

THE KNIGHTS' *Journal*

SPRING 2026 NEWSLETTER



FRANCISCAN BROTHERS • KNIGHTLY SERVICE • RADICAL LOVE • FOR GOD AND THE CHURCH



UNITED WITH BISHOP CONLEY, THE KNIGHTS TOOK PART IN A PRO-LIFE EUCHARISTIC PROCESSION AROUND PLANNED PARENTHOOD. BRINGING THE PRESENCE OF OUR LORD INTO THE PUBLIC SQUARE AND WITNESSING TO THE SANCTITY OF LIFE.



**KNIGHTS of the
HOLY EUCHARIST**

CHRISTUS IN CORDIS TEMPLO
7303 N. 112TH ST., WAVERLY, NEBRASKA 68462
KNIGHTS.ORG

Under the Mantle of Mary



Br. Athanasius Mary, KHE



Simply believing in the existence of God is not exactly what I would call a commitment. Believing has to change the way we live.
-Mother Mary Angelica

When we seek healing or comfort, whom do we usually turn to first? Very often, we turn to our mothers. There is something about a mother's care that brings reassurance and peace. In the spiritual life, it is much the same. We can confidently turn to Our Blessed Mother, who lovingly intercedes for us and accompanies us in the midst of our trials.

Mary always leads us to her Son. Like a loving mother, she cares for us in a way that reflects God's own tenderness. What greater path to healing could there be than being brought before Jesus Himself? Through her maternal care, Our Lady gently places us before the Lord, trusting in His mercy and love.

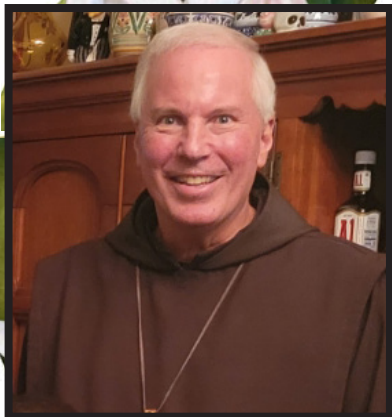
One prayer we can turn to is a simple request that Our Lady be a mother to us in the present moment. We ask her to wrap us in the mantle of her protection and to bring us before the throne of the Divine Child Jesus, lovingly laying us at His feet. We can ask, if it is God's holy will, that Jesus touch our hearts and heal any emotional wounds we may have gathered throughout the course of our lives.

This prayer is one we can often offer not only for ourselves, but for anyone who asks for prayers. In this way we can be inspired by the example of Teresa of Calcutta. When she encountered someone sick in the streets of Calcutta, she would pray simply, "Blessed Mother, be a mother to this person now." Mother Teresa often said that this prayer never failed her. We can also adopt this prayer in our own devotional life.

When we bring our needs before Jesus through Mary, it is important that we always pray for God's will to be done. We surrender the situation to Him completely, whatever the outcome may be. Whether the result appears positive or difficult in our eyes, we entrust everything to God's wisdom and love. This surrender is an act of deep trust, and God always honors such trust, even if His answer comes in ways we do not expect.

If you are struggling with sickness, emotional burdens, or any trial in life, know that you are not alone. We hold you in prayer and stand with you in the midst of your difficulties. By loving Mary, we show our love for Jesus as well, for devotion to the Mother always leads us closer to the Son.

Entrust yourself to the maternal care of Our Lady. Ask her to take you and your intentions before the throne of Jesus. As the loving mother she truly is, she will bring your needs to Him with great tenderness. So, whatever God's will may be, we can always say with faith and gratitude: Praise God.



Mary as Mother Duck



Br. Athanasius Mary, KHE

Sometimes, analogies are the best way to get someone's attention and to reorient them in life, and I've found this to be true in the spiritual life as well. My sister sent me a video of her being followed by a bunch of ducklings, and it looked like the ducklings mistook her for their mother. After watching that video, I began thinking about Mary and the image of her as a mother duck. The mother duck will always lead her young toward food and shelter, and Mary, being who she is, will lead all of God's children to the food and shelter of our souls, namely Jesus, and particularly the Eucharist.

Ducklings will always follow their mother closely because if they don't, they will be lost and unable to survive on their own. The same thing can happen to us in the spiritual life; if we lose track of Our Lady, we can look for substitutes to fill that role. This can come in many different forms, such as using technology as an escape rather than as a tool, or using substances to flee from reality.

