

**“What does Saint Francis of Assisi  
have to offer us in 2018?”**

**REFLECTIONS**

*By: Father John Quigley*

6:00pm

Sunday, March 18

The Historical context.

The World and Church of 13th Century

Monday, March 19

Francis' imprisonment and emotional collapse (PTSD)

Tuesday, March 20

Francis' life as the Saint of Assisi

Wednesday, March 21

Francis' passion for peace

**Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday nights  
the Sacrament of Reconciliation  
will be offered from 5-5:45pm**

## **Saint Francis of Assisi (1181 – 1226)**

### ***Pre-History for Francis.***

245 BC Assisi is established by the Romans.

1173 Assisi is under German domination after being taken from Alexander III.

1174 Christian Bishop of Mangozza the chancellor of the Holy Roman Empire crushes uprising in Assisi, builds, reinforces Rocca fortress and installs Conrad of Urslingen as governor.

### ***Francis' Youth***

1181 Giovanni Bernadone (nicknamed Francesco) born in Assisi.

1190 Fredrick dies and his son Henry takes his place. Francis is 9 years old.

1197 Henry dies in Portugal. His 3 year-old son Fredrick II is named Emperor. Francis is 17 years old.

1198 Pope Celestine dies, his nephew Innocent III elected at 37 years old and knowing the weakness of the Emperor Innocent adds Spoleto to his realm. Assisi revolts. Rocca is destroyed; the Maiores and the minors clash. Upper class flee to Perugia. Francis is 17/18 years old. Clare is 5 years old. Minores reinforce the walls around Assisi. Rage spreads in the valley to Sasso Rosso. Girardo Gliglerio flees to Collestrada then to Perugia.

1202 Battle of Collestrada. Francesco age 21 is taken prisoner of war.

### ***Six Year Period of Conversion.***

1203 Francesco (22) ransomed and returned home ill and disoriented.

1204 He tries to go back to battle and fails after his dream at Spoleto.

1205 Confused – Problems at home with father. Springtime - he gave generously to beggars at cloth shop, embraces a leper;

Autumn – crucifix speaks to him at San Damiano. He sells father's cloth to repair the little church. Breaks with family, renounces his inheritance. He goes to Gubbio to the home of a cloth dyer whose son Frederico Spadalunga a fellow prisoner in Perugia gave him clothing.

1206 Francesco to Rome as a pilgrim. He returns home in penitential clothing, begins to live with lepers. He nurses lepers and begs for stones to repair San Damiano, Porziuncola, and San Pietro.

### ***Founding of the Fraternity***

1208 24 February (St Matthias) Francisco (27) hears Gospel passage (Matt 10: 9-10) at Porziuncola and has an understanding for his life, "he is to the herald of the great King."

16 April, with friends Bernard and Peter he opens the book of Gospels to find the future direction of their lives (Matt 19:21, Luke 9:3 & Matt 16:24).

April 23 Giles joins them. 3 men from Assisi more join during summer. The 7 go to Rieti where another man joins community. They travel 2 x 2.

In September he has grace of forgiveness at Poggio Bustone.

- 1209 Papal Inquisitor goes to southern France and he is killed. Under orders of Simon de Montfort the papal army massacred 20,000 “heretics” in one day of slaughter (22 July) in Beziers. Simon sends word to Innocent II that “today 20,000 souls went before the judgement seat of God and it is He who will say who was heretic or Christian.” In August the crusade against the Cathars (Albigensians) moves to Carcasone, Albi, Castelnaudary, Castres, Fanjeau, Limoux, Lombers and Montreal. Francesco plus the 7 return from Rieti to Assisi, 4 more brothers join the community. The 12 go to Rome **for Innocent III’s approval** then back to Rivo Torto in Umbria.
- 1212 Clare joins the fraternity at Porziuncola. She is 19 years old.

