

## Conquering Fear and Taking Risks

Think of all that you could accomplish if fear wasn't a barrier. Think of the new limits you could reach if you challenged yourself. Oftentimes, we are more than capable of achieving greatness and conquering the hurdles scattered along the track we're running to the finish line, but our fear is holding us back. Sometimes this fear is justified; if you know what you have to do could potentially do more harm than good if you were to fail. You want a job and you want to stand out to your potential employer. You brainstorm various tricks and gimmicks you could utilize to help you stand out from the crowd. This could benefit you should it impress the recruiter, but it could also backfire should the recruiter feel you've overexerted yourself. Sometimes this fear is unfounded; the fear of failure, for example. If you don't try to do something, you have no chance of succeeding, nor failing. If you fail at a task, well, you learn from experience and you can use that experience with your previous failures to guide you into your next endeavor. You can become a more resilient and educated person prepared to take on new challenges, having learned from your previous mistakes. Regardless of whether you succeed or fail, you won't move forward at all without at least trying. It is said that the greater the risk you take, the greater the reward you will receive. We associate riskiness with our own levels of fear. If we are fearful, whether that fear is logical or not, then the endeavor is risky and we should proceed with caution or, worst, not proceed at all. It is important to understand that our brains value comfort over risk-taking. We must remember that our brains, for all their hard work and importance, cannot always be our go-to source for decision making. Sometimes, it is important to lead with your heart. We ought to maintain a balance with the brain and the heart; a balance between logic and emotion to ensure that we are giving ourselves our best chance at success. Our brains will not always guide us in the right direction and relying solely on logic and comfort will leave us stagnated in life. God gave us emotions for a reason and we ought to utilize them just as often as we do our brain power. Go out and do what you know needs to be done to succeed. Follow your heart and take risks- you will quickly find yourself on the right track to success.

~JANE FARMER, FEBRUARY 3, 2025

### “The Last Word”

The old poet sat alone in his candlelit study, quill trembling in his hand. He had written epics, sonnets, words that shaped kings and shattered empires. Yet tonight, ink pooled uselessly on parchment. He had lost his last word. It had been there that morning, curled at the tip of his tongue, nestled between the folds of his mind. A word of perfect beauty, the final piece to a life's work. But when he reached for it, it was gone. Frantic, he tore through old manuscripts, whispering forgotten verses under his breath, trying to lure it back. The shelves loomed, their volumes mocking him. A knock at the door. A woman in a cloak of dusk entered. Her eyes held the weight of centuries, and her voice was the hush before a storm. “You summoned me,” she said. His breath caught. He had heard tales of her—The Collector. The one who came for the final words of men who had nothing left to give. “I'm not ready,” he whispered. She tilted her head. “You were, this morning.” His mind reeled. Had he spoken it aloud? Had the word left him in a careless breath, unnoticed, unguarded? The woman reached into the air and plucked something unseen. She rolled it between her fingers, considering. “Such a rare thing,” she mused. “The last word of a poet.” “Please,” he begged. “Let me have it back.” She smiled, a crescent blade of sorrow. “No.” And with that, she swallowed it whole. The poet gasped, grasping at his throat. There was nothing left. The candle flickered. The ink dried. And in the silence of his study, the last word faded from the world.

~DOMINIC



Digital work by Dominic

## STREET VOICES

**St. Francis Breadline**  
Franciscan Bread for the Poor  
COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

**V5 N8 ■ FEBRUARY 2025**

If you have any content to share for our newsletter please see one of the breadline staff. **We are in need of content such as a poem, lyrics, writing, thoughts, questions, image of your artwork or anything uplifting or informative.** Anyone who contributes content for our newsletter will receive a \$10 gift card.

