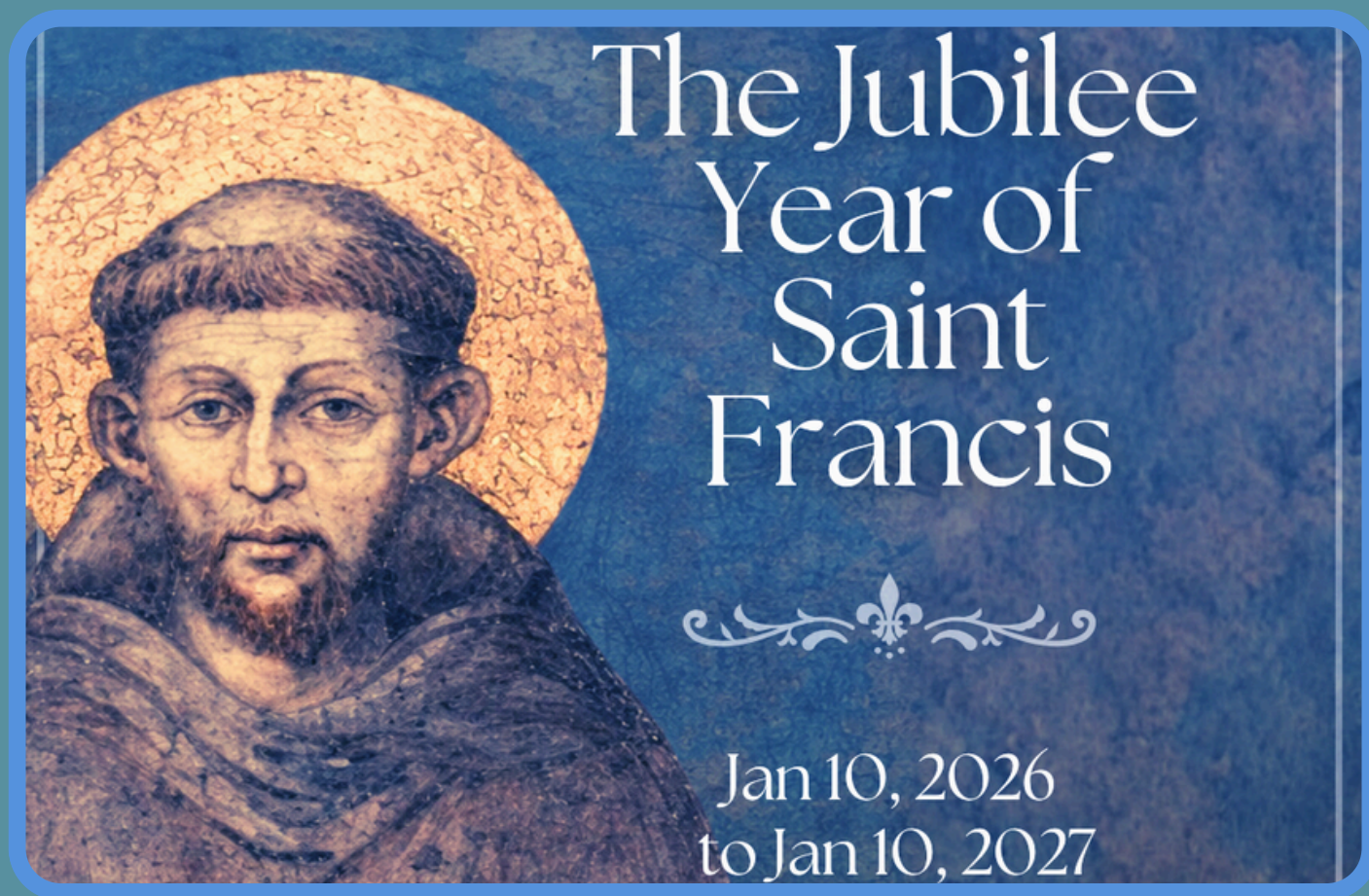


CELEBRATING 800 YEARS OF ST. FRANCIS

JUSTICE



As part of this yearlong celebration and lead-up to the Transitus, TSSF Creation Justice Peace is offering 3 months of daily reflections focusing on Justice, Peace, and Creation. This booklet contains daily inspirations for contemplation and action, that are designed to both feed and challenge you by weaving our Principles into each reflection. We will also host one online Zoom meeting during each month.

We hope this will enliven your Rule and thus bring you much Joy as we celebrate 800 years of St.Francis' vision!



This booklet is also available in Spanish and Portuguese
at TSSF.org/creation-justice-peace-cjp

Written for Creation Justice Peace by Gordon Kubanek, TSSF
July 2026

DAY 1

It's Time to Celebrate our Jubilee Year!



"Whoever serves me must follow me."

TSSF Principles Day 1

Reflection: Pope Leo's Prayer for the Jubilee Year of St. Francis:

Saint Francis, our brother, you who eight hundred years ago went to meet Sister Death as a man at peace, intercede for us before the Lord.
You recognized true peace in the Crucifix of San Damiano, teach us to seek in Him the source of all reconciliation that breaks down every wall.
You who, unarmed, crossed the lines of war and misunderstanding, give us the courage to build bridges where the world raises up boundaries.
In this time afflicted by conflict and division, intercede for us so that we may become peacemakers: unarmed and disarming witnesses of the peace that comes from Christ.
Amen.



Video:

[The Jubilee Year of Saint Francis \(800 Years Later\) is NOW!](#)

Why does the message of St. Francis challenge modern Christianity, consumerism, and environmental neglect more than ever before?

Action:

I vow to follow the way of Jesus Christ via the example of Francis of Assisi.
Today I will do one tiny Christ-like act that is inspired by the example St. Francis.

DAY 2

Delight

The life that is freely given is eternal.

TSSF Principles Day 2

Reflection: “It is not easy always to be joyful, so keep in mind the duty to delight.” *Dorothy Day*

We are ALL Saints in the making and chosen by God to help make Heaven of the Earth. One way we do this is bring God’s JUSTICE which is much bigger than our human version.

Here is one such Saint, Dorothy Day, who can inspire us to find our path to making Justice real in our world. She wrote JUSTICE large in her larger-than-life life. Dorothy Day is perhaps the best-known political radical among American Catholics. The Catholic Church has opened a beatification process for Dorothy Day. For that reason, the Church refers to her with the title Servant of God. Day's conversion is described in her 1952 autobiography, *The Long Loneliness*. Day was also an active journalist, and described her social activism in her writings. In 1917, she was imprisoned as a member of suffragist Alice Paul's nonviolent Silent Sentinels. In the 1930s, Day worked closely with fellow activist Peter Maurin to establish the Catholic Worker Movement, a pacifist movement that combines direct aid for the poor and homeless with nonviolent direct action on their behalf. She practised civil disobedience, which led to additional arrests in 1955, 1957, and in 1973 at age 75. As part of the Catholic Worker Movement, Day co-founded the Catholic Worker newspaper in 1933.

Video:

Listen to her granddaughter, [Kate Hennessy](#), speak about her life and work.

Action:

When the next injustice happens to you find that place in your heart where you can find a way to transform this dark moment into seeing a path towards delight.



