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Capuchin Vocation Update Province of St. Joseph

Franciscan prayer: God's insatiable desire

Part 3 of a series by William Hugo, Capuchin

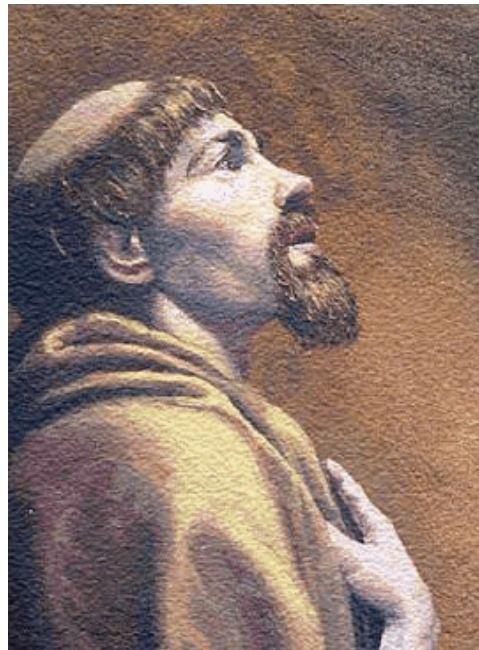
Many people approach me with the question, "What should I do to pray?" The question might suggest that they think prayer starts with them. Instead, I imagine Francis and Clare of Assisi starting with God, and, in particular, with God's desire. Since it is obvious that we can desire all kinds of things that lead us away from God, it is important to examine our desire. But when we start by considering God's desire, I find that questions about our desire fall into place.

When Francis and Clare gaze at God, they see *big desire*. First, God expresses so much desire that the result is creation. God wants to share himself by creating others. But then, for reasons we might describe as sin or limitation, creation becomes separated from God, and God absolutely hates that! Ever since the breach between God and creatures, God has desired to heal it, and every moment of God's existence is filled with God's work to accomplish this. Now that's desire!

Perhaps you are wondering why I refer to *God's desire* rather than *God's will*. I'm fairly convinced that, when most people hear *God's will*, they begin to wonder what concrete things God wants them to do. This often seems to be about what's in God's

head. Francis and Clare seem to focus less on what God wants done and more on *whom* God wants. God wants his creation back. This spiritual intuition is more concerned with God's heart than his head. It's full of passion that seems akin to sexual passion. Well, it should, and that is why I prefer to talk of God's *desire* over his *will*.

The relationship of two people in love is never simply about scant looks back and forth. That is more akin to infatuation. A love relationship begins when people interact on a personal level, and the responses of one grow out of the actions of the other. Our relationship with God is similar. It's about passion for a person, and it begins with God's behavior of creating us and then a host of other actions to which we get to respond. Our choices become clearer once we've experienced God's desire.



The next *Vocation Update* on Franciscan prayer will focus on how Francis and Clare increasingly understand God as they experience his desire. How does God express it? What is God like? What is he willing to do to be successful in passionate pursuit of us?

But be prepared. The answers you discover are likely to change your life!

Join SLS alumni gathering at their alma mater to take another look at Capuchin life.

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