

This booklet invites you to join a thirty-day pilgrimage inspired by the life and spirituality of Saint Francis of Assisi, whose death we will commemorate in 2026, eight hundred years after he called people to live lives of peace, simplicity, joy, and care for creation.



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30 DAYS OF A PEACE PILGRIMAGE

Peace, Prayer,
Reconciliation, and
Seeing the World Differently

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Peace, Prayer, Reconciliation, and Seeing the World Differently

INSPIRED BY THE WORK OF

Andrew Mayes

Susan Pitchford

John-Francis Friendship

Sian Yates

Simon Cocksedge

Nicholas Alan Worssam



Third Order
The Society of St Francis

Welcome to the Pilgrimage

There seems to be something in the air at present that is drawing people back to walking.

Thousands set out each year on pilgrim routes such as the Camino de Santiago. Television programmes like Race Across the World capture our imagination with stories of travel, challenge, discovery, and human connection. Bookshops are filled with accounts of long-distance walks, pilgrimages, and journeys of personal transformation. More and more people are discovering that walking can nourish not only the body but also the mind and spirit.

Perhaps this is because, in a fast-moving and often noisy world, walking helps us slow down. It invites us to notice what we usually rush past, to pay attention to the landscape around us, and to listen more deeply to what is happening within us.

Pilgrimage is more than simply going from one place to another. It is travelling with purpose. It is allowing the journey itself to teach us. Pilgrims have walked for centuries seeking wisdom, healing, peace, reconciliation, adventure, and a deeper awareness of God.

Invitation

This booklet invites you to join a thirty-day pilgrimage inspired by the life and spirituality of Saint Francis of Assisi, whose death we will commemorate in 2026, eight hundred years after he called people to live lives of peace, simplicity, joy, and care for creation.

You may be walking many miles each day. You may be joining part of the Francis 800 Peace and Reconciliation Pilgrimage. You may simply be taking a short walk around your neighbourhood, local park, churchyard, coastline, or garden. You may even be making this pilgrimage from home, reflecting prayerfully wherever you are.

There is no minimum distance for a pilgrim. What matters is the willingness to set out.

Structure of this materials

Each day offers a theme, a reflection, a wondering question, a practical pilgrimage action, and a prayer. Together they form a journey through themes of peace, reconciliation, courage, gratitude, listening, compassion, and hope.

Like Abraham, who travelled by stages, and like Francis, who discovered God along roads, hillsides, villages, and among ordinary people, we are invited to become travellers rather than tourists—open to surprise, attentive to grace, and ready to be changed by what we encounter.

So lace up your walking shoes, open your eyes and heart, and begin. Whether your pilgrimage takes you across the country or simply around the corner, may these days help you discover that every path can become holy ground, every encounter can become a blessing, and every step can become a step towards peace.

Peace and all good on the journey.

Sian Yates TSSF, 2026

Climbing the Hill: Seeing Both Shores

LUKE 8:22

Let us go across to the other side of the lake.



Pilgrim Practice

As you walk or reflect at home today, notice where you instinctively divide the world into “us” and “them.” Who is your “other side”?

Prayer

Christ of the hills and wide horizons, lift me beyond narrow vision. Teach me to see the world through your reconciling love. Amen.

Wondering

- What shore do I usually stand on? What changes when I see from a higher place? Who have I stopped trying to understand?

Andrew Mayes describes how Jesus would climb the hills above Galilee to pray. From the shoreline you could only see one side of the lake at a time. Looking west meant seeing familiar Jewish villages.

Looking east meant seeing the feared territory of the Decapolis — foreign, pagan, dangerous. But from the hills everything changed. From above, both shores could be seen together. What looked divided from below was held together from above. The lake was not a barrier after all — it was a meeting place.

Peace often begins when we climb high enough spiritually to see differently. Much conflict grows because we only see one shore: our tribe, our politics, our fears, our wounds, our version of the story. Prayer enlarges vision.

Contemplation widens the heart. Francis of Assisi also learned to “see both shores.” He crossed boundaries between rich and poor, Christian and Muslim, healthy and leper. Peace was not naïve optimism for Francis. It was the courage to cross towards the other side.

When Francis embraced the leper, he crossed an inner frontier. What had once filled him with fear became “sweetness of soul and body.” Peace began not with an idea, but with encounter.

Contemplation that Becomes Peace

JOHN 14:27

Peace I leave with you;
my peace I give to you.



Pilgrim Practice

Set aside ten minutes for silence, scripture, or quiet prayer. Then carry that peace consciously into one encounter.

Prayer

Lord of peace,
draw us into your presence.
May contemplation
become compassion,
and compassion become peace.
Amen.

Wondering

- What is God saying to me in silence?
- How might my prayer become peace for someone else?
- What within me needs to be softened?

Jesus lived in a deeply polarised society. Andrew Mayes reminds us that people were separated by religion, class, purity laws, ethnicity, politics, and status. Some were honoured. Others were shamed.

The world has not changed much. Today we still divide: left and right, native and foreigner, religious and secular, deserving and undeserving.

Modern life often rewards outrage more than understanding.

Social media algorithms thrive on division. News cycles profit from fear.

Yet Jesus repeatedly crossed boundaries. He touched lepers. He spoke with women publicly. He welcomed children. He ate with outsiders.

