

Go,  
Rebuild  
My Church!

**Comprehensive  
Course on the  
Franciscan  
Mission  
Charism**



Franciscan  
Mission  
according to  
Modern Sources

Lesson Unit 9

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

### Editor and copyright:

International Planning Team of the CCFMC

### Chairperson:

Anton Rotzetter OFMCap

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

### Editorial Team:

Anton Rotzetter OFMCap, Maria Crucis Doka OSF,  
Margarethe Mehren OSF, Patricia Hoffmann,  
Othmar Noggler OFMCap, Andreas Müller OFM

### Graphics:

Jakina U. Wesselmann, Franciscan Mission Centre

### Project Address:

CCFMC Secretariat  
c/o Franciscan Mission Centre  
Albertus-Magnus-Str. 39  
D-53177 Bonn  
Federal Republic of Germany  
Tel. +49-228-953540  
Fax +49-228-9535440  
<http://www.mzf.org>



## Africa Edition

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



### Editorial Team:

Maria Aoko FSJ, Assumpta Hegarty OSF,  
Mario Debattista OFM, Heinrich Gockel OFM  
Matthew McCormack OSF

### Cover Design:

Kolbe Press

### Printed by:

Kolbe Press, PO Box 468, Limuru, Kenya

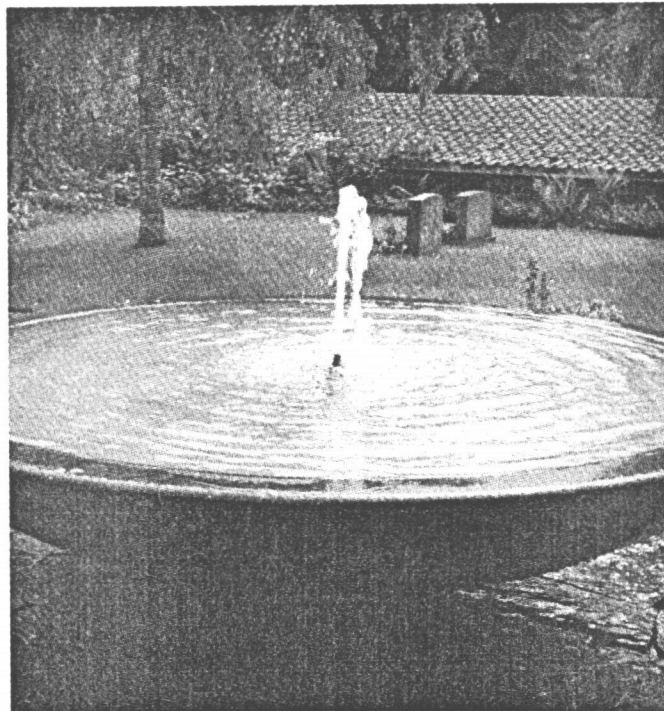


Page 2

Lesson Unit 9 Franciscan Mission according to Modern Sources

# Go, Rebuild My Church!

*A Comprehensive  
Course on the  
Franciscan Mission  
Charism*



## Franciscan Mission according to Modern Sources



### Lesson Unit 9



# Contents



## Franciscan Mission according to early Sources

### From the Sources

How each time, also our time, is God's time.

- A. Introduction
- B. Survey
- C. Information
  - 1. **Fundamental reasons for the Franciscan Mission**
    - 1.1 The Franciscan family as such is missionary
    - 1.2 Every brother and every sister is a Missionary
  - 2. **The Character of the Franciscan Mission**
    - 2.1 Basic Attitudes
    - 2.2 What is the meaning of "Peace and all good"?
  - 3. **Response to an objection**
- 4. **Practical Consequences**
  - 4.1 Expecting new prophetic and missionary initiatives
  - 4.2 Working for the unity of humanity
  - 4.3 Creating necessary structures for formation
  - 4.4 Stressing the importance of missionary awareness-building among the young brothers and sisters
- D. Exercises
- E. Applications
- F. Bibliography
- G. Picture Credits
- H. Abbreviations







How each time,  
also our time, is God's time

*Brother Egidius once heard the  
cry of a crow. He was seized  
by an inner fire and called out:  
O Lady Crow, I will come to  
you and listen to you praising  
the Lord.*

qua

qua



*I will take to heart that you  
are not saying 'la, la'<sup>1</sup> but  
'qua, qua'<sup>2</sup>. Because you are  
telling me: Not there, not 'la,  
la' – in another life, but here,  
'qua, qua' – it is here that  
you must strive to do good.*

From the biography of  
Brother Egidius

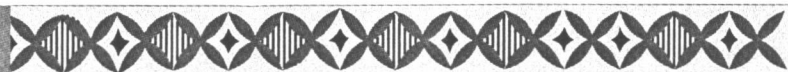
<sup>1</sup> la: Italian: there

<sup>2</sup> qua: Italian: here



# Introduction

A



## ork in our times

Franciscan men and women have been borne along by a long history (Bible, Franciscan traditions, mission history). Up to now, the first lesson units of this course have already put us into contact with some aspects of this tradition. However, in our own time we are being confronted by very specific and concrete problems. Such modern trends must be given special attention by the Church and our Franciscan movement and, in fact, they have found their expression in

various documents of the Church and of the Franciscan Orders.

As we are concerned here with a specifically Franciscan concept of mission, we will concentrate exclusively on Franciscan documents. Prescriptions that could be applied always and anywhere are not at issue. However, some orientation and guidelines capable of giving direction to missionary life and work are needed.

# Survey

B



## he basic dynamics of mission

First of all, we shall try to give a brief overview of the foundations of the Franciscan mission. As the Order conceives itself as being essentially missionary in nature, each brother and each sister, personally, needs to enter into these basic missionary dynamics. Secondly, we will turn to some specific features of Franciscan mission, starting with a series of fundamental attitudes. We have to call attention to the fact that today the concept of *salvation* is being understood in a broader sense than before, namely as "*Pax et bonum = peace and all things good.*" First, we have to see that peace and salvation (*all things good*) are notions that surpass history and all human capacity. We cannot bring



Salam  
Peace  
Pax  
Friede  
Paix  
Paz  
Amani



about peace and salvation by ourselves. At the same time we have to point out clearly and unmistakably the immanent aspect of salvation: we should strive for "Peace and all things good", for our personal wholeness and also in interpersonal relationships, in different communities, in all nations and cultures.

Some people believe that the modern documents are no longer in harmony with the original Franciscan tradition. We will try to face up to their objections and answer them in the third part. Finally, we shall arrive at some practical conclusions.

## Information

C



### Fundamental reasons for the Franciscan Mission

Today, a movement calling itself Franciscan must be able to represent the intentions of St. Francis in a credible way. There is no doubt that St. Francis understood himself as a missionary, not only "among the Saracens" but also among the Christians of his own country. Wherever he was, he proclaimed the Good News of "peace and all things good" and wanted all people to be converted to Christ and so find their salvation.

Living and acting thus, Francis gave a new impulse to the missionary task of the Church. "He filled the whole earth with the Gospel of Christ" (1C 97).

As in the days of St. Francis, missionary crisis exists in our time. The Franciscan movement is called upon to help overcome this

1.



*St. Francis preaches to all creation.*

crisis in a creative way, without falling back on false concepts.



