

Go,
Rebuild
My Church!

**Comprehensive
Course on the
Franciscan
Mission
Charism**



The
Franciscan
Family

Lesson Unit 2

The documents of Vatican II, Pope Paul VI's *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, and Pope John Paul II's *Redemptoris Missio* have deeply affected the understanding of mission. Constant efforts are being made to clarify its purpose, and objectives, and to determine the most appropriate methods to carry it out. *Go, Rebuild My Church: A Comprehensive Course on the Franciscan Mission Charism*, provides a particular context to stimulate dialogue about the many dimensions of mission and the inevitable recognition of the equality, dignity and humanity of all persons. The course is unique, since it is genuinely inter-Franciscan and inter-cultural. An ongoing process for exchange among all members of the Franciscan Family from six continents provides for a creative meshing of the best in current theology, Franciscan research and pastoral practice. The vast and profound changes of present-day society make all the more urgent our search for a fuller understanding of humanity in the light of the Gospel and the Person of Jesus Christ.

As Franciscans, with the world as our "cloister," we welcome this refreshing moment of intercultural dialogue. Francis was the first among founders to situate the missionary dimension of the Gospel call clearly within his rule. This study reawakens us to the challenge and genuineness of Francis' message for our own times.



Imprint

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Second revised edition including the suggestions of the International Congress of the CCFMC, Assisi 1994

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Africa Edition

Publisher: Comprehensive Course
on the Franciscan Mission Charism
CCFMC Africa Secretariat
PO Box 21197, Nairobi, Kenya



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Cover Design:

Kolbe Press

Printed by:

Kolbe Press, PO Box 468, Limuru, Kenya

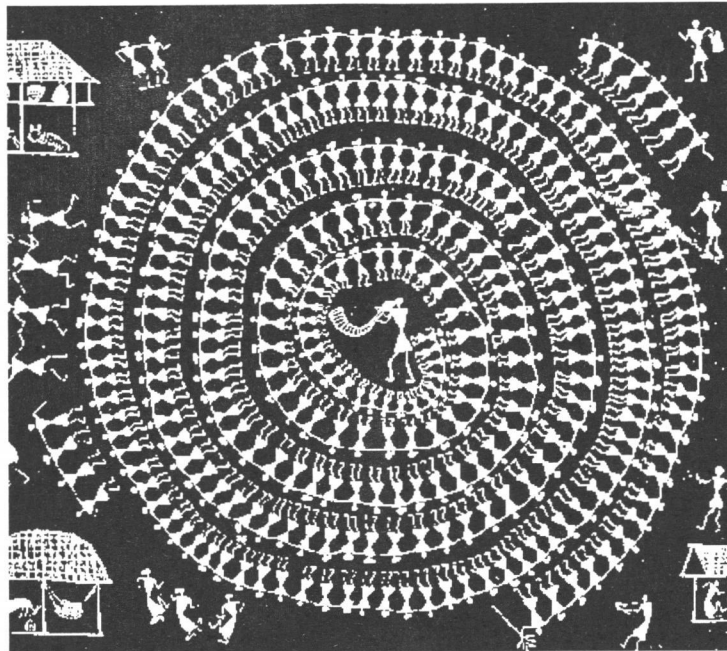


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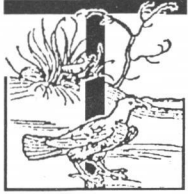
The Franciscan Family



Lesson Unit 2



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Why the Whole World is Running After Francis

Brother Masseo, one of Francis' first brothers, was unable to understand why so many people were running after Francis. His followers came from every walk of life: young and old, men and women, educated and unlettered, married and single, from among the nobility and the peasantry alike. All wanted to walk the way of Francis. "What could it be," Masseo wondered, "what is it that attracts all these people?"

Francis was not an educated man; he knew how to read and write, but not much else. He did not have an instantly recognizable family name, nor could he boast of a noble heritage. He was merely the son of a merchant. Nor was Francis good looking; he was small and almost repulsive to look at, with ears that stuck out. Clearly, it was neither his education, background nor personal beauty that attracted so many people. So what was it? Brother Masseo repeated his thoughts to Francis himself. When Francis heard them, he rejoiced: "If none of those things matter", he cried, "then it is God Himself who attracts them; it is because of Him that all these people follow me" (Based on Fioretti 10).



Introduction



Common Family

Francis and Clare committed themselves to an incarnational faith which was made a reality by the birth of Jesus Christ into the world. That was their common vocation. They did not remain alone in their calling; God gave them countless brothers and sisters to share in it (See Test 14).

Today, too, many different individuals, groups, communities and orders have Francis and Clare as their common point of reference. And the words Clare left for her sisters could be relevant to all of these:

Among the other gifts which we have received and do receive daily from our benefactor, the Father of mercies, and for which we must express the deepest thanks to our glorious God, there is our vocation, for which, all the more by way of its being more perfect and greater, do we owe the greatest thanks to Him. Therefore the Apostle writes: "know your vocation! The Son of God has been made for us the Way which our blessed Father Francis, His true lover and imitator, has shown and taught us by word and example" (TestCl 1ff).

But it is not enough merely to speak of our common vocation. We must also share in witnessing together to that vocation in the world. Today, that is more urgent than ever. We have done far too little to promote our Franciscan calling. Neither have we shown ourselves to be united as one family.





Survey

B



he lives

and example of Francis and Clare

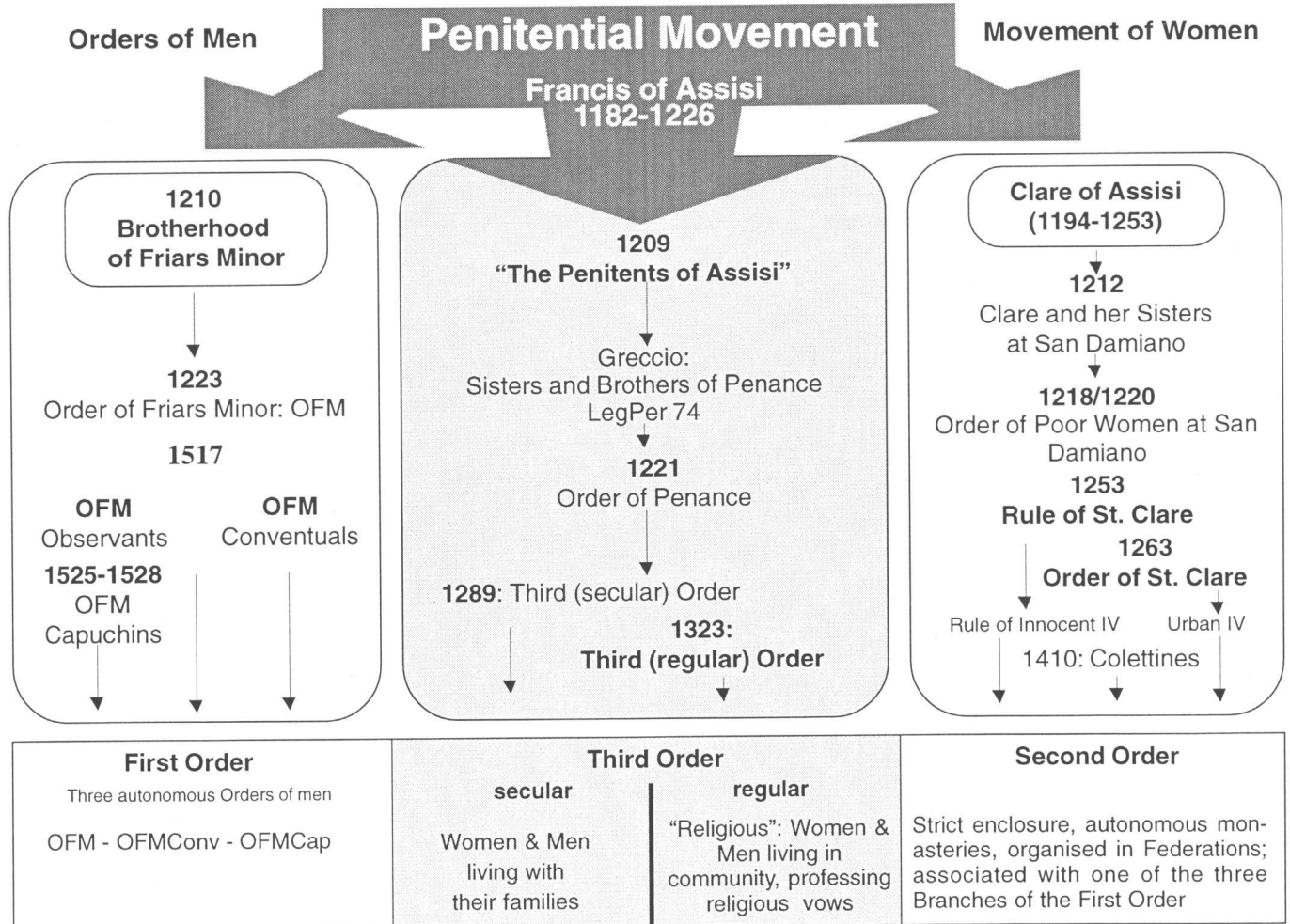
have had a marvelous and far-reaching effect. This is not surprising, since before Francis the social system in which he grew up had very little real awareness of Christ or of the Gospel. Many people, for example the Albigensians, and movements preaching poverty or penance, and groups of women who became known as the Beguines were unhappy with the state of affairs and were searching for an alternative way to live.

