

# Handbook for Animators of Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation (JPIC)



DEVELOPED BY THE NATIONAL JPIC COMMISSION  
SECULAR FRANCISCAN ORDER, USA  
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## Introduction

**Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation** are above all values of the Kingdom of God. As such, God Himself is involved in and committed to the task of making the world a place that is just and reconciled, providing a dignified life to all creatures. Among the values of the Kingdom of God, justice and peace receive a central place. Saint Francis was aware of God's mission as Creator, Liberator and Redeemer. As Franciscans, we are called like Saint Francis to rebuild the Church – restoring it to a place that is just and reconciled.

In the Beatitudes, Jesus declares that those are blessed who hunger and thirst for justice (Mt 5: 6). Equally blessed are the “peacemakers; they shall be called children of God” (Mt 5: 9). Jesus also indicates what is important in Christian life: “Seek first the Kingdom of God, and His righteousness” (Mt 6: 33). Jesus Himself sought first the Kingdom of God and His justice, and showed hunger and thirst for justice and was persecuted because of it. He Himself was the source, the giver and the cause of peace.



*The principles of the Church's social doctrine, which are based on the natural law, are then seen to be confirmed and strengthened, in the faith of the Church, by the Gospel of Christ.*

*In this light, men and women are invited above all to discover themselves as transcendent beings, in every dimension of their lives, including those related to social, economic and political contexts.*

*The proclamation of Jesus Christ, the “Good News” of salvation, love, justice and peace, is not readily received in today's world, devastated as it is by wars, poverty and injustices. For this very reason the men and women of our day have greater need than ever of the Gospel: of the faith that saves, of the hope that enlightens, of the charity that loves.*

~ From the Introduction of the **Compendium of Social Doctrine of the Church**



We invoke the intercession of **Saint Francis of Assisi**, Deacon and Seraphic Founder of Three Orders and Patron of Ecology, so that this text will bear abundant fruit as an instrument for the proclamation of the Gospel, for justice, compassion and for peace.

To Our Lady, Queen of the Angels, Immaculate Mother of God, Patroness and Queen of the Three Franciscan Orders, pray for us.

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*“As far as the Church is concerned, the social message of the Gospel must not be considered a theory, but above all else a basis and a motivation for action.”*  
~ Centesimus Annus, 57



**A Reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Romans**

(Rom 12:5-16ab)

Brothers and sisters:

We, though many, are one Body in Christ  
and individually parts of one another.

Since we have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us,  
let us exercise them:

if prophecy, in proportion to the faith;  
if ministry, in ministering;  
if one is a teacher, in teaching;  
if one exhorts, in exhortation;  
if one contributes, in generosity;  
if one is over others, with diligence;  
if one does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness.

Let love be sincere;  
hate what is evil,  
hold on to what is good;  
love one another with mutual affection;  
anticipate one another in showing honor.

Do not grow slack in zeal,  
be fervent in spirit,  
serve the Lord.

Rejoice in hope,  
endure in affliction,  
persevere in prayer.

Contribute to the needs of the holy ones,  
exercise hospitality.

Bless those who persecute you,  
bless and do not curse them.

Rejoice with those who rejoice,  
weep with those who weep.

Have the same regard for one another;  
do not be haughty but associate with the lowly.

## Psalm 34

### **The Lord hears the cry of the poor, Blessed be the Lord.**

I will bless the Lord at all times  
With praise ever in my mouth;  
Let my soul glory in the Lord  
Who will hear the cry of the poor.

### **The Lord hears the cry of the poor, Blessed be the Lord.**

Let the lowly hear and be glad  
The Lord listens to their pleas;  
And to hearts broken God is near  
Who will hear the cry of the poor.

### **The Lord hears the cry of the poor, Blessed be the Lord.**

## **A Reading from the Holy Gospel According to Matthew**

(Matthew 25:34-45)

“Then the King will say to those on His right, ‘*Come, you who are blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry, and you gave Me something to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me something to drink; I was a stranger, and you invited Me in; naked, and you clothed Me; I was sick, and you visited Me; I was in prison, and you came to Me.*’ Then the righteous will answer Him, ‘*Lord, when did we see You hungry, and feed You, or thirsty, and give You something to drink? And when did we see You a stranger, and invite You in, or naked, and clothe You? When did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?*’ The King will answer and say to them, ‘*Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of Mine, even the least of them, you did it to Me.*’

“Then He will also say to those on His left, ‘*Depart from Me, accursed ones, into the eternal fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels; for I was hungry, and you gave Me nothing to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me nothing to drink; I was a stranger, and you did not invite Me in; naked, and you did not clothe Me; sick, and in prison, and you did not visit Me.*’ Then they themselves also will answer, ‘*Lord, when did we see You hungry, or thirsty, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not take care of You?*’ Then He will answer them, ‘*Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me.*’”



**A Reading from the Pastoral Constitution on the Church  
in the Modern World from the Second Vatican Council**

*The Christian duty of working for peace*

Christians should cooperate, willingly and wholeheartedly, in building an international order based on genuine respect for legitimate freedom and on a brotherhood of universal friendship. This is all the more urgent because the greater part of the world still experiences such poverty that in the voices of the poor Christ himself can be heard, crying out for charity from his followers. There are nations – many of them with a majority of Christians – which enjoy an abundance of goods, while others are deprived of the necessities of life, and suffer from hunger, disease and all kinds of afflictions. This scandal must be removed from among men, for the glory of Christ's Church and its testimony to the world are the spirit of poverty and the spirit of love.

Christians, especially young Christians, deserve praise and support when they offer themselves voluntarily in the service of other people, with bishops giving a lead by word and example, to do all in their power to relieve the sufferings of our times, following the age-old custom of the Church in giving not only what they can spare but also what they need for themselves.

Without being uniform or inflexible, a method of collecting and distributing contributions should be established in each diocese and nation and on a world-wide level. Whenever it seems appropriate, there should be joint action between Catholics and other Christians. The spirit of Charity, far from forbidding prudence and orderliness in social and charitable action, in fact demands them. Those intending to serve the developing countries must therefore undergo appropriate and systematic training.

In order to foster and encourage cooperation among men, the Church must be present and active in the community of nations. It must work through its own public organizations with the full and sincere cooperation of all Christians in their one desire to serve all mankind.

This end will be more effectively achieved if the faithful are themselves conscious of their human and Christian responsibilities and seek to awaken among those in their own walk of life a readiness to cooperate with the international community. Special care should be taken to give this kind of formation to young people in their religious and secular education.

Finally, it is to be hoped that, in carrying out their responsibilities in the international community, Catholics will seek to cooperate actively and constructively with other Christians, who profess the same Gospel of love, and with all men who hunger and thirst for true peace.



The **Spirituality of Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation** was defined by Pope Paul VI: the mission of Justice and Peace is that of “keeping the eyes of the Church open, its heart sensitive and its hand prepared for the work of charity which it is called upon to realize in the world.”

Our fraternities are clearly called to help the brothers and sisters live their faith in the world, helping them to understand and act on the social dimensions of the gospel in their everyday lives. Like Saint Francis, we are not only called to rebuild the church, we are called to be like our Incarnate God, who is attentive and present to all of life and creation.