## The Franciscan family, as such, is missionary

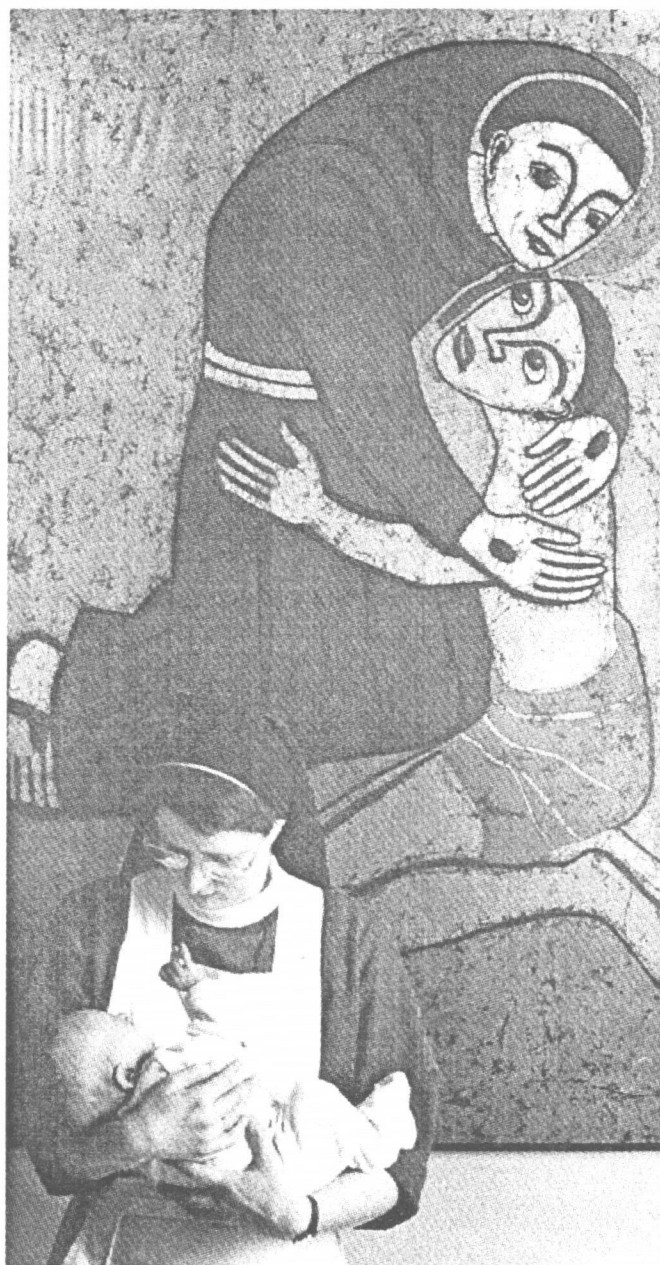
1.1.

People used to distinguish between “*missionary institutes*”, founded exclusively for missionary activities, and other institutes, primarily destined for pastoral work, although they might maintain some missionary activities as well in distant countries. Today, this kind of distinction can only be maintained if one limits the concept of *mission* to activities in far-away countries, aiming at the conversion of people to the Christian faith. Such a missionary commitment to other people and cultures is still justified despite changing times and a change of missionary concepts. However, it is important to note that mission has a much more extensive meaning for St. Francis: witnessing by one’s whole life, here as well as there, and then – when it pleases God – proclaiming the Word, here as well as there. The Franciscan movement is missionary by nature. This conciliar view, which was also accepted by the branches of the Franciscan movement after Vatican II, is reflected in the more recent mission documents. Although we can only select some representative statements from these documents, we nevertheless have the whole Franciscan movement in mind. The abundance of documents makes it impossible to mention all the good contributions of Franciscan men and women.

*Our entire Fraternity is missionary, with everyone in the Fraternity sharing the missionary vocation (OFM General Chapter, Medellin 1971, Nr. 2).*

*Fundamentally, every Franciscan vocation is missionary. The Franciscan life-plan according to the Gospels implies as its root a natural apostolic dimension without limits, just as the Gospel of Jesus is without limits (OFM Cap Third Plenary Council, Mattli 1978, Nr. 10).*

Before Vatican II, short-sighted and limited ideas of *mission* restricted it to activities in far-away countries. *Missions* and *home provinces*<sup>3</sup> were seen as two completely different and separate enti-



*The Franciscan movement is missionary by nature.*

ties. For the missionaries, there was a “*Mission Statute*” which gave them specific rules and conceded exemptions from normal community life. The Capuchins, for instance, mentioned mission only in the twelfth chapter of their constitutions and only in a few sentences.

<sup>3</sup> *Home province* means the province where a Franciscan brother or sister is registered.





In a similar fashion, the pre-conciliar Church considered *missions* an affair pertaining to individual missionaries, but not to the Church in their home country. Vatican Council II brought about an essential change: it declared that the Church, as such and as a whole, is missionary by its very nature (AG 2, LG 1). Therefore, though the Council issued an additional mis-

sionary decree, the basic statements on mission were embodied in the Constitution on the Church. So no one can say any longer "*mission is none of my concern.*" Accordingly, the "*Missionary Statute*" as a separate text of the Capuchin Order was removed. Mission is now securely rooted in the Constitutions themselves, equally valid for all members of the Order.

## Every brother and every sister is a Missionary

1.2.

The old dispute, on whether the call to mission is a "*special vocation*", has finally been settled.

*This missionary task does not of itself imply either a special vocation different from that shared by all the friars, or a lifelong commitment (Mattli 1978, Nr. 11).*

Each brother and each sister is a missionary. This becomes even more evident when today we speak of "*mission in six continents.*" Wherever people exist who have hardly been touched by Christ, a missionary situation is given.

We should therefore regard anyone as worthy of missionary care:

*those "... yet untouched by the Gospel and those alienated from the Gospel as traditionally presented. By our presence, we will try to help them interpret their experience and encourage the good that we find" (Bahia 1983, Nr. 17; see also Mattli 1978, Nr. 6).*



*Each brother and each sister is a missionary.*

2.



## he Character of the Franciscan Mission

In this section some fundamental attitudes will be highlighted which are currently stressed in recent

Franciscan documents. They aim at conveying a notion of what "*Peace and all things good!*" is all about.



- Trust in life

Franciscans should not give in to pessimistic tendencies, but trustingly preach the Good News of a fulfilled life.

*We live in an extraordinary period of human history in which the peaks of achievement never before attained are matched by similarly unprecedented depths of bewilderment and despair. If ever there was a time when we were challenged to be, more than ever before, a light to illumine the world, a city on the hill, a salt to give savour to people's lives, surely that time is now. For we possess the antidote to pessimism, to the gloomy foreboding, to the dejection and the fear which affect our time. We have the Good News! (Medellin 1971, Nr. 12).*



*Shadow of fear.*

- Respect for other religions

*We observe that people of other religions do possess great spiritual values, and we declare that it is not our intention to destroy them. We are convinced that there is a light shining in them which comes from the Creator of all things (Medellin 1971, Nr. 15).*

*The Friar Minor rejoices in this evaluation of the religious world. He praises the Lord for the wonders He accomplishes among all peoples. He will seek dialogue and common prayer in order to give and receive the gifts of the experience of God. Mutual visits, especially on the occasion of religious feasts, will be a sign of a growing universal brotherhood. Also, such contacts will open the way towards shared undertakings among all people of good will for greater justice and peace in the world! (Mattli 1978, Nr. 27).*

Pope John Paul II has taken a decisive step in this direction with his call for the Day of Prayer of the World Religions for Peace (Assisi 1986) and so has encouraged us Franciscans to enter into inter-religious dialogue.

