

Life in FRATERNITY: Our Call to Rebuild the Church*



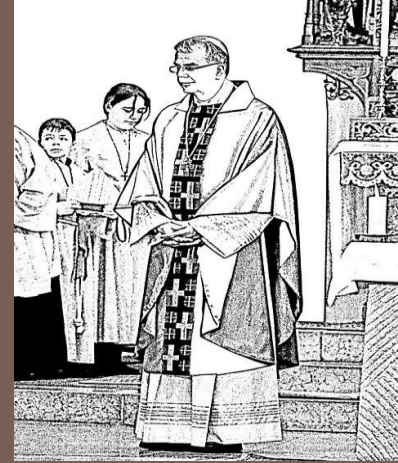
Presentation to Brothers and Sisters of St. Francis Region
Monday, June 1, 2026

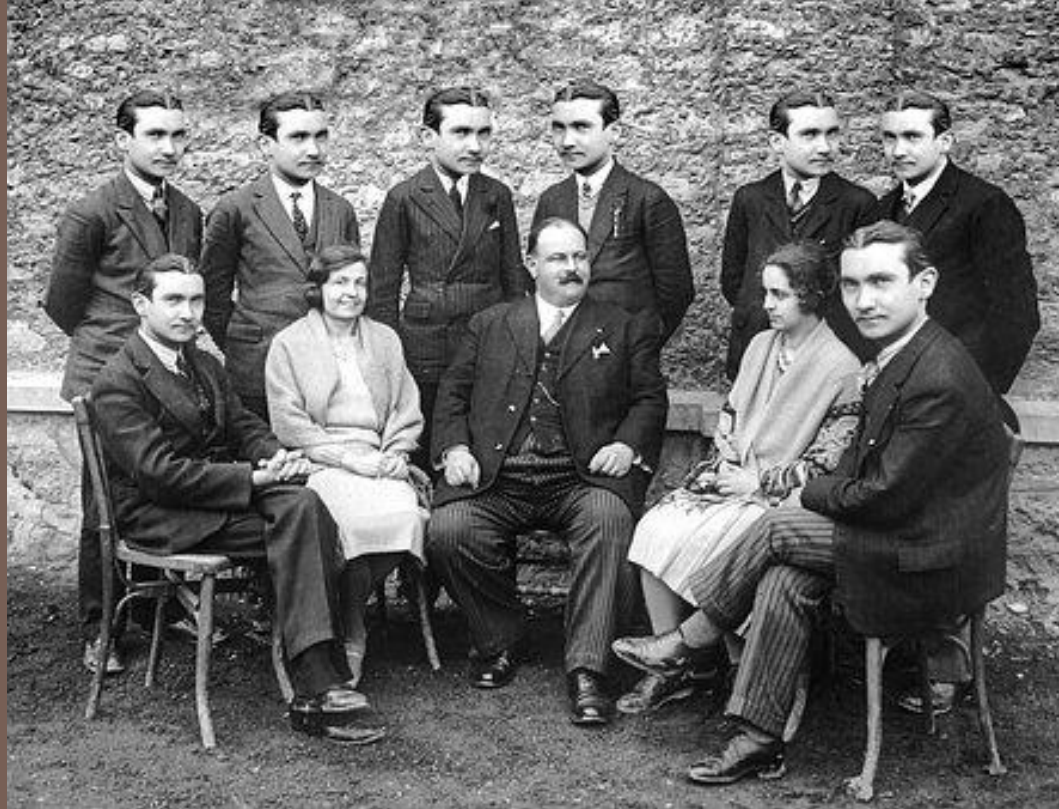
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National Formation Commission
Secular Franciscan Order-USA

Words of Profession

“I promise to live all the days of my life the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ in the Secular Franciscan Order by observing its rule of life.

May the Grace of the Holy Spirit, the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary and our holy father St. Francis, and the **fraternal bonds of community** always be my help, so that I may reach the goal of perfect Christian love. “





“After the Lord gave me some brothers, no one showed me what I had to do but the Most High Himself revealed to me that I should live according to the pattern of the gospel.” (Test: 14)

Models of FRATERNITY



**Fraternity is patterned after
love between**

**the Holy Trinity and the
the Father,**

Son and

Holy Spirit...