*“The Spirituality of Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation is not a new concept. It’s been in the Franciscan family for some 800 years. It is not about running around with picket signs (although that could happen). It has to be based on, and then bubble up from, the Gospel...We are people of the Spirit, so our Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation is a spirituality.*

*“Our lives are Gospel-centered. That means Franciscans are pro-life. I’m talking about reverence for all of creation. It is better to love than to be right because our vocation, our calling, is to reconciliation. We are instruments of bringing about the kingdom of heaven...That’s what we mean about Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation.”*

~ Friar Pio Jackson, OFM (Province of the Sacred Heart) at JPIC Rally, 2012

## **The Franciscan Call As Gospel People**

Encouraged by the teaching found in documents like *Rerum Novarum* (1891), many in the Church were increasingly concerned with finding solutions to social and political problems. But it was with the Second Vatican Council, especially *Gaudium et Spes* (1965), that a clear commitment to social and political action became directly associated with the mission received from Christ: “*Christ did not bequeath to the Church a mission in the political, economic or social order; the purpose he assigned to it was a religious one. But this religious mission can be the source of commitment, direction and vigor to establish and consolidate the human community according to the law of God*” (GS 42).

In *Gaudium et Spes* there is a positive evaluation of the world as something that has been created by God, redeemed by Christ and called to fullness. There is an appreciation for historical reality, the place where God reveals Himself as the Redeemer of humankind. The Second Vatican Council directed the whole Church and every Christian to serve the world by building the Kingdom. This orientation is described in the famous opening statement of *Gaudium et Spes*: “The joys and the hopes, the griefs and the anxieties of the people of our time, especially those who are poor or in any way afflicted, are the joys and the hopes the griefs and the anxieties of the followers of Christ” (GS 1).

## The Role of Secular Franciscans in Society

As Secular Franciscans, we commit ourselves to live the Gospel according to Franciscan spirituality in our secular state. We are called to make our own contribution, inspired by the person and message of our Seraphic Father Francis, towards a world in which the dignity of the human person, shared responsibility, and peace and love may be living realities.

Let us give thanks to our God and Father, our brother and Redeemer, Jesus and the Spirit of Love for the holy charism that was poured forth by our Seraphic Father Francis.

*“Franciscans are social in nature. Franciscans live the Gospel in public, in the public sphere, not in individual privacy. The Incarnation was and is a social event. I repeat: a social event. It’s a big party! Let’s make it good! Our “evangelical life” orients us toward engaging society and its members. We care for everyone in society, and thus the common good has a prominent role in the Franciscan tradition. There is universality to our social vision, and we should be able to contribute something to the globalization of human culture today.*

*“Franciscans are action-oriented. For us, learning, study, and philosophy are, at least in part, derivative of a human social experience, of action, of serving, of loving. This too is rooted in the Incarnation: Christ’s embodied action.*

*“We practice a spirituality of social engagement, in dialogue with society, the needs of its members, especially the suffering and vulnerable. At our best, we Franciscans are creative, manifesting the creativity of God through our social innovation. This may be pastoral, practical, prophetic, or some combination of the above.*

*“Franciscans are not content with understanding alone. We want to express our understandings through love, through practical action.”*

~ Keith Douglass Warner, OFM



## **From the Apostolic Commissions to Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation (JPIC)**

Through prayer and study, the Ad Hoc Committee discerned that a Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation (JPIC) model, would at this time, best serve the Secular Franciscan Order in fostering greater understanding and living of the Gospel.

The proposal of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Commissions on October 5, 2007: *The structure of the Apostolic Commissions will cease in its current form. In its place will be a Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation (JPIC) team (up to 4 persons) with a keen awareness of Articles 14 – 19 of the Rule and of the social issues before the USCCB.*

The task was not simply to create a new structure but rather to re-integrate Articles 14-19 into our lived expression of the Rule. The motion at the October 2007 Chapter was: *“to accept the recommendations of the ad hoc committee on the Commissions to restructure the Apostolic Commissions to one Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation Committee.”* The proposal was accepted by all voting members at the NAFRA Chapter.

*“While remaining autonomous, this change in title and structure will give the Secular Franciscan Order a closer partnering with other entities in the Franciscan family and the Church.”* (From the proposal document)

The National Executive Council (NEC) expects regional fraternities to collaborate with the JPIC team and to disseminate information to the local fraternities. The NEC expects the regional fraternities to consider a JPIC person or team focus.

**Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation**, which encompasses family, work, ecology, and peace and justice; **encourages the living of the Rule as related to the apostolic activities from the point of view of who we are.**

The intention is to renew the vision of who we are called to be. *“In the spirit of conversion, they should live out their love for the renewal of the Church, which should be accompanied by personal and communal renewal. The fruits of conversion, which is a response to the love of God, as works of charity are the interactions with the brothers and sisters”* (General Constitutions, Art. 13.2).

~ From TAU-USA Winter 2007



*“Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation, fully living the Secular Franciscan Rule, responds to the call of the Church in the twenty-first century. The apostolic commissions, combined to form JPIC, allow for the maturation of the secular Franciscan charism.”* ~ Pat Brandwein-Ball, TAU-USA, Summer 2008

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In May of 2008, members of the JPIC Transition Committee met to work out a structure for JPIC. The intentions then are much the same as today:

- Continue apostolic works in which you are currently engaged
- Appoint a JPIC coordinator to disseminate information
- Collaborate with your respective formation commission in reviewing ways to stimulate theological reflection and discussion of materials from CIOFS
- Explore local parish and diocesan websites for information on issues pertinent to your area; develop a personal Franciscan response
- Sign up for the SFOPJNET Group
- Develop a database of contact persons for each fraternity for JPIC purposes

The initial emphasis on JPIC grounds us in an examination of our Rule and General Constitutions. Recall that the Constitutions give flesh to the meaning of the day to day manifestation of our life as a penitent. The penitential life draws us ever more deeply into union with God by His grace and our conversion – turning from the ways of the world to the ways of a Gospel life. Jesus, the Incarnate Word of the Father, entered human history to make known the way to the Father.

Our Rule comes out of the Vatican II Council. But...all of the laity are called to conversion and evangelization: acting from grace to bring Christ into the world directly. This takes many forms and each of us is gifted in diverse ways. All of our gifts are necessary to build up the Kingdom already begun in this life. Our particular *penitential way* draws us by Profession into the life and mission of the Church more intimately.

~ Pat Brandwein-Ball, TAU-USA, 2008



## **JPIC Mission Statement**

*The mission of JPIC is to assist the Professed Secular Franciscans as they reflect on their relationship with God as manifested in the fruits of conversion in their lives.  
This with special regard to the daily choices made in the areas of justice, peace making and respect for all created things and people; as brothers and sisters of penance,  
bringing life to the Gospel and the Gospel to Life.*

## **Goals of JPIC**

- To foster an atmosphere in fraternity, the privileged place, where with openness and trust, we may share with each other, the manner in which our personal conversions are shaping our Franciscan lives.
- To reinforce the appreciation of the dignity of the human person in the choices made in our professed lives by responding in charity and patience to all we meet and to respond as Franciscans to anything which would denigrate the dignity of the human person, beginning with our own personal communications with one another.
- To assist in the living out of obedience to the common good as intended by God so that the professed Secular Franciscan builds up all that is good for all of Creation and does nothing which would damage the fabric of communal interdependence.
- To strengthen the professed Secular Franciscans' commitment to solidarity with all of Creation enabling them to make those choices in life which would bring about a more fraternal and evangelical world.

~ From the **FUN Manual**



SPIRITUALITY

FORMATION



FRATERNITY

APOSTOLATE

The **JPIC BE-Attitudes Diagram** is our guiding force for JPIC Animation. The JPIC BE-Attitudes are the way of BE-ing, then doing, peace and justice. We begin with the **Four Pillars**, which were created by the **Brothers and Sisters of Saint Francis Region** in 2004. These four pillars, **Spirituality, Formation, Fraternity, and Apostolate**, are the foundations we use to access how deeply we are living our Franciscan charism – how we are *being* Christ in the world. When these pillars are lived out deeply and authentically, then conversion is allowed to happen.