**The St. Francis Breadline and this publication is made possible by the Our Lady of Guadalupe.**

### FRANCISCAN 360 IS OPEN!

**WHAT:** Case Management, Computer Access, Mailing Address, Health Clinic

**WHERE:** 144 W. 32nd Street

**WHEN:** Monday - Thursday, 9am - 4pm  
Scheduled appointments only on Friday from 9am - 4pm

**WHO:** All are welcome!

**NEW:** Art and Guitar classes, Work space available Tuesday 9am - 11am

**Good Morning!** This week we have writing from Rodney Wise, Timothy Middleton, Wenda, poetry from Gregory Spears and Steven Conti, writing from Derrick Lola, Kevin F., Timothy Middleton, Reginald G., Jane Farmer, and Dominic, a Haiku from M. Dunn, and artwork from Dominic and Montez

Philippians 4:12-13

*“I know how to be brought low, and I know how to abound. In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need. I can do all things through him who strengthens me.”*

**Be the first person to correctly answer all three trivia questions and win a gift card.**

Which planet is closest to the sun?

What is the name of the world's first artificial satellite?

What Renaissance artist painted the Sistine Chapel ceiling?

**Answers to last week's trivia.**

1. What player took over most points scored from Wilt Chamberland? Ans: Kareem Abdu Jabbar
2. Who us the last player to register a triple double for the whole season? Ans: Russell Westbrook
3. Who broke Babe Ruth's record of hitting the most homeruns in the American league? (The record was 60) The record has since been broken again! Ans: Roger Maris broke Babe Ruth's record with 61 OArron Judge broke this record with 62

**St.** Francis, I have been coming to st Francis, for the past 35 to 40yrs I have seen many people come and go,back then I was homeless and in a very bad way,most of the time the sandwiches from the church would be the only thing for me to eat, the world was different then, I am very grateful for this church!! It has grown so much over the years,I prayed to my higher power who I choose to call God to help me rise up!! From my situation, and he did ,but I had to do my part,I stopped doing bad things and did a 360 degree turn around, hence the social service unit a st Francis which was a excellent idea,it helped me very much, this is the only church open 7 days a week holidays, doesn't matter, they work very hard all staff and volunteers, who are my friends and associates, who I am so grateful to have in my life,all the best to all and please continue to do the good work!!! Stay prayed up my friends.

~ TIMOTHY MIDDLETON



## 5 Stages of Change

**Pre contemplation** 1. The cost of the problem behavior (such as drug use) is not yet recognized. The individual is in denial and is not seriously considering changing their behavior. They may have made previous attempts to change but have since given up.

**Contemplation** 2. The individual is experiencing ambivalence about change. They can see reasons to change their behavior, but they are still hesitant. The problem behavior continues

**Preparation** 3. The individual had decided to change their behavior, and to think about how to do so. During this stage they will begin to make change, minor changes to support their goals, but they might not have completely ended the unwanted behavior.

**Action** 4. Significant steps are taken to end the problem behavior. The individual might be avoiding triggers, reaching out for help, or taking other steps to avoid temptation.

**Maintenance** 5. The changes made during the action stage are maintained. The individual may continue to face challenges, but at this point they have successfully changed their behavior for a significant period of time.

**Relapse** After making changes, some individuals will return to their previous problem behavior. This can happen at any time during the previous stages. Not everyone will experience relapse, but it is always a risk.