The things of the world are not bad in and of themselves; it is only when these things are used as a replacement for actual relationships that they become problematic. The problematic element can occur either in using things to take the place of God or other people, and neither outcome is good. Our replacement "mother duck" can seem all well and good on the outside, but it can take us to places that God would not want us to go.

Within the history of the Church, Mary has had many titles, and the closest title to this analogy is "Mary, Star of the Sea." Before navigational systems, sailors would have to rely on the stars to guide them to safety, and they would often look to the "North Star" as a way to get their bearings and figure out where they needed to go. Both the North Star and the mother duck

can be viewed as guides to lead one back to God.

In the case of the ducklings, the "stand in mother" can seem like a legitimate source of guidance, but we need to always make sure that the mother is pointing true North. If the maternal guide in question is not Mary, then the "replacement mother duck" may not have your best interests at heart. Since Mary always leads God's children to her Son, she is the surest guide we could have in this case. In all of life's circumstances, we need to keep our eyes fixed on God. Mary helps us do this. Our task is to be like ducklings and follow where she leads. Mary will lead us to the Eucharist and to an ever deeper encounter with Our Lord Jesus Christ. Mary is our North Star and our Mother who leads us safely into the harbor of Christ.

From our outreach coordinator



My name is Stacy Lehmann and for the past 13 years I have had the privilege of serving alongside the brothers in support of the mission entrusted to them. Many of you may already recognize my name, as I have had the opportunity to correspond with you by phone, email, or letter over the years. While much of my work takes place behind the scenes, it has been a true blessing to connect with so many of you who support and share in this mission.

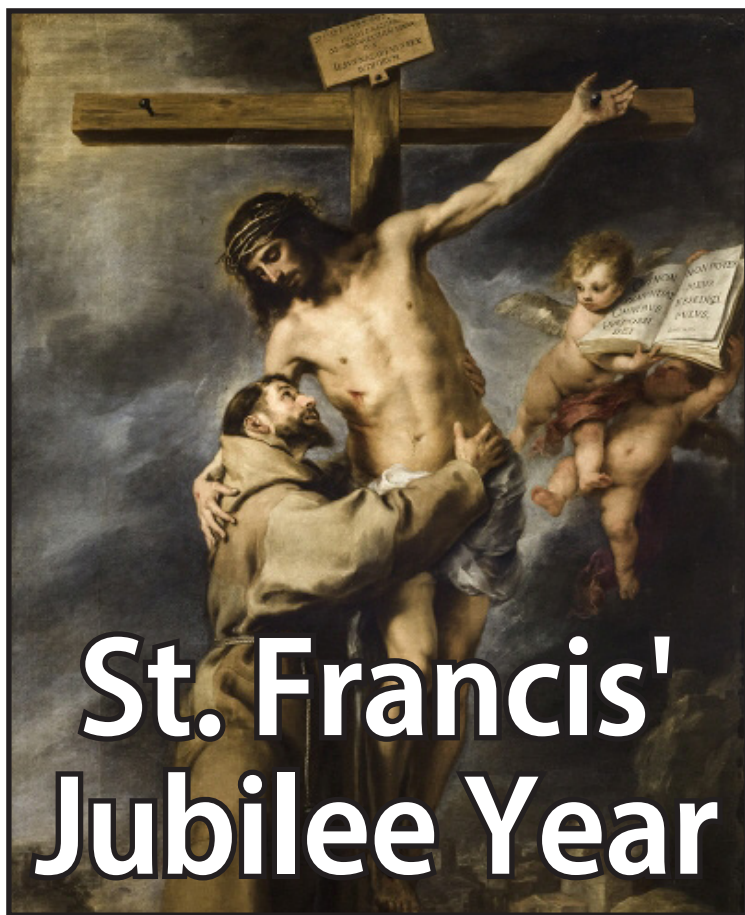
As the outreach coordinator, I assist with communications, respond to inquiries, and help ensure that those who reach out are welcomed and cared for. It is a joy to play a small part in the work God is doing through those called to religious life.

If you have any questions, needs, or would like to connect, I can be reached at 256-297-3011 or by email at knightsinfo@gmail.com. I am always happy to assist.