*The interplay among the Four Pillars addresses the content, the approach, the living, and the sharing of the Secular Franciscan life.*

- † ***Spirituality Pillar** are aimed at providing the materials for a Franciscan identity and mindset; with this material,*
- † ***Formation Pillar** is intended to mold and shape the individual progressively throughout Orientation, Initial Formation, and Ongoing Formation;*
- † ***Fraternity Pillar** is the interactive piece aimed at living the formed spirituality with those who are on the same journey;*
- † ***Apostolate Pillar** has a twofold intent ... working with and for ... working with fellow Franciscans in a cooperative, collaborative, manner respecting the gifts and person of each member of the group – the service rendered is a Gospel response, in and of itself laudable, yet the added factor is this service is done by a group who is ‘of one mind and one heart’ ... a seamless garment if you will ... communicating an example of the early Christian community. In fraternity the ideal is to recognize the gifts God provides in sisters and brothers, forging a bond and this community of sisters and brothers simultaneously ministering not only to the needs of others but also witnessing to the Franciscan identity by the manner in which the ministry is dispensed.*

The Four Pillars give us developed focus to live authentically *The Rule of the Secular Franciscan Order*.

~ From the **BSSF Regional Formators’ Guidelines for Orientation and Initial Formation, 2010**

Then, the guiding texts for being a Secular who does justice are the **Gospels**, our **Holy Rule** and our rich and prolific **Catholic Social Teaching**. Studying and following these texts on a consistent basis must be an inherent part of being a Secular Franciscan.

### **Contemplate, Education, Animate**

Finally, we must not forget about the interior life. Mother Teresa said everything begins in prayer! Not merely passing or casual prayer; but deeply discerning and heart-filled prayer. This discernment should begin with the question: “*Who am I?*” Not merely what are my roles and responsibilities; but who am I when all of the roles and responsibilities no longer define. After your period of discernment and the Holy Spirit reveals what is yours to do, then you need to educate yourself on the issues that speak to you. Education is not just reading a lot of books. It includes active listening – listening to the stories of those affected by the plight you are undertaking. After prayerful study and reflection, then and only then, are you prepared to animate others. It is said you cannot give away what you do not have. Fill up your own spirit tank before you attempt to fill up your brother's or sister's tank.

Conversion happens when the Spirit prompts us to question our priorities, our desires, and our very selves. That prompting unsettles us and at the same time, enlightens and inspires us. But conversion isn't just about you and me – it's about Jesus. We not only see ourselves in a new light, but we also see Jesus in all His glory – as in the Transfiguration. It becomes a Mount Tabor experience. Seeing who Jesus is, we also get a glimpse of who we can become. As the Apostle Paul says, “Christ in me is the hope of glory!” That hope, that vision is so compelling that we turn fully towards peace and compassion – and away from that which is not peace or compassion.

## **THE ROLE AND MISSION OF THE JPIC ANIMATOR**

Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation is an integrative dimension of our vocation, just like prayer, fraternity, formation and evangelization. In our life, all of these dimensions are distinct, yet connected, and woven together to create a fabric of our unique Franciscan way of being.

Living JPIC values affects our prayer and fraternities, and also the way we see reality, the economy, style of life and mission. Living JPIC values makes our prayer and our celebration of the Eucharist more present to the realities of our society and the world around us. It encourages us to apply the Word to these realities, and to read Scripture from the perspective of the poor. Living JPIC values encourages us to foster peace in our relationships with our sisters and brothers, to learn to resolve conflicts in nonviolent ways, and to live pardon and reconciliation.

JPIC values are lived in relationships, in and through our fraternal life. JPIC cannot be lived if it is not based on a personal encounter with Jesus Christ, and on listening to God in the Scriptures, in the Church, in people (especially the poor), and in the events of our world. JPIC cannot be the work of loners who function outside the fraternity, but of members dedicated to life in fraternity.

The values of JPIC are lived from the perspective of minority, adopting the life and condition of the little ones in society inserted into the reality of the world, practicing respect for creation, and walking the paths of nonviolence and solidarity with the marginalized and excluded. The work of transformation proposed by JPIC is not simply social work, but it is an evangelizing mission based on the call we receive from the Lord Jesus to announce the Kingdom in word and deed. In the spirit of the Gospels, our Holy Rule and Catholic Social Teaching, we strive to respond respectfully to all whether they agree or disagree with our positions.

### **The Role of the Animator of Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation**

The principal responsibility of a JPIC Animator is to encourage the members to become involved with peace and justice issues and not just do the work themselves. The Animator must animate and guide the members, by word, deed and ideas that JPIC is an integral part of their vocation and not an optional extra. Every member is responsible for the personal and fraternal living out of the JPIC values. It is not the exclusive responsibility of those who happen to be named.

- The Animator should be a professed Secular who is prepared, who loves the poor, and who has time to accomplish the role.
  - A candidate who is well-qualified can be named Animator as long as a professed member companions with him/her.
  - If a local or regional fraternity has not assigned a JPIC Animator, then either one of the Councilors-At-Large or the Vice Minister must assume the responsibility of Animator by receiving and disseminating information from the National JPIC Animator.
- Animators must always work closely with the local or regional councils. They must attend council meetings and report on tasks and apostolate updates. They must be a conduit of information, especially from the National JPIC Animator. They must be open to feedback from the council, working collaboratively with the council. JPIC Animation is not a one-person show; it is the work of the entire fraternity and region.
- Animators must be dedicated to prayer as it is the Kingdom of God and God's passion for the world and for all people that we are called.
- Animators must be on the lookout for new ways of understanding and always remember the attitude of Jesus who stripped Himself of glory to enter into solidarity with us, to make himself brother to all, including the marginalized. Animators must seek to live this attitude, putting themselves above no one, and being with and for the little ones, the less important ones.
- Animators must bring awareness to the reality of the world around us, both near and far: of the inequalities and injustices; of the need to rethink our lifestyle and mission in light of the Gospels, our Holy Rule, Catholic Social Teaching and our Franciscan charism.

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- They are to inform the members on issues that have to do with justice, peace, human rights and the integrity of creation; to discover the causes that generate these problems and the people affected by them. This can be done by offering them reflection material, especially from Catholic Social Teaching and our Franciscan spirituality, which will help them to develop Christian responses to these situations.
- Animators must be mindful and respectful of diversity and the differences we find among God's people, including in our fraternities and our faith communities. First and foremost, Animators must be mindful communicators – listening with mercy, speaking with understanding and exercising silence to allow the Holy Spirit to stir and move.

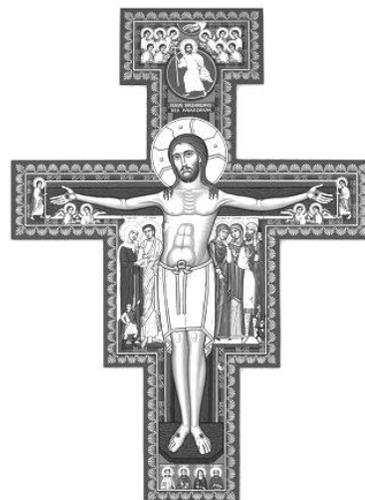
### **A JPIC Animator must ask these questions:**

- What am I doing or proposing to encourage the inclusion of JPIC values, projects etc., into the daily life of the fraternity or region?
- How can I support the fraternity or region with a particular JPIC ministry?
- What other issues does the fraternity or region need to address at this time?
- Am I animating and guiding the members in the spirit of mercy, compassion and truth?



