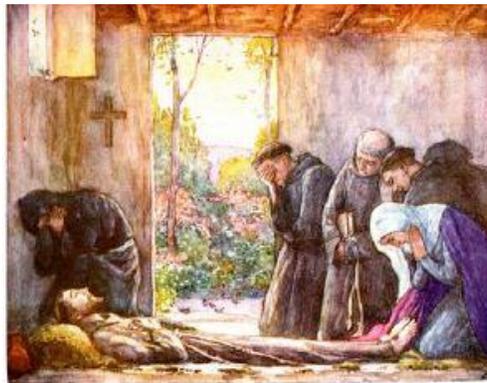


October 3rd



Introduction

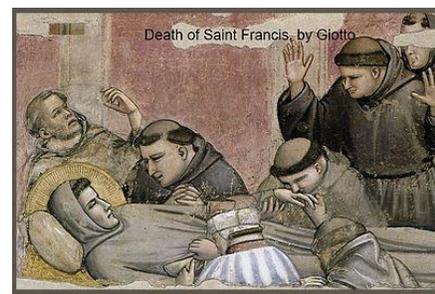
LEADER: Each year on the third evening of October, we ritually remember the passing of St. Francis of Assisi from this life into God. To ritually revisit the story of Francis' passing is vital; without it something significant is missing. It specifies the living memory of Francis; it intensifies our commitment to follow Christ in the way of the poor man of Assisi.¹

Before beginning the ritual, let us meditate upon the following readings and scripture, describing the last days and hours of our Father Francis:

FIRST READER:

A reading from Thomas of Celano and St. Bonaventure:

St. Francis spent the last few days before his death in praising the Lord and teaching his companions, whom he loved so much, to praise Christ with him. He himself, in as far as he was able, broke out with the Psalm: *I cry to the Lord with my voice; to the Lord I make*



¹ Daniel Grigassy, O.F.M., "The Transitus: A Rite of Intensification, Part I," The Cord 43, No. 10 (October 1993): 261-274. Daniel Grigassy, O.F.M., "The Transitus: A Rite of Intensification, Part II," The Cord 43, No. 12 (December 1993): 335-347. Daniel Grigassy, O.F.M., "The Transitus: A Rite of Intensification, Part III," The Cord 44, No. 3 (March 1994): 85-96. (These three articles are the primary sources for information on the Transitus and its components.)

loud supplication. He likewise invited all creatures to praise God, and, with the words he had composed earlier, he exhorted them to love God. Even death itself, considered by all to be so terrible and hateful, was exhorted to give praise, while he himself, going joyfully to meet it, invited it to make its abode with him. "Welcome," he said, "my sister death."

(Celano, Second Life.)

When the hour of his death approached, Francis asked that all of the brothers living with him be called to his death bed and softening his departure with consoling words, he encouraged them with fatherly affection to love God. He spoke of patience and poverty and of being faithful to the Holy Roman Church, giving precedence to the Holy Gospels before all else. He then stretched his hands over the brothers in the form of a cross, a symbol that he loved so much, and gave his blessings to all followers, both present and absent, in the power and in the name of the Crucified. Then he added: "Remain, my sons, in the fear of the Lord and be with Him always. And as temptations and trials beset you, blessed are those who persevere to the end in the life they have chosen. I am on my way to God, and I commend you all to His favor."



With this sweet admonition, this dearly beloved to God, asked that the book of the Gospels be brought to him and that the passage in the Gospel of St. John, which begins before the Feast of the Passover, be read. Finally, when all God's mysteries had been accomplished in him, his holy soul was freed from his body and assumed into the abyss of God's glory, and Francis fell asleep in God. (Bonaventure, Major Life.)

