

## **LIVING FRATERNITY**

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

In March 2013, we suggest continuing our deepening of the meaning of the text « *Lord, what do you want me to do?* » presented at *Fraternité 2012*, by Fr. Pierre Brunet, ofm.

This month, we are proposing to take a look at the challenges of our humanity and the faith's answer.

At the monthly meeting, the fraternity should have 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 their own copy of the Rule.

*Good preparation - Good meeting*

## **MARCH 2013 MONTHLY MEETING**

### **Opening Prayer and Song**

(According to the Ritual or chosen by the fraternity)

### **Reading:**

While one person calmly does the reading of the following text, the others will listen.

*For the crossing of my life and of my faith:*

*« Lord, what do you want me to do? »*

### **The challenges to my humanity**

#### **The great questions of life**

Life presents us with great questions, often without answers: *Who am I?*

*Why am I on this earth? For whom do I matter? How to love and be loved? Why are there tribulations, suffering, and death? Why are there injustice and social inequalities? After death, what?*

### **Sharing**

On the questions in the preceding paragraph. Each member reads the questions in silence. During a few minutes, each one shall write a few notes on their answer to the chosen question.

Afterwards, we shall take a few moments to share these questions and notes.

## **Recollection**

During the following reading, each member is invited to note (by underlining or highlighting) what is most significant in the text. **Afterwards, we resume the reading of the following text:** (If possible, another person could do the reading.)

## **Spiritual and Human**

« *We are not human beings on a spiritual journey. We are spiritual beings on a human journey.* » (P. T. de Chardin)

In other words, our existence, under the Spirit of our baptism is to go to the end of our human life: learn to love, to discover the place of others, to serve in a disinterested way, to give of oneself for good, justice, truth, etc. And it must be made to return from where we came: God (cf. the tree whose roots grow towards heaven).

## **Faith's answer**

Faith does not have the answer to life's great questions. It helps us to go through them. Faith is a gift, a seed for journeying, growing, going to the end of the questions, especially the most difficult ones.

**My Christian faith** (in difference to the human values encountered in the world or in others) **draws from Jesus Christ and from his way of life**, his humanity under his Father's gaze. Jesus proposes a radical style: exceed the law of the Lex talionis (*An eye for an eye...*) « *They have told you, I, myself, tell you*), but love my enemies, pray for those who persecute me, announce and dispose of evil, forgive the unforgivable, work toward reconciliation.

**These values go against the current of a secular and mundane mentality centered on easiness, instant happiness, individualism, exclusion of others, fatalism and despair, atheism** (getting along without God; accusing Him of all the world's problems or absolving Him of them), etc.

## **Christ's way enlightens my faith**

It is to go to the end of his humanity, linked to his Father. From his baptism and this discovery, he withdraws to look closely at this link before he leaves on his mission:

Make God close and the Kingdom accessible to everyone, heal by my presence, make evil to retreat, touch the hearts by my goodness, bring about a bit of peace, make truth known, let me be welcomed and give of myself without asking for anything in return.)

My answer is a **spirituality that is discovered along the journey.**

It will only be defined on my deathbed; in the mean time, it reinvents itself on a daily basis. **How to go to the end of my humanity?** By welcoming it, respecting it, loving it, letting it be transformed. In journeying with others. By becoming the house of the Spirit in one's self.

Everyone has his or her way of journeying toward God and establishing one's self within Him: his route, his hermitage, his desert, his public places, his temples and his houses to answer God's calling and to discover the Gospel. There is no trite or useless journey. *There are many rooms in my Father's house.* (John 14, 2)

## **Sharing with excerpts from the Gospels**

Here are a few excerpts from the Gospels of John and Luke on which our sharing can be done to deepen the Word of God according to what these two evangelists have passed down to us.

The person who animates the meeting asks that the members choose one of the excerpts. This is a moment for a search in the Bible.

The Light rejected by the world. (John 1, 9-13)

The Son, witness of the revelation and of the life (John 3, 31-36)

The divine origin of the revelation (John 7, 14-18)

Jesus, the way to the Father for those who believe in him (John 14, 8-10)

The power of faith (Luke 17, 5-6)

## **In the footsteps of Francis**

*(Excerpt from Admonition 1, verses 1 to 7)*

The Lord Jesus said to His disciples: I am the Way, the Truth and the Life; no one comes to the Father except through Me. If you know Me, you would know My Father as well; and from now on you shall know Him and have seen Him. Philip said to Him: Lord, show us the Father, and that suffices for us. Jesus said to him: So much time I have been with you, and you do not know Me? Philip, he who sees Me, sees even My Father. The Father dwells in inaccessible light, and God is spirit, and no one ever sees God. For this reason He cannot be seen except in spirit, since it is the spirit that vivifies, the flesh is good for nothing. But neither does the Son in that, which He is equal to the Father, seen to anyone to be otherwise than the Father, otherwise than the Holy Spirit.

## **Deepening of points taken from the Rule and the General Constitutions**

### **OFS Rule, Article 14**

Secular Franciscans, together with all people of good will, are called to build a more fraternal and evangelical world so that the kingdom of God may be brought about more effectively. Mindful that anyone « who follows Christ, the perfect man, becomes more of a man himself », let them exercise their responsibilities competently in the Christian spirit of service.

### **General Constitutions, Articles 19 and 20**

#### **Article 19**

1. Secular Franciscans should always act as a leaven in the environment in which they live through the witness of their fraternal love and clear Christian motivations.

2. In the spirit of minority, they should opt for relationships which give preference to the poor and to those on the fringe of society, whether these be individuals or categories of persons or an entire people; they should collaborate in overcoming the exclusions of others and those forms of poverty that are the fruit of inefficiency and injustice.

### **Article 20**

1. Secular Franciscans, committed by their vocation to build the Kingdom of God in temporal situations and activities, live their membership both in the Church and in society as an inseparable reality.
2. As the primary and fundamental contribution to building a more just and fraternal world, they should commit themselves both to the generous fulfillment of the duties proper to their occupation and to the professional training that pertains to it. With the same spirit of service, they should assume their social and civil responsibilities.

### **Life - Objective:**

In the month of March, it is suggested that we have a good Holy Week in preparation for the Feast of Easter...

### **Events and Information from the Church and the Order**

Reminder of National, Regional and Local Fraternity activities.

### **End of the meeting with a prayer** (choice of the fraternity)

### **At home**

In order to continue our reflection, let us go and look in the Compendium, Chapter III, Man's answer to God, numbers 25 and 27 to 32. In the Catechism of the Catholic Church, you can find in Chapter III - Man's answer to God, articles 142-143, 150-151, 153-165, 172-175, more details concerning our faith.

### References to Article 14 of the OFS Rule:

Vatican II, The Church, in today's world, Article 93 - A world to build and to lead to its end.  
A clarification of our responsibility in the Church today.