



The Center
for Christian Spirituality

Hope in Focus

October 26, 2025

*This is certainly appropriate since the Son of God, the Lord of virtue and the King of glory, (Ps 24:10)
fell in love with this virtue, Holy Poverty, with a special affection.*

He sought, found, and embraced Her while achieving our salvation in the middle of the earth. (Ps 74:12)

*At the beginning of his preaching he placed Her as a light of faith for all who would enter harbor,
and even set Her as the foundation stone of the house.*

*While the other virtues receive the kingdom of heaven only by way of promise from Him,
Lady Poverty is invested with it by Him without delay.*

Blessed, he said, are the poor in spirit, for the kingdom of heaven is theirs. (Mt 5:3)

*At the beginning of his conversion, therefore, blessed Francis, as the Savior's true imitator and disciple,
gave himself with all eagerness, all longing, all determination to searching for, finding, and embracing Holy Poverty.
He did so neither wavering under adversity nor fearing injury, neither shirking effort nor shunning bodily discomfort,
in order to achieve his desire: to reach Her to whom the Lord had entrusted the keys of the kingdom of heaven.*

The Sacred Exchange Between St. Francis and Lady Poverty, 13th century

Praying with St. Francis of Assisi

"This My Soul Loves"

*Wisdom, simplicity, poverty, humility,
Holy love and surrender, God within all.
Vices face away, as these virtues guide my way.
Help me walk in obedience, God over all.
This is my mission, perfect submission.
This I desire, this my soul loves.
Virtues transcending, grace never ending.
This I desire, this my soul loves.*

The Way of Jesus, Way of St. Francis

inspired by the first Franciscan Rule, 1209

Our Rule of Life is very simple: poverty, chastity, obedience.

Follow the teachings – and the very footsteps! – of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Jesus is the one who said these things:

*If you wish to be perfect, go, sell your possessions, and give money to the poor,
and you will have treasure in heaven; then come, follow me. (Matthew 19:21)*

*If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross daily and
follow me. (Luke 9:23)*

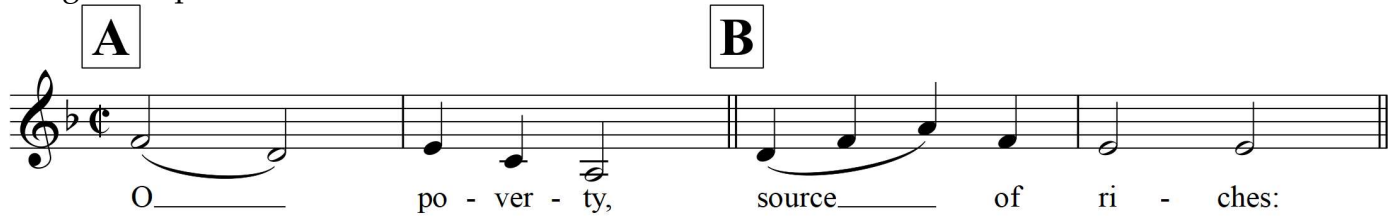
*Whoever comes to me and does not hate father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters,
yes, and even life itself, cannot be my disciple. (Luke 14:26)*

*And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or fields, for
my name's sake, will receive a hundredfold, and will inherit eternal life. (Matthew 19:29)*

Song of Response

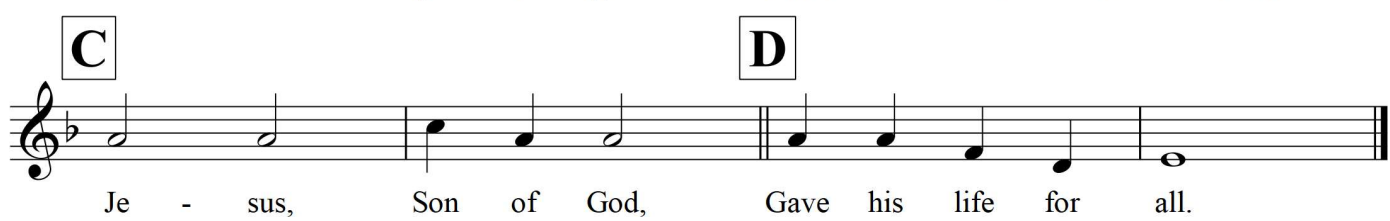
"O Poverty"

A **B**



O po - ver - ty, source of ri - ches:

C **D**



Je - sus, Son of God, Gave his life for all.

