

THE MARQUAND READER

October 06 – October 10, 2008

This Week at Marquand

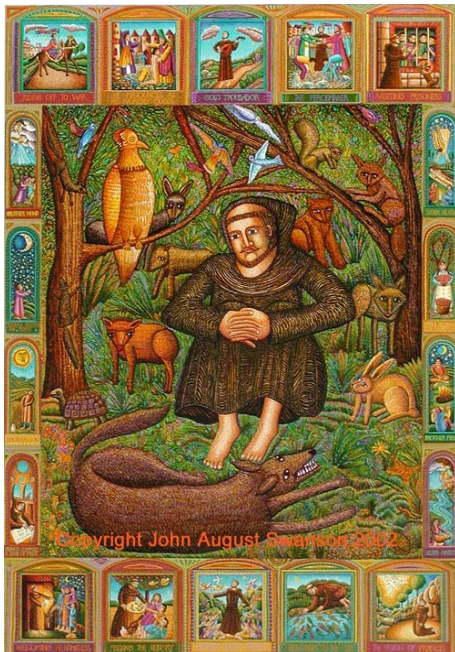
Monday: *A Celebration of Saint Francis*
led by the Catholic Student Group.

Tuesday: *A Service of the Word*
with graduating student Jonah Bartlett, preaching, and the Marquand Gospel Choir.

Wednesday: *Sung Morning Prayer*
led by Patrick Evans, Director of Chapel Music.

Thursday: *Songs and Prayers from Taizé*

Friday: *Community Eucharist for Coming Out Day*
with Mark Miller, Lecturer in the Practice of Sacred Music, preaching,
and Kristen Leslie, Associate Professor in Pastoral Care and Counseling, presiding.



**FRANCIS AND THE WOLF
BY JOHN AUGUST SWANSON**

Saint Francis of Assisi

By Emily Scott Bloemker

Saint Francis, son of a wealthy businessman, was born in 1182 in Assisi, Italy. Raised under the influence of medieval chivalry, Francis grew up wanting to be a soldier. After a disillusioning stint as a “cheerful and popular prisoner of war,” Francis began to desire to serve God instead of to fight. Soon after, Francis heard Christ speak from a crucifix in San Damiano, ordering him to ‘go and repair my Church which ... is falling into ruins.’ This would be Francis’ goal for the rest of his life.

At the age of twenty-five, Francis renounced his worldly goods and began to live as a hermit in the woods near Assisi. For the next nineteen years, Francis would work towards the establishment of a monastic order which strove after “deliberate imitation of ... Christ and his apostles,” especially through “voluntary self-denial and renunciation of property.” This order would give rise to an order

for women, begun by Saint Clare; as well as a lay order.

After his return from a preaching tour to Egypt in 1220, Francis underwent a “dark night of the soul” after finding that his order was wracked by internal power-struggles. After receiving reassurance in a vision that “Christ himself would always remain the principal head of the Order,” Francis emerged from his struggles; one year later, in 1224, he would receive the sign of the stigmata. Francis died in 1226. He is best known for his love of creation, which led him to preach to birds, tame a wolf, and compose the beautiful *Canticle of Brother Sun*. Francis was canonized by Pope Gregory IX in 1228, and his feast is celebrated on October 4th.

Source: The Little Flowers of Saint Francis, Written by Brother Ugolino di Monte Santa Maria, Translated by Raphael Brown



Taizé

By Johanna Johnson

The sound of ringing bells fills the air around a tiny village on a hill in Burgundy, France, beckoning hundreds, even thousands of people to prayer. The many languages represented among this crowd, representing countries all over the world, are silenced as they file into the sanctuary. Each person grabs a small songbook as they enter, and then takes a seat on the floor. At one end of the dimly lit and slightly downward sloping room are red banners sweeping from the floor to the ceiling and hundreds of candles – an atmosphere at once breath-taking and calming. On the hour, the over 100 brothers of Taizé come into the space and take their seats, and the service begins.

In August 1940, Brother Roger arrived in the village of Taizé all alone at the age of 25, with the goal of creating a community where reconciliation would become a reality every day, and where simplicity and kind-heartedness would be lived out as essential Gospel realities. From the beginning, the community Brother Roger formed served as a haven for many in need, including refugees (many of them Jews during World War II), orphans, and prisoners of war. Today, because of its international and ecumenical nature (the brothers come from over 25 different countries and Protestant, Catholic, and Orthodox Christian backgrounds), it serves as a concrete sign of reconciliation between divided Christians and separated peoples. The community welcomes hundreds of thousands of primarily youth from around the world for stints ranging from a weekend to a few months, and there are sometimes as many as 5000 visitors in one week.

