



HOLY SEEING

A Visual Invitation to Prayer

Brother Ignatius Feaver o.f.m. cap

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NOVALIS

To Netta and Marie

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CRUCIFIED LOVE

*Christ on the cross bows His head,
Waiting for you, that he may kiss you,
His arms outstretched,
That they may embrace you,
His hands are open, that he may embrace you,
His body spread out
That He may give himself totally,
His feet are nailed, that He may stay there,
His side is open for you,
That He may let you enter there.⁵*

St. Bonaventure, "Soliloquy"

This prayer of St. Bonaventure's invites us into an intimacy with the Crucified Christ in which the great spiritual teacher wrote, "There is no other path but through the burning love of the Crucified."⁶ This speaks to our soul of the immense love for which Christ died for us on the cross. The cross, then, becomes the place of our encounter with Crucified Love.

Spend some time with this image contemplating the prayer of St. Bonaventure: the image of Christ Crucified, who himself is a constant gifting of his love.

What are the crosses in your life that you are invited to embrace with love and compassion?

⁵ St. Bonaventure, quoted in Ilia Delio, OSF, *Franciscan Prayer* (Cincinnati, OH: St. Anthony Messenger Press, 2004), 91.

⁶ Bonaventure, *The Soul's Journey into God*, 54.



Carceri
July 20 '99

LESSONS OF SILENCE

Be still and know that I am God.

Psalm 46:10

*In the morning, while it was still very dark,
Jesus got up and went out to a deserted place,
and there he prayed.*

