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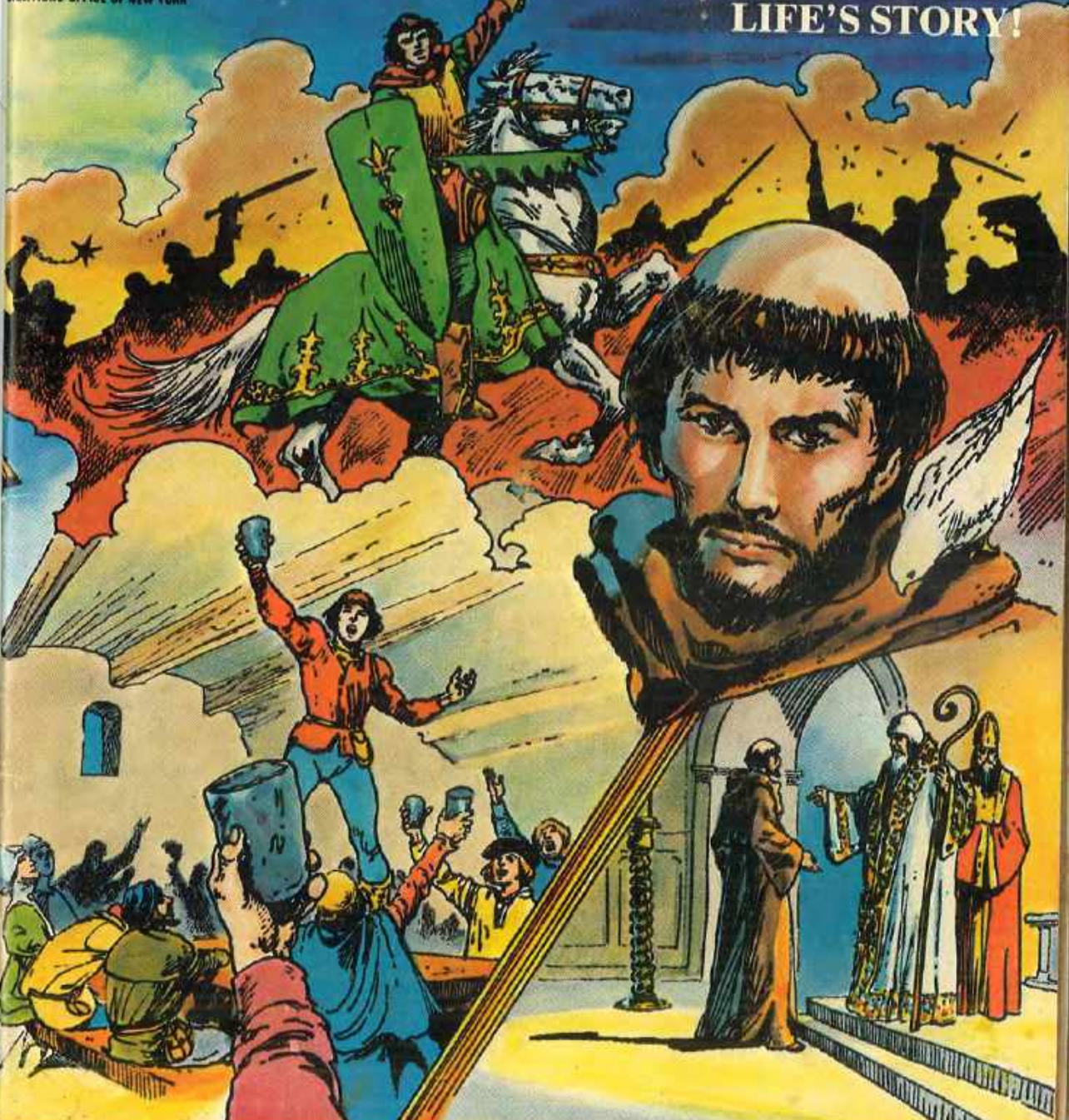
# FRANCIS

BROTHER OF THE UNIVERSE

HIS COMPLETE  
LIFE'S STORY!



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# FRANCIS, BROTHER OF THE UNIVERSE

## The Story Behind the Story

It was a chance comment in Tokyo, Japan, that brought about **Francis, Brother of the Universe**. Marvel Comics' representative in Japan, Mr. Gene Pelc, was talking over coffee at the Franciscan Chapel Center with Fr. Campion Lally, O.F.M. and Fr. Flavian Walsh, O.F.M. about his work with Marvel. "Why don't you do a book on St. Francis?" commented Fr. Campion (Franciscans go by their informal first names). Mr. Pelc thought for a moment, then said, "Why not?"

"A Franciscan would have to do the storyline and dialogue," Mr. Pelc continued, "but who?" They looked to visiting Franciscan Fr. Conrad Harkins, Director of the Franciscan Institute at St. Bonaventure University in southwestern New York and one of the best-known experts in America on the life of St. Francis. Fr. Conrad remarked that what they needed was a popularizer, rather than an academician. He suggested Fr. Roy Gasnick, O.F.M., Director of the Franciscan Communications Office of New York.

Mr. Pelc wrote to Fr. Roy who, in his own words, "jumped at the chance of doing a comicbook." A comicbook buff (reader and trader) as a youngster, Fr. Roy had also worked with Paramount Pictures in publicizing Franco Zeffirelli's film about St. Francis, **Brother Sun, Sister Moon**, with N B C News for their hour-long documentary in 1977, **St. Francis of Assisi: A Search for the Man and His Meaning**, and with the Off-Broadway musical, **Francis**, in 1978.

Once the Marvel Comics executives approved the remarkable venture—Marvel had never done a religious comicbook before—the project was on its way. Fr. Roy did the story scenario working in close collaboration with Marvel's Mary Jo Duffy, who, aided by Fr. Roy, wrote the actual dialogue. Mary Jo, an editor at Marvel Comics for nearly five years, is widely regarded as one of the best young writers in the field. Two of Marvel's top artists were assigned for the artwork. John Buscema, a talented penciler, perhaps best known for his work on **CONAN THE BARBARIAN** and the **SILVER SURFER**, did the original visual conceptions and drawings. Marie Severin, who has done memorable work on many of Marvel's most prominent characters, including **DOCTOR STRANGE**, **THE HULK**, **THE SUB-MARINER**, and most recently, **THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN**, did the inking and coloring.