## JPIC IN FORMATION

Francis was greatly influenced by his experience of God as Creator, and by following Jesus – whom he met in the San Damiano cross. He heeded the Gospel call to embrace the leper, and claimed himself brother of all people and of all creatures. Conversion for Francis was a lifetime journey, allowing him to pass from a life centered on self to a gradual conformity with the Lord. Following the example of St. Francis, we embark upon our own journey. Upon a solid foundation in the charism of St. Francis, we integrate these JPIC values into the formation of new members and the ongoing formation of current members. We strive for growth in our way of life, so that we can proclaim the Gospel and like Francis, embark on a journey of ongoing conversion, embracing reconciliation, peace, justice and care for all creation.



Between initial and ongoing formation there is not only a connection, but there is reciprocal and profound interaction. If formation truly is a continuous process of growth and conversion involving the whole of a person’s life, and if Franciscan formation seeks to form members in the totality of our charism, then formation to JPIC values is an essential part of this process and of our entire Franciscan life.

## Learning to Read the Signs of the Times

In order to confront the problems of our world we must first study them, along with their causes and effects. In scientific terms, this demands an “analysis of reality.” When we add a theological perspective to this process, it is called “reading the signs of the times.” Such a process involves the first two stages of the JPIC methodology: SEEING and JUDGING. “Seeing” demands much more than a simple glance at the world. Rather, we are invited to conduct a rigorous analysis of social conditions, their causes and the effects they have on people, especially on the poor and oppressed. After the analysis has been done, we are called to “judge” the situations described, making use of biblical insight, the tradition of the Church, theological reflection and the contemporary experience of the People of God who struggle to live their faith in justice. Reading the signs of the times is not something that happens automatically, but needs to be learned and practiced.

## RESOURCES FOR JPIC ANIMATORS

The National JPIC Commission suggests that each JPIC Animator have the following resources:

- The Rule of the Secular Franciscan Order
- The General Constitutions of the Secular Franciscan Order
- The National Statutes of the National Fraternity of the Secular Franciscan Order in the USA
- The Ritual of the Secular Franciscan Order
- Regional Guidelines (Each region should have these in place)
- The Holy Gospels
- The “For Up to Now” (FUN) Manual PLUS accompanying CD-Rom (includes essential documents of Catholic Social Teaching)
- Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church by the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, 2004
- Handbook for Secular Franciscan Servant Leadership, 2010 Edition



*“United by their vocation as ‘brothers and sisters of penance,’ and motivated by the dynamic power of the gospel, let them conform their thoughts and deeds to those of Christ by means of that radical interior change which the gospel itself calls ‘conversion.’ ~ From Article 7, OFS Rule*

## The Values of JPIC

The values of Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation are an essential element of our Christian life. The declaration of Jesus in Chapter 4 of Luke's Gospel, taken from Isaiah, underlines this idea:

*“The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me,  
Because He has anointed Me  
To preach the gospel to the poor;  
He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted,  
To proclaim liberty to the captives  
And recovery of sight to the blind,  
To set at liberty those who are oppressed;  
To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.”*

The bishops declared that: *“Action on behalf of justice and participation in the transformation of the world fully appear to us as a constitutive dimension of the preaching of the Gospel” (Justice in the World, Synod of Bishops, 1971).*

These values cannot simply remain on paper; they must be lived out in concrete ways in our daily lives. The task becomes more difficult in a world that is increasingly complex and violent. Our Rule has taken seriously the challenge to incarnate the values of JPIC.

*“Let them individually and collectively be in the forefront in promoting justice by the testimony of their human lives and their courageous initiatives. Especially in the field of public life, they should make definite choices in harmony with their faith.*

*“Mindful that they are bearers of peace which must be built up unceasingly, they should seek out ways of unity and fraternal harmony through dialogue, trusting in the presence of the divine seed in everyone and in the transforming power of love and pardon. Messengers of perfect joy in every circumstance, they should strive to bring joy and hope to others.”*

~ From Articles 15 & 19, OFS Rule



**Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation** is simply the Rule of the Secular Franciscan in action. Our Rule is based on the Gospels; JPIC is also based on the Gospels. It bubbles up from the Gospels. It is lived out from the Gospels. JPIC is not just something we do, it is who we are, as followers of Jesus in the way of Saint Francis of Assisi. It is an attitude that influences what we do and how we minister, with God, with ourselves, with other people and with creation.

The former Apostolic Commissions focused specifically on Articles 14-19 of our rule; pulling out peace and justice, work, family and ecology. JPIC embraces the wholeness of the rule, as do we who profess to that rule. The wholeness of the rule also includes prayer and contemplation, which is first and foremost, our fraternal communities as well as all our other communities – our parishes, our homes, wherever we congregate and minister, as well as Our Blessed Mother Mary, as Francis placed the protection of the Order in her hands.

Friar Francisco O’Conaire, OFM, Executive Secretary of the Interreligious JPIC Commission says: *The focus of Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation is to support the restoration of “right relationships”; with God, in oneself, between people and with creation. JPIC is about building a more just and harmonious world by making a preferential option for the most vulnerable in our societies, including the integrity and care for creation. JPIC is not just something we do, it is who we are. It is an attitude, a vision that influences what we do and how we minister.*

Fr. Francisco goes on to say, *“The role of JPIC Animation is to remind us of the importance of living and promoting this dimension of the gospel. The role of a JPIC Animator is to help each person and community or fraternity to identify his/her own particular way of living and promoting JPIC values.”*

We have a Rule of Life that gives us the guidelines to being and doing peace, compassion, justice, and joy; of promoting JPIC values – building bridges of hope, of faith, of peace and compassion.

In his Letter to the Romans, the Apostle Paul wrote: *If possible and as much as depends on you, live peaceably with everyone* (Romans 12:18). Notice he did not say to live peaceably only if the other is peaceful as well. Knowing that peace begins within, Paul expressly says *“as much as depends on you.”* This means that your peace is your responsibility. There is a global tendency to point the finger of blame when there is a lack of peace. We blame our government, our nation, our enemies, our relatives, our bosses, and even our God. Again, this behavior takes the ownership off ourselves and places it outside of ourselves where we are powerless to do anything about it.

*“Peace is not an idea. Peace is not a political movement, not a theory or a dogma. Peace is a way of life: living mindfully in the present moment.... We must simply stop the endless wars that rage within... Imagine, if everyone stopped the war in themselves – there would be no seeds from which war could grow.” ~ Claude Thomas*

## In Terms of the Rule

**Justice, Peace, and the Integrity of Creation (JPIC)** “exists to bring about an awareness of the power of the OFS Rule to truly transform the life of the Secular Franciscan thereby having a Gospel effect on the world and our society. In its broadly based goals, it looks at the whole Rule in terms of peace making and bringing about a just society through the everyday experience of Secular Franciscans who, by right of the sacrament of Baptism, are called to create a more “fraternal and evangelical world.” (Guidelines for JPIC Committee)

Through the integration of our Profession – permanent commitment to Gospel living, The OFS Rule – our way of life, and the General Constitution – defines our identity as secular Franciscans. Candidates reflect upon the manner in which they respond to the vocation, “united more intimately with the Church... Go forth as witnesses and instruments of her mission among all people, proclaiming Christ by their life and words.” (Rule, Article 6)

The lived experience of Secular Franciscans will necessarily be expressed in what is just, peaceful, and respectful of all created things and people. (Translating the Mystery, prologue to the JPIC Mission Statement)

“In the spirit of conversion, they should live out their love for the renewal of the Church, which should be accompanied by personal and communal renewal. The fruits of conversion, which is a response to the love of God, as works of charity, are the interactions with the brothers and sisters.” (GC, Art 13.2)

