



THE MOMENT OF MERCY

By Jan Parker OFS

In the past few years I have grown in my appreciation of the *Office of the Passion*, particularly Psalm 15. St. Francis composed this psalm in honor of the Nativity of our Lord, and during the Christmas season he prayed it five

times a day. Last year I chose to pray it daily, not as often as Francis, but often enough that it became dear to me.

I remember praying it one night when I was feeling a little overwhelmed by the challenges of the day. I was longing for hope and peace. I read slowly, meditating on each verse, when suddenly these words of St. Francis jumped out at me: ***"On that day the Lord sent mercy and song in the night!"*** I felt a rush of joy, as if I truly did hear a song in the night!

"On that day" meant Christmas! "Mercy" meant Jesus! The "song in the night" is "Glory to God in the highest" - the song of the angels! I was delighted with this revelation: Christmas is a celebration of the Father's gift of Mercy! In that moment of mercy I found all the peace and hope I needed.

How appropriate that this **Year of Mercy** begins in Advent as we prepare to celebrate the birth of Jesus. As Pope Francis announced in the first line of *Misericordiae Vultus*, "*Jesus Christ is the face of the Father's mercy.*" Truly, with the birth of Jesus, the Lord sent mercy and a song for our longest night. Let us open our hearts to Jesus! Let us celebrate Christmas as "*the moment of Mercy!*"

You are invited to contribute to our "Moment of Mercy" column in each issue of the TAU-USA during the Year of Mercy. Do you have a story of mercy received, or given, that you would like to share? Please send your story to tauusa.ofs@gmail.com. We look forward to your contributions.

Psalm Fifteen

Sing for joy to God our help;
With exultant voice
raise to the Lord God living and true a shout of
joy!

Because the Lord is the Most High,
The awesome, great King over all the earth.

For the most holy Father of heaven,
Our King before all ages,
Sent from on high the beloved Son
Who was born of the Blessed Virgin, Holy Mary.

He called out to God: You are my Father,
And God placed him as the firstborn,
The highest above all earthly Kings.

On that day the Lord sent mercy
And song in the night.

This is the day the Lord has made;
Let us rejoice in it and be glad.

For to us is given the beloved child most holy,
Born for us along the way and placed in a
manger
Because there was no room for him at the inn.

Glory to the Lord God in the highest
And on earth peace to those of good will.

Let heavens rejoice and earth exult,
Let the sea and all that is in it roar,
Let fields and everything in them sing for joy.

Sing to the Lord a new song; sing to the Lord all
the earth!

For the Lord is great and highly to be praised;
More awesome than all gods.

Bring to the Lord, families of nations,
Bring to the Lord glory and honor,
Bring to the Lord the glory due his name.

Cast off the weight of sin and take up the Lord's
holy cross,
Follow the Lords' most holy commands to the
very end.

Glory to the Father and to the Son,
And to the Holy Spirit.
As it was in the beginning, is now,
And will be forever. Amen.