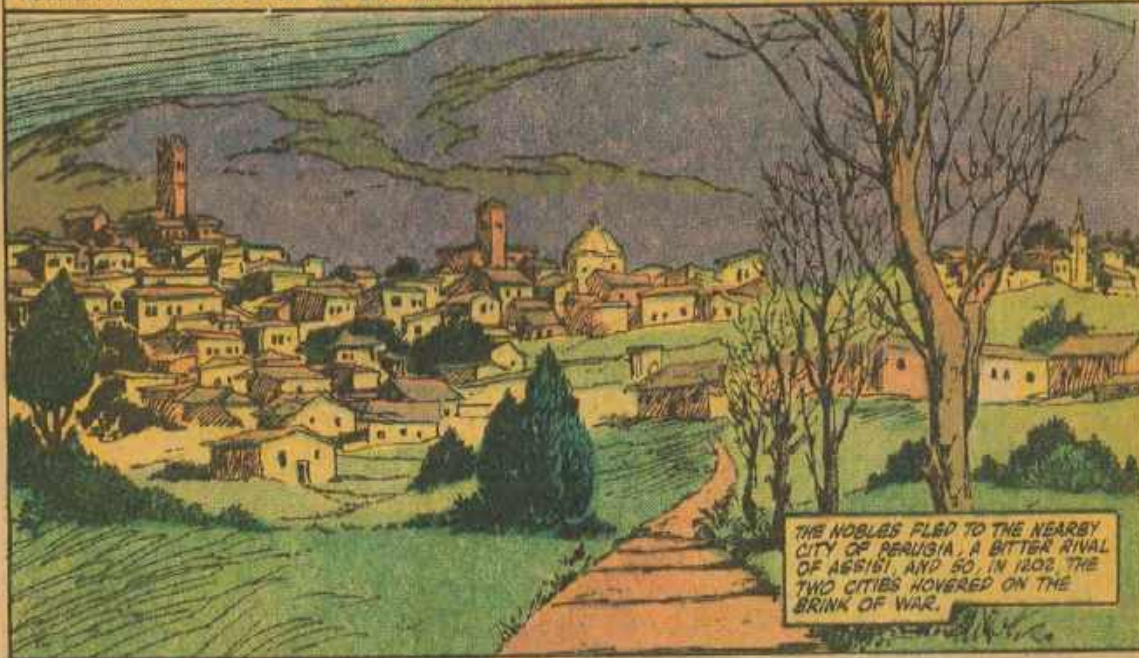
Besides Marvel's distribution system, **Francis, Brother of the Universe** will have its own religious distribution through the well-known Paulist Press.

The book is more than timely since the world will note the 800th anniversary of St. Francis' birth in 1982.





HE WAS BORN IN ASSISI, A PROSPEROUS ITALIAN CITY, IN 1192, THE END OF THE DARK AGES. ASSISI WAS LOYAL TO POPE INNOCENT III DURING THAT PERIOD OF POLITICAL TURMOIL. THE POPE HAD DRIVEN OFF ASSISI'S NOBLE RULERS, AND THE PEOPLE OF THE CITY HAD ADOPTED A FORM OF REPUBLICAN GOVERNMENT IN THEIR PLACE.



THE NOBLES FLED TO THE NEARBY CITY OF PERUSIA, A BITTER RIVAL OF ASSISI, AND SO, IN 1202, THE TWO CITIES HOVERED ON THE BRINK OF WAR.

IT IS IN THIS YEAR THAT YOUNG FRANCIS BERNARDONE TURNS TWENTY. HE IS THE SON OF A WEALTHY CLOTH MERCHANT, AND A MEMBER OF THE MIDDLE CLASSES.



ALTHOUGH HE IS NOT ONE OF THEM, HE IS POPULAR WITH THE YOUNG NOBLES, BECAUSE HE KNOWS HOW TO ENJOY HIS FRIENDS A GOOD TIME.

WELL, FRANCIS, WHAT HAVE YOU GOT PLANNED FOR US TO DO TONIGHT?

NOTHING SPECIAL, BERNARDO. I THOUGHT WE'D JUST GO OUT AS WE ALWAYS DO, EAT, DRINK, SING, AND ENJOY OURSELVES.



"NOTHING SPECIAL," HUH? IT'S NO WONDER THEY CALL YOU "THE KING OF THE FEASTS."

AND WHILE HIS SON IS OUT SPENDING HIS HARD-EARNED MONEY, PIETRO BERNARDONE LOOKS ON AND SHAKES HIS HEAD.



THAT BOY OF MINE... SOMETIMES I THINK HE AND HIS FRIENDS WILL RUIN ME THE WAY THEY CARRY ON...

... BUT THOSE YOUNG NOBLES LIKE FRANCIS, THEY SEEM TO ACCEPT HIM.

"HE'S MEANT FOR GREAT THINGS. HE'S SURE TO BRING HONOR TO THE FAMILY NAME!"



THE YOUNG NOBLES DO SEEM TO ACCEPT FRANCIS, BUT, IN HIS HEART, HE IS SHARPLY AWARE OF THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THEM.

IF THEY ONLY KNEW WHAT NOBILITY MEANS TO ME... HOW I DREAM OF BEING ONE OF THEM...



... OF LIVING A LIFE OF CHIVALRY AND GLORY!

WHEN THE WAR WITH PERUSIA FINALLY COMES, IT SEEMS THAT FRANCIS WILL HAVE HIS CHANCE.

