



Franciscan Season of Giving

Join us during our year end season of giving as we reflect on this Franciscan community. May it inspire you to perceive both the sacred and what is yours to do.

Peace and all good,
FSC's Director, Christine



a word from Tom

If you've been to the Franciscan Spiritual Center, you probably noticed all the rooms have green nameplates. Most names were chosen by the person who uses the room the most.

I chose *Gubbio*. It is in reference to the legend, *St. Francis and the Wolf of Gubbio*. I have been attached to the legend for many years, in part due to its message, but also because of the depictions of the wolf, looking more like a friendly dog than a fierce beast.

The legend, as I tell it, is that Francis happened upon the village of Gubbio, not far from Assisi, and found the villagers terror-stricken. They lived in fear of a vicious wolf that came into the village, eating their chickens, livestock, and even the villagers themselves. They dared not venture outside the walls of the village, lest they be caught by the wolf and consumed. Hearing this, Francis boldly went outside the village to confront the wolf, despite the villagers' pleas not to risk his life.

Undeterred by the villagers' entreaties, Francis came upon the wolf, who snarled and growled as if he were about to eat Francis. But Francis halted the advance of the wolf by raising his hand and making the sign of the cross over the wolf. The wolf stopped in his tracks and listened as Francis rebuked him for having frightened the villagers and killed their animals.

Francis made a deal with the wolf: You stop your wanton killing and the villagers will see to it that you always have enough food to eat. The wolf extended his paw and rested it on Francis' palm. The agreement was sealed.

With the wolf's need for food and the villagers' need for safety guaranteed, Francis left Gubbio. The villagers then lovingly put out food aplenty for the wolf who never went hungry again and lived peaceably with them for years.

As it is with legends, no one really knows if this scenario ever occurred, or if it symbolized Francis' intervention into some other village upheaval, or if a follower of Francis fabricated the story out of whole cloth. Regardless, it is a teaching story, not unlike the parables Jesus told. It emphasized the goodness of the wolf once his hunger was satisfied and the generosity of the villagers once they no longer needed to be in fear of the wolf.

Francis was able to see that the wolf wasn't so much a malicious beast but rather a starving canid struggling to survive. Francis

resolved the conflict by making sure both the wolf and the villagers had their basic needs met.

The legend is one of many examples of Francis as a peacemaker. He saw both sides of a situation and came up with a solution that ultimately was embraced by all involved.

As a Franciscan ministry, FSC is also in the business of peacemaking. Maybe not as dramatic as Francis and the wolf, but we extend a hand through spiritual direction, meditation, retreats, and other programs for people with a spiritual hunger. We walk alongside people as they make peace within themselves, with those around them, and even with God. We can be a presence of peace. We can offer spiritual nourishment and safety.

Your contribution to the Franciscan Season of Giving will help support the work of peacemaking that all of us at FSC and the Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia are committed to doing.

Peace to you,

Tom Welch

Spiritual Director and Supervisor for other spiritual directors

p.s. The next time you are at FSC, ask if you can check out my Francis-and-the-Wolf memorabilia. Maybe you will be captured by the message, too.

October 2026

To make a charitable donation to the
Franciscan Spiritual Center, mail a check to:
PO Box 144, Marylhurst, OR 97036
or
use our online portal.

Give

To see the other Season of Giving reflections, visit our home page.

FSC's Website

[Unsubscribe](#) | [Update Profile](#) | [Constant Contact Data Notice](#)



Try email marketing for free today!