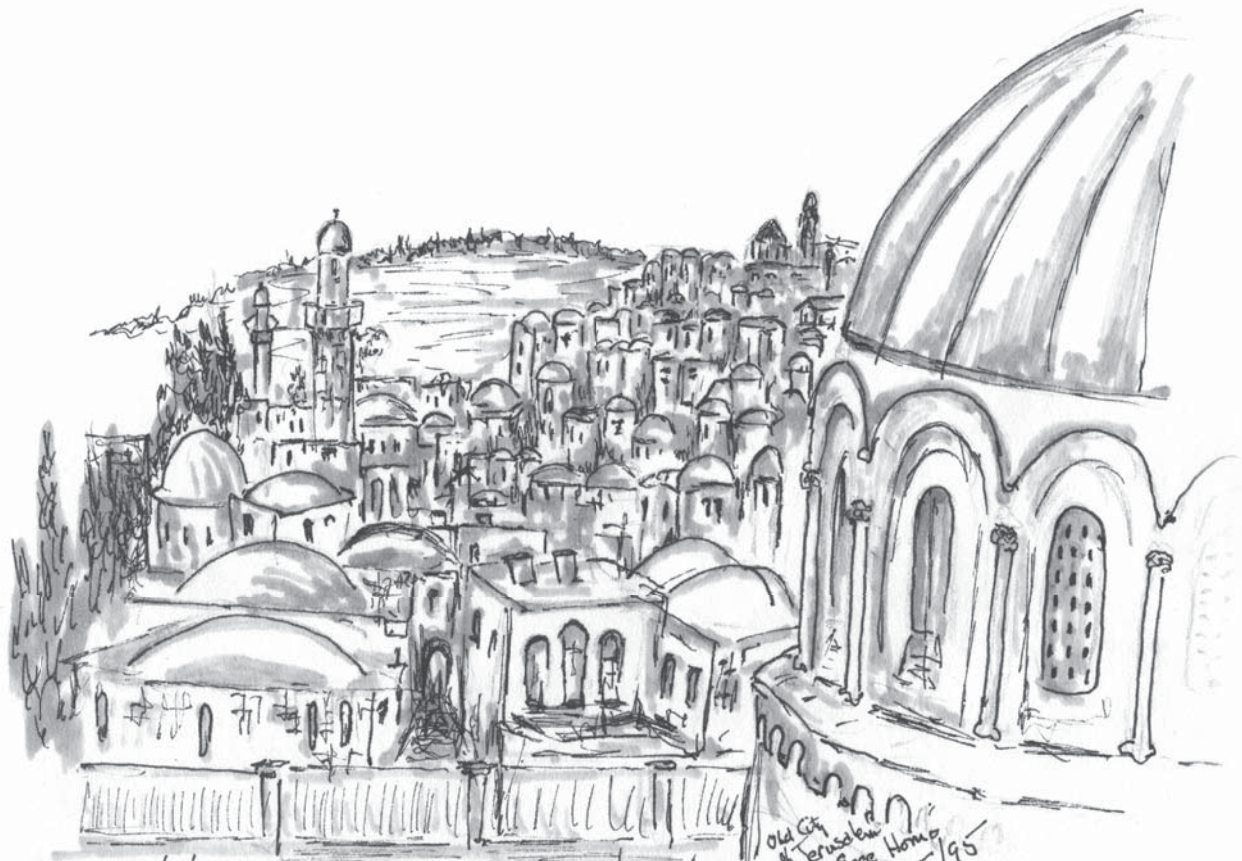
Mark 1:35

St. Francis established more than twenty places of solitude (hermitages). The drawing is of one of the first hermitages he set up, on a mountain above Assisi. I spent a day in prayer there. I was surrounded with silence except for nature's movement, but it took some time for me to let the silence enter into me. There is an ancient Chinese wisdom saying: "The lessons of silence are peerless and are unmatched by anything else under Heaven."⁷ There in a cave on Mount Subasio, I began to experience this lesson of silence. We live in a world of continuous noise. It is only when we begin to be still within that we discover that this silence is what we long for.

Where do you go to learn "the lessons of silence"?

What is evoked in you when you enter into that interior place of stillness?

⁷ Quoted in Adeline Yen Mah, *Watching the Tree: A Chinese Daughter Reflects on Happiness, Tradition, and Spiritual Wisdom* (New York: Broadway Books, 2002), 242-43.



"I saw the holy city,
the new Jerusalem" Rev. 21:2

G. N. G.

Old City
of Jerusalem
from Ecce Homo
Jan 5/95

THE LONGING OF THE HEART

*I was glad when they said to me,
“Let us go to the house of the Lord!”
Our feet are standing
within your gates, O Jerusalem.*

*Pray for the peace of Jerusalem:
“May they prosper who love you.
Peace be within your walls ...”*

Psalm 122:1-2, 6-7

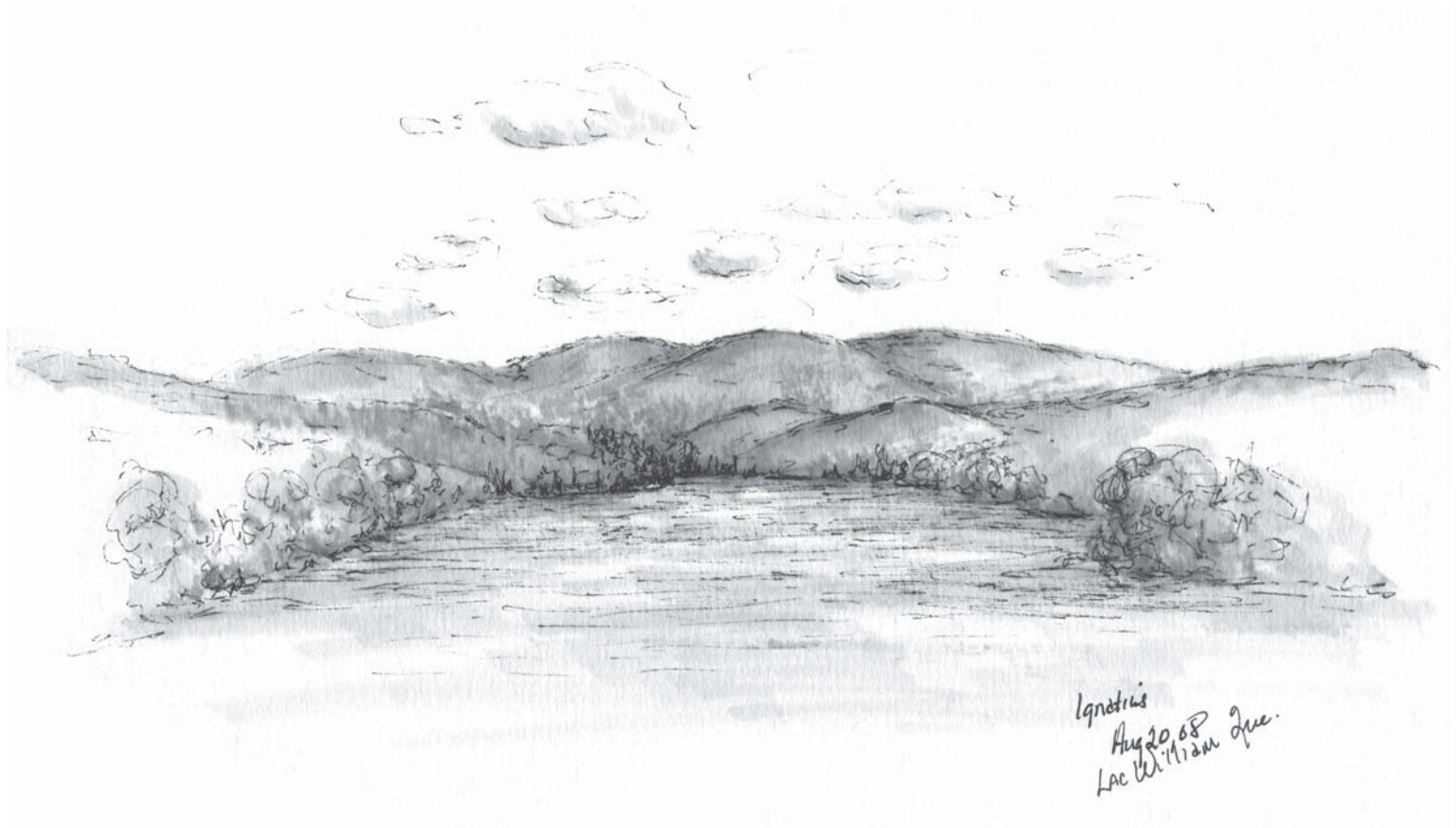
This image of the old city of Jerusalem was drawn on the terrace of the home of the Sisters of Sion, where I would often sit and contemplate this sacred city. Psalm 122 became a part of my daily prayer. I was there during the Second Intifada, when the City of Peace knew little or no peace.

