

OCTOBER 4, 2019
Memorial of St. Francis of Assisi
Lk. 10: 13-16

GOD'S PRESENCE IN VERY ORDINARY, UNSPECTACULAR WAYS.

What if Jesus were here to visit us today, what would he say to us and our community? How would we respond if he issue a warning like what He did to Chorazin and Bethsaida? What is the reason why Jesus was upset with these communities? The word woe is also translated as alas, sadly, unfortunately. All His life, Jesus always showed God's mighty works had for His people. Chorazin and Bethsaida experienced this and blessed with the visitation of God through Jesus Christ. But these people did not appreciate and welcome the significance of Jesus among them, they were unconcerned to His healing ministry, and don't take Him completely. Jesus chastises them for doing nothing!

My brothers and sisters, sometimes we can be like them. We fail to see how the Lord our God is changing us. God's presence among us is expressed in very ordinary, unspectacular ways. It takes the form of an unexpected kindness from someone, an offer and encouragement that we had not expected, a word of gratefulness, admiration or support at a time when it was needed, and sometimes to a positive, generous response to a request we make. Our Lord is present to us in and through each other. He is gracing us in different ways even if we don't notice His presence, His love and His care. So, my brothers and sisters, before we retire in the evening, let us always look back over the day and give thanks to God for all the blessings we received everyday.

This is what happened to Giovanni di Bernardone (1181-1226), who was nicknamed Francesco ("the Frenchman") by his father Pietro, as his mother was French. As a young man Francesco lived the life of a troubador and planned to fight for Assisi as a soldier. But in 1204 he had a vision that redirected his life; on a pilgrimage to Rome, he joined some poor people begging at Saint Peter's Basilica and resolved from then on to live in poverty and simplicity in the service of Christ and the Church. He began preaching in the streets, and soon gathered an Order, later called Franciscans, that followed this evangelical lifestyle. With Saint Clare of Assisi he also founded the Poor Clares, an enclosed religious order for women, as well as a confraternity, the Third Order, for laypeople. In 1219, he tried to convert the Sultan to put an end to the Crusades. Once his Order was authorized by the Pope, he withdrew from external affairs to a life of austerity and prayer. In 1224, he received the stigmata, and bore in his body the wounds of Christ's Passion. Association of Catholic Priests in Ireland

Let us ask the intercession of St. Francis of Assisi that we may recognized our Lord most especially in ordinary things and always thank Him for the beautiful creation He made for us. St. Francis of Assisi pray for us. Amen.