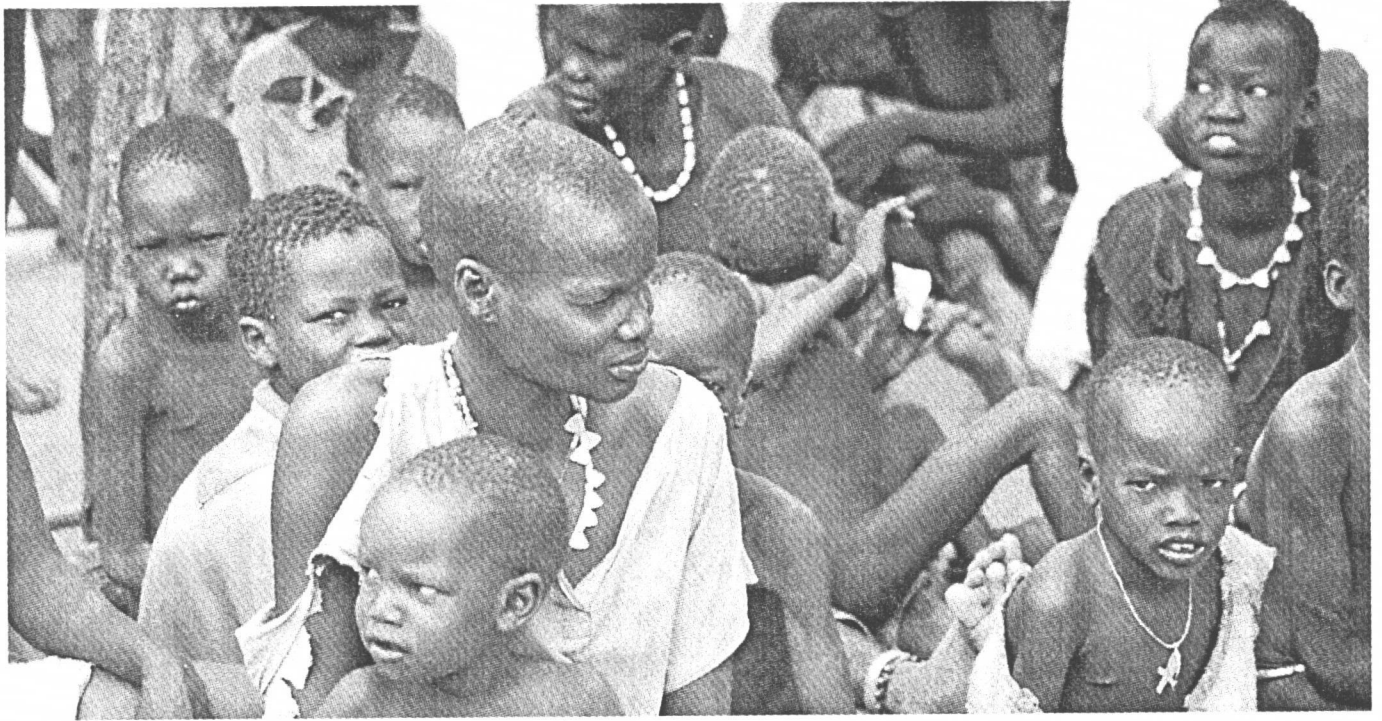
- Common search for the truth

This should not be done by forcing our truth upon others as absolute, but by fraternal dialogue and by searching together for the truth.

*Faithful to the demands of minority, we should aim to reach people's hearts through dialogue, respect, listening, understanding and acceptance. While we are the bearers of the Message and of certain values, we should at the same time be disposed to accept the message and values possessed by others – proclaiming the Lord while knowing how to listen humbly as He speaks through everything and through all our brothers and sisters (Mattli 1978, Nr. 13).*

*We friars want to make a lifetime effort in becoming one with our people in their way of feeling and thinking and in their manner of life... joining them in self-analysis and real dialogue; and, together and in obedience to the Holy Spirit, forming with them a truly local Christian community. This will be the result of*





*We want to root ourselves in the culture of the people in every land (Mattli 1982).*

a dialogue and can in no way be imposed from without. This must spring from within, following a real meeting of their fundamental religious aspirations and authentic Christian values (Medellin 1971, II, Nr. 8).

- **Respect for other cultures**

In their encounter with foreign people, Franciscans will

*... appreciate the cultural values of the people and will sing the Canticle of the Creatures on seeing the love, the sense of community, the dignity and the joy of the people: because it is all created by Him and through Him! With this theological interpretation, the Gospel will more easily be 'incarnated' within cultures, and be made to take on local forms and begin a new history (Mattli 1978, Nr. 25; cf. also Mattli 1982, Nr. 8).*

- **Overcoming a non-Franciscan clericalism**

*We observe that in many instances that where the activities and initiatives within the Christian community are centered around the priest or his substitute,*

*the people of God do not grow in responsibility for their life and action... This makes us remember St. Francis who was experienced by his companions as 'the brother'. He would not establish his community on a hierarchical basis... We have a special task to fulfil within the Church, namely to build a living community of brothers and sisters on their way together toward making God's goodness a reality for all humankind (Mattli 1982, Nr. 9).*

In theory, these are well-formulated demands. However, much is required and demanded to put them into practice:

- ▣ **Ongoing conversion**

*Accepting Jesus' way demands 'metanoia', personal and communal conversion, as we seek to penetrate culture with Gospel values. We must be more and more evangelised ourselves, freeing ourselves from sin and from any part we might have in injustice and oppression, from all that in any way hinders us from receiving and proclaiming God's love at work in the world (Bahia 1983, Nr. 15; cf. also Mattli 1978, Nr. 12).*





## ▣▣▣▣▣ Prayer and contemplation

*We remember Francis of Assisi who wanted to adore God everywhere and at every moment, and wanted to love Him in all creatures. He sought the silence of caves, forests and churches...For that reason we want to give back to prayer, liturgy and silence the place they deserve. Without fear we want to encounter the outburst of the people's faith, and we want to participate creatively in it. When we stand before God with our people, all of our conflicts and sufferings, our expectations and hopes take on a dimension which transcends all and, at the same time, fulfils (Mattli 1982, Nr. 11; cf. also LU 10).*