The meaning of the word *Jerusalem* is “City of Peace”. As Psalm 122 tells us, it is the City of Peace because it is “the house of the Lord”. Jerusalem becomes a concrete image of our heart’s longing! This longing is for our world, for families, within myself.

Terrorism, mass shootings, and the constant threat of war create societies of fear. As the Beloved of God, we know that love is the answer. In St. John’s first letter, he writes, “perfect love casts out fear” (4:18). How can we become Christians who love unconditionally, as Jesus has taught us in the parable of the Prodigal Son?

As you gaze upon this image of Jerusalem, what is the peace that you deeply long for?

How can you become an instrument of peace?



Ignatius
Aug 20 08
Lac William Que.

OUR COMMON HOME

*Triune Lord, wondrous community
of infinite love,
teach us to contemplate you
in the beauty of the universe,
for all things speak of you.
Awaken our praise and thankfulness
for every being that you have made.
Give us the grace to feel profoundly joined
to everything that is.*

Pope Francis, *Laudato Si'*, no. 246

One summer, when I was on retreat at Lac William in Quebec, I was caught by the immense beauty of God's creation. This image spoke to me of two images from Scripture. First, the opening words of Psalm 24:

*The earth is the Lord's and all that is in it,
the world, and those who live in it ...*

As I sat with this awareness of being in the mystery of God's creation, a familiar line from Psalm 46 settled in my heart: *Be still, and know that I am God!*

The prayer on this page was composed by Pope Francis for the conclusion of his encyclical *Laudato Si': On Care for Our Common Home*. The context of this prayer is our Triune God, "wondrous community of infinite love". St. Bonaventure names the Trinity a "communion of love". In the "communion of love", creation is born and sustained by God's infinite love, of which all creation is an expression!

How do we reconcile our Triune God of creative love and humanity's destructive actions that have caused the warming of the planet?

As a Christian, what is your personal responsibility to save "our common home"?



Griechus
Ais 3.04
Hindisaan Lake B.C.
(Old Grandpa-)

RETURNING TO THE EARTH

*[The Lord] knows how we were made;
he remembers that we are dust.
... their days are like grass;
they flourish like a flower of the field;
for the wind passes over it, and it is gone ...
But the steadfast love of the Lord
is from everlasting to everlasting.*

Psalm 103:14-17

This image is of a First Nations cemetery near Anderson Lake in British Columbia. The markers are all made of wood. Many have fallen over and begun to rot. An Ojibway friend said that they are like the totems that eventually return to the earth. As the psalmist prays, “The Lord knows how we were made”. In Genesis we read how we were made: “Then the Lord God formed man from the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life” (2:7). Our lives are sustained by the continuous breath of God; the psalmist assures us that God’s breath in us never ends: “the steadfast love of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting”.

All of nature is an expression of God’s creative breath. As you contemplate God’s creative breath in nature, what is evoked in you?

In light of God’s steadfast love, how do you reflect on your own death?

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5 4 3 2 1 24 23 22 21 20

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