Francis and Clare: the early documents; introduction:

Francis and Clare left few documents, and their views on their project “to follow the gospel” must be reconstructed from the following material (all in Latin apart from one work):
- The “Testaments” that both of them wrote shortly before their deaths;
- The early “Rules” for the friars and sisters that at least partially were composed by them;
- Letters and “admonitions” they sent to various people;
- One poetic work by Francis in Italian.

For this course, the following materials will be used:

*Francis:*
- The “Early Rule” of the friars that took shape between the papal oral approval in 1209 (the early document consisted mostly of gospel quotations) and 1221;
- The “Later Rule” of 1223 that was officially approved by the pope;
- the “Rule of Hermitages”;
- Francis’s “Testament” written shortly before he died;
- one “Admonition”;
- the “Canticle of Creation” written shortly before he died

*Clare:*
- “The Rule of St. Clare”;
- Clare’s “Testament”;
- Clare’s “Letters to Agnes of Prague”

As a commentary on Francis’s “Early Rule,” a short text by the prominent Franciscan historian David Flood will be used

**Published sources of texts:**


All these texts can be found on the following website (one needs to register to access):
www.franciscantradition.org/early-sources

For the purpose of this class they have all been copied and pasted into appropriate links on the website (see first class in this section)

in pdf linked to the class website (see first class in this section)

All should read the introductory sections from D. Flood for background: Flood, Chapter 1, no. 1 (Leaving Assisi), pp. 6-8; Chapter 1, no. 2 (Assisi in 1210), pp. 8-11; these pages contain introductory information on the social and economic life in Assisi at the time when Francis started “living according to the gospel”
In order to understand better how Francis understands and interprets scriptures, read D. Flood, p. 50, and a chapter from A, Vauchez’s book *Francis of Assisi* (see link to the first class of this section)