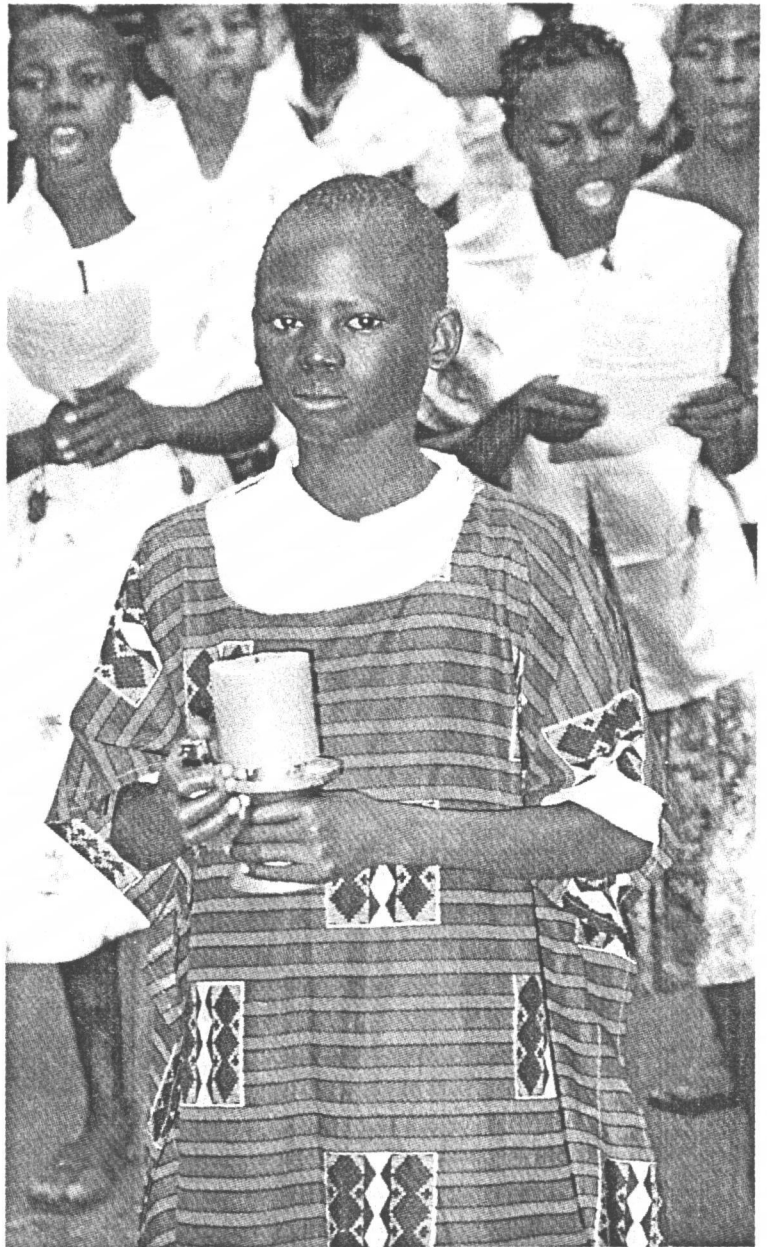
## ▣▣▣▣▣ Credible fraternity

*Our lifestyle as brotherhood can be an example to a world hungering for community and longing for a new and more humane society... Therefore we ask the friars...to give witness to brotherhood as the best form of evangelising: 'By this shall all know that you are My disciples (Jn 13:35).' Our brotherhood invites others to share what we are, what we have and what we do (Bahia 1983, Nr. 23; see also Ch. 2: Sent as Brothers).*

*The Poor Clares say in their constitution: Something invaluable precious is depicted through our life in a community of love. This life, which has its foundation on the communion of life in the Trinity, requires that we reveal the mystery of love everyday, as faithfully and as clearly as we possibly can (Art. 90).*

*It is stated in the SFO Rule that*

*...the sense of brotherhood makes them happy and willing to treat all people as equals, especially those who are least. They make an effort to create for them living conditions which correspond to their dignity as people who have been redeemed by Christ (Ch. 2,13).*



*We want to give back to prayer, liturgy and silence the place they deserve (Mattli 1982).*



## Inter-Franciscan Co-operation

We encourage a fraternal and generous co-operation, in ways that are most appropriate, with all the Franciscan families, both of men and women (Mattli 1978, Nr. 41; see also Bahia 1983, Nr. 23/6).

The SFO Rule states:

*The Franciscan family unites all members of God's people, the laity, friars, sisters and priests, who are called to follow the footsteps of St. Francis in imitation of Christ. In different ways, but in a dynamic living together, they would like to bring to mind the common*

*charism of the Seraphic Father in the life and in the mission of the Church (Ch. 1,1).*

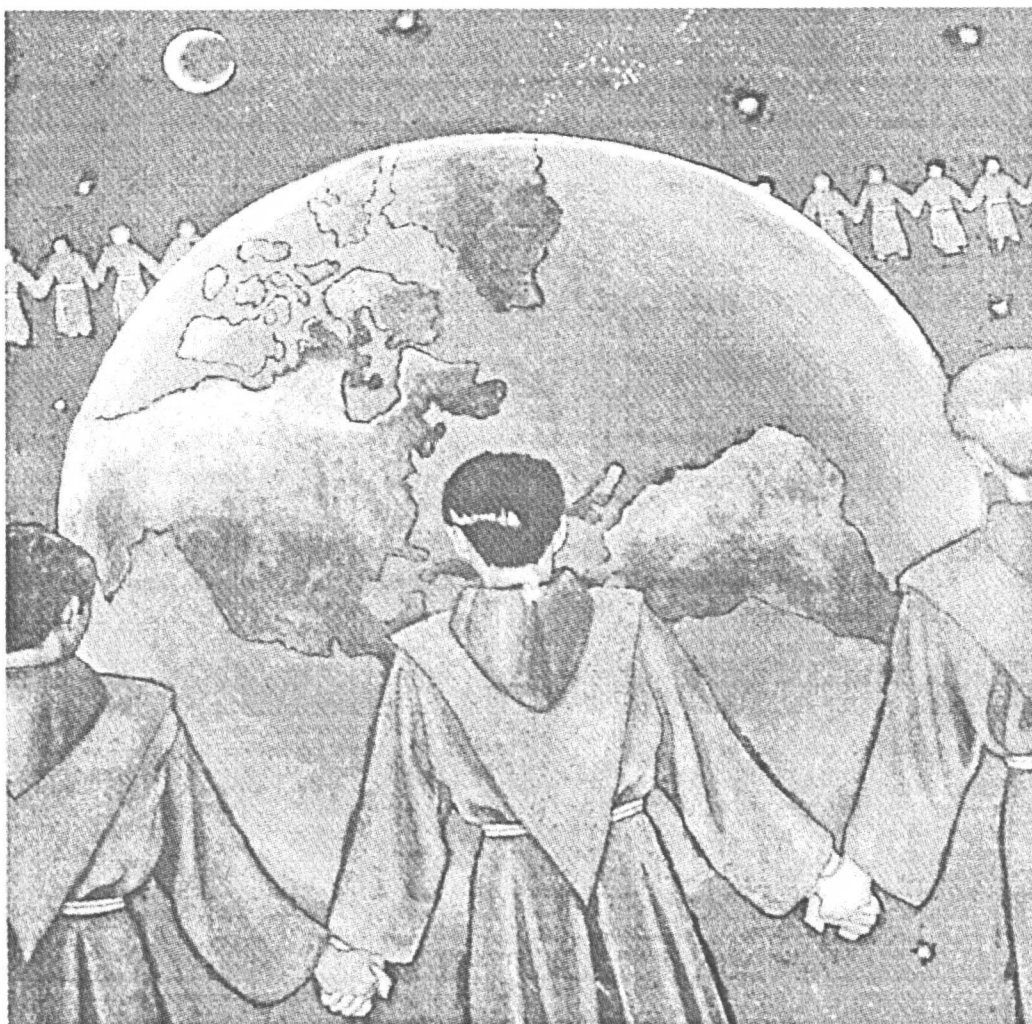
The follow-up proposals of the Inter-Franciscan Congress of Mattli 1982, stress particular co-operation in the field of formation, communication, Justice and Peace.

The theme of inter-Franciscan co-operation is discussed more thoroughly in Lesson unit 3.

