not all of us are called to enter a religious order.

Not all of us are called to live in a hermitage.

Not all of us are called to abandon our professions, families, or responsibilities.

But all of us are called to listen to the voice of Christ.



All of us are called to holiness.

All of us are called to conversion.

All of us are called to love.

All of us are called to detach ourselves from what separates us from God.

All of us are called to carry our cross.

All of us are called to seek peace.

All of us are called to live within the Church.

And all of us are called to complete our journey with our hope placed in eternal life.

Francis understood that the greatness of a Christian does not consist in being important in the eyes of men.

It consists in belonging completely to God.

That is why he remains relevant.

That is why he remains uncomfortable.

That is why he remains necessary.

And that is why, eight hundred years after his Transitus, the Church once again places our eyes upon him.

Not so that we may simply admire the saint.

But so that we may learn from him to look toward Christ.

Because, in the end, that was the whole of Francis' life:

to leave everything in order to find Christ, and to find in Christ the true treasure.

And perhaps this is also the question that should continue to echo in our hearts this October 4:



What would I have to abandon in order to follow Jesus Christ more faithfully?

Saint Francis of Assisi,
pray for us.

Saint Francis, poor and humble,
pray for us.

Saint Francis, in love with Christ crucified,
pray for us.

Saint Francis, lover of the Church,
pray for us.

Saint Francis, brother of the poor,
pray for us.

Saint Francis, instrument of Christ's peace,
pray for us.

Saint Francis, model of penance and conversion,
pray for us.

Saint Francis, witness of perfect joy,
pray for us.

Saint Francis of Assisi,
pray for us and teach us to live the Gospel.