### ***Francis’ Peace Missions***

- 1211 Francesco (age 30) tries to go to Egypt on a “Peace Mission.” Boat blown off course he lands in Syria.
- 1213 Count Orlando gives the gift of LaVerna to Francis. Innocent calls for the 5<sup>th</sup> Crusade.
- 1214 Francis, Bernard and Giles go to Spain aiming for Morocco. They experience the international (positive) acceptance of their way of life.
- 1215 IV Lateran Council called in Rome to approve the pope’s new crusade and new Church laws re: Eucharist. Francis attends and starts the Eucharistic Crusade.
- 1216 16 July Innocent III dies, 18 July Honorius III, who had been the tutor of Fredrick II, is elected. 2 August Francis secures the Pardon of the Porziuncola Indulgence.
- 1217 Chapter of Mats at Porziuncola. Friars sent to Germany, Tunis and Syria. Later to Spain. Francis wants to go to France but is dissuaded by Hugolino.
- 2118/9 Francis (37 years) goes to Damietta, Egypt and meets Sultan Malik al Kamil, (also 37 years old) nephew of Saladin.

### ***Francis’ Disillusionment With the Friars and Death***

- 1220 Francis returns from Egypt to address problems within Order. He resigns as superior, Peter Catani chosen by Francis to replace him. Francis requests Honorius that Hugolino be appointed Protector of Order.
- 1221 March 10 Peter Catani dies and Elias made Vicar General. Francis writes “words of life” for laity who wish to follow him and a first Franciscan Rule that is not approved. Francis is 40 years old.
- 1223 At Fonte Colombo he (42 years ol) writes a new Rule of life for the friars – approved at General Chapter in June - and is accepted by Pope Honorius in November. He invents the Christmas crib in Greccio on his way home from Rome to Assisi.
- 1224 Francis (43) receives the stigmata at Mount LaVerna on September 14 or 15. Clare’s long severe illness begins. She is 31.
- 1225 Francis is at Marches; March-May at San Damiano with Clare and writes the Canticle of the Creatures; June to Rieti Valley where he meets Cardinal Hugolino and papal curia; September, Fonte Colombo for eye surgery.

1226 Francis goes to Siena (April) for eye treatment; (May / June) Cortona where he dictates his wTestament; spends 6 weeks at San Damiano because of illness.

Francis dies on evening of October 3 and is buried at San Giorgio in Assisi the next day.

1228 16 July Francis is canonized by Gregory IX (Hugolino, who was elected March 19, 1227). Thomas of Celano commissioned to write a life of St Francis.

### ***Marks of PTSD in Francis' Life.***

*Aspects of Francis' life that we can understand within the current medical science of psychology (PTSD) ways that early biographers (St Bonaventure and Thomas of Celano) could never have seen.*

Collapse of credibility of authorities in Assisi and Perugia and their economic system (his sudden hatred of money) that was supported by warfare and killing.

He was caught in liminal spaces- not here not there. Suspended. Fear of enclosed spaces, asking the friars to wander without roof coverage.

Hallucinations and wild dreams. Panic while sleeping with Bernard of Quintavalle. Hatred / fear of mice and flies.

Erratic behaviour in his father's shop. Almost bi-polar. Protect your back, keep it to the wall.

Connection with animals as his friends.

His unkempt appearance that has been romanticized.

Like most of today's veterans he did not talk about the war and the killing.

He had a profound compunction of guilt. He made lent four times a year throughout his public life.