### What is the meaning of "Peace and all good"?

2.2.

Before the Second Vatican Council, *Salvation* was generally understood to mean: accepting the faith, receiving the sacraments and hoping for eternal life. Whatever the missions were doing for the betterment of humanity – caring about the whole person through schools, hospitals, agricultural projects – was thought of as a kind of *pre-evangelisation*, as a means to an end. It was supposed to create a proper climate, convincing people of the goodness of the Christian faith and inclining them to accept baptism.



*Franciscans search for greater justice in the world.*



In 1971, under the special influence of the Latin American bishops, the Synod of Bishops in Rome declared that a commitment to justice and to human development was an essential part of evangelisation itself (compare Lesson units 19 and 20). It was to be taken seriously by everyone who has evangelisation at heart. It was not to be dismissed loftily as a form of *horizontalism*.<sup>4</sup>

Such an endeavour towards earthly well-being no longer only consists in distributing alms and other aid to disadvantaged individuals, but in changing the unjust structures that causes the situations where despair reigns. Therefore, the Mattli '78 congress has set the Franciscan motto "*Peace and all good*" firmly in the context of the new socio-economic reality (compare No. 20-24). The aim is to make felt in this modern world, that the salvation God wishes to give, is a reality capable of changing life. Bahia 1983, too, has summoned all the brothers:

*... to conscientize ourselves and people about the unjust system of socio-economic, political and cultural domination of millions of people in the Third World by the superpowers and richer countries in east and west, by the multinationals and transnationals, and to promote a new economic and political order which will bring greater justice to our world (Bahia 83, Nr. 31).*

Contrary to the Earlier Rule of the Third Order, the SFO Rule encourages people to take initiative:

*Through the witness of their lives and courageous initiatives, whether individual or communal, they strive to promote justice, especially in public life, by being true to their faith in decision making (Ch. 2, 15).*

Finally, the Mattli document of 1982 has also concentrated its attention almost exclusively on this aspect (cf. Mattli 82, 1 and 6). This goal cannot be reached at the first attempt. It requires the slow and wearisome process of awareness-building or conscientization:

*Now it has become increasingly more evident that development and liberation cannot be imposed upon others from the outside. It is an imperative to make people aware of their own situation and to assist them to become active in their own development and liberation. This method of conscientization is very effective. Through dialogue it brings forth the will to change one's own situation and to become an active agent for the betterment of human life. This is not an easy matter. Dialogue awakes the will to change the existing situation and to humanise life through its own strength (Medellin 1971, IV. 14).*



*It is imperative to make people aware of their own situation and to assist them to become active in their own development and liberation (Medellin 1971).*

<sup>4</sup> *Horizontalism* means the limiting of the Christian idea and practice to the social level.





The temptation to speed up this process by force is great. In this respect, the position and the corresponding attitude of the Franciscans should be clear:

*The friars should be understanding of those who in desperation have recourse to violence, not always motivated by hate, but often even by a love of justice. However, they as Franciscans choose another method: that of being one with Christ in the 'kenosis'<sup>5</sup> of non-violence and of trust in the power of non-violence. Without equivocation let them take an active part in peace movements and in organisations against the injustices of dictatorships, be they left or right wing (Mattli 1978, 22; cf. also Medellin 1971, V. 20).*

*The brothers and sisters of the Third Order Secular, together with all people of good will are called upon to build a world in which the Kingdom of God can become a reality, a world that is more humane and is in accordance with the spirit of the Gospel. In this way they are aware that anyone 'who follows Christ, the perfect human being, will also become more human'. Through this they are able to properly practice their responsibility in the spirit of Christian service (SFO-Rule Ch. 2,14).*

More effective than anything else is the testimony of one's own life, a life lived with the poor:

*Francis found Christ through the poorest of the poor, the leper. The love of God was made real for him through the poor Infant of Bethlehem and the Suffering Servant at Calvary. Francis lived and worked with lepers and the poor so as to share in their 'blessedness'. He rejoiced in their lowliness and disinterest in power, their tremendous confidence in Providence and their freedom. We Franciscans, too, will find Jesus in being for the poor, with the poor and living as the poor do. Thus, it is through our poverty and minority that we are evangelised and evangelise (Bahia 1983, 28).*

*This situation has led many of the Third World churches to act in solidarity by making a preferential option for the poor and against poverty. In these Churches, the Poverello of Assisi stands out as the Patron of the Church of the poor... Thus we see in Francis a process from being 'for' the poor to being 'with' the poor and finally to living 'as' the poor (Mattli 1982, 1).*

This engagement for the poor has been tried to be lived in the actual prevailing circumstances of the three current systems of modern society: the system of National Security, of international Capitalism and of Marxism (cf. Lesson unit 21). 'Mattli 1978' took up a clear stance towards all



*More effective than anything else is the testimony of one's own life.*

three systems and has condemned their violation of human rights. However, it did not demand a tactic of "all or nothing", but of dialogue and change working from within:

*There is a Franciscan way of being present in socio-political struggle, made up of fraternity, of confrontation and a spirit of peace. And all have need of this witness (Mattli 78, 22). The Capuchin missionary tries to make the poor more self-aware and to prepare them to defend their rights. Also, through frank dis-*

<sup>5</sup> Kenosis is the New Testament term for the self-sacrifice of Jesus (cf. Phil 2:5-11).



cussion, the friars of the Third and First Worlds will seek to influence the decisions of governments and of multinational companies (23). We should even be ready to "go among the Marxists and (start) dialogue with them, just as St. Francis who, despite the adverse systems of his time, went to the Sultan, spoke with him, man to man, and then sent his friars 'among' the Saracens, not 'against' them (24).

It is obvious that the engagement for the poor cannot be reconciled with the endless and senseless spiralling of rearmament:

*Confronted by the fact that \$ 1.4 billion is spent each day on armaments – while 40,000 children starve to death daily – our world must find ways for Isaiah's*

*admonition to be realised, i.e. turn our swords into ploughshares (Is. 2:4) and use this immense amount of \$ 500 billion dollars per year for the needs of our human family (Bahia 1983, 6).*

Similarly, it is clear that Franciscans will engage themselves with all legitimate means for the observance of human rights (cf. Mattli 1982, 3), especially, too, for the rights of women, both in society and in the Church (cf. Mattli 1982, 2).

We carry out all of these suggestions for the preaching of justice on earth and salvation in heaven not as "lords of the land", but as servants of the local churches into whose structures we merge (cf. Mattli 1978, 18).



### Response to an objection

3.



*It is our task to live our prophetic calling  
in the Church and in society.*

The Franciscan Order in former times was associated with being close to the people, with acts of popular piety, hearing confessions, preaching and going on pilgrimages. As a result, some people who found these traditional Franciscan activities appealing can hardly understand and accept today's strong emphasis on "justice and peace", especially the critical accent of "Mattli 1982" within the Church, the demand for declericalization as well as the critical stance towards society.

These circles within and without the Order have declared that this document is irreconcilable with the Franciscan attitude of piety, gentleness and absolute loyalty to the Church. However, this conviction must be questioned as it does not constitute the only possible interpretation of Franciscan history. Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger responds:



*The rejection of existing forms of the Church which today we would call a prophetic protest, could not have been more radical than it was in Francis.*

Apart from this, we cannot and should not imitate Francis and Clare slavishly. In his testament, Francis writes: *"The Lord granted me, brother Francis..."* (Test 1). Saint Bonaventure puts similar words into Francis' mouth in the hour of his death, when he writes: *"I have done what was mine to do.*

*May Christ teach you what is yours"* (LMj 14, 3).