For now, the focus is on “being” secular Franciscan, (purposeful lowercase ‘s’). Our being, our Franciscan essence, springs forth from our many and continual conversions. Opening ourselves to God’s grace, waiting expectantly, we gradually see the truth of who we are and gain a glimpse of who we are invited to be by God, “to be truly myself, to fulfill all the dimensions of who I am in myself and in God.” (15 Days of Prayer with Saint Francis of Assisi, Thaddee Matura, 2009)

Authentic conversion leads to life in Christ, not only for us but also for all people and all creation. Our eyes open to the needs of others; our hearts are moved to respond as we become Gospel people. “Thus it is evident to everyone that all the faithful of Christ, of whatever rank or status, are called to the fullness of the Christian life and to the perfection of charity; by this holiness as such, a more human manner of living is promoted in this earthly society. In order that the faithful may reach this perfection, they must use their strength according as they have received it, as a gift from Christ. They must follow in his footsteps and conform themselves to his image, seeking the will of the Father in all things. They must devote themselves with all their being to the glory of God and the service of their neighbor. In this way, the holiness of the People of God will grow into an abundant harvest of good, as is admirably shown by the life of so many saints in Church History.” (Lumen Gentium 40.2)

## Handbook for Animators of Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation (JPIC)

One of the saints who lived this life was Francis of Assisi; the Rule of life given to the Secular Franciscan Order by the Church gives expression to his manner of life according to the needs of the church today.

Our Rule, our penitential life, and our whole way of living are now more than ever hinged on the Catholic Social Teaching concerning the Dignity of the Human Person. The dignity of every human person comes from God. In the Genesis story of creation, God specifically created humankind. We were not created with the other animals. We were created out of the dust of the earth...an already created thing, not nothingness. Once formed, we are breathed into life by God; His very breath quickened us. No other creature has this distinction.

We are created in the image and likeness of God, image of the Son Jesus Christ, body and soul. Our soul is given specific faculties: intellect, memory, and will. These will remain forever with us. Created in the image of God who is in eternal relationship, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, we are thus social beings. Our human nature requires us to be in relationship. Created by the same Father we are of one and the same human family.

We have talked about the personal conversion and the everyday circumstances of life. This is a necessary first step to understanding JPIC. The second intention of JPIC is on a larger scale. Secular Franciscans work diligently with other Secular Franciscans, other members of the Franciscan family, and the whole Church to bring gospel values to all people through courageous initiatives to make changes in society at every level.

This requires recognizing the signs of the times, knowledge of issues of our day and Catholic Social Teaching in a Franciscan light. Thus aware of the needs of others we unite our voices to strengthen the call for and support legislation with preferential option for the poor and marginalized, upholding the dignity of life in every circumstance, striving “to create conditions of life worthy of people redeemed by Christ.” (Rule, Art 13)

In the General Constitutions, Article 18.3 states, “They should work together with movements which promote the building of fraternity among peoples: they should be committed to create worthy conditions of life for all and to work for the freedom of all people.”

*~ Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation from the **FUN Manual***



## BEING Peace

In his **Testament**, Francis tells us that “*the Lord revealed a greeting to me that we should say: ‘May the Lord give you peace.’*” Saint Bonaventure recalls, “*At the beginning and end of every sermon [Francis] announced peace; in every greeting he wished for peace.*” Both Francis and Clare greeted the people of Assisi with *Pace e Bene! Peace and Good!* As Franciscans, peace must be at the center of all our comings and goings.

Pope Emeritus, Benedict XVI says, “*Peace concerns the human person as a whole, and it involves complete commitment. It is peace with God through a life lived according to his will. It is interior peace with oneself, and exterior peace with our neighbors and all creation.*”

He also says, “*Like Francis, always start with yourselves. We are the first house that God wants to restore. If you are always able to renew yourselves in the spirit of the Gospel, you will continue to assist the pastors of the Church to make more and more beautiful the Church's face, that of the bride of Christ.*”

**1. Rule Paragraph 14** \* Secular Franciscans should always act as a leaven in the environment in which they live through the witness of their fraternal love and clear Christian motivations.

**2.** In the spirit of minority, they should opt for relationships which give preference to the poor and to those on the fringe of society, whether these be individuals or categories of persons or an entire people; they should collaborate in overcoming the exclusion of others and those forms of poverty that are the fruit of inefficiency and injustice.

\* **14.** Secular Franciscans, together with all people of good will, are called to build a more fraternal and evangelical world so that the kingdom of God may be brought about more effectively. Mindful that anyone “who follows Christ, the perfect man, becomes more of a man himself,” let them exercise their responsibilities competently in the Christian spirit of service.

~ Art. 19, OFS General Constitutions; Art 14, OFS Rule



*“Peace begins with each of us.... As we learn to appreciate ourselves and accept God’s gift of peace, we begin to radiate peace and love to others.”* ~ Rev. John Dear

*Peace is a gift before it becomes a task.* It is gift from Jesus “*My peace I bequeath to you, my own peace I give to you. A peace the world cannot give, this is my gift to you*” (Jn 14:27).

From the **ANIMATE PEACE PROGRAM**, we can begin by following the **PEACE Principles**, which embody the themes of our Catholic Social Teaching as well as our Gospel values.

**PRAYER** is the source and summit. Henri Nouwen once wrote, *“Prayer is the beginning and the end, the source and the fruit, the core and the content, the basis and the goal of all peacemaking. When we sit down to pray, we enter the presence of the God of peace who disarms our hearts. We make our peace with God, and God gives us the gift of peace. That’s where it all starts.”*

**Article 8** of our Rule begins: *“As Jesus was the true worshipper of the Father, so let prayer and contemplation be the soul of all they are and do.”* Everything we are and do must be embodied in a spirit of prayer. In the life of prayer, our wills and God’s grace act together. When we pray, we surrender our will to that of the God of peace.

In *Called to Follow Christ*, Fr. Benet Fonck’s commentary on our rule, he says, *“Prayer as an essential element of our Franciscan way of life puts us in intimate communication with God, puts us in touch with our own identity, and gives us the energy, strength, and determination to live the gospel more effectively.”*

**EMPATHY** is *the ability to imagine yourself in another's place and understand the other's feelings, desires, ideas, and actions; putting yourself in the shoes of the other. Instead of empathy, we tend instead to have a strong urge to give advice or reassurance and to explain our own position or feeling.* In *The Empathic Civilization*, author Jeremy Rifkin points out that empathy is essentially communicative and collaborative and not oriented to finger-pointing and competition. Empathy invites mutuality and hospitality.

*Believing we have to “fix” the situation and make others feel better prevents us from being present. The key ingredient of empathy is presence: we are wholly present with the other and what they are experiencing.*

*“People will forget what you said, people will forget what you did,  
but people will never forget how you made them feel.”*

**ACTIVE LISTENING** – *When we hear, we hear with just the ears. When we listen, we listen with the whole body – ears, eyes, heart, posture, mind – open and empty.* Many people wrongly assume that listening is a passive process of being silent while another person speaks. We may even believe that we are good listeners, but what we are often doing is listening selectively, making judgments about what is being said, thinking of ways to end the conversation or redirect the conversation in ways more pleasing to ourselves.

Dr. Marshall Rosenberg, author and animator of *Nonviolent Communication*, says, if someone is confronting you in a threatening manner, the most tactical question to ask is: ***What do you need me to understand?*** Then, just listen to them. Remember, the line in the **Peace Prayer**: *First seek to understand, then to be understood.* Most people who are confrontational just need to be heard.