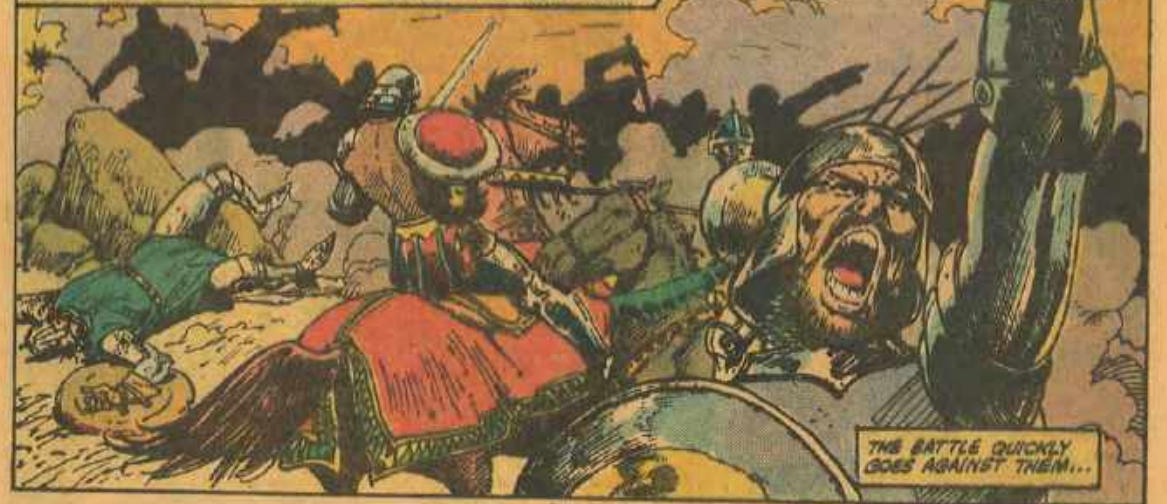


TAKE CARE, SON.

COME BACK SAFELY!

FATHER, MOTHER... HAVE NO FEAR! I'LL COME HOME FROM THIS WAR A KNIGHT!

BUT DESPITE THE CONFIDENCE WITH WHICH THE ARMY OF ASSISI SETS OUT, IT IS SOON CLEAR THAT THEY ARE OUT-MATCHED AND OUTNUMBERED BY THE PERUSIAN FORCES.



THE BATTLE QUICKLY GOES AGAINST THEM...



... AND FRANCIS SEES MANY OF THE KNIGHTS, THE MEN HE HAS ADMIRERD AND ENVIED SO MUCH, STRUCK DOWN TO DIE IN THE DIRT, AS QUICKLY AND TRAGICALLY AS ANY OF THE OTHERS.



FRANCIS IS TAKEN PRISONER, AND, PERHAPS, BECAUSE OF HIS OBVIOUS WEALTH, IS HOUSED IN THE SAME CELLS AS THE ASSISIAN NOBLES AWAITING RANSOM.

THERE, HE HAS LITTLE TO DO BUT REFLECT...

THIS... THIS IS THE GLORY OF WAR? TO BE SLAUGHTERED ON THE BATTLEFIELD?... TO BE CAGED LIKE ANIMALS... AND FOR WHAT? FOR HONOR?!

ALL TOO SOON, PRIVATION TAKES ITS TOLL ON MEN'S BODIES AND SPIRITS, AND THOSE FRANCIS ADMIRERD BEGIN TO ACT LIKE ANIMALS.



A--A NOBLE... AND HE'S ATTACKING OTHER MEN FOR FOOD!

INEVITABLY, AS THE MONTHS PASS, ILLNESS STRIKES THE PRISONERS, AND FRANCIS FINDS A NEW USE FOR HIS TALENT FOR MAKING OTHERS HAPPY...



HERE... THIS MAY MAKE YOU FEEL BETTER.

HE OFFERS FOOD, COMFORT AND ENTERTAINMENT TO THOSE AROUND HIM...

... EVEN AS HE, TOO, SICKENS.

HOW LONG CAN THIS GO ON?



I SING FOR THEM, BUT THERE'S NO ONE TO SING FOR ME.

FINALLY, AFTER A YEAR, THE PRISONERS ARE RANSOMED AND SENT HOME, BUT...



FOR MONTHS, FRANCIS GOES THROUGH THE MOTIONS OF HIS LIFE, UNTIL...

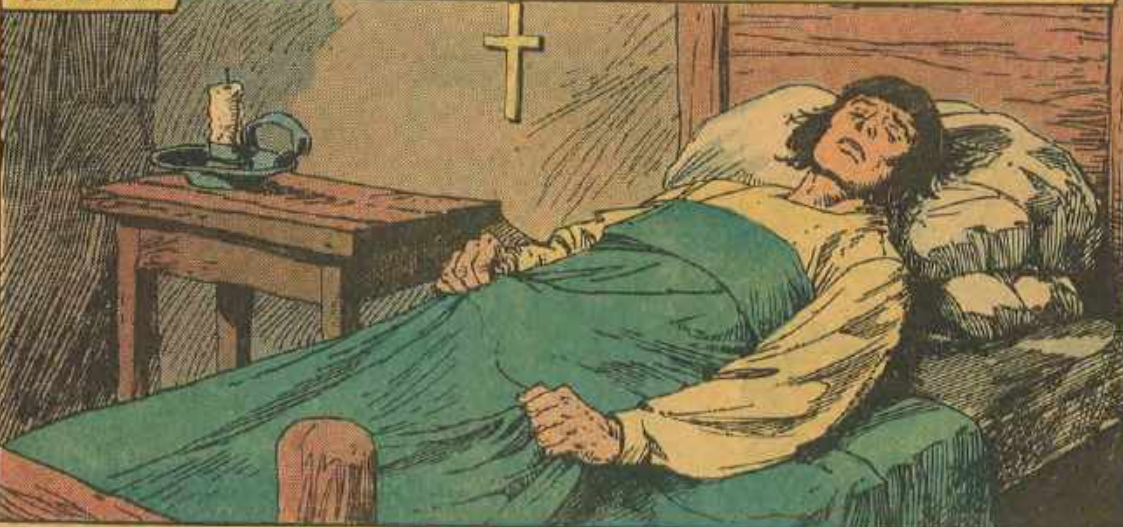
ANGELO, I'M WORRIED ABOUT YOUR BROTHER SINCE HE GOT OUT OF PRISON. FRANCIS HAS BEEN SO QUIET AND LISTLESS, HE DOESN'T SEEM LIKE HIMSELF.