Therefore, it is our task to continually discover anew, define and live our prophetic calling in the Church and in society. And so Franciscan brothers and sisters seek to understand the signs of the times, to take Human Rights seriously, and put into practice their joint responsibility for a Church that is consonant with the Gospel and the Council for a just human society.

## **P**ractical Consequences

### 4.

#### Expecting new prophetic and missionary initiatives

##### 4.1.

If we are serious about the missionary direction the Franciscan movement and all the brothers and sisters are to take, then we must try to reach with the Gospel that 50%, 70%, 90 % of the people in the formerly Christian West who no

longer identify themselves with the Church. It has been correctly stated that today Europe is the most difficult mission territory. New prophetic missionary initiatives could and should be expected from us.

#### Working for the unity of humanity

##### 4.2.

Francis and Clare were united with all people. We should look upon it as our main concern to work for the unity of all human beings. Beyond the limitations of nationalism, special interests

or ideological selfishness and elitism, we should continue proclaiming the liberating message of God's love for all people.

### Creating necessary structures for formation

4.3.

Today we are no longer western Franciscan communities with missionaries abroad, but a worldwide movement in six continents. Our communities must therefore give priority to creating everywhere the necessary structures of formation and provide the needed formators, possibly with inter-Franciscan support.

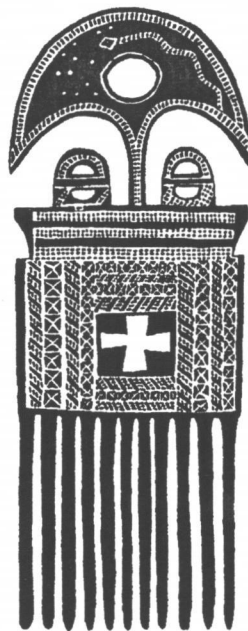


### Stressing the importance of missionary awareness-building among the young brothers and sisters

4.4.

*In the formation of young brothers and sisters, increased importance should be given to their missionary awareness and conscientization (Mattli 1978, 35 ff.; Bahia 1983, 27).*

Lesson Unit 4 deals with this topic in detail.





## Church Documents and Franciscan Sources

Scripture	Luke 4:16-22
Church Documents	AG 2; LG 1
Franciscan Sources	1C 97; LMj 14:3; Test 1
Inter-Franciscan Documents	Mattli 82, No. 1-3, 6, 8f., 11
OFM, OFMCap, OFMConv.	Medellin 71, No. 2, 14, 17, 20f., 27 Madrid 73 Mattli 78, No. 6, 10-13, 18, 20-25, 27, 35 ff., 41 Bahia 83, No. 15, 17, 23, 27f., 31, 36 OFMCap Constitutions § 94f.
Poor Clares	
Third Order Regular	
Secular Franciscans	SFO Rule, Ch. 1:1; 2:13 f.

*Note: The list of sources may be completed by the participants.*

## Exercises



### Exercise

Read again "2.1. Basic Attitudes" in this Lesson Unit

### Task

Read the sections from the documents and determine your position on the following topics: confidence, dialogue, respect for other cultures, respect for other religions, overcoming clericalism, ongoing conversion, fraternity, prayer and contemplation, inter-Franciscan co-operation.





## Exercise

2.

**Compare Luke 4:16-22 with the following text by Cardinal Paulo Evaristo Arns:**

*To inquire into the humanity of Jesus does not mean to deny His divinity. On the contrary, it signifies rediscovering the true meaning of what His divinity is. Latin American theology concentrates on the contemplation of Jesus' deeds because it believes that in this human life of Jesus is contained the core of God's self-revelation. Why should the Gospels exist, if the life of Jesus did not contain the innermost essence of*

*God's word? However, it is the human life of Jesus that leads us to the poor and to their liberation.*

### Questions

1. How does Jesus combine His preaching of Salvation with His acts of healing?
2. What is the relationship between the Salvation of the soul and the Salvation of the body?



## Exercise

3.

**The following four texts come from Asia, Latin America and Africa. Compare their witness of life.**

**a) *The Franciscan Missionaries of Mary (FMM) in the Philippines – A Return to a lifestyle of simple presence among the people:***

*Until 1971, the Church in the Philippines has been effective through schools and hospitals, serving mostly 20 percent of the upper social classes of the population. At that time the first renewal sessions were held for Provincials of various Orders and Congregations. Through a critical revision of life, inspired by the Second Vatican Council and General Chapters of their own communities, people arrived at the conclusion that to by-pass the poor would not be according to the intentions of Jesus.*

*In consequence, the FMM like as other women's congregations, started to give up some of their schools so as to be able to make sisters more available. These received special formation and were sent out in small groups of three to four members to go among the poor in the slums, living in very simple little houses. This new life-style brought them to a new awareness, and a self-assertion, showing them new ways of how to get along.*

*In fact, they applied 'the first method of going to the Saracens' St. Francis wrote about in his Early Rule which consists in living simply among people, admitting to be Christians, but for the rest, trying to be no more than honest helpful individuals and members of the community.*



**b) Report from the small Franciscan communities in the Northeast of Brazil – Changing one's social position, an indispensable step:**

How should the sisters meet the poor in rural districts and in city slums? If they were not to be content with giving them charitable assistance, more was needed: it would be necessary to become an integral part of the world of the poor. Sr. Benvenuta describes how small communities of religious try to do just this among the poor:

*We were a group of three to five Sisters, all having the same desire to give witness to the Kingdom of God among the people, but outside of normal structures i.e. conventional settings. We really wanted to take part in the life and in the conflict-ridden situation of the people. It was our aim to proclaim the solidarity and fraternal values of the Kingdom of Jesus Christ, a Kingdom of Salvation. The first step therefore for the small communities was a change of social position.*

*For a long time, however, our work and pastoral activities were reduced to going to the people without really belonging to them. We could not yet feel their troubles and struggles, their fears and pains, nor did we understand their daily problems of survival, because we went to them without really sharing in the daily drama of their lives. So it was difficult for us to accept their behaviour, finding some of their reactions even shocking. We were not yet capable of identifying the causes of their problems which made their lives so bitterly hard; and consequently our activities did not achieve the desired results. Only when we finally understood this and decided to take this difficult but fundamental step of changing our social position, of starting to live among the people, and accepting all the consequences implied therein, did our attitude change, making us more humane and understanding towards them and their problems.*

*Exchanging our social position opened our eyes to the mistakes we had made up to now, and how we could give witness in the future. Now we were really ready to participate in the life of the people because we finally experienced in our own persons the causes of all the problems our brothers and sisters were going*

*through in their hard lives (Sr. Benvenuta Silva, IMC, Brazil).*

**c) A Report from the Ivory Coast/Africa – A dialogue of life:**

Gwénolé Jeusset, a French Franciscan from Brittany, lives and works as a missionary on the Ivory Coast, trying to enter into dialogue with the Muslim population. He writes:

*For the last ten years, I have been living a spiritual adventure with an old Muslim 'peuille' (the name of a tribe) who has great influence on the Muslim population of Abidjan. I am working together with a group of priests, religious and lay people, about ten persons, half of them being European, the other half African. This group has been meeting regularly, except during this last year.*