Again and again he moved towards those society pushed away. Franciscan spirituality insists that every person carries dignity because every creature comes from God. Francis called all creation brother, sister, kin.

St Bonaventure taught that all creation flows from divine love and longs to return to harmony in God. Separation wounds both humanity and creation itself.

Beyond Either/Or

MATTHEW 5:9
Blessed are
the peacemakers.



Pilgrim Practice

Notice today where
conversations become
polarised.
Try replacing certainty
with curiosity.

Prayer

God of wisdom,
free us from the need
to reduce others into enemies.
Teach us the spaciousness
of your Kingdom.
Amen.

Wondering

Where have I become rigid?
Can I hold truth and humility
together?
What would reconciliation look
like instead of victory?

Many human beings often think in
opposites: black or white, sacred
or secular, friend or enemy, winner
or loser.

This “either/or” thinking can make
us feel safe because it simplifies
the world. But it also creates fear
and violence.

Jesus consistently moves beyond
false opposites.
He speaks of loving God and
neighbour.

Justice and mercy.
Contemplation and action.
Truth and compassion.
The Kingdom of God is often
“both/and.”

Francis embodied this too. He was
deeply contemplative yet intensely
active. He loved solitude yet
walked among crowded towns. He
embraced poverty yet overflowed
with joy.

Peace-making requires resisting
simplistic thinking.

During the Fifth Crusade, Francis crossed battle lines to meet Sultan
al-Kamil in Egypt. He neither abandoned his faith nor demonised the
Muslim world. He approached with humility and openness.
Even amid war, Francis believed encounter was possible.

The Open Table

LUKE 14:13-14

When you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, and the blind.



Pilgrim Practice

- Share food today if possible.
- Eat slowly and gratefully.
- Notice who is absent from society's tables.

Prayer

Christ who ate with strangers and sinners, make our hearts and communities places of welcome. Amen.

Wondering

- Who taught me I belonged?
 - Who struggles to find welcome today?
- What tables need widening?

For Jesus, meals mattered. Tables reveal who belongs.

One of the clearest signs of Jesus' Kingdom was the open table — where status dissolved and outsiders became guests of honour.

The table becomes an act of reconciliation.

Franciscan spirituality has always valued hospitality. The friars were to receive guests "with kindness and courtesy." Hospitality is not entertainment. It is spiritual practice.

Many people today experience profound loneliness even while surrounded by people. Peace is not only the ending of war. It is the restoration of belonging.

St Clare of Assisi created communities where mutual care and shared life overcame status and hierarchy. Her witness reminds us that peace is sustained through daily practices of tenderness.

Light and Cloud



MATTHEW 17:1-8

Pilgrim Practice

Walk part of today in silence,
or sit in silence at home.
Allow uncertainty
to remain unresolved.
Notice where you
cling to control.

Prayer

God beyond our understanding,
meet us in both light and cloud.
Teach us to walk by trust
rather than fear.
Amen.

Wondering

- What mysteries am I resisting?
- Can I trust God in confusion as well as clarity?
- Where do I seek certainty instead of relationship?

Andrew Mayes reflects beautifully on the Transfiguration. Jesus encounters both dazzling light and overshadowing cloud.

The disciples want clarity, certainty, and permanence: "Let us build three tents."

But instead they enter mystery. Peace-making also requires living without total certainty.

We often want simple answers and clear enemies. Yet human suffering is complex.

The cloud teaches humility. Francis knew both light and darkness: joy and illness, companionship and loneliness, vision and uncertainty.

True peace is not control. It is trust.

What Franciscan story highlights for you the idea that for true peace there must be trust?

The Healing of Shame

JOHN 8:10-11

Neither do I condemn you.



Pilgrim Practice

Today pray gently for those who feel excluded or ashamed — including yourself. Offer compassion instead of judgement.

Prayer

Merciful Christ, restore dignity where shame has wounded. Help us become gentler with one another. Amen.

Wondering

- What shame do I carry?
- Who is blamed or scapegoated in society today?
- What would restorative peace look like?

Andrew Mayes highlights how shame structured first-century society. Certain people were pushed outside dignity and belonging.

Jesus repeatedly restores people to community.

Peace cannot exist where people are humiliated or discarded. Many today carry hidden shame: poverty, failure, addiction, mental illness, abuse, loneliness, identity, grief.

Francis himself stripped naked before the bishop in Assisi, relinquishing status and inheritance. Yet paradoxically, in losing worldly honour he discovered freedom.

The Gospel heals shame not through denial but through love.

Jacopone da Todi wrote passionately about divine love meeting humanity in vulnerability and brokenness rather than perfection.

Creation Reconciled

PSALM 148



Pilgrim Practice

Walk attentively today, or listen at home to the world around you.
Listen to birdsong.
Notice wind.
Touch a stone or tree bark.
Practice gratitude.

Prayer

Creator God,
reconcile us with the earth
from which we come.
Teach us reverence,
simplicity,
and gratitude.
Amen.

Wondering

- What happens when I slow down enough to notice creation?
- What would it mean to live more gently?

Andrew Mayes points to biblical visions where opposites are reconciled: wolf and lamb, wild creatures and domestic animals, young and old together praising God.

Francis expanded this vision through his love of creation.
Brother Sun.
Sister Moon.
Brother Fire.
Sister Water.