SECOND READER:

John 13: 1-17

Now before the feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart out of this world to the Father, having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end. And during supper, when the devil had already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him, Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had

come from God and was going to God, rose from supper, laid aside his garments, and girded himself with a towel. Then he poured water into a basin, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel with which he was girded. He came to Simon Peter, and Peter said to him, "Lord, do you wash my feet?" Jesus answered him, "What I am doing you do not know now, but afterward you will understand. Peter said to him, "You shall never wash my feet." Jesus answered him, "If I do not wash you, you have no part in me." Simon Peter said to him, "Lord, not my feet only but also my hands and my head!" Jesus said to him, "He who has bathed does not need to wash, except for his feet, but he is clean all over; and you are clean, but not all of you." For he knew who was to betray him; that was why he said, "You are not all clean."

When he had washed their feet, and taken his garments, and resumed his place, he said to them, "Do you know what I have done to you? You call me Teacher and Lord; and you are right, for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet." For I have given you as example, that you also should do as I have done to you. Truly, truly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master; nor is He who is sent greater than He who sent Him. If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them. "

ALL: O most holy soul, at your departure the heavenly host comes to meet you, the angelic choir rejoices and the glorious Trinity welcomes you, saying: Remain with us forever. (O santissima anima)

THIRD READER:

Psalm 142

I cry with my voice to the Lord,
with my voice I make supplication to the Lord,
I pour out my complaint before him,
I tell my trouble before him.
When my spirit is faint,
thou knowest my way!

In the path where I walk
They have hidden a trap for me.

The Transitus of St. Francis

4

I look to the right and watch,
but there is none who takes notice of me;
no refuge remains to me,
no man cares for me.

I cry to thee, O Lord;
I say, Thou art my refuge,
my portion in the land of the Living.
Give heed to my cry;
for I am brought very low!

Deliver me from my persecutors;
for they are too strong for me!
Bring me out of prison,
that I may give thanks to thy name!
The righteous will surround me,
for thou wilt deal bountifully with me.

ALL:

O most holy soul, at your departure the heavenly host comes to meet you, the angelic choir rejoices and the glorious Trinity welcomes you, saying: Remain with us forever. (O santissima anima)

(Pater, Ave and Gloria Patri)

LEADER: Let's all kneel and repeat the Our Father, Hail Mary and Glory Be five times, in honor of the five wounds of St. Francis.

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name:

Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation: but deliver us from evil. Amen.

Hail Mary, full of grace; the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

(Salve, sancta Pater)

LEADER: Hail, holy Father, the light of your country, model of your minors, mirror of virtue, way of uprightness, rule of conduct; from this exile in which our flesh holds us, lead us to the kingdom of heaven.

LEADER: Francis, poor and humble, enters heaven as a rich man.

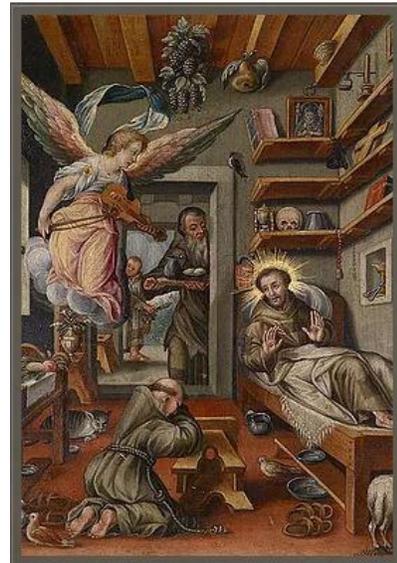
ALL: He is honored with the hymns of the blessed.

(Oration)

LEADER: O God, on this day you granted the reward of blessed eternity to our blessed Father Francis; mercifully grant that we who celebrate with tender devotion the memory of his death may have the joy of sharing in his blessed regard. Through Jesus Christ Your Son, Our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, One God, for ever and ever. Amen.

LEADER: Let us bless the Lord.

ALL: Thanks be to God



LET THERE BE PEACE ON EARTH

Let there be peace on earth
And let it begin with me;
Let there be peace on earth,
The peace that was meant to be.

With God our Creator
Children all are we,
Let us walk with each other
In perfect harmony

Let peace begin with me,
Let this be the moment now;
With every step I take,
Let this be my solemn vow:

To take each moment and live each
moment in peace eternally.
Let there be peace on earth
And let it begin with me.