

LIVING FRATERNITY

Theme: « Living our prophetic mission »

In June, we are proposing a look at the fourth document in which Pope Francis reminds us that by our baptism we are capable of participating in Jesus' prophetic function. He considers that all consecrated persons (in our case committed) to the Lord by their promise are called in a special way to live and act prophetically.

Recall: At the monthly meeting, we would suggest a deepening of the Gospel, our Way of life, by **taking a good moment of time to share the texts of the Word of God for the day or for the Sunday to come.** Thus the fraternity will make good use of the Bible at its disposal.

Good preparation --- Good meeting

JUNE 2015 MONTHLY MEETING

Opening Prayer and Song: (According to the Ritual or chosen by the Fraternity)

Reading: (choose a person who reads calmly)

Our prophetic mission

The Church is the salt of the earth; she is the light of the world. She is called to make present in society the leaven of the Kingdom of God and she does this primarily by her witness, her witness of brotherly love, of solidarity and of sharing with others...

I am counting on you **“to wake up the world”**, since the distinctive sign of consecrated life is prophecy. As I told the Superior Generals, radical evangelical living is not only for religious: it is demanded of everyone. But the religious follow the Lord in a special way, in a prophetic way. This is the priority that is needed right now: to be prophets who witness to how Jesus lived on this earth...

Sharing:

With the help of the following question, let us take a few minutes to share our reflections on

1. What would it be for us, secular Franciscan, a prophet today? (About 15 minutes)

Continue the reading with another person.

Working concretely

I ask you to work concretely in welcoming refugees, drawing near to the poor and finding creative ways to catechize, to proclaim the Gospel and to teach others how to pray. Consequently, I would hope that structures can be streamlined, large religious houses re-purposed for works, which better respond to the present demands of evangelization and charity, and apostolates adjusted to new needs.

Rather than living in some utopia, you will find ways to **create “alternate spaces”**, where the Gospel approach of self-giving, fraternity, embracing differences, and love of one another can thrive.

Sharing:

In the preceding paragraph, Pope Francis presents a list of concrete gestures. Are we familiar with these gestures? Have we accomplished any? Together, let us talk. (About 10-15 minutes)

Creating other places

At times, like Elijah and Jonah, you may feel **the temptation to flee**, to abandon the task of being a prophet because it is too demanding, wearisome or apparently fruitless. But prophets know that they are never alone. As he did with Jeremiah, so God encourages us: “Be not afraid for I am with you to defend you”. (Jr 1:8)

Sharing:

In the preceding paragraph, do you notice anything particular in the expressions used by Pope Francis? What? Together let us talk about them. (About 10-15 minutes)

Continue the reading with another person.

Reflection:

Let us take a few moments to answer the following question:

How much contact do we have with the poor, with disadvantaged groups, with refugees ... in our entourage ... (About 20 minutes)

Deeping of the Word of God:

Let us take the necessary time to listen to the reading, then with the help of the following questions, afterwards, share a moment to answer the questions:

1. What do I notice that is happening?
2. Who are the principal personages? Secondary ones?
3. What do I notice about these personages?
4. What do I notice about the milieu where the action is happening?
5. What is being said? Asked for? Offered? Refused? Contradicted? Discussed?
6. What is Jesus' attitude? His behavior? What is his reaction?

In the footsteps of Francis

(Excerpt from the Letter to the Order, verses 8 and 9, Écrits Claire et François, Édition du Cerf, Paris, 2003)

Confess that he is good and exalt him by your actions; for this is why he has sent you into the whole world, so that, by the word and the action, you will give witness to his voice and that you will make known to all that there is no one mightier than him.

Deepening of points taken from the Rule and the General Constitutions

Rule

Article 6

They have been made living members of the Church by being buried and raised with Christ in baptism; they have been united more intimately with the Church by profession. Therefore, they should go forth as witnesses and instruments of her mission among all people, proclaiming Christ by their life and words.

Called like Saint Francis to rebuild the Church and inspired by his example, let them devote themselves energetically to living in full communion with the pope, bishops, and priest, fostering an open and trusting dialogue of apostolic effectiveness and creativity.

General Constitutions

Article 17

1. Called to work together in building up the Church as the sacrament of salvation for all and, through their baptism and profession, made "witnesses and instruments of her mission", secular Franciscans proclaim Christ by their life and words. Their preferred apostolate is personal witness in the environment in which they live and service for building up the Kingdom of God within the situations of this world.
2. The preparation of the brothers and sisters for spreading the Gospel message "in the ordinary circumstances of the world" and for collaborating in the catechesis within the ecclesial communities should be promoted in the fraternities.
3. Those who are called to carry out the mission of catechists, presiders of ecclesial communities, or other ministries, as well as the sacred ministers, should make the love of Francis for the word of God their own, as well as his faith in those who announce it, and the great fervor with which he received the mission of preaching penance from the Pope.
4. Participation in the service of sanctification, which the Church exercises through the liturgy, prayer, and works of penance and charity, is put into practice by the brothers and sisters above all in their own family, then in the fraternity and finally through their active presence in the local Church and in society.

Life – Objective:

In the month of June, let us prepare our vacations by admiring the works of the Lord and by giving witness by our actions ...

Events and Information from the Church and the Order

Remind the members of regional and local activities.

End of the meeting: (a prayer or song chosen by the fraternity)

Suggestion: A hymn or a prayer to the Sacred Heart of Jesus

At home

To continue our reflection, reads the following passage:

An excerpt from the documents of Vatican II: *Lumen Gentium*, Chapter IV, Article 35 – The Laity

Christ, the great Prophet, who proclaimed the Kingdom of His Father both by the testimony of His life and the power of His words, continually fulfills His prophetic office until the complete manifestation of glory. He does this not only through the hierarchy who teach in His name and with His authority, but also through the laity whom He made His witnesses and to whom He gave understanding of the faith and attractiveness in speech (cf. Acts 2, 17-18; Ap 19, 10) so that the power of the Gospel might shine forth in their daily social and family life. They conduct themselves as children of the promise and thus strong in faith and in hope they make the most of the present (cf. Ep 5, 16; Col 4, 5) and with patience await the glory that is to come (Rm 8, 25).

Suggestion: Go to your Bible and find the excerpts cited in the preceding paragraph.

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We take this occasion to wish each one of you

a magnificent summer!

May it be for us all a time of renewal, of contemplation,
of prayer and of fraternal gatherings.

And ... why not organise a time of fraternisation, where it is possible, around of pot-luck supper, in an outdoor area favorable to a fraternal meeting lived with the Word of Jesus to love *one another*; and to do to *others as you would it have done to you.*»?