

The Franciscan Journey

Chapter 4

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Inquiry in the SFO



Inquiry – 1st Phase of Initial Formation



Continuing discernment of vocation
Look at Lay/secular spirituality
Exploration of the spirit of Francis & Clare
Brief history of the SFO & Rule
Intro to Scripture Study
Reflections – Church & Spirit of Vatican II

Journey of Inquiry



Ceremony of Introduction & Welcoming



Inquirer formation time

- Not less than 6 months



Must attend initial formation sessions

Participate in fraternity gatherings -

Indispensable for initiation into community

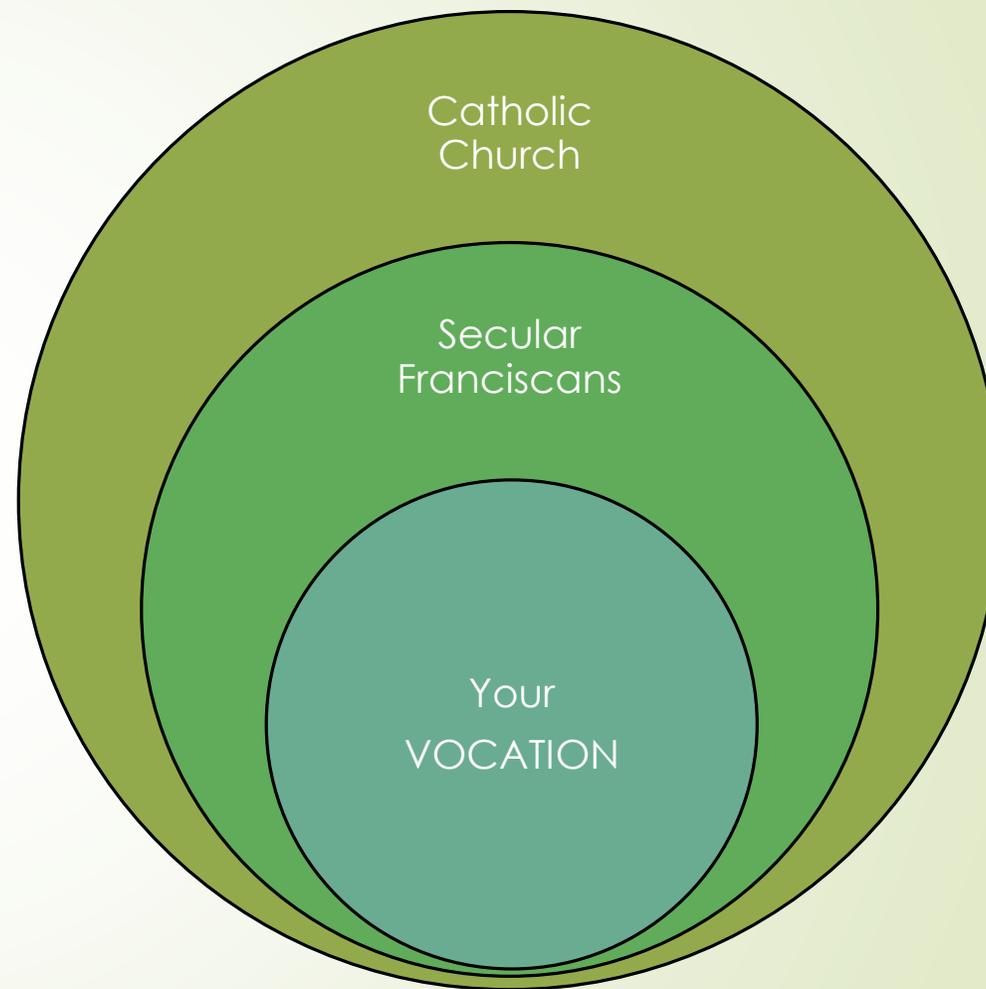
(Constitution art. 40.3 Nation Stat art. 19.2 a, 19.2 c)



- SFO IS A **VOCATION** which must be **Prayerfully Discerned** during Orientation & in Inquiry

Are you being called to follow Christ in the footsteps of Francis of Assisi?

Do intend to make present the **charism** of our Seraphic Father, Francis, in the life and mission of the Church?





