

LIVING FRATERNITY

Theme : « Lord, what do you want me to do? »

During this month of December, we end the year with *Becoming ferrymen*, from the text « *Lord, what do you want me to do?* », presented at *Fraternité 2012*, by Fr. Pierre Brunet, ofm.

Becoming ferrymen ... Yes, but ferrymen for what? This is a question that leads to reflection. It incites us to become artisans of peace in this world, today more than ever.

Recall: At the monthly meeting, the fraternity should have in place at the disposal of the members a Bible, at least one copy of the General Constitutions, an example of the Catechism of the Catholic Church and at least one copy of *Living with Christ*. Also, each member should have in hand their own copy of the Rule.

Good preparation - Good meeting

DECEMBER 2013 MONTHLY MEETING

Opening Prayer and Song

(According to the Ritual or chosen by the fraternity)

The animator can read the Gospel for the day, in order to discover the signs leading to the « treasure hidden in the field... » A few minutes of reflection.

Reading: (choose a person who can read calmly)

Becoming ferrymen

Favouring the inevitable passages to allow the baptized and the non-baptized to « pass onto the other shore », to regain the journey of life and to discover the Gospel buried in the field of the world. The point is to redo the experience of the disciples of Emmaus who have turned their backs on Jerusalem, who have walked with the Pilgrim-Stranger, shared their experience, their expectations and their deceptions, who referred to the Word, who have expressed their desire to have the experience last, the joy to celebrate with the simple gestures of life, of the table and of the journey, learned the urgency to go and admit to others that he is Alive. They have gone from the route of absence to the route of faith, from death to life, from solitude to the sacrament of communion. Having done it among them, they could henceforth do it with/for others.

We must serve as links and indicators for the passages toward a new determining experience with:

- persons in distress (physical, moral, psychological, spiritual)

- persons searching (seeking sense, agnostics, people eager for spirituality, indifferent to the Church),
- converts and persons in renewal (older baptized, esoteric, full of oriental wisdom)
- regular church goers
- undernourished of the faith
- Church leaders
- marginal and distant volunteers (divorced remarried, same sex couples, atheists, apostates)
- Christians of all tendencies (pious, mystics, fundamentalists, critics of the Institution, socially engaged persons, feminists, charismatics, new communities).

Becoming ferrymen, serving as bridges between...

This is a ministry without a mandate other than the evangelical dispatch of the disciples. **This is part of our responsibility as baptized.** Our baptism roots us in the world, with companions for the journey, to learn how to be Christian, regardless of the situation of our economic, social or moral life. The passages are generally slow and rigorous. We do not always see the outcome, the harvest, the success of the mission. The paradox is to stay moving, all the while establishing us definitively in God with others. **The challenge to be ferrymen is valuable for the Church in ruins, in restoration and in construction. What already exists and what is called upon to be born.**

Recollection

Take a few moments to reflect on the preceding texts and give answer to:
Are we actually ferrymen or ferrymen in becoming? (Sharing: 5 minutes)

Continue by reading the following letter (Ep 2)

Reading

Pass, to go over to the definite residence

So then, you Gentiles are not foreigners or strangers any longer; you are now fellow-citizens with God's people and members of the family of God. You, too, are built upon the foundation laid by apostles and prophets, the cornerstone being Christ Jesus himself. He is the one who holds the whole building together and makes it grow into a sacred temple dedicated to the Lord. In union with him you too are being built together with all the others into a place where God lives through his Spirit. (Ep 2, 19-22)

Recollection and Sharing

How does this text shed light on the meaning of our mission?

Continue the reading.

The Franciscan way to « built Church » ?

Francis proposes an attachment to the Church through an attachment to **material churches** (Test). He asks that they be visited and venerated (2LFid33), cleaned and kept worthy so that one can celebrate in them. **The institutional Church** remains as our holy mother (TestS5) up to and into her representatives (Lord pope, bishops, priests deacons, etc.), even the most notoriously recognized sinners (Adm 26). But she also is **a holy people** where the ministries cross and intermingle with the great and the lowly of this world, without worrying about precedence (1Reg 23,7). Each Christian is sent back to the truth of his witness: **by the word and by the example**.

... Francis proposes a look of mercy for each of the members of the Church. The confession of faith must return to the one Only God, adored and revered by all.

At the centre of the Church, there is the Christ Savior who lasts by his Spirit. His work is to bring us to the Father and to restore all to the Father, the good, our activities, our fraternal relationships, our mission, etc. The announcement of the Kingdom remains accessible to all. **The Franciscan intuition always wants to bring God to the world, in the heart of the City**. This Church must remain poor and pilgrim, converted and blessed, rooted in this century and guaranteed of the kindness of the merciful God Savior (LD). It is reliant on the Message, the sacramental signs, the forgiveness. **It must travel the world like the forgiveness of God** (Chesterton).

Sharing

Take a moment to share.

In the footsteps of Francis

(Excerpt from 1st Rule, Chapter 23, verse 7, Claire et François d'Assise, Écrits, Éditions du Cerf, Paris, 2003)

And all those who in the holy Catholic Church and in all its following orders : priests, deacons, sub-deacons, associates, exorcists, readers, porters and all the clerics, all the religious men and women, all the converts and all the children, the poor and the destitute, the kings and the princes, the workers and the farmers, the servants and the lords, all the virgins and those who remain celibate and those who are married, the lay, men and women, all the small children, the adolescents, the young and the old, the healthy and the sick, all the small and all the great, and all the people, all races, all tribes and all languages, all the nations and all the men, everywhere on the earth, who are and who will be, humbly we , all brothers minor, useless servants, ask and implore them, that we may all persevere in true faith and penance because no one can be saved otherwise.

Deepening of points taken from the Rule and the General Constitutions

OFS Rule, Article 19, par. 1 and 2

Mindful that they are bearers of peace which must be built up unceasingly, they should seek out ways of unity and fraternal harmony through dialogue, trusting in the presence of the divine seed in everyone and in the transforming power of love and pardon. Messengers of perfect joy in every circumstance, they should strive to bring joy and hope to others.

General Constitutions, Articles 23.1 and 24.2

Article 23

Peace is the work of justice and the fruit of reconciliation and of fraternal love. Secular Franciscans are called to be bearers of peace in their families and in society:

- they should see to the proposal and spreading of peaceful ideas and attitudes;
- they should develop their own initiatives and should collaborate, individually and as a fraternity, with initiatives of the Pope, the local Churches, and the Franciscan Family;
- they should collaborate with those movements and institutions which promote peace while respecting its authentic foundations.

Article 24.2

In the fraternity:

- the spirituality of the family and of marriage and the Christian attitude towards family problems should be a theme for dialogue and for the sharing of experiences;
- they should share the important moments of the family life of their Franciscan brothers and sisters and they should give fraternal attention to those — single, widows, single parents, separated, divorced — who are living difficult situations;
- they should create conditions suitable for dialogue between generations;
- the formation of groups of married couples and of family groups should be fostered.

Life - Objective:

During the month of December 2013, you are invited to live the true sense of this Advent time and to prepare for a Christian Christmas of joy and sharing ...

Events and Information from the Church and the Order

Remind the members of regional and local activities.

End of the meeting (a prayer chosen by the fraternity)

At home

To continue our reflection, go and look in the Compendium of the Catechism of the Catholic Church, the articles 480-486 and in the Catechism, the numbers 2304 and 2305, on the safeguard of peace.

Reference to article 19 of our Rule

- in the 1st Rule of Francis, Chapter 7, verse 15;
- in the Legend of the Three Companions, Chapter 14, verse 58.