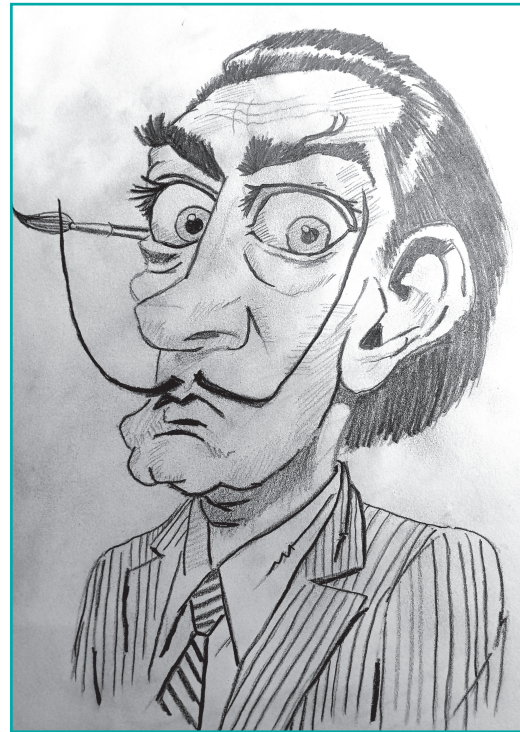


A little more than a week into sobriety, which I wanted no part of, I find Christ in the hope of something better, even in the want of the substance that ruins my life. I know it sounds strange. But, aren't we, as humans, always searching for something above what we're experiencing? Giving it much thought, if only to preoccupy my mind from wanting to get high, I realize that having hope, alone, proves that Christ dwells in us. If not, how could we desire something better, the very meaning of hope? Belief in anything is the rock solid foundation of faith in it. How much more so in Christ? Even when we're disappointed, how can we be so if our expectations are not to have expected that which He promises? Years ago, when I lost my service dog, "Sally Pickles," because of a decision I'd made while under the influence, I never gave up hope that one day I might see her again, even if from a distance. And there she was, a couple of weeks ago, still remembering me. Christ had answered my continuing prayer. How much more will He answer the prayers of those who petition His mercy upon those who seek Heaven? I know Sally Pickles is where she's supposed to be, and I'm grateful. Ask yourself today; Do I have hope or disappointment in anything? If so, how could it be if you have not the expectation of far better? Belief in Christ creates optimism, a higher standard. It's unavoidable. So go with it! Yell it from the rooftop, if you get the biblical drift Expect better in all circumstances. Let it be a testimony of faith in something better. If others are lucky, they'll hear what you're saying, spiritually, and they'll grow. In retrospect, I have. I've learned that getting high is a temporary state of misery that disguises itself as pleasure. Sure, we believe it feels great, until afterwards, when the misery and guilt kick in. Does it guarantee I won't pick up again? Hardly? Only faith in Christ can do that. I fully expect that, if He heard my petitions to see my dog again, how much more does He listen, intently, to my desire to finally remain clean.

~JOSEPH G.



Drawing by Khari



## “The Clock That Devours Men”

The machine broke on a Tuesday, or at least, what the man thought was Tuesday. The numbers on the dashboard were twitching, bleeding into each other like oil in water. He remembered a flash of light, the shriek of broken time, and then heat — a heat that peeled thought from bone. When he crawled from the capsule, his boots began to melt. Red dunes hissed with rage under a blistering sky. No birds. No shadows. The horizon pulsed like a wound. He coughed, and blood trickled from his nose, evaporating mid-air. The machine, twitching like a dying insect, lurched again. It didn't know how to move forward anymore — it could only spiral sideways. Somewhere beyond time. The next place was wet. A jungle so dense he had to punch through vines that breathed. The air tasted of metal and sugar and something that remembered being alive. Insects the size of cats moved in the periphery, whispering in clicks. One stared at him — a fly with compound eyes like galaxies, filled with faces. He screamed until the humidity stole the sound. Later, lightning struck, and the forest became a cathedral of fire. He ran as the heat devoured the sky. Bugs didn't burn. They watched. Then: another convulsion. The machine folded, groaned, and dumped him in a world ruled by mushrooms the size of trees. They loomed in silence, spore-filled and patient. The air was thin, laced with glittering dust. His lungs refused it, but his body took it anyway. The fungi whispered in dreams. They showed him before. Not the before he knew — not his century — but the Before-Before. When time was a throat and Earth was still learning to breathe. They showed him the first scream. He woke up choking on black filaments that grew from his skin. The machine made no more noise. It had become a fossil. Or perhaps an organ. He couldn't tell. Now, he walks. Through ash fields. Through steam bogs. Through places not meant for memory. He can no longer remember his name. The only thing he knows is this: Time doesn't run forward. It feeds. And he's still being digested.