Striving for Perfect Charity – Following Christ (Rule 2)

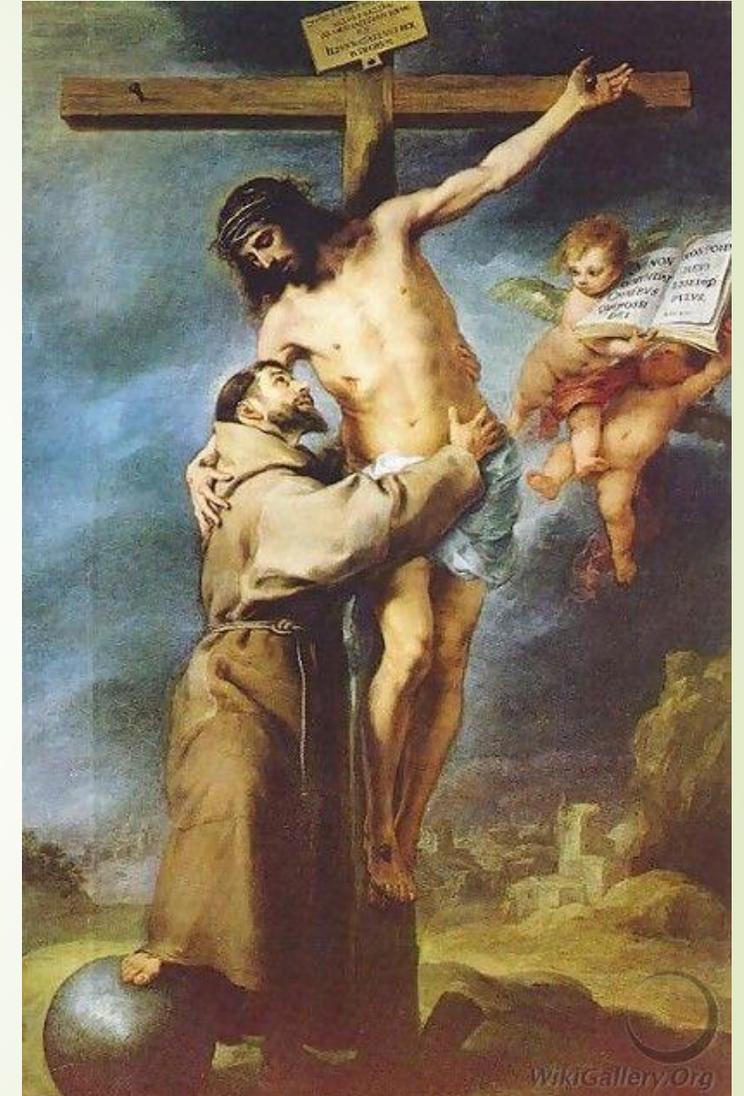
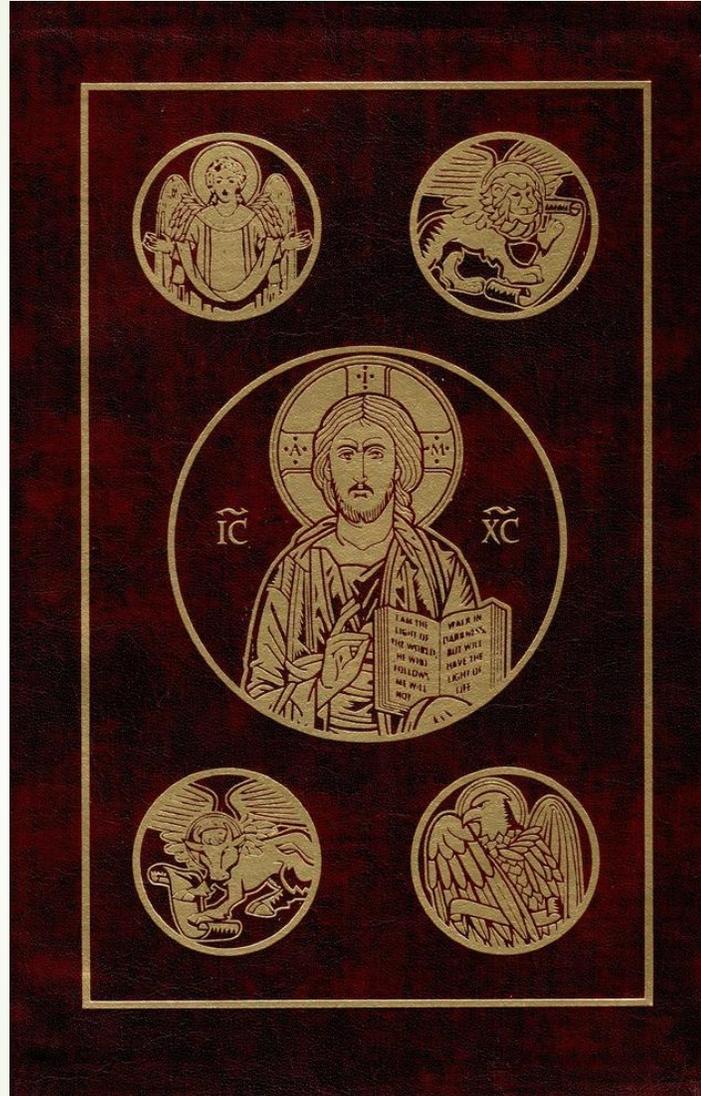
- ▶ **Let Every Creature in the heaven, on earth, in the sea and in the depths give praise, glory, honours and blessing**
- ▶ **To Him Who suffered so much,**
- ▶ **Who has given and will give in the future every good for He is our power and strength,**
- ▶ **Who alone is good, Who alone is almighty,**
- ▶ **Who alone is omnipotent, wonderful glorious,**
- ▶ **and Who alone is holy, worth of praise and blessing through endless ages.**
- ▶ **Amen**