Thank you for your generosity, your prayers, and your continued support of the brothers. I hope to hear from you soon! May God richly bless you,

Stacy





Br. Maximilian Maria, KHE

This year the Church is celebrating the Jubilee Year of St. Francis of Assisi. We commemorate the eight-hundredth anniversary of his passing into eternal life in 1226. Jubilees in the life of the Church are not merely historical commemorations. They are sacred seasons of grace, invitations to renewal, repentance, and a deeper encounter with the mercy of God.

For those who follow the Franciscan spirit, this Jubilee holds a special significance. It calls us to look again at the life of St. Francis and rediscover the beauty of the Gospel as he lived it: simply, joyfully, and completely surrendered to Christ. St. Francis desired to follow Jesus faithfully through humility, love of the poor, reverence for creation, and deep devotion to the Lord in the most Blessed Sacrament. He became a radiant witness to the transforming power of the Gospel.

This Jubilee Year invites us to enter that same path of renewal.

Throughout the history of the Church, Jubilee Years have been celebrated as special times when the faithful are called to conversion of heart and reconciliation with God. They are moments when the Church opens wide the treasury of grace and encourages all the faithful to return to the Lord with renewed devotion.

During this Franciscan Jubilee, the Church invites us to contemplate the life and example of St. Francis in a deeper way. By reflecting on his love for Christ and imitating his virtues, we are drawn closer to the heart of the Gospel.

The Church also offers the faithful the opportunity to obtain a plenary indulgence during this Jubilee under the usual conditions: sacramental confession, reception of Holy Communion, prayer for the intentions of the Holy Father, and sincere detachment from sin.

Pilgrimage to churches connected with the Franciscan tradition or time spent in prayer and reflection can be ways of receiving this grace, calling us to an interior renewal, a deeper love for Christ, and a more faithful way of living the Gospel.

At the center of St. Francis' life was a profound love and reverence for the Holy Eucharist. For St. Francis, the mystery of Christ present on the altar filled him with great awe and wonder. He often spoke with deep emotion about the humility of God who chooses to remain with us under the simple appearance of bread.

"O sublime humility! O humble sublimity! That the Lord of the whole universe, God and the Son of God, should humble Himself like this and hide under the form of a little bread for our salvation."

These words reveal the heart of St. Francis. He saw the Eucharist as the greatest sign of God's love: Christ giving Himself entirely to His people. Because of this, St. Francis encouraged reverence for the Mass and for the sacred vessels used in the liturgy. He urged priests and the faithful to approach the Eucharist with humility, gratitude,

and deep devotion.

For St. Francis, the Eucharist was not only something to be adored. It was the source of his strength and joy. In the Eucharist, he encountered the living Christ, and from that encounter flowed his compassion for the poor, his love for creation, and his peace of heart.

As we celebrate this Jubilee Year, we too are invited to rediscover the Eucharist as the center of our lives, the place where Christ gives Himself completely to us.

Alongside his devotion to the Eucharist, St. Francis held a deep and tender love for the Blessed Virgin Mary. He honored her as the Mother of the Lord and as the perfect model of discipleship. He loved to reflect on Mary's humility, her quiet "yes" to God that made the Incarnation possible. In her willingness to receive the Word of God into her life, St. Francis saw the perfect example of what every Christian is called to become: a soul open to God's grace.

For St. Francis, Mary always led the faithful closer to Christ. Her humility, simplicity, and trust in God were virtues he sought to imitate throughout his life. During this Jubilee Year, we can follow his example by entrusting ourselves to Our Lady, asking her to guide us more deeply into the mystery of her Son.