~DOMINIC

# STREET VOICES

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

**V5 N19 ■ MAY 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, Dominic, Cora Shaw, Jane Farmer, Kevin F., and Joseph G., poetry from Stryker, and art work from Jim C., and Khari.

*Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith.*

HEBREWS 12:1-2

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

Hosting football, hockey, and baseball (respectively), in what non-coastal US city will you find Nissan Stadium, Bridgestone Arena, and Hawkins Field?

Who is the all-time leading scorer in NBA history?

Which MLB player was nicknamed “The Bambino”?

**Answers to last weeks trivia questions**

When was Netflix founded: 1997, 2001, 2009, 2015? (1997)

How many keys does a classic piano have? (88)

What happened on July 20th, 1969? (Apollo 11 landed on the Moon)



## WATCH OUT FOR UNBELIEF

As moral free agents on this earth, we have the choice to believe whatever we choose to believe. In the book of Matthew Chapter 13:58, Jesus was doing mighty miracles around the people but, for some reason he couldn't continue because, it's not like he just couldn't anymore but, the people's UNBELIEF, prevented him from moving forward. UNBELIEF is actually a sin. When you choose not to believe the word of God. Not to believe the Good News or the Gospel. UNBELIEF will hinder a lot of people from moving forward with God. It will prevent people from entering the kingdom of God. God blesses the good and the bad believe it or not, some situations or circumstances just didn't happen by as we call it LUCK. Something's. Things in our lives where orchestrated by Almighty God Himself. He did it to show you that HE IS REAL!!!

~RODNEY WISE





## WISDOM

With the tongue we praise our Lord and Father and with it we curse human beings who have been made in God’s likeness. Out of the same mouth comes praise and cursing. It should not be.

James 3;13. Who is wise and understanding among you? Let them show it by their good life, by deeds done in the humility that comes from wisdom. But if you harbor bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast about or deny the truth. Such wisdom does. not come down from heaven but is earthly unspiritual, demonic. For where you have envy and selfish ambition, there you disorder and every evil practice.

In surrendering our heart and minds to this wisdom, God’s word will guide, nourish and strengthen, heal and protect our lives daily. It’s wisdom provides, and instills knowledge how we should live, inspires and enhances our growth, development, and promotes JUSTICE. You have opportunity for searching out his word for problem solving solutions, consolation during burdensome. (oppressive , painful, and disappointing circumstances. Winning isn’t it but taking a stand by exercising God’s word, his wisdom against negativity, darkness, and cords of adversity that the enemy try to conqueror and plague or torment and harass you concerning his tactics and tools/devices of evil, opposing good in you now because you’re God’s word in action concerning your personal choices and livelihood, relationships and career goals or business related endeavors, and your spirituality, etc. Putting aside carnal inclinations and fleshly gratification, works of the flesh as mentioned envy, selfish ambitions, slander and behavior of evil practice (wrongdoing) is one’s willingness for change and advancing mental and spiritual growth and maturity causing positive outcome securing such one’s future endeavors and destiny, as well as encouraging productivity in building, strengthening, or promoting wholesome and meaningful relationships complimenting each other, bearing witness to God’s word as peacemakers who sow in peace and reap a harvest of righteousness, being pure thinkers, peace-loving and considerate, (Human mind and heart matters relating spirituality concerning God’s Law) is essential. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall inherit your kingdom. Bearing witness to his written word, against the odds I’ve survived as some others, and GOD’S anchoring HOPE is for sustaining and protecting from evil, so here we are in a world of surprises and disappointments, it’s opportunity to carefully review each circumstance, our choices, life’s direction, and advance higher dimensions, reach peaks into our future. God provides wisdom and confidence for overcoming, having valleys or wilderness experiences doesn’t eliminate ones greater purposes concerning manifold blessings, and future aspects. God’s wisdom grants Hope from our past to present. Letting go of the past, moving forward from the earthly and unspiritual is, it. from carnal to spiritual. There’s Call for CHANGE. Reading God’s life’s example enhances, encourages, preserving in trials, fortitude, strength, confidence and hope. Participating and practicing his character developing fruitfulness and omitting selfish ambitions, envy, etc., Live Love, lives are predestined Playfully focus oneself perspective, having consideration for others likewise never feel less than who he has created you as or to become. Your life is predestined. Your minds matter, your lives matter especially when in intimate connection and centering focus on the highest power, in relationship with Jesus. He is not without clear views in nature with his angles in heavenly places through creation, in the whereabouts of mankind concerning light or darkness, our choices pertaining works and deeds of righteousness or unrighteousness. Word Up, Jesus is not under, calls us from the deep to his light, (wisdom), up and out of situations causing bondage, whereby unintelligent irrational thinking, ignorance causing barriers, and captivity forbidden freedom, and well health fitness. One’s life shouldn’t be prolonged it’s destiny through wrong ambitions or wrong influence concerning falsehood or above mentioned of another. God’s word warned and forbid such. Jesus commanded beforetime Pharaoh, Let my people Go. He knew their hearts and motives against his word concerning his good purposed .and openly exposed their tendencies of wrongdoing. Ones habits shouldn’t be as theirs and lives fruitful and meaningful with this principle of sowing and reaping, being recipient of what you give out, and reaping a bountiful harvest by appropriating this word sincerely and respectful in obedience to God. Being abreast of such wrongdoing, motives not crowning your honor or promoting your desires for successful accomplishments is about being in God’s wisdom, staying ahead of the game.