Francis too worked out such an alternative *way of life* but only for himself personally, without any intention of forming an order. However, the Lord gave him brothers (Test 14) who became the First Order. Soon after that, women followers became the Second Order. In addition, there were people whose encounter with Francis had converted them to a life of penance, and these became known as the

Third Order. Francis' picture of these three groups drew on contemporary images of family life; he saw them all as members of one family. However, he never described himself as father, which would have had the overtones of the term *pater familias* today; instead, he called himself the fruitful mother of many sons for the King, the Son of God (See 2 Cel 11, 16-17 and EpLeo). This understanding, of course, extends to the Second and Third Orders as well.

This, then, is the origin of the call of all those who follow Francis, that they should unite themselves into one common family, in order to witness more effectively to their common vocation. The history of the development of this family is extremely complex. What follows is a rough diagram of the way in which its history evolved:

THE FRANCISCAN FAMILY TREE





Origins with Francis and Clare



We are aware today that the Franciscan movement, as such, has its origin in Francis and Clare. However, it would be misleading to describe

them as the sole starting point. They themselves were influenced by historical developments.

The Penitential Movement and the Beguines



When Francis spoke of his *new life*, he used the word penance. The original name for his band of brothers, logically enough, was “penitents from Assisi.” Clare too, quite independently of Francis, saw herself as a penitent. Penance is a vital concept for an understanding of that period of history. It was for them synonymous with living according to the Gospel. It denotes total commitment to God and to Jesus Christ.

So why do they make so much use of this word penance which has a somewhat negative connotation to modern ears? The medieval understanding of religious commitment was different in essence from our own. It was concerned with separation from the rest of society in order to live in special relationship to God, either singly or in groups. The Penitents’ understanding of their calling was that they should grieve constantly for their own sins and the sins of all. Through a life of prayer, meditation and self-denial, they were seeking their own salvation and that of all people. The concept of penance thus shaped religious awareness in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. A gradual development of these ideas spilled over into all areas of life; they even came to form the basis of a defined legal system.

From the very beginning of Christianity, sin and forgiveness were not seen as affecting only the

individual in isolation. People could not regard sin and reparation with indifference. The Church, therefore, took up an official position with regard to penance. For acts of murder, adultery, blasphemy or any other sin which was contrary to a life lived in union with God, acts of penance had to be performed: abstention from sex within marriage, giving a specified sum of money to the poor, endowing a church or monastery, fasting, or saying certain prayers. The public role of defining sin, forgiveness for sins committed, and the imposition of penalties was taken on by the Church. With time, this state of affairs was forgotten and private confession was on the increase, and this not without resistance from the institutional church. Many women and men, however, were deciding to enter into a state of penance out of their own free will. They began to accept the consequences, both for themselves and on behalf of others, which had previously been bound up with public penance. In a book on the subject of penitential exercises, it was suggested: *If you don't know the psalms, cannot keep a night vigil or make a genuflection, stand with your arms extended, your body forming a cross, or lie stretched out on the ground, then seek out someone who can do these things in your place. For Scripture says: 'Bear one another's burdens' (Gal 6:2).*



This practice of penance led to the formulation of detailed rules. Certain professions (merchants and soldiers, to name two examples) and actions were forbidden as they were seen contrary to the Gospel. Suggested ways of penance included fasting on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays; keeping the Great Fast (Lent); almsgiving; self-



inflicted pain, e.g. by flagellation or wearing a hair shirt; penitential pilgrimages; retreat to a hermitage. All of these elements also make an appearance in the lives of Francis and Clare. Stipulations on this kind of penance appear in a kind of *rule*, the so-called *Memoriale* of 1221, once ascribed to Francis but now known not to be his. Cardinal Hugolino probably had a hand in it, as indeed he did with the rule for the sisters as San Damiano and with the Friars Minor. Francis makes tacit reference to the *Memoriale* in his Letter to the Faithful, directed at the penitents who wanted to turn to him for inspiration.

Francis' view of Gospel living influenced the penitents deeply. The later Third Order has its origins in this movement of penitents which arose spontaneously and without organization. It was finally given official recognition in 1289 by Pope Nicholas IV.

Before Francis and Clare, at the very beginning of the 13th century, there was already real enthusiasm for this Order of penitents. Thomas of Celano's view of Clare throws some light on its spiritual dynamic.

Many, finally, already united in marriage, bound themselves by mutual consent to the law of continency, the men entering some established Orders, the women the monasteries. The mother invited the daughter, or the daughter the mother,

to the following of Christ; the sister drew her sister thereto, the aunt her nieces (CL 10).



However, something else is made clear by this historical fact, namely, that it was among women that the penitential movements had most of their effect. Throughout central Italy, as with the Beguines of the Rhineland, there was a spontaneous growth of movements for and among women. These mostly involved women of noble or landed family background, called to a *radical life* for God, to be lived in solitude or often in a convent. The significance of the Beguines and similar movements is only now beginning to be properly understood.

Therefore it is understandable that ascetic motivations (self-denial and mortification) characterized all three of the Franciscan orders. Yet, it is not asceticism that lies at their center, as we saw in Unit 1. The emphasis of the Franciscan charism is above all a positive one: witness to a God who became human and who makes human beings more fully themselves.

In addition to the history of the penitential movements, the sociopolitical situation in Assisi also played a decisive role in the way Francis and Clare came to live their vocation.



“When I was still in sin” (Test I)

In his *Testament*, Francis divides his life into two quite distinct phases: his life in sin and his life of penance. This division not only tells us something of Francis' own story, but also tells us why the lifestyles of society and of the Franciscan orders seemed to contradict each other's values. They stood out against each other through what Francis called the exodus from the world. Francis understood his own later life as a definite reversal of the life which he had previously led in the town of Assisi.

