

The Bench

There was a man who sat alone on a bench in the middle of the city.

He was slouched, shivering slightly, and staring at the ground like it owed him something. His backpack was torn. His shoes didn't match. His eyes looked hollow, like they'd been emptied out over time.

People passed by.

A businessman glanced down, frowned, and dropped a five-dollar bill at the man's feet without stopping.

A woman from a local church handed him a pamphlet and said, "There's hope in Christ," before hurrying off to her lunch meeting.

A street medic crouched down and asked, "You hurt anywhere?" The man shook his head. The medic nodded, tapped his shoulder, and moved on.

Still he sat.

Then another man came along—ragged coat, scuffed hands, face weathered by wind and time.

He didn't say anything at first. Just sat beside him. Not close enough to crowd him, but close enough to mean it.

After a minute, he pulled a tangerine from his pocket, peeled it slowly, and handed the man half.

They sat there chewing in silence, the peel curling between them like a question that didn't need an answer.

Finally, the first man said, "You one of those outreach workers?"

The other shook his head. "Nah. I've just been here before."

"On this bench?"

"In this place. Where you don't know what day it is. Where your name feels like it doesn't belong to anybody anymore. Where people either look past you or down at you, but never at you."

The first man stared at him. "You get out?"

The other nodded.

"How?"

"I didn't do it alone."

They sat a while longer. Watched pigeons argue. Watched people hustle past like the world was on fire.

The man with the torn backpack said, "Everyone else just gives me things and keeps walking."

His companion smiled gently. "That's because they think you're a problem. I don't. I think you're a person."

They didn't hug. No violins played. The moment passed like all moments do.

But later, when a woman sat down crying on the same bench, the man with the torn backpack reached into his bag, pulled out the other half of the sandwich he'd saved, and offered it without a word.

Because now he'd been there.

And now he knew the way out.

- RHYAN SCORPIO-RHYS

We brave the world, day-by-day, with the help of our loving and all-powerful God. No matter how hard life gets, we persist because of the strength he gives us. Praise God- He is the most high and it's our duty to honor him by abiding by His word. We aren't perfect and will never live up to God himself, but we can try our best everyday to live, as best as we can, to His standards and follow in His footsteps. We were meant to live with Him again. This world is only temporary. He gives us so many opportunities to rejoin Him so why do so many choose to waste them? Listen to the Lord and follow Him before it's too late.

- MERCEDES

STREET VOICES

St. Francis Breadline Franciscan Bread for the Poor COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

V5 N33 ■ AUGUST 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 Mercedes, Original song lyrics from Timothy D.Falvey, writing from Jane Farmer, a short story from Rhyan Scorpio-Rhys, writing from Rodney Wise, writing from Sawanda Stewart, poetry from Seraphiel, writing from Dwan Harris, writing from Henry Yee, writing from Kevin F., and artwork from Lola Derrick.

Psalms 34:4–5, 8

I sought the LORD, and He answered me and delivered me from all my fears. Those who look to Him are radiant, and their faces shall never be ashamed. Oh, taste and see that the LORD is good! Blessed is the man who takes refuge in Him!

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

Who is Paul David Hewson?

Who is Robert Allen Zimmerman?

Who is Farookh Bulsara

Answers to last weeks trivia questions

What is St. Francis known as the patron saint of?
Animals and the environment.

What did St. Francis do that caused friction with his father?
He gave away his family's wealth.

What did St. Francis do at Greccio that is significant?
He created the first nativity scene

Faded Love

**It only takes one look from you before I begin to dissolve.
The blankness of my stare from not knowing questioning if I even belong.
Suddenly then I am left with no questions left to be solved.**

**Your eyes are soft, and your meaning is clear,
I wish they whispered of the love that we both used to hold so dear.
Intentions drowning while hidden behind so many unseen tears.**

**We each used to have a flame that would shine so bright.
Both of us had the same dream of sharing one life.
Which is nearly extinguished, bringing a chill of the cold night.**

**When there is nothing left to say or nothing left in my power that I can do.
Then there are no more common energies that are left to be misconstrued.
Everything I did was to try to make this right because you are the one I chose.**

**With the end being so near I can't be myself unless I still try.
I believed we would share last names, and never say goodbye.
But, no matter how much it hurts. It's better than living a lie.**

- SERAPHIEL

Writing could have been so creative to expand and enhance the mind to goal reaching, active and outgoing in life. Having a supportive attitude on encouraging one another to strive and completion of stability towards successful of hope for the future. Evolving to communicate in social environments helping to increase the life of venturing into places that never been before. Exploring other different cultures and nationalities with new life styles to learning abilities inherited. Involving with meeting and social of or to people. Problem solving easier to be around that type of atmosphere.

