

For years, I was a mirror, polished bright,
Reflecting every need that came my way.
I walked on eggshells through the quiet night,
To keep the shadows of your storms at bay.

My voice was just an echo in the hall,
A muted note within a grand design.
I built the chairs so others would not fall,
While never claiming any space as mine.

I measured worth in how much I could give,
In hollowed chests and hands worn down to bone.
I thought that was the only way to live—
To be the soil where others' seeds were sown.

But gardens perish when the well runs dry,
And silent martyrs crumble in the dust.
I watched the seasons of my life go by,
Betraying self to earn a stranger's trust.

BY: JAE WEBB

Nature

Green leaves grow in quiet light,
Soft and small, they feel just right.

Wind moves gently through the trees,
Cool and calm like easy seas.

Roots go deep into the ground,
Holding life without a sound.

Flowers open, bright and slow,
Simple things that help us grow.

Birds sing songs up in the sky,
Clouds drift slowly passing by.

Rivers move, both clear and free,
Flowing to the waiting sea.

Nature lives in calm, soft ways,
Steady through our nights and days.

BY: DENSTON HINDS

STREET VOICES

Franciscan Bread FOR THE POOR, Inc. • St. Francis Breadline

Volume 6 Number 18
MAY 2026

Community Newsletter

This collection of writings brings together a range of voices and perspectives that explore themes of nature, loneliness, identity, faith, healing, and personal growth. Each piece reflects a unique lived experience and emotional truth, offering insight into how individuals understand themselves, others, and the world around them.

Featured writers in this collection include Denston Hinds, Mike Gonzalez, Martin Barrientos, Jane, Caleb L. Thompson, Jae Webb, Rhyan Scorpio-Rhys, and Nerreck Lola, each contributing their own distinct style and message. Their work moves between poetry and reflective prose, capturing personal struggle as well as moments of clarity, hope, and spiritual reflection. This collection also includes captivating visual drawings by Darnell Davis and Joseph Richardson.

“Then Jesus declared, ‘I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never go hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.’”

JOHN 6:35 (NIV)



WEEKLY TRIVIA CHALLENGE

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

This Week's Trivia Questions

1. What year was the first Thanksgiving day parade held in NYC?
2. What year did the first commercial airline flight take place?
3. What year did the first animated TV series premiere?

Answers to Last Week's Trivia Questions

1. What percentage of the human body is made up of water? 60%
2. What is the strongest land animal in the world? African elephant
3. In what year was New York City founded? 1624

Call on Me Lord

You are never too old
to set another goal or
to dream a new dream.

There is no way to happiness, happiness is the way. Champions keep playing until they get it right.

Courage does not always roar; sometimes courage is the quiet voice at the end of the day saying, “I will try again tomorrow.”

One who gains strength by overcoming obstacles possesses the wisdom of where our help comes from.

For the Lord hears our cry every time we call on You.

BY: NERRECK LOLA

Alone

Loneliness sits beside me, quiet as snow,
Not a wound, but a window left open.
In its stillness, I hear my own thoughts
Without the noise of the crowded world.
It teaches me the shape of my breath,
The rhythm of days I can call my own.
No need to perform, no need to pretend,
Just the honest echo of being alive.
In empty rooms, I discover space
Where ideas stretch and softly bloom.
Dreams grow louder when silence listens,
And even small hopes feel vast and bright.
I walk alone, but not abandoned.

BY: MIKE GONZALEZ

FRANCISCAN 360 IS OPEN!

WHAT: Case Management, Computer Access, Mailing Address

WHERE: 144 W. 32nd Street

WHEN: Monday - Thursday, 8:30am - 4pm
Scheduled appointments only on Friday from 9am - 4pm

WHO: All are welcome!

If you have any content to share for our newsletter please send content to streetvoicesnewsletter@gmail.com.

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 Province of Our Lady of Guadalupe.

Patience

Patience is a virtue we could all use a little more of. Kindness, understanding, and empathy for our fellow man are necessary to accomplish a world of peace and unity. There are eight billion humans on this planet. We all come from different regions of the world, come in various colors and sizes, worship differently, and live differently. No two people are the same.

How can so many individuals, each with their own belief systems and cultures, come together as brothers and sisters as God intended us to do? It starts with acknowledging our differences. We first have to understand that we are all different.

It is common for some to say that despite the oceans and borders that separate us, we are all one and the same. But this is not entirely true. While there are universal components that are fundamental to the human experience, our surroundings, childhoods, heritages, family, and friends make us unique.