In order to understand the fascination Francis exerted on so many people, we need to examine the nature of his life in sin. In descriptions of the early life of Francis, we are often tempted to understand the state of sin in terms of individual sins committed. Primarily, however, it is meant to express a general state of sinfulness, a complete reliance on social values and relationships which remained untouched by God, Jesus or the Gospel. However much urban life was shaped by the existence of churches and priests, or attendance at divine service, the majority of inhabitants, in the last reckoning, were more concerned with feathering their own nests, without reference to external authority or morals.

The world in which Francis at first participated, and from which he later distanced himself, can be characterized by the following traits:

- Urban development was leading to mass abandonment of rural life, as is still happening today in many parts of the world. Technological discoveries were on the increase at that time, trade was blossoming. This encouraged the growth of towns and meant prosperity for many. However, such change still affected only a small part of the population.

- The majority of the people lived at subsistence level, with only the bare necessities for existence. Countless people suffered poverty and misery. Cruellest of all was the fate of the

lepers, who were forced to live outside the town boundaries. There was even a religious service formalizing their exclusion from society.

- With the rise of the towns, there arose a feeling of urban self-confidence which at the same time signified social change; the basis of



society was no longer the land, but towns, no longer the nobility (in Assisi known as the *maiores* or great ones), but the rich merchants (*minores*, or little ones). Authority was no longer bestowed by the grace of God understood as being appointed for life on the basis of familial ties and descent, but by the will of the people, appointed by election for a fixed term. There was



no more feudal rule, or power derived from ownership of land and reliant on a mutual loyalty between master and servant. Instead, power was now held by the citizens. This fundamental change in the structure of society was a painful process strung out over many years. In Assisi it led to revolution, civil war and captivity (including the young Francis in the war against neighboring Perugia).

- In 1203, the Peace Charter was signed between the nobility and people of Assisi. It reaffirmed government by the nobility, but in a milder form. Directly after this, in 1203-4, many of the decisive events in Francis' life were to take place: his illness, his encounter with the leper, his experience in the church of San Damiano, and the rift with his father.

- In 1210, a Freedom Charter was presented in Assisi, and political weight shifted to the advantage of the common people. At roughly the same time Francis, accompanied by eleven followers, placed his own freedom charter before the Pope; this was the Rule of Life which the brothers had voluntarily promised to live by (*Rule of 1221*).



We know that in the earlier part of his life, Francis was part of and affected by this process of change. Later, however, he began to go his own way.

Compassion

Francis linked his conversion with one quite distinct, concrete experience: his encounter with a leper. He recognized that Assisi was essentially a culture without compassion, and that the social system in which he had grown up was not based on Gospel values. The world in which he had been raised was not rooted in neighborliness but in money, prestige, power, and in the domination of the rich over the poor. So Francis distanced himself from the world and began to develop his alternative culture of compassion (see Test 1-5).

Francis discovered Jesus Crucified, in the throngs of lepers. He discovered the Gospel in the poor, and set himself alongside the great mass of beggars and casual laborers. By doing so, he revealed a brotherly and sisterly Church, and tried to live out its message in the company of the poor and the lepers. This Church was called to continue in the three orders that originated with Francis.

We will not go further into the nature of Francis' alternative way of living at this point. It will be examined in greater detail in later units.





At first, Francis remained for a long while alone, despised, pursued by his father, thought to be mad. Later, however, brothers began to arrive, and then sisters. After ten or fifteen years, numberless people had been carried away with enthusiasm by the Franciscan alternative way of living. Two texts illustrate Francis' effectiveness:

Men ran, and women too ran, clerics hurried and religious hastened, that they might see and hear the holy man of God who seemed to all to be a man of another world...Many of the people both noble and common, cleric and lay, impelled by divine inspiration, began to come to St. Francis, wanting to carry on the battle constantly under his discipline and under his leadership. All of these the holy man of God, like a plenteous river of heavenly grace, watered with streams of gifts; ...he was an excellent craftsman, and according to his plan, rule, and teaching, proclaimed before all, the Church is being renewed in both sexes, and the threefold army of those to be served is triumphing. To all he gave a norm of life, and he showed in truth the way of salvation in every walk of life (1Cel 36ff).

Even more important than the above text, written in 1228 by the Franciscan Thomas of Celano, is the eyewitness account of Jacques de Vitry. It is all the more valuable for being written from the point of view of an outsider and dates from as early as 1216.

A great number of men and women...renounced all their possessions and left the world for the love of Christ: Friars Minor and Sisters Minor as they were called. They are held in great esteem by the Lord Pope and the cardinals. They are totally detached from temporal things and have but one passion to which they devote all their efforts: to snatch from the vanities of the world souls that are in danger and to prevail upon them to imitate their example. Thanks be to God, they have already achieved important successes and made numerous conquests. Those who have heard them say to their friends: Come along! and so one group brings another. As for the brothers themselves, they live the life of the primitive church of which it is written: The whole group of believers was united, heart and

soul. During the day they go into the cities and villages, giving themselves over to the active life of the apostolate; at night, they return to their hermitage or withdraw into solitude to live the contemplative life.



The women live near the cities in various hospices and refuges; they live a community life from the work of their hands, but accept no income. The veneration that the clergy and laity show toward them is a burden to them, and it chagrins and annoys them.

Once a year, in a place on which they agree, the men of this order assemble to rejoice in the Lord and eat together and they profit greatly from these gatherings. They seek the counsel of upright and virtuous men; they draw up and promulgate holy laws and submit them for approval to the Holy Father, then they disband again for a year and go about through Lombardy, Tuscany, Apulia and Sicily (Jacques de Vitry, Letter of 1216).



The second founding figure of this new spiritual movement is Clare of Assisi. The great 19th century Franciscan scholar Sabatier said of her:

The figure of Clare is not merely a reproduction of Francis, founder of the order. She appears as one of the noblest women in all of history. One has the impression that she remained behind the scenes out of humility. But others do not regard her in the right light, perhaps because of needless caution, or perhaps even because they are affected by rivalry between different Franciscan foundations. Without such reticence, Clare would be numbered among the greatest women in history.

The first thing to be said about Clare is that she had a clear sense of the shape of her own spirituality before she ever came in contact with Francis. Independently of him, she chose a radical life of penance for herself.

As soon as Francis heard of her he sought contact with her. He told her of the good Jesus and she followed him. She allied herself with the Franciscan movement in 1212. In a dream, she saw Francis as a mother at whose breast she drank, in the words of a witness for her canonization (Proc 3. and 12. witness).

While Francis belonged to the *minores*, the rich merchant guild of the people of Assisi, Clare was a member of the *maiores*, the noble class. There must have been a kind of conspiracy among the women of this noble family; once Clare was established at San Damiano, her blood sisters Agnes and Beatrice, her mother Ortolana and another relative, Pacifica di Guelfuccio, all followed her there. For these Sisters Minor, as they were initially known in analogy to the First Order brothers (they later gained the official name of Poor Ladies of San Damiano), Francis wrote a rule which Clare adopted into the text of her own Rule.

When the Blessed Father saw that we had no fear of poverty, hard work, suffering, shame, or the contempt of the world, but that, instead, we regarded such things as great delights, moved by compassion he wrote for us a form of life as follows: 'Since by divine inspiration you have made yourselves daughters and servants of the most high King, the heavenly Father, and have taken the Holy Spirit as your spouse, choosing to live according to the perfection of the Holy Gospel, I resolve and

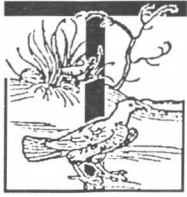
promise for myself and for my brothers always to have that same loving care and special solicitude for you as [I have] for them (RCI 6:2).