-DAWN HARRIS

✿ Belief in Jesus Christ. ✿

Life's narrow and twisting turning roads
Heart feels heavy, is there a way home?
They told me about some man who lived years ago
They said He's alive today and can save my soul
He's willing to forgive but can I forgive myself?
Said He died on a cross but can I put my pride
on the shelf?
If I could look into His eyes, what would I see?
A sea of eternal love looking back at me.

- HENRY YEE

Tired Radio - Part 1

Mind your pints and quarts she'd say
She gave me several warnings
I was Counting on her, but she was counting bad pennies
just don't count on her in the morning

Lost loves are distant echoes
In the substrates of our mind
A lesson learned, A stone unturned
A birthday card on time... every time
I was so lucky to have loved you
Even luckier you once loved me
I know you know you loved me first
But I'm just another one of your bad pennies

-TIMOTHY D. FALVEY

Genesis chp1: "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth." Allow me to be the first to say, when I first read that page when I was younger. I was already hooked on God. I was already wondering; "What was he like?"... "How amazing it must be to be him"... However, if someone had told me then, that I was anointed and had spiritual gifts, oh and also told me that having an anointing means that you have to sacrifice and go through....

Well ... I probably wouldn't have been as enthusiastic as I am right now. Of course, it took me a long time and many,many,many trials to get here where I am. But now, the only difference is, I'm even more amazed at who he is, and so much more in love and in awe. You see, you have to go through the storms. People often look for the elevator with God, and do not want to take the stairs. They like the straight path better than the narrow one.

Reality check... There are no shortcuts when it comes to God. He does not want your polished self, with a suit and tie and a mask that you were in front of others. He doesn't want that rehearsed prayer you pray in church and then 5 minutes later walk out and forget what you prayed for. God looks for the raw, the real. He looks for the person that will stand 10 toes down, no matter what anyone thinks. Because no one's opinion matters but his.

He is the Alpha and Omega. The beginning and the end. There is nothing that should come before him. But yet, we take advantage of the everyday air that we breathe and sunlight that lights our day. Not even considering giving him a few minutes of our time before the busy day ahead. We do not even give gratitude for the endless grace and mercy that he bestows upon us out of love. But yet we feel entitled to blessings. That alone should make us fall to our knees. But fortunately, we all will bow come Judgement and unfortunately, not everyone will hear those words; "Well done, my good and faithful servant"

-SAWANDA STEWART

◉◉◉◉◉ Is Change in Your Heart ◉◉◉◉◉

Is change in your heart? Are you satisfied with your life past and present? Is there chaos, trouble, bad decisions, not feeling secure? It happens to everyone at one point or another! How do we change things? One must be willing to change, allow God and people to help. A feeling of helplessness can rear its ugly head but overcome with belief in oneself. With God in your life, it's possible to forgive yourself for past mistakes! For myself, change is an ongoing process day by day. I have God in my life so I have belief I can change things that need to be changed. I have good days and bad days but the good outlasts the bad. Belief you can, God has you!

-KEVIN F



Artwork by Lola Derrick

✿ THE DARK ENTITY'S ✿

A lot of us wrestle with various addictions or what we call bad habits. Some of these bad habits are detrimental not just to our health but our life as well. Some of these bad habits could cost you your very Life. When we give in to these very dark entities as we call them, like substance abuse, pornography, looking at inappropriate things on the Web, alcoholism, to name a few. We are opening up portals to the supernatural. These dark entities will continue to MASTER us if we continue to engage with it. Jesus said "you shall know the truth and the truth shall set you free" John 8:32. Trusting to turn our will over to GOD, will help us to conquer these bad habits. "Present your body as a living sacrifice". Romans 12:1. "Walk by faith not by sight".

- RODNEY WISE

God's Plan

Through all of life's challenges, we always have the light at the end of the tunnel to look forward to. We are almost guaranteed, at some point, that no matter what storm we are currently weathering, we will eventually find solace and peace. Each challenge we face was placed before us by God to teach us important lessons and to grow our souls. God would never give us more than we are capable of handling and He has every intention of ensuring that we make it through the chaos and commotion that He has thrown at us. Everything happens for a reason and although you may not be able to understand the value of whatever it is that you're currently going through, God possesses the foresight and ethereal wisdom that we lack and we can be assured that He always has the best of intentions for all of His children. We are all on different paths and have different lessons to learn, so it's easy to feel defeated. It's easy to look at the charmed lives others lead and wonder, "why them and not me?" Remember that the journeys we undergo are individualized. The paths we walk are personal. Each soul was sent to this earth for a different purpose and no two are alike. There is no use in comparing yourself to others as God Himself has carved out the perfect path for you and, if you follow it, you will find yourself once again sharing eternity with Him in His kingdom. The trials and tribulations we face are temporary, but God's love is forever. His love for us is unmatched and cannot be replicated by anyone. Remember to follow Him, through the good and the bad, and you will be rewarded at the end of the long, hard journey with eternal life, free from pain and suffering.

-JANE FARMER