- ▶ Later Admonitions & Exhortation
- ▶ Francis of Assisi – The Saint – Vol 1, pages

Rule 10 – “Christ, poor and crucified, “ Greatest manifestation of the love of God for humanity..”

- ▶ Our growth in Franciscan spirituality enriches our relationship with Jesus
- ▶ **Maintaining relationships is not easy**
- ▶ Learn how to deal with tough issues
- ▶ Conflicts, opposing ideas and opinions
- ▶ ,Need guidance of the Holy Spirit
- ▶ A heart that sees where Love is needed
- ▶ **FRANCISCANS AVOID THAT WHICH DIMINISHES OR DESTROYS RELATIONSHIPS – WE ARE CALLED TO BRING UNITY.**

- ▶ *This may require listening, forgiving, making a reconciliation, apologizing, discontinuing to dominate.*



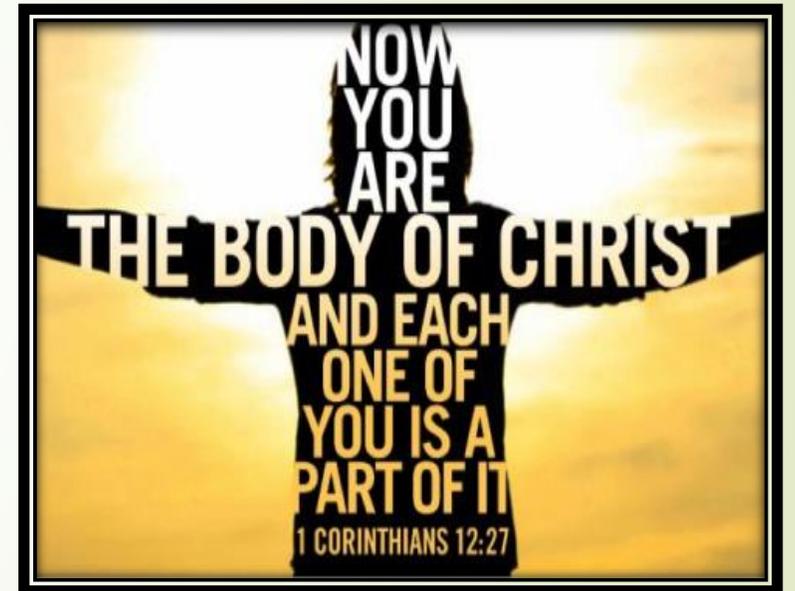
Human Frailty ~ It is Necessary to Convert Daily

Fruits of Conversion are **Works of Charity** in the interactions with the brothers and sisters.