Peace is not only human reconciliation. It includes the whole earth.

Today creation groans under climate crisis, pollution, extinction, and exploitation. Ecological destruction is also spiritual fragmentation — humanity forgetting its kinship with creation.

Francis invites us back into relationship.

Near the end of his life, suffering and nearly blind, Francis still composed the Canticle of the Creatures, praising God through creation and even through “Sister Death.”
Peace includes learning to belong humbly within creation rather than dominate it.

Gathering the World Together



LUKE 13:34

How often have I desired to gather your children together..."

Prayer

Lord,
make us instruments of your peace.
Where there is hatred,
let us sow love.
Where there is injury, pardon.
Where there is despair, hope.
Where there is division, reconciliation.
Amen.

Pilgrim Practice

Pause today and give thanks.
Carry one commitment forward:
listening, reconciliation,
simplicity, courage,
or a habit of peace

Wondering

- What has changed in me during this journey?
- Where is God calling me to become a peacemaker?
- What would it mean to live reconciled?

At the heart of Andrew Mayes' reflections is Jesus' longing to gather humanity together. Not uniformity. Not control. Not forced agreement. Reconciliation.

Jesus dreams of a world where east and west, north and south, sit together at one table. Francis inherited this longing. His movement was not an escape from the world, but a way of

healing relationship — with God, neighbour, self, creation, and even enemies.

Peace pilgrimage is not merely symbolic walking. It is learning another way of being human.

A pilgrim walks more slowly, listens more carefully, depends upon others, and travels lightly. The journey itself becomes prayer.

Blessed Giles of Assisi taught that peace begins in simplicity, humility, and learning to live without domination over others.

Beginning Penance: Turning Towards Mercy

LUKE 15:20

While he was still far off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion.



Pilgrim Practice

Notice what you instinctively avoid. Take one small step towards mercy, truth, or reconciliation.

Prayer

Merciful Christ, meet me in the places I avoid. Give me courage to turn back towards love, truth, and reconciliation. Amen.

Wondering

- What bitterness am I carrying?
- Where might God be waiting for me?
- What would it mean to turn around spiritually?

Francis understood penance not as punishment, but as turning back towards God. Conversion begins when we stop running from truth and allow ourselves to be found by mercy.

Near the end of his life Francis wrote, "The Lord gave me to begin doing penance." His conversion began when he encountered the lepers he once feared. What had disgusted him became the place where grace met him.

Peace often begins this way. We avoid painful memories, difficult conversations, and truths about ourselves. Yet God may already be waiting in the places we fear most.

Penance means changing direction. It is not shame, but honest transformation.

The journey towards peace begins within.

Francis said that when he showed mercy to the lepers, "what had seemed bitter to me was turned into sweetness of soul and body."

Brother Body: Receiving Ourselves with Compassion

JOHN 14:27

Come to me, all you
that are weary and
carrying heavy burdens,
and I will give you rest



Pilgrim Practice

Walk at a gentler pace today.
At home, create space
for quiet and rest.
Listen to your body
without judgement.

Wondering

- Where am I too hard on myself?
- What kind of fasting would bring freedom?
- What helps me become peaceful within myself?

The early Franciscans practised fasting, silence, and simplicity. Yet Francis gradually learned that peace also requires compassion towards ourselves.

He called the body “Brother Body.” At times he treated Brother Body harshly through fasting and hardship. Later, he warned the brothers against excessive severity.

God desires mercy, not sacrifice.

The body is not an enemy to conquer, but a companion on the journey. Many people carry hidden exhaustion: anxiety, disappointment, loneliness, or relentless self-criticism.

Pilgrimage invites us to walk more gently.

Peace cannot grow where we are continually violent towards ourselves.

One night a friar became weak with hunger. Francis woke everyone to eat together so the brother would not feel ashamed. Compassion mattered more than strict discipline.

Prayer that Becomes Mercy



MATTHEW 5:7

Blessed are the merciful,
for they will receive mercy.

Prayer

Christ of compassion,
make my prayer truthful
and my love practical.
Teach me to recognise you
in every person I meet.
Amen.

Pilgrim Practice

Pray quietly for the people
you pass today.
Let one act of mercy
become your prayer.

Wondering

- How does prayer shape the way I treat people?
- What would reconciliation look like in one relationship?

Simon Cockledge and Br Nicholas Alan SSF reminds us that for Francis, prayer and mercy could never be separated. True prayer changes how we see other people.

Clare of Assisi spent long hours in silence, yet the sisters remembered her kindness, wisdom, and encouragement. She came from prayer carrying peace into the community.

Contemplation is not escape from the world. It is learning to see with the eyes of Christ.

The deeper we enter prayer, the more we recognise the suffering and dignity of others.

Peace grows through ordinary mercy: listening carefully, forgiving slowly, speaking gently, serving quietly.

The test of prayer is not spiritual intensity, but love.

Angela of Foligno taught that prayer and confession cleanse the soul, helping the heart "taste and see" the goodness of God.

Holy Activity: Becoming a Dwelling Place of Peace

JOHN 14:23

We will come to them and make our home with them.



Pilgrim Practice

Choose one practice to carry forward: silence, simplicity, forgiveness, service, prayer, or reconciliation.