Until this time, this way of life was unknown in the Church. Clare had to struggle for decades to establish her claim to the Franciscan way of life, and in particular to the absolute poverty which lay at its heart. By ecclesiastical law, women's communities could not ordinarily gain official recognition if they had no material possessions or endowments. Furthermore, the only recognized model for religious women was a Benedictine monastic lifestyle which predated the Franciscan ideals, and to which the Church thought it had to bind the sisters.

Clare of Assisi, a highly educated woman (she had a sound knowledge of classical Latin, for example), finally achieved her ideal of an uncompromised Franciscan form of life after a long and stubborn fight with the Roman Curia. She produced her own *Rule* encompassing this ideal, thus becoming the first woman in history to have written a *Rule* for an order of women. She received Papal recognition of her *Rule* only a short time before her death.





he Three Orders

Initially, then, Francis and Clare were an integral part of a wider penitential movement which helped to form their ideas and spirituality. However, their personalities were so strong that they were able to move away from that initial position and develop their own paths. Out of their appeal to others emerged three orders, which Thomas of Celano was able to describe, even very early on, as an historical unity. The picture, then, is that of a many-faceted movement made up of people who wanted to share in the alternative way offered by St. Francis, and who had found their identity, a meaning for their lives, and an individual style through their encounter with him. In the words of Celano:



Many put aside worldly cares and gained knowledge of themselves from the life and teaching of the most blessed Francis, and they longed to attain love and reverence for their Creator (1Cel. 37).

The three Orders will now be briefly described.

The Franciscan Third Order

2.1.

If we take the penitential movement to be the starting point for both Francis and Clare, it is possible to trace a direct line of development to the Franciscan Penitents' Order, as the Third Order was originally called. The other two orders are not merely derivatives but consolidations of this Order of Penitents.

From very early on, fascination for Francis had its effects on the penitents groups. It is not without significance that the Third Order of St. Francis has its origins in Greccio where the Crib ceremony took place and the religion of the Incarnation was revealed. Francis often said to the brothers,

Great cities do not contain so many converts to the life of penance as there are in Greccio, which is only a little provincial town.



The story continues:

For often, when the brothers there sang the evening office, as brothers in many places did then, the people of the little town, both great and small, came out of their homes and stood in the street outside and answered the brothers in a loud voice: Praise to the Lord our God! Even little children who could hardly speak gave praise to God as best they could whenever they saw the brothers (LP 34).

The Third Order was concerned with people who had been through an experience of conversion, and who wanted to turn once again to God in their daily lives. They recognized him and bore witness to him as the Lord of their lives; they practiced their faith in God in their homes, as well as in their families, their work, and in all their social relationships. Francis gave these people a kind of rule in the *Letter to the Faithful*.

The history of this letter is especially interesting because there are two different texts. The first text (1st *Letter*) is basically no more than a sermon on penance. The Second *Letter* goes further, with spiritual admonitions and concrete guidelines. They are deepened by an introduction which is theologically and spiritually impressive (it could be compared to the Prologue to John's Gospel). In Unit 1 we focused on this letter for its insight into the meaning of Franciscan vocation. We have already made reference to the *Memoriale*, the statute which Francis himself did not write, but which lays down the organizational and juridical principles regulating such a form of life.



This statute is significant inasmuch as its central emphasis is the exhortation to refuse military service. Here we see the subversive potential of the Third Order, which could also be of relevance today. Based on this statute, penitents could join together in monthly meetings; these were, as far as we can now ascertain, led by lay people. Dominicans, Franciscans and other religious oversaw their spiritual well-being. Later on, the autonomous lay groups had to surrender leadership to the religious orders. For the Third Order, this was an unnatural expression of their distinctive values.

The principle of lay leadership was intrinsic to the Third Order and enshrined in its documentation. It remained decisive for the developing history of the Third Order. The clericalized Church of this time intended to bring all movements under its control and into a position of dependence on central clerical authority. The clergy had very

little confidence in independent lay communities and mistrusted them.

The *Memoriale* was superseded in 1289 by the *Rule of Nicholas IV*. The entire penitential movement was placed under the auspices of the Franciscans. Their juridical and spiritual links were thereby strengthened and clarified, and they were officially referred to as the Franciscan Third Order. Incidentally, every group which had followed the *Memoriale*, but had taken inspiration from other orders rather than from Francis, now founded their own Third Order, for example the Third Order of St. Dominic.



From an historical point of view the Third Order has taken many forms with distinctive expressions. Here are some distinctions between the different expressions of the Third Order:

► The Original Form: the “converted in their own homes”

The best-known member of this category is probably Francis's friend, Brother Jacoba Frangipani di Settesole. Francis often visited this noblewoman when he was in Rome. She rushed to be with him on his deathbed and had the privilege of being buried near Francis's own grave (3 Ce1 37-39). Blessed Luchesius di Poggibonsi (d.1260) also deserves mention. Together with his wife Bonadonna, he was converted and dedicated himself to caring generously for the poor.

► Recluses

These were women and men whose lives of penance led them to shut themselves up inside towers or city walls in imitation of Francis's withdrawal from the world. Notable among these was Margaret of Cortona (d.1297) who, after a life apart from God, turned to wanting to know God alone, and thus became an extraordinary witness to her contemporary world. It was almost recognized as obligatory for every medieval town to have its own recluse or hermit, to whom the townspeople could entrust their sorrows and on whose intercession they could rely.

► Sisterhoods

Originally, these were groups of women who opted for a communal lifestyle. They called themselves by various names, such as The Collection and The Sisters of the Forest. At first, they had no connection with Franciscan spirituality. Slightly later came the Beguines, who, in accordance with the Council of Vienna (1311-1312) placed themselves under ecclesiastical control and adopted, among other things, the Third Order Rule. In time they were also obliged to take on enclosure, thereby becoming more

strictly monastic in lifestyle. Many of the sisters' communities which are in existence today have a similar origin. Some may still be living under enclosure; others may have reformed themselves into active congregations.

► The Regular Men's Orders

The men's communities began in much the same way, but their later development was along very different lines. They adopted the rule of the Third Order, but instead of placing themselves under a vow of enclosure, they aligned themselves with the First Order. This way of life, which received ecclesiastical approval in 1323, exists today in the form of a distinct Franciscan order for men, separate from the First Order, and with its own Minister General (TOR and OSF).

► Active Congregations

Even as late as the 15th and 16th centuries, it was impossible for women who chose to live communally in religiously motivated groups for the purpose of engaging in areas of social need (e.g. by nursing, teaching and other educational work) to avoid being entangled in ecclesiastical regulation. Church law forced them to live in enclosure. It was only in the 17th century and the years that followed, that individual congregations, inspired by Franciscan ideals, began to take on active social tasks again. In the 19th century there was a sudden explosion in numbers of such communities. In considering this vast number, it might be interesting to inquire about their common denominator. In reality, each of these different expressions of the Franciscan spirit achieved something of significance in its time. They began many projects and there remain many witnesses to their lively energy. Many of the communities have left a lasting impression on their home towns, regions or even on a whole country. However, because in the past such communities tended to live entirely independently of one another, rather than turning toward each other in mutual recognition, a sizable proportion of their potential for effective action was lost.



The Franciscan Third Order in the Catholic Church today takes two forms:

■ The Third Order Regular (TOR/OSF)

Under this title are 22 communities of men and 382 of women (both congregations and institutes) united by a common *Rule*. This *Rule*, ratified on December 8, 1982 by Pope John Paul II, is more Franciscan, both in its use of language and in its spirit, than any previous example. The communities, however, remain autonomous, loosely bound together by their common commitment to the three vows of poverty, chastity and obedience, and to a state of life based on the evangelical counsels. In their actual form of life, therefore, they are more closely related to the First and Second Orders than to the Secular Third Order. There is even a range of strictly enclosed orders for women which form part of the TOR. The abbreviation OSF (Order of St. Francis) is widely used as a common denominator of identification.