DAY 3

Sacrifice

Jesus calls those who would serve him to follow his example and choose for themselves the same path of renunciation and sacrifice.

TSSF Principles Day 3

Reflection:

What is Justice? To speak truth to power. One Christian path has been martyrdom. Francis was seeking and expecting martyrdom when he went to preach peace during the 5th crusade in Egypt. The first Franciscan martyr was Berard of Carbio, a thirteenth-century Franciscan friar who was executed in Morocco for attempting to promote Christianity. He and his companions, Peter, Otho, Accursius, and Adjutus, are venerated as Catholic saints and considered the Franciscan Protomartyrs. Expelled from the kingdom twice, they returned each time and continued to preach. His Saint day is January 16.

Video:

[The Martyrdom of Saint Berard](#)

Action:

What sacrifices are you making in your life that better enables you to follow in the path of Jesus?



DAY 4

Be Kind

When Saint Francis encouraged the formation of The Third Order he recognized that many are called to serve God in the spirit of Poverty, Chastity, and Obedience in everyday life.

TSSF Principles Day 4

Reflection: "God has sent others, mysterious others, to walk with us... to help us see clearly.- Allan Levi

A kind friend recommended that I read Theo of Golden. I did. You should too. I have never experienced such a deep dive into kindness and the simultaneous pain of the human condition. Some people see kindness as an aspect of weakness but it is clear from this book and probably from your own life experiences that being kind is a challenge and is a deliberate and thought out choice.

"For anything to be good, truly good, there must be love in it." - Allan Levi



Video:

[Theo of Golden Book Review](#)

Action: Practice a seemingly act of kindness that is deliberate and heals.

Before you know what kindness really is
you must lose things,
feel the future dissolve in a moment
like salt in a weakened broth.
What you held in your hand,
what you counted and carefully saved,
all this must go so you know
how desolate the landscape can be
between the regions of kindness.
excerpt from poem Kindness by Naomi Shihab Nye

DAY 5

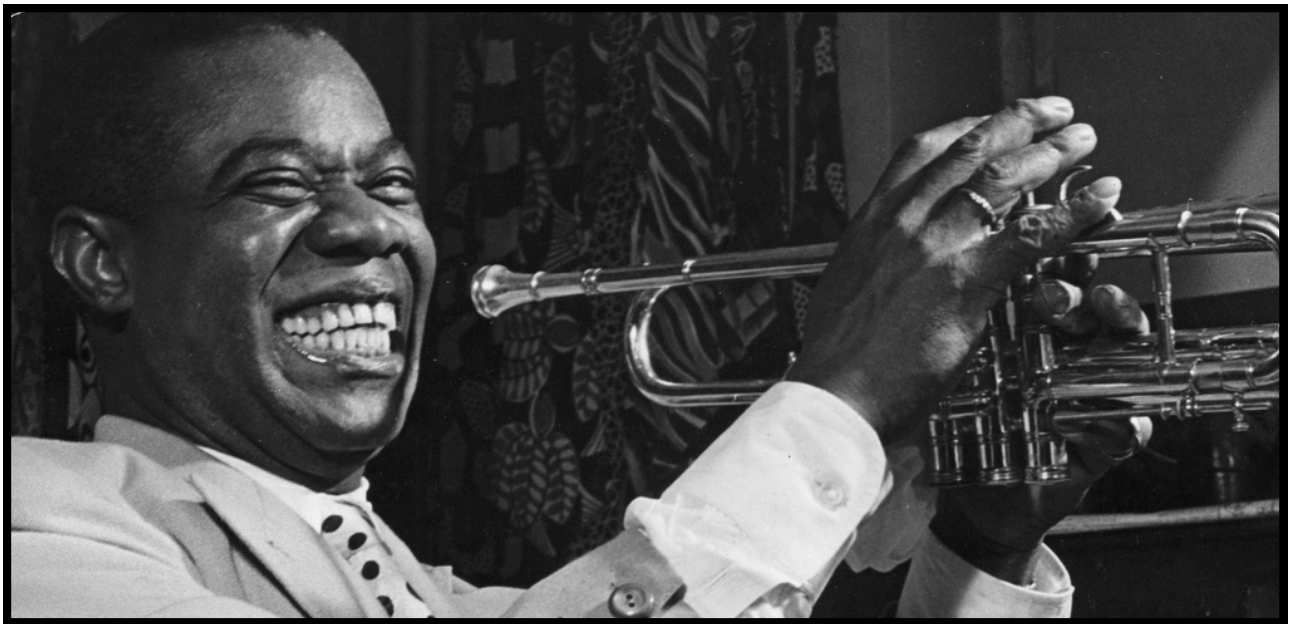
You are a Saint

The Order is founded on the conviction that Jesus Christ is the perfect revelation of God.

TSSF Principles Day 5

Reflection:

I was at a Jazz Vespers concert organized by our Parish priest who love jass and poetry where the music of Louis Armstrong was showcased. Among his many hits, which he had over a 40 years period, was the joyous "When the Saints come marching in". The crowd sang along with the chorus and all of us were lifted a bit closer to heaven. Music can, and should always, do that. That was Louis's gift to us – music that brought us closer to God and closer to each other – for these two are like partners in a dance – they dance together like Fred Astair anbd Ginger Rogers. Armstrong's best known songs include "What a Wonderful World", "La Vie en Rose", "Hello, Dolly!", "On the Sunny Side of the Street", "Dream a Little Dream of Me", "When You're Smiling" and "When the Saints Go Marching In". Did you notice that all these songs are full of joy and happiness?



Video:

Louis Armstrong ["When the Saints come marching in"](#)

Action:

We are told we are Saints: prove it. Do something that is out of your comfort zone. Do it quietly. Without fuss. God will know that you are good and faithful servant.

DAY 6

Judge Not

We bear witness to Christ in our own immediate environment and pray and work for the fulfillment of his command to make disciples of all nations.

TSSF Principles Day 6

Reflection: Judge not, and you will not be judged; condemn not, and you will not be condemned; forgive, and you will be forgiven. Luke 6:37

We are the feet and hands of Christ in the world. He did not judge, he healed. He did not condemn, he saved. He did not create division, but brought people together. The most famous example in literature of character who does not judge and is loved because of is the youngest son Alyosha in Dostoevsky's novel *The Brothers Karamazov*. The introductory description of him drives home powerfully the power of non judgment and the implicit Love that accompanies this.

