

...A Book for St Francis

SUMMER 2017 UPDATE

"We have been called to heal wounds, to unite what has fallen apart, and to bring home those who have lost their way"

- St Francis of Assisi

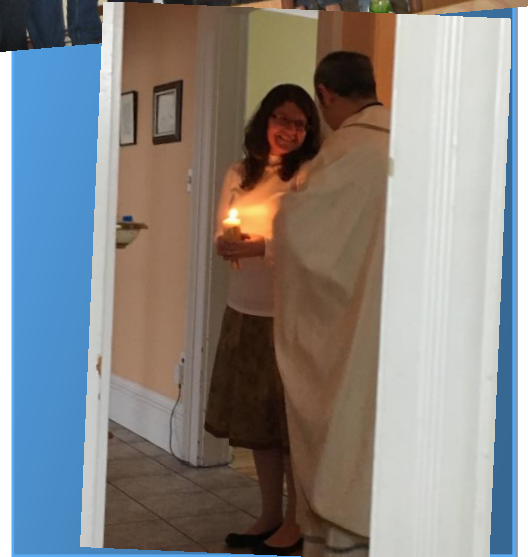


Our only strength, the only meaning of our lives is Christ.

The only thing we want is to be with Him, listening to His Word, dwelling in His Sacramental Presence, which is the Eucharist, through the intercession of His Mother Mary...

He is our Lord, the Beloved of our souls, the One Who shared in our poor humanity and gave Himself out of Love for us; and right now Jesus Christ, the Risen One, shines on us with a splendour like the sun.

Nothing in the whole creation makes sense but Him and to rest our heads on His chest, like the Apostle John did at the Last Supper, listening to the beat of His Sacred Heart.



My dearest brothers and sisters in Christ,

The great blessing of consecration in religious life is to be able to offer the beautiful gifts that we all received from the Lord, so as to allow Christ to live and act through us and within us. I am talking about the three vows (Chastity, Poverty and Obedience) that bind those who consecrate their lives to God and that we can describe as offering as a sacrifice the joy of marriage, the pleasure of using freely and responsibly of the goods of creation, the amazing capability of determining our future according to our own hopes and desires.

To renounce these gifts is a special call that some men and women received in order to be signs of the Presence of Christ. It's a great privilege as it gives us the freedom to live completely dedicated to the Love of God and Love of neighbour. In this is found the deepest joy and the meaning of life. This way of living is called Consecrated Life and it has been part of the Life and Holiness of the Church since the first centuries of the Church.

And yet all the Baptized are also called, in different ways, to live in Chastity, Poverty and Obedience, as Christ first did. All the Baptized are called to look at the gifts of life in a new and special perspective. Through the conversion of our hearts, these gifts change from an opportunity of self-fulfillment and become an oblation to God for His Glory and the good of humanity. Marriage, Property and Self-determination are transformed into the joy of belonging to a person in the sacred bond of love that opens up to the gift of new life; the responsibility of stewardship of creation for the good of the next generations; the self-offering of our lives doing what is good and right according to the Message of the Gospel, contributing to building the Kingdom of God. By God's Grace we are all called to transform these gifts into a New Christian Life, which is the Life of the Gospel, through Faith and Charity.

My greatest desire is that, by the Power of the Holy Spirit, we will be set free from those demands and concerns of our modern world that impose on us an image of humanity that doesn't correspond to the Image of God. I hope that all of us will discover the Infinite Love of Christ and the Joy of belonging to Him, receiving from Him the inspiration and the strength to live the mystery of our lives, walking towards the Father, Who is waiting to embrace us and give us peace.

I thank you for your support towards us as we live this life of our call to consecration. Your prayers and closeness to us help to sustain our community in everything that we do. To give you a short update on what we have been doing this year, here are some highlights of what the brothers and sisters have been engaged in.

St Bonaventure Convent – Rome

Fr Pio is studying Patristics and Fr Christopher is pursuing Biblical Studies.

Br Peter was ordained to the diaconate in October, and he will return home soon for a time of pastoral work before ordination to the priesthood.

Br John and Br Augustine have been studying in Rome for the past three years. Both of them took some time off studying for a time of community and formation.

Fr Roberto was in Rome supporting the community there, and has returned home to Halifax, residing with the contemplative community in San Damiano.

St Francis Convent – Halifax

Fr Francesco continues to serve the Franciscans in his role as moderator of the community and filling in as needed in parishes throughout the diocese.

Fr James continues his work in St Theresa's and St Catherine's parishes, working on giving them energy and life.

Br Grant has devoted himself full time to the ministry of Veritas Books and Gifts this year. The store has had a very successful year, opening a new branch in Truro and moving the flagship store to a new location in Clayton Park, where there are more opportunities to look at new ways to engage in evangelization through this ministry. The new location is 30 Farnham Gate Road.

St Anthony Convent – Dartmouth

Fr Paul has had some health setbacks this year, and we are pleased that he is recovering well. Despite this, he has done very good work at Northwood Manor with the residents there, as well as providing sacramental services around the diocese when needed.

Br Nathanael is continuing his work as administrator of St Anthony Parish with the assistance of Fr Joseph with the sacraments at St Anthony's as well as in other parishes as needed.

St Clare Convent – Herring Cove

Sr Bernadette is working part-time at St John the Baptist Parish and St Patrick Parish and is pursuing studies at Dalhousie in History.

Sr Rita continues to minister at St Theresa's and St Catherine's Parishes.

Sr Teresa has taken on a position at St Peter and St Paul Parish and collaborates with the university chaplaincy at Saint Mary's University.

Sr Edith is working as a pastoral associate with Br Nathanael at St Anthony Parish.

Sr Katie Oster joined the convent this year as a postulant.

St Agnes Convent – Halifax

Sr Gemma is working at the Catholic Pastoral Centre and is studying psychology at Dalhousie University. This year she completed the Diploma in New Evangelization program at the Atlantic School of Theology.

Sr Ilaria completed her Bachelor of Music Degree at Dalhousie this year. For the summer, she has been assisting at the Outreach at St Mary's Cathedral Basilica, as well as at Veritas Bookstore.

Sr Elizabeth and Sr Angela continue their ministry at Veritas, and Sr Angela began studies at Saint Mary's University, working towards a Bachelor of Arts degree.

San Damiano Convent – Musquodoboit Harbour

The Contemplative community of San Damiano experienced a lot of change this year, as Fr Joseph moved to Dartmouth, and Fr Roberto and Br Augustine have gone there to assist Sr Patricia in managing the needs of the community as Sr Therese is sick and has moved to St Agnes Convent, to be closer to the hospital and to receive the assistance of the sisters there in caring for her.

Fr Francesco