FRANCIS!!

OOHHH--E

THE PERUSIAN PRISON HAD TAKEN MORE OUT OF FRANCIS THAN ANYONE REALIZED UNTIL HE FELL ILL FOR THE SECOND TIME.



FOR MONTHS, HE IS WRACKED WITH FEVER, SOMETIMES TOGGING AND MUTTERING IN DELIRIUM...



AND WHEN THE FEVER FINALLY LEAVES HIM, HE IS WEAKER AND MORE LISTLESS THAN EVER.



IT WILL BE A LONG TIME BEFORE HE IS COMPLETELY WELL.



EVENTUALLY, THOUGH, THE "KING OF THE FEASTS" RETAINS HIS OLD FRIENDS. FRANCIS ENTERS THE NEW WHIRL OF SOCIAL ACTIVITY WITH A FIERCE, DETERMINED GAIETY. IT IS AS IF, AWARE NOW OF HOW HOLLOW HIS DREAMS OF NOBILITY HAVE BECOME, HE TRIES A LITTLE TOO HARD.



COME ON, EVERYONE! THIS WILL BE THE BEST NIGHT YET! FOOD, DRINK, AND ALL THE FUN YOU CAN THINK OF!

YOU KNOW... WE REALLY SHOULD RESENT THAT A COMMONER GIVES PARTIES AS GOOD AS THE ONES FRANCIS THROWS.



AS LONG AS HE PAYS THE BILLS, I'M NOT GOING TO RESENT A THING.

IT'S A DISGRACE THE WAY THAT BOY OF YOURS SQUANDERS YOUR MONEY!



I'M PROUD OF HIM... EVERYONE KNOWS THAT PIETRO BERNARDONE'S SON CAN ENTERTAIN HIS FRIENDS IN STYLE...

... BUT I WISH HE COULD DO IT A LITTLE MORE CHEAPLY.



LOOK AT THEM... YOUNG, GOOD-FOR-NOTHING SPEND-THRIFTS!

AND THAT FRANCIS BERNARDONE IS THE WORST OF THE LOT!

I'VE GOT A SURPRISE TONIGHT, INSTEAD OF GOING TO ONE OF OUR USUAL PLACES, WE'RE GOING TO A PEASANT INN. THE LANDLORD WILL KEEP EVERYONE ELSE OUT, SO WE'LL HAVE THE PLACE TO OURSELVES.



THERE'LL BE A COOK THERE TO GIVE US A DINNER TO REMEMBER!

SOUNDS GREAT!



WILL YOU LOOK AT HER! SHE'S ONE OF THE MOST BEAUTIFUL GIRLS I'VE EVER SEEN!

HELLO, THERE! YOU'RE VERY LOVELY! WOULD YOU LIKE TO GO OUT WITH MY FRIENDS AND ME?

ARE YOU CRAZY? SHE MUST BE TEN YEARS YOUNGER THAN YOU ARE, AND SHE'S COUNT SCHIPI'S DAUGHTER, CLARE.

DO YOU KNOW WHAT HE'D DO IF HE HEARD YOU--?



OH, WELL... I GUESS I GOT CARRIED AWAY.



WELL, FRANCIS, YOU'VE DONE IT AGAIN. THIS IS TERRIFIC! DON'T YOU EVER RUN OUT OF IDEAS?

I HOPE I NEVER DO, BERNARDO.



I WANT TO SPEND MY LIFE TRYING NEW THINGS, AND FINDING NEW WAYS OF SEEING AND DOING OLD THINGS.

YOU MAKE IT SOUND APPEALING... WHATEVER YOU DO, I THINK I'D LIKE TO COME ALONG FOR THE RIDE!



HEY, FRANCIS, THIS IS A LOT MORE FUN THAN BEING IN PRISON, ISN'T IT?

... ALL I WANT TO DO IS FIND SOME WAY OF FORGETTING THAT PLACE AND LIVING DOWN MY CAPTURE AND ILLNESS!

TO THINK I ONCE DREAMED OF THE GLORY OF WAR...









DON'T WORRY, FATHER. I'LL COME BACK WITH HONORS THAT I'VE EARNED, AND GLORY THAT I HAVE A RIGHT TO.



THAT NIGHT, AS IF IN RESPONSE TO HIS OWN BOAST, FRANCIS HAS A STRANGELY PROPHETIC DREAM...



ALL OF THESE ARMS ARE FOR YOU AND YOUR KNIGHTS!

AND THE NEXT MORNING...



I CAN'T GET THAT DREAM OUT OF MY MIND!

IT SEEMED TO SAY THAT ALL MY WISHES WILL COME TRUE... THAT I WILL BECOME A NOBLE, AND A LEADER OF MEN, AND YET...

THERE MAY HAVE BEEN MORE TO IT, BELOW THE SURFACE. IF ONLY I COULD BE SURE--!



AND, SOME DAYS LATER, ON THE NARROW RIVER NEAR APULIA...

THIS IS OUR CHECKPOINT, MEN. WE'LL CAMP HERE FOR THE NIGHT, AS SOON AS WE'VE CROSSED THE BRIDGE.



THAT NIGHT, WHILE THE ARMY SLEEPS...

FRANCIS...

MAMME!

FRANCIS!

WHAT? WHO'S THERE?



ALL YOUR LIFE, YOU'VE TRIED TO LIVE AND LOVE BY THE RULES OF CHIVALRY. NOW TELL ME THIS-- WHOM SHOULD YOU FOLLOW, THE LORD OR THE SERF?



HUH? YOU SHOULD FOLLOW THE LORD, OF COURSE... ANY FOOL KNOWS THAT!

THEN MAYBE YOU'RE A FOOL. YOU'RE FOLLOWING THE SERF.



BUT... I'M HERE IN THE NAME OF THE POPE! AND THE ONLY ONE HE ANSWERS TO IS...

OH, MY GOD!

MY... GOD?

YES, FRANCIS.