■ The Secular Franciscan Order (SFO)

Originally of enormous sociopolitical significance, the Order of Penitents gradually became a conventionally pious order of men and women. Pope Leo XIII set great hopes on a renewed Third Order of Franciscans. To achieve this, he gave them a new *Rule*. The purpose of the secular Third Order of St. Francis, in the authoritative view of the Pope, was not only to act as the spiritual under-pinning of the Church, and indeed of all public life, but also to communicate and to realize the social/ethical message of the Church, and thus to act as a counter to Marxism. The Third Order was, consequently, gripped by an exciting new dynamism.

In France it was involved in the *Semaines Sociales*, thereby contributing to the formulation of sociopolitical ideals. Unfortunately, this new dynamic was swiftly brought to a halt once again by the Church's intervention. Under Pius X the Third Order was forbidden to become so actively involved in such matters. Because of this, an opportunity was lost. In many countries the

Third Order sank back into insignificance.

On another level, however, something new and promising has been taking place in the last decade. Groups of secular communities associated with a First Order friary in their locality have linked themselves into a national movement. Eventually the process extended across the world and Third Order officers were appointed with the authority to sign certain documents alongside the Ministers General.

At the present moment, the chances are good that the rediscovery of incarnational faith will have an impact on every area of secular life. The new *Rule*, completely revised, may aid and contribute to this process. Up until modern times, groups felt bound by the *Memoriale* and the *Rule of Leo XIII*, and were thus marked by a stark, unworldly asceticism. The new *Rule*, ratified by Pope Paul VI on June 24, 1978, contains the true Franciscan spirit through and through.

A member of the secular Franciscan community in North America comments:

Paul's new rule makes a clear call to the whole Franciscan community to be part of the vanguard of evangelization (Bahia, 1983; 17). Apart from the many aspects of missionary outlook which they share with Franciscans in religious orders and their common commitment to preach the Kingdom through witness and example, the secular Franciscan Order has its own distinctive mission, alongside other lay organizations. They are called to renew the world order (Decree on Lay Apostolate). The struggle for renewal to bring the heart and spirit of Christ into the every day lives of people in the world, like yeast in sour dough is given a Franciscan emphasis through its concentration on areas of apostolic activity. Their apostolate is to promote the holy state of family life, to value work as a gift offered for the improvement of humanity, and to establish themselves as a vanguard for justice and peace in human action through courageous initiatives, as well as to conserve the environment, i.e., to protect and maintain the whole of creation, animate and inanimate alike.



The First Order: The Order of Friars Minor (OFM)

2.2.

The early Franciscans, or Penitents of Assisi, were radical wandering preachers. In 1209-10 they traveled to Rome, taking with them a document in which they had put down some words of Scripture which constituted the foundation of their way of life. It also contained a few rules by which their common life was to be structured. This was the basis of their separation from the wider penitential movement and the beginning of their existence as an independent Franciscan brotherhood. The *Rule of Life*, given oral assent by the Pope, was updated year by year. By 1221, this Earlier Rule" (*Regula Non Bullata*) had become so vague in application that it needed reworking. The revised version known as the Later Rule" was ratified by a papal bull in 1223 (*Regula Bullata*) and is still in use today.

It is important to note, however, that despite the *Rule*, it was Francis himself who remained the inspiring force of the brothers common ideal and their formative influence (Jordan of Giano, 17).

The brothers lived out a constant tension: on the one hand they did hard physical labor, begging when necessary, and the preaching of penance; on the other hand they engaged in prayer, contemplation and living together as brothers. This tension, brought to unity in the person of Francis, led through history to the many reformed expressions of the Franciscan movement, which remain lively today. Essentially, the tension persists between two disparate yet connected elements, namely, God and people.

1. Turning to God in prayer and contemplation which is bound up with radical poverty and complete renunciation of possessions. The intention here is to live under the same social conditions as those who are forced to live in poverty. Poverty is thus an example of solidarity lived out to the full.

2. Turning to people and to the world in solidarity, combining closeness to people, living in towns, providing spiritual and social assistance, with the means necessary for effective action.



The history of the Friars Minor could be described in terms of a pendulum, constantly swinging between the two extremes. Renewal or reform movements in Franciscan history have been given various names: Spirituals, Bernardines, Dicalced, Alcantarines, Recollects and many others. The three orders in existence today grew out of this history with all its tensions. In 1517 Pope Leo X tried to clarify relationships by separating one single order, headed by its Minister General, into two independent groups. Soon after that, a third group came into existence. This action on the Pope's part was a mistake, causing the pendulum to start swinging once more and yet other new groups to emerge as offshoots. Pope Leo XIII later led the groups back to unity. So it is that we now have three independent, self-governing men's communities, each following the Rule of 1223 and looking to Francis as founder:



➡ **Order of Friars Minor Conventual:
(OFMConv)**

This is the smallest of the three Orders, also known as grey Friars or black Franciscans (because of their black coloured habit), maintains a presence today in all five continents.

➡ **Order of Friars Minor:
(OFM)**

This order, the largest of the three, is known to the general public simply as the Franciscans. In 1517 the order became separate from the Conventuals. The new groupings which emerged as a consequence were united under the title OFM by Leo XIII in what is known as the Leonine Union.

➡ **Order of Friars Minor Capuchin:
(OFMCap)**

Between 1521-28, through a painful process of change, there emerged from OFM the commu-

nity of the Capuchins, whose original intent was to live a life of pure contemplation. (The name Capuchins derives from their long pointed hoods.) Soon, however, they were re-establishing themselves in public life, even becoming involved in politics.

New departures and splits in the three orders show that even today the pendulum has not yet stopped moving. It should also be noted at this point that this history of change and reform had a similar effect on the women's communities and on the Third Order Regular as well. Affiliation to one or other of these movements is described as Franciscan obedience, a reference to the style and rule of life of each group rather than to the vow of obedience itself.

During the last few decades, the Third Order Regular has established its autonomy; it now exists independently of any of the individual orders, but this does not affect the spiritual bond and mutual cooperation between them.



The Second Order: The Poor Clares (OSC)

2.3.

In the year 1263, Pope Urban IV declared that all Poor Ladies of San Damiano (that is to say, all sisters who, to a greater or lesser extent, looked to Clare as their inspiration) should be known as Poor Clares.



The unifying name, however, obscures the extremely stormy history of this Order. Clare wanted to follow Francis, who gave her a Rule of her own as a guide. Because of the social context in which she lived, it was impossible for Clare to live in the same way that Francis did; for example, the life of a wandering preacher would hardly have been feasible for a woman. Poverty, however, was of great importance to her. Thus, in 1216 she formulated the so-called Privilege of Poverty which she later asked to

have ratified by successive Popes. The life of the Clares was in some ways similar to that of the brothers who lived in hermitages. The focus was unmistakably placed on lasting commitment to God through prayer, the Office, and contemplation.

For Cardinal Hugolino, however, the legal and spiritual basis of the San Damiano community was inadequate. He observed, moreover, that similar communities were being founded throughout Italy. So he founded the Order of the Poor Ladies of San Damiano, including in it several spontaneously emergent women's communities whose inspiration actually owed nothing to either Clare or Francis. He established the order on a Benedictine monastic footing and wrote a new *Rule* for it (1218-1220). At its heart was the concept of total enclosure: more than half the *Rule* was concerned with stipulations about the minutiae of enclosure.