**COMPASSION** – Author Robert Wright said, “*In the beginning there was compassion.*”

**Compassion is the recognition of another person’s suffering accompanied by the disposition to alleviate that suffering.** You witness the suffering of another, and your heart is moved to do something about it. This can only happen when your heart is at peace and not at war.

***Compassion moves us from something to something else: from empathy to action.***

**EVANGELICAL LOVE** – In the English language, we generally associate love with a feeling, and usually positive feelings. *Agapé* describes an unconditional love rooted in behavior toward others without regard to their due. It is the love of deliberate choice. When Jesus speaks of love in the Gospels, the word *agapé* is used, a love of behavior and choice, not a love of feeling.

Jesus left us two great Commandments: Love God and love our neighbor as ourselves. So, the greatest commandment is to love. It does seem a little silly to try to command somebody to feel a certain way for someone else. But Jesus is saying that we ought to *behave* well toward them. I cannot always control how I feel about other people but I certainly am in control of how I behave toward other people. Feelings can come and go depending upon the weather or your mood! “Love your enemies...” It is hard to feel good about our enemies; we are asked to act for their real good.

St. Thomas Aquinas said, “**Love is the effective willing of the good of the other.**”

Love is not an emotion, it is not a feeling – love is a choice, it is an act of the will; it is something that we do. Love is not something that happens to you, it is something that you do; it is a choice that you make. *What are you choosing? You are choosing the good of the other.* Not your good, but the good of the other. What is the best for the other?

So, how do we **do** love? We read in Paul’s First Letter to the Corinthians: *Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails.* (1 Cor. 13: 4-8)

**We do love by being patient, kind, humble, respectful, selfless, forgiving, honest and committed. Love is not about how you *feel* toward others but how you *behave* toward others.**

*“When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne. Before him will be gathered all the nations, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. And he will place the sheep on his right, but the goats on the left. Then the King will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.’ Then the righteous will answer him, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? And when did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? And when did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?’ And the King will answer them, ‘Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.’ ~ Matthew 25:31-40*



### **All fraternity members should participate in an apostolate**

Inspired by the example of St. Francis and by our Rule and Constitutions, Secular Franciscans should strive to serve our sisters and brothers and seek out ways to build a more fraternal and just world. We are called to act as God’s instruments to help bring about the New Creation. To this end, the National Fraternity urges all Secular Franciscans to participate in an apostolate, specifically in the five areas of focus from the Rule: ecology, family, peace and justice, work, and youth/young adults.

While it is clear that every Secular Franciscan should have an apostolate/service-oriented dimension to her or his life, it should also be clearly stated that each local fraternity is NOT required to embrace a specific apostolic work as a common apostolate of the entire fraternity. However, the lived experience of the members of a particular local fraternity may – and frequently does – inspire them to develop a common fraternity apostolate to which each and every member contributes in his or her own way. There is value to the corporate witness of a common apostolic endeavor, the image and the reality that this local group of Secular Franciscans as a *community* works together in providing service together can help develop and sustain a sense of cohesiveness within the fraternity. Thus, while local OFS fraternities are not required to sponsor a common apostolate, there are significant benefits which generally accrue to those that do.

~ From **Handbook for Secular Franciscan Servant Leadership**, 2010

**JPIC Animation – The JPIC-ky Activities Seculars Are Involved With**

- Newsletters
- Articles
- Newspaper Editorials
- Prayer & Contemplation
- Speaking Opportunities
  - Fraternities
  - Regions
  - Retreats
  - Churches
  - Outside Organizations
- Donate Blood
- Pro-Life Causes
- Laudato Si Studies
- Disabilities – Needs
- Shelters/Housing Needs
- Waste-free Thanksgiving
- Interfaith/Interreligious
  - Sultan and the Saint
- Emailings
- Soup Kitchens
- Food Pantries
- Days of Recollection/Prayer
- Sponsoring Events
- Medical Missions
- Care for Creation
  - Solar Panels
  - Monarch Butterflies
  - Beekeeping
  - Community Gardening
  - Recycling
  - Sanctuary for Birds
- Racism/Xenophobia – Social Issues
- Nonviolent Actions
- Conflict Resolution
- Restorative Justice
- Being a “Catalyst”
- Commission Liaisons
- Monthly Study Groups
- Re-entry Programs for Women
- Prison Ministry
- Hospital Chaplaincy
- International Day of Peace (Sept. 21<sup>st</sup>)
- Making Phone Calls
  - Congressional Representatives
  - Infirm Fraternity Members
- Just Neighbors
- Two Feet of Love in Action (USCCB)
- “Begging for Jesus” – go out and get it
- Fraternity Formation w/JPIC
- Catholic Worker Houses
- H2O Project
- Crafts/Culinary Activities
- St. Vincent de Paul Society
- Catholic Charities
- Pace e Bene/Campaign Nonviolence
- Habitat for Humanity
- Bread for the World
- Franciscan Action Network
- Franciscan Mission Service
- Franciscan Family Apostolate
- Franciscans International
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

**It’s about meeting people where they are...then stretching them**

**Localization: Identify the greatest need in your area, where the least is being done, that you can make an impact.**

~ Compiled by participants from the **2017 Animate Peace Gathering**

## CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING

In 1998, the United States Catholic Conference published *Sharing Catholic Social Teaching: Challenges and Directions, Reflections of the U.S. Catholic Bishops*. This report declares:

*It is clear that in some educational programs Catholic social teaching (CST) is not really shared or not sufficiently integral and explicit. As a result, far too many Catholics do not adequately understand that the social teaching of the Church is an essential part of Catholic faith. This poses a serious challenge for all Catholics, since it weakens our capacity to be a Church that is true to the demands of the Gospel.*

Thus, the Bishops “sought a renewed commitment to integrate and to share the riches of the Church’s social teaching in Catholic education and formation at every level. This was one of the most urgent challenges for the new millennium.”

The foundational conviction underlying Catholic social teaching is that God is at work in human history. This was true in biblical times; it is true today. God is at work healing and redeeming human history and inviting all people to participate in that work.

Catholic social teaching begins from a perspective of faith. It is the Church reflecting on its mission in the world today, helping us to think about how we relate to the world around us and the problems that we face. In fact it is one of the greatest treasures of our Catholic tradition.

Most would accept that CST in its current form began with the encyclical **Rerum Novarum** in 1891 and has continued until the present with **Evangelii Gaudium** in 2013 and **Laudato Si’** in 2015.

Drawing upon the Scriptures, its traditions and its knowledge of social and economic traditions around the world, the Church has produced a formidable body of principles by which social and economic activity can be judged.

The **Catechism of the Catholic Church** (#2423) gives three reasons for CST:

- To propose principles for reflection
- To provide criteria for judgment
- To give guidelines for action

It can be summarized as:

- authoritative Church teaching on social, political and economic issues;
- informed by Gospel values and the lived experience of Christian reflection;
- analyzing that experience from different historical, political and social contexts;
- providing principles for reflection, criteria for judgment and guidelines for action;
- thus helping us in our struggle to live our faith in justice and peace.

## **The Seven Themes of Catholic Social Teaching**

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

### **Life and Dignity of the Human Person**

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

### **Call to Family, Community, and Participation**

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

### **Rights and Responsibilities**

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

### **Option for the Poor and Vulnerable**

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

More on Option for the Poor and Vulnerable

### **The Dignity of Work and the Rights of Workers**

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

### **Solidarity**

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

### **Care for God's Creation**

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

~ **United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB)**



## The Consistent Ethic of Life

The substance of a Catholic position on a consistent ethic of life is rooted in a religious vision that acknowledges God as the creator and destiny of human life. It is God who establishes the centrality and sacred meaning of human life and existence.

