

**LIVING FRATERNITY**  
**Theme: «With the Gospel in your pocket »**

In the month of June, during our fraternal meetings, we are proposing a meditation from Pope Francis. This mediation will help us with the application of Article 4 of our Rule. We have also added two exercises for reflection and sharing.

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

*Good preparation – Good meeting*

**JUNE 2017 MONTHLY MEETING**

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

**Reading:** (choose a person who reads calmly)

**To know and recognize Jesus**

Only if we know, recognize, adore and follow Jesus will he truly be “the centre of our life”. And to do this there are a few gestures available to everyone: to always have close at hand a pocket version of the Gospel so as to easily read it each day, along with the recitation of brief prayers of adoration, such as the Gloria, while paying close attention not to simply “parrot” the words. These are the counterparts of the “simplicity of Christian life”; in effect, it does not help to have recourse «strange or difficult matters».

The liturgical season that we just experienced, centred on “the wait for Jesus and then the coming of Jesus: his birth and the mysteries of his birth until his baptism”. Thus, “today begins a new liturgical season, and the Church shows us that Jesus is also at the centre of this beginning”. Indeed, “the centre of today’s liturgy is Jesus: Jesus as the first and last word of the Father”. And “this is the centre of our life: Jesus Christ who manifests himself, shows himself, and we are invited to know him, to recognize him in life, in the many circumstances of life”. In this perspective, we should ask a « question: is the centre of my life Jesus Christ? What is my relationship with Jesus Christ? ».

**Sharing:**

After the reading, take the time to answer the following questions.

1. Is the centre of my life Jesus Christ?
2. What is my relationship with Jesus Christ?

## **How to know and recognize Jesus**

« First of all, recognize Jesus, know him and recognize him, Thus, the first approach is to know and to seek how Jesus was :does this interest me »?.It is « a question that all of us must ask ourselves : does it interest me to know Jesus or perhaps am I more interested in soap operas or gossip or ambitions or knowing about other people's lives »?

Indeed, to know « Jesus, one must first « be able to recognize him ». And « to know Jesus , there is prayer. The Holy Spirit, yes, but it is also good practice to « pick up the Gospel every day » and read a passage :it is the only way to know Jesus », to know « what he did, what he said ». It is essential « to read the story of Jesus: yes, the Gospel; is the story of Jesus, the life of Jesus, it is Jesus himself, it is the Holy Spirit that shows us Jesus there ». For this reason, Francis wanted to renew his advice: « Please, do this: each day a passage of the Gospel, a small one --- three, four, five minutes ». This is the seed. It is the Holy Spirit who makes the seed sprout and grow ».

## **Research and Sharing:**

Take a copy of the Gospel and search for examples that made Jesus known and recognized. Allow the necessary time in order that each member can do their research. Then, share the examples found.

## **Adore Jesus**

While the first task is « to recognize Jesus, to know Jesus », the second task is to « adore Jesus, he is God! ». It is important to « adore Jesus ». However, the real question is whether we adore Jesus. « Let us consider the two manners of adoring Jesus ». First there is « the prayer of silent adoration: “ You are God, you are the Son of God, I adore you” ».This is « adoring Jesus ». But then we must also « remove from our heart the other things that " we adore”, that interest us more ». There must be « God alone ».

In this regard, the Pope offered another practical suggestion: « There is a little prayer that we pray, the Gloria, but we often say it mechanically, like parrots ». Instead, « this prayer is adoration, glory: I adore the Father, and the Son and the Holy Spirit ». The Pope then recommended: « adore, with little prayers, in silence before the grandeur of God, adore Jesus and say: You are the only One, you are the beginning and the end, and I want to be with you for all my life, for all eternity. You are the only One ». And in this way, « banish the things that prevent me from adoring Jesus ».

