

## LIVING FRATERNITY

**Theme: « Lord, what do you want me to do? »**

In May 2013, we continue our deepening of the meaning of the text « *Lord, what do you want me to do?* », presented at *Fraternité 2012*, by Fr. Pierre Brunet, ofm.

This month, we shall consider more deeply the heritage of the beatitudes to better understand together what these words of Jesus can bring us today.

Recall : At the monthly meeting, the fraternity should have in place at the disposal of the members a Bible, at least one copy of the General Constitutions, an example of the Catechism of the Catholic Church and at least one copy of Living with Christ. Also, each member should have on hand their own copy of the Rule.

*Good preparation - Good meeting*

### MAY 2013 MONTHLY MEETING

#### **Opening Prayer and Song**

(According to the Ritual or chosen by the fraternity)

**Reading:** (choose a person who can read calmly)

#### **The legacy of the Beatitudes**

Let us go forward with this legacy, carrier of life. The Gospel of the beatitudes is a charter of life for all situations without solutions (sealed tombs). They are a way of raising awareness what Jesus took for his own mission and to foretell of the coming of the Kingdom: a call to live standing up, free and not having to resign or enclose ourselves in defeat. The Christian message is a bearer of Resurrection.

#### **FORWARD WITHIN THE IMPOSSIBLE!**

Jesus goes through what is the most dehumanising experience by believing. Instead of resigning himself to passivity and fatality, he takes the road to liberation. On the cross, he remains the perfect believer.

#### **BLESSED: Stand up! Rise! Blessed!**

The Kingdom is accessible to all those who place themselves in the grace of God to be freed from death and to accede to happiness by remaining ... free. In the Beatitudes, what is Jesus speaking about? About ..

*Who are the poor!* Those whose material and spiritual ordeals do not bring them to rely only on God's assistance?

*Who are the mild?* The mild by nature, but those who go on despite their social and religious condition?

**Who are the inconsolable?** The melancholy; those who await the definitive consolation of humanity and the freedom from its troubles?

**Who are the thirsty for justice?** Those whose Christian action is caring for others and who claim to be of God?

**Who are the merciful?** Those who adopt the entrails of God in their gaze and their presence?

**Who are the pure of heart?** Those who live a moral purity?, Of the uprightness paid by their own lives? Of the visionaries of God?

**Who are the peacemakers?** Is he speaking of the promoters of conflict resolution? Of the absence of war? Of those who work for the fulfilment, the happiness of others?

**Who are the persecuted?** Of those who carry in their flesh and in their existence the choice to act in the name of Christ?

## Sharing

In the preceding text, we have read a series of questions. They will help us reflect on the Gospels of the beatitudes according to Mathew (5, 1-12) or Luke (6, 20-28 ) that follow.

Let us take a moment to read these excerpts from Mathew or Luke. Afterwards, while keeping in sight the preceding questions, we can use to share our thoughts on the beatitudes.

According to Mathew 5, 3-12

« Happy are those who know they are spiritually poor; the Kingdom of heaven belongs to them!

Happy are those who mourn; God will comfort them!

Happy are those who are humble; they will receive what God has promised!

Happy are those whose greatest desire is to do what God requires;

God will satisfy them fully!

Happy are those who are merciful to others; God will be merciful to them!

Happy are the pure in heart; they will see God!

Happy are those who work for peace; God will call them his children!

Happy are those who are persecuted because they do what God requires; the Kingdom of heaven belongs to them!

Happy are you when people insult you and persecute you and tell all kinds of evil lies against you because you are my followers.

Be happy and glad, for a great reward is kept for you in heaven.

This is how the prophets who lived before you were persecuted.

According to Luke 6, 20-23

« Happy are you poor; the Kingdom of God is yours!

Happy are you who are hungry now; you will be filled!

Happy are you who weep now; you will laugh!

Happy are you when people hate you, reject you, insult you, and say that you are evil, all because of the Son of Man!

Be glad when that happens, and dance for joy, because a great reward is kept for you in heaven.

For their ancestors did the very same things to the prophets! »

Afterwards, go back to the questions presented above and choose a few for sharing.

**Sharing** (about 20 minutes) Then continue with the reading of the following text.

## **POOR IN HEART**

*Happy the poor.*

*The first situation in which to hear the Word of God is poverty. We must avoid making it a simplistic idea: a material one. It is also false to reduce it to a purely spiritual aspiration. Material poverty is an economic situation and not a virtue. Poverty does not necessarily lead to love. But true love always leads to poverty.*

*Happy are those who have a pauper's soul.*

*Happy are those who can accept being criticized by the Word of God.*

*Happy are those who can accept to have their ideas questioned.*

*Happy are those who accept that they have not yet understood everything.*

*Happy are those who can accept that God can ask for everything.*

*Who has a pauper's soul? When the Lord destabilizes us from one of our material or spiritual positions!*

*Poverty is the first condition to being permeated by God. Go! Leave you country, your culture, your habits, your past. And Abraham left not knowing where he was going. (He11,8).*

*God wants us to not cling to anything. The true pauper is Christ, he never held on to anything!*  
[manuscript text found in Brother Luke's missal, monk of Tibhirine, Algeria].

## **Recollection**

A moment to tell one another, the word or phrase in the preceding text which speaks the most to us. Afterwards, if there is some, a few interventions can be shared.

## **In the footsteps of Francis**

### **Admonition 18. On compassion for one's neighbour**

Blessed (is) the man, who supports his neighbor during his frailty to the extent that he would want to be supported by him, if he falls into an exactly similar situation. Blessed (is) the servant who renders all his goods to the Lord God, because he who has retained anything for himself "conceals" within himself "the money of his Lord" God (Mt 25:18) and "what" he thought he "had, shall be born away from" him (Lk 8:18).

## **Deepening of points taken from the Rule and the General Constitutions**

### **OFS Rule, Article 11**

Trusting in the Father, Christ chose for himself and his mother a poor and humble life, even though he valued created things attentively and lovingly. Let the Secular Franciscans seek a proper spirit of detachment from temporal goods by simplifying their own material needs.

Let them be mindful that according to the gospel they are stewards of the goods received for the benefit of God's children.

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

## **General Constitutions, Articles 15**

- 1.** Secular Franciscans should pledge themselves to live the spirit of the Beatitudes and, in a special way, the spirit of poverty. Evangelical poverty demonstrates confidence in the Father, creates interior freedom, and disposes them to promote a more just distribution of wealth.
- 2.** Secular Franciscans, who must provide for their own families and serve society by means of their work and material goods, have a particular manner of living evangelical poverty. To understand and achieve it requires a strong personal commitment and the stimulation of the fraternity in prayer and dialogue, communal review of life, and attentiveness to the instructions of the Church, and the demands of society.
- 3.** Secular Franciscans should pledge themselves to reduce their own personal needs so as to be better able to share spiritual and material goods with their brothers and sisters, especially those most in need. They should give thanks to God for the goods they have received, using them as good stewards and not as owners.

They should take a firm position against consumerism and against ideologies and practices which prefer riches over human and religious values and which permit the exploitation of the human person.

## **Life - Objective:**

During the month of May 2013, we invite you to read again the excerpts from the gospels presented here to meditate them ...

## **Events and Information from the Church and the Order**

Recall of National, Regional and Local Fraternity activities.

**End of the meeting** (a prayer to the Virgin Mary chosen by the fraternity)

## **At home**

In order to continue our reflection, let us go and look in the Compendium, the numbers 356-361. In the Catechism of the Catholic Church, you can find in the articles 1716-1719 and 1725-1726 presentations on the beatitudes.