

# ***Franciscan Journey* chapter 3 notes**

## **Francis, Clare, Catholic Doctrine**

### **The calling of Francis**

- Son of a merchant. Merchants were a rising class, but not nobility.
- Francis originally sought glory and nobility by becoming a knight.
- First experience in battle resulted in a one-year imprisonment and illness.
- During a second effort to become a knight, Francis heard a voice that asked who could do more for him, the lord or the servant.
- The vision prompted him to return home, and there ensued a struggle with his father.
- Francis ended up proclaiming that God the Father would afterwards be his only father.
- Francis embraced Lady Poverty and a life of service first to the lepers.

### **The calling of Clare**

- Clare's family was of nobility.
- Class struggle forced them to relocate to Perugia when Clare was around six years old.
- Her family was able to return to Assisi when Clare was in her teens.
- Although her family was already one of nobility, the family sought to gain standing through a favorable marriage for Clare. But Clare was called to a different life.
- Clare became aware of Francis and spent time with him learning his way of life.
- One Palm Sunday 1211, she left home to join Francis and entered the religious life.
- Francis and the brothers received Clare, cut her hair as a sign that her life was now dedicated to God, and arranged for her to stay in a Benedictine convent.
- The order of Poor Clares had begun.

### **Key Catholic Doctrine**

- God is love, and we are to follow the path of love.
- God so loved us that sending his Son was the original plan, not a plan B caused by Adam's sin.
- God's love finds expression in the Incarnation.
- Jesus shows us what love looks like in daily life.
- Personal faith in Jesus is fundamental.
- Jesus established the Church as a believing community that faithfully transmits God's revelation through scripture, tradition, and the magisterium.
- Sacred scripture is the inspired Word of God.
- Magisterium is the teaching office of the college of bishops in union with the Pope.
- Another element of our faith is belief in the Real Presence Of Jesus in the Eucharist.
- The Eucharist, as the source and summit of the Church's life and mission, must be translated into spirituality, into a life lived "according to the Spirit."

## ***God is Love (Deus Caritas Est)* - Benedict XVI, paragraph 12, 14, 19, 29**

### **Jesus Christ – the incarnate love of God**

- Novelty in the New Testament is not in ideas, but in the figure of Christ himself.
- Jesus went after the "lost sheep," and later shed his blood for our salvation.
- It is from the cross that our definition of love must begin.
- In this contemplation the Christian discovers the path along which his life and love must move.
- In the Eucharist, union with Christ is also union with all those to whom he gives himself.
- Eucharistic communion, includes the reality both of being loved and of loving others in turn.
- Church's charity is a manifestation of the Trinity, the work of the Holy Spirit through us.
- The Church is committed to justice and love.

## **1 Celano - Chapter VIII, *St. Francis of Assisi - The Saint - Vol 1*, page 196-199**

### **Building San Damiano, life of the ladies**

- [Praying before the cross in San Damiano church, Christ told Francis: "Go and rebuild my church, which you can see is falling into ruin."]
- Francis took this command literally and began rebuilding the church of San Damiano.
- This church became the home of the Poor Clares.
- Key virtues: charity, humility, chastity, poverty, abstinence, silence, patience, joy, prayer.

### ***The Saint* – Letter to the Entire Order – pg. 118**

- Let everyone be struck with fear, let the whole world tremble, and let the heavens exult when Christ, the Son of the living God, is present on the altar in the hands of a priest!
- The Son of God, so humbles Himself that for our salvation he hides himself under an ordinary piece of bread!
- Secular Franciscan vocational prayer for Thursday morning: "O God, Francis and Clare had great awe and reverence for the Eucharist. May our devotion to Jesus' Body and Blood be an example to those who aspire to the Franciscan life."

## ***Matthew 5:1-16***

### **The Beatitudes**

Seeing the crowds, he went up on the mountain, and when he sat down his disciples came to him. And he opened his mouth and taught them, saying:

"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

"Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.

"Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.

"Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.

"Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.