Prayer

God of peace,
make my heart your dwelling place.
Send me into the world
as an instrument of reconciliation,
mercy, and hope.
Amen.

Wondering

- What has this pilgrimage changed in me?
- What kind of peacemaker am I being called to become?
- How can I continue this journey in ordinary life?

The early Franciscans first called themselves “penitents”: ordinary people trying to live differently in everyday society. They prayed, served, reconciled, and lived simply.

Francis believed that God longs to make a home within us. Penance, prayer, fasting, and mercy prepare that inner dwelling place.

Simon Cockledge reminds us that the journey never ends with private

spirituality. Those who draw close to God are sent back into the world for “holy activity”: compassion, justice, peacemaking, and service.

Pilgrimage changes little unless it changes how we live afterwards. Peace becomes a way of speaking, listening, consuming, forgiving, and crossing boundaries.

The Franciscan path is simple but demanding: to become people in whom Christ feels at home.

The Franciscan Third Order was formed for people living in towns, homes, workplaces, and families. Their calling was to carry Franciscan peace into daily life.

Truth Spoken Through Simplicity

MATTHEW 5:37

Let your word be
'Yes, Yes' or 'No, No'.



Pilgrim Practice

Choose one act of simplicity or generosity today: give something away, travel more lightly, listen without interrupting, or spend money more compassionately

Prayer

Lord, free us from hypocrisy and pretence. Teach us to walk humbly, listen before speaking, and witness to peace through the honesty of our lives. Amen.

Wondering

- Where am I invited to live more simply?
 - Do my actions match my words?
- How might simplicity become peace?

Saint Dominic saw that people would not believe a Gospel preached from comfort and privilege. So he walked simply, listened deeply, and lived the truth he proclaimed.

Francis knew the same. Peace begins when words and actions become one. A life of simplicity can speak more truthfully than many arguments.

In a noisy world, integrity is a form of witness. It is tempting to speak of peace while living from anxiety, competition, or display. The Gospel calls us to a different kind of freedom: truthful, humble, and uncluttered.

A peace pilgrim asks not only, "What do I believe?" but, "Does my life make that belief visible?"

Francis asked the brothers to preach by their lives before they preached by their words. Simplicity made the Gospel believable.

Compassion Stronger Than Conflict



LUKE 6:36

Be merciful, just as your
Father is merciful..

Prayer

God of mercy,
where there is division,
make us bridge-builders.
Where there is anger,
make us gentle.
Help us seek understanding
rather than resentment.
Amen.

Pilgrim Practice

Make one deliberate act of reconciliation: a kind word, a patient conversation, a message of encouragement, or a prayer for someone you struggle to understand.

Wondering

- How do I respond to people who differ from me?
- Do I seek understanding or victory?
- Where might compassion be stronger than conflict?

In his book *Stars in the same Firmament* Andrew Mayes reminds us that Saint Dominic engaged those who disagreed with him through patience, study, humility, and compassion. Even when mocked or rejected, he refused bitterness.

A Franciscan peace pilgrimage calls us into the same spirit: conviction without cruelty, truth without contempt, reconciliation without hatred.

Francis too lived this difficult mercy. He crossed battle lines, spoke with those considered enemies, and trusted that encounter could open a door.

Peace does not ask us to abandon truth. It asks us to refuse dehumanisation.

The other person is never merely an argument to defeat. They are a child of God to be encountered.

Francis went to Sultan al-Kamil during the Crusades with courage and humility. He went not to conquer, but to meet.

Contemplation that Becomes Peace

JOHN 14:27

Peace I leave with you;
my peace I give to you.



Pilgrim Practice

Set aside ten minutes for silence, scripture, or quiet prayer. Then carry that peace consciously into one encounter.

Prayer

Lord of peace,
draw us into your presence.
May contemplation
become compassion,
and compassion become peace.
Amen.

Wondering

- How might my prayer become peace for someone else?
- What within me needs to be softened?

Dominic believed prayer must overflow into action. Study, silence, contemplation and preaching were never separate from the suffering of the world.

Francis understood this too. He withdrew to lonely places, caves, hillsides, and hermitages, yet always returned to the roads and towns carrying peace.

Contemplation is not avoidance. It is allowing God to soften what is hard, heal what is wounded, and reorder what is restless within us.

Today we pray not only for peace in the world, but for peace within ourselves — peace that can be carried into one conversation, one home, one community, one wounded place.

Francis often prayed through the night, then returned to the brothers and the poor with renewed compassion. Prayer became presence.

Perfect Joy in the Rain

JOHN 15:11

I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you.



Pilgrim Practice

Notice today the difference between happiness and joy.

Prayer

Christ who walked through suffering with love, teach me the deeper joy that no darkness can extinguish.
Amen.

Wondering

- Where do I search for happiness?
- Have I mistaken comfort for peace?
- What sorrow needs gentleness rather than denial?

The weather changed during the night. By morning the road was wet beneath my boots and a cold wind moved through the trees. I walked beneath grey skies, thinking of Francis and Brother Leo speaking of "perfect joy."

It is a strange teaching. Everything around us says joy comes through comfort, success, recognition, and control. Yet Francis says true joy can survive rejection and suffering because it is rooted not in circumstances, but in God.

Around midday I sheltered in a small church. Someone inside was practising the organ. The music faltered, but it was beautiful because of its fragility.

