

Beyond Baptism

Where the Eucharist Transforms Lives and Hearts.

October 2025

St Francis of Assisi ` Feast Day October 4th



This month we celebrate St. Francis of Assisi. He is best known for the blessing of the animals. But we should be aware he built his ministry based on his belief in the Eucharist.

He learned early on that the Eucharist is the REAL Presence of Jesus Christ. He viewed the Eucharist as the core of his faith. Francis encouraged his followers to treat the Sacrament with the utmost reverence and to pour out their hearts to God in adoration of this sacred mystery.

Francis's View of the Eucharist

Living Presence of Christ:

For Francis, the Eucharist was not merely a symbol but the actual, living Body and Blood of Christ, who was present on the altar just as he was when walking the earth.

Emptiness of Self:

His devotion to the Eucharist was deeply connected to his ideal of poverty and the complete emptying of self. He found his vocation to radical poverty in the presence of the Divine Lord hidden in the bread and wine.

A Call to Relationship:

He understood the Eucharist as an invitation to a deep, personal relationship with God. Receiving the sacrament was not just a ritual but an act of entering into communion with Christ, where both God and the person receive one another totally.

Francis's Actions and Writings

Reverence and Care for Churches:

Francis demonstrated his reverence by ensuring that the Blessed Sacrament was never left in inadequate housing and by emphasizing respect for priests and the sanctity of churches where the Eucharist was celebrated.

Encouragement to His Brothers:

He urged his friars to live in accordance with Christ's teaching to "Do this in memory of me" by receiving the Body and Blood of the Lord with great humility and respect.

Inspiration for His Followers:

In his "Admonitions" and his "Letter to the Entire Order," Francis expressed a fervent belief that all people should recognize and honor the Eucharist, believing that only through humility could one truly embrace the gift of Christ's presence.

Legacy of Eucharistic Devotion

A Spiritual Fire:

Thomas of Celano, a biographer of St. Francis, noted that the saint "burned with a love that came from his whole being" for the Eucharist and sought to spread this intense adoration to others.

Franciscan Way of Life:

His Eucharistic spirituality was so central that it formed the foundation of the Franciscan spiritual life, inspiring devotion to the Blessed Sacrament that continues to burn in the hearts of his followers centuries later.

Miracle at Assisi

In, 1240 during the Crusades, Emperor Frederick II sent Saracen mercenaries (muslims) to attack Assisi as part of a conflict with Pope Innocent IV. These mercenaries were stationed at the convent of San Damiano, threatening Saint Clare and the other nuns. The sisters heard them approaching as they climbed over the walls to attack. They quickly ran to St. Clare who was the Abbess. Bedridden for being sick, she quickly got up and picked up a “pyx” with the Eucharist in it, (some stories say a Monstrance). She prayed to Christ to protect her. Suddenly a voice came out and said *“I will always protect you”* She then asked to protect her sisters and the city of Assisi who loved Jesus dearly.

She approached the window and held up the Eucharist. As the invaders looked up they appeared frightened and turned around and left the city. We will never know what frightened them to leave but apparently they all either felt something or saw something to make them change their minds.

St Clare instructed the sisters that the voice they heard was not to be proclaimed til after she died.

This story was written by Thomas of Celano who was a Franciscan Friar and alive at the time.

St Clare’s love and devotion to the Eucharist allowed her to be brave enough to approach the window, she had a personal relationship with Christ.

The Little Sisters of the Poor celebrate this Miracle and call it “Covenant Day” on June 22 to commemorate a miraculous event.

For more information, or to volunteer contact us at info@beyondbaptism.com

A note from the Co-Founder Debbie Mastroeni

I hope you enjoy the newsletter each month, as much as our team does researching and writing them.

We find the belief, love, and devotion that the Saints had for the Eucharist truly inspiring. Through their example, they remind us to seek a deep, personal relationship with Christ, just as they did. Of course, their world was not free of challenges—though they did not face the constant distractions of television, phones, business travel, or busy family schedules, they endured their own hardships, including brutal wars, famine, and illness without the benefit of modern medicine.

For over 2000 years the church and Christ want one thing from us, to have a personal relationship with Him. What a gift! Beyond Baptism hopes that we continue to reach more of you and soften and open your hearts to the Lord. It makes a world of difference in each of us. Accept Him as we receive in Mass and be alone with Him in Adoration. The more you are with Jesus the more you will have a sense of Peace that we all deserve.

On a personal note, I have been in formation for over 3 years to become a Secular Franciscan and on October 4th I was professed. St Francis was told by Christ “Go rebuild my church”, I take that very seriously. it was easy to say yes to the profession. When Rich came to me with Beyond Baptism, you can imagine my heart was filled with Joy. what a great way to rebuild the church.

Each of our leaders, volunteers and of course our Priests continue to encourage us to continue our ministry.

This year, we have been highlighting the Eucharistic Miracles that we will soon visit on our pilgrimage to Italy, departing on October 20th. As a Secular Franciscan, I am especially grateful that we will be spending time in Assisi—an experience I am deeply excited for. Please know that we will keep all of you in our prayers throughout the journey. If you have any special intentions, feel free to email me at info@beyondbaptism.com, and we will gladly lift them up in prayer.