

LIVING FRATERNITY

Theme: « Go, into the world, more enthusiastic »

In April, we present a second excerpt from the presentation by Fr. Louis Cinq-Mars, ofmcap, « Go, confident and happy! » which our Francophone members received at *Fraternité 2013*.

Recall: At the monthly meeting, the fraternity should have in place at the disposal of the members a Bible, at least one copy of the General Constitutions, an example of the Catechism of the Catholic Church and at least one copy of Living with Christ. Also, each member should have on hand their copy of the Rule.

Note: Is our meeting place favorable, welcoming, warm? This is an important point to consider for encouraging our members to express their various points of view on the subject.

Good preparation --- Good meeting

APRIL 2014 MONTHLY MEETING

Opening Prayer and Song (According to the Ritual or chosen by the Fraternity)

Reading: (choose a person who reads calmly)

Go into the world and in a precise timeframe

This imperative to go is not said in a vacuum ... but each time in a context or a precise timeframe. Francis' era was characterized by the rapid growth of an economy marked by greed that generated exclusion; by civil wars for the defence of the rights or privileges and by the crusades initiated by the Church.

Francis gradually becomes aware of his vocation and the world in which he will live as a convert, as a penitent. He grew up in a society of profound changes. A new social group, where we can find bankers and merchants to which his family belongs, tries to make a place for itself in a structured world according to birth and possession of lands. This society excludes the most poor and the most fragile, notably the lepers. While reading the Gospel, Francis realizes that Christ is the centre of all; this Christ he discovers in the infirmed and in those that society rejects. Since Christ himself made himself close to them, they must, with Him, be at the centre.

Sharing: After this reading, share your answers to the following questions:

1. What do you notice in this paragraph about Francis' time?
2. Do you see any comparisons with our world today? Name them.

Continue with the reading once the sharing is ended.

What can we do about our world? The Canada of XXI era joins a world more and more global, a world profoundly marked by the technologies of communication, a world where the peoples are in movement, on a planet in deep economic transformation and in an era where the unlimited possibilities cohabit with misery and all sorts of conflicts. If Francis of Assisi was with us, he would tell us: «This is your cloister; this is where your will experience God ». This choice of Francis is in a radical contrast with great monastic tradition that invited people to leave the world in search of God. On the contrary, Francis little by little is lead to become attached to the traces of Christ in the great cloister of the world.

Reflection:

Take a moment to reflect on following questions and be prepared to share (about 15 minutes)

1. Do the changes in the XXI century have any impact on your life style?
2. Do you know how to use them as a service for the good of the community?

Continue with the reading once the sharing is completed.

In November 2012, the bishops in Quebec published a document «Catholics in a pluralistic Quebec », in it we read: « Yes, God loves this world, our world, with its loves and its works, its joys and its sorrows, its beauty and its misery. He loves it with passion, madly, up to giving of himself so that the world would have life in abundance. Yes, God loves this Quebec, our Quebec, with its talents and its projects, its music and its dances, its exuberance, sometimes, and also, its silences. This Quebec that has arrived at a new stage in its life, in its history. A stage of maturity. A stage where it must face the challenges of a more and more diversified world where differences of convictions and beliefs affirm and display themselves in a new manner.

« We can affirm without a risk, they wrote, that to be mistaken about our society is far from being unanimous or uniform when it comes to talking about religious questions. It is going through a good number of changes and tendencies and tends to diversify even more. It would be reckless to pretend to describe a common attitude or position for today's Quebecers on religion. »

Sharing:

Take a last moment to silently again read for one's self the entire text before sharing your answers.

- 1) In this context that is ours, how can we announce peace and penitence?
- 2) How do we manifest God's generosity?
- 3) How do we keep alive the memory of Christ poor and humble in our society and in the hearts of our fellow citizens?

Reflection:

Let us silently listen to the reading of today's Gospel... then, take a moment to share. What reaches me in this text? Why?

In the footsteps of Francis

(Taken from the Letter to the Faithful, (2LFid), verses 28 to 30, François d'Assise, Écrits, Vies, témoignages, Éditions du VIIIe Centenaire, Paris, 2010)

How those who accept the authority of power must judge others

Of those who have received the authority to judge others must exercise judgment with mercy, as they would obtain mercy themselves from the Lord. In effect, a judgment will be without mercy for those who did not exercise mercy. Therefore, have charity and humility; and give alms, because they wash the souls of the stain of sin.

Deepening of points taken from the Rule and the General Constitutions

OFS Rule, 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.

General Constitutions, Article 22

1. Secular Franciscans should "be in the forefront ... in the field of public life." They should collaborate as much as possible for the passage of just laws and ordinances.
2. The fraternities should engage themselves through courageous initiatives, consistent with their Franciscan vocation and with the directives of the Church, in the field of human development and justice. They should take clear positions whenever human dignity is attacked by any form of oppression or indifference. They should offer their fraternal service to the victims of injustice.
3. The renunciation of the use of violence, characteristic of the followers of Francis, does not mean the renunciation of action. However, the brothers and sisters should take care that their interventions are always inspired by Christian love.

Life - Objective:

During the month of April, let's apply ourselves to living with even more fervour the Period of the Passion and of Easter, all the while thinking daily of the Lord who made the sacrifice of his life to save us.

Events and Information from the Church and the Order

Remind the members of regional and local activities.

End of the meeting (a prayer or an hymn chosen by the fraternity)

At home

To continue our reflection, read the paragraphs extracted from article 14, Vatican II - The Apostolate of Lay Persons -that speaks to us about our role in our world today

The National and International Plan

Immense is the field of the apostolate, on the national and international plan, where the laymen are the stewards of Christian wisdom. In the devotion toward the nation, in the loyal fulfilment of their civic duties, Catholics will feel the need to promote the common good; this is how they came bring to the civil authorities to take notice of their opinion so that it will exercise with justice and that the laws will be in accordance with moral strictness and the common good. That Catholics competent in political matters, affirmed as is suitable in Christian faith and doctrine, not refuse the management of public affairs and at the same time preparing the road to the Gospel.

Catholics will engage in collaboration with all men and women of good faith to promote all that is true, just, holy, worthy of being loved (see Ph 4, 8). They will enter into dialogue with them, going to them with intelligence and sensitivity, and will search how to improve social and public institutions according to the spirit of the Gospel.