Perhaps Gospel joy is not the absence of sorrow, but the refusal to let sorrow have the final word.

Christian joy is not denial.

It is deep trust that God remains present even here.

Near the end of his life, Francis composed the Canticle of the Creatures, praising God even for Sister Death. Joy had become part of his surrender.

The Grace of Small Things

PHILIPPIANS 4:4

Rejoice in the Lord always.



Pilgrim Practice

At the end of today,
write down ten small things
for which you are grateful.

Prayer

God of hidden mercies,
open my eyes to the grace
woven through ordinary life.
Amen.

Wondering

- What small kindness have I overlooked?
- Where have I encountered quiet grace today?
- How might gratitude soften my heart?

Today was filled with small kindnesses. A woman smiled and wished me peace. A café owner refilled my cup. A child waved from a passing bus.

Nothing remarkable happened. Yet by evening I felt I had spent the day standing inside grace.

Susan Pitchford writes about gratitude amid suffering — not as escape, but as resistance against despair. The world remains fractured, yet every act of kindness refuses to let cruelty define everything.

Later I passed buildings still scarred by war, with flowers spilling from window boxes beneath damaged stonework. Wounds and beauty side by side.

That feels deeply Christian. The risen Christ still bears wounds, yet they no longer speak only of death. Francis also found holiness in ordinary gifts: bread, birdsong, friendship, shelter.

Perhaps peace begins by noticing grace already present among us. Peace grows where dignity is restored.

Francis encouraged the brothers to receive even the smallest necessities with gratitude.

Refusing to Look Away

MATTHEW 25:40

Just as you did it to one of the least of these... you did it to me.



Pilgrim Practice

Pay attention today to the people you normally overlook.

Prayer

Compassionate Christ, save me from the peace that comes through indifference. Teach me to recognise your face in those the world forgets. Amen.

Wondering

- Who do I unconsciously avoid?
 - What suffering feels too difficult to face?
 - How might compassion call me beyond comfort?

Today I nearly walked past him. He sat outside the station wrapped in damp blankets while people avoided eye contact. Part of me wanted to do the same. I was tired, cold, and eager to reach shelter.

But once seen, he could not be unseen.

We spoke briefly. I bought soup and bread, and we shared awkward conversation beneath the station canopy. Nothing dramatic happened.

Yet I felt unsettled — not because of him, but because of myself.

Susan Pitchford writes that joy cannot be separated from compassion. There is a false peace that comes from avoiding suffering. But Christ never walked that path. Again and again, Jesus moved towards the excluded and wounded.

Francis learned this when he embraced the leper. Peace begins whenever we refuse to look away.

Francis instructed the brothers to live among the poor, not at a safe distance from them.

The Road That Leads Home



MATTHEW 6:21

Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

Prayer

God of the pilgrim road, teach me the freedom of simplicity and the peace of belonging wholly to you. Amen.

Pilgrim Practice

Walk slowly today. Notice what you are still carrying unnecessarily.

Wondering

- What am I afraid to surrender?
- What might it mean to travel with a sense of detachment?

The road climbed through olive groves silvered by the wind. For long stretches I walked alone except for birdsong and my own footsteps.

Pilgrimage strips life back to essentials. Slowly, hidden attachments reveal themselves: the need to appear successful, the desire to control outcomes, the fear of uncertainty.

I thought of Francis standing before the bishop in Assisi, surrendering even his fine clothes. It was not poverty for its own sake.

It was freedom. Francis wanted nothing to stand between himself and God's love.

Toward evening I reached a hillside chapel as bells rang for prayer. In the fading light I felt one simple assurance: I belong to God.

Susan Pitchford writes of returning to Assisi and facing her own attachments. In that honesty she discovered homecoming.

Perhaps pilgrimage is not escape, but return: to God, to truth, to the self beneath fear.

Near the end of his life Francis said, "Let us begin again, for until now we have done little."

Light Within the Wound

JOHN 8:12

I am the light of the world.



Pilgrim Practice

Today notice places of hidden hurt: within yourself, within your community, or within the wider world. Pray gently for healing rather than quick solutions

Prayer

Christ, light of the world, shine within the wounded places of humanity. Bring healing where there is sorrow, truth where there is silence, and reconciliation where hearts remain divided. Amen.

Wondering

- Where does unspoken sorrow still dwell?
- How might Christ's light enter wounded places gently?
- Can reconciliation begin without truth being hidden?

In the book *Lentscapes*, Korea's story of peace and reconciliation still bears wounds from colonisation, war, and division. Many speak of *han* — sorrow carried across generations.

Beneath modern success remain loneliness and grief. Families are separated, and many live under pressure and silence. Andrew Sung Park says this woundedness is spiritual as well as social.

Christ says, "I am the light of the world." For Park, Christ's light is

not easy optimism but compassion entering suffering. At the cross, Christ bears both sin and sorrow. Reconciliation begins where truth meets mercy.

This light appears in forgiveness, justice, and communities learning to heal.

Francis understood this when he embraced the leper.

Peace grows whenever love enters wounded places without judgement.

Francis taught the brothers to live among those who suffered and were rejected. Compassion was not weakness for Francis. It was the path toward reconciliation.

Cultivating Peace

MATTHEW 5:9
Blessed are the peacemakers.