WHAT... WHAT IS IT YOU WANT ME TO DO?



RETURN TO ASSISI. WHEN YOU ARE THERE, YOU WILL LEARN MY WILL.

BUT... MY PARENTS... THE DISGRACE... IF I GO BACK NOW, DO YOU KNOW WHAT PEOPLE WILL SAY?



YES, FRANCIS, I KNOW. BUT YOU MUST ACCEPT THIS. IT IS TIME FOR YOU TO FOLLOW THE LORD.

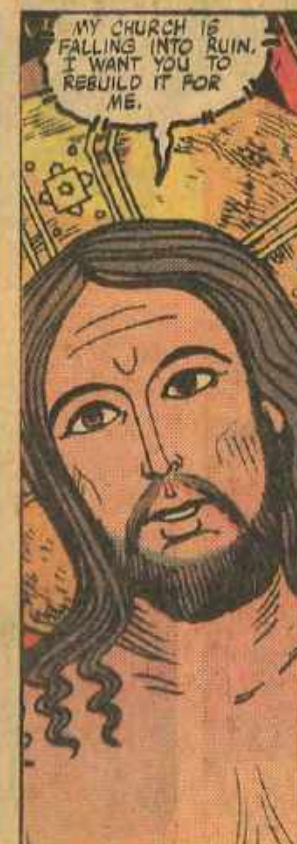


AND SO, THE NEXT DAY, FRANCIS LEAVES THE CAMP. HE HAS ABANDONED HIS LIFELONG DREAM OF WORLDLY GLORY-- FOREVER.















IN THE DAYS THAT FOLLOW, THE PEOPLE OF ASSISI CAN SCARCELY RECOGNIZE THEIR FORMER "KING OF THE FEASTS" AS HE APPEARS AMONG THEM, WEARING A PATCHED, WORN WORKER'S TUNIC.



YET, DESPITE THEIR SCORN...



ONE DAY, BY CHANCE...



BUT, OVER DINNER...



DURING THE NIGHT, BERNARDO IS AWAKENED BY HIS FRIEND'S CRIES.



THE NEXT DAY, AS FRANCIS WORKS AT REBUILDING THE CHURCH...



IT'S GOOD, BERNARDO. IN ALL MY LIFE, I'VE NEVER FELT HALF AS GOOD AS I DO NOW.



YES... WELL, NOW'S THE TIME I DO WANT TO JOIN YOU.



THEN, AS ONE WHO DREAMED OF KNIGHTHOOD TO ANOTHER, I HOLD YOU TO YOUR OATH. TURN ME AWAY, AND YOU'LL BE BREAKING ALL THE RULES OF CHIVALRY!



SOON... LOOK... HERE COMES PETER CATANI.



AND... FRANCIS, MY NAME IS GILES. I'M ONLY A HERF, BUT I'D LIKE TO BE YOUR FOLLOWER, IF YOU'LL HAVE ME.







THAT EVENING...

SOON THERE WILL BE MORE THAN JUST THE FOUR OF US. WE'LL HAVE FOLLOWERS FROM FRANCE, SPAIN, GERMANY... FROM ALL OVER THE WORLD.



AND FINALLY, IN BISHOP GUIDO'S PALACE...

YOUR GROUP HAS GROWN, FRANCIS. THERE ARE ALMOST A DOZEN OF YOU. WHAT DO YOU CALL YOURSELVES?

THE FRIARS MINOR-- OR "LITTLE BROTHERS." WE WANT TO IDENTIFY OURSELVES WITH THOSE WHO ARE SMALL, THE POOR AND OPPRESSED. OURS IS A SIMPLE ORDER, WITH NO DESIRE FOR POWER OR AUTHORITY.



I'VE HEARD NOTHING BUT EXCELLENT REPORTS ABOUT YOU. PEOPLE TRUST YOUR PREACHING AND THE EXAMPLE YOU SET, AND CERTAIN PRIESTS HAVE EVEN REFORMED BECAUSE OF YOU.



I THOUGHT THAT GOD WANTED ME TO REBUILD HIS CHURCHES... ONE STONE AT A TIME. NOW I REALIZE THAT HE MEANT FOR ME TO REBUILD HIS CHURCH... ONE PERSON AT A TIME.

BEFORE YOUR ORDER GROWS ANY LARGER, YOU MUST GO TO THE POPE AND GET HIS OFFICIAL APPROVAL. I'M SORRY... IT WON'T BE EASY FOR YOU... YOU MAY FAIL.



THANK YOU, MY LORD FOR YOUR KINDNESS AND YOUR ADVICE. WE'LL LEAVE FOR ROME AS SOON AS WE CAN.



ON THE ROAD TO ROME THE FRIARS MINOR SING, LIKE HEAVENLY MINSTRELS...

HOW GREAT IS THE WORLD... AND THE GLORY OF GOD!



DAYS LATER, IN THE PAPAL AUDIENCE ROOM...

WHO'S NEXT ON MY AGENDA?

A FELLOW FROM ASSISI... FRANCIS SOME- BODY-OR-OTHER. CARDINAL JOHN OF COLONNA RECOMMENDED THAT WE SEE HIM. HE AND A GROUP OF HIS SCRUFFY-LOOKING FRIENDS WANT TO FOUND A NEW ORDER.



MORE FANATICS? I SEE 60 MANY OF THEM, THEY TIRE ME... OH, WELL, YOU MIGHT AS WELL SHOW HIM IN.



AND, AFTER FRANCIS AND HIS COMRADES HAVE ENTERED...

YOUR HOLINESS, MY BROTHERS AND I WOULD LIKE TO FOUND A NEW--

NO.

BUT WE JUST--

NO. ROME HAS SPOKEN. GO HOME.



HOLY FATHER, SUPPOSE THERE WAS A KING WHOSE SON HAD BEEN LOST AS A CHILD AND WAS RAISED BY SERFS...





GO ON.

WELL, ONE DAY, THE PRINCE LEARNS HIS TRUE ORIGINS AND GOES TO SEE HIS FATHER, BUT HE'S NOT EVEN ADMITTED TO THE PALACE.

