



Hope in Focus

October 19, 2025

*Every mystic lives in a radically different world than the one we take for granted.
Francis saw the same sorts of objects and events we see. He just organized them differently.
Or - more accurately said - he discovered the world to have a different organization and
to require a different sort of response than the world inhabited by the rest of us.*

*His bodily and mental experimentation altered his consciousness
so that the world of everyday dissolved into a sacred universe:*

*God's world, the kingdom of heaven, the land- and mindscape revealed by Jesus. . . .
Francis did not so much imitate the things Jesus did as discover for himself through relentless experimentation
how the cosmos of Jesus could be established and lived in thirteenth century Italy.*

John Ryan Haule, The Ecstasies of St. Francis: The Way of Lady Poverty

Praying with Francis

"Most High and Glorious God" (The Prayer of St. Francis of Assisi)

*Most high and glorious God,
Lighten the darkness of heart and mind.
Let Wisdom lead me to you,
That I may live for love of your love.
Most high and glorious God,
Grant me true faith, certain hope, and pure love.
That I may follow you,
And carry out your holy command.
My God and my all. My God and my all. My God and my all.*

Walking with St. Francis of Assisi

John Ryan Haule

In the first phase of his life, when he was 'in sin,' Francis was driven by a fear of narcissistic crisis. He was running from shame. The second stage began when he tried to redirect his course through biblical experiments but discovered that shame was still the obstacle. Here, he tried to outsmart shame by choosing foreign locales for his experiments. The third stage of his life, the point he describes as 'leaving the world,' began with a crucial reversal of his mindset. Instead of trying to run from shame or outsmart it, he took shame as his advisor. He found that deeply disturbing narcissistic emotions were always located at cross-over points between the worlds, just where most of us turn tail and run. It is terrifying to contemplate the dissolution of the self I have always known as well as the world it has constructed. But for a new world and a new self to come into existence, the old must disintegrate. In his confrontation with shame, Francis discovered he had to allow his 'sinful' self and the 'sinful' world to fall apart and disappear so that a new experimental self could assemble itself in the sacred cosmos.

Offering Ourselves

"As Above So Below"

*As above, so below. On the earth as in the heavens,
Till your kingdom comes in love, so below as above.
As in Christ, so in me. Born beloved of the Father,
Called to selfless sacrifice, So in me as in Christ.*

*Far beyond the struggles of each moment,
There is hope for those who believe.
Hope that lifts our spirits up to heaven,
Hope that helps our hearts to perceive.*

Contemplating a Psalm

adapted from Psalm 18, Nan Merrill

*You give me freedom to choose the journey road;
I elect the narrow way.
For I pursued my fears and faced them;
and did not run back until I was free.
I saw each one through,
so that they were not able to rise;
they were transformed by love,
For you enabled me with strength to look deep within;
holding me when fears threatened to overwhelm me.*

Expanding Our View

"Things Unseen"

*Life is more than all we see,
Faith is more than all we know.
For we hope in things unseen,
Trusting God to help us grow.
God help us see what we're blind to,
Hear the cries we ignore.
See beyond just this moment,
To the glory in store.
Grant us faith in the darkness,
In the cold of the night,
To see goodness and light.*

Welcoming Prayer

*Sensing
Welcoming
Surrendering
Experiencing Joy*

Song of Response

"Let Nothing Disturb You" (The Prayer of St. Teresa of Avila)

*Let nothing disturb you,
Let nothing frighten you,
All things are passing away.
God never changes.
Patience obtains all things,
Whoever has God lacks nothing;
God alone suffices.*

Centering in the Silence

During these minutes of silence, simply rest in God's abiding and loving presence in this moment. You are in God and God is in you. Just be and relax. Center your attention in your heart and imagine your breath flowing in and out from your heart area. If it helps you to center, use a sacred prayer word to help you descend into this silence (such as Abba, Spirit, Jesus, Beloved, Light, or Love) or use Francis' own mantra and breath prayer, "My God" (*inhale*) "and my all!" (*exhale*)

Moving to the Table

"Most High and Glorious God" (The Prayer of St. Francis of Assisi)

*Most high and glorious God,
Lighten the darkness of heart and mind.
Let Wisdom lead me to you,
That I may live for love of your love.
Most high and glorious God,*