It is astonishing what mystical depths Clare managed to attain despite the imposition of this completely unfranciscan rule. It is possible to surmise, in fact, that she followed it only in externals rather than in spirit. Furthermore, in 1234 Clare built up links with Agnes of Prague, who was struggling to establish the order along Franciscan lines. Pope Gregory IX (formerly Cardinal Hugolino) took absolutely no notice. He referred to the *Rule* which Francis had intended for the sisters as baby food, inadequate for grown women. It was only in 1247, when Innocent IV produced a new rule for them, that there was any sign that their efforts had gained any notice. But even he had misjudged matters. Clare determinedly resisted his intention of forcing possessions on the sisters. After that, she began to write her own rule. She based this on the brothers *Rule* of 1223, thus emphasizing the spiritual unity between the First and Second Orders.

However, in retaining a purely contemplative form of life, she adapted some portions of



Hugolino's rule and the freer Franciscan ideals to her own purpose. The *Rule* she wrote is extremely unusual in that it is fundamentally shaped by her own spiritual experience. Calling on her own close relationship with Francis, it stresses her insistence on absolute poverty as the way forward. It has already been established that she stressed the democratic nature of communal living far more explicitly than Francis, who himself was the brothers' model.

It was just before Clare's death that her *Rule* gained the approval of Church authorities. However, few communities were permitted to follow it. Pope Urban IV, who gave the name Poor Clares indiscriminately to all the orders of Poor Ladies of San Damiano, wrote yet another *Rule* for the majority of these (by the time of Clare's death there were at least 150 communities looking to her as their central inspiration), which ensured that they remained untouched by the true nature and expression of her spirituality. Clare's finest hour was yet to come: today, the majority of communities follow the *Rule* she wrote.

The reforms which overtook the First Order also had their effect on the Clares. Especially memorable is Coletta of Corbie (d.1447). Her efforts to

renew the Franciscan orders were successful among communities of men and women alike, and the movement which bears her name is still part of the family of Clares.

Two separate types of Clares are distinguished:

Damianites:

Their basis is the *Rule of St. Clare* of 1253. The majority of Clare communities these days follow this rule.

Urbanites:

Poor Clares who follow Pope Urban IV's *Rule* of 1263; about 80 communities altogether.

Behind the difference in name there is in fact a relatively high degree of uniformity. Basically, each convent is independent of the others, though those under the same rule form loose federations. Reform movements and expressions retain significance and new forms of living according to the spirit of Clare are still making an appearance, for example, the Poor Clare sisters who feel called to live a hermit life within their *Rule*.

The Franciscan Family

2.4.

Altogether, there is evidence of a very great number of communities past and present who have drawn inspiration from Francis and Clare. According to the sources we have already examined, it is clear that Francis and Clare understood the three orders as one family, whose many members shared a common bond. Francis, in his *Rule* for the sisters (See Form Viv 1; 2 Cel 204) emphasizes that "*he and the brothers see the sisters as their own flesh and blood (tamquam de ipsis) and are bound to them in loving care and special concern.*" Clare's final blessing was not just on her sisters, but on the brothers as well. When the Pope wanted to separate Clare and her Sisters from the broth-

erhood, Clare responded by going on hunger strike (CL 37). Right up to the time of her death, she passionately lived out her commitment and adherence to the Franciscan charism: her letters, her *Rule* and her *Testament* are all full of this passion for unity between the First and Second Orders. As far as the Third Order is concerned, Francis wanted to reach out personally to everyone. When he was no longer able to do so himself, he used letters to do it for him (1 EpFid, 2 EpFid).

Among the different groupings that make up the Franciscan family today, this awareness of a common bond is growing. There is a sense of belonging to a family which is growing. This





2. Let us therefore live in community of spirit as brothers and sisters and by mutual cooperation willingly promote studies and common projects concerning Franciscan life and activity.
3. We should cultivate a special relationship with our sisters who profess the contemplative life, offer every day a sacrifice of praise, seek to hold fast to God in solitude and silence, and extend the Church by a hidden apostolic fruitfulness. When there is question of association with some monastery of Capuchin Poor Clares in accordance with canon 614 and the following canons, the General Minister with his Definitory acting collegially shall decide having heard the views of the major superior. Regarding an associated monastery the major superior has genuine power as determined by the Constitutions of the said sisters. Likewise we should be united in fraternal affection with those religious institutes which are spiritually united to our Order.
4. We should always fulfill our duties of love and friendship towards our parents, relatives, benefactors, helpers and others who belong to our spiritual family and commend them to God in our community prayers.

§ 95

new awareness finds concrete expression in the reworking of the constitutions of each branch of the family (see Lesson Unit 3).

To take just one of many examples, the 1982 *Capuchin Constitutions* show their spiritual unity with other communities:

§ 94

1. By God's design a rich diversity of religious groups has developed for the good of the Church; this same variety also flourishes in one and the same Franciscan spiritual family, in such a way that the charism of our Founder spreads and makes its influence felt through many brothers and sisters, including those of the Secular Order.

1. Within the Franciscan family the Secular Franciscan Order or Fraternity holds a special place. It shares in and promotes a genuine Franciscan spirit and it must be regarded as necessary for the completion of the Franciscan charism.
2. In this Order the brothers and sisters, moved by the Holy Spirit, are spurred on to work for the perfection of charity in their secular state by professing to live the gospel in the spirit of St Francis.
3. The Secular Franciscan Order is united to our Order by its origin, history and sharing of our life and it has been entrusted to our care by the Holy See.
4. Hence the brothers should be eager to show a fraternal spirit towards members of the Secular



Order, support them by their example in fidelity to the gospel way of life and effectively promote the Order itself both among the diocesan clergy and among the laity.

5. *Our superiors have authority to establish fraternities of the Secular Franciscans in all our houses and also elsewhere, the requirements of law being observed. They should further a true vital interchange between the fraternities of our Order and the fraternities of the Secular Order.*



6. *The Minister should make sure that constant and diligent spiritual and pastoral assistance be given to the Secular Fraternity through united and coordinated efforts with other Franciscan families, in accordance with its own legislation and that of universal law, especially by suitable brothers assigned to that ministry.*

7. *The brothers shall willingly provide spiritual assistance to this Order. Always bearing in mind its secular character, they shall not interfere with its internal government, except in cases mentioned in law.*

8. *As a sign of shared responsibility, the governing body of the respective fraternity of the Secular Franciscan Order shall be consulted both in the appointment of assistants and in the establishment of fraternities.*

9. *The brothers shall also foster and spiritually assist all associations, above all of young people, which cultivate the spirit of St Francis. Our houses should become centers of fraternal gatherings and inspiration for all, whether clergy or laity, who wish to follow Christ's footsteps under the leadership of St Francis.*

Church and Franciscan Sources

Scripture	Mt 18: 1-4; Jn 17: 2-26; Gal 6:2
Church Documents	
Franciscan Sources	EpLeo 2; FormViv 2,10; RCI 6:2; TestCl 2ff; EpFid; 2 EpFid; RegNB 2,5,7; Test 1-5, 14; LP 34; 1Cel 6ff; 2 Cel 16ff; 3 Cel 37ff; Fior 10; Jord 17
Inter-Franciscan Documents	Clare, The New Woman, 1
OFM, OFMCap, OFMConv.	OFM General Constitutions, Art. 55-63; Statutes Ch 94ff; OFM Conv Constitutions 1
Poor Clares	
Third Order Regular	
Secular Franciscans	
Others, Supplements	

Each Community may add further items.