WHY NOT?



WELL, HE'S JUST A GERP, AND NO ONE BELIEVES THAT SOMEBODY OF SUCH A HUMBLE ORIGIN CAN BE A TRUE SON OF THE KING.

HOLY FATHER... DON'T LET THE CHURCH BE LIKE THAT KING. WE ARE ALL TRUE SONS OF THE CHURCH. DON'T JUDGE US BY OUR HUMBLE APPEARANCE AND TURN US AWAY BEFORE WE'VE HAD OUR SAY.



EHMM... VERY CLEVER. YOU'VE CONVINCED ME. COME BACK TOMORROW, AND AFTER I'VE LISTENED TO YOU, I'LL MAKE MY DECISION.



THAT NIGHT IN HIS DREAMS, HOWEVER, POPE INNOCENT III LEARNS THAT GOD WILL HAVE HIS SAY BEFORE THE HOLY MAN FROM ASSISI.

CHURCH... NO... THE CHURCH IS FALLING...



SUDDENLY, FROM OUT OF NOWHERE, DARTS A HUMBLE, HAUNTINGLY FAMILIAR FIGURE.



AND ALTHOUGH AT FIRST HE SEEMS TO BE SMALL, HE IS STRONG ENOUGH TO SUPPORT AND REBUILD THE CRUMBLING STRUCTURE.



HIS HOLINESS AWAKENS WITH A JERK, AND...

THAT MAN IN MY DREAM... THE ONE WHO REPAIRED THE CHURCH...

HE LOOKED LIKE... COULD HE HAVE BEEN...?



IN THE MORNING, IT IS A SUBDUED AND ALTOGETHER MORE OPEN-MINDED PONTIFF WHO GREETED THE FRIARS MINOR.

FRANCIS, I BELIEVE I'VE HAD A SIGN FROM GOD. HE'S SHOWN ME THAT YOU ARE THE MAN TO REBUILD HIS CHURCH.

BUT... THAT'S WONDERFUL! HE'S SHOWN ME THE SAME THING!



WELL, I CAN HARDLY ARGUE WITH BOTH OF YOU. I APPROVE YOUR ORDER. WHAT WILL YOU USE TO RULE YOURSELVES?

THE GOSPELS, YOUR HOLINESS. NO MORE, AND NO LESS.



IT'S FUNNY... I THOUGHT YOU'D BE LIKE MOST OF THESE FANATICAL REFORMERS, THINKING YOU HAD TO TEAR DOWN THE CHURCH BEFORE YOU CAN REBUILD IT. INSTEAD, YOU'RE EMBRACING THE BEST PARTS OF IT.



"GOOD LUCK, FRANCIS. YOU'VE SET YOURSELVES A DIFFICULT TASK... MAYBE AN IMPOSSIBLE ONE, BUT IF ANYONE CAN DO IT, I THINK YOU CAN."

NOW WE MUST GO OUT INTO THE WORLD AND BEGIN OUR REAL WORK... TEACHING PEOPLE TO LOOK ON GOD AS THEIR FATHER, AND ON CHRIST AND EACH OTHER AS BROTHERS...



...TO SEE THE CHURCH AS THEIR MOTHER AND TO STOP SPOILING THIS BEAUTIFUL WORLD, WHICH IS THEIR HOME. WE'LL CARRY THIS MESSAGE INTO ALL LANDS.



THEN, ONE DAY, ON A STREET IN ASSISI...

FRANCIS!

WHY... IT'S CLAIRE SCHIPI. ISN'T IT? WHAT CAN I DO FOR YOU?

QUITE A BIT, FRANCIS. YOU SEE, I'VE WATCHED YOU FOR THE LAST TWO YEARS...













BUT... FEUDAL ALLEGIANCES ARE THE BASIS OF OUR ENTIRE SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT! AT THE RATE PEOPLE ARE JOINING YOUR ORDERS, ENFORCING SUCH A RULE--

-- COULD HELP TO DESTROY OUR POLITICAL SYSTEM!



WELL, I NEVER SAID THAT'S WHAT I WANTED...  
... BUT IF IT DID HAPPEN, WOULD THAT BE SUCH A BAD THING?

HHMMMM...



THEN, ONE DAY... I'VE SENT MANY OF THE BROTHERS TO FOREIGN COUNTRIES... NOW IT'S MY TURN, I'M GOING TO THE LAND OF THE SARACENS TO SEE THE CRUSADE-- THE "HOLY WAR!"

BUT... WHAT IF YOU'RE KILLED? THINK OF THE DANGER! AND THINK OF THE ORDER! IF ANYTHING HAPPENS TO YOU--



I DON'T FEAR DEATH. MY SOUL IS READY TO MEET THE LORD, WHENEVER HE DECIDES TO CALL ME.



AS FOR THE FRIARS MINOR... WELL, BROTHER ELIAS LIKES TO ORGANIZE. HE CAN RUN THINGS UNTIL I RETURN.



ELIAS? BUT HE'S...

ELIAS IS HUMAN, AS WE ALL ARE. I'LL HAVE TO TRUST HIM.



IN DANETTA, EGYPT...

LOOK AT THEM, BROTHERS, MARCHING OFF FOR GLORY AND FOR GOD, JUST AS I DID WHEN I WAS YOUNG. WILL PEOPLE NEVER LEARN?



AND, WHEN THE CHRISTIANS AND SARACENS MEET ON THE BATTLEFIELD, FRANCIS SEES HOW LITTLE WAR HAS CHANGED SINCE HE HIMSELF DREAMED OF KNIGHTHOOD.



IN MANY WAYS, THE CRUSADES ARE WORSE THAN THE BATTLES OF HIS YOUTH.