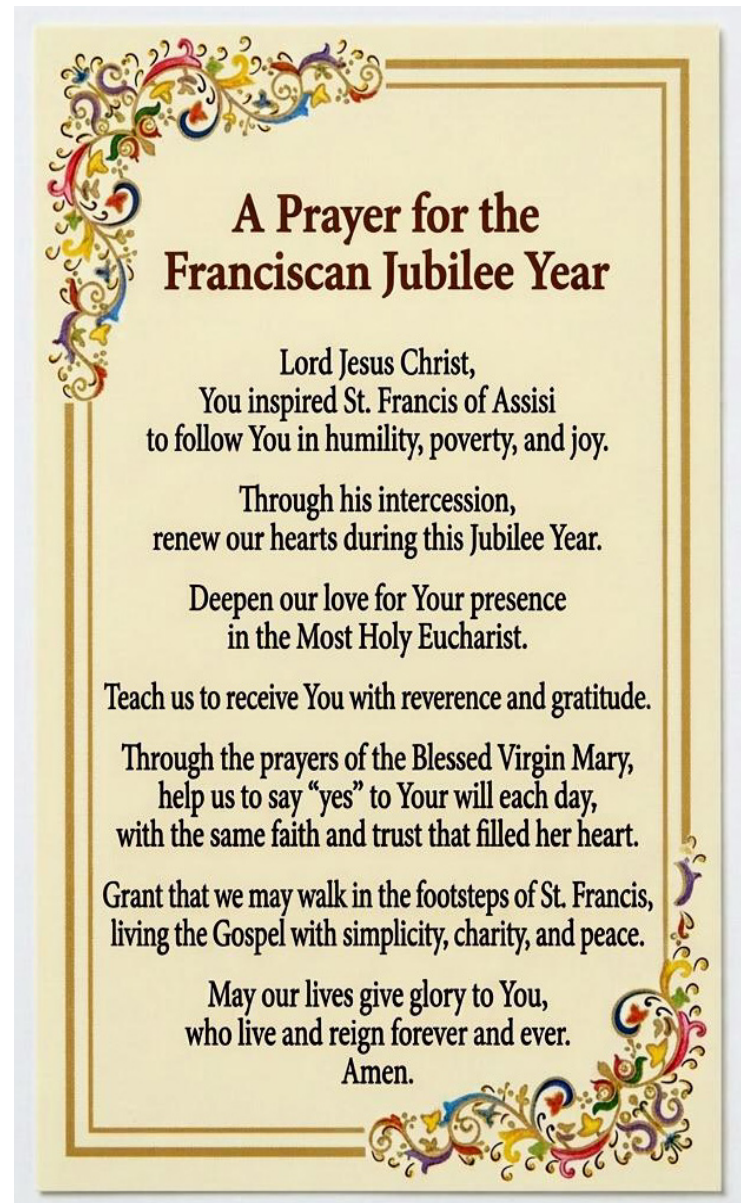
The celebration of this Jubilee Year is meant to touch our daily lives. St. Francis teaches us that holiness is found in faithfulness. His example reminds us that every moment can become an offering to God when it is lived with love.

Let us renew our spiritual lives in simple ways during this Jubilee Year by participating more deeply in the Holy Mass, spending time in Eucharistic adoration, receiving the Sacrament of Reconciliation more regularly, praying the Rosary and entrusting our intentions to Mary, performing acts of mercy and charity to those in need, and seeking peace and reconciliation within our families and communities.

These quiet acts of faith allow the spirit of St. Francis to live again in our own time.

The beauty of the Franciscan way is its simplicity. St. Francis did not give us complicated programs or grand plans. Instead, he invited his followers to live the Gospel with sincerity and joy. He believed that when a person truly encounters Christ, the heart is transformed. From that transformation flows love, humility, and peace.

Eight centuries after his passing, the witness of St. Francis continues to inspire the Church. His life reminds us that holiness is possible for every person who opens their heart to the grace of God. This Jubilee Year gives us an opportunity to pause, reflect, and begin again. May we take this time to deepen our love for the Eucharist, to grow in devotion to Our Lady, and to renew our desire to follow Christ with the joyful simplicity that marked the life of St. Francis.



To Die Like a Thief

*Reflection on: Matthew, Judas, and the
Choice We All Face at Calvary*



David Waldinger (postulant), KHE

On one hand, we see a thief. On the other hand, another thief. Two men, two crosses, two very different endings. They are two sides of the same coin: the coin of sinners.

We know the story of Calvary. As far as we know, only one of the thieves crucified beside Jesus received Christ's promise of paradise that day. Dismas, the repentant thief, sometimes called the thief who stole Heaven. The other thief remains unnamed in Scripture.

But what if there were more thieves present on Calvary than just those two? What if there were also those who asked Jesus to remember them, and those who asked nothing of Him? Those who turned toward Him, and those who turned inward on themselves?

In this reflection, two other men deserve our attention: Matthew and Judas. Both were chosen as apostles. Both were sinners. Both were close to Christ. Yet their stories show us two very different responses to grace.

Matthew was a tax collector before he followed Jesus. In his time, tax collectors were viewed as traitors to their own people because they worked with the Roman occupiers. Many enriched themselves by collecting more than required. Because of this, they were often treated as social outcasts. To many, Matthew would have been considered not only a thief, but a collaborator.

Yet when Jesus said two simple words, "Follow

me," Matthew immediately left everything behind.

