

St. Mary of the Angels-The Porziuncola

Francis was especially fond of St. Mary of the Angels, the “Little Portion”- a tiny chapel hidden away in the woods and marshes near Assisi. The tiny chapel is housed within the basilica and is no longer available for pictures.

St. Mary of the Angels-The Porziuncola



St. Mary of the Angels-The Porziuncola

Francis rebuilt the tiny chapel which became the center of the Franciscan movement. We celebrated Eucharist in the Porziuncola this morning-what a blessing. As of last night, the Cardinals and Bishops that are meeting there had scheduled the chapel for themselves and we were assigned a different chapel. But, Francis interceded and this morning the Chapel suddenly became free and we were able to use it. The entire chapel is about the size of St. Peter's chapel if not smaller. 25 of us were there for Eucharist and 6 of us had to sit up along the altar (another blessing) with others sitting on the floor or in one of the other 10 seats.

Francis loved this chapel because of its dedication to Mary, Mother of the Word.

Here Francis received Clare in 1212 and then took her to Bastia.

In 1216, Francis had a vision and obtained *Il Perdono di Assisi*, approved by Honorius III. In a cave outside of the church, are two pieces of wood from the pulpit that Francis used to tell the people of Assisi about the *Il Perdono*.



Prior to this time, pardon for sins was given by making a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, to Rome or to an Italian mountain dedicated to St. Michael the Archangel, or by joining the crusades. Originally Pardon could be obtained on August 2 by crossing the threshold of the Porziuncola. Later that was extended to everyday.

St. Mary of the Angels-The Porziuncola

Below is the medieval church of St. Stephano which is still in use. It is two or three times the size of the Porziuncola but would be closer to what the original building looked like.

St. Mary of the Angels-The Porziuncola



St. Mary of the Angels-The Porziuncola



St. Mary of the Angels-The Porziuncola



Just a side note-this is the confessional.

St. Mary of the Angels-The Porziuncola



St. Mary of the Angels-The Porziuncola

The Porziuncola conjures up sentiments and thoughts linked with having a center, a heart. This place symbolizes Francis' heart. It invites us to ponder who or what is at the center of life for us.

The Porziuncola invites us to consider our call to preach conversion and peace to all. Formation into a missionary spirit is central to the spirituality of this place.

The Porziuncola calls us to a spirit of reconciliation and forgiveness: toward ourselves, others, and creation and in our relationship to God.

St. Mary of the Angels-The Porziuncola

St. Elizabeth of Hungary the patron of the Secular Franciscans.



St. Mary of the Angels-The Porziuncola

Reflection

Francis hearing the Gospel Feb 23, 1208, gave him a lifelong direction. We listen to the Scriptures to guide our lives.

The Porziuncola is also called the "Sanctuary of Mission." The Franciscan family is founded on the idea of mission. What is yours? How do you plan to carry it out?

St. Mary of the Angels-The Porziuncola

Francis and the cricket.



St. Mary of the Angels-The Porziuncola