*Grant me true faith, certain hope, and pure love.
That I may follow you,
And carry out your holy command.
My God and my all.
My God and my all.
My God and my all.*

Receiving Holy Communion

Expanding Our View

"Things Unseen"

*Life is more than all we see,
Faith is more than all we know.
For we hope in things unseen,
Trusting God to help us grow.
God help us see what we're blind to,
Hear the cries we ignore.
See beyond just this moment,
To the glory in store.
Grant us faith in the darkness,
In the cold of the night,
To see goodness and light.*

Receiving a Good Word



Our Staff

Haley Brown – Associate Director of The Anchor House

Courtney Garrison – Ministry Assistant

Christian Ibanez – AV Production

Peter Johns – Associate Director of Contemplative Worship

Zachary Montasser – Violinist

Nick Cavazos – AV Production

Rev. Rachel Sciretti – Associate Pastor

Rev. Dr. Michael Sciretti, Jr. – Pastor of The Center

Quartet

Allie Waguespak – Soprano, **Krista Pape** – Alto, **Dallas Gray** – Tenor, **Nathan Holmes** – Baritone

Today's Music

'Most High and Glorious God' – Peter Johns, *'As Above, So Below'* – Peter Johns,

'Things Unseen' – Peter Johns, *'Let Nothing Disturb You'* – Peter Johns

For information about The Center for Christian Spirituality and upcoming events, visit:

www.TheCenterFCS.org.

Please register your presence in the notebooks in the foyer.

Centering Prayer

Immediately following worship | The Chapel

Worship Response

10:00 a.m. | The Anchor House

SoulCollage® Workshop: Honoring Our Wisdom Keepers

Sunday, October 19 | The Anchor House | 1:00 – 4:00 p.m. | \$20

As we near the time of All Saints Day in the church, we will gather to create cards for our Wisdom Keepers, persons who have influenced and changed our lives with their presence. We honor those who are living and remember those who have journeyed into eternal life. Wisdom Keepers can be people we know and love OR can be Saints from history that have influenced our spiritual journey. Join us for this special time of SoulCollage. For more details and to register use the QR Code here.



Yoga at The Center: A Posture of Prayer

Monday, October 20 | The Anchor House | 6:00 – 7:00 p.m. | \$10 per class

In this course, led by Jonathan Mangrum, we will use the practice of yoga as a lens to explore what it means to embody spirituality. Each class will include time engaging in breath work, meditation, yoga postures, and poses.



Poetry Circle

Tuesday, October 28 | The Anchor House | 6:30 – 8:00 p.m.

Join us for the next meeting of the Poetry Circle with Mark Jodon. The Center's poetry circle will share and critique our poems, explore poetic forms and devices, try our hands at writing prompts, and grow together in fellowship and community. This circle is for anyone who loves poetry, no matter your writing experience level. For more information, contact Mark Jodon at MJodon@littler.com

November Guided Silent Retreat: The Feast of All Souls and All Saints

Saturday, November 1 | The Anchor House | 9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. | \$35

For November's guided silent retreat, we will personally explore the Feasts of All Saints and All Souls. We ask that you consider bringing an icon or picture of a person who has been a "saint" for you – whether they are officially recognized by the Church as a saint and have an icon written of them, or if they are one of your personal "saints" that have radiated the light of Christ to you. For more details and to register scan the QR code here.



The Anchor House Hours

Tuesdays – Fridays | Noon - 4pm

The Anchor House is open in the afternoons for you to come and pray, meditate, walk the Labyrinth or just be still. If you would like to request a specific room for spiritual direction, counseling or for your own time of retreat outside of these hours, please let Haley know and we will make sure a room is available for you.

Holding One Another in the Light

As our commitment to one another deepens, we want to be able to pray for one another – bearing burdens and joining in celebrations. Here is how to participate:

1. Make a request for prayer or thanksgiving using the QR link or go to thecenterfcs.org
2. Opt in to receive the weekly prayer list by emailing Rachel at rscoretti@chapelwood.org.



Giving to The Center

We invite you to financially give to The Center in response to what you have received today or throughout our contemplative offerings. Using the QR code will take you to a page where you can make a one-time offering or recurring gift. Thank you for your contribution and investment.