*Sometimes we meet with a Muslim group, forming together with them the Islamic-Christian group of Abidjan. It seems that it is one of the only groups of this type in Black Africa, having been founded in 1971. To stimulate dialogue we founded a newspaper in Abidjan, called 'Relations.' This paper is read by Muslims and Christians alike, contributing to mutual understanding. The Islamic-Christian group is growing and feels fortified.*

*However, it must be admitted that this success depends very much on the personality of the person who founded this movement. One of the collaborators on the staff of 'Relations' confirms this, writing in the Christmas edition 1983: 'This copy will reach you late. You will understand why. Every time Fr. Gwénolé leaves us, the group of Muslim and Christian friends moves forward only in very small steps'.*

**d) A letter from Moundou/Chad, December 1984 – Building up the Church of the Poor:**

*"May this country affect your stomach!" With this wish an old woman in Doba greeted me in her native language (Ngambay). She was content to see me back in Chad after 14 years of absence. Yes, she was right: This country has upset my guts. It is indescribable what these men, women and children have to live through. More than during my first stay in this country, I am encountering a situation of misery and suffering.*



*In Doba where I stayed for a couple of weeks, I could not leave my room without stumbling over a dozen adults, teenagers or children squatting before my door and begging: "Father, I am so hungry!"*

*This terrible famine is killing hundreds a day. You are being told that the reason is this long period of drought. This is what your newspapers and television say. But here in the South, they know that the real cause is war, which has been going on for many years already and has rekindled in the last months. Hardly anybody identifies the reason for hunger with this war, but many farmers have been killed and many had to look on while their poor barns were pillaged and burned. Whole villages have been destroyed. The only chance to survive was given by flight into the bush or exile in the Sudan or other neighbouring countries.*

*In such a situation, when the poor become ever poorer, we feel totally ineffective, displaced, helpless, but also deeply affected, challenged right down into our deepest being. Many momentous questions arise, concerning the state of the world we are constructing, and the degree of our responsibility for this situation... It is not easy to see clearly. The only thing I am sure about is a challenge to ever increasing generosity. It is a challenge to build up a Church as detached as possible from the West – a truly African Church – a Church not reduced to teaching catechism, to baptising and preaching, but really a Church for the poor, where they can truly express their lives and take new courage, revitalising their energies, liberating themselves from everything that tends to crush and smother their lives.*

*Will the European and African Christians, who have lived through these last months, be able to identify this challenge and accept it?*

*Since the beginning of October I have been living in a township called Moundou together with two native Capuchins. A third one has promised to join us. Then there is also a French Brother belonging to our group. For two months we have been living outside the mission station compound, in a house made available to us for nothing, by a construction co-operative. Now we are living in a very simple house in town. So we have moved nearer to people.*

*In our lives, prayer and meditation, shared reflection and interpersonal relationships are of great importance. We do our own housekeeping – cleaning the place, doing the shopping, the cooking, and so on... Hubert works half-time as a male nurse in hospital. The two brothers, natives from Chad, one being a mechanic, the other a gardener, are still looking for a job. I am accompanying the postulants and the professed of the Franciscan Sisters in Donia, helping them to reflect on Francis of Assisi. I am also counselling a group of young men who want to enter the seminary next year.*

*However, during the next two years, I will search together with my Brothers from Chad, how to live the Gospel according to the spirit of St. Francis. We would like to make Jesus Christ and His Gospel relevant in a new way in this Church of the poor. I can assure you it is not easy to find the way. Communication problems, consequences of different cultural backgrounds and ideologies, education and mentality make it all the more difficult. So our common life is not without tensions, however, very enriching. It offers concrete experience of perseverance in a difficult dialogue; experience of sharing and acceptance of differences.*

*It makes one eminently happy to discover that a fraternal life among persons of different races and origins is indeed possible. Please pray, so that we may persevere. It is worthwhile. The poor from this sorely tried Chad share with you the courage and the confidence in a better future, their faith and hope in a God Who liberates and Who gives peace. All the Brothers greet you. I send you my very special expression of fraternal friendship (Fr. Hervé Roduit OFM Cap).*

### Questions

1. What do these testimonies have in common?
2. To what extent do they apply the 'basic attitudes' referred to and demanded in this lesson unit?
3. What personal experiences or experiments of a similar nature have you had?





# Applications

E



## Application

### Read the following text:

Normally, expatriate missionaries cannot influence political structures in the countries they have gone to because they are foreigners. But they must be conscious that their words may contribute to the escalation of burning issues of justice and freedom, leading even to the shedding of blood. And they will be co-responsible for it if this happens. Violence may sometimes be seen as "politically justifiable," but it can never be a Franciscan method.

All revolutions cause structural changes. In a revolution, the maintenance or enforcement of structures is played against the well-being of individuals. Human lives are wasted always in order to justify ideas. Stalinism in Russia or Maoism in China have claimed millions of lives in order to build a new society. The individual is always sacrificed.

Franciscans can never work for structural changes which imply violence to claim legitimacy. Instead, they must always try to save the lives of individuals from being stifled by unjust structures. The duty to stand by the individual person must be seen clearly. It was the standard approach of Jesus: He always defended the rights of the individual.

(Lucian Mulhern OFM, USA and Noel O'Dwyer OFM, England)

### Task

Consider the consequences of such an attitude in life!



## Application

### Read the following text:

In Asia, Franciscans should absorb typically Asian values even more.

We name among others:

- a simple and poor lifestyle;
- fraternity and peace;
- contemplation;
- a sense for the cosmic dimension of life.

(Sr. Grace Chu FMM, Hongkong and Ambrose Nguyen van Si OFM, Vietnam)

2.

### Questions

1. Do the values mentioned above constitute specifically Franciscan values?
2. If you think they do, why would Asian people want to see them stressed even more?



# Bibliography

## F



## Bibliography

**Anderson, Gerald H. & Thomas, ed. Stransky, F.**  
*Mission Trends. No. 1 Crucial Issues in Mission Today.* New York: Paulist Press, 1974.

