

Pray for Us.

I spent the day in prayer with my family. Visiting each one and praying an *Our Father* and a *Hail Mary*. I brought flowers for them, too. It was a nice day spent at the cemetery. Did he say, "Cemetery?" Yes, I did. I visited St. Peter's Cemetery when it was time for my admission interview weekend with the Franciscan Friars. I prayed with my deceased relatives to ask for God's guidance and direction. Who better to pray for me, and with me, than the ones who rest eternally in God's presence? As I visited each grave, I recalled their faith journeys.

I reflected at the grave of my great-grandmother, Helen "Bee" Macnab. She was a woman of faith, who was awarded the Benemerenti Medal. A medal instituted by Pope Gregory XVI in 1832 and is conferred on those who have exhibited long and exceptional service to the Catholic Church, their families and community. "Lord, may I serve your Church and her people with the same commitment," I prayed.

I visited the grave of my great aunt and uncle, Helen and Pix Medler. Helen had a great love of the Blessed Virgin Mary. "Pray that I might have the same zeal for the Mother of God," I said. I then wonder over to the grave of my great uncle Bob Macnab who had a great love of life. "Pray that I might find the goodness in all of life and experience its joys," I said. As I visited more graves, I continued to pray and reflect on their lives.

My trip around the cemetery ended at the grave of my grandfather, Francis "Bill" Macnab. As I stood there, I recalled one of my last conversations with him. We had just finished celebrating Mass in his hospital room. The Franciscan priest said, "He would make a good Franciscan wouldn't he, Bill?" I stood there and nervously laughed. My grandfather eyes widened and said, "Yes, he would." A little time later, he waved me closer and whispered, "Follow your heart my grandson and it will lead you to Him." A few weeks later, he passed away.

I had forgotten that moment until I was standing at his grave, praying with him for my admission interview weekend. Yet, here I was. Tomorrow, I would leave for my interview. I was nervous and his words brought guidance and peace to the journey I was about to embark on.

Today, I am a professed Franciscan friar. God continues to call and I continue to draw strength and support from the lives of my family, the friars and the communion of saints. As you discern our way of life, I encourage you to explore the lives of the Franciscan friars, Poor Clares and Secular Franciscans saints who followed in the footsteps of our founder, St. Francis of Assisi. Learn their stories. Be inspired by their efforts to live the Gospel way of life. Do not stop there. Learn the stories of our friars in the United States. Explore the ministries they founded to serve immigrants, addicts, the poor and hungry. Then ask yourself if God is calling you to our story.

On his deathbed, St. Francis of Assisi said, "I have done what was mine to do. May Christ teach you what is yours!" May you discover your own story within the Franciscan friars as others have before you.

May God bless you and keep you on this journey of faith called life.

Peace and All Good,
Br. Scott Slattum, OFM

Prayer before the San Damiano Crucifix - St. Francis of Assisi

Most High, glorious God,
enlighten the darkness of my heart.
Give me true faith,
certain hope and perfect charity,
sense and knowledge, Lord,
that I may carry out
Your Holy and true command.
Amen.

Personal Reflection:

According to the National Religious Vocation Conference new member to religious life are more likely to say that they were attracted "very much" by the life and works of its founder. Are you attracted to the life of St. Francis of Assisi and St. Clare of Assisi? What appeals to you about their way of life?

Peace Prayer of Saint Francis

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace:
where there is hatred, let me sow love;
where there is injury, pardon;
where there is doubt, faith;
where there is despair, hope;
where there is darkness, light;
where there is sadness, joy.

O divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek
to be consoled as to console,
to be understood as to understand,
to be loved as to love.
For it is in giving that we receive,
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned,
and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.
Amen.