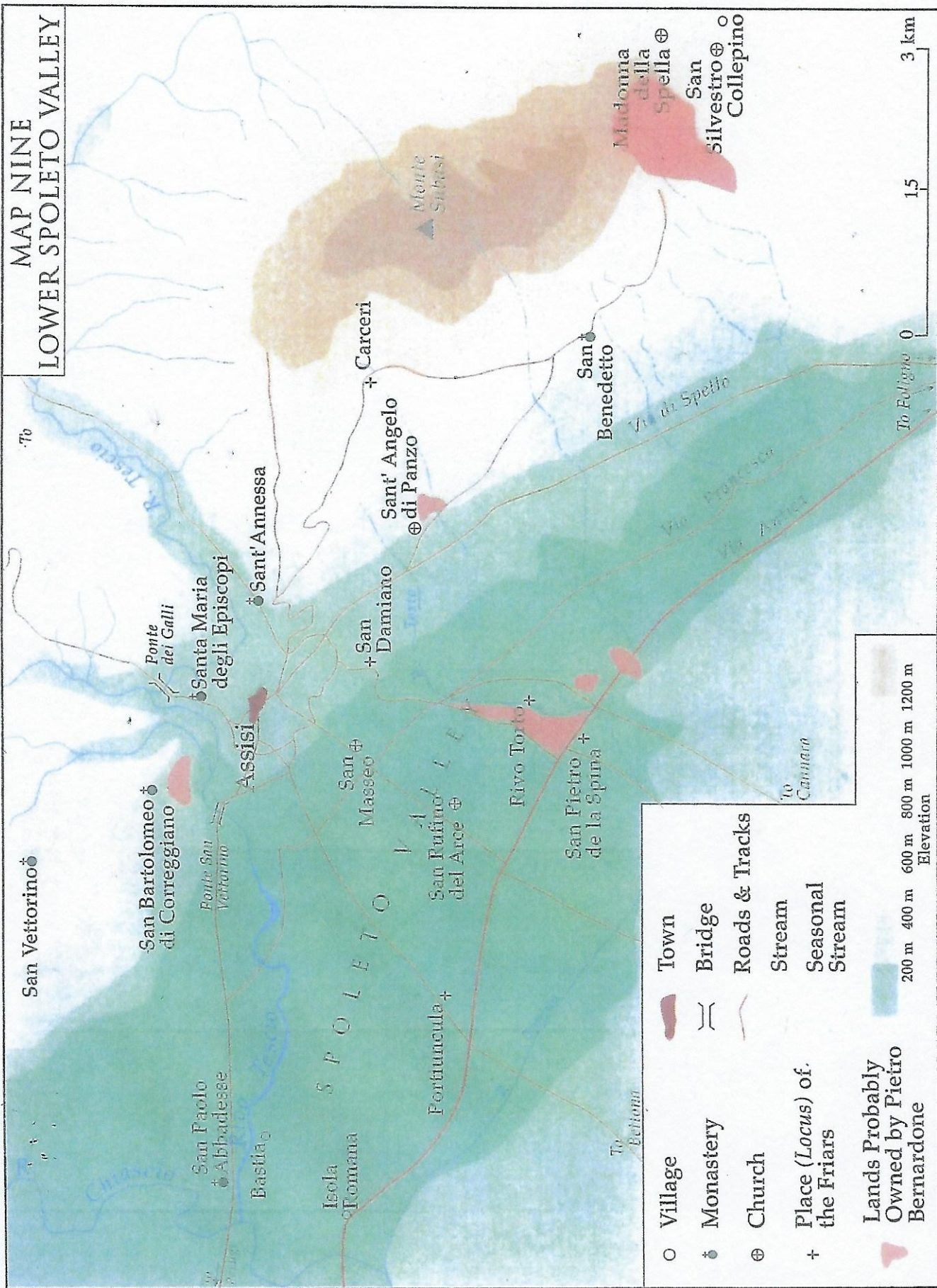
Fear of recidivism and his dramatic and extreme reactions to "temptation" – among the roses at Porziuncola and at friars' dinner at Greccio.

"Uptight nervous behaviour. Shaky masculine identity and hostility toward authority figures.

"Nixon Report on Viet Nam.