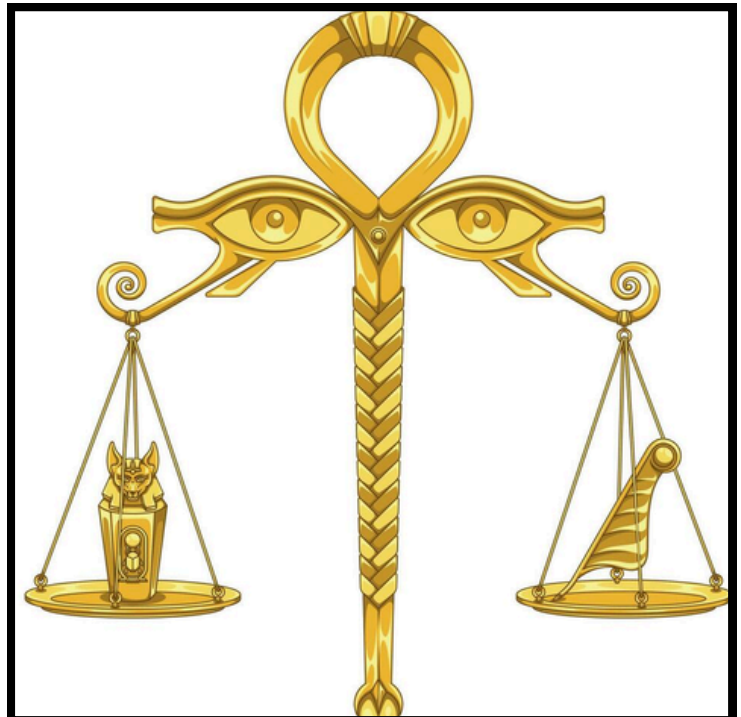
He did love people; he lived all his life, it seemed, with complete faith in people, yet no one ever considered him either naive or simple. There was something in him that told one, that convinced one, that he would take judgment upon himself and would not condemn anyone for anything. It seemed, even, that he accepted everything without the least condemnation, although often with deep sadness. Everyone loved this young man wherever he appeared.

Video:

A short excerpt about Alyosha from [The Brothers Karamazov](#)

Action:

Don't judge, especially don't judge those you strongly disagree with. They may be misguided, but the better way to changing them is Love, not hatred which is the brother of judgment.



Scales of Justice: Ancient Egypt

DAY 7

Love Those the World Despises

We accept as our second aim the spreading of a spirit of love and harmony among all people.

TSSF Principles Day 7

Reflection:

I love this story as it is so human. This was the inner conversion moment for Francis when his old view of Justice shattered and he saw that until he loved those that the world despised his love of God was not real but simply a beautiful mirage.

At about 22 or 24, Francis was trying to find his life while he rode his horse through the hills around Assisi. One morning in the valley, he heard a cough and saw a figure moving toward him — shambling and hunched. As the light grew, Francis saw the signs of leprosy: a purple lesion above the lip, thin limbs, the smell of sickness. Fear hit him. He wanted to wheel his horse and flee. But something in him said, “Stay.” Francis’ horse in his time and culture was more than a means of transportation; it was a symbol of wealth and class. It always required the poor to look up at the rider. So, Francis dismounted. First, he gave the man all the coins he had, yet the man kept shivering. Then Francis took off his cloak and wrapped it around him. Yet still, the man’s eyes told him he had a deeper need. “God, what now?” Francis asked himself. And then, Francis did the one thing he had always feared — he embraced the leper and kissed him. Some early biographies say that in that moment the leper disappeared. Those versions of the story often remind me of the story of Emmaus when Jesus vanished as soon as the disciples recognized him in the breaking of the bread. Whether or not that’s exactly what happened, Francis knew that something profound in him had changed. Near the end of his life Francis described this encounter as the key turning point of his conversion. In the Testament he wrote: “The Lord granted me, Brother Francis, to begin to do penance in this way: While I was in sin, it seemed very bitter to me to see lepers. And the Lord Himself led me among them and I had mercy upon them. And when I left them that which seemed bitter to me was changed into sweetness of soul and body; and afterward I lingered a little and left the world.” What was once unbearable for Francis became the doorway to grace. -Charlie McCarron, Provincial Minister

Video:

[St. Francis hugs the leper](#)

Action:

Hug someone who REALLY needs a hug. Or hug a tree. Just hug.



DAY 8

Love Justice

Members of The Third Order fight against all injustice in the name of Christ, in whom there can be neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female; for in him all are one.

TSSF Principles Day 8

Reflection: Justice, and only justice, you shall follow, that you may live and inherit the land that the Lord your God is giving you.
Deuteronomy 16:20

When I read these ancient words what jumps out at me is that we only inherit the land IF we have justice. In other words, we have no future without Justice. These words also make a clear link between how we treat other and our ability to live on the land, and thus I see how Justice and care for Creation are one: for only as we care for each do we have a good land to live on. Thus we see that Justice for each other infers that there is also Justice for the land – a theme we will explore more deeply in our third 30 days during our Love for Creation.



Video:

[Living a Life of Justice](#) is about more than principles—it's about daily choices that reflect fairness, mercy, and humility. What does it mean to embody justice in our relationships, communities, and as leaders?

Action:

Identify some injustice you see around you that is of the size that you, or you with others, can actually do something about. There is no action too small, for just as a small sin is still a sin, so is any small act of Justice still Justice – and God will notice.

DAY 9

Practice Justice

We are prepared not only to speak out for social justice & international peace, but to put these principles into practice in our own lives.

TSSF Principles Day 9

Reflection: Francis continues to inspire people. Here is the tale of one lady, Satoko Kitahara of Japan, who dedicated her life to the poor because of a Franciscan monk.

Satoko adopted St. Elizabeth of Hungary as her patron saint because her fiery soul was like the Franciscan tertiary Elizabeth, at a time when Satoko was evolving towards the spirituality of St. Francis of Assisi. With the enthusiasm of the neophytes, Satoko was eager to dedicate herself entirely to charity towards her neighbour. She then committed herself to helping the poorest of the poor in the community of rag-pickers with “Brother Zeno” – a Polish Franciscan monk. She wrote, “I had discovered a Japan that I had never even known to exist. Thousands of people were enduring a life of total destitution, and some of them were less than a mile from my home. I was living in an affluent and well-cultured world, but this humble foreign Brother was giving his all, without any concern for himself, in the reality of this painful world.”



Video:

[A bit on Kitahara's Life](#)

Action:

Wherever you live find somebody who needs a friend and help them experience justice.

DAY 10

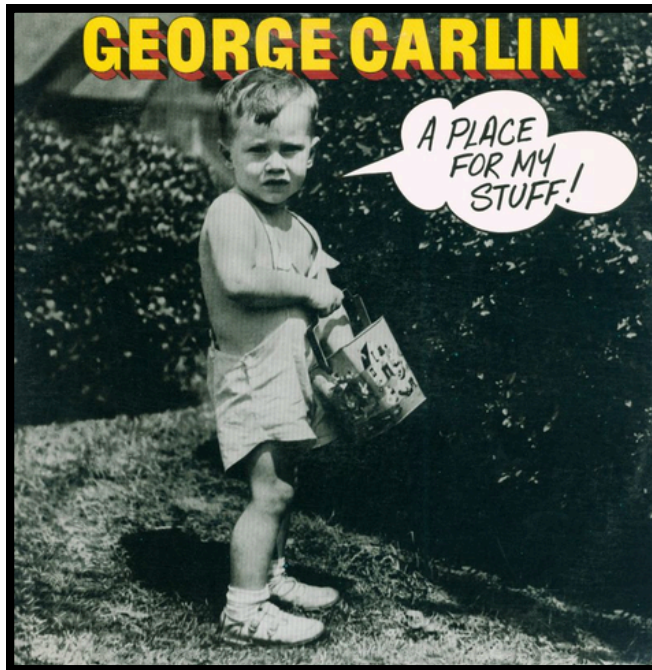
Lady Poverty

Saint Francis chose Lady Poverty as his bride, desiring that all barriers set up by privilege based on wealth should be overcome by love.