What is striking is what Scripture does not tell us. We do not hear of Matthew returning to his old life. We do not hear of repeated failures like Peter's denial, Thomas's doubt, or the ambition of James and John. Instead, we see quiet fidelity. The man once known for taking becomes a man who gives his life to proclaiming the Gospel.

Pope Benedict XVI once reflected that the Good News is precisely this: that God offers His grace to sinners. Matthew's life demonstrates this beautifully. A man once considered among the worst is given the opportunity to become a witness to Christ. Someone believed in him. Someone saw more than his past.

In this way, Matthew resembles the good thief. Both turned toward Jesus. Both accepted mercy. Both allowed grace to redefine their story.

Judas presents a much more tragic contrast.

Like Matthew, Judas was chosen. Like Matthew, he lived close to Jesus. Unlike Matthew, he allowed something else to take root in his heart. The Gospels suggest motives ranging from greed to disappointment to darker spiritual influences. Whatever the combination of causes, Judas ultimately betrayed Christ.

**"What kind of sinner
will I be? The one who
turns toward mercy,
or the one who turns
inward in despair?"**

What makes his story so painful is that he did feel remorse. Scripture tells us he admitted his sin, even returning the silver he had been paid. Yet instead of turning toward mercy, he turned toward despair. This is the critical difference.

Peter also sinned gravely by denying Christ. But Peter returned. Judas despaired. One trusted in mercy. The other trusted only in his own judgment of himself.

Judas resembles the other thief on Calvary. Both were close enough to see Jesus. Both were suffering the consequences of their choices. Yet neither fully entrusted themselves to Him.

This reveals something uncomfortable about the human heart. Sometimes we approach God more for what He can do than for who He is. The bad thief asked to be saved from suffering. Judas may have hoped for a Messiah who would fulfill his expectations. Both struggled to see Christ for who He truly was.

The good thief, however, did something different. He simply said: "Jesus, remember me." He did not demand rescue from the cross. He did not negotiate. He simply entrusted himself to Christ. And that was enough.

If we are honest, we can probably see ourselves in all three of these men. Like Matthew, we are called away from our old lives. Like Judas, we sometimes feel the weight of our failures. Like the thieves, we all must decide how we will respond to Christ when we encounter Him in our suffering.

The question is not whether we are sinners. That part is already settled. The real question is what kind of sinner we will be. Will we be the sinner who turns toward mercy? Or the sinner who turns inward in despair?

Calvary shows us something remarkable. Jesus allowed Himself to be placed between both kinds of thieves. He did not distance Himself from sinners. He placed Himself among them. And He still does.

Every time we come to Mass, we stand spiritually at Calvary. The same mercy offered to Dismas is offered to us. The same invitation given to Matthew is given to us. Even the tragedy of Judas reminds us of the danger of losing hope in God's mercy.

The lesson is simple, even if it is difficult to live:

It is possible to be a sinner and a saint in the making. It is possible to fall and still return. It is possible to die like a thief... and still enter paradise. The difference is whether we are willing to turn toward Jesus and ask to be remembered. Because the great comfort of the Gospel is this:

Long before we remember God, He already remembers us.

"Every Mass places us at Calvary. The same mercy offered to the good thief is offered to us."



What are Gregorian Masses?



The Holy Mass is the greatest prayer of the Church and the most powerful way to ask God's mercy for the souls of the faithful departed. One beautiful Catholic tradition is the offering of Gregorian Masses, a series of 30 Masses celebrated on 30 consecutive days, for one deceased person. This practice dates back to the sixth century and is associated with Gregory the Great, who encouraged this devotion after learning that a monk for whom thirty Masses had been offered was freed from purgatory after death. Because of this tradition, Gregorian Masses have long been regarded as a great act of charity for a loved one who has passed away. Each Mass is offered for one specific soul, asking the Lord in His mercy to welcome that person into the fullness of eternal life.

Through the work of the Catholic Near East Welfare Association (cnewa.org), these Masses are celebrated by priests serving in mission territories. When the faithful request Gregorian Masses, their offering not only provides prayer for the deceased but also helps support missionary priests and their ministries throughout the world. In this way, requesting Gregorian Masses becomes a beautiful double gift: a prayer of love for the faithful departed and support for priests serving the Church in places of great need. If you would like to request Gregorian Masses for a loved one, please scan the QR code below or contact them using the phone number provided.

Toll-Free: (800) 442-6392