Pilgrim Practice

Today notice the relationships around you: family, community, creation, or those from whom you feel distant. What small act of peace-making might help life grow there?

Prayer

God of peace and reconciliation, teach us to become peacemakers. Help us to restore what has been wounded, to tend relationships with patience and care, and to create spaces where life may flourish. Amen.

Wondering

- What does peace with justice look like in my life?
- Where does relationship need restoring?
- What fragile seeds of reconciliation need tending today?

In *Lentscapes*, we are reminded that in Aotearoa New Zealand, peace must be cultivated. The Māori word rongo means peace but is also linked to growing kūmara: where conflict rules, life cannot flourish.

Peace is not passive but the patient work of repairing relationships, restoring dignity, and protecting the sacred space between people. Sian Yates writes that Māori theology centres on relationships between people, land, ancestors, and creation. Reconciliation restores what has been broken.

Peter Bargh reflects on the Church's long journey toward justice and reconciliation through the Treaty of Waitangi. One story tells of Ngākuku, whose daughter Tarore was killed in tribal conflict. Rather than seek revenge, he chose forgiveness.

Jesus calls not simply for peaceful people but peacemakers. Francis understood this too: peace grows through humility, truthfulness, and patient love. Like a fragile garden, reconciliation must be carefully grown. Peace must be grown.

Francis often greeted people with the words, "May the Lord give you peace." For Francis, peace was not an idea but a daily practice of reconciliation and compassion.

The Long Labour of Memory



JOHN 20:27

See my hands and my feet.

Prayer

God of compassion, be present in places of grief and memory. Strengthen those who seek truth and justice. Teach us the courage to remember honestly and to become people of reconciliation and peace. Amen..

Pilgrim Practice

Today remember places in the world marked by violence, war, or unresolved grief. Pray especially for those who still wait for truth, justice, or healing.

Wondering

- What wounds remain unspoken in my community or in the world?
- How can truth be faced without losing compassion?
- What might reconciliation require of us?

Some landscapes carry wounds that cannot easily be spoken. In *Lentscapes*, Bosnia is one of those places.

During the war, thousands were killed and communities shattered. Many still wait for truth, justice, and remembrance. One visitor described the Podrinje Identification Project in Tuzla, where victims' remains are still being identified — fragments of lives waiting to be named.

In such places, peace is no longer sentimental. It becomes the hard work of truth, mourning,

memory, and compassion. After the resurrection, Christ still bears his wounds.

Dorothee Sölle wrote that God is not distant from suffering but present within it. The resurrection is not denial of pain but God's refusal to let violence have the final word.

Francis understood this too. Peace grows wherever suffering is faced honestly rather than avoided. Reconciliation begins when truth is spoken gently, memory honoured, and human dignity restored.

Francis often meditated on the wounds of Christ. Near the end of his life, he received the stigmata, carrying in his own body the marks of suffering and love held together.

Walking in the Light

JOHN 12:35

Walk while you have the light.



Pilgrim Practice

Spend some time today in silence. Notice what truths you may be avoiding: within yourself, within relationships, or within the wider world. Ask God for courage to face them gently and honestl

Prayer

Christ, light of the world, shine into the hidden places of our hearts and lives. Give us courage to face truth with humility, to care for creation with responsibility, and to walk gently in the light of your love. Amen.

Wondering

- What truths remain hidden beneath the surface of my life?
 - Where do I choose comfort over honesty?
- How might truth lead not to fear, but to freedom?

Antarctica is a landscape of truth, as seen in *Lentscapes*. There are no forests or cities — only ice, wind, silence, and light. Everything is exposed, and changes in the ice are visible.

The frozen layers hold memory: volcanic ash, climate shifts, and traces of human impact. Nothing is hidden. Here, truth is witnessed rather than debated.

Holy Week carries a similar honesty. As Jesus moves toward the cross, fear, violence, betrayal, and human weakness are brought

into the light. Yet Christ's light reveals in order to heal.

Barbara Brown Taylor writes that transformation begins when illusions collapse and reality is faced truthfully. Antarctica reflects this too: melting ice warns us and calls us to responsibility.

Francis understood that peace begins with truthfulness and cannot grow from denial. The Gospel invites honesty about ourselves, our world, and harm to creation.

Francis loved solitude in wild places. In silence and simplicity he learned to see himself, creation, and God more clearly. Prayer became a place of honesty and transformation.

Crossing the Threshold

JOHN 13:14-15

If I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet.



Pilgrim Practice

Today cross one small boundary. Listen carefully to someone different from yourself. Offer kindness where there may usually be distance.

Prayer

God of peace, teach us to cross boundaries with humility and compassion. Help us become people of reconciliation and hope. Amen

Wondering

- Where am I tempted to fear or judge others?
- What boundary might God be asking me to cross?
 - How can humility lead toward peace?

In the heart of Tbilisi in Georgia stands the Peace Cathedral — a place where Christians, Muslims, Jews, and people of other faiths share one roof, one courtyard, and often one table. Its vision is simple: “Many faiths, one humanity.”

Peace here is not an idea but a daily practice of hospitality, listening, and shared life.

One story tells of a Christian man and a Muslim woman married there, with priests and imams standing together in blessing. In a divided world, such moments become signs of hope.

