

I have done what was mine to do; may Christ teach you what is yours!

St. Francis of Assisi



St. Francis's Transitus is not a death to be remembered but a passage to be entered. What he crossed over from possession to poverty, from fear to fraternity, from isolation to communion is the same passage the Gospel asks of us as we celebrate his 800th Transitus. It's called in our Franciscan tradition, not a funeral, and not a memorial. We call it a Transitus - a 'passing over' from this earthly life to the glory of eternal heaven. We do not participate as an audience, rather, we participate as his brothers and sisters. We enter this sacred time (vigil) and find our way to the Portiuncula (Little Portion), to gather around Francis as he dies, as the early friars once did.

In the life of St. Francis, this "Passing" was a process of continuous conversion toward doing the will of God. After his initial conversion of leaving his family and Assisi, Francis was in a continuous process of discerning God's will in his life. He dedicated himself to the will of God by living, "the present of his life." St. Francis delved into the contemplative prayer depths of his own tradition, as opposed to mere repetition of tired formulas. He sought direction in the mirror of creation rather than intellectual and fabricated ideas. And most radically, he looked to the underside of his society, to the suffering, for an understanding of how God transforms us. He walked the journey himself and thus he could lead others along the path. It was by living the present moment of his life; St. Francis inserted himself into the will of God toward the fullness of life. This meant, dying to his human will and living for God's will. This dialectical experience of life-through-death was revealed to him through the mystery of the Cross, which is the power and wisdom of the Father. Hence, in the life-project of St. Francis, Jesus the Crucified was the only model whom he wanted to imitate as perfectly as possible. And, for he absolutely knew that Jesus is the only secret code to eternal life that he deeply wished and desired.

St. Francis, left this world (Sister Mother Earth) faithfully living what was his to do, "I have done what was mine to do; may Christ teach you what is yours." As his brothers and sisters, we follow the spirit of St. Francis in everything we do and yet we can only do it in the way we ourselves are inspired and guided by the Holy Spirit. We can only change the world insofar as we have changed ourselves. We can only give away who we are and what we have. We can only offer to others what God has done in and for us. Sacred time of Transitus of St. Francis, be a reminder for us to live in communion with God and each other. Let it be an invitation and encouragement to embark on a spiritual pilgrimage; renewing our vocation to live the Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, offering Him to humanity. *Wish you a Blessed Feast of St. Francis of Assisi, our Seraphic Father!*

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