

Spiritual Journey/ Teachings

Soon after giving up his wealth, he left Assisi as a peasant. Francesco believed that he would not find enlightenment in closed walls. After walking for a couple miles he came across a village of lepers. (Lepers are people with a contagious disease that rots the face and bones) When Francesco was younger, he wouldn't even dare to get close to the village. This time was different, however, Francesco would come up to them. He did so because the loneliness and suffering was intolerable. The lord had led him to the lepers and he would show love and care to them. Lepers were only used to people running away and not having that warm feeling of someone saying "I love you" in their hearts. Francesco would nurse the lepers and he knew that this was his test from god. God has led him to places where others rejected.

He believed that the world was good because god had created it. Francesco wanted to improve the world. He would follow the teachings of Jesus. Soon people started to follow him and his way of life.

Francesco would put many churches in Italy to shame. Priests were lazy and unreliable and Francesco pointed them out. This would discipline them and get more attention for his teachings. He then sets out to Rome to talk with the pope.

Upon his arrival to Rome, cardinals would tell the pope to dismiss Francesco. They would call him a beggar and a rustic (unsophisticated) person. Despite all the talk from the cardinals, the pope saw Francesco as a true man of god and gave Francesco the papal permission to preach his teachings.

Francesco and his followers would be made fun of and thrown out of places as a worthless beggar. While Francesco preached, people wouldn't even pay attention. Instead Francesco would preach to the birds. The birds stood quiet and painters from that time would draw "ugly" birds such as crows as Francesco's audience. The birds would represent the middle class people. Francesco's teachings would be about loving your neighbors and if they wish not to love then at least do no harm to anyone.

In his early thirties, he got sick and his conditions would worsen even more. He even thought about retiring. Being convinced not to retire by a wealthy knight's daughter who had converted to his teachings. Francesco followed Christian forces on the fifth crusade to Egypt. (Crusades were wars between Muslims and Christians for the holy land) In Egypt, Francesco would teach his ways, which was a crime since it was under muslim control. When Francesco got to Egypt, he saw the bloodiest battle of the fifth crusade. He then tried the unthinkable. Francesco went to the Sultan of Egypt to try to make peace between Christians and Muslims. Unexpectedly, the sultan gave Francesco permission to preach and talk about peace to the sultan himself. After a long time from preaching in Egypt, Francesco found his followers to be doing the opposite of his teachings. His followers would obtain chapels and churches, even though Francesco was teaching them about being completely poor. He soon resigned from being leader and received the portrayal of the stigmata (points of Jesus where he was "crucified on"). He had not failed god, followed Jesus and spread his teaching all throughout Europe. Francesco had lost the ability to walk and became blind. Knowing his end was near, he summoned his few friends and passed away.