~DERRICK LOLA

## VOICES

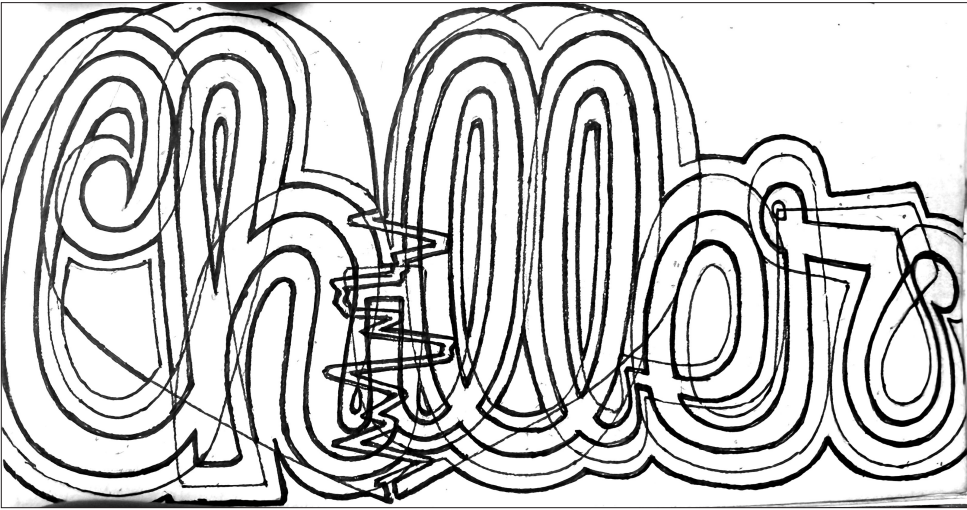
Voice's play a big part in our lives whether you realize it or not. Just about everything that we do , we use our brain to carry the task for whatever we are thinking at the moment. According to the Bible. We have two forces that are at war with each other. Our flesh and our spirit. (Galatians chapter 5). They are constantly fighting against each other. But, not only that, our thinking plays a big part in whether which direction we will go. Jesus said "My sheep hears my voice". God's people look to hear the voice of God. A lot of people that we hear about, like on the news who do bad things most of the time , they blame it on the voice or voices in my head. Just like our flesh and spirit. There's God and Satan. Voice's are coming from all directions. People, social media, television, music, book's etc. we have to be careful of what we look at and listen to. So, today if you want to be led by the Holy Spirit? Trust in Jesus Christ and His direction.

~RODNEY WISE

## THE STORY

LOBSTER  
WHO DO YOU LOVE WITH THIS CRAB FEST THEY HAVE EVERY YEAR  
WELL NO I NEVER MADE YET TO ONE OF THESE FAMOUS EVENTS  
I SURE I WILL EVERY SEAFOOD YOU CAN THINK OF I WOULD SAY  
RED LOBSTER YES I HAVE BEEN HERE BEFORE WELL I MENU ISN'T  
QUITE THAT LONG IT'S A SHORT SUPPLY OF SEAFOOD FYOU CAN RECIEVE  
NOW GET THIS THE BISCUIT IS YES THE FAMOUS ON THE MENU YES  
AMAZING WELL I THINK IM GOING TO PUT THE SEAFOOD PALOZZA  
ON MY LIST TO DO #DONTLIKECLOSEDTIGHTSPACES BUT I DON'T  
LIKE A LARGE CROWD OF PEOPLE WHAT WOULD YOU THINK ABOUT  
THIS SITUATION .THE SEAFOOD GURU WHO IS HE OR SHE CALL ME?  
#COFFEEANDMILK

~WENDALEESHELTONMENNDES



Drawing by Montez

If your heart has hate,  
You'll never know love  
You'll never know  
Your angel from above  
If your heart knows love  
Don't let it feel hate  
To be old and alone  
Will be your fate.

~GREGORY SPEARS

## Fixing Our Eyes on Jesus

Such a slip can also happen in our desire to walk in God's ways. When the religious leaders persecuted Jesus for not keeping the Jewish law (John 5:16), He warned that they'd become so fixated on studying and enforcing the law that they were missing the person the law pointed to. " These are he very scriptures that testify about me, yet you refuse to come to me to have life." (v. 39-40). In trying to be before God, the religious leaders focused on flowing the Jewish law and making sure everyone else did too, Likewise, in our zeal for God, we may keep up with good things - church attendance, Bible study, charity work and even get others to join us. But we can become so focused on them that we miss the person we're doing them for - Jesus. In all we do, lets ask God to help us fix our eyes on Christ (Hebrews 12:2) he alone is "the way and the truth and the life." ( John 14:6)

~REGINALD G.

## Legacy

This past week my daughter presented me with my fifth grand daughter! Such a blessing! Family legacy is so precious to my family its the story of family experiences, accomplishments, births and who were the forebears of the family! My personal legacy is the guidance I provided for my children, grandchildren as well as the support I provided to community members in need of assistance whether it was large or small. My elders taught me to always be your brother's keeper treat others as you would like to be treated! I want to be remembered as one who could be counted on and who's heart was golden!

~KEVIN F.



Haiku image by M. Dunn

Happy Valentine's Day

Like fresh snow falling,  
On warm February day-  
You melt my heart.

by M. Dunn