

11.

Trusting in the Father, Christ chose for himself and his mother a poor and humble life¹⁹, even though he valued created things attentively and lovingly. Let the Secular Franciscans seek a proper spirit of detachment from temporal goods by simplifying their own material needs. Let them be mindful that according to the gospel they are stewards of the goods received for the benefit of God's children.

Thus, in the spirit of "the Beatitudes", and as pilgrims and strangers on their way to the home of the Father, they should strive to purify their hearts from every tendency and yearning for possession and power²⁰.

12.

Witnessing to the good yet to come and obliged to acquire purity of heart because of the vocation they have embraced, they should set themselves free to love God and their brothers and sisters²¹.

13.

As the Father sees in every person the features of his Son, the firstborn of many brothers and sisters²², so the Secular Franciscans with a gentle and courteous spirit accept all people as a gift of the Lord and an image of Christ²³.

A sense of community will make them joyful and ready to place themselves on an equal basis with all people, especially with the lowly for whom they shall strive to create conditions of life worthy of people redeemed by Christ²⁴.

14.

Secular Franciscans, together with all people of good will, are called to build a more fraternal and evangelical world so that the kingdom of God may be brought about more effectively. Mindful that anyone "who follows Christ, the perfect man, becomes more of a man himself", let them exercise their responsibilities competently in Christian spirit of service²⁵.

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 faith²⁶.

16.

Let them esteem work both as a gift and as a sharing in the creation, redemption, and service of the human community²⁷.

¹⁹ *First Letter of St. Francis* 5 (1 FA:ED, *The Later Exhortation* (2Lt 5), p. 46).

²⁰ Rom. 8:17; *Lumen Gentium* 7:4.

²¹ *Admonitions of St. Francis* 16 (1 FA:ED, *Adm XVI*, p. 136); *First Letter* 70.

²² Rom. 8:29.

²³ 2 Celano 85 (2 FA:ED, 2C 85, p. 303); *First Letter* 26 (1 FA:ED, 2LtF 26, p. 47); *First Rule* 7:13 (1 FA:ED, ER 7:14, p. 69).

²⁴ *First Rule* 9:3 (1 FA:ED, ER 9:2, p. 70); Mt 25:40.

²⁵ *Lumen Gentium* 31; Constitution on the Church in the Modern World (*Gaudium et Spes*) 93.

²⁶ *Apostolicam Actuositatem* 14.

²⁷ *Gaudium et Spes* 67:2; *First Rule* 7:4 (1 FA:ED, ER 7:4, p. 68); *Second Rule* 5:1 (1 FA:ED, LR 5:2, p. 102).



17.

In their family they should cultivate the Franciscan spirit of peace, fidelity, and respect for life, striving to make of it a sign of a world already renewed in Christ²⁸.

By living the grace of matrimony, husbands and wives in particular should bear witness in the world to the love of Christ for his Church. They should joyfully accompany their children on their human and spiritual journey by providing a simple and open Christian education and being attentive to the vocation of each child²⁹.

18.

Moreover they should respect all creatures, animate and inanimate, which “bear the imprint of the Most High”³⁰, and they should strive to move from the temptation of exploiting creation to the Franciscan concept of universal kinship.

19.

Mindful that they are bearers of peace which must be built up unceasingly, they should seek out ways of unity and fraternal harmony through dialogue, trusting in the presence of the divine seed in everyone and in the transforming power of love and pardon³¹.

Messengers of perfect joy in every circumstance, they should strive to bring joy and hope to others³².

Since they are immersed in the resurrection of Christ, which gives true meaning to Sister Death, let them serenely tend toward the ultimate encounter with the Father³³.

Chapter 3 LIFE IN FRATERNITY

20.

The Secular Franciscan Order is divided into fraternities of various levels — local, regional, national, and international. Each one has its own moral personality in the Church³⁴. These various fraternities are coordinated and united according to the norm of this Rule and of the Constitutions.

21.

On various levels, each fraternity is animated and guided by a council and minister (or president) who are elected by the professed according to the Constitutions³⁵. Their service, which lasts for a definite period, is marked by a ready and willing spirit and is a duty of responsibility to each member and to the community.

Within themselves the fraternities are structured in different ways according to the norm of the constitutions, according to the various needs of their members and their regions, and under the guidance of their respective council.

²⁸ *Misericors Dei Filius* 2:8.

²⁹ *Lumen Gentium* 41:5; *Apostolicam Actuositatem* 30:2.3.

³⁰ 1 *Celano* 80 (1 FA:ED, 1*Cel* 80, p. 250).

³¹ *Misericors Dei Filius* 2:9; *Legend of the Three Companions* 14:58 (2 FA:ED, L3C, 14:58, pp. 76 and 101-2).

³² *Admonitions of St. Francis* 21 (1 FA:ED, *Adm.* 21, p. 135); *First Rule* 7:15 (1 FA:ED, *ER* 7:16, p. 69).

³³ *Gaudium et Spes* 78:1-2.

³⁴ Can. 687. now: Can. 309.

³⁵ Can. 697. now: Can. 309.

