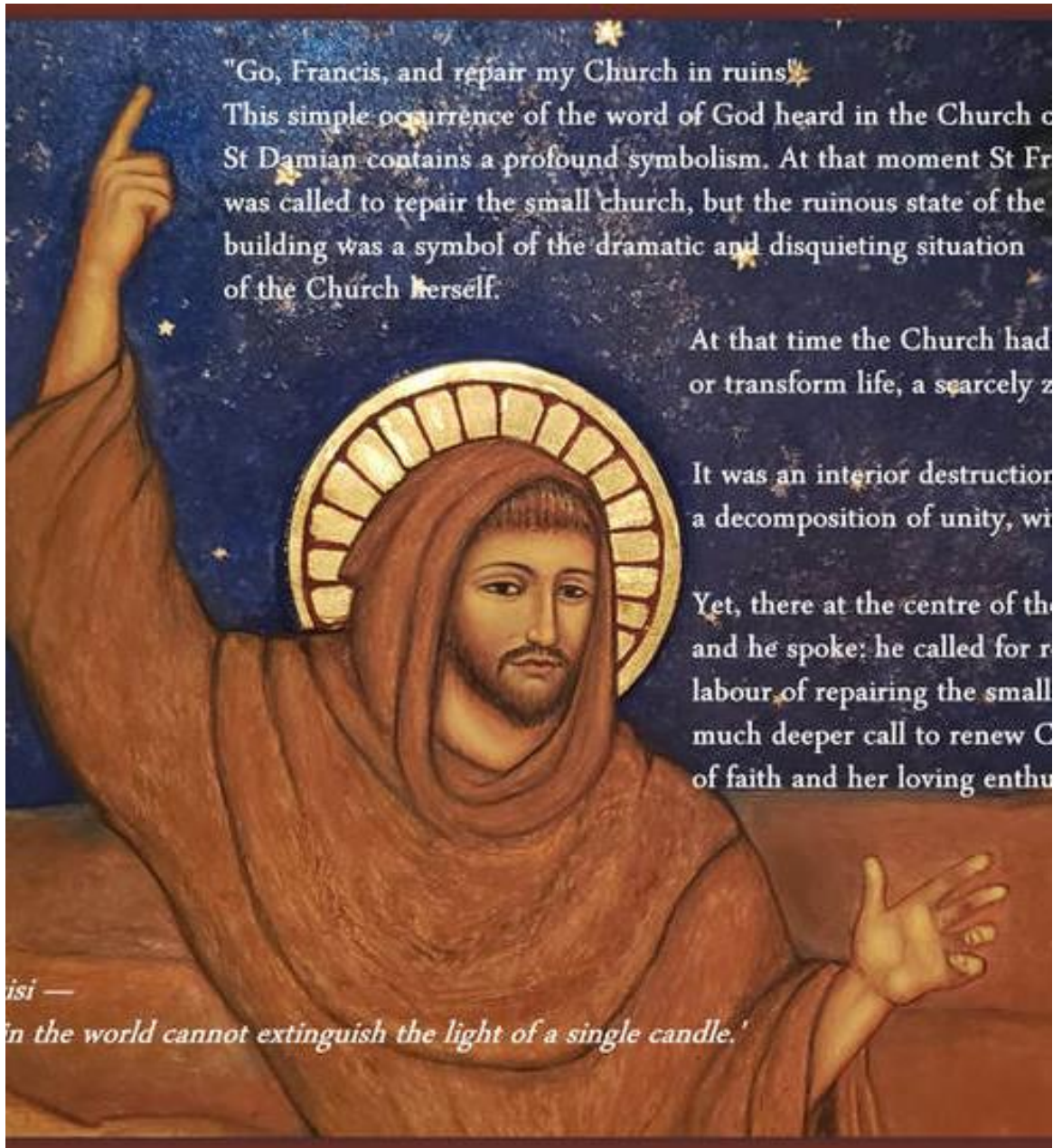


THE EARLY RULE PROLOGUE

Rule and the Life of the Brothers





Basic understanding of the GOSPEL

- Direct way to imitate Jesus Christ and follow in His footsteps
- How to join Francis' community and how to embrace its spirit
- Core elements of Gospel perfection
- Solidarity with God and the Poor in sharing the work of God
- Evangelii Gaudium & Joy of the Gospel – that Francis' vision of how to follow the Gospels leads to Perfect Joy

I HAVE QUESTIONS



LOTS OF QUESTIONS

Consider...

