

CELEBRATING SAINT FRANCIS

Feast: October 4

***“And the one on whom seed was sown on the good soil,
this is the one who hears the word and understands it;
who indeed bears fruit, and brings forth,
some a hundredfold, some sixty, and some thirty.”***

– Matthew 13:23

As our Jewish brothers and sisters celebrate Rosh Hashanah beginning October 3rd which commemorates the day on which Yahweh created Man, Adam, Yahweh’s final and most precious creation. Each Rosh Hashanah, the birthday of Mankind, the Jewish people proclaim Yahweh as the one and true King. They reaffirm their desire to serve Him every moment of their lives.

Beginning October 5th, our Muslim brothers and sisters celebrate Ramadan, a “month of blessing” marked by prayer, fasting, and charity. It is a time when Muslims concentrate more on their faith and less time on the concerns of everyday life. It is a time of worship and contemplation.

Let us emulate Francis in his love for all of creation especially the daughters and sons of God who share the same beginning in Abraham. May we be people who work tirelessly for better understanding of all peoples so that we may live and work together in harmony and peace.

There is an incident in the life of St. Francis that can serve as a model for solving conflicts in a nonviolent way and for improving understanding between Christians and Muslims. Francis of Assisi (1182–1226), who lived during the time of the Crusades, had come to distrust violence and war. In the year 1219 he sought a non-violent way to solve the conflict between Christians and Muslims. Francis journeyed to Damietta, Egypt, near the mouth of the Nile, determined to have a meeting with the Sultan of Egypt, even as Christian crusaders were engaged in bloody conflict with the Muslim forces nearby.

Francis succeeded in getting an audience with Sultan Malek-el-Kamel. Though Francis tried to persuade the Sultan of the good news of Jesus’ saving love for all, the Sultan was not drawn away from his own faith and convictions. Yet, he saw Francis’ enthusiasm and courage and listened to him courteously and with admiration. He saw to it, moreover, that Francis was given safe passage back to the Christian camp. In our day, we need to follow the example of St. Francis and the sultan and reach out in respectful dialogue with our brothers and sisters of different religions and cultures.



Let us pause

and remember that we live and breathe and move in the Lord our God.

Holy is God, holy and mighty, holy and living forever!

Psalm 96

Sing to the LORD a new song;

sing to the LORD, all the earth.

Sing to the LORD, bless His name;

announce His salvation day after day.

Tell God's glory among the nations;

among all peoples, God's marvelous deeds.

For great is the LORD and highly to be praised,

to be feared above all gods.

For the gods of the nations all do nothing,

but the LORD made the heavens.

Splendor and power go before Him;

power and grandeur are in His holy place.

Give to the LORD, you families of nations,

give to the LORD glory and might;

give to the LORD the glory due His name!

Bring gifts and enter His courts;

bow down to the LORD, splendid in holiness.

Tremble before God, all the earth;

say among the nations: The LORD is king.

The world will surely stand fast,

never to be moved.

God rules the peoples with fairness.

Let the heavens be glad and the earth rejoice;

let the sea and what fills it resound;

let the plains be joyful and all that is in them.

Then let all the trees of the forest rejoice before the LORD who comes,

who comes to govern the earth,

to govern the world with justice and the peoples with faithfulness.

ISAIAH 2:

In days to come, the mountain of the LORD'S house shall be established as the highest mountain and raised above the hills. All nations shall stream toward it; many peoples shall come and say: "Come, let us climb the LORD'S mountain, to the house of the God of Jacob, that He may instruct us in his ways, and we may walk in His paths." For from Zion shall go forth instruction, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.

He shall judge between the nations, and impose terms on many peoples. They shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks; One nation shall not raise the sword against another, nor shall they train for war again.

Let us walk in the light of the LORD!

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God has changed the world's direction!

God can change the human heart:

agents of the new creation

mend the people torn apart;

so are we changed to be the go-betweeners for unity.

Peace will be our way of thinking:

common wealth and common state.

Gone the wounds, the words and weapons

that conspire to hurt and hate,

and no power shall devour earth or air may peace may flower.

Debts and doubts will be forgiven,

cancelled in the name of God,

olive trees again be planted

there where soldiers' boots have trod,

hunger fed, terror fled, justice shining in its stead.

What have we as commendation,

sent to speak as speak we must?

Love will be our global language,

hands an enemy can trust,

faith to faith,

race with race,

all shall find a meeting place.

Envoys of a high commission,

gifts of hope we find to share,

though we stall, fail or fall,

shall we now refuse God's call?

Intercessions

Response: *God of all love and understanding, hear us.*

**That all peoples will recognize each other as brothers and sisters,
sons and daughters of the Living God,
and treat each other with justice, respect and dignity, we pray:**

**That those areas of our world
that are experiencing turmoil and war because of different religious beliefs
will find true peace in our God, we pray:**

**That all who suffer persecution, torture and death,
will do so in a spirit of forgiveness and love, we pray:**

**That as stewards of all creation,
we will reverence the gifts the good God has given us, we pray:**

**That You, O God, will bless all the members of the Franciscan family
and enable them to be instruments of Your peace, we pray:**

Prayer

God of all peace, Who wills for every child, every person, wholeness and justice; in the midst of war and violence, we pray for peace.

We pray for all who carry the responsibility in the current tensions between the United States and its allies, and nations of the Middle East.

Grant, O God, an outpouring of Your Spirit of peace and a new vision.

We pray for the United Nations and all who work to sustain its purposes of peace and justice.

Grant, O Lord, an outpouring of Your Spirit of courage and a new vision of Your loving purpose for our fragile world.

We pray for the people of the Middle East, the United States and its allies that children will be valued, that the oppressed may be freed, that the voiceless will be heard.

Grant, O Lord, an outpouring of Your Spirit of love and a new vision of Your loving purpose of every human life.

We offer our prayer in great hope that peace with justice will be achieved because it is Your will. We make our decision to love others better than we love ourselves and to give others life and hope whatever the cost. Amen.



**Lord,
make me an instrument of Your peace.**

**Where there is hatred, let me sow love;
where there is injury, pardon;
where there is doubt, faith;
where there is despair, hope;
where there is darkness, light;
and where there is sadness, joy.**

**O, Divine Master,
grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled as to console;
to be understood as to understand;
to be loved as to love;
for it is in giving that we receive;
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned;
and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life,**

**Saint John Baptist de La Salle
and all you holy Brothers who have gone before us,
help us in our educational ministry
to teach the ways of justice and peace.**

Live Jesus in our hearts. Forever!