

Reflection Wednesday Week 3 St Francis de Sales 2024

St Francis de Sales (1567 - 1622) was born near Annecy, in Savoy, studied law and was ordained a priest despite opposition from his father. He re-evangelized the people of his home district (the Chablais), who had become Calvinists. Despite danger from hostile Calvinists, he preached with such effectiveness that after four years most of the people had returned to the Church. He was then appointed bishop of Geneva, and spent the rest of his life reforming and reorganising the diocese, and in caring for the souls of his people by preaching and spiritual guidance.

St Francis taught that we can all attain a devout and spiritual life, whatever our position in society: holiness is not reserved for monks and hermits. He wrote that *“religious devotion does not destroy: it perfects,”* and his spiritual counsel is dedicated to making people more holy by making them more themselves. In preaching against Calvinism, he was driven by love rather than a desire to win. One Calvinist minister said *“if we honoured anyone as a saint, I know of no-one since the days of the Apostles more worthy of it than this man.”*

St Francis is the patron saint of writers and journalists, who would do well to imitate his love and his moderation: as he said, *“whoever wants to preach effectively must preach with love.”*

What do you call a guy who's really loud? Mike.

Where do cows go on Friday night? To the MOOOOOvies

What do race horses eat. Fast food!