

Minding Your Surroundings

We are who we surround ourselves with. We emulate the behaviors of those we are around the most. You must decide early on in your life who you want to be in this world and the impact that you want to leave after you exit. Do you want to bring peace and good to humanity or chaos and wickedness? Oftentimes we know exactly who we are dealing with, but second guess ourselves. We make excuses for the actions of the people we call our friends. We give endless chances to them; to correct their behavior and atone for their past misdeeds. But how many times must a person choose to put you in harm's way before you finally say, "enough is enough"? How many chances can a person get to right their wrongs before you finally realize that their actions are not mistakes, but intentional and a testament to who they are as a person? You must not endanger yourself to satisfy the needs of others. While we are all on this journey called life, all trying to improve ourselves, all trying to experience spiritual growth to return home one day with the Lord, you must always put yourself first and not allow yourself to be taken down by people with no intentions of uplifting you. Sometimes these people, not only have no intention of uplifting you, but are on a chosen path of destruction and are seeking people, such as you, to follow along with them. It's easy to get caught up in following crowds and blindly agreeing with those you consider friends, but it takes courage to stand up for yourself and your spirit and do the opposite; do what is right in the face of peer pressure regardless of the consequences. We all have choices to make in this world. We all have our own paths to walk. Choose your friends wisely as you just might find yourself mirroring the behavior of those closest to you.

- JANE FARMER

AMERICA'S FREEDOM

Rich and Famous, Poor or needy? What brings about change and what effect does change have in our country, city or our personal lives. What and who produces a stronger effect on human minds or livelihood? where does the change begin. All over the world there are crys and crises, yet it does not appear to somehow others survive the chaotic extremities and adversities/obstacles of life. Dealing and coping life's adverse or challenging circumstances can be very difficult at times, especially when perils consist of life or risk of well being. In America and even New York there are risk factors when it comes to safety matters, and unresolved ratio of crimes more prevalent in some places than others, where scenes of tragedies, homelessness, economy and survival issues, poverty and diseases exist and with these bondages and captivity which some are victims of, it's yet perseverance against the odds with a greater purpose in our striving for FREEDOM. Being alleviated from the pressures and tenseness or toxic effect, wear and tear through sometimes of everyday living. Having and developing CONFIDENCE for our FREEDOM in mind and spirit also aides moral strength for survival and we're no longer slaves to circumstances. Our Freedom as Americans has its privileges because we're allowed Freedom to Choose, and understand the power and consequences of right choices. Freedom of Religion, Religious Rights, is also an established Law in America without prejudices, discrimination, yet in recognition and referencing fear[respect] for OUR CREATOR, preference is American culture and standards, and it's dignity and standards shouldn't be trespassed or violated. Sometimes Living amongst a world's influence surrounding darkness where Gods word reflects light and our spirituality brings elimination, and releases energies for producing substance for our being, LIFE. It's the FREEDOM God grant us through his spirit channeling divine blessings for miraculous and v life changing experiences. What's ones life changing possibilities? What makes our country, city greater, overcoming any obstacle it faces? Reasoning it how creation began and whose Architect of creation, whose creator? In the beginning God created man, breathe into a human soul and it became in existence, it's where it began, FREEDOM, through his spirit. ABBA FATHER.

He came to set the captive free. Tired of life's circumstances, suffering, misfortunes? Life isn't treating you fair enough? You don't have to stay there, rise and proclaim your FREEDOM, your liberty is his justice, his unmerited favor, God's gift of love/provision. Position yourself, set focus to your life's direction, in spite of the odds, you can arrive your destiny, you're born to win, not failure, God will guide you through your tunnel in life's journey. Go for it.

- CORA SHAW

Across the sea, a wisdom old,
A gentle path, a story told.
Not just a reason to survive,
But why, with joy, we truly thrive.
What you love, a fervent fire,
Fuels the soul, lifts spirits higher.
A hidden song, a silent dream,
The vibrant current of life's stream.
What you're good at, skilled and bright,
A practiced hand, a guiding light.
Talents honed, with graceful ease,
Bringing forth a lasting peace.
What the world needs, a call so clear,
To mend a hurt, to quell a fear.
A helping hand, a thoughtful deed,
Planting seeds where all can feed.
What you can be paid for, just and true,
Sustains your life, sees you through.
A fair exchange, for work well done,
Beneath the moon, beneath the sun.
Where these four rivers softly meet,
A sacred space, incredibly sweet.
There lies your ikigai, strong and deep,
The promises your spirit keeps.
So search within, with open heart,
To find your purpose, play your part.
For in this quest, so pure and kind,
A life of meaning, you will find.