BY: JANE

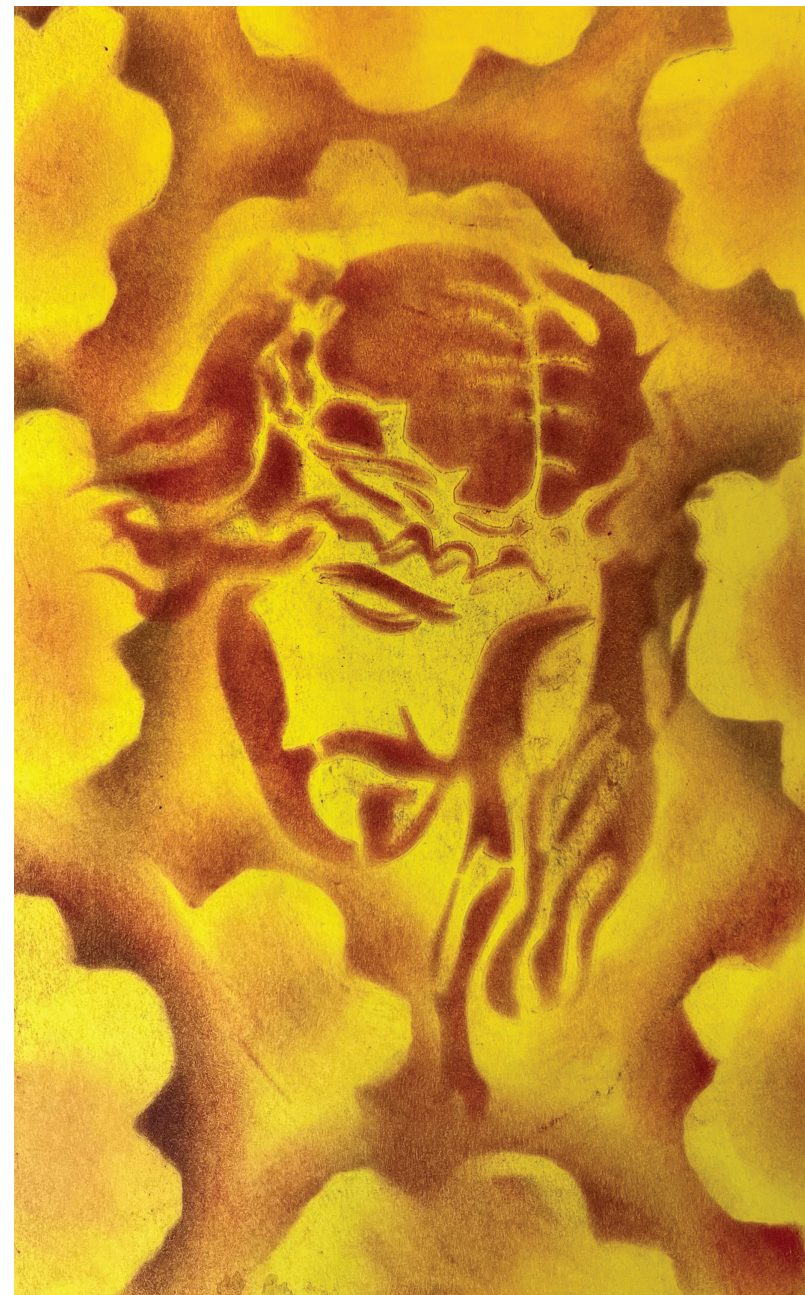


The Stillness That Holds the City

Elias Rook was the kind of painter who moved slowly in a city that refused to. In New York, where everything pulsed with urgency, he stood still watching strangers, studying shadows, searching for something most people had long since stopped noticing.

He lived in a cramped walk-up in Manhattan, surrounded by unfinished canvases and overdue bills, painting not for money but for meaning though the lack of both weighed on him more each day. One evening in the Lower East Side, he noticed an older woman feeding pigeons with a quiet, unshaken calm while the city rushed around her. There was something about her stillness steady and unbothered that stayed with him long after he returned home.

BY: CALEB L. THOMPSON



Artwork by Darnell Davis



Artwork by Joseph Richardson

We all come from different walks of life, with different backgrounds, lived experiences, and unique points of view that set us apart from one another. We are all on different paths with a calling in life. What is right for you might not be right for another, and that is more than okay.

We are all different pieces of a very large puzzle, and each individual piece helps make the whole. We are one with God, and we are all His children. Because of our differences, we are not meant to connect deeply with every person we meet. Some people enter our lives only briefly as friends, enemies, mentors, or teachers. They come to offer lessons and experiences but are not meant to remain long-term.

BY: MARTIN BARRIENTOS



Carrying the Dead Well

There is a way of remembering that keeps someone alive in you. And there is a way of remembering that swallows you whole.

Carrying the dead well is the difference.

Some people try to erase loss change the subject, stay busy, keep everything light. Others build a shrine out of grief and live inside it, replaying the last words, the last day, the last chance to make things different.

Neither one is mercy.

Carrying the dead well means telling the truth without turning it into a prison: they are gone, and you loved them. It means speaking their name without making it a weapon. It means letting memory be a place you can visit, not a place you are forced to live in. It means allowing joy to return without treating it like betrayal.

Franciscan faith has room for this because it does not demand that we “get over” anything. It asks us to stay near what is real and to trust that God is near it too.

BY: RHYAN SCORPIO-RHYS

