

Franciscan Journey chapter 22 notes

Foundations of the Kingdom

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 the responsibilities competently in the Christian spirit of service.

Commentary

The natural consequence simple living and sense of community is selfless service. Secular Franciscans expend themselves by using their special talents, competence, and responsibility. Thus they bring to others the experience of God and the hope for achieving their full humanity.

Constitutions 19.1, 19.2, 20.1, 20.2

- Act as leaven through witness of fraternal love.
- Opt for relationships that give preference to the poor and marginalized.
- Work to overcome poverty and injustice.
- Membership in Church and society inseparable.
- Commitment to work, professional training, social and civil responsibilities.

Compendium Catechism 107, 108

- All are invited to Kingdom of God and called to convert.
- Jesus came to free us from slavery to sin.

“fraternal and evangelical”

- fraternal = caring and loving relationship with one another.
- evangelical = reflect gospel values.
- Make inroads in society to make it responsive to human dignity and need.
- Proclaim our values by words, actions, and presence.
- *Mater et Magistra*: examine situation, evaluate carefully, decide what can/should be done.

Justice based upon good relationships (from PowerPoint presentation)

- Trinitarian spirit moves us to grow in ways of justice.
- Negative words and attitudes are destructive.
- Franciscans use positive words and actions.
- We collaborate with others in challenging injustice.
- We do not become a “one issue” people.
- We are not bystanders – we get involved.

Qualities to Seek Solutions

- OFS Rule teaches qualities needed in personal relationships – useful to build fraternal and evangelical world.
- Dialogue – LISTEN without prejudice.

- When people are respected and treated with love and justice it helps us prepare ways to build the Kingdom of God.

"exercise the responsibilities competently"

- Personal self-knowledge helps us perceive where we can best contribute.
- Fraternity = variety of skills, social concerns, ongoing formation about social issues.

"Christian spirit of service"

- Jesus calls us to serve rather than seeking to be served.
- Gracious acceptance of service from others is part of this call.

"that anyone "who follows Christ, the perfect man, becomes more of a man himself"

- We have one savior and that is Jesus.
- Ability to persist will need union with Jesus and the prompting of the Holy Spirit..
- Be wise in implementation.
- Franciscans, who unceasingly seek the ways of peace will avoid violence.

Practice Church's Social Teaching -- *US Catholic Catechism for Adults*

- Catholic social teaching embraces both the Church's perennial concern for people's social needs as well as an explicit social doctrine.
- The central focus of the Church's social teaching is justice for all, especially for the helpless and the poor.
- The Church's social doctrine addresses a wide range of issues that include:
 - the dignity of work.
 - the need of workers to receive a salary that will enable them to care for their families.
 - a safe working environment.
 - responsibility of the state for areas such as a stable currency, public services, and protecting personal freedom and private property.
 - businesses to consider the good of the employees, not just the profit motive.

Action and Suffering – *Spe Salvi* – Pope Benedict XVI

- Important to know that I can always continue to hope, even if in my own life, or the historical period in which I am living, there seems to be nothing left to hope for.
- We cannot "build" the Kingdom of God by our own efforts—what we build will always be the kingdom of man with all the limitations proper to our human nature.
- The Kingdom of God is a gift.
- So on the one hand, our actions engender hope for us and for others; but at the same time, it is the great hope based upon God's promises that gives us courage and directs our action in good times and bad..

Christianity & Social Progress (*Mater et Magistra*) – St. Pope John XXIII

- Make use of every possible means of providing these citizens with the scientific, technical and professional training they need, and to put at their disposal the necessary capital for speeding up their economic development with the help of modern methods.
- Scientific and technical progress, economic development and the betterment of living conditions, are certainly valuable elements in a civilization. But we must realize that they are essentially instrumental in character. They are not supreme values in themselves.
- Indifference to the true hierarchy of values shown by so many people in the economically developed countries. Spiritual values are ignored, forgotten or denied, while the progress of science, technology and economics is pursued for its own sake, as though material well-being were the be-all and end-all of life.

Questions

4. What does it mean to be a “servant-leader”?

According to the *Handbook for Franciscan Servant Leadership* (2010):

Three essential characteristics when one assumes a Franciscan servant leadership role are:

1. that the call or commission is initiated by God;
2. that the response or commitment is wholehearted; and
3. that the leader has or is open to receiving the vision necessary to serve in a servant leadership capacity.

7. Scripture Reflection *Mark 8:15-21*

Why were they failing to understand Jesus?

This passage brings to a climax the theme of the disciples' failure to understand the meaning of Jesus' words and actions, which has been growing steadily more pronounced (4:13, 40-41; 6:52; 7:18; 8:4). But whereas the Pharisees' hardness seems to be unyielding, that of the disciples is amenable to change. The very fact that they are continuing to follow Jesus and learn from him implies their willingness to let go of the inner resistance that hinders their understanding.

The disciples remain on an earthly level. With remarkable cluelessness, they conclude that Jesus is scolding them for having forgotten to bring bread. After twice seeing him bring overflowing abundance out of a few loaves and fish, they are still worried about where they will get their next meal.

In a series of seven questions, Jesus reproves them for their spiritual blindness. The emphasis on understand, comprehend, see, hear, and remember accents the mental effort required to grasp the hidden meaning of what they have witnessed.

Catholic Commentary on Sacred Scripture - Mark

In its criticism of the disciples this narrative not only looks backward to the blindness of the disciples but also prepares for the transitional narrative of the gift of sight in the

healing of the blind man in 8:22–26 and another giving-of-sight story (10:46–52). In the interim division of the gospel (8:22–10:52) misunderstanding by the disciples is one of the constitutive elements of the plot. The dialogue between Jesus and his disciples in 8:14–21 and their obtuseness clearly recall important elements in the whole first part of the gospel and foreshadow imminent deeper divisions not over bread but over the meaning of the life and death of Jesus. In following the spiritual journey of the disciples, Mark's readers are invited to enter for themselves more deeply into the challenge that Jesus' words will pose for them in the following section.

Sacra Pagina - Mark