

# LIVING FRATERNITY

## Theme: He really is risen ...

For the month of May, we are proposing as the subject for reflection and sharing, the following passages : taken from the Catechism of the Catholic Church (Nos. 651-659)

*Good reflection and good sharing.*

**Recall:** Our monthly meeting should favour an encounter with Christ. A spirit of prayer heralds a good encounter, and a good preparation promotes communal experience. At the meeting, having a copy of the Holy Scriptures, the Rule and General Constitutions, will provide clarity and depth for our edification and experience.

## MAY 2020 MONTHLY MEETING

**Opening prayer or song** (according to the Ritual or a song chosen by the fraternity)

### Introduction

Read attentively the following passages, all the while allowing for pauses to reflect so as to better feed our sharing with the members of our fraternities, be they in made in fraternity or by telephone or electronically until social distancing requirements are maintained.

With the help of your Bible, retrace, read and meditate the references included in the text.

### III. THE MEANING AND SAVING SIGNIFICANCE OF THE RESURRECTION

**651** "If Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain." (1 Col 15, 14) The Resurrection above all constitutes the confirmation of all Christ's works and teachings. All truths, even those most inaccessible to human reason, find their justification if Christ by his Resurrection has given the definitive proof of his divine authority, which he had promised.

**652** Christ's Resurrection is the fulfillment of the promises both of the Old Testament (cf. Luke 24, 26-27.44-48) and of Jesus himself during his earthly life.(cf. Mathew 28, 6; Mark 16, 7; Luke 24, 6-7) The phrase "in accordance with the Scriptures"(cf. 1 Col 15, 3-4 and the Creed from Nicea-Constantinople indicates that Christ's Resurrection fulfilled these predictions.

**653** The truth of Jesus' divinity is confirmed by his Resurrection. He had said: "When you have lifted up the Son of man, then you will know that I am he." (John 8, 28) The Resurrection of the crucified one shows that he was truly "I AM", the Son of God and God himself. So St. Paul could declare to the Jews: "What God promised to the fathers, this he has fulfilled to us their

children by raising Jesus; as also it is written in the second psalm, 'You are my Son, today I have begotten you.'" (Acts 13. 32, 34; cf. Ps 2, 7). Christ's Resurrection is closely linked to the Incarnation of God's Son, and is its fulfillment in accordance with God's eternal plan.

**654** The Paschal mystery has two aspects: by his death, Christ liberates us from sin; by his Resurrection, he opens for us the way to a new life. This new life is above *all justification* that reinstates us in God's grace, (cf. Rom 4, 25) "so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life." (Rom 6, 4) Justification consists in both victory over the death caused by sin and a new participation in grace.( cf. Ep 2, 4-5; 11, 3). It brings about *filial adoption* so that men become Christ's brethren, as Jesus himself called his disciples after his Resurrection: "Go and tell my brethren." (Matthew 28, 10; John 20, 17). We are brethren not by nature, but by the gift of grace, because that adoptive filiation gains us a real share in the life of the only Son, which was fully revealed in his Resurrection.

**655** Finally, Christ's Resurrection - and the risen Christ himself is the principle and source of *our future resurrection*: "Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep. . . For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive." (1 Col 15, 20-22). The risen Christ lives in the hearts of his faithful while they await that fulfillment. In Christ, Christians "have tasted. . . the powers of the age to come" (He 6, 5) and their lives are swept up by Christ into the heart of divine life,(cf. Col 3, 103) so that they may "live no longer for themselves but for him who for their sake died and was raised." (2 Col 5, 15).

## **IN BRIEF**

**656** *Faith in the Resurrection has as its object an event which as historically attested to by the disciples, who really encountered the Risen One. At the same time, this event is mysteriously transcendent insofar as it is the entry of Christ's humanity into the glory of God.*

**657** *The empty tomb and the linen cloths lying there signify in themselves that by God's power Christ's body had escaped the bonds of death and corruption. They prepared the disciples to encounter the Risen Lord.*

**658** *Christ, "the first-born from the dead" (Col 1:18), is the principle of our own resurrection, even now by the justification of our souls (cf. Rom 6:4), and one day by the new life he will impart to our bodies (cf.: Rom 8:11).*

## **Questions for reflection and sharing**

1. My faith in the Resurrection of Christ ... is it a living faith that enlighten my whole life?
2. Do I have doubts concerning the resurrection of Christ? What are they?
3. How can I strengthen my faith in a way that it will illuminate my daily?
4. If my doubts cause my faith to falter, what can I do to strengthen it?

Take time to speak of it with members of my fraternity. See with them what their convictions are and why?

Certain members may have lived deep and outstanding spiritual experiences in their life and can help in my own life, why not take some time to share these?

## **Life-Objective**

It is the month for Mary, the most beautiful month.

Therefore, let us take time, especially during Sundays in this month, to pray the mysteries of the Rosary, particularly the Glorious ones, by remembering Mary's joy when her risen Son appeared to her. Let us rejoice with our Mother in what her Son has realized for us.

## **Recall of the Rule and the General Constitutions**

In 2018, we celebrated 40 years of our way of life, we now suggest doing a review together at this time, of article 94, from **Chapter II, the Way of Life and Apostolic Activity**, as well as article 16 of our General Constitutions that pertain to it. Take time to carefully read the articles,.

### **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.

### **General Constitutions**

#### **Article 16**

1. Mary, Mother of Jesus, is the model of listening to the Word and of faithfulness to vocation; we, like Francis, see all the gospel virtues realized in her. The brothers and sisters should cultivate intense love for the most holy virgin, imitation, prayer, and filial abandonment. They should manifest their own devotion with expressions of genuine faith, in forms accepted by the Church.
2. Mary is the model of fruitful and faithful love for the entire ecclesial community. Secular Franciscans and their fraternities should seek to live the experience of Francis, who made the Virgin the guide of his activity. With her, like the disciples at Pentecost, they should welcome the Spirit to create a community of love.

### **Events and information from the Church and the Order**

As all the gatherings are cancelled, let us take time to pray longer for the Church, the Franciscan Family, the sick, the persons alone and the families.

May this time serve to unite them more. Let us pray for the doctors, nurses and all the persons who remain in service.

May God protect them and give them health and strength during this time where their devotion, often heroic, puts them in the first line of fire.

### **Hymn to the Mother of God**



It is truly worthy to celebrate You, O Mother of God, Blessed and very pure and Mother of our God! You, more venerable than the Cherubs, and more incomparably glorious than the Seraphim, Who without stain, gave birth to God the Word, You truly Mother of God, we exalt you.

**Hymn extracted from the Divine Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom.**

*Source :* <http://www.abbaye-saint-benoit.ch/saints/chrysostome/divers/liturgie.htm>

**End of the meeting:** (a song or a prayer chosen by the fraternity)

Suggestion: say a prayer to the Virgin Mary, the Salutation of the Blessed Virgin Mary or another.

### **At home**

If you own some, take time to read articles about Mary our Queen and our mother.