TSSF Principles Day 10

Reflection:

Thoreau, in some ways a Franciscan spirit, wrote: We don't own stuff, it owns us. "Stuff" requires attention, maintenance, uses up our limited intellectual and emotional energy and will, in excess, decrease our quality of life instead of increasing it like we think it does. The fact is that in materialistic culture "stuff" represent the lion's share of how many of us spend the most valuable gift we have from God: our time. Guarding and getting more "stuff" than we need is a major source of injustice in the world for if we shared there would absolutely be enough "stuff" for everybody.



Video:

[George Carlin does a brilliant skit](#) on how "stuff" has become the meaning of our life. Take a moment and have a good belly laugh as you listen to him.

Action:

Get rid of something – and that can and probably should include any emotional baggage you have.

DAY 11

Need or Want?

All of us accept that we avoid luxury and waste, and regard our possessions as being held in trust for God.

TSSF Principles Day 11

Reflection:

Most of us, including me, tend to match our lifestyle to our income. If we earn more, we “deserve” a bigger house or a nicer car or a cruise in the Caribbean. In fact, most of my friends suffer from this illness, and while I recognize that this is a harsh thing to say I say it considering it an illness like a flu for which they are not to blame. Our society promotes this materialistic worldview that “more is always better” so if we live OF the world this way of life is a good thing. But we followers of Francis do not live OF the world for although we live IN the world we are OF heaven – we are stardust. I believe that one role of our faith is to inoculate us so that our spiritual immune system is strong enough not to succumb to this illness that I “deserve” a cruise or that “more is better”. One such hero of the Faith who knew this well was John Wesley. Here is the story of how God “inoculated” him.

Wesley had just finished buying some pictures for his room when one of the chambermaids came to his door. It was a winter day and he noticed that she had only a thin linen gown to wear for protection against the cold. He reached into his pocket to give her some money for a coat, and found he had little left. It struck him that the Lord was not pleased with how he had spent his money. He asked himself: “Will Thy Master say, ‘Well done, good and faithful steward?’ Thou has adorned thy walls with the money that might have screened this poor creature from the cold! O justice! O mercy! Are not these pictures the blood of this poor maid?” Perhaps as a result of this incident, in 1731 Wesley began to limit his expenses so he would have more money to give to the poor. He records that one year his income was £30, and his living expenses £28, so he had £2 to give away. The next year, his income doubled, but he still lived on £28 and gave £32 away. In the third year, his income jumped to £90; again he lived on £28, giving £62 away. The fourth year, he made £120, lived again on £28, and gave £92 to the poor. Wesley preached that Christians should not merely tithe, but give away all extra income once the family and creditors were taken care of. He believed that with increasing income, the Christian’s standard of giving should increase, not his standard of living.

Video:

[Wesley in 5 min](#)

[Tolstoy on how much we need](#)

Action:

Discover what you NEED to live happily and see how much you can give away.



DAY 12

Live Simply so Others can Simply Live

We aim to stay free from all attachment to wealth, keeping ourselves constantly aware of the poverty in the world and its claim on us.

TSSF Principles Day 12

Reflection:

I went to the woods because I wished to live deliberately, to front only the essential facts of life, and see if I could not learn what it had to teach, and not, when I came to die, discover that I had not lived. I did not wish to live what was not life, living is so dear; nor did I wish to practice resignation, unless it was quite necessary. I wanted to live deep and suck out all the marrow of life, to live so sturdily and Spartan-like as to put to rout all that was not life, to cut a broad swath and shave close, to drive life into a corner, and reduce it to its lowest terms, and, if it proved to be mean, why then to get the whole and genuine meanness of it, and publish its meanness to the world; or if it were sublime, to know it by experience, and be able to give a true account of it in my next excursion." H.D. Thoreau, Walden



The interior of Thoreau's self-built cabin on Walden pond

Video:

[Life Lessons from Henry David Thoreau | The Power of Simple Living](#)

Action:

Find some object or some personal vanity or some way you are living that is so luxurious that it is getting in the way of you truly living and let it go, let it be free so you can be free.

DAY 13

Imago Dei

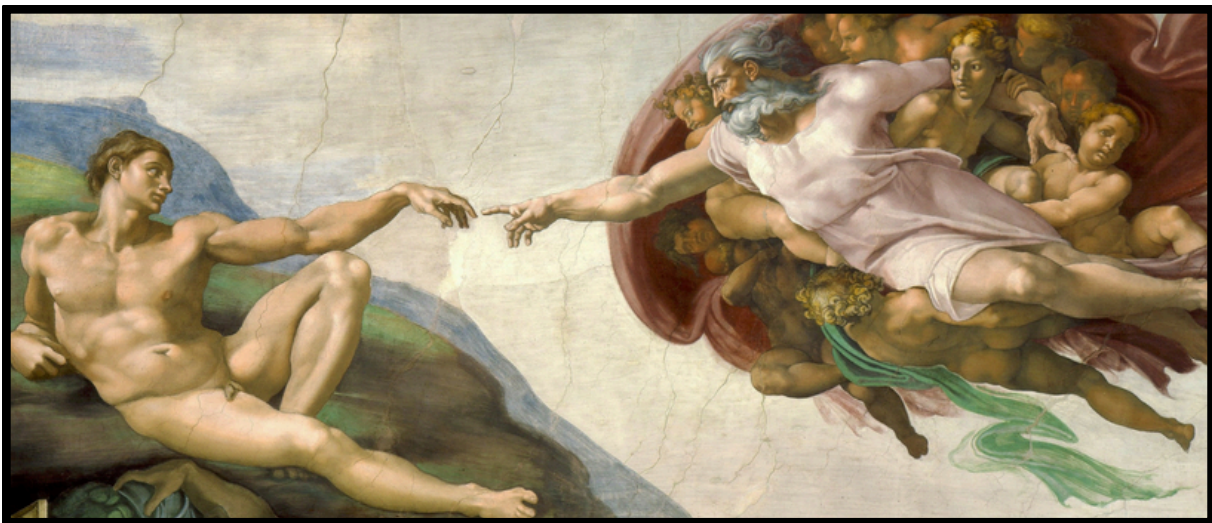
Tertiaries desire to be conformed to the image of Jesus Christ, whom we serve in the three ways of Prayer, Study, and Work.

TSSF Principles Day 13

Reflection:

We are made in God's image so that we can have a relationship with God. We are made of flesh and spirit, so we are of the earth and of heaven. As God's image bearers, we were made to worship and glorify God as His children, and that is where we find our true purpose and calling. I think that rather getting all "theological" the fable of the Stained Glass Artisan helps us better understand Imago Dei.

In a valley of grey stone, there lived a humble artisan. She was known not for making things out of stone, but for working with light. One day, she found a pile of dull, broken, and jagged glass shards scattered near a dried-up riverbed. They were ugly, useful to no one, and stained with dirt. The villagers told her to cast them away. Instead, the artisan gathered the broken pieces and brought them to her workshop. She didn't melt them down or turn them into something else. Instead, she painstakingly cleaned each piece, polished its edges, and arranged them into a large window. She did not create a new image; she simply arranged the pieces so that when the sun rose, the sunlight passed through the broken, colourful shards and threw a magnificent, breathtaking pattern of light across the entire valley. The villagers stopped, amazed. "How did you make such beauty from trash?" they asked. The artisan smiled. "They were never trash. I only recognized their purpose. They were made to hold the light."



