



**Five Important Spiritual Thoughts from the Liturgy of the Word
...and follow up for the Secular Franciscan
December 8 – December 14**

1 – “May it be done to me according to your word.” (Lk 1:38)**

...Is my “Yes” to God the same as Mary and Francis’s?

2 -- “To what shall I compare this generation?” (Mt 11:16)**

...How do I describe the world right now? How do I describe myself right now?

3 – “Blessed is he who shall have seen you, and who falls asleep in your friendship.” (Sir 48:11)

...Looking at it from the context of the New Testament, it is speaking to Jesus, and for the Franciscan, to Francis.

4 – “Be patient, brothers and sisters.” (Jas 5:7)

Extended meditation:

PATIENCE

“By your perseverance you will secure your lives.”

Luke 21:19

Jesus speaks of the end of the world, a frightening thing for most people. During his discourse, he predicts that there will be persecution, close relatives will betray the faithful, and there will obviously be death. But he also says that even though you lose your life, not a hair on your head will be destroyed, and you will secure your lives.

Perhaps, the phrase that bears some thought are the words of Jesus that it is by **perseverance** that his followers will secure their lives. Perseverance can be defined by the English translation that some translations have of this passage—**patient endurance**. Those are two key elements that a person interested in the spiritual life must develop.

First, patience. The immediate results may not look promising as signified by the fact that there will be persecution. But if we trust the Lord’s words, ultimately, there will be victory. Our problem as human beings is with the word *ultimately*. We do not tend to be patient people; we are used to having things instantly and this carries over to spiritual realities as well

SHAPING THE FRANCISCAN FOOTPRINT

by Father Mike Scully OFM Cap., Regional Spiritual Assistant



We don't want to have to wait for—say—a deeper spiritual life. The fact is as many spiritual authors suggest: *it takes a while for God to really get through to us*. I saw a T-shirt a couple years ago worn by a teenager at a CYO convention: large letters that covered the whole shirt: PBPWM – GINF – WMY. I had to ask him what it meant as I guess a number of people did: it meant **“Please be patient with me; God is not finished with me yet.”** It takes patience for the reign of God to develop well.

And secondly, endurance, that is consistency. That we will work at our spiritual lives every day implies effort, and, and a constant involvement on our parts. Once again, something that we don't want to do.

There is a tremendous example of that given in the film “Unbroken.” It is the true story of Louis Zamperini, an Olympic athlete who enlisted in the US Air Corps and became a bombardier on a B-24 Liberator bomber during the Second World War. His life took him through a couple of airplane crash landings, almost fifty days in the Pacific Ocean in a safety raft, and finally an unbelievably brutal couple of years in Japanese concentration camps. Throughout it all, the one guide for him was that he was determined to persevere and never give up. He learned his determination and perseverance from early on, mostly from his own personality of just not giving up and then help from his brother in particular. That learning enabled him to endure what most people would never be able to do.

Perseverance is a must as one defines the spiritual life. A spiritual person will be patient, and will endure what it takes to become truly spiritual in his/her approach to life.

5 – “Which of the two did his father's will?” (Mt 21:31)

...What is the Father's “will” for me, and am I following it completely?