

WEEKLY MEDITATION for the 30th Sunday of Ordinary Time

Today's Gospel reading tells us about healing a blind man but it tells us even more about discipleship, about following Jesus. When Bartimaeus was cured he could have gone off to live his own life, forgetting about Jesus. Instead he became an immediate and enthusiastic disciple of Jesus. He followed Jesus along the

road of faith.

From being a mere believer due to his being cured, Bartimaeus became a disciple. *There is a big difference.* His willingness to follow Jesus contrasts with other disciples' frequent misunderstanding and hesitation during the journey to Jerusalem.

Bartimaeus was in darkness

until he met Jesus. We are in darkness when we hate, when we live in error and sin, when we choose evil. Hence, we can sincerely pray the heartfelt prayer of Bartimaeus: "Master, I want to see."

May we see what is truly important in life, and above all, that we may see with the eyes of our Faith.

St. Jerome's Centennial Pilgrimage to Assisi & Rome, Oct. 9-18, 2012



After having a bite to eat (excellent Italian pasta, sausage and other delicious specialties), we checked into our hotel, the Fontabella on the Via Fontabella, in the heart of Assisi's old town. The place is nice and cozy, and the people are very kind. Sometimes it is almost shockingly kind. After refreshing, many of us took our first walk to the Basilica of St. Francis

DAY 1 - Tuesday, Oct. 9 - Umbria - Assisi

After safe overnight flight from Chicago to Rome, our tour guide, Luka, welcomed us at Leonardo da Vinci Airport. We boarded our bus, left Rome, and traveled through the beautiful countryside of Lazio and then the region of Umbria. A light rain is welcoming us, making this morning quite an interesting experience. On both sides of the road, we see small towns and villages with old medieval towns and castles on the top of hills. We stopped at a very cozy place to get the first taste of Italian coffee. *Bellissimo caffè!*

In the heart of Umbria, halfway up the slopes of Mt. Subasio at 420 meters above sea level lies Assisi, a town extraordinarily special, widely known, gentle and a place of soul-searching encounters. The spirit of St. Francis of Assisi can be felt everywhere. It feels that time has stopped since St. Francis, known to the locals as Francesco, left this earthly dwelling in 1226.

Did you know that he was born in 1881 or 1882 to a very rich merchant family? He was training to be a knight, ready to fight, to follow orders and kill others for the sake of local pretensions, but then suddenly this knight's heart was changed. He came back to his home town of Assisi, renounced all of the possessions and wealth that his family had for him, and decided to follow the simple way of Jesus of Nazareth. His story is truly inspirational. I heard today already from the people in our group that they feel the presence of peace and the presence of this simple man we call St. Francis.

and to the Town Square of the old city. Some of the pictures we take tell our story...

DAY 2 - Wednesday, Oct. 10 - Assisi

After breakfast we walked to the Basilica. Fr. Ivan presided over the Mass at the lower level of the church, a place of distinguished spirituality. Following the Mass, our local guide, Claudia, welcomed us in front of the church. We were given radios for quietly hearing her explanations of the Basilica as we walked around this magnificent church. We went to the crypt and then to the even lower chapel where St. Francis is buried. A simple grave, with a Tau sign (the Greek letter resembling a cross). On the side plaque it reads: "Francesco 1182-1226." We said a prayer for our intentions, for the people of St. Jerome and for those in need. We walked up the big staircase to the upper level of the Basilica, where famous frescos by Giotto portray the life of St. Francis. This simple man from Assisi touched so many millions of people with his message of peace and love for Christ in simplicity that it is shocking to feel the presence of peace in this city, in this place today, in our own very time. The Basilica of St. Francis of Assisi rises up today in the place where the Saint had chosen to be buried.

(to be continued...)

— Fr. Joe

This Thursday: All Saints Day, A Special Remembrance

On this day, Thursday, Nov. 1, we remember those who have gone before us to heaven. At the 7 p.m. Mass on Thursday the Marian Society will assist us with special prayers and meditations for our beloved deceased. Please plan on joining us for this time of spiritual remembrance, reflection and healing.



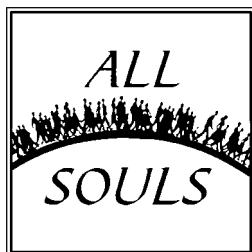
The Marian Society will lead us in a Rosary at 6:30 p.m. before the Mass.

Blessings and prayers at graves at Cemeteries

Thursday, Nov. 1 on All Saints Day, and Friday, Nov. 2 on All Souls' Day, we will visit our beloved deceased's graves at our local cemeteries:

November 1:
St. Mary Cemetery at 10 a.m.

November 2:
Holy Sepulchre Cemetery at 10 a.m.
Resurrection Cemetery at 10 a.m.



See the photos and writings from our just completed Rome-Assisi Pilgrimage

Go to our Parish website: www.stjeromecroatian.org and click on link to our parish's Facebook page. Then,



whether you are a member of Facebook or not, you will be able to see our parish Facebook page and all of the photos and text from our pilgrims!

As Winter Grows Closer, Help Homeless Stay Warmer—Bring Blanket and Coats



Please bring any extra blankets or winter clothing (especially men's coats) that you have to help the homeless and needy in our city.

Also help in our annual fall food drive to assist Chicago food pantries. Please bring your non-perishable food to the box at the church entrance or to the rectory before Thanksgiving Day.



Last chance to pick up a "Spare Change for Babies" baby bottle in the back of the Church. The money collected by emptying your spare change into these bottles adds up, and is used by the Women's Centers of Chicagoland to help moms with crisis pregnancies and their babies, before and after birth. It is beautiful how many thousands of moms and babies have been helped by these Centers! Please return your bottles in November.

- ◆ **St. Jerome's Centennial Day DVDs** — See highlights of the April 29th Mass with Cardinal George and highlights of the Banquet at the Hilton Towers. Available at the Rectory for \$20.
- ◆ **St. Jerome's Centennial Yearbooks** are now available in both soft-cover (\$20) and beautiful hardcover (\$40) versions. If you had an ad in the book, you are entitled to a free soft-cover or a \$20 hardcover book. Enjoy the all the photos & history!
- ◆ **Weight Watchers** meets every Tuesday in the Small Hall behind our church. Join others in choosing a healthy lifestyle when it comes to food and exercise.