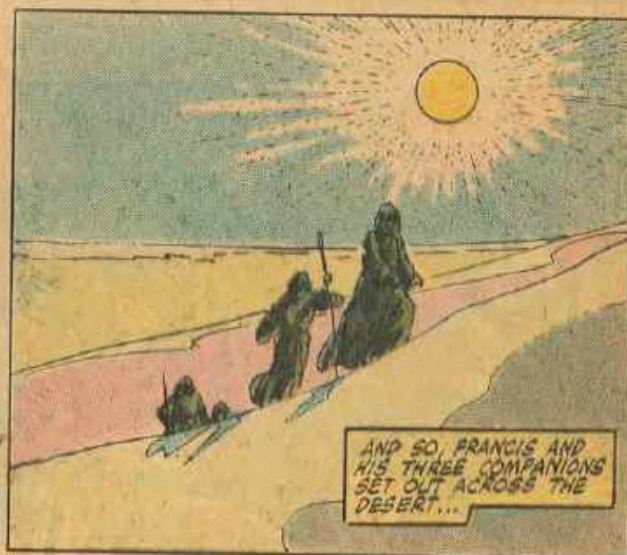
THIS IS MADNESS! THEY'RE SLAUGHTERING EACH OTHER LIKE SO MANY ANIMALS, AND EACH OF THEM BELIEVES THAT HE IS DOING IT FOR GOD!



SOON, FRANCIS FINDS HIS SKILLS AS A HEALER ARE NEEDED ONCE MORE.

SO MANY MEN... YOUNG MEN... GOOD MEN, CRIPPLED FOR LIFE, AND DYING IN THIS SENSELESS WAR.

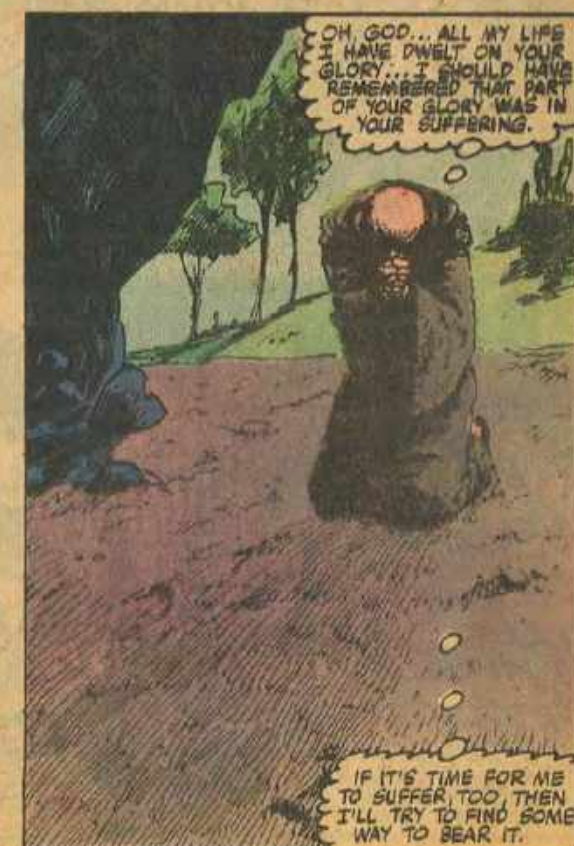








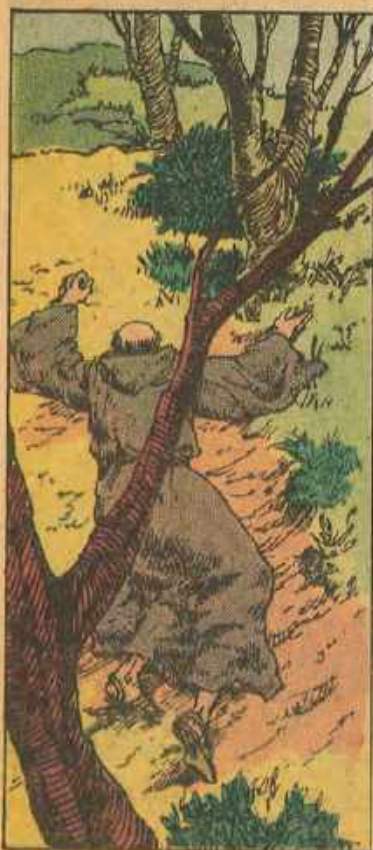
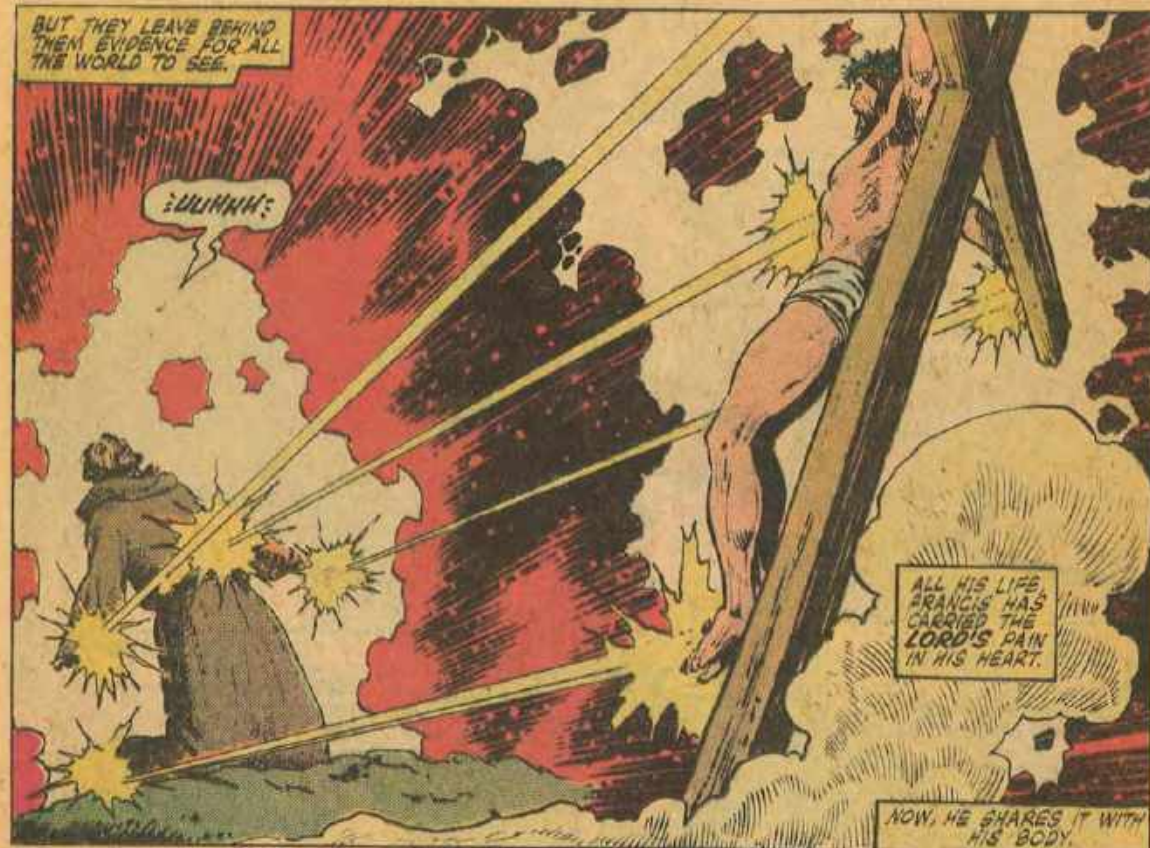