- In your reading of the Gospel, what seems to be the most important instruction for our daily living?
- What led you to consider adopting Franciscan spirituality in your life as a lay person or a vocation with St. Francis?

Francis opened the Scripture 3 Xs...

1. "If you wish to be perfect, go and sell all you own, and give to the poor".
2. "Take nothing on your journey"
3. "If anyone would follow me, let him deny himself, take up his cross and follow me".



Not pagan practice to predict future, but Francis used this to "listen to God's Word and trusting that God would confirm the way to Gospel perfection." Francis sought guidance of the Holy Spirit – St Bonaventure

Major
Legend of
St Francis
of Assisi-
Desire of a
Soul -

Bonaventure

Chapter 1 Become like Jesus, Gospel -Listen and Act

- Basic Ways

1. Embrace of poverty – gives all to poor, store up treasures in heaven
2. Living in obedience – God's will, not your own, take up your cross, die to self
3. Living in chastity – relinquishing flesh and blood, exclusive relationships, free to serve anyone, wherever
4. Reward – Those who give up friends, family, possessions and control will have eternal life

Living like
Saint Francis
of Assisi:
Poverty,
Chastity, and
Obedience





Habit of St. Francis of Assisi

Chapter 2 - Clothing / Habit

- Clothing – Individual status & social connections to family/state/special societies
- Francis stripped himself of clothing – renouncing connection to family and gave himself to God and the Church

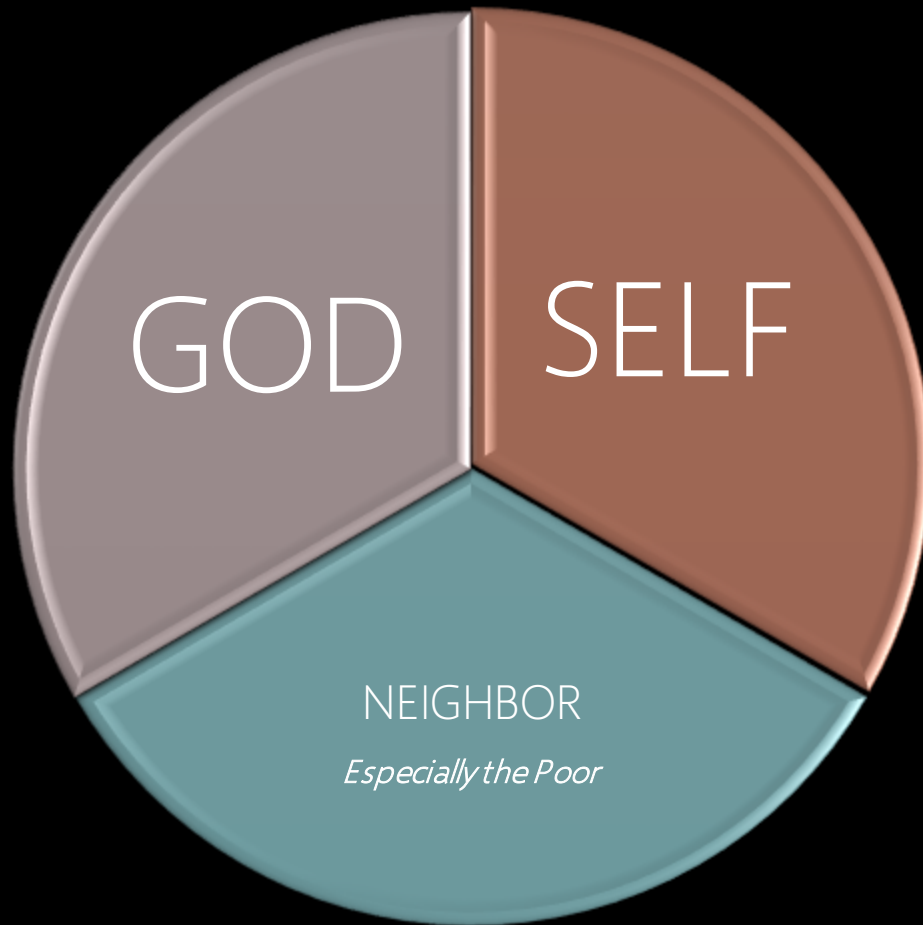
All the Friars shall wear coarse garments, and they may mend them with sackcloth and other pieces of cloth, with the blessings of God.