Video:

[What is Imago Dei?](#)

Action:

Find something ugly and make it beautiful, again.

DAY 14

Praise

Tertiaries seek to live in an atmosphere of praise and prayer.

TSSF Principles Day 14

Reflection:

Praise changes our perspective of our situation. It helps us from being “ME” focused to “GOD” focused. Praise loosens the bondages from our lives because we recognize who created us and it also reminds us of who we belong to. When we begin to live a life of praise and worship to God. It brings us the gift of gratitude. Rather than talk about it, let’s praise God right now with Psalm 150 [adapted by Stephen Mitchell] and with the song in the video link.

*Praise God in the depths of the universe;
praise God in the human heart.
Praise God for his power and beauty,
for God’s all-feeling, fathomless love.
Praise God with drums and trumpets,
with double basses and saxophones.
Praise God in market and workplace;
with computer, with hammer and nails.
Praise God in bedroom and kitchen;
praise God with pots and pans.
Praise God in the temple of the present’
Let every breath be God’s praise.*



Video:

[Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart’s “Ave Verum Corpus”](#)

Action:

Next time you pray go beyond “thank you” and “can you please help me with...” to praise. Praise brings us to a place that makes all life a joy and every moment a blessing.

DAY 15

The Healing Power of the Eucharist

The heart of our prayer is the Eucharist.

TSSF Principles Day 15

Reflection:

For Francis and Clare, justice was a pre-condition for peace. They had both experienced war and knew its evils well. Although Francis's experiences with war are well known Clare's was not known to me..until now. In the year 1240, Assisi was under threat. A wave of Saracen mercenaries, hired by Emperor Frederick II, descended on Italy. Ruthless and violent, they approached the peaceful convent of San Damiano just outside the city walls—home to St. Clare of Assisi and her community of Poor Clares. The sisters had no weapons, no soldiers, and no real way to defend themselves. But Clare knew where her strength came from. The sisters were terrified. Many wept, preparing for martyrdom or worse. Clare didn't panic. Clare Trusted the Power of the Eucharist. Clare instructed the sisters to bring her the monstrance containing the Blessed Sacrament from the chapel. Though gravely ill and bedridden at the time, she insisted on being carried to the entrance of the convent, holding the Eucharist in her hands. Facing the enemy with the Body of Christ raised high, she prayed aloud: "Does it please You, Lord, to deliver into the hands of these beasts the defenseless children I have nourished with Your love? I beg You, Lord, protect these women whom I cannot protect." Then something happened. The advancing soldiers—armed, aggressive and confident—suddenly froze. Panic overtook them. One by one, they turned and fled. A key message from this event is this: St. Clare didn't just believe in the Eucharist. She acted on it.

Video:

[Jonathan Roumie \(played Jesus in The Chosen\) on the Power of the Eucharist](#)

Action:

When you receive the Eucharist don't just believe, use its power to act out your faith.



DAY 16

Radical

Tertiaries recognise the power of intercessory prayer for furthering the purposes of God's kingdom.

TSSF Principles Day 16

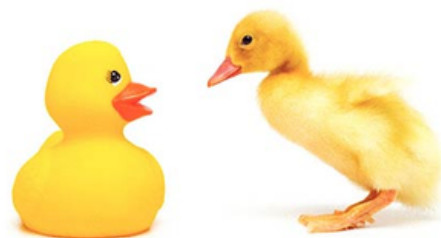
Reflection:

If Prayers are the ultimate and most powerful weapons of the spirit perhaps we should look into the nature of Christian power, perhaps we should be clear that if we believe in the power of prayer we must also be filled with the fanatical and extreme love that was Jesus. Years ago I was "into" Rob Bell – a "radical" evangelical preacher whose videos called NOOMA I would still recommend. His powerful messages and prayers made me feel like I was a lukewarm Christian – not exactly God's favorite kind of Christian, Revelation 3:16 makes clear: So, because you are lukewarm, neither hot nor cold, I am about to spit you out of my mouth.

Moderation sounds good. As a typical Canadian I admire compromise and being moderate. Tolerance sounds good too. Yet both are a slippery slope. Christ was seen as a fanatic. He was an extremist. Some saw him as a terrorist and a threat – which he was – he was a threat to power and false authority. For a few who saw and experienced him as truth he was fanatically good – but still an extremist. Fanatically and extremely filled with truth. For others who were filled either self importance and saw power as the path to happiness. He deserved death. He unveiled power based upon the lie of fear and set us free – free from power that did not come from God. I learned this recently: the difference between raw power and Godly power is that raw power is based upon fear and "me" while Godly power carries a godly authority because whoever has real Authority – as Christ did – is AUTHENTIC and is LOVE. He or She walks the talk. What they say and do fills their being and always, always, always HEALS – because that is love made physical – even if it may hurt in the short term at times. Christ had to die because he was a threat to the misguided and twisted tiny selves of the powerful who were disconnected from the reality that God is all, God is simply relationship and mutuality and that all of us are the sons and daughters of God and deserve Justice. God and all life is a dance we do together, as the dance that we call the Trinity makes clear.

Video:

[Authenticity is Authority that Inspires Love – Curt Harlow](#)



Action:

Be a fanatic for goodness. Be a fanatic for Joy. Be a fanatic for Friendship. Inspire people around you with your fanatic authenticity and your fanatic Love for Justice.

DAY 17

We never Condemn

Tertiaries therefore give priority to devotional study of scripture as one of the chief means of attaining that knowledge of God.

TSSF Principles Day 17

Reflection: For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. John 3:17

Yesterday I had a little incident in the local Walmart parking lot after I had shopped with my 96 year old mother for some needles. I had parked too close to a car so I had to fold, temporarily, the neighbouring cars mirror so my mother could walk by without damaging it, as she has a walker. Once she was in the car I went around to fold it back but the man, who had been the whole time in the car watching [unknown to me] came out, folded the mirror back before I could, pushed my mirror in and started yelling at me. I did not raise my voice and simply explained that I was trying to protect his mirror from damage by my 96 year old mother. I remained calm and said "I am sorry" that I had not folded his mirror back right away, but he kept yelling. At that point another shopper walking by just smiled and winked at me and said: "well done for not reacting". That totally deflated the guy yelling, who then got out of his car and pulled my mirror back into position. The important bit is this: I was only able to be calm, and I mean not just on the outside but on the inside, because I was not judging the man [as explained on Day 6].

I cared enough not to hate. Not to judge. Not to condemn. Wrapped within this story is this idea: The opposite of love is not hate - it's not caring. The opposite of Love is saying "You don't matter". The opposite of Love is that I walked past you downtown as you lay drunk in the snow I never even noticed you. I don't care is much, much worse than hate... a surprising insight, at least to me, an insight I have been grappling with and still finding hard to accept.

Video:

[The opposite of Love is not Hate it is Indifference](#)

[Love ALL that Life Offers](#)



Action:

What are you indifferent about? What makes you not care? What creates this feeling? What do you hate? In both cases, how can you transform either your hatred or condemnation or indifference into Love. Try it on something real in your life.