Exercises



Exercise

In Assisi in 1982, Pope John Paul II had the following to say about Francis and Clare:

It is truly difficult to separate these two names, Francis and Clare: each a phenomenon, each a legend. When you celebrate Clares feast day, do it with great solemnity. It is hard to separate these two. Between them lies something very deep, something that may only be understood with the help of the values that come from Franciscan, Christian, evangelical spirituality, and not by human criteria. This twin name, Francis Clare, is a reality only to be understood in Christian, spiritual, even heavenly terms but at the same time it is a reality of this earth, this town, this church.

It all took shape here. We are not dealing with pure spirit, for these were not purely spirits: they were persons, body and spirit. But in the living tradition of the Church and of all Christianity, of humankind, it is not merely the legend which remains to us. There remains also the way in which Francis saw his sister, the way in which Francis entered into marriage with Christ: he saw himself as her mirror image, as the image of the mystical Bride of Christ, from whom he took the form of his sanctity.

He saw himself as a brother, a poor man after the holy image of this true Bride of Christ, in whom he also saw the image of Mary, the perfect bride of the Holy Spirit.

This is the place in which pilgrims have come together for eight centuries, to see this godly legend St. Clare, at St. Francis' side a legend whose influence on the life of the Church, as well as on the history of Christian spirituality, has been enormous.

Now, in our own time, it is necessary for us to rediscover St. Clare for ourselves, because she has such meaning for the life of the church. The rediscovery of this charisim and this calling is much needed. The rediscovery of the holy legend of Francis and Clare is very necessary too. (Clare of Assisi – the New Woman, 1)

Questions

1. How does the Pope, in this passage, see the relationship between Francis and Clare?
2. How do you respond to his view?
3. How would you describe the relationship between Francis and Clare?



Exercise

Underline the Statements in the Capuchin Constitutions (Unit 2.4 above), which characterize the relationship between the different orders within the Franciscan family.



Questions

1. Rank the statements in order of importance.
2. Look for similar statements in your own Rule or Constitutions.





Exercise

Read Francis' Second Letter to All the Faithful
(2EpFid 19-62).

Questions

1. What constitutes the missionary dimension of the letter?
2. Using this letter as a source, elaborate on what separates the Third Order from the First and Second Orders?
3. What do all three Orders have in common?



Exercise

Examine the following text from Africa:

The characteristic marks of the society in which the Franciscan movement had its origin can be seen today in most African countries, which are finding themselves in a state of profound and rapid change. Take the following examples:

In addition to a plutocratic oligarchy (its predominance, the result of illegal dealings between the representatives and western capitalism, of a few very wealthy families), there is also an elitist oligarchy directing revolutionary parties. Both of these powerful groups share the distinguishing characteristics of the ruling classes in 13th century Italy: pride, greed and the desire for power which was achieved at the expense of the poor.

The phenomenon of urbanization is becoming ever more widespread. The country people, and in particular the young, are migrating daily by the thousands to the big cities, hoping to find a better life there. The reality fails to live up to their expectations. Instead of a better life, the city can offer them nothing but unemployment, promiscuity, a life of crime, prostitution and misery...

African women, traditionally held in renown for their maternal loving care, hard work, diligence and modesty, find themselves in an urban setting as the helpless victims of exploitation by a corrupt ruling class. They are often forced into prostitution, a foreign import which is resorted to in order to satisfy the instincts of tourists from overseas.

Just as in Francis' time the Church hierarchy was not in a position to save the world from its own corruption, today it is equally unable to alter the situation solely by means of good intentions or theoretical reforms. In the face of such a situation, Africa is in urgent need of a new Francis, or at least of his spiritual family, called as it is to further his mission. We regret the absence of any trace of the Franciscan charism in the ingredients of the modern African urban mentality; all the more powerfully so because we are so vitally aware of how we need its healing effects on a mentality which seems dead set on losing itself in degrading materialism. Most especially we regret the absence of the secular Third Order, which might be able to have an effect where neither the First Order nor the TOR would have entry or influence

that is to say, in the secular corridors of power. Many of those in government were educated in convent schools, but are no longer under any kind of religious influence. If there were any possibility of demonstrating to them the transforming power of the Franciscan spirit, they might be moved by it and become servants of their people rather than their exploiters and oppressors.

In other words, we want the Franciscan family to have a much more visible, more constant presence in Africa, in order that we might act as signposts to the ruling classes, stand alongside the people in the

poor quarters of our big cities, and help the people of the country areas to a greater level of awareness (Francois-Marie Lufuluabo, OFM, Zaire; Bishop Alfonso Nteka, OFM Cap, Angola).

Question

In your opinion, are the authors justified in drawing a parallel between prevailing conditions in 13th century Assisi and those in some modern-day African states?

Applications



Application

The secular Third Order founded by Francis brought the practice of gospel life (once seen as confined only to the monasteries) out into the world, into the homes and families of contemporary society. The Third Order Regular, on the other hand, focused the new drives of a changing world in their religious life. This cycle, however, should not be seen as a closed circle, but rather as a spiral out into an open future. As long as there are generous-hearted women and men ready to follow in Francis' footsteps by living out and interpreting Christ's Gospel in their daily lives amid the frequent changes of our world, Francis' movement will continue to be a charge of spiritual energy in any kind of society, able to include and speak to people in every age.



Questions

1. Is the viewpoint of this text still valid today?
2. Which branches of the Franciscan family are near where you live, or in your country?



2. 



Application

It is evident, from the rapid increase in numbers among those who sought to imitate Clare, that the people of Assisi and other Italian towns saw the value of her witness and that of her sisters. By the 16th century they had grown to as many as 600 convents and around 30,000 sisters.

Question

How do the Clares live out their missionary task as part of the Franciscan family?

3. 



Application

As discrimination against women is still widespread, we Franciscans have a valuable contribution to make towards altering this sad state of affairs. Francis left his spiritual family with three branches of equal standing. This teaches us that it is proper to treat all classes and conditions of persons equally. Our vocation allows us greater freedom when it comes to tackling the needs of our time. For example, as we work to change attitudes, values and systems which place no worth on women in a male society and to reassert their true value, we can look to Francis and Clare. From them we learn how beautiful mutual friendship between women and men can be and how it can lead to shared growth. They dared to be differ-

ent. Thus they became the forerunners of a cultural and religious renewal whose effects are still tangible today.

Questions

- What significance have women had in the history of the Franciscan movement
- for the spread of Franciscan ideas?
 - for faithfulness to the Franciscan charism?
 - for the emancipation of women?
 - for the missionary task of the church?

4. 



Application

Witnesses to the voices of Franciscan life from all over the world:

1. From Europe (England)

St. Francis was the exact opposite of an embittered Puritan. He was the happiest of all saints and did not wish to see long faces around him. He always rebuked brothers who displayed melancholy or discouragement. His Brothers were to be 'joculatores Dei', clowns of God, who



traveled throughout the world to announce the joy of the Good News. Sometimes, reports Thomas of Celano, I have seen him with my own eyes drawing a stick across his arm as if playing the violin, and singing praises to God in French (T. Okey, in his preface to *The Little Flowers of St Francis*, London 1910, p. XVIII).

2. From Europe (France)

The Second World War hit my inner life like a thunderbolt. I kept seeing St Francis more and more clearly before me. The world, set on self-destruction, seemed horrible to me, and slowly inside me there grew the conviction that the Gospel had failed. Christ himself asked what response he would get if he came back to earth. The souls he had touched, to which he had revealed himself, were like a faint sprinkling of cool water in this wild tempest of idiocy. Almost exactly half way between the first Christmas and this hell where men were tearing each other to pieces, another Christ had appeared: the Francis of Assisi I had known since my youth. But he too had failed... or had he? It only appeared so...He was convinced that salvation would come through the Gospel. The Gospel was eternity. The Gospel was just beginning. What were 20 centuries in the eyes of God? (J. Green, *Brother Francis*, Herder, Freiburg 1983, p.41 ff).