We need one another if we want to bring the Franciscan spirit to the Church & the world.

Must create a supportive community, a model of reverence & respect, learning to forgive and accept – **NOT EASY**

We must **CHANGE** – Rule requires us to actually “deal” with the people in our lives.



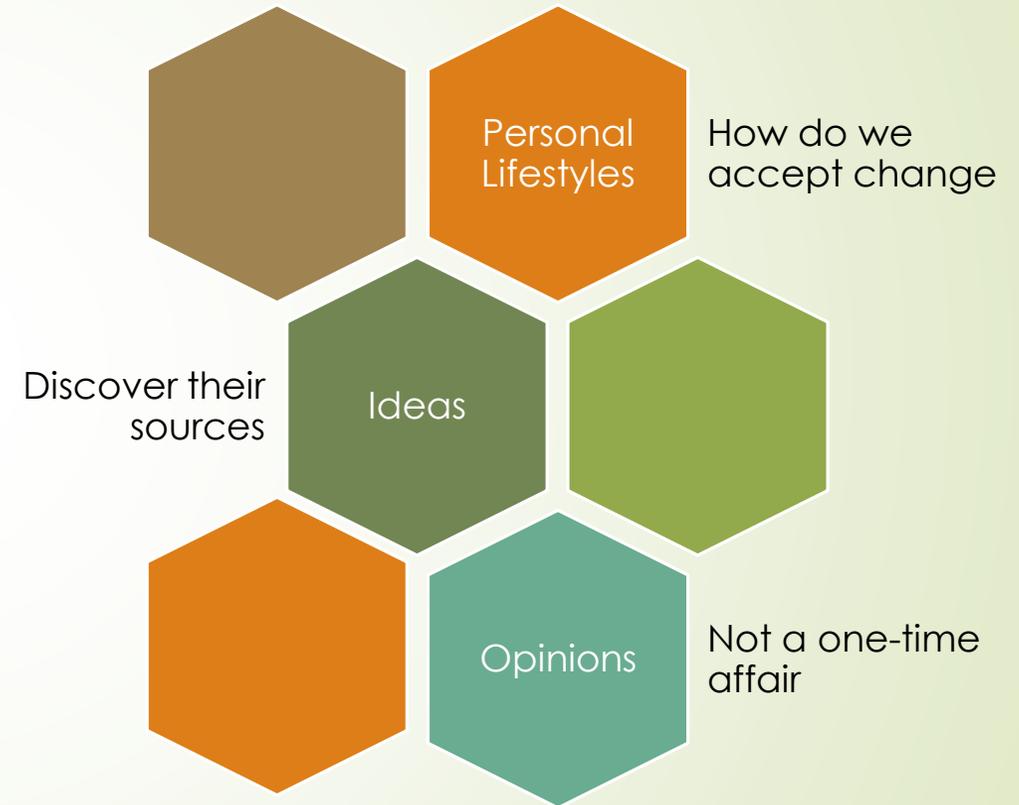
Franciscan “Conversion Process”

Conversion requires constant comparison with our life and the **life of Christ in the Gospels**. We will discover many things that need to change.

- How do we perceive the marginalized?
- How do I maintain relationships with those engaged in criminal activity – or who insult or denigrate us?
- How do we assess the qualities of those running for public office?
- How do we deal with failures of authorities in the Church, civil society, families or groups.

*Do we create an **atmosphere of acceptance** for friends, children, spouse, immigrants?*

- How do we support servant leadership in the SFO?



Franciscan Spirit Touches the Whole of Life



Constitutions – article 12.1)



Love is Free

- ▶ Those who practice charity in the Church's name will never seek to impose the Church's faith upon others.
- ▶ Pure & generous love is the best witness to the God -
- ▶ A Christian knows when it is time to speak of God and when it is better to say nothing and to let love alone speak. (*God is Love – Benedict XVI paragraph 31c*)
- ▶ Franciscan bring their whole life into conformity with the Gospel and the spirit of St. Francis.
- ▶ The SFO Rule and Constitution assist us in the vocation given by the Holy Spirit.