The Sacred Exchange

Song of Response

"O Poverty"

*O Poverty, source of riches:
Jesus, Son of God, gave his life for all.*

Meditation

Praying with St. Ignatius of Loyola

"*Suscipe*" (Receive)

*Suscipe, suscipe. Suscipe, suscipe.
All I am, all I have. You've given all into my care:
Every single thought, every choice I make,
The freedoms I possess, come fill them all with love.
Please receive all I am, as I receive all that You are.
I return to You all that I hold dear,
To use as You desire, for I believe in this:*

*Your grace, Your love, is all that I need.
Your love, Your grace, is enough for me.*

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*)

Praying with St. Ignatius of Loyola

"*Suscipe*" (Receive)

*Suscipe, suscipe. Suscipe, suscipe.
All I am, all I have. You've given all into my care:
Every single thought, every choice I make,
The freedoms I possess, come fill them all with love.
Please receive all I am, as I receive all that You are.
I return to You all that I hold dear,
To use as You desire, for I believe in this:*

*Your grace, Your love, is all that I need.
Your love, Your grace, is enough for me.*

The Communion Feast *from Francis' 'Letter to the Order' and "Second Letter to the Faithful'*

*Let every creature in heaven, on earth, in the sea and in the depths
give praise, glory, honor, and blessing to the One
Who suffered so much for us, Who has given so many good things,
and Who will continue to do so for the future.*

*For He is our power and strength, He Who alone is Good, Who is Most High,
Who is all-powerful, admirable, and glorious;
Who alone is holy, praiseworthy, and blessed throughout endless ages....*

*Let the whole of humankind tremble, the whole world shake and the heavens exult,
when Christ, the Son of the Living God, is present on the Table.*

*O admirable heights and sublime lowliness!
O sublime humility! O humble sublimity!
That the Lord of the Universe, God and the Son of God,
so humbles himself that for our salvation
He hides Himself under the little form of bread!*

*Look, brothers and sisters, at the humility of God,
And pour out your hearts before Him!*

*Humble yourselves as well, that you may be exalted by Him.
Therefore, hold back nothing of yourselves for yourselves,*

*Hold back nothing of yourselves for yourselves,
so that He Who gives Himself totally to you may receive you totally.*

Praying the Collect

from "The Sacred Exchange"

*Blessed Lady Poverty,
Hidden from the eyes of the world,
a pearl priceless and beautiful.
Guide us, our Lady,
we your simple ones,
for the road is difficult
and the gate at the end is narrow.*

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

Today's Music

'This My Soul Loves' – Peter Johns, *'O Poverty'* – Jaques Berthier, *'Suscipe'* – 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.

Yoga at The Center: A Posture of Prayer

Monday, October 27 | 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.



Creative Space

Saturday, November 8 | The Anchor House | 9:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

Creative Space is a nurturing, encouraging gathering of people who come together to create art and spend time in personal reflection. You will get an opportunity to explore spirituality through creative expression, as well as to be creative in a setting that is intentionally designed to enhance the spiritual. Materials are provided and everyone is welcome. No reservation is required.

Dying Well

Saturday, November 8 | The Anchor House | 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

It is hard making decisions about life and death, and it is uncomfortable having conversations with family about your wishes in death, but what if you had help, wisdom, and insight? It's time to finally get your affairs in order with a workshop on Dying Well. Our 4-hour workshop is offered by Rev. Andrew Wolfe, Rev. Rachel Sciretti, and Chapelwood member Derry Essary.



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 rsciretti@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.