~CORA SHAW

## Celebration

At the time of this writing I’m watching the homecoming of Pope Francis! A man who cherished the love of his fellow man and women and children! He spoke out on the misdeeds of man, the misfortunes of man and the mistakes that men make! There’s no room for hate, there’s no room for prejudice and so forth! Be your brothers keeper treat others equally! During my 69 years on this planet Pope Francis was one of the most caring, giving wanting to walk upon the people gentlemen there was! As those who praise him during his funeral mass celebrate his life and his presence!

~KEVIN F

## No More Fear

When you have God on your side, there is no need to fear the outside world. You are more than capable of overcoming any obstacle or roadblocks you find yourself stumbling upon with the unmatched strength of the Lord on your side. We are all God’s children and he is here to love and support us through our journeys here on this Earth, but we must also do our parts and follow His word to the best of our abilities. With God’s strength and love, we are unstoppable against darker forces that seek to tear us down, but if we do not live by God’s commands, how can we expect Him to save us from the situations we put ourselves in? Living a holy lifestyle is not only for our own benefits, and not only to please God, but it benefits those around us as well. Our communities prosper when we are all in accordance with the commands God has given us. God’s commands were given unto us to prepare us for a path of love and light, shying us away from the darkness that unfortunately exists in this world. While our God is all-loving, we cannot expect Him to support and protect us when we are walking in the darkness, when the path to salvation and redemption is an easy path to follow. Accepting God into your heart is the key to eliminating any fears or uncertainties you may have in this mortal world and living the life intended for us by God will ensure smooth-sailing.

~JANE FARMER



In the still of cold and lonely nights,  
Shadows stretch like whispers, cloaked in frights,  
They dance along the walls, a haunting sight,  
Judging dreams that flicker, lost in flight.

Under the silver gaze of a watchful moon,  
They gather in corners, a silent tune,  
Casting doubts in echoes, a soft monsoon,  
Filling the silence, a shadowed commune.

Ghostly figures loom where warmth once thrived,  
In the heart of the dark, where hopes have contrived,  
They murmur judgments, making courage deprived,  
As the chill wraps around, ambitions are shrived.

Yet in their dark embrace, a lesson lies,  
For shadows are born from light that defies,  
They remind us of fears, but also the skies,  
The strength to rise up, where our spirit flies.

So let them judge, these silhouettes of gray,  
For within their cold realm, truths find a way,  
To ignite the fire that flickers and sways,  
In the heart of the night, hope sparks a brave day.

Embrace the shadows, let them fall behind,  
For within the cold grip, a warmth you will find,  
As the dawn breaks anew, with dreams intertwined,  
In the tapestry of life, let your spirit unwind.

~STEVEN CONTI, A.K.A. STRYKER



Comic by Jim C.