3. From Asia (Pakistan)

In the past, and even today, religion has not always been a force for freedom in the lives of Asian people. Instead, far more often, it has a legitimizing role: with its godly authority it sanctioned the existing power systems which in turn ensured religion a privileged position within society. In this way religion was actually prevented from exercising its true critical and prophetic mission. In order to get back to the position of realizing its mission, religion needs to divest itself of all the trappings of power. The Asian friar minor can lend his own contribution to this process, in that he lives out the 'minoritas Dei' in solidarity with the poor, and thus helps religion in general and Christianity in particular to rediscover its original inspiration. ...Before he comes to this situation, however, he must live like Francis on the margins of the Church; as soon as the Church sanctions his actions he must take care that such official approval does not cause the movement to abandon its prophetic role, which is to keep calling the Church back to the ideal of the 'minoritas Dei', to radical poverty and the powerlessness of a crucified God (G. Hoerberichts OFM, *Identity as Asian Franciscans*, Mattli 1982, p.6).

4. From Africa (Malawi)

Franciscan life is not just a challenge to African women. It is at the same time a deep and wonderful encounter with many values which are rooted in their traditional culture; for example, a strong feel for community and sisterly living, simplicity, closeness to nature, and joy. May our holy Father Francis forgive us if we sometimes compete with him, like the grasshoppers in our garden, in our joyful celebration. We are so thankful to God that he has given us so great a founder, who through his extraordinary charism helps us like a gardener to develop the treasures of our own culture to the glory of God and for the good of all his Church. It is regrettable that some intellectuals speak in complicated and confusing ways about the challenges we present. The demands of Scripture are directed at all nations.

Jesus himself encountered grave opposition from among his own people. But he did not alter his message. I would like to end with the following: Let me remain an African woman in all aspects of my life, except in those which stand in contradiction to the Bible and to the ideals of our founder. Do not alter them for my sake because I am African. God will give me the grace to live them like anyone else, from any country, because with you I can overcome any obstacle and climb any wall (Ps. 18:30). With God on our side who can be against us? (Rom 8:31) [M. Clara OSC, *Challenges to Franciscan Sisters in the Third World*, Mattli 1982 p. 40].

5. From Latin America (Brazil)

Francis, with all your love for Holy Church, from which of her worst weaknesses would you seek to free her, so that she might recover her strength and farsightedness in order to bring about a fairer and more humane world, the sort we all dream of? If I am not mistaken, Francis, you would rectify three wrongs above all:

Biblical poverty, with which you wanted the Church to clothe itself, would free it once and for all from the concern with prestige; it should disentangle itself completely from the company of the powerful, in order to become more effective in intervention for the oppressed, who constitute two thirds of the worlds population on this eve of the 21st century.

You would do anything to stop us, men and women of the Church, from confusing worldly wisdom with the wisdom of God. Christ rejoiced when the Spirit gave Simon Peter the insight to recognize him as the Son of the living God. But Christ did not hesitate to call Peter Satan when worldly wisdom led Peter to wish to deflect his Master from death on the cross.



And you would make every sacrifice imaginable to ensure that the church of Christ immediately and genuinely put into action admirable encyclicals like 'Populorum Progressio' and God-given decisions like those of Vatican II (Dom Helder Camara, *The Great Challenge of Our Time: Brother of All People*, Werl 1976, p.113 ff).

Exercise

Compare the texts.

1. What conclusions do you draw from them?
2. What challenges emerge for the Franciscan family?

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Picture Credits



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Cover St. Francis. Fresco by Giotto, Upper Church. Basilica of St. Francis, Assisi.

P. 3 "The Warlis - Tribal paintings and Legends," from publication Lakshmi Lal (Ed.).

P. 5 Francis. Margaritone d'Arezzo.

P. 6 Clare receives the habit of poverty from Francis. Linocut by Sr. Clara Winkler, OSF.

P. 9 left column:
Woodcut, 17th century.

P. 9 right column:
Engraving by Adriaen Collaert based on sketchings by Adam van Oort (van Noort 1562-1641).

P. 10 Building Artisans in the Middle Ages. Woodcut, 15th century.

P. 11 Pope Innocent III blesses Francis and con-

firms his rule. Fresco by Benozzo Gozzoli, Montefalco, Church of St. Francis.

P. 12 Drawing by Sr. Veronica de Roza, FMM.

P. 13 St. Clare brings the light of contemplation to Africa. Drawing by the Poor Clares, Lusaka-Zambia.

P. 14 top:
Francis presents to the sisters and brothers of the three Orders the foundation charters. Woodcut by Wolf Traut, 1511.

P. 14 bottom:
Francis receives the merchant Luchesius and his wife into his lay movement whereby the Third Order begins. Penal by Bonaventura Belinghieri in the Franciscan Church at Pescia.

P. 15 St. Francis. Fresco by Margaritone d'Arezzo, 1216-1290, Sacro Speco, Subiaco.



- P. 18 Woocut, 17th century.
 P. 19 Capuchin with and without a cloak.

- P. 20 St. Clare. Basilica of St. Mary of the Angels.
 P. 22 Francis gives the first Order the Rule.

Abbreviations



Writings of Saint Francis

Adm	Admonitions
BenLeo	Blessing for Brother Leo
CantSol	Canticle of Brother Sun
EpAnt	Letter to St. Anthony
EpCler	Letter to the Clergy
1EpCust	First Letter to the Custodians
2EpCust	Second Letter to the Custodians
1EpFid	First Letter to the Faithful
2EpFid	Second Letter to the Faithful
EpLeo	Letter to Brother Leo
EpMin	Letter to a Minister
EpOrd	Letter to the Entire Order
EpRect	Letter to the Rulers of the Peoples
ExhLD	Exhortation to the Praises of God
ExhPD	Exhortation to the Poor Ladies
ExpPat	Prayer Inspired by the Our Father
FormViv	Form of Life for St. Clare
1Fragm	Fragment of other Rule I
2Fragm	Fragment of other Rule II
LaudDei	Praises of God
LaudHor	Praises to be said at all the Hours
OffPass	Office of the Passion
OrCruc	Prayer before the Crucifix
RegB	Later Rule
RegNB	Earlier Rule
RegEr	Rule for Hermitages
SalBVM	Salutation of the Blessed Virgin Mary
SalVirt	Salutation of the Virtues
Test	Testament
TestS	Testament written in Siena
UltVol	Last Will written for St. Clare
VPLaet	Dictate on True and Perfect Joy

Writings of Saint Clare

1LAg	First Letter to St. Agnes of Prague
2LAg	Second Letter to St. Agnes of Prague
3LAg	Third Letter to St. Agnes of Prague
4LAg	Fourth Letter to St. Agnes of Prague
LEr	Letter to Ermentrude of Bruges
RCI	Rule of St. Clare
TestCl	Testament of St. Clare
BCI	Blessing of St. Clare

Early Franciscan Sources

1Cel	First Life of St. Francis by Thomas of Celano
2Cel	Second Life of St. Francis by Thomas of Celano
3Cel	Treatise on the Miracles by Thomas of Celano
AP	Anonymous of Perugia
CL	Legend of Clare
CSD	Consideration of the Stigmata
Fior	Fioretti
JdV	Witness of Jacque de Vitry
Jord	Jordan of Giano's Chronicle
LM	Major Life of St. Francis by Bonaventure
LMin	Minor Life of St. Francis by Bonaventure
LP	Legend of Perugia
L3S	Legend of the Three Companions
Proc	Acts of the Process of Canonization of St. Clare
SC	Sacrum commercium
SP	Mirror of Perfection