What is so striking about a service of Taizé is both the beauty and the simplicity of the service. There is no central person leading, and all the people face forward to direct their prayers to God. Following the basic form of the daily morning office, participants are at once praying alone and in community. Especially noteworthy about a Taizé service is the

silence, which happens in every service. Lasting from five to ten minutes, it offers ample time to find yourself in a place of meditative reflection and prayer. Besides the silence, much of the service is sung, for as the songbook states, “Song is one of the most essential elements of worship.” The many beautiful songs of Taizé are written in multiple languages to accommodate the vast diversity represented in the community. They are short and meant to be repeated many times; the few words, often from Scripture and expressing a basic reality of faith, are quickly grasped by the mind, and as they are repeated, they whole being comes to know them deeply. The simplicity of the songs lets them stay in our hearts through the day so that prayer need not stop after we leave the space.

Join us in Marquand as we try to create this space first fostered on a hilltop in Burgundy, and enter into this time of song and silence, prayer, meditation, and joy.



The Sacred Act of Coming Out

by Patrick Evans, Director of Chapel Music

Saturday, October 11, will mark the 20th Anniversary of National Coming Out Day, -a day of celebration of the lives of people of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender experience. The act of “coming out” (naming yourself to be LGBT to family, friends, co-workers, members of your faith community, or others who may not know the fullness of your life experience) is a personal, political, and deeply spiritual act.

For some, it is a joyous, simple and uncomplicated experience. Others endure anguish and rejection from the people from whom they need love and encouragement instead.

In the 20 years since the first National Coming Out Day, huge strides have been made in LGBT civil rights in the US, as well as acceptance and justice within faith communities. This progress, political and ecclesial, is possible to a great extent because of millions of individual coming out conversations, so that fewer and fewer people can honestly say they don’t have any LGBT family or friends, and when discussing policy are unable to merely imagine the effects of their actions on some unknown “other.”

With the explosion of positive media images of LGBT people in the past ten years, coming out conversations have become more frequent, and in many cases, easier to have.

However, the seeming acceptance of LGBT lives in the larger media world often leads vulnerable teens to come out to family when it isn’t actually safe to do so. The number of LGBT homeless teens has grown exponentially in the last decade. In many areas, churches and other faith communities are taking the lead in responding to this crisis.

Additionally, many people within the church are unable to come out, as most ecclesial structures still bar LGBT people from ordained office or other leadership in the church.

As we observe the 20th anniversary of National Coming Out day, we also observe the 10th anniversary of the brutal murder of Matthew Shephard, on Sunday October 12th. In our

broken world, bias and hate-motivated violence is still a dangerous reality. LGBT folks and our allies live our lives between kyries and alleluias, just like everybody else.

For most folks who grew up in faith communities, many times the hardest coming out conversation is the one with God. Coming out is a deeply spiritual, many would say sacramental act, acknowledging the love of a creator in whose image we are fearfully and wonderfully made, a redeemer who understands the vilest rejection and violence, and a spirit who guides and inspires the living of our days.

The Yale Divinity LGBTQAI Coalition (I'm the faculty advisor, and I think I may have still left off a few letters) and the chapel team work together every year to plan a festival eucharist on the Friday closest to National Coming Out Day. On Friday, we will hear of the movement of the spirit and the work of God in the lives of LGBT people and our allies both in this community as well as the wider world. Mark Miller, Lecturer in the Practice of Sacred Music and Director of the Marquand Gospel Choir will preach, and Kristen Leslie, Associate Professor of Pastoral Care and Counseling, will preside. We invite you to join us in Marquand on Friday, knowing that the sacred act of coming out is not just for LGBT folks, as there are many other things we all need to "come out" to God about, and live fully in the redeeming grace offered to us without condition.

MARQUAND CHAPEL TEAM

Chapel Ministers: [Jennifer Miller, Sean Lanigan, Meredith Coleman-Tobias, Emily Scott Bloemker](#)

Organists: [Ahreum Han, Josiah Armes, Timothy Weisman](#)

Marquand Chapel Choir Directors: [Jonathan Richter](#)

Gospel Choir Director: [Mark Miller](#)

Chapel Administrative Assistant: [James Aveni](#)

Liturgical Coordinator: [Christa Swenson](#)

Director of Chapel Music: [Professor Patrick Evans](#)

Acting Dean of Chapel: [Professor Gordon Lathrop](#)

Dean of Chapel (*on sabbatical 2008-09*): [Professor Siobhán Garrigan](#)