-KHARI

STREET VOICES

St. Francis Breadline Franciscan Bread for the Poor COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

V5 N24 ■ JUNE 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! Today we have writing from Dominic, poetry form Anthony Kegarise, writing from Kevin, writing from Seraphiel, poetry from Stryker, writing from Cora Shaw, writing from Rodney Wise, bible passage shared by Mercedes, poetry from Khari, writing from Khari artwork from Montez and a comic from Lola Derrick.

PSALMS 23:5

*You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies.
You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.*

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

Which Knicks guard won the Slam Dunk contest three times?

Name one team that played the first official NBA game?

Who wore 613 for the Knicks?

Answers to last weeks trivia questions

What is the rarest and most expensive spice in the world by weight? Saffron

Who has won the most total Academy Awards? Walt Disney

Which country has won the most FIFA World Cup titles? Brazil

*You can be a tiger
It will make you wiser
Or you can be a lion
And you can die trying
Beware on the road of life ahead
Dream into reality when you go to bed
Think in your head before the words are said
And it will all be okay in the end*

- ANTHONY KEGARISE

LUKE 16:19-31 (The Rich Man and Lazarus)

“There was a rich man who was dressed in purple and fine linen and lived in luxury everyday. At his fate was laid a beggar named Lazarus, covered with sores and longing to eat what fell from the rich man's table. Even the dogs came and licked his sores. “The time came when the beggar died and the angels carried him to Abraham's side. The rich man also died and was buried. In Hades, where he was in torment, he looked up and saw Abraham far away, with Lazarus by his side. So he called to him, ‘Father Abraham, have pity on me and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, because I am in agony in this fire.’ But you received your good things, while Lazarus received bad things, but now he is comforted here and you are in agony. And besides all this, between us and you a great chasm has been set in place and you a great chasm has been set in place, so that those who want to go from here to you cannot, nor can anyone cross over from there to us.’ “He answered, ‘Then I beg you, father, send Lazarus to my family, for I have five brothers. Let him warn them, so that they will not also come to this place of torment.’ Abraham replied, ‘They have Moses and the Prophets; let them listen to them.’ “ ‘No Father Abraham.’ he said, ‘but if someone from the dead goes to them, they will repent.’ “He said to him, ‘If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be convinced even if someone rises from the dead.’”

- MERCEDES

Where the Sky Forgot to Close

He fell — not through space, but through feeling. The dimension folded open like soft skin, bleeding emotion in slow gravity. His eyes adjusted not to light, but to ache. And then, suddenly: He was inside a cathedral the size of a planet. The architecture was alive — not organic, not machine — but woven from longing. Towers built of translucent ribs hummed low requiems. Walls sang when touched. Every surface was made of remembered things, solidified through sorrow. He walked over a floor paved with glass, beneath which entire lifetimes played out, muted and looping. Children growing old without laughter. Lovers mouthing apologies they never voiced. A soldier releasing a bird instead of pulling a trigger. All these things happened at once, and none of them could be changed. The air shimmered with forgotten names. He spoke one aloud — not knowing how he knew it — and a door opened. Behind it: a world of giant statues made from the moments people almost loved each other. A woman turning toward a man, about to confess. A friend almost calling before the accident. A child almost reaching for their mother’s hand. Frozen nearly. Marble “what-ifs.” He tried to leave — but the sky above wouldn’t close. Because it was made of memory, too. A ceiling of stars rearranging themselves to spell the regrets of every soul who’d ever lived. And one star blinked out. Then another. The sky was forgetting. He began to run. Not from danger — but from grief’s geometry, which was too vast to look at directly. But wherever he stepped, the floor beneath him changed — it displayed his own unlived paths. One showed him holding someone in the rain. Another, laughing without shame. Another, dying at peace. He tried to scream — but here, sound was sacred, and could not be wasted. So he wept instead. And the building listened. It bent gently toward him, its arches dimming with compassion. One of the statues cracked open — not breaking, but blooming — revealing a new path. It led down. Not to hell. But to somewhere small, and still, and possibly warm. He stepped forward. Not knowing if he was leaving the place, or becoming part of it.

