

Feast of St. Bonaventure Prayer Service

*"In everything, whether it is a thing SENSED or a thing KNOWN, God is hidden within."
(Bonaventure)*

Centering

The Journey by S. Briana McCarthy, OSF

Francis of Assisi
Clare of Assisi
Bonaventure of Paris

Three mystics
Three thirteen century saints
Who shared a vision with the world
They saw all of creation
As a relational mirror
Reflecting prayerfully
The "Altissimo"
Almighty, Most Holy
Most high and supreme God
All good
Totally good
Highest good.

They experienced all of creation
As sisters
As brothers
All birthed from the womb
Of the Triune God of Love.

And they were transformed beings
Who sang with their lives:
All praise,
All Glory,
All Grace,
All Honor,
And all Good . . . Be . . . Forever

Reading from Bonaventure

Acknowledging Jesus

If good things are so pleasant even when enjoyed singly, imagine how delightful beyond delight that Good must be which contains the delightfulness of all goods! If life created is so precious, imagine how enrapturing must be Life All-creating! If salvation is our best end as an acquired state, how transporting must be Salvation Itself, the Author of all deliverance!...

What will a person have who possesses that Good, and what will she not have? Assuredly, she will have everything that satisfies her, and nothing that displeases.

Why, then, servant of God, do you wander so far, seeking delights for your body and mind? Love one single Good in which all goods are found, and that will suffice; desire simple Good, which is all good, and that will be enough....The more we love God here, the more we shall enjoy God there.

Therefore, love God much in this life, and you shall enjoy God much in the next; let the love of God increase in you now, so that you may have then the fullness of God's joy. This is the truth to be pondered in your mind, proclaimed by your tongue, loved in your heart, expressed by your lips; your soul should hunger, your body thirst, your whole substance crave for nothing but this until you enter the joy of your God, until you are clasped in your Lover's arms, until you are led into the chamber of your beloved Spouse who, with the Father and the Holy Spirit, lives and reigns, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Reflection

John Denver and Bonaventure: How could they be connected?

John Denver, songwriter, wrote a song entitled: "Annie's Song" for his wife. It appears that John was influenced by Bonaventure, not consciously, but in the Spirit world.

Bonaventure focused on the FIVE SENSES: Sight, Smell, Taste, Touch, and Hearing. He described how Francis came to his deep love of Jesus, the Christ, through his five senses. Francis and Bonaventure experienced the Goodness and Wonderment of God in creation.

Bonaventure is known as the "Love Doctor." He wrote about God's love in Francis' life. He said, "Francis, it became clear to me how God gifted you with a deep desire and passionate flame for Christ. You mirrored the crucified Christ, in your body" (sacred wounds).

Bonaventure asked for three gifts: GRACE, DESIRE, and PRAYER. He also asked to become FIRE, the passionate love of Christ. John sang, "You fill up my senses, come fill me again." Bonaventure, centered in the senses, knew the mystical realms when he said: "The fire that inflames totally and carries one into God . . . THIS FIRE IS GOD." John and Bonaventure experienced both human and Divine Love.

Song

Annie's Song by John Denver
(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RNOTF-znQyw>)

You fill up my senses like a night in the forest, like the mountains in springtime,
like a walk in the rain, like a storm in the desert, like a sleepy blue ocean.
You fill up my senses, come fill me again.

Come let me love you, let me give my life to you, let me drown in your laughter,
let me die in your arms, let me lay down beside you, let me always be with you.
Come let me love you, come love me again.

Quiet Reflection

Take a few minutes to reflect on your experiences of human and Divine Love.

Prayer

“May my heart ever hunger after and feed upon Thee,
Whom the angels desire to look upon,
and may my inmost soul be filled with the sweetness of Thy savor;
may it ever thirst for Thee, the fountain of life,
the fountain of wisdom and knowledge,
the fountain of eternal light, the torrent of pleasure,
the fullness of the house of God;
may it ever compass Thee, seek Thee, find Thee, run to Thee,
come up to Thee, meditate on Thee, speak of Thee,
and do all for the praise and glory of Thy name,
with humility and discretion, with love and delight,
with ease and affection, with perseverance to the end;
and be Thou alone ever my hope,
my entire confidence, my riches, my delight, my pleasure,
my joy, my rest and tranquility, my peace, my sweetness,
my food, my refreshment, my refuge, my help,
my wisdom, my portion, my possession, my treasure;
in Whom may my mind and my heart be ever fixed
and firm and rooted immovably. Amen.” (Bonaventure)

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