

## ***Franciscan Journey* chapter 17 notes**

### **The Mother of God ... and Our Mother**

#### **Rule Article 9**

The Virgin Mary, humble servant of the Lord, was open to his every word and call. She was embraced by Francis with indescribable love and declared the protectress and advocate of his family. The Secular Franciscans should express their ardent love for her by imitating her complete self-giving and by praying earnestly and confidently.

#### **Commentary**

The description of the way of life now moves to the manner of proclaiming the gospel every day by lifestyle (10–14) and ministry or apostolic activity (15–19).

First of all, Mary's self-giving and prayer are set up as the primary example of gospel living. Devotion to her has always been a hallmark of the Franciscan calling, both as a way of expressing love for her and as an important way of finding Jesus himself.

#### ***Constitutions* - article 16.1, 16.2**

- Mary is a model of faithfulness to vocation.
- Franciscans cultivate love of Mary and manifest devotion in forms accepted by the Church.
- Welcome the Spirit to create a community of love.
- Her faith-filled willingness to trust God serves as a model for all of us.

#### ***Deus Caritas Est***

- "*Magnificat anima mea Dominum*," ("My soul magnifies the Lord" *Lk 1:46*).
- In these words she expresses her whole program of life: not setting herself at the center, but leaving space for God.
- Mary's greatness consists in the fact that she wants to magnify God, not herself.

#### **Mary's role as Mother**

- Mary is a partner in the saving love of God at work in the world.
- She showed her strength and perseverance in flight to Egypt and the Crucifixion.
- She lived a quite ordinary life as wife and mother.
- She had great faith in God in accepting the Annunciation.
- She is virgin made church - a model of how to respond to God's call.
- Francis dedicated his Order of Penitents to her guidance and protection.
- Her Magnificat offers a look at how God cares for the poor and marginalized.
- She reveals a trust that God will fulfill what He said He would do.

#### **Our Lady of the Angels – the Portiuncula (the Little Portion)**

- The Portiuncula is the "cradle" of the Order - a church Francis repaired about three years into his conversion. It is the church of Our Lady of
- He loved this church more than any other church. He asked his friars never to abandon it. The Portiuncula is "home" to the Franciscan pilgrims who visit it.

- He sought and received the favor of a plenary indulgence for those visiting the Portiuncula on August 2 (later extended to all Franciscan churches).
- Franciscan Crown Rosary - Seven Joys of Mary remind us of the joy of the Franciscan spirit:
  - 1) The Annunciation.
  - 2) The Visitation.
  - 3) The Birth of Christ.
  - 4) The Adoration of the Magi.
  - 5) Finding Jesus in the Temple.
  - 6) Meeting Christ after the resurrection.
  - 7) The Assumption and Coronation of Mary.
- Franciscans assess the value of their devotion to Mary by the quality of their personal self-giving and prayerfulness.
- Spirit of Mary: Mindfulness / Acceptance / Gratitude / Inclusiveness / Compassion. We do well to make these part of our spirit as Franciscans and lovers of Mary, the mother of God.

### **Mary as the Full Image of Humanity, *Poverty & Joy* - Wm Short OFM**

- Franciscan friar John Duns Scotus promoted the idea of the Immaculate Conception of Mary based upon his thinking about the notion of Mary as the fully human person.
- This doctrine celebrates Mary as fully and clearly what a human person is meant to be, what all of us are created to be: clear images of God.

humility of Christ.

- Brothers, look at the humility of God, and pour out your hearts before Him!
- Humble yourselves that you may be exalted by Him!
- Hold back nothing of yourselves for yourselves, that He Who gives Himself totally to you may receive you totally!

### **The Cult of the Blessed Virgin Mary in the Church – Dogmatic Constitution on the Church – *Lumen Gentium* – Paragraphs 66 & 67**

- “All generations shall call me blessed, because He that is mighty hath done great things to me.”
- The Church promotes honoring Mary but admonishes us to abstain zealously both from all gross exaggerations.

### **Francis and the Blessed Virgin Mary (section 19) - *FUN Manual***

- Mary’s role is to lead us to her Son.
- She lived an ordinary life, performing the services of family life.
- She immediately responded to God’s call to vocation.
- In the Magnificat we see her inner manner of trusting God and looking for ways that God acts on behalf of the poor.

- Nothing separated her from Jesus.
- Imitating her humble service is completed in the ordinary places of everyday life. The spirit of humble service needs both nourishment and expression to grow.
- We imitate Mary by humbly serving others without fanfare or detection.
- Mary's life was one of obedience, open to the call and word of her Son.
- Mary gives Franciscans a model to follow by how she embraced the changes in her life.
- As Franciscans we are called to serve. The spirit of humble service needs both nourishment and expression to grow.
- Franciscans strive to live peacefully in all they do.
- Our lives are to be lived as prayers.
- Mary, Queen of Peace is given this title because her life exuded peace.
- We are called daily to conversion and when we fall short, Mary is there to intercede for us.
- Franciscan tradition holds up for our consideration two devotions to Mary as alternative means of praying the Liturgy of the Hours: the Franciscan Crown Rosary and the Little Office of the Blessed Virgin.
- In the Office of the Passion, Francis wrote an Antiphon to the Blessed Virgin to be prayed before and after each psalm.