"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.

"Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

"Blessed are you when men revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so men persecuted the prophets who were before you.

### **Salt and Light**

"You are the salt of the earth; but if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trodden under foot by men.

"You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do men light a lamp and put it under a bushel, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.

## **F.U.N. Manual – 04 Basic Catholic Doctrine**

### **Scripture**

- Francis was immersed in Scripture – not only intellectually, but lived.
- *Dei Verbum* acknowledges that to truly discern what God may have been saying in the Scriptures, one must know something of the literary form of the passage as well as the historical context.
- Bible not a science or history book as we would understand it today. Rather it is a history of salvation and our relationship with God. It is the Word of God.
- We are to form ourselves through *prayerful* reading of Scripture – going from gospel to life and from life to gospel. *Lectio Divina* (“Sacred Reading”) is one way of praying with Scripture.

### **Trinity and Christology**

- Trinity: One God, Three Persons.
- The Word became flesh and dwelt among us.
- Franciscan theology on the Incarnation – God’s love for us, **not** Adam’s sin, is the reason for the Incarnation. Intimate relationship through the Incarnation was the plan from the start.

### **The Church – The Continuing Body of Christ**

- “Church” – the community, the pilgrim people of God.
- Paul describes each member as an essential part of the Body.
- Each of us has unique gifts for the benefit of the Church, and the Church needs them all.
- In the Eucharist “we come to share in the divinity of him who humbled himself to share in our humanity.”
- *Lumen Gentium* outlines the role of the laity and our call to holiness. It is a role that important to the Church, not a lesser role. We are to be active participants in the mission of the Church.

### **Liturgy and Sacraments**

- Two main liturgies: The Mass (Liturgy of the Word and Liturgy of the Eucharist constituting a single action) and the Liturgy of the Hours (consecrating the entire day to continuous praise).
- Liturgical Year harmonized between Mass and Liturgy of the Hours. Three-year cycle of Sunday Mass readings. Two-year cycle of weekday Mass readings. Four-week Psalter in Liturgy of the Hours.

### **Mary**

- Titles of Mary refer to her relationship with Christ.
- Mary is a type and living symbol of the Church as virgin and mother.
- Communion of Saints = crowd of witnesses. Mary is the preeminent member.
- Two dogmas: Immaculate Conception and Assumption.
- Francis placed Mary as the Protectress of the Franciscan family: she holds a special place in our hearts and lives.
- Franciscan Crown Rosary commemorates the seven joys of Mary.

### **Canon Law**

- Only a few statutes of Canon Law affect us. We don’t quite fit in with the normal categories.
- We are not “religious.” We are real Franciscans, just as Franciscan as OFMs, Poor Clares, and TOR.

## ***F.U.N. Manual – 20 Clare of Assisi***

- Clare was born into a family of nobility. Noble women were expected to marry men who would enhance wealth, power, and/or preserve peace.
- Contrary to the wishes of her father and other male relatives, that was not Clare's calling.
- Clare had developed a deep prayer life and practiced mortification while still young.
- At the age of 16 decided that she would consecrate her life to God.
- When she was eighteen years old, she heard St Francis preach and determined to live the same gospel life as Francis.
- Palm Sunday 1212 she left home in secret to make her vows before Francis.
- Francis arranged for her to stay with Benedictine nuns and gave her a simple form of life.
- As Clare gathered followers, the Poor Ladies, Francis settled them at the Church of San Damiano, one of the churches he had rebuilt and named Clare abbess.
- Three miracles attributed to Clare:
  - Clare staved off an invading army by raising a ciborium before her.
  - Clare fed all of her nuns with a tiny piece of bread.
  - Clare was ill in bed, but in a vision, experienced Christmas Mass just as though she had been physically present.
- In letters to Agnes of Prague, Clare described her Mirror of Perfection, a contemplative prayer that began with gazing upon the crucified Christ.
- Clare worked her entire life to obtain the privilege of Poverty for her order. This was finally granted just days before she died.