DAY 18

Fear Not

As well as the devotional study of Scripture, we all recognize our Christian responsibility to pursue other branches of study, both sacred and secular.

TSSF Principles Day 18

Reflection:

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.

He makes me lie down in green pastures: he leads me beside still waters;
He restores my soul: he leads me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.
—Psalm 23:1-3

Recently I heard a preacher make this point that the key words in this psalm are "for his name's sake". I shall not want and I shall not fear and death has no power over me, only when I LIVE "for his name's sake". Thus, when we live for and with God our fears and anxieties disappear like the mirages they truly are. This allows us to really live. To live in this moment. Not to live reliving past traumas or the obsessing over future possible disasters. To live in the now where life is. If you're the type who needs some more depth how damaging the fear of death in our culture you can read "You Might Die Tomorrow: Face Your Fear of Death to Live Your Most Meaningful Life" by Kate Manser or if you prefer something meatier try The Denial of Death by Ernest Becker which earned him a Pulitzer Prize in 1974. It is a multidisciplinary work that argues human civilization is a massive "immortality project" designed to distract us from our primal fear of our own mortality. In other words, our fear of death prevents us from living.



Video:

[The fear of Death kills your Life](#)

Action:

Spend time with someone who is dying or afraid in some way that prevents them from truly living.

DAY 19

To be Christ's Disciple is to be a Servant

Jesus took the form of a servant. He came not to be served, but to serve.

TSSF Principles Day 19

Reflection:

As followers of Christ we are his disciples – disciples who serve. We heal. We speak truth to power. We love. We are joyful. We cry with those in pain. We live a richer life in Christ than we could possibly live alone. But there is a cost, as Boenhoffer made clear in his book “The Cost of Discipleship” and by his life and in his death. He uses these two aspects of humanity: 1. You find what you look for. 2. You notice what you care about. To make the case that the only sane path to living a fulfilled, healing and joyous life is to follow in Christ's path – but this comes at a cost.

"WHEN Christ calls a man," says Dietrich Bonhoeffer, "he bids him come and die." There are different kinds of dying, it is true; but the essence of discipleship is contained in those words. I now share this poem of his.

WHO AM I?

*Who am I? They often tell me I stepped from my cell's confinement calmly,
cheerfully, firmly, like a Squire from his country house.*

*Am I then really that which other men tell of? Or am I only what I myself know of
myself?*

*Restless and longing and sick, like a bird in a cage, struggling for breath, as though
hands were pressing my throat, yearning for colors, for flowers, for the voices of
birds,*

*thirsting for words of kindness, for neighborliness, tossing in expectation of great
events,*

*powerlessly trembling for friends at an infinite distance,
weary and empty at praying, at thinking, at making, faint, and ready to say
farewell to it all.*

Who am I? This or the Other?

*Am I one person to-day and to-morrow another? Am I both at once? A hypocrite
before others, and before myself a contemptible weebegone weakling?*

*Or is something within me still like a beaten army fleeing in disorder from victory
already achieved?*

Who am I? They mock me, these lonely questions of mine.

Whoever I am, Thou knowest, O God, I am thine.

Video:

[The Cost of Discipleship](#)

Action:

Ask yourself “Who am I?” Use Boenhoffer's poem to help you.



DAY 20

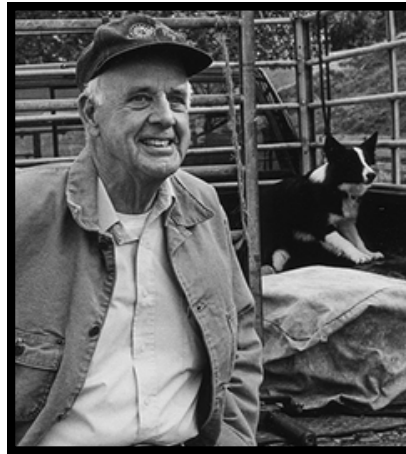
Work brings Peace when Justice reigns

Tertiaries endeavour to serve others in active work.. The chief form of service that we have to offer is to reflect the love of Christ.

TSSF Principles Day 20

Reflection:

I am a huge fan of Wendell Berry, the prophet, essayist, novelist and poet from Kentucky – I hope you will be too after reading this. Justice & Peace are as Father Sky and Mother Earth: they are complement of each other and complete the whole. This being whole is healing, because to heal simply means to made whole again. Work that is God's work also heals. I repair a leaking faucet – it is whole again. You stitch up my deep wound – I am whole again.



Video:

[The Peace of Wild Things, read by Wendell Berry](#)

When despair for the world grows in me
and I wake in the night at the least sound
in fear of what my life and my children's lives may be,
I go and lie down where the wood drake

Action:

When life destroys the peace in your heart, pray. When others seek to get you angry, pray. When your failing health fills you with despair, pray. When others lie about you, pray. For when you pray you with God, and God will dispense Justice and bring you Peace.

DAY 21

The Mysterious Dance of the Trinity

Humility, love, and joy are the three notes that mark the lives of Tertiaries.

TSSF Principles Day 21

Reflection:

Let's admit it, the idea of the trinity is a weird yet wonderful idea. It helps to see how Justice, Peace and love of Creation are connected & are just reflections of the same thought: sin has its roots in greed and exploitation of "the other" because only "I" matter. However, it both confuses me and enlightens me. For me, after many struggles, the Trinity has helped me see & experience life as a dance. All that God does and is as a dance. Perichoresis is the Greek theological term describing the mutual indwelling, co-inherentance, or "divine dance" of the three persons of the Trinity—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. It signifies that all three are distinct yet fully present, permeating, and encompassing one another in an eternal, unified, and intimate loving relationship. The key word is relationship. When we are in relationship as God is we are healthy and happy and blessed.

Now I am going to make a jump by admitting that I believe the Trinity is powerful because it is NOT a rational construct and that is makes it more true and more powerful and more inspirational – that it is "foolishness to the world" – as all deeper truths are. It's truer than true, because we prefer understanding – as we did in the Garden of Eden when we chose to eat of the fruit of the tree of knowledge, we must rationalize what we believe. This idea is not just mine, there are psychologists who see that much, but not all, of what we do with our thinking is simply rationalize what we want and believe. I am OK with that, if it makes me part of the cosmic dance we call the Trinity.



Video:

[We rationalize: we don't think often rationally](#)

Action:

Ask yourself: who are your two divine partners in your divine Trinitarian dance?

DAY 22

Do the Impossible, but with Humility

We likewise seek to serve one another with humility.

TSSF Principles Day 22

Reflection: Start by doing what is necessary, then do what is possible, and suddenly you are doing the impossible. - St. Francis

Little did St. Francis know that he when started rebuilding the tiny church of San Damiano that he was rebuilding THE Church. We too can start small and with God's help that small step can lead us on a great adventure. Recently I have noticed events that I once that of as impossible. Once I noticed them happening more and more often I realized that what I had once thought of as impossible was only HIGHLY improbable and even more strange is the fact that now I see these "HIGHLY improbable" events happening often. They are not Earth shattering, but what they do is remove the blinders from my eyes to see that there is more possible that I had imagined when I focused on what was impossible rather than what was possible – even is highly improbable. These days one of the most impossible acts you can do is to HOPE. To never let go of the reality that at the end of all the mess will be cleaned up, or, as Julian of Norwich said:

"All shall be well, and all shall be well, and all manner of thing shall be well."