**Fraternity is a call to build a community of
love that reflects LOVE back to the God of
LOVE**

The image features two hands in silhouette, positioned to form a heart shape. The hands are dark against a bright, glowing background of a sunset or sunrise, with warm orange and yellow tones. The heart shape is the central focus, and the text is centered within it.

**Father
Son
Spirit**

And the Holy Family



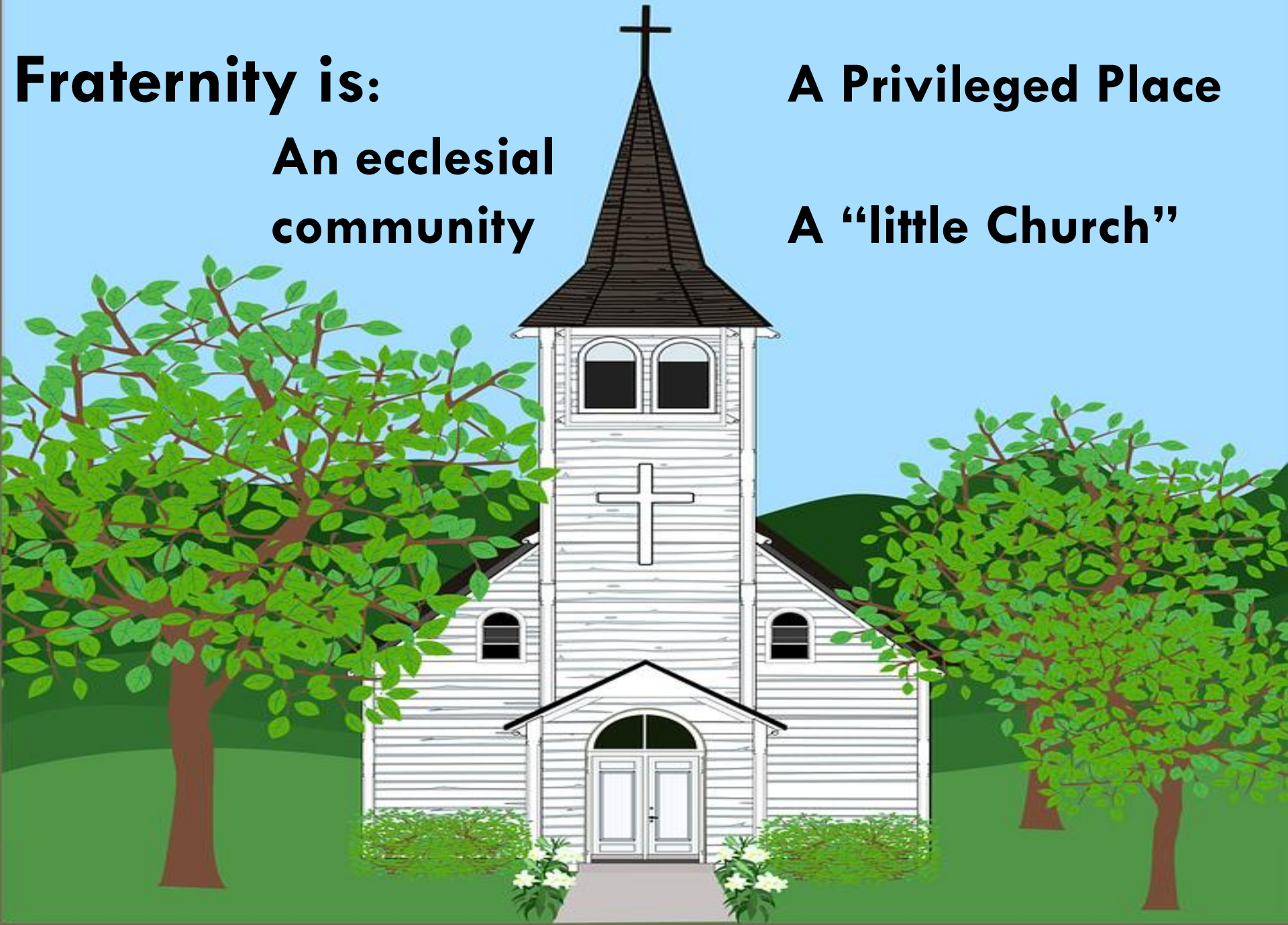
- “...they are the sons of the heavenly Father, whose works they do, and are the spouses, brothers and mothers of our Lord Jesus Christ.
- We are spouses, when by the Holy Spirit, the faithful soul is united with our Lord Jesus Christ,
- we are brothers to him when we fulfill “the will of the Father who is in heaven.
- We are mothers, when we carry him in our heart and body through divine love and a pure and sincere conscience; we give birth to him through a holy life which must give light to others by example.”