-DOMINIC

THE KING

In today’s world we seem to have titles for just about everything. Don’t get me wrong. Kings and Queens were in existence for centuries. In today’s society, the word Goat seems to be the latest term people are using these days. Goat meaning: Greatest Of All Time. This is the crime that the world seems to be like promoting. You see it in everything from sports to entertainment etc. But, there is one king who sacrificed his love for you and me. His name is Jesus. There is nothing you can compare with what our Lord and Savior has done for humanity. The gift of salvation, and the gift is FREE. Jesus is not a king He is the KING OF KINGS. This is not something somebody came up with, this is written in the HOLY Word of God. Straight from the Heavenly Father. John :1 “In the beginning was the word and the word was God and the word was with God”.

- RODNEY WISE

We are blessed

You learn along the way how to face adversity and not succumb to daily grind. How to learn from own mistakes and avoid repeating them in the future. Short of this routine, you are going to continue to remain in your predicament. Learn as you live you will turn the corner to no return. And one day, you will look back with no regrets. Life is up and down. Never wonder why you had to go what you went thru. Focus on what is coming ahead and be positive and grateful for what the Lord has saved for you. This is all you can do. The universe works in a mysterious way. Get up when you are down and be happy when things are looking good. Going forward, swim thru the little waves, avoid the large ones, and appreciate getting to the shore safe and sound. We are all blessed. As long as you keep this in mind. And you are no different. AMEN.

- KEVIN

Beneath the waking sky’s soft pastel hue,
Summer mornings whisper, gentle and anew.
Golden rays stretch out, warm and bright,
Chasing away the shadows of night.

The air is thick with citrus scent,
A lazy breeze, a sweet content.
Dewdrops sparkle on leaf and blade,
Nature’s jewels in dawn’s parade.

Birds serenade with cheerful trill,
While butterflies dance, soft and still.
The world awakens, vibrant, alive,
In summer’s glow, we thrive and strive.

As the sun climbs higher in azure height,
Heat wraps earth in glowing light.
Fields shimmer with wheat and corn,
Crisp and lush, from freshly born.

Mornings drift into blazing noon,
A furnace’s hum, a warming tune.
Pools invite, their mirror gleam,
A cool escape from sun’s fierce beam.

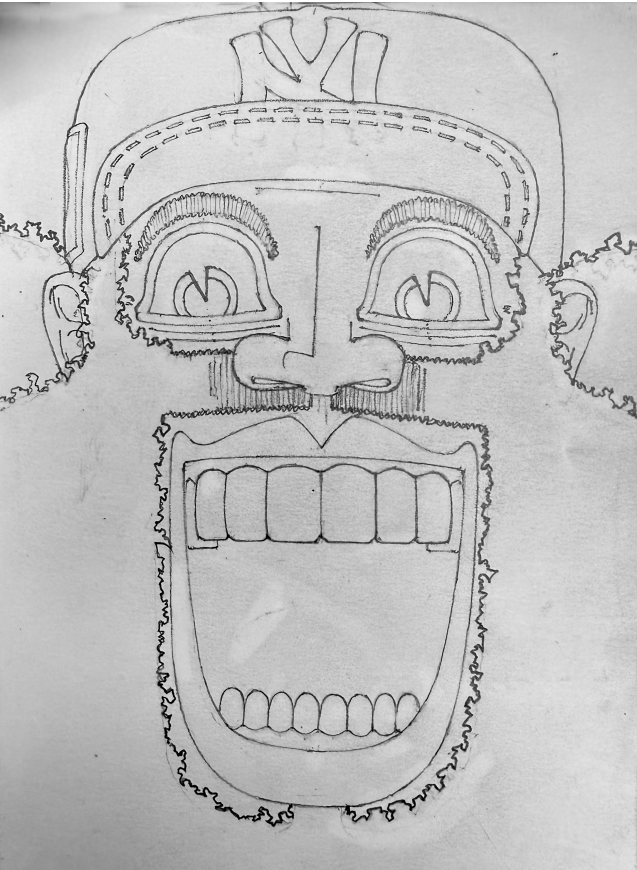
Days stretch long, unending, bright,
Radiant beams in endless flight.
Summer’s warmth, both fierce and kind,
Fills the heart and warms the mind.

Beneath the sun’s relentless blaze,
We find our joy, amid the haze.
In mornings sweet and days so hot,
Summer’s melody is never forgot.

- STEVEN CONTI, A.K.A. STRYKER



Comic by Lola Derrick



Drawing by Montez

When Pain Shows

Our pain is a thing that comes and goes.
What we do with it is a deciding factor in how we grow.
How we hold it in.
And, how we choose to let it show.
Determines the situation we are in at our very low.
We stuff it down to hide it so nobody can see.
And, we finally let it out when we are alone and left to be.
Because, that is the only way that we know how to grieve.
Eventually turning us cold mistaken we are free.

-SERAPHIEL