Jesus did something similar in the upper room when he knelt to wash the disciples' feet — even the feet of Judas. Peace begins whenever we choose humility over fear and service over judgement.

Francis also crossed boundaries during the Crusades to meet Sultan al-Kamil with openness and respect rather than hatred.

The Peace Cathedral reminds us that reconciliation grows slowly through encounter, kindness, and the courage to cross thresholds of fear.

Francis greeted strangers and enemies alike with the words, “May the Lord give you peace.”

Flowers Among the Rubble



JOHN 14:27

Peace I leave with you;
my peace I give to you.

Prayer

God of reconciliation,
bring peace where there is bitterness,
hope where there is grief,
and healing where lives have been broken.
Teach us to become people
who sow mercy and peace.
Amen.

Pilgrim Practice

Today pray for places of division
in the world and within
your own life.
Is there one small step toward
forgiveness, understanding,
or reconciliation that
you might take?

Wondering

- What rubble do I carry within me?
- Where might forgiveness open space for healing?
- How can peace grow even in wounded places?

In Enniskillen, Northern Ireland, a bomb exploded on Armistice Sunday during the Troubles. Gordon Wilson and his daughter Marie were among those trapped. Before she died, she told him, “Daddy, I love you very much.”

The next day he said, “I bear no ill will. I bear no grudge.” In a moment where revenge might have followed, he chose forgiveness. His words became seeds of peace in broken ground.

Peace does not erase suffering. He never denied his grief, but refused

to let hatred shape the future. His forgiveness quietly challenged both communities.

Jesus speaks of this kind of peace: not fragile, but rooted in courage, mercy, and grace. Francis understood reconciliation begins when bitterness is refused and compassion chosen.

Like wildflowers through broken stone, peace grows slowly in wounded places. Even in the quieter rubble we carry — hurt, fear, and grief — healing and new life can still emerge.

Francis taught the brothers never to seek revenge or repay harm with harm, but to become instruments of peace through humility and mercy.

The Gardener of Peace

JOHN 20:16

Jesus said to her, 'Mary.'



Pilgrim Practice

Spend time outdoors today if possible. Notice signs of new life and reflect on where healing may already be quietly growing.

Prayer

Risen Christ, gardener of peace and reconciliation, heal what is wounded and teach us to live as people of hope and peace. Amen.

Wondering

- Where do I most need peace today?
- What relationships need healing?
- How might I become a peacemaker?

Mary Magdalene walks into the garden carrying grief. Good Friday is still fresh. Her hopes feel shattered. She expects only death and loss. But then the risen Christ speaks her name: "Mary."

In that moment everything changes. Peace comes not as power or triumph, but as relationship restored. Mary realizes she is not abandoned. She is seen, known, and loved even in sorrow.

This is the peace of the Gospel: not escape from suffering, but God's healing presence within it. The wounds of the world remain real. Communities are divided.

Human hearts still carry fear and grief. Yet resurrection reminds us that violence and despair do not have the final word.

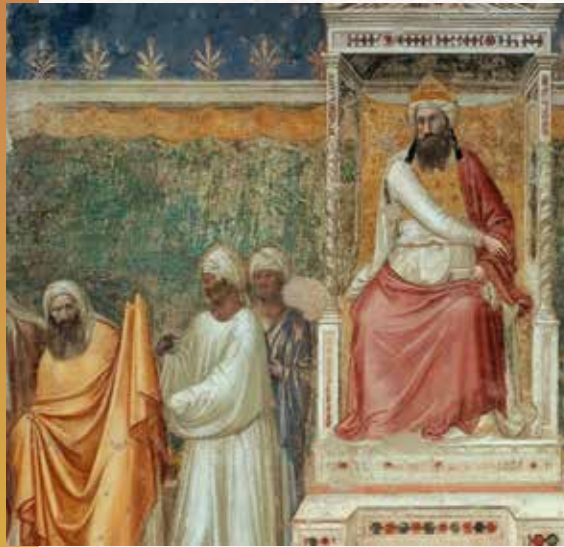
Francis of Assisi believed peace begins whenever people choose mercy over hatred and hope over fear. The risen Christ becomes the gardener of reconciliation: bringing healing where life has been wounded, and hope where all seemed lost.

Peace often begins quietly: a kind word, a wound honestly faced, a relationship restored, a small act of forgiveness.

Francis often prayed alone in nature and returned with a deeper love for people, peace, and creation.

Peace Across Boundaries

MATTHEW 5:9
Blessed are the
peacemakers.



Pilgrim Practice

Today learn something about another faith or culture with openness and respect. If possible, speak with someone whose background differs from your own and listen carefully to their story.

Prayer

God of all peoples,
teach us to cross boundaries
with humility and compassion.
Replace fear with understanding,
hatred with friendship,
and division with peace.
Amen.

Wondering

- Who do I find difficult to understand?
- What fears keep people divided?
- How might peace grow through listening and friendship?

John-Francis Friendship, in *A Saint for All Seasons*, suggests the world is often divided by fear of difference. Religion, culture, history, and politics can become walls between people. Yet Jesus repeatedly crossed those boundaries, welcoming outsiders and treating everyone with dignity.

Francis of Assisi followed this path. During the Crusades he crossed battle lines to meet Sultan al-Kamil, not with weapons but with humility and peace. He believed encounter was holier than hostility.

