



March 2009

The peace which you proclaim with words must dwell even more abundantly in your hearts. Do not provoke others to anger or give scandal. Rather, let your gentleness draw them to peace, goodness, and concord. This is our vocation: to heal wounds, to bind what is broken, to bring home those who are lost. - Legend of the Three Companions

What a Waste

Prepare for shock and awe (and national embarrassment): According to government sources, roughly 25% of the food Americans buy goes to waste. That's about one pound of food, per American, per day -- thrown in the trash. Sadly we've crossed the line from Land of Plenty to Land of Waste. The best therapy for curing wastefulness is not only free, but it even helps others who really need it. Volunteer one day out of the year at a local food kitchen for the needy, and then see how much food you throw away. The raising, processing, packing, distribution, sale, and waste disposal associated with the food we eat -- or don't eat -- leaves a sasquatch-sized carbon footprint on old Mother Earth. Save your money, save the planet ...



Crisis of Meaning

Western civilization is undergoing a crisis of meaning. We need to grow beyond our false worldview and narrow individualism that is destroying our values and traditions, leaving us empty and afraid.



Bad things and hard times remind us of what really matters. Sometimes adverse situations give us pause from the daily flurry of "normal" life and give us a chance to think about what we're living for. Is there more to life than what I'm living? Is there a higher calling that I should pursue? Am I spending enough time with those I love? When faced with loss, do my priorities make sense?

We can find joy and peace in knowing that we aren't alone, and that we can still turn to God, our "ever-present help in times of trouble" and the true shelter from any storm. I don't know about you, but when I'm faced with tragedy or a fearful situation, it drives me closer to my Franciscan brothers, and to God. In these times I learn what it means to love, to care, to show compassion, to pray, and to encourage. What I need to remember is to have an attitude of unbounded gratefulness toward all of life. This reflects for me whether transformation is real and my life is authentic. Not that I look forward to difficulties, but when they come, I know that even in great "evil" good can result. Realize that any struggle we face on earth is small in comparison to the amazing future God has promised to those who follow him. Become a Franciscan.

Check out the new province web site at www.thefriars.org.

RECOMMENDED READING

[Lent and Easter Wisdom From St. Francis and St. Clare of Assisi](#)
John V. Kruse



Francis and Clare

express their vision of the gospel life. Included in these writings are numerous themes extremely appropriate for the Lenten and Easter seasons: penance, conversion, self-sacrifice, service, embracing the cross, the humility and charity of Christ, joy, new life, and mission. May the words and example of these two great saints inspire us to faithfully follow Christ to the cross so that, together with them, we might experience the joy and new life of Easter. Francis understood that Christ was calling him to serve as an agent of reform in the Church in general. Having abandoned the comfortable life of the Italian merchant class, he embraced a life of radical poverty in order to free himself of anything that would hinder him in his quest to live a life of authentic Christian discipleship.

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