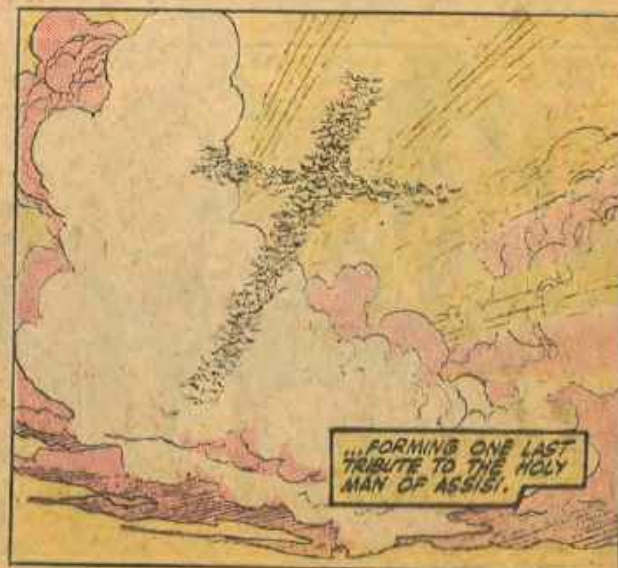
















## CANTICLE OF THE SUN

As adapted by Ken Ford and Richard Duprey for the off-Broadway musical *Francis*, originally produced and directed by Frank A. Martin.

Praise be to You, O Lord and Father  
Praise be to You and You alone  
We praise you, O Lord, for all of Your creatures,  
Especially Brother Sun

For Brother Sun, he is strong and bright  
And he gives us light as we live each day

Praise also Sister Moon  
And the sparkling stars  
Which Thy Hand made

Praise Thee, O Lord, for our Brother the Wind  
For weather that's cloudy and weather that's clear  
Praise Thee, O Lord, for sweet Sister Water  
Helpful to all Thy children here

Praise Thee, O Lord, for our Brother Fire  
Praise how he warms and lights the night

Praise Thee, O Lord, for the Earth our Mother  
She who sustains us that we might  
Be led to a love of all creatures great and small  
As they show Thy grace

Lord, help us each to learn  
Everywhere we turn  
We can see Thy Face

Praise Thee, O Lord, for all those who suffer  
Injuries in Thy Holy Name  
Blessed are they who merit to suffer  
You will reward them for their pains

Praise be to You, O Lord of all seasons  
Praise be to You, O Lord, for all reasons

Glory to You, O God!  
Glory to You, O God!  
Glory to You, O God, and You alone!







## SAINT FRANCIS AND THE CUSTOMS OF CHRISTMAS

Although it is not widely known, two of the most popular Christmas traditions originated with Francis of Assisi. In the city of GRECCIO, he commemorated the birth of the Christ child by recreating the Nativity with a Christmas crib, or *creche*.



To this day, Christians use chain figurines of the Holy Family and wooden mangers at Christmas, setting up the seasonal dioramas in their churches and homes.

It was also Francis who began the custom of singing popular music at the Christmas season, in addition to the weightier Latin music performed in the churches.



CHRISTMAS CAROLLING. As it is called, has been popular in many countries ever since.



## SOME OTHER FACTS ABOUT ST. FRANCIS AND HIS FOLLOWERS

More books have been written about St. Francis than about any other saint.

He is the patron saint of peace, the patron saint of ecology, the patron saint of Italy and the patron saint of animals.

His "Canticle of Brother Sun" was the first major poem written in Italian.

Many historians trace the origins of Renaissance (hence, modern) poetry, art and drama back to St. Francis.

By forbidding the laymen in his Third Order from bearing weapons and from taking the oath of fealty, St. Francis became partially responsible for the downfall of the feudal system. Serfs (semi-slaves) were freed and the number of petty wars were reduced.

His followers were the first missionaries to reach China and the far east as well as both North and South America. Franciscans were with Christopher Columbus on his second voyage to the New World.

The New World's first printing press was set up by St. Francis' followers in Mexico City in 1539.

Franciscans established the first college in the New World in Mexico City, 1536.

Because the Franciscan Missions in California became the foundation for the growth of the state, St. Francis has been called the "first of the first Californians."

The City of San Francisco is named after him in Spanish.

Los Angeles takes its name from the Little Portion, St. Francis' main church and headquarters in Assisi. The full name was "Pueblo de Nuestra Señora La Reina de Los Angeles de Portiuncula" --Town of Our Lady of the Angels of the Little Portion.

The full name of Sante Fe, New Mexico is "La Villa de Sante Fe de San Francisco" --City of the holy faith of St. Francis.

Arizona's highest mountains are called the San Francisco peaks.

There is a mountain range in Missouri called the St. Francois (French) Mountains and one of Missouri's counties is also named for St. Francis.

In Arkansas, both a river and a town bear the name St. Francis.

Besides Roman Catholic Franciscans, there are also Anglican, Episcopalian and Lutheran Franciscans.



