

Franciscan Journey chapter 24 notes

The Gift of Work

Rule Article 16

Let them esteem work both as a gift and as a sharing in the creation, redemption, and service of the human community.

Commentary

Another concrete means of proclaiming the Good News of Jesus Christ is expressed in attitudes toward work (16). Through working, the Secular Franciscans discover their workaday world as the arena of their salvation and at the same time exemplify the saving Christ to others. So, human labor is a blessing, both received and bestowed. By working, a person shares in the creative power of the Father, renews the face of the earth along with the Son, and brings the love of the Holy Spirit to the human community. Such an attitude toward work can reshape one's own and others' values and actions regarding labor and management, business and economics, living wages and welfare, proper use of one's own talents, and the resources of others.

Constitutions 22.1, 21.2

- Work is a gift – a means of livelihood.
- To work is a grace – serve God and neighbor.
- Work is a right and a duty.
- Work is worthy of respect – all should be able to work and working conditions humane.
- Leisure and recreation necessary for personal development.
- Maintain balance.

Gaudium et Spes

- Through work we are partners in the work of God.
- Work is associated with the redemptive work of Jesus.
- Dignity of work.
- Remuneration for work should guarantee livelihood for workers and families.

“gift” – service to others. Quality of our work and our spirit will identify us as Franciscans.

“sharing in creation” – through our products and services.

“share in redemption” – love and respect for others will be part of our work-spirit.

We offer light through our good working spirit. We bring the love of God to each situation.

- Commitment to sharing in the creation, redemption, and service of others.
- Offers people an example of what a gospel life looks like.

Franciscan approach to dealing with problems at work

- We will not allow negative situations to influence us to act in like manner.
- We must not become violent in these situations.
- We must maintain our Franciscan spirit.
- Talking with other Franciscans can help us be faithful.
- Know when to say "no" to taking on more responsibility. Maintain balance.

Franciscans allow the Gospel and their Rule of life to guide their attitudes and actions. In a world where getting ahead can be a prime motivation, Franciscans are willing to forego getting ahead if people would be hurt or diminished by that action.

We have been called to this: to heal the wounded, bind up the broken, and recall the erring. In fact, many who seem to us to be members of the devil will yet be disciples of Christ.

It is worth the effort to create space for leisure in life. We are able to control only so much of our time. We look to the period we can control in order to create space for things that bring joy and relaxation. Such decision-making helps us keep a balance in our life. It helps us in refreshing our inner spirit.

In work, as in all other activities of life, relationship is important. Franciscans continue to uncover what is needed to nurture relationships.

- Franciscans work for justice without dividing people into good and evil.
- Franciscans strive to bring people together in a society known for its dedication to justice.
- Franciscans will get truthful information, approach the parties with care, concern, and respect – acting in ways that achieve the goals we seek. We want people to live together peacefully after serious dialogue.
- Work for both individual victims of injustice and for social systems that support justice.

Scripture reflection: 1 Thessalonians 5:12-24

We beg you, brethren, to respect those who labor among you and are over you in the Lord and admonish you, and to esteem them very highly in love because of their work. Be at peace among yourselves. And we exhort you, brethren, admonish the idle, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with them all. See that none of you repays evil for evil, but always seek to do good to one another and to all. Rejoice always, pray constantly, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. Do not quench the Spirit, do not despise prophesying, but test everything; hold fast what is good, abstain from every form of evil.

May the God of peace himself sanctify you wholly; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. He who calls you is faithful, and he will do it.

- To workers: Have respect for managers and supervisors.
- To managers: Admonish, encourage, help, be patient.
- Rejoice, pray, give thanks.

There is, Augustine claims, “another inward kind of prayer without ceasing, which is the desire of the heart.” If you long for God, you do not cease to pray, for “the continuance of your longing is the continuance of your prayer.” In other words, all of life can be done for God’s sake, recognizing that all good things are God’s gifts, and become

in this way prayer and thanksgiving. Moreover, according to Augustine, God speaks back by shaping our desires, uniting our will to his. (*Catholic Commentary on Sacred Scripture*)

USCCA – Reflections...on the Catholic Church's Social Teaching: Major Themes

The economy must serve people, not the other way around. Work is more than a way to make a living; it is a form of continuing participation in God's creation. If the dignity of work is to be protected, then the basic rights of workers must be respected—the right to productive work, to decent and fair wages, to organize and join unions, to private property, and to economic initiative.

Franciscan Prayer – Ilia Delio, OSF

- Francis was not really interested in the poverty of material possessions; rather he was concerned for the type of poverty that would lead to interdependence and the love of the brothers for one another.
- Thus he advocated that his followers live not without things but without possessing things.

God is Love (*Deus Caritas Est*) – Pope Benedict XVI – Paragraph 28a

- Govern according to justice.
- Justice is both the aim and the intrinsic criterion of all politics.
- Faith and reason: faith liberates reason from its blind spots and therefore helps it to be ever more fully itself. Faith enables reason to do its work more effectively and to see its proper object more clearly.
- Building a just social and civil order, wherein each person receives what is his or her due, is an essential task which every generation must take up anew.