**I HAVE SOME
QUESTIONS!**

Understand the Rule - Questions

- What do the 4 Gospel texts and their accompanying threefold formula (Obedience, Poverty, Chastity) mean today?
- The ER (Early Rule) speaks about hypocrisy, i.e., those who say (words) they are following the Gospel, but their actions indicate they are not. Where today is there such hypocrisy- not just in others but in one's own words and deeds?



Franciscan 1st Order – God's Will vs Self Will

Our Yes to being a Franciscan entails relationship between God, self and our neighbor – particularly our poor

Yes to Divine Will

No to Self Will

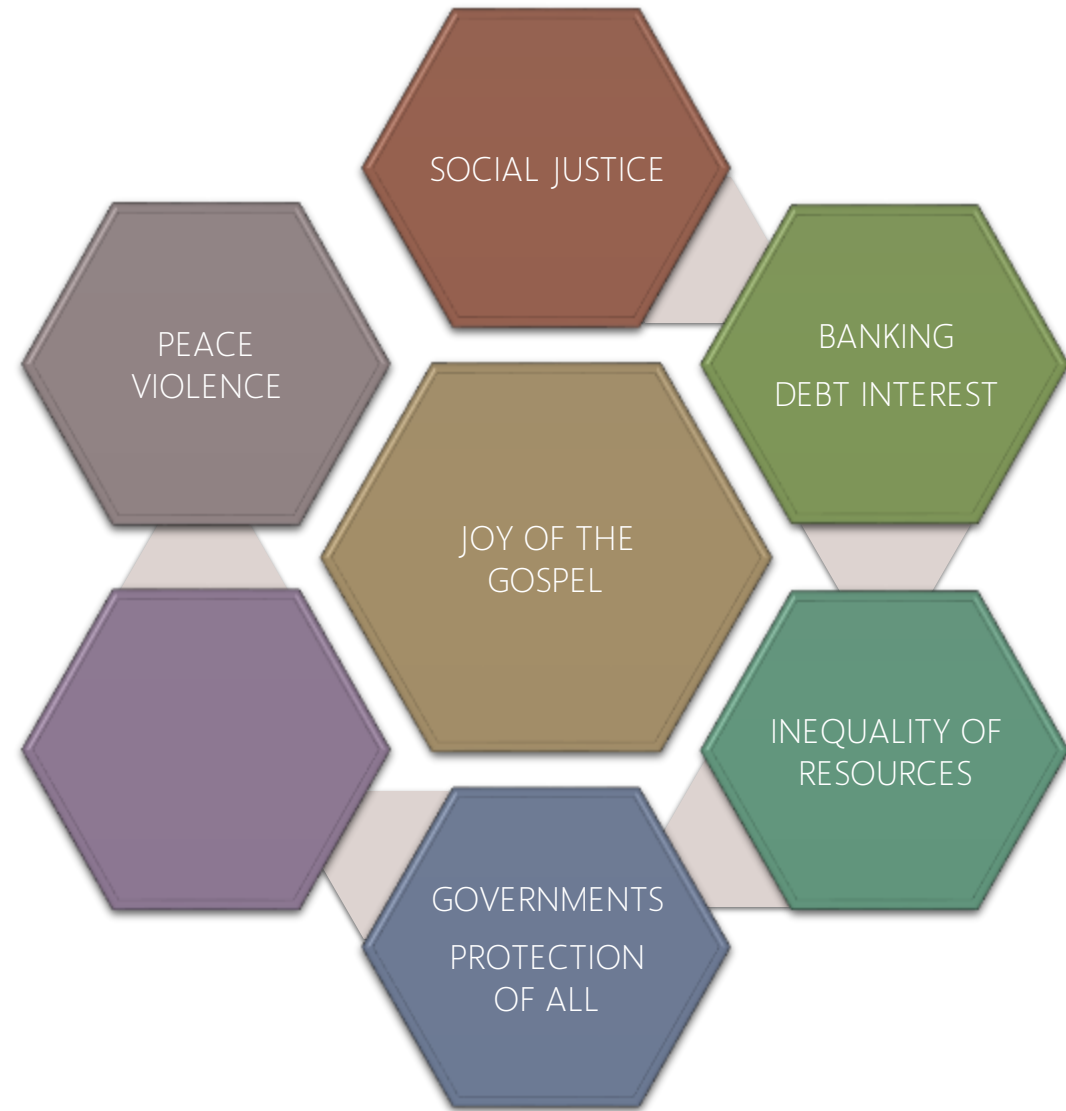
Yes to Neighbor

**Double Renunciation –
choosing another to obey
and place all goods in hands
of the needy – Freedom to
follow Christ**

JOY of the GOSPEL

Nn 49-60

JOY IS RECEIVED IN THE
AMOUNT OF JOY AS
WE GIVE TO OTHERS



THEMES FROM CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING

The Church's social teaching is a rich treasure of wisdom about building a just society and living lives of holiness amidst the challenges of modern society. Modern Catholic social teaching has been articulated through a tradition of papal, conciliar, and episcopal documents. The depth and richness of this tradition can be understood best through a direct reading of these documents. In these brief reflections, we highlight several of the key themes that are at the heart of our Catholic social tradition.



