

Rivo Torto

After receiving approval of his way of life, his Rule and Life, from Pope Innocent III (1209), Francis and the brothers set up their initial fraternal way of life at Rivo Torto. Rivo Torto, like so many streams in the area is more akin to a drainage ditch. Francis was familiar with the Rivo Torto area and its people since his family had e land holdings in the area. (Last will and testament of Francis' nephew Piccardo di Angelo di Pica, 1253).

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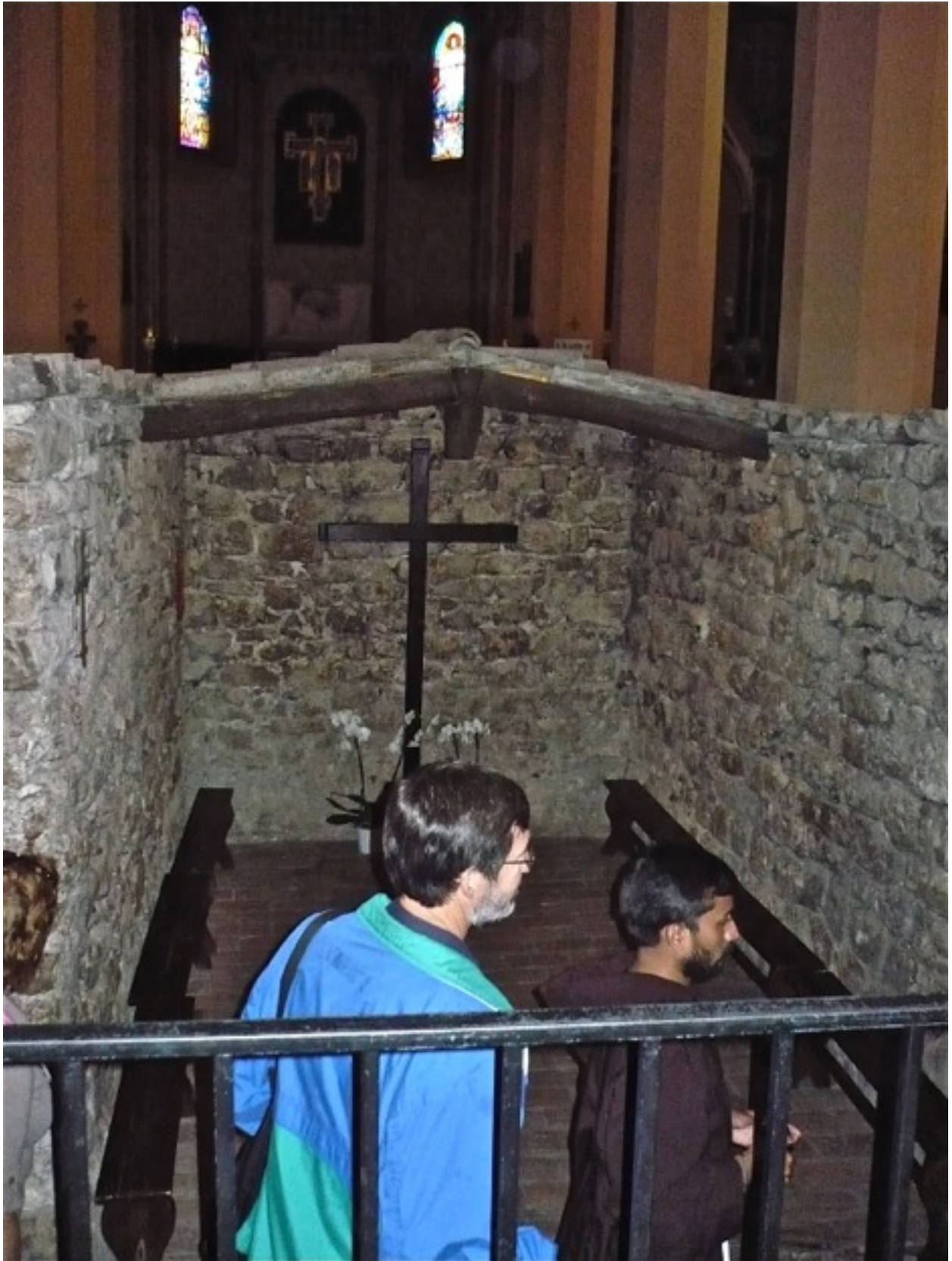


In side the parish church, they have reconstructed a visual of the shed that they occupied. In 1250, an altar was built here establishing this as a place of public prayer. Experts speculate that this depiction is like the Hilton compared to what the men really lived in.

It was here that Francis got the brothers up to eat with a brother who was “dying of hunger”. Francis then told the brothers that each person must consider their own constitution and take whatever his body needed to sustain itself. “Just as we must beware of overindulgence in eating, which harms body and soul, so we must beware of excessive abstinence even more, because the Lord desires mercy and not sacrifice.”

