

November 1, 2022

**JPIC:
Love the Lord, Love His Kingdom, Love the Earth**

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ and in St. Francis,

Greetings. May the Lord Give You Peace on this blessed holy day, All Saints Day. I am certain it called to mind for you, as it did for me, all of our wonderful Franciscan saints who have walked before us, showing us how God spoke to them and how they followed. Our beloved Saint Francis is a true model of hearing, believing, and acting. We all know the powerful story of his desire to be a knight for the empire to become an active, loving, caring servant of the Living and Loving Lord.

I am participating in Ascension's program of the Bible in a Year, read and commented upon by Father Mike Schmitz. I have wanted to do this for a long time. When I prepared to commemorate the feast day of St. Francis, I reflected upon his devotion to scripture. Therefore, this October seemed like the perfect time to begin, and I did so on October 1. It has been a very meaningful journey and I invite you to take a look. I listen to the day's readings and Father Mike's commentary on YouTube. Later in the day, I read the passages, reflect further, and try to write one or two points to carry with me for my own spiritual formation.

On Day 2, the reading was Genesis 3 and 4. Genesis 4 recounts the birth and early life of Cain and Abel, a story very familiar to us. I was struck this time when the Lord came to Cain and asked, "Where is your brother?" The reader already knew what had happened and, so did the Lord, for He knows our thoughts, words, and deeds. The question also struck me personally because I am the older sister to three younger brothers and my parents would often ask me, "Where is your brother?"

More importantly, however, the question went to my heart. When Cain answered, "I do not know; am I my brother's keeper?" the inquiry for me went deeper. I am not sure how our Bible scholars interpret this interchange, but I heard the Lord asking me, where are your brothers, and sisters, and all members of the human family. I, says the Lord, created all. He calls us to care for all in our human family.

So, sisters and brothers, as we move through this final part of 2022 and begin 2023, let us be mindful of all within the human family and strive to be the beneficial presence to all that God is calling us to be. May we embrace God's love and carry it into the world, as He has asked us to do. May we walk together as Franciscans, dedicated to God and following our Rule of Live given to us by our Saint. May we remember, when God sees a person in pain or trouble, may He see a Franciscan there to help.

Peace and All Good,

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