Early Exhortation

Fraternity is:
**An ecclesial
community**

A Privileged Place

A “little Church”



A School of LOVE



RELATIONSHIPS





Fraternality, trust, openness, vulnerability, and intimacy in sharing, are extremely important in the development of fraternal unity.



“Blessed is the person who supports his neighbor in his weakness as he would want to be supported were he in a similar situation.”

(Admon. XVIII)

The “Ideal” Fraternity:



The “anima” of the Franciscan Charism

Cohesiveness of fraternal spirit & sharing

Sincere love witnessed in personal interactions

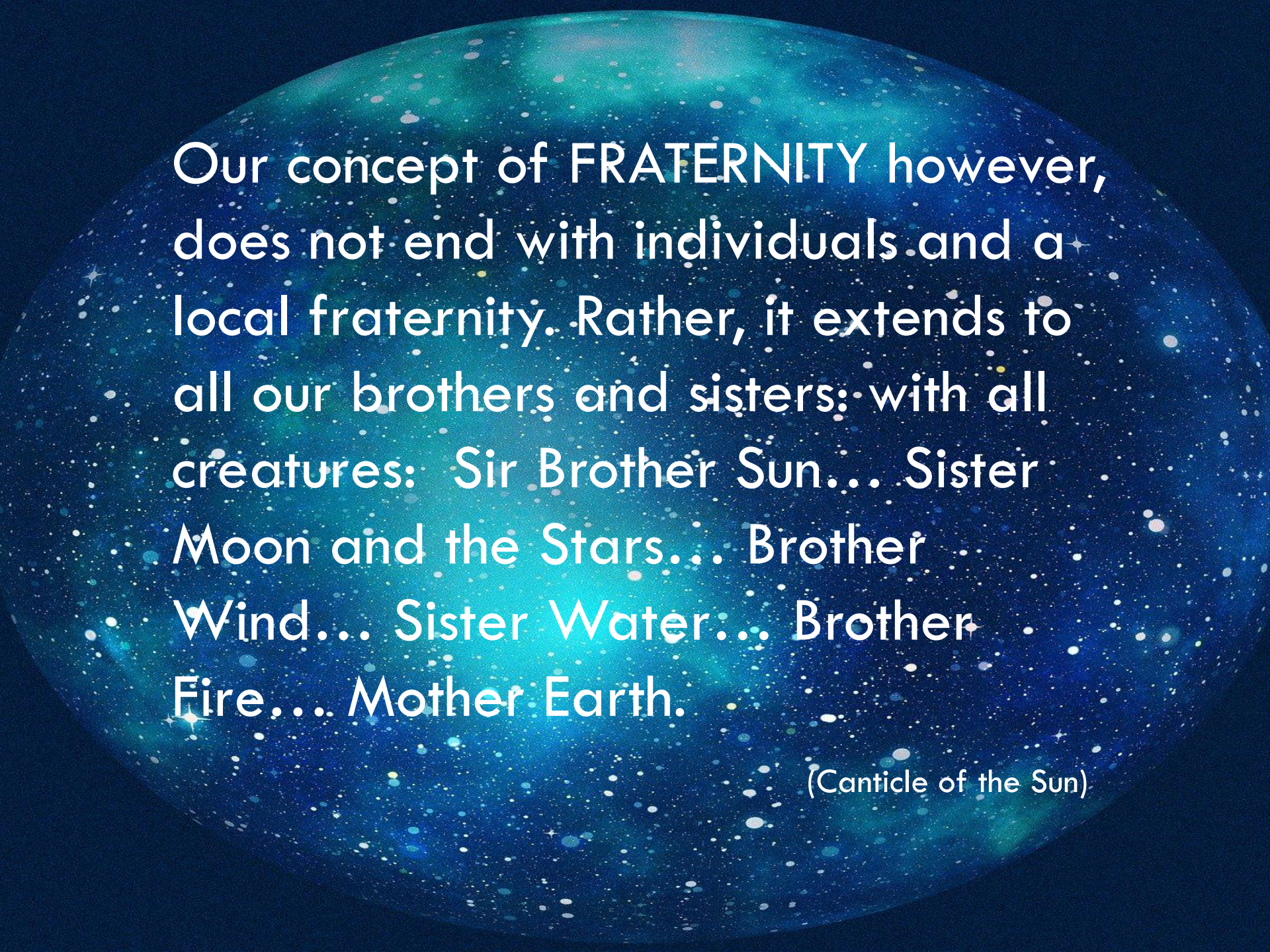
Acceptance and warmth

Unity of purpose while accepting diversity in expression

PAUSE:

In the Chat,
identify what ideal
characteristics
would be important
for you in your
fraternity. (Feel
free to add
additional
characteristics.)





Our concept of FRATERNITY however,
does not end with individuals and a
local fraternity. Rather, it extends to
all our brothers and sisters: with all
creatures: Sir Brother Sun... Sister
Moon and the Stars... Brother
Wind... Sister Water... Brother
Fire... Mother Earth.

(Canticle of the Sun)



UNIVERSAL KINSHIP

Secular Franciscans are urged to “devote themselves especially to careful reading of the gospel...going from gospel to life and life to the gospel.” (Rule: 4)

This means that the OFS is an **evangelical order**. The goal then is for the Secular Franciscan to live the gospel and proclaim it by one’s life and words.





**The spirit of the Lord has been given
to us.**

For He has anointed us with His Life.

He has sent us to:

To bring the Good News to the poor,

**To proclaim liberty to the
captives;**

And to the blind, bring new sight;

