



November 20, 2019

POSTCARDS FROM ASSISI

Time magazine named Francis one of the most influential people of the last 1000 years. Although St. Francis was born in 1182 and lived only 44 years, his spirit is very much alive in the Christian church today!

Recently I was blessed with the continuing education opportunity to go to Assisi and study with Rev. Dr. Mary Luti, a UCC pastor and professor of medieval history.

Francis was not a saint in his youth, but gradually his faith deepened. As he prayed at the little San Damiano chapel near Assisi, he felt Jesus calling him to "Repair the church-- as you can see, it is falling apart." At first Francis took the words literally, and began to act as a one-man property maintenance committee, sweeping and helping with masonry projects!



His mission expanded as his heart was moved by compassion. Francis modeled service to poor and suffering people. He drew inspiration from the sun, moon, stars and all the animals, seeing creation as a glimpse of God. He preached at every opportunity, even to the birds! His deep commitment to modeling his faith in Jesus, as well as his joy in living, continue to inspire.

Here is one of his prayers:

*Most High, all glorious God,
enlighten the darkness of my heart.
Give me right faith,
certain hope,
and perfect charity,
with deep humility, wisdom
and understanding,
that I may know
and do your most holy will. Amen.*

With gratitude,

Judy

Rev. Judy Swahnberg

