Franciscan Journey
Chapter 21

How to Love People

"God sees hearts as we see faces."
All People are a Gift & an Image of Christ

- We need a sense of Community – where we feel joyful and equal with all
  
- **RULE – 13**
  
- Universal kinship
  
- Create a spirit of Welcome
  
- Atmosphere of Fraternity
St Francis

Work towards

- Foundation of Universal Kinship
- Human Dignity
- Shared Responsibility
- Love may be living realities

Oppose every kind

- Exploitation
- Exclusion
- Indifference
Build Fraternity Among Peoples

- Create worthy conditions for life
- Work for the freedom of all people (Constrictions Art. 1.1, 1.2, 18.3)

- Acquire Virtues of
  - Moderation in possessions
  - Justice in our treatment of others
  - Respect for their human dignity
  - Solidarity with all peoples

If you want peace, work for justice.

— Pope Paul VI —
Examination of our Perspective

Goes beyond family & fraternity relationships

Moves us to Relationships with All People – especially decisions we make about the “lowly”.

Many people consider themselves to be “lowly”
Spirit guides Franciscan way of relating to people

- A gentle spirit
- A courteous spirit
- Accept people as a gift
- Accept people as an image of Christ
- Place ourselves on an equal basis with people
- Recognize people’s work
A Gentle Spirit

Call on Holy Spirit and Opens Dialogue

Understands
- People are not perfect
- Recognizes people’s worth

All choices are not life giving
- Accepts Person
- Does not approve of poor choices

Focus upon Goal
- Other’s actions do not dictate our response
- Keep your actions in tune with goal

Creates spirit of hospitality
- Not condemnation
- Not judgement
Gentle Person

- Not a Push Over
- Good Grasp of Reality
- Supports Change without Creating Conflict that hinders Solution
- Does not presume to have all of the Answers
- Takes Action that fit Situation
- Seeks Help when needed
- Does not give up or give in
Let all brothers who know that he (another brother) has sinned not bring shame upon him or slander him; let them instead, show great mercy to him and keep the sin of their brother very secret because those who are well do not need a physician, but the sick do.

Courteous Person

- Recognizes Dignity of others
- Courtesy has more Authority than politeness
- Courtesy springs from our inner spirit of respect for all people

When Jesus appeared to Apostles after His death on the Cross – He responds to their needs without judgement – They were the people who would help build the Kingdom of God

Jesus kept his Goal in mind and treated them with courtesy. Troubled as they were, Jesus’ reaction to them opened the door to listening to Jesus’ words.
Francis gave witness to courtesy

- His treatment of his brothers
- Francis’ courtesy was never withheld from anyone who needed it
- Secular Franciscans are called to have the same courtesy – OFS RULE puts it precisely when it says: accept all people as a gift from the Lord and an image of Christ.

- CANTICLE OF THE CREATURES
- Creation reflects God’s Love
- Francis show courtesy to all creation
Accept all People as a Gift – Image of God

Will require a change in us
Listen to others – find Christ in them
Franciscans should give example of gift to others
Search for the Image of Christ

- Peel away the layers of poor decisions that brought people to this point in their lives
- TRUST is needed – we must be trustworthy
- Confidence in our love is needed – must be persistent in our love
- Caring Spirit must manifest itself – we need to care
- Throughout this process – CHANGE will occur in each of us
WE ARE ALL HUMAN – CREATED IN GOD’S LIKENESS

- Place ourselves on an equal basis with all people – which brings conversions
- Equality doesn’t mean that everything is exactly equal
- Gender, Experiences, Education, Family traits, Cultures, etc.
- We are capable of self knowledge
- We entering into communion with people through self giving
- To be made in God’s image also unites human beings as God’s stewards in the care of the earth and of all God’s other creatures.

(United States Catholic Catechism for Adults – USCCB pg.67)
Love for the Poor & Marginalized

- Franciscans strive to create conditions of life worthy of people redeemed by Christ
- Franciscans have a common desire to relate to God, all people, and all of creation.
- Accept challenge as part of being Franciscan.
- joined in community life we bring joy to others through our common collaborative efforts.
- But now thus says the Lord, he who created you, O Jacob, he who formed you, O Israel; Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine...Because you are precious in my sight, and honored and I love you...Do not fear, for I am with you. (Is 43:1, 4-5)

IF GOD HAS SUCH SENSITIVITY FOR US, WE WILL SHOW THE SAME SENSITIVITY TO ONE ANOTHER.