The consistent ethic of life, articulated by Cardinal Joseph Bernadin in 1983, is a moral vision for life in community and is at the heart of the gospel, and the Church's social teaching. Human life is ordered and protected in a social context – by the rules and laws formulated in a society. In the Vatican II document, *Gaudium et Spes*, we see this clearly expressed,

*Because of this essential sociality that orders society to the good of the person, society, in turn, bears a duty to foster, promote, and to protect human life – from conception to natural death. (GS, 12)*

“The inalienable rights of the person must be recognized and respected by civil society and the political authority. These human rights depend neither on single individuals nor on parents; nor do they represent a concession made by society and the state; they belong to human nature and are inherent in the person by virtue of the creative act from which the person took his origin. Among such fundamental rights one should mention in this regard every human being's right to life and physical integrity from the moment of conception until death.’ ~ **The Catechism of the Catholic Church**, 2273



## From the Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church

*The proclamation of Jesus Christ, the “Good News” of salvation, love, justice and peace, is not readily received in today's world, devastated as it is by wars, poverty and injustices. For this very reason the men and women of our day have greater need than ever of the Gospel: of the faith that saves, of the hope that enlightens, of the charity that loves.*

*Discovering that they are loved by God, people come to understand their own transcendent dignity, they learn not to be satisfied with only themselves but to encounter their neighbor in a network of relationships that are ever more authentically human. Men and women who are made “new” by the love of God are able to change the rules and the quality of relationships, transforming even social structures. They are people capable of bringing peace where there is conflict, of building and nurturing fraternal relationships where there is hatred, of seeking justice where there prevails the exploitation of man by man. Only love is capable of radically transforming the relationships that men maintain among themselves. This is the perspective that allows every person of good will to perceive the broad horizons of justice and human development in truth and goodness. [4]*

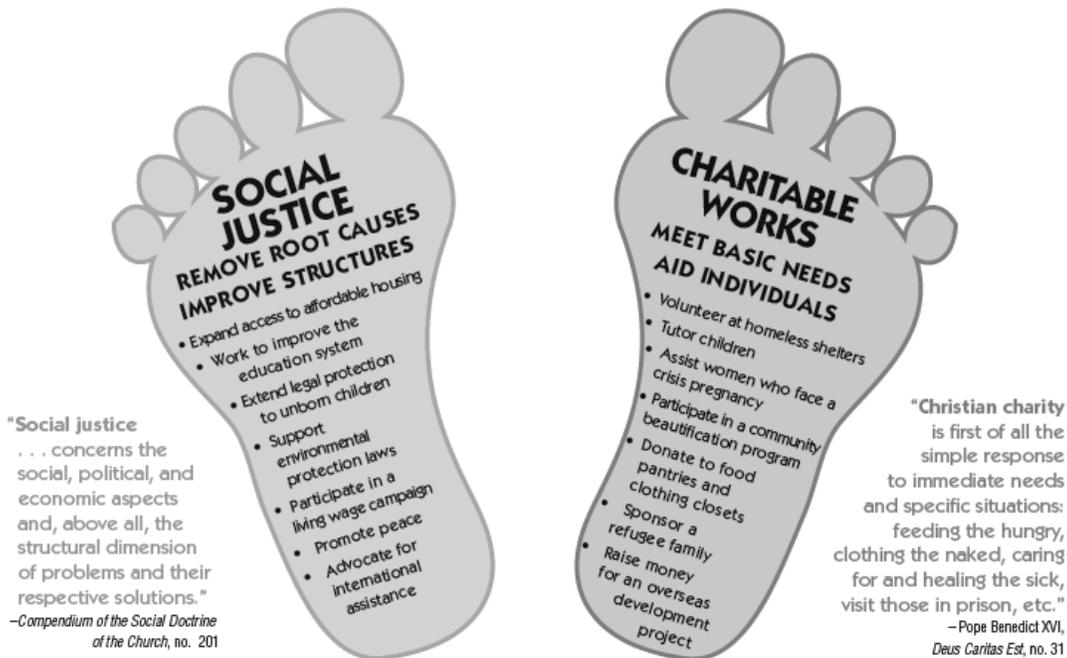
*Redemption begins with the Incarnation, by which the Son of God takes on all that is human, except sin, according to the solidarity established by the wisdom of the Divine Creator, and embraces everything in his gift of redeeming Love. Man is touched by this Love in the fullness of his being: a being that is corporeal and spiritual, that is in a solidary relationship with others. ... As bearer of the Gospel's message of Incarnation and Redemption, the Church can follow no other path: with her social doctrine and the effective action that springs from it, not only does she not hide her face or tone down her mission, but she is faithful to Christ and shows herself to men and women as “the universal sacrament of salvation.” [65]*

*The whole of the Church's social doctrine, in fact, develops from the principle that affirms the inviolable dignity of the human person. ... The relationship between God and man is reflected in the relational and social dimension of human nature. Man, in fact, is not a solitary being, but “a social being, and unless he relates himself to others he can neither live nor develop his potential.” [107, 110]*



# The Two Feet of Love *in Action*

Catholic disciples on mission are called to put **Two Feet of Love in Action!** This foundational tool describes two distinct, but complementary, ways we can put the Gospel in action in response to God's love: *social justice* (addressing systemic, root causes of problems that affect many people) and *charitable works* (short-term, emergency assistance for individuals).



**Social Justice** "concerns the social, political, and economic aspects and, above all, the structural dimension of problems and their respective solutions" (*Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, no. 201). We step with this foot when we work to address the *root causes* of problems facing our communities by advocating for just public policies and helping to change the social structures that contribute to suffering and injustice at home and around the world.

**Charitable Works** are our "response to immediate needs and specific situations: feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, caring for and healing the sick, visiting those in prison, etc." (*Deus Caritas Est*, no. 31). We step with the Charitable Works foot when we work to aid or assist others both locally and globally to meet their immediate, short-term needs. Examples include engaging in direct service or providing food, clothing, shelter, or monetary assistance to help those in need.

~ The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB)

From **Caritas in Veritate** (Charity in Truth), Pope Benedict XVI, 2009

*Charity goes beyond justice*, because to love is to give, to offer what is “mine” to the other; but it never lacks justice, which prompts us to give the other what is “his”, what is due to him by reason of his being or his acting.

I cannot “give” what is mine to the other, without first giving him what pertains to him in justice. If we love others with charity, then first of all we are just towards them. Not only is justice not extraneous to charity, not only is it not an alternative or parallel path to charity: justice is inseparable from charity, and intrinsic to it. Justice is the primary way of charity.

Charity always manifests God's love in human relationships as well, it gives theological and salvific value to all commitment for justice in the world. (6)

To love someone is to desire that person's good and to take effective steps to secure it. Besides the good of the individual, there is a good that is linked to living in society: the common good. It is the good of “all of us”, made up of individuals, families and intermediate groups who together constitute society. It is a good that is sought not for its own sake, but for the people who belong to the social community and who can only really and effectively pursue their good within it.



To desire the common good and strive towards it is a requirement of justice and charity. To take a stand for the common good is on the one hand to be solicitous for, and on the other hand to avail oneself of, that complex of institutions that give structure to the life of society, juridically, civilly, politically and culturally, making it the *pólis*, or “city”.

