

FRANCIS OF ASSISI, Oct. 4, readings – introduction.

We are not particularly well served by the one set of 3 readings for the feast of St. Francis of Assisi (as also partially the feast of the Stigmata of St. Francis). Both feasts use the same very accommodated first reading, with overtones of the Francis story, but ripped out of its context. The Gospel for the feast of St. Francis is merely the old 1<sup>st</sup> choice of the common of confessors not martyrs, formerly heard more often than any other Gospel.

I have chosen to draw the first readings from the Franciscan tradition rather than from the Scriptures. If it is not seen as desirable to use them in the official liturgy of the word, the first reading could be read right before the liturgy begins, giving a Franciscan setting, or could be used in the introductory rites of Eucharist.

It is possible to choose many themes and readings for this feast. I leave the theme of the cross mostly to the feast of the Stigmata. (If one desired to replace the 1<sup>st</sup> reading with a Franciscan story, the account of receiving the Stigmata would be appropriate: Second Book of the Life of St. Francis by Thomas of Celano, chapter III, Francis of Assisi: Early Documents, pp. 263-4.) I have chosen the themes of 1) poverty, discipleship, and minority; 2) brothers and sisters; 3) all creation praises you. The readings are chosen in a loose relationship to these themes, allowing for many avenues of reflection and sharing.

The readings follow the ABC calendar of the Sundays of the year.

This development of alternate readings has no official standing, and is entirely a private composition, offered to any who may find some value in it.

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