Videos:

[Alex Honnold Free climbing El Capitan](#)

"God's plan was much better than mine – even if I have no arms and legs. There is nothing impossible with God." - [Nick Vujucic, born without arms or legs.](#)

Action:

Identify something you believe is impossible in your life and just do it.

DAY 23

The Wolves Within Us All

Humility confesses that we have nothing that we have not received and admits the fact of our insufficiency and our dependence upon God.

TSSF Principles Day 23

Reflection:

Wolves are part of our identity as Franciscans and we are wise to acknowledging the wolves within us the wolves of love and hate within us that are battling is part of everybody's spiritual path. Here is the Cherokee fable that helps us understand why we need humility so much. There is always this war within you, and this is spirit war that Jesus was fighting for us.

An old Grandfather said to his grandson, who came to him with anger at a friend who had done him an injustice, "Let me tell you a story. I too, at times, have felt a great hate for those that have taken so much, with no sorrow for what they do. But hate wears you down, and does not hurt your enemy. It is like taking poison and wishing your enemy would die. I have struggled with these feelings many times." He continued, "It is as if there are two wolves inside me. One is good and does no harm. He lives in harmony with all around him, and does not take offense when no offense was intended. He will only fight when it is right to do so, and in the right way. But the other wolf, ah! He is full of anger. The littlest thing will set him into a fit of temper. He fights everyone, all the time, for no reason. He cannot think because his anger and hate are so great. It is helpless anger, for his anger will change nothing. Sometimes, it is hard to live with these two wolves inside me, for both of them try to dominate my spirit." The boy looked intently into his Grandfather's eyes and asked, "Which one wins, Grandfather?" The Grandfather smiled and quietly said, "The one I feed."



Videos:

[The Cherokee Fable "The Two Wolves"](#)

[What Jung Believed about Jesus](#)

Action:

The next time the wolf of anger or apathy or judgment rises within you, notice him; don't feed him and consciously look for the wolf within you of empathy, non-judgement, love – knowing that you only lose if you feed the wrong wolf.

DAY 24

Music Heals

We take care to cast out the beam from our own eye before offering to remove the speck from another's.

TSSF Principles Day 24

Reflection:

Servant of God Thea Bowman (1937-1990) was a Protestant girl in Mississippi when she converted to Catholicism through the witness of those at her Catholic school. But even after she became a Franciscan Sister of Perpetual Adoration, she experienced racism within the Catholic Church. She chose to fight for her people by educating American Catholics on Black culture and the Black Catholic experience, becoming a trusted adviser to the United States Bishops. She was an evangelist in the Black community, both in the United States and in Africa, and a profound witness of the gift diversity is within the Church. One historian said of her, "Arguably no person in recent memory did more to resist and transform the sad legacy of segregation and racism in the Catholic Church than Thea Bowman...who inspired millions with her singing and message of God's love for all races & faiths."

The Ancients discussed at great length the "music of the spheres" - envisions the movements of celestial bodies as a form of inaudible cosmic harmony, linking mathematics, astronomy, and music. Music is universal, it connects us both to each other and to God, as the cross does. Recently, during Contemplative Prayer sessions during Lent, our leader used a Tibetan "singing bowl" to create a heavenly sound that resonated within us. That music helped to heal us and push away all our worries and distractions - as music should always do - a truth that J..Bach confirmed on every piece of music when he wrote: "To the Glory of God".

Videos:

[Robin Spielberg tells a very personal story about the healing power of music](#)

[One of her pieces of music](#)

Action:

Play or listen to some music today that either inspires or heals you.



DAY 25

Love

Love is the distinguishing feature of all true disciples of Christ who wish to dedicate themselves to him as his servants..

TSSF Principles Day 25

Reflection:

I like this story because it reminds of the Wolf of Gubbio story where we no longer see wolves as the enemy.

Some say we fear wolves because we are so much like them – smart and vicious. Some say we fear wolves because they were once the world's top global predator, but we replaced them and now we are. Either way, wolves can tell us a lot about our humanity, or lack of it.

A man in Alaska stumbled upon a timber wolf that had been caught in a trap and was badly injured. Even though the wolf was close to death, the man was initially scared when he saw the large animal, but then noticed that the wolf had milk and realized she had puppies who needed her to survive. He decided to try and save the mother wolf and set out to find the puppies. After following her paw marks, he found a den a half mile away and called out to the puppies with wolf howls. Four starving pups came out and began nursing on the man's fingers. The man carefully put them in his bag and took them back to their mother, who was overjoyed to see them. Despite her initial mistrust of the man, he knew she would die without food, so he brought her the remains of a deer to eat. Four years after his first encounter with the mother wolf at Coho Creek, the man found himself in danger again while hunting for steel traps by the bog. Suddenly, a bear charged at him and chased him. In a moment of desperation, the man shouted out "wolf cries," and was relieved when a familiar figure appeared before him. It was the wolf he had saved years ago, coming to his rescue.

Video:

[An article about the event](#)

[A video about the event](#)

Action:

Like the man in the story sacrifice can also mean putting yourself at risk without knowing if what you are doing will ever benefit you. Think of an action that will not benefit you but is clearly going to bring life and joy to the world.



DAY 26

Harmony

We seek reconciliation with those from whom we are estranged.

TSSF Principles Day 26

Reflection:

To reconcile is to no longer be separated from another being. Fortunately, we have Christ's sacrifice which has reconciled us with God. Likewise we are called to follow his example to reconcile the differences with have with other people and also God's creation by removing the divisions between us. I experienced the power of the poison of what happens when there is no reconciliation between the members of several families during a road trip several years ago which made a powerful impression on me. To answer from every family who I asked: "Do you have family members who refuse to talk with another?" was yes. I was shocked and horrified, knowing the same poison had infected some of my family in Europe. This poison is deadly and we are so blessed to have a Savior, and hopefully some Earthly friends, who can remove this poison from your soul.

*How wonderful it is to live in harmony with other people:
Like stepping out of the bath - your whole body fresh and vibrant.
Like the morning dew glistening on the tiniest blade of grass -
It is God's infinite blessing, a taste of eternal life. Psalm 133*



Video:

[5 Steps to Help you Reconcile](#)

Action:

If you have divisions with another seek to reconcile with them. If you have a friend or family member who could heal by reconciling with another try to help them do so.

DAY 27

Grief & Gratitude & Sacrifice

We gladly give of ourselves, remembering that love is measured by sacrifice.

TSSF Principles Day 27

Reflection:

We are approaching the end of our 30 day journey and there is still so much to share with you. Today we will weave the life threads of grief and gratitude and sacrifice into strong rope that will allow you to live the rich life that God intends for you to have as his gift for your service to all creation. We all suffer grief. To live a rich life we must choose sacrifice. Both are hard. When we discover gratitude for all that Life brings us all the grief and sacrifice becomes worth it. Life has the possibility of making sense. Gratitude is the water that allows the tiny seed of our faith to grow. To do this means helping each other so that Justice prevails – as this parable makes clear.