Peace begins in small human acts: listening, sharing food, hospitality, and learning another's story. It does not require sameness, but recognition of shared humanity.

The risen Christ still speaks peace into a divided world — not through domination, but relationship. Where people live, work, and eat together across difference, fear loosens and strangers become neighbours.

Peace often begins simply: a conversation, a shared table, a willingness to cross the room.

Francis greeted all people with the words, "May the Lord give you peace." His meeting with the Sultan became a lasting sign that respectful encounter is possible even during conflict.

Repairing the House of Peace

JOHN 10:9

I am the gate.
Whoever enters by me
will be saved.

Prayer

Christ,
healer of your people, repair what is
broken within your Church and within us.
Teach us humility, gentleness,
and courage.
May we become people who build
peace, restore trust,
and reflect your love in the world.
Amen.



Pilgrim Practice

Today pray for the peace
and healing of the Church.
Offer encouragement, kindness,
or patience to someone
within your faith community.
If possible, do one quiet act that helps
repair rather than deepen division

Wondering

- What wounds within the Church grieve me most?
- How can peace begin through small acts of humility and reconciliation?
- What might it mean to help “repair the house” today?

The Church, like the world, is often wounded by division, fear, and conflict. Many have responded by attacking, abandoning, or trying to remake it entirely.

In *A Saint for All Seasons*, Francis takes another path. Praying in the ruined chapel of San Damiano, he hears Christ say, “Francis, go and repair my house.” He begins by fixing buildings, but gradually realises Christ is speaking about the healing of God’s people.

Francis does not destroy or replace the Church. As Thomas of Celano writes, “He did not tear out the

foundation, but he built upon it.” He believes renewal comes not through power or control, but through living the Gospel. He embraces prayer, humility, mercy, and care for the poor. People are changed more by his life than his words.

Peace in the Church still grows this way: not through winning, but healing; not pride, but love; not perfection, but Christlikeness.

The Church is repaired whenever mercy replaces bitterness, service replaces status, and reconciliation replaces hostility.

Francis once wrote: “I want these most holy mysteries honoured and venerated above all things.” For Francis, love of God was always connected to love of people, especially the poor, suffering, and excluded.

Peace Through Simplicity



MATTHEW 5:9

Blessed are the peacemakers.

Prayer

God of peace, free us from the fears and burdens that prevent us from living lightly and lovingly. Teach us the simplicity of Francis, the gentleness of Christ, and the deep peace that comes through trust in you. Amen.

Pilgrim Practice

Today walk more simply and more slowly. Notice how often anxiety comes from rushing, comparing, possessing, or striving. If possible, give something away or spend time in silence with gratitude for enough.

Wondering

- What do I cling to for security or identity?
- What might I need to let go of to grow in peace?
- Where do simplicity and trust lead to greater freedom?

Peace is often hardest to find when life is crowded with anxiety, possessions, and ambition, writes John Francis Friendship.

Francis of Assisi discovered another way. Hearing the Gospel, he cried, "This is what I wish, this is what I seek." He realised peace is not an idea but a way of life.

He began letting go of wealth, status, and comfort, travelling simply and speaking of repentance, kindness, and reconciliation. His greeting became, "Pace e bene" — peace and all good.

For Francis, peace meant harmony with God, others, self, and creation. The more he let go, the freer he became. He wrote that true peacemakers "maintain peace in soul and body."

Real peace begins not by gaining more, but by needing less; not by control, but by trust. Francis asks: what do we carry that prevents peace from growing within us?

One night Bernard of Quintavalle, who later became Francis' first companion, heard Francis praying softly: "Deus meus et omnia." "My God and my all." Those simple words revealed the source of Francis' peace and freedom.

Becoming Peace for the World

MATTHEW 5:14

You are the light
of the world.



Pilgrim Practice

As this pilgrimage ends, choose one way you will continue walking the path of peace.

It may be through prayer, reconciliation, hospitality, care for creation, serving the poor, or becoming a gentler presence within your community.

Carry peace forward.

Prayer

Lord Jesus, make us bearers of your peace in a wounded world. May our lives reveal your compassion, humility, and love. Teach us to honour all people and all creation as gifts of God. And send us out now to live the Gospel gently, courageously, and joyfully. Amen.

Wondering

- What kind of witness does my life offer to the world?
- Where is Christ calling me to become a peacemaker?
- How can love become more visible through the way I live?

As this pilgrimage ends, the real journey begins. Peace is never meant to remain private — it is carried into the world through how we live, speak, forgive, and love.

Francis understood this. People were drawn to him not for power, but for a new way of being marked by humility, mercy, simplicity, and care for the poor. In a divided world, his life became a sign of another Kingdom.

He believed the Gospel is shared not through force, but through Christlike living — prayer,

compassion, reconciliation, and care for creation. The Gospel spreads less through influence than through love.

Our lives always reveal what shapes us: fear or compassion, division or reconciliation, control or trust.

Francis saw all creation as sacred, treating all beings as brothers and sisters. St Bonaventure wrote that holiness grows through humility and ends in love. That is the peace Francis carried — and the peace we are invited to carry now.

Francis called Mary the “Virgin made Church” because in her life he saw complete openness to Christ. Like Mary, Francis believed the Church is called to bear Christ into the world through humility, love, and peace.