To set the downtrodden free;

**And to proclaim the Lord's favor in
our lives (LK 4:18)**

Secular Franciscans
are “Called like
Saint Francis, to
rebuild the
Church....”

(Rule, Art.6)





YOU ARE MY WITNESSES
ISAIAH 43:10

The preferred apostolate for the Secular Franciscan is
“personal witness in the environment
in which they live
and
service for building up the Kingdom of God
within the situations of this world.” (GC, Art. 17.2)



We are conduits of God's Love for others!



**UNITY OF PURPOSE while accepting
DIVERSITY OF EXPRESSION**



**The Dignity of the Human Person:
“The Divine Seed in everyone and the transforming
power of Love and pardon” Rule: 19**

Primary apostolates for secular Franciscans contained in the 1978 Rule are:



- Promoting **Justice** (Article 15)
- Esteeming **work** and the **workers** (Article 16)
- Cultivating respect for **family life** (Article 17)
- Respect for all **creation—ecology** (Article 18)
- Joyful and hopeful **bearers of peace** (Article 19)

Justice:



Article 15: Let them individually and collectively be in the forefront in promoting justice by the testimony of their human lives and their courageous initiatives.

Especially in the field of public life, they should make definite choices in harmony with their faith.

Work:



Article 16.

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



Family:

Article 17. In their family they should cultivate the Franciscan spirit of peace, fidelity, and respect for life, striving to make of it a sign of a world already renewed in Christ.



By living the grace of matrimony, husbands and wives in particular should bear witness in the world to the love of Christ for his Church.