A Lion lay asleep in the forest, his great head resting on his paws. A timid little Mouse came upon him unexpectedly, and in her fright and haste to get away, ran across the Lion's nose. Roused from his nap, the Lion laid his huge paw angrily on the tiny creature to kill her. "Spare me!" begged the poor Mouse. "Please let me go and some day I will surely repay you." The Lion was much amused to think that a Mouse could ever help him. But he was generous and finally let the Mouse go. Some days later, while stalking his prey in the forest, the Lion was caught in the toils of a hunter's net. Unable to free himself, he filled the forest with his angry roaring. The Mouse knew the voice and quickly found the Lion struggling in the net. Running to one of the great ropes that bound him, she gnawed it until it parted, and soon the Lion was free. "You laughed when I said I would repay you," said the Mouse. "Now you see that even a Mouse can help a Lion."



Video:

[Brandon Lake's song Gratitude](#)

Action:

Today be grateful for one little thing, one act of kindness you saw. Repeat.

DAY 28

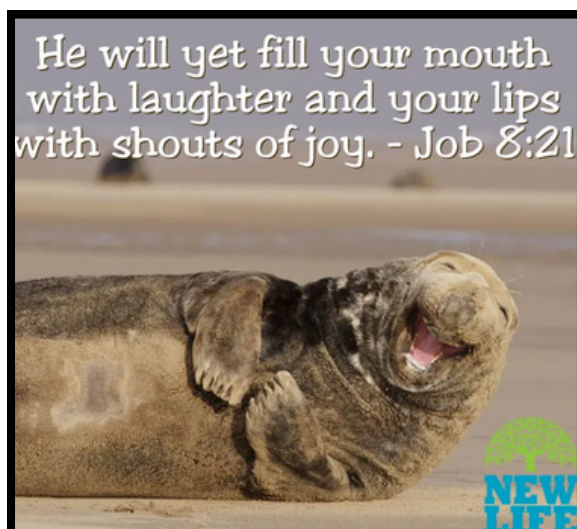
Joy & Laughter

We delight in fun and laughter, rejoicing in God's world, its beauty and its living creatures, calling nothing common or unclean.

TSSF Principles Day 28

Reflection: The one who trusts in the Lord will be happy. – Proverbs 16:20

Laughter and joy and giggles and happiness seem to me, and a new convert friend of mine, to be an under-rated and under-valued gift from God within our Christian path – except, fortunately, for Francis. He was a “party animal” when young and transformed that zest for life into a Joy that permeated all that he did and was. We, of course, seek to do likewise. Many years ago, before I became a tertiary, I was convinced that God also loves us to be joyful by the reading of a medieval murder mystery entitled “The Name of the Rose” by the Italian professor Umberto Eco. In the story it is imagined that a lost essay by Aristotle is found that proposes that the closest we can come to God, and each other, is through laughter. This was, of course, heresy in the medieval world where the fear of God and eternal damnation kept folks in line and the money rolling in. That was the world Francis lived in and yet.. he laughed. I believe his ability to laugh was an essential ingredient in his striving for the justice needed to bring Peace to our world. That is probably one of the reasons I chose to become a tertiary – to laugh more. Of course now I see Christ's path as full of joy & laughter because as Christ is THE healer it is clear that the healing power of laughter is truly one of God's gift to us in this veil of tears.



Videos:

[The healing power of laughter](#)

[Excerpt from the Name of the Rose](#)

Action:

Find a good joke, tell it to your friends and enjoy. Repeat.

DAY 29

Suffering

Joy is still there even in times of darkness and difficulty, giving cheerful courage in the face of disappointment.

TSSF Principles Day 29

Reflection:

One of the recurring tough questions is: why do bad things happen to good people? Why do we suffer? For some folks original sin is enough of an explanation. For others the ideas of the Stoics, as expressed by Marcus Aurilius's meditations where he teaches that obstacles are not barriers, but pathways and that when we face difficulty, we discover resilience we did not know we had. For a thousand years, the last famous Roman book to be written – The Consolation of Philosophy by Boethius helped people when they suffered injustice. For some poetry speaks to their souls – perhaps these few lines from Blake's Auguries of Innocence will console you:

To see a World in a Grain of Sand
And a Heaven in a Wild Flower
Hold Infinity in the palm of your hand
And Eternity in an hour...
It is right it should be so
Man was made for Joy & Woe
And when this we rightly know
Thro the World we safely go
Joy & Woe are woven fine
A Clothing for the soul divine
Under every grief & pine
Runs a joy with silken twine

Videos:

God and Suffering: Isn't human suffering proof that a just, all-powerful God must not exist? On the contrary, says Boston College Professor of Philosophy Peter Kreeft

Marcus Aurelius on Adversity

Action:

If you have suffered greatly search you heart. Is there is any way this suffering has brought you closer to God and closer your authentic self? Is there any way to redeem the suffering?

We can suffer and sing at the same time. In fact, we must. - Dr. Jaiya John

DAY 30

Is Love worth the Hurt?

The humility, love, and joy, which mark the lives of Tertiaries, are all God-given graces.

TSSF Principles Day 30

Reflection:

Now that our 30 day journey exploring Justice through a Franciscan lens is over, a journey where Love and sacrifice are the “secret” ingredients that make Justice possible the question remains: Why does this hurt so much? Is love worth the hurt? There may be an answer, but I don’t have it, and I am OK with with because when I keep asking the question I keep on learning more and more and getting closer and closer to both God – and you, dear reader. I leave you with this parting gift – a fable about pain and sacrifice and love and blessing. May you be blessed so that you can be a blessing to others.



Videos:

[The Last Seed – A Fable](#)

[Poem Keeping Quiet by Pablo Neruda](#)

Action:

Find 5 minutes to be quiet. To be still, deep within. To not worry. Simply to be. To breathe. To know that all is well in the world because God is always with you. And when somebody disturbs your inner quiet don’t react, don’t become frustrated, let that inner quiet flow from you and envelope, with love, all that is around you and then you will know that God is with you and you are with God.

DAY 31

Join the community for an online discussion.
7:30-8:30pm ET

Contact gordonjkubanek@gmail.com to register.

How will you plan to use what you learned about justice during this month to change the world?

To use an image from the 19th century, popularized by the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.: How will you help bend the long arc of the moral compass of history towards justice?

CONCLUSION

We hope and pray that these 30 days of Justice-themed reflections that we have celebrated together for the Jubilee Year of St. Francis have brought you the joy and peace and love that are God's reflections and gifts to our world.



A Four-fold Franciscan Blessing

May God bless you with discomfort at easy answers, half-truths, and superficial relationships, so that you may live deep within your heart.
May God bless you with anger at injustice, oppression, and exploitation of people, so that you may work for justice, freedom and peace.
May God bless you with tears to shed for those who suffer from pain, rejection, starvation and war, so that you may reach out your hand to comfort them and to turn their pain into joy.
May God bless you with enough foolishness to believe that you can make a difference in this world, so that you can do what others claim cannot be done.

A series of horizontal dotted lines for writing, spaced evenly down the page.

A series of horizontal dotted lines for writing.