In Their Family....
Franciscan Journey
Chapter 25

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RULE 17 - Family

- Secular Franciscans should consider their own family to be in 1st place in which to live their Christian vocation.
  - Make space within for prayer, for Word of God, for Christian Catechesis
  - Respect for Life – from Conception to Natural Death
  - Rule of OFS an aid in Married Life – fidelity is profound witness for family, the Church and the world
Share Important Moments of Family Life

- Give special attention to - Single, widows, single parents, separated, divorced – who are living in difficult situations
- **Rule 19** – Create conditions suitable for dialogue between generations
- Foster formation of groups of married couples & family groups
Collaborate with Church Efforts on Respect for Life & Family Issues

- Need to educate children – “bringing them to awareness of being living active members of the People of God”
- Formation of groups of children – initiate into love of Franciscan life.
- National statutes give appropriate orientation for organization of these groups & their relationship to the fraternity & to Franciscan youth groups
The Family Environment

Faith Professed & Witnessed

- Pray together
- Engage in Lifelong Learning
- Forgive
- Serve
- Welcome & Affirm
- Celebrate life
- Bring justice & mercy to community
- Help each other to live & grow the faith
- NO Family is too broken to be used for the Lord’s purposes

The Family is holy not because it is perfect, but because God’s grace is at work in it.

USCCB pg. 376
Basic Unit of Society
Family – Domestic Church

- Healthy family - prerequisite of healthy society
- Authority, stability, loving relationships – essential for a society that wants to sustain freedom, security, & community responsibility.
- Good Family contributes to life in these structures
- Best parents can’t guarantee children will be the best, but odds are better than dysfunctional families.
Challenges of Marriage

- Need for Conversion
  - Re-viewing relationship - boredom, miscarriage, children, finances, work, mental/physical health, addictions

- Challenges bring opportunities for growth

- Need for: Dialogue & Love
Home – Where Vision & Reality Meet

- The RULE focuses upon a spirit of peace, fidelity, & respect for life – especially – Family Life
- Teens – reaching for independence, wanting security
- Discoveries about sex, drug & alcohol
- Being responsible at home, sharing chores
- Need prayer, love, patience, forgiveness, understanding and firmness
Relationship with God
Creating an Atmosphere of Peace or Chaos

Need for Dialogue

1. Take time to pray together, call on the Holy Spirit for assistance
2. People, take responsibility for their actions
3. Be willing to change negative/frustrating actions – require conversion
4. Forgive others if they were hurt by their actions
5. Develop tools to continue dealing with feelings & hurts that may occur
Family Life -
Marriage

- Desire to remain exclusively faithful until death
- Promised before God in the midst of family and friends before priest or deacon
- Supported by continuing presence of Christ in life of the spouses as he pours into their hearts the gift of love through the Holy Spirit
- The couple does not walk along & possesses the graced freedom to respond to natural & supernatural help USCCB page 286
- Spouses with God’s grace, give witness, often in difficult conditions, deserve the gratitude & support of the ecclesial community CCC no.1648
Cultivate Respect for Life Belief in the Sacredness of Life

- Conception, in the womb & protection, love at beginning of life
- Early years of life, showing love, touching, caress
- Growing years of life – concern for education, intellectual, faith-wise, emotional. Teach to express love to one another
- Teen years of life – struggles to discover their identity, sexuality & development of skills to function independently – preparing for adulthood
- Respect life of family members – as move from home to live independently – continues as people grown older
- Older family members – avoiding euthanasia or actions that deliberately hasten natural death
Sacredness of Life

- Respect life of family members – as move from home to live independently – continues as people grow older

- Respect older family members – avoiding euthanasia or actions that deliberately hasten natural death
Life Issues  
– Beyond the Family

FRANCISCAN LOVE

• True Christian love cannot be choosey
• We try to imitate the God who loves all people
• We work to create conditions of life worthy of people redeemed by Christ (*OFS Rule #13*)

Protect the Unborn

Protect the sick from unethical actions
• Care to be taken regarding power of attorney or written documents about care given to people who are seriously ill

Death penalty doesn’t respect life

 Desire to stop violence & conflict that take innocent lives

Wars that destroy the lives of people in the military as well as civilians
The Home is a Domestic Church
- **Make Love Present**

- Spouses witness by their love
- Provide children a simple and open Christian education
- Be attentive to the vocation of each child
- Help children discover how they can best serve Christ
- Secular Franciscan should find ways to assist youth programs in parish or neighborhood
- Support those who are divorced or separated – needs of the children are of special importance
- No one and no place is outside of focus of our love