## **Reflection:**

Now, take the time to mention the things that can truly prevent us from adoring Jesus. ( about 15 minutes)

## **Today's Gospel – Follow Jesus**

« The third task I recommend to you in order to have Jesus at the centre of our life » is what is said in the Gospel according to Mathew 4, 18-22, to Mark 1, 15-20 or to Luke 5, 1-11 : follow Jesus ». When the Lord « saw Simon and Andrew working – they were fishermen – he said to them, “Follow me” ». We must therefore « follow Jesus, the things he taught us, the things we

find each day when we read that piece of the Gospel ». And we must ask: « Lord, what do you want me to do? Show me the way ». Francis reiterated that the essential thing is to always keep « Jesus at the centre ». And, « this means knowing, recognizing Jesus, adoring and following Jesus: Christian life is very simple, but we need the grace of the Holy Spirit, so he may awaken in us this will to know Jesus, to adore Jesus and to follow Jesus ».

### **Biblical Reflection:**

Read the Gospel of the day (or of the preceding or following Sunday). Share your thoughts on this gospel, using one or two of the following questions:

1. To whom does it speak?
2. How does it reach us personally?
3. Is it a message of hope? Another kind of message? How and why?

### **A reflection on our values:**

We are proposing an exercise that asks that we reflect on the values with which we identify ourselves. Which ones for us are priorities?

The exercise is done as follows: each member receives a small piece of paper on which to write at least 3 values that are a priority for him or her. He or she indicates the priority for each value by assigning each a value of 3, 2, 1. Take 10 minutes to do this task in fraternity. When all the members have finished writing, the person animating can suggest that the sharing begin. In turn, each member presents and explains his or her choices.

If possible, write on a board the chosen values noting the number of times each value is mentioned. When all the members have given their answers, we can highlight the values most often noted and see a consensus or an agreement that shows the values that the fraternity advocates as having priority.

### **A reflection on our wolves:**

Another exercise comes from the reading of the story of the wolf of Gubbio. (*The Little Flowers of St. Francis, 21, How Francis tamed the very fierce wolf of Gubbio (included in the Omnibus of Sources, Habig, Marion ed, Franciscan Herald Press, 1973)*). The person animating could distribute a copy of the text or do the reading of the story. Then the sharing is done in order to identify the reasons explaining the actions of the wolf.

Then we can identify one's wolves (by writing them on paper) according to what was mentioned during the reading of the story of the wolf of Gubbio. Take the necessary time to say share what our wolves represent.

### **In the footsteps of Francis**

*(Excerpt from the Admonition 1, verses 1-4, Critical Latin Edition, by Fr. Kajetan Esser, ofm)*

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”.

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

### **Rule 8**

As Jesus was the true worshipper of the Father, so let prayer and contemplation be the soul of all they are and do. Let them participate in the sacramental life of the Church, above all the Eucharist. Let them join in liturgical prayer in one of the forms proposed by the Church, reliving the mysteries of the life of Christ.

## **General Constitutions**

### **Article 12.3**

The brothers and sisters should love meeting God as His children and they should let prayer and contemplation be the soul of all they are and do. They should seek to discover the presence of the Father in their own heart, in nature, and in the history of humanity in which His plan of salvation is fulfilled. The contemplation of this mystery will dispose them to collaborate in this loving plan.

### **Article 14.2**

The Eucharist is the center of the life of the Church. Christ unites us to himself and to one another as a single body in it. Therefore, the Eucharist should be the center of the life of the fraternity. The brothers and sisters should participate in the Eucharist as frequently as possible, being mindful of the respect and love shown by Francis, who, in the Eucharist, lived all the mysteries of the life of Christ.

## **Life-Objective:**

During the whole month of June, regularly pray to the Sacred Heart of Jesus ....

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

Remind the members of regional and local activities.

## **End of the meeting:** (prayer or hymn chosen by the fraternity)

Suggestion: Song to the Sacred Heart of Jesus or to the Immaculate heart of Mary..

## **At home**

Excerpts from Vatican II, The Apostolate of the Laity, no. 4 – The spirituality of the laity:

Only by the light of faith and by mediation on the word of God can one always and everywhere recognize God in Whom « we live, and move, and have our being » (Ac 17, 28), seek \his will in every event, see Christ in everyone whether he be a relative or a stranger, and make correct judgments about the true meaning and value of temporal things both in themselves and in their relation to man's final goal.

Furthermore, the laity who have followed their vocation and have become members of one of the associations or institutes approved by the Church try faithfully to adopt the special characteristics of the spiritual life which are proper to them as well.

**To all we wish a good and restful summer in the peace and joy of the Lord ...**