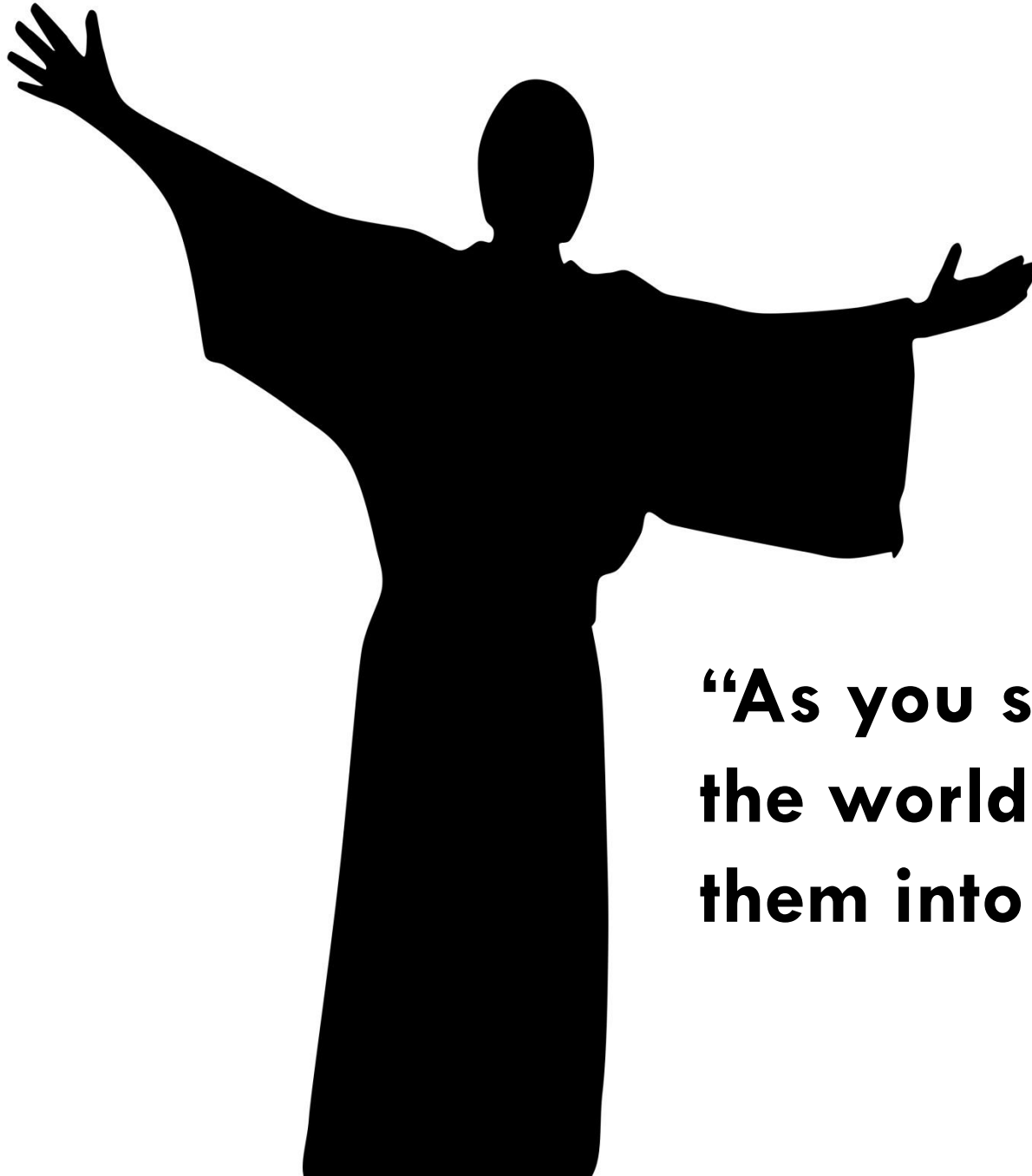
They should joyfully accompany their children on their human and spiritual journey by providing a simple and open Christian education and being attentive to the vocation of each child.

Article 24.1 of the General Constitutions states:

Rule 17 Secular Franciscans should consider their own family to be the first place in which to live their Christian commitment and Franciscan vocation. ...

They should concern themselves with respect for all life in every situation from conception until death.





**“As you sent me into
the world, so I sent
them into the world.”**

ER XXII: 51

Reflection Questions:

- What spoke to your heart during this presentation? Describe how it affected you.
- What challenged you to change how/what you are doing?
- Identify one way you are going to change by making a concrete resolution with action steps to implement this change.

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*ACKNOWLEDGEMENT:

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