*JAQ 18 March 2018*

# MAP NINE LOWER SPOLETO VALLEY



○	Village	■	Town
⦿	Monastery	≡	Bridge
⊕	Church	—	Roads & Tracks
+	Place (Locus) of the Friars	—	Stream
■	Lands Probably Owned by Pietro Bernardone	—	Seasonal Stream

Elevation  
200 m 400 m 600 m 800 m 1000 m 1200 m

3 km

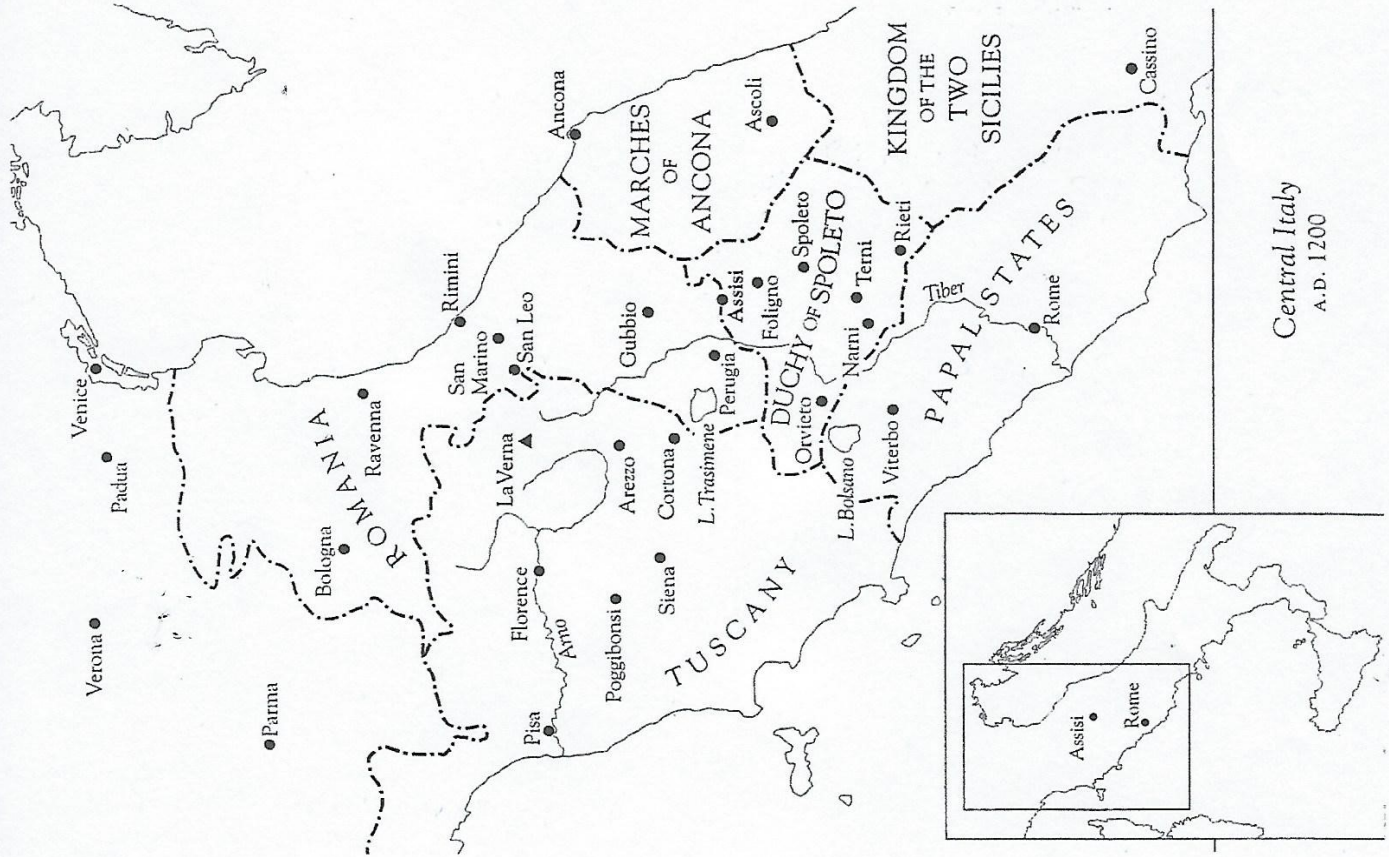
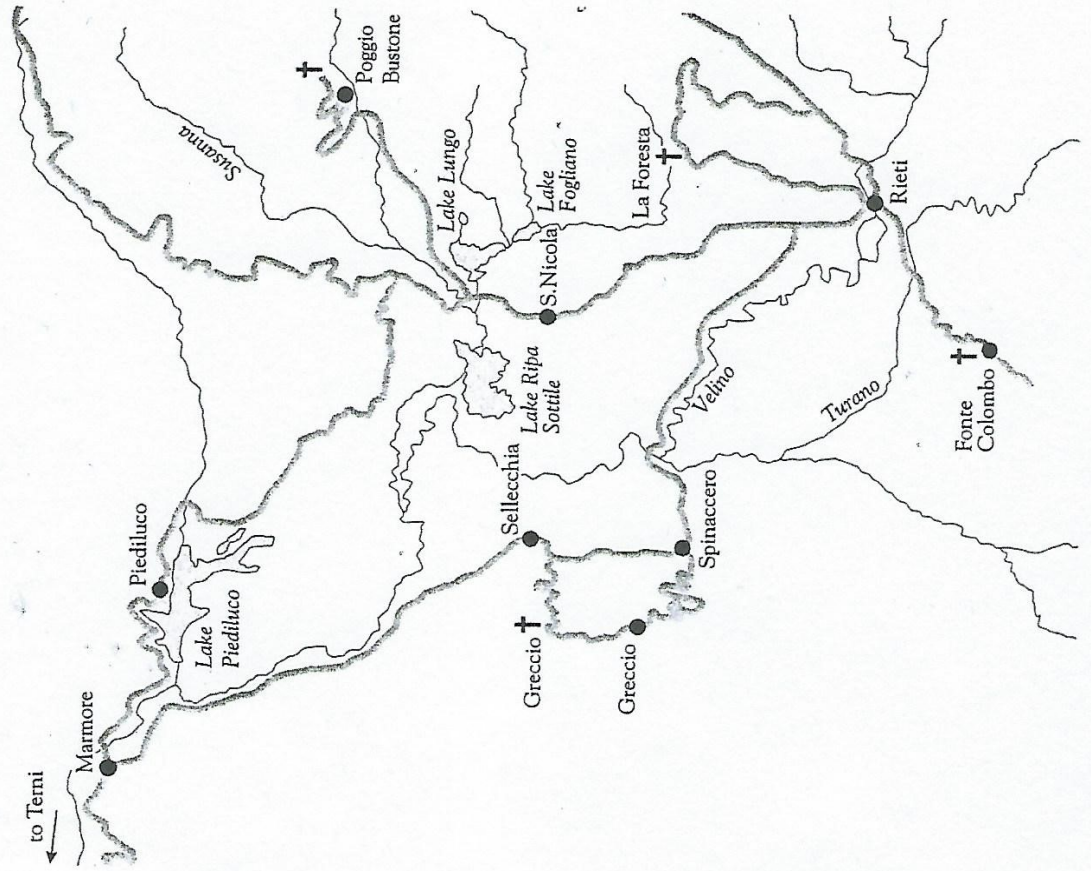
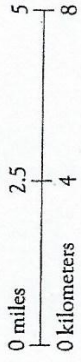
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The Rieti Valley  
1220-1226



Central Italy  
A.D. 1200

# MAP THREE ITALIAN PENINSULA POLITICAL REGIONS, 1220

- Holy Roman Empire
- Peter's Patrimony
- Papal States (Recovered by Innocent III)
- Kingdom of Sicily
- Town
- Roman Roads

0 50 100 miles  
0 50 100 km