LIFE AND DIGNITY OF THE HUMAN PERSON

The Catholic Church proclaims that human life is sacred and that the dignity of the human person is the foundation of a moral vision for society. This belief is the foundation of all the principles of our social teaching. In our society, human life is under direct attack from abortion and euthanasia. Human life is threatened by cloning, embryonic stem cell research, and the use of the death penalty. The intentional targeting of civilians in war or terrorist attacks is always wrong. Catholic teaching calls on us to work to avoid war. Nations must protect the right to life by finding effective ways to prevent conflicts and resolve them by peaceful means. We believe that every person is precious, that people are more important than things, and that the measure of every institution is whether it threatens or enhances the life and dignity of the human person.



CALL TO FAMILY, COMMUNITY, AND PARTICIPATION

The person is not only sacred but also social. How we organize our society—in economics and politics, in law and policy—directly affects human dignity and the capacity of individuals to grow in community. Marriage and family are the central social institutions that must be supported and strengthened, not undermined. We believe people have a right and a duty to participate in society, seeking together the common good and well-being of all, especially the poor and vulnerable.



RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Catholic tradition teaches that human dignity can be protected and a healthy community can be achieved only if human rights are protected and responsibilities are met. Therefore, every person has a fundamental right to life and a right to those things required for human decency. Corresponding to these rights are duties and responsibilities—to one another, to our families, and to the larger society.



OPTION FOR THE POOR AND VULNERABLE

A basic moral test is how our most vulnerable members are faring. In a society marred by deepening divisions between rich and poor, our tradition recalls the story of the Last Judgment (Mt 25:31-46) and instructs us to put the needs of the poor and vulnerable first.



THE DIGNITY OF WORK AND THE RIGHTS OF WORKERS

The economy must serve people, not the other way around. Work is more than a way to make a living; it is a form of continuing participation in God's creation, if the dignity of work is to be protected, then the basic rights of workers must be respected—the right to productive work, to decent and fair wages, to the organization and joining of unions, to private property, and to economic initiative.



SOLIDARITY

We are one human family whatever our national, racial, ethnic, economic, and ideological differences. We are our brothers' and sisters' keepers, wherever they may be. Loving our neighbor has global dimensions in a shrinking world. At the core of the virtue of solidarity is the pursuit of justice and peace. Blessed Pope Paul VI taught that "if you want peace, work for justice." The Gospel calls us to be peacemakers. Our love for all our sisters and brothers demands that we promote peace in a world surrounded by violence and conflict.



CARE FOR GOD'S CREATION

We show our respect for the Creator by our stewardship of creation. Care for the earth is not just an Earth Day slogan. It is a requirement of our faith. We are called to protect people and the planet. Living our faith in relationship with all of God's creation. This environmental challenge has fundamental moral and ethical dimensions that cannot be ignored.



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Paul VI, *On the Celebration of the Feast of St. Joseph* (Rome, January 1, 1972).

10/1/2017

Franciscans are
Catholics Squared...

Fr. Scully OFM, Cap.

Saints known for work in Social
Justice...

St Damian of Molokai

St Marianne Cope

St. Junipero Sierra OFM

St. Thomas More OFS

St. Katherine Drexel OSF

St Joan of Arc

St. Frances Cabrini OSF

St Roch

St John Capistrano OF

St. Katherine Drexel OSF

Follow Jesus to have true JOY

- Striving to embody the “Word-Deed Dialect”
 - While marked with wonder, happiness, consolation, excitement, and hope...
 - Can be met with our experience of **sorrow, repentance, disappointment, anger, loneliness and other painful feelings.**
- Living the Gospel **does not banish being human** – still difficulties inside and outside of ourselves



"When I think of the happiness that is in store for me, every sorrow, every pain becomes dear to me."

- ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI

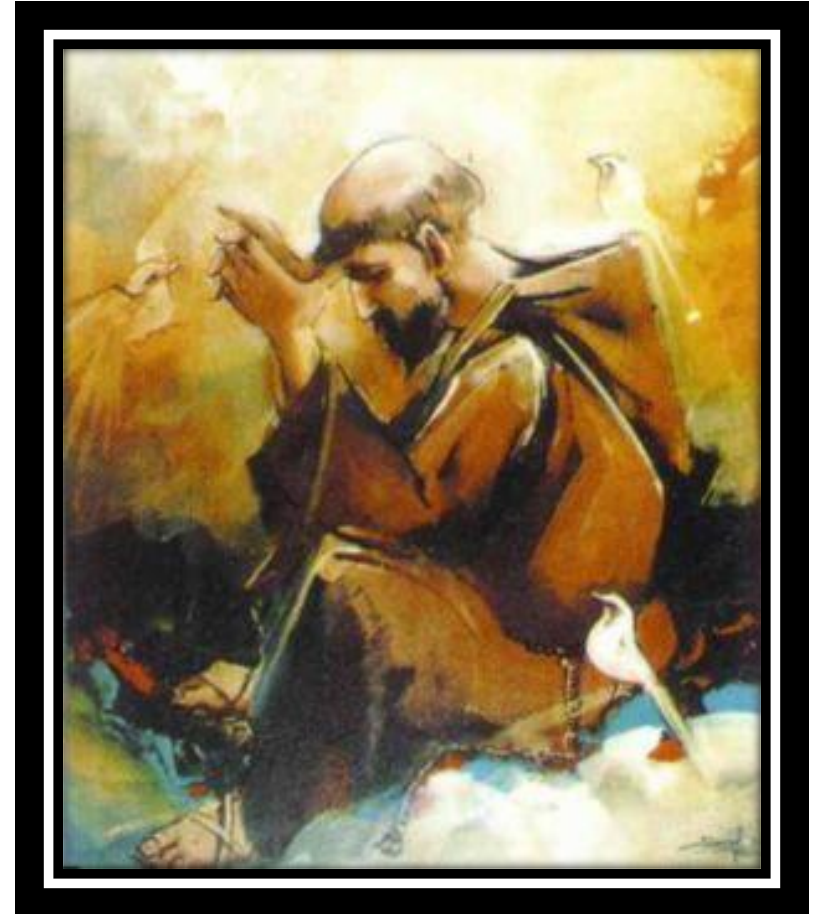


Give Life to Others to Find True JOY

- Francis saw in Christ's cross, the cross imprinted on his body, **God's love for us**.
- To take up your cross is not a punishment even if it involves penance & mortification by dying to our self-will.
- **Charity, God's own love for Himself and for us – highest good a human can have**
- We become most human when we become **more than human**
- Find friendship with God, **Eternal Life** and fullest JOY

- "If you love those who love you, what benefit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them.
- And if you do good to those who do good to you, what benefit is that to you? For even sinners do the same.
- And if you lend to those from whom you expect to receive, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, to get back the same amount.
- But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return, and your reward will be great, and if you will be sons of the Most High, for He is kind to the ungrateful and the evil.
- Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful.

- Luke 6:32-36



Reflect & Discuss

The counsels of the Gospel perfection are demanding. If God has made so many good things on this earth, why should even these good things be renounced?

Can you see your pursuit of a Franciscan spirituality in the instructions for a postulant, even 800 years later? How or how not?

Can these who are not professed Franciscan still live the Gospel life of St. Francis proposes? Should they or is there a more appropriate option?

COMMERCIAL
BREAK

BROADCAST
INTERRUPTED

- **“Take a Nap!”**:

- **Why This Franciscan Brother Says Good Sleep Can Help You Combat Sin**

- How often do you take a nap?

- [Brother Leo Mary, MFVA](#), of the **Franciscan Missionaries of the Eternal Word** with EWTN recorded a video for the community’s Instagram page explaining the importance of good quality sleep.

- In the video, Brother Leo says, “Father Angelus would tell us, **70% of our sins come from not sleeping enough**. If you think about it,

- when you get irritable and cranky, it’s usually because you haven’t gotten enough sleep.

- **“So he said, ‘When in doubt, take a nap.’**

- “There was a lady that told me she went to confession to Father Angeles, and he said, **‘For your penance, take a nap.’**

- “She said, ‘I’ve never heard that before.’

- “And yet, we need our sleep, and each person is different, so you need to know how much sleep you need.

- And so for me, I’m gonna take a nap.”

- In conclusion, Brother Leo then humorously drops down on the bed.