What holds you back from taking care of yourself physically, spiritually? How do you seek balance fore wholeness?

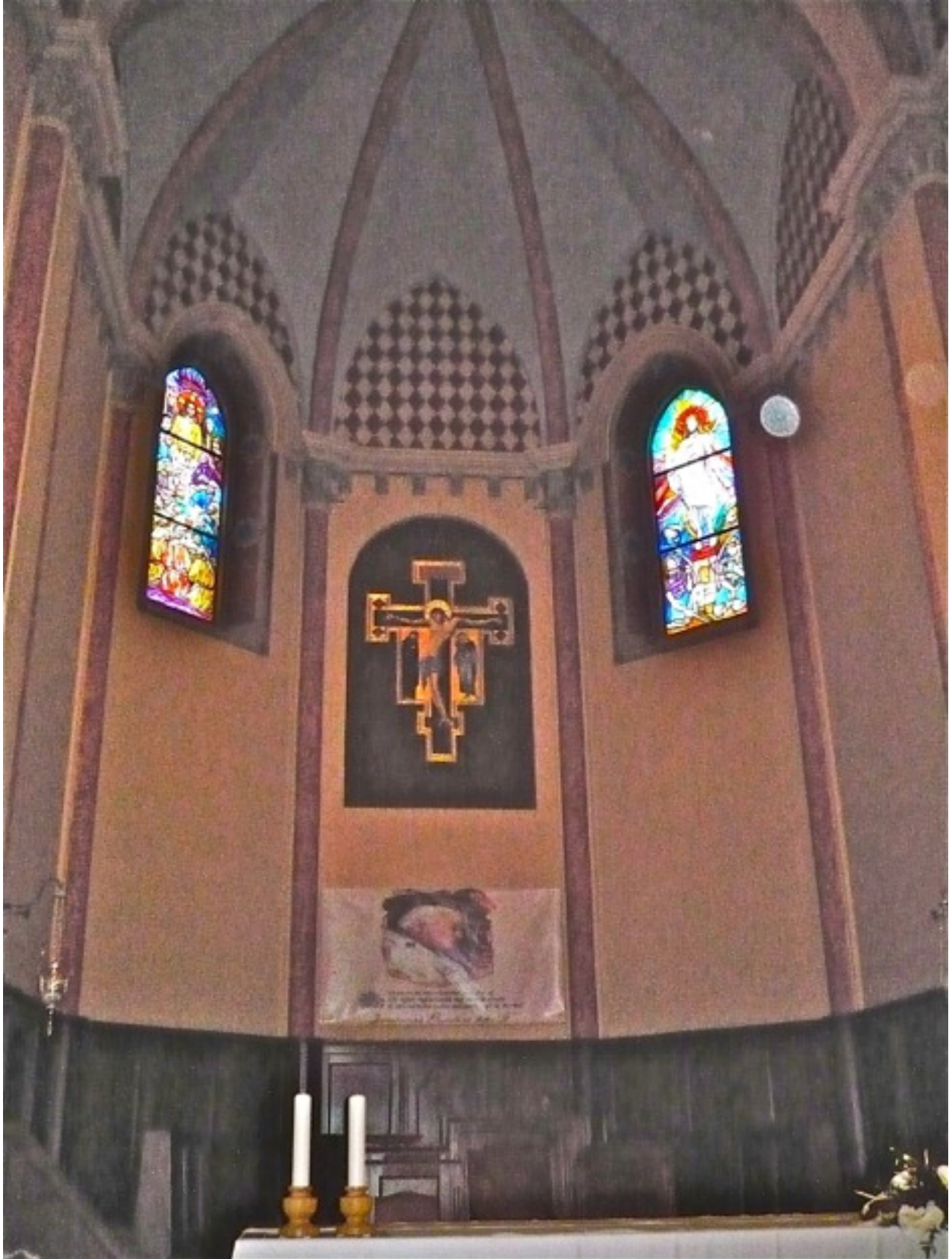
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The new church.

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Rivo Torto was located about a mile from the leprosaria. Every day they walked to the leprosaria to work with the lepers. At night they returned to Rivo Torto for fraternitas, prayer and solitude.

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One night a farmer walked his donkey into the shed, this protoconvento, and reclaimed it for himself. Francis did not wish to argue with the man. He told the brothers that God did not call them to prepare a lodging for a donkey, not have dealings with men. "While we are preaching the way of salvation to people and are giving them wise counsel, we should dedicate ourselves most of all to prayer and thanksgiving.

They left the hut for the use of poor lepers, and moved to a small dwelling near St. Mary of the Porziuncola where they stayed until they acquired that church. The Porziuncola is located a mile in the other direction from the leprosaria.