**Cullmann, Oscar J.**  
*Salvation History.* New York: Herper and Row, 1967.

**Dalton, William J.**  
*Salvation and Damnation.* Wisconsin: Clergy Book Service, 1977.

**Heims, Mark**  
*Salvation: Truth and Differences in Religion.* New York: Orbis Books, 1995.

**Hinnebusch, Paul**  
*Salvation History and the Religious Life.* New York: Sheed and Ward, 1966.

**Kirk, Andrew**  
*The Mission of Theology and the Theology as Mission.* Pennsylvania: Trinity Press, 1997.

**Boff, Leonardo**  
*Salvation and Liberation.* New York: MaryKnoll, Orbis Books, 1984.

**Lombardi, Riccardo**  
*The Salvation of the Unbeliever.* Westminster: Md. Newman Press 1956.

**McCoy, Joseph**  
*Advice from the Field.* USA: Garamond Press, 1962.

**Müller, Karl**  
*Mission Theology: An Introduction.* Nettetal: Steyler Verlag, 1987.

**Power, John**  
*Mission Theology Today.* New York: MaryKnoll, Orbis Books, 1971.

**Sullian, Francis Aloysius**  
*Salvation Outside the Church?* New York: Paulist Press, 1992.

## Church Documents

**AG: Ad Gentes:** Decree on the Church's Missionary Activity.

**EN: Evangelii Nuntiandi:** Paul VI, Missionary Evangelization Today.

**GS: Gaudium et Spes:** The Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World.

**LG: Lumen Gentium:** The Dogmatic Constitution on the Church.

**RM: Redemptoris Missio:** John Paul II, The Mission of the Redeemer.

**MM: Mater et Magistra:** John XXIII, Christianity and Social Progress.



# Picture Credits



## Picture Credits

- Cover** St. Francis. Fresco by Giotto, Upper Church St. Francis, Assisi.
- P. 3** Fountain. From: Ferment 1/96, Photo: H. Wirz.
- P. 5** Woodcut, M. Gubig, 1992.
- P. 6** From: Franziskaner Mission 2/96.
- P. 7** Woodcut by W. Traut, Nürnberg 1511/12.
- P. 8** From: INFAG-Nachrichten 1/96.
- P. 9** Photo: Comboni Press.
- P. 10** Woodcut by Sr. Christina Muelling.
- P. 11** Photo: Comboni Press.
- P. 12** Photo: Comboni Press.
- P. 13** Picture by L. Long.
- P. 14** From: FM 1/95; Photo: FM-Archive, M. Gamba.
- P. 15** Photo: Comboni Press.
- P. 16** foto-present.
- P. 18** **Top:** From: Ite 5/91, Photo: F. Hasler.  
**Bottom:** From: Franziskaner Mission 3/2000.

# Abbreviations



## Writings of Saint Francis

English	Latin	English	Latin
Adm	Adm	Admonitions	
BLL	BenLeo	Blessing for Brother Leo	
CtC	CantSol	Canticle of Brother Sun	
LtAnt	EpAnt	Letter to St. Anthony	
LtCl	EpCler	Letter to the Clergy	
1LtCus	1EpCust	First Letter to the Custodians	
2LtCus	2EpCust	Second Letter to the Custodians	
		1LtF	1EpFid
		2LtF	2EpFid
		LtL	EpLeo
		LtMin	EpMin
		LtOrd	EpOrd
		LtR	EpRect
		ExhP	ExhLD
			First Letter to the Faithful
			Second Letter to the Faithful
			Letter to Brother Leo
			Letter to a Minister
			Letter to the Entire Order
			Letter to the Rulers of the Peoples
			Exhortation to the Praises of God





English	Latin	English	Latin
CtExh	ExhPD Exhortation to the Poor Ladies	RH	RegEr Rule for Hermitages
PrOF	ExpPat Prayer Inspired by the Our Father	SalBVM	SalBVM Salutation of the Bl. Virgin Mary
Formlife	FormViv Form of Life for St. Clare	SalV	SalVirt Salutation of the Virtues
PrsG	LaudDei Praises of God	Test	Test Testament
PrH	LaudHor Praises to be said at all the Hours	TestS	TestS Testament written in Siena
OfP	OffPass Office of the Passion	Last Will	UltVol Last Will written for St. Clare
PrCr	OrCruc Prayer before the Crucifix	TPJ	VPLaet Dictate on True and Perfect Joy
LR	RegB Later Rule		
ER	RegNB Earlier Rule		

### Writings of Saint Clare

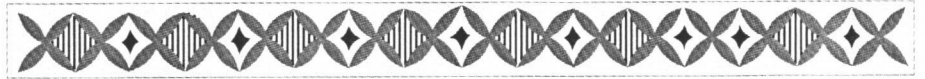
1LAg	1 <sup>st</sup> Letter to St. Agnes of Prague	LEr	Letter to Ermentrude of Bruges
2LAg	2 <sup>nd</sup> Letter to St. Agnes of Prague	RC1	Rule of St. Clare
3LAg	3 <sup>rd</sup> Letter to St. Agnes of Prague	TestCl	Testament of St. Clare
4LAg	4 <sup>th</sup> Letter to St. Agnes of Prague	BC1	Blessing of St. Clare

### Early Franciscan Sources

1C	1Cel	1 <sup>st</sup> Life of St. Francis by Thomas of Celano
2C	2Cel	2 <sup>nd</sup> Life of St. Francis by Thomas of Celano
3C	3Cel	Treatise on the Miracles by Thomas of Celano
AP	AP	Anonymous of Perugia
LegCl	CL	Legend of Clare
LFl	Fior	Fioretti. The little Flowers of St. Francis
JoLV	JdV	Witness of Jacque de Vitry
ChrJG	Jord	Jordan of Giano's Chronicle 4
LMj	LM	Major Life of St. Francis by Bonaventure
LMn	LMin	Minor Life of St. Francis by Bonaventure
LP	LP	Legend of Perugia
L3C	L3S	Legend of the Three Companions
Proc	Proc	Process of St. Clare's Canonization
ScEx	SC	Sacrum commercium The Sacred Exchange
MP	SP	Mirror of Perfection



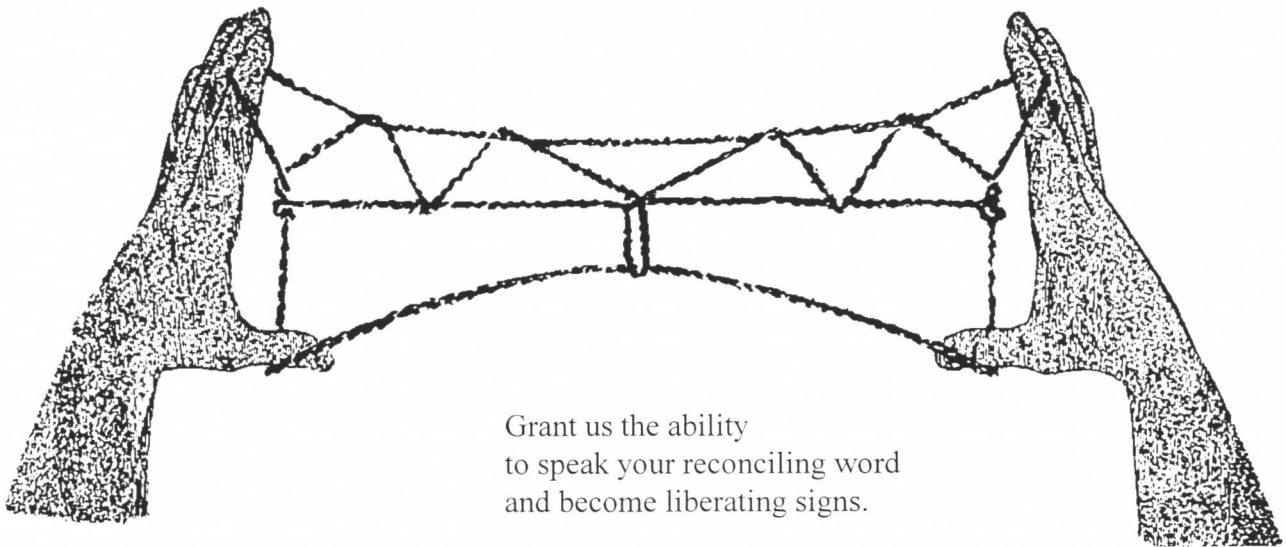
# For Reflection



Wake up the power  
to unite what is separated

God  
of all people,  
You will that we are your allies,  
your covenant of love.

Wake up in our midst the power  
to unite what is separated,  
to untie knots.



Grant us the ability  
to speak your reconciling word  
and become liberating signs.

Call people from among us  
who radiate your light  
who build bridges  
who tie the bonds of love  
and make your covenant a feast.

*Anton Rozetter*