The more we strive to secure a common good corresponding to the real needs of our neighbors, the more effectively we love them. Every Christian is called to practice this charity.... (7)

***Peace is the work of justice and the effect of charity.***



## 125 YEARS OF PAPAL SOCIAL TEACHING

Since the end of the nineteenth century, popes have regularly written encyclicals dealing with the social, political, and economic concerns of their day (e.g., economic disparity, social revolutions, industrialization, war, etc.). These encyclicals, which are the foundation of modern Catholic social teaching, utilize the Church's scriptural, philosophical, and theological wisdom in order to propose a new way of living, based on true charity and justice.

### **Rerum Novarum:** On the Condition of Labor

Pope Leo XIII, 1891

Pope Leo XIII wrote the first social encyclical, *Rerum Novarum*, in response to the changes brought on by the Industrial Revolution and political upheaval in Europe. Pope Leo rejected socialism as a solution to the unequal distribution of wealth and instead upheld the right to private property and the right of workers to form associations.



### **Quadragesimo Anno** (In the Fortieth Year)

Pope Pius XI, 1931

Pope Pius XI wrote *Quadragesimo Anno* to commemorate the 40th anniversary of *Rerum Novarum*. Rejecting both communism and unbridled capitalism, Pius warned against the excessive concentrations of economic and political power, and articulated the principle of subsidiarity, namely that no higher level of organization should do what lesser and subordinate organizations can do.



### **Mater et Magistra** (Mother and Teacher)

Pope John XXIII, 1961

Pope John XXIII wrote on the anniversaries of *Rerum Novarum* and *Quadragesimo Anno*. Affirming the role of the Church as a mother and teacher of all nations, he reiterated the teaching of his two predecessors and focused on the new social questions of his time: the plight of depressed agricultural economies in relation to industrial ones, international aid and development, and scientific and technical advancements.



### **Pacem in Terris** (Peace on Earth)

Pope John XXIII, 1963

Covering the entire spectrum of relations between individuals, between the individual and public authorities, and between nations, John XXIII affirmed the inviolability of human rights and the Christian obligation to work toward lasting peace by following God's laws. Recognizing the threat of nuclear arms, he called for their elimination.



**Populorum Progressio** (On the Development of Peoples)

Pope Paul VI, 1967

The first pope to travel extensively around the globe, Pope Paul VI highlighted the ethical dimensions of global development. Peace is not just the absence of war, it is spiritual and human development.

**Octagesima Adveniens** (Eightieth Anniversary)

Pope Paul VI, 1971

In his apostolic letter written on the 80th anniversary of Rerum Novarum, Paul VI called on Christians (particularly the laity) to live up to the duty of participating in social and political reform as a way of discovering the truth and living out the Gospel.

**Laborem Exercens** (On Human Work)

Pope John Paul II, 1981

Celebrating the 90th anniversary of Rerum Novarum, Pope John Paul II explained that work is fundamental to human existence for it is a sharing in God's creation. Labor has a special dignity and priority over capital.

**Sollicitudo Rei Socialis** (On Social Concern)

Pope John Paul II, 1987

Pope John Paul II celebrated the 20th anniversary of Populorum Progressio by updating and extending Paul VI's teaching. Neither communism nor capitalism by themselves can ensure authentic development. While the Church has no technical solutions to offer, it is an "expert in humanity" that has something to say about what constitutes true progress.

**Centesimus Annus** (Hundredth Year)

Pope John Paul II, 1991

Writing on the 100th anniversary of Rerum Novarum and soon after the collapse of the Soviet Union, Pope John Paul II recognized the merits of market-based economies, but warned of the dangers of consumerism. Humanity has an essential "capacity for transcendence" which the Church safeguards.

**Evangelium Vitae** (The Gospel of Life)

Pope John Paul II, 1995

Pope John Paul II wrote Evangelium Vitae to highlight the most basic of all principles – the value and sacredness of all human life – and to call on Christians to build a new culture of life. Science and technology have produced new threats to human life: contraception, abortion, artificial reproduction, and euthanasia. He also articulated the Church's objections to capital punishment.





**Deus Caritas Est** (God Is Love)

Pope Benedict XVI, 2005

In a world where the name of God is sometimes associated with vengeance or even hatred, Pope Benedict XVI spoke of God's limitless love and the distinctive nature of Christian charity that we must show to one another.

**Caritas in Veritate** (Charity in Truth)

Pope Benedict XVI, 2009

Charity in truth, Pope Benedict wrote, to which Jesus Christ bore witness, is the principal driving force behind the authentic development of every person and of all humanity. The book of nature is one and indivisible: environment, human life, sexuality, marriage, family, social relations. Authentic development requires that we protect and nourish all these while relying on God's love and providence.

~ Adapted from the USCCB and the Office of Social Justice, Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis ~ April 2011

**Gaudium et Spes** – (The Joys and Hopes)

A 1965 document of the Second Vatican Council (1962 – 1965), promulgated by Pope Paul VI

This document underlines the need of the church to be completely immersed in human affairs and for the church to share the joys and hopes of all people.

**Dignitatis Humanae** – (Human Dignity)

A 1965 document of the Second Vatican Council (1962 – 1965)

This document is essentially a declaration of religious freedom and the call for all Christians to respect religious freedom; a freedom which must also be permitted by states. The church must be allowed to work freely, but compulsion or force must play no part in a person's response to God.

**Justitia in Mundo** – (Justice in the World) – 1971 Synod of Bishops

'Justice is a constitutive dimension of the preaching of the Gospel...' The Church must examine its conscience about its lifestyle and so witness to the Gospel. This document also stresses the importance of education for justice.



**Pope Francis I** is the 266<sup>th</sup> Pope and Bishop of Rome. Throughout his life, Pope Francis has been noted for his humility, his concern for the poor, and his commitment to dialogue as a way to build bridges between people of all backgrounds, beliefs, and faiths.

**Evangelii Gaudium** (Joy of the Gospel)  
Pope Francis I, 2013

“The joy of the Gospel fills the hearts and lives of all who encounter Jesus” – thus begins the Apostolic Exhortation, by which Pope Francis develops the theme of the proclamation of the Gospel in the contemporary world, drawn from, among other sources, the contribution of the work of the Synod held in the Vatican in October 2012 on the theme “The new evangelization for the transmission of the faith.”

### **Laudato Si: On Care for Our Common Home**

Pope Francis I, 2015

“*LAUDATO SI', mi' Signore*” – “*Praise be to you, my Lord*”. In the words of this beautiful canticle, Saint Francis of Assisi reminds us that our common home is like a sister with whom we share our life and a beautiful mother who opens her arms to embrace us. “Praise be to you, my Lord, through our Sister, Mother Earth, who sustains and governs us, and who produces various fruit with colored flowers and herbs”

**On Care for Our Common Home** (Laudato Si') is the new appeal from Pope Francis addressed to "every person living on this planet" for an inclusive dialogue about how we are shaping the future of our planet. Pope Francis calls the Church and the world to acknowledge the urgency of our environmental challenges and to join him in embarking on a new path. This encyclical is written with both hope and resolve, looking to our common future with candor and humility.



# Mindful Communication

*Mindful that they are bearers of peace which must be built up unceasingly, they should seek out ways of unity and fraternal harmony through dialogue, trusting in the presence of the divine seed in everyone and in the transforming power of love and pardon.” (OFS Rule, Art. 19)*

## *What does it mean to be mindful?*

Being mindful is merciful noticing. We tend to notice with criticism, cynicism, and judgment. We don't notice with purity of heart. We attach stories and agendas to what we notice. We give it labels and complain that what we notice is not as perfect as we would like it to be. Well, this is not merciful noticing; this is not being mindful.

When we notice mercifully, we just notice; suspending all agendas, all labels and all judgment. Nothing is attached except what is right there in front of you. Nothing has meaning until we assign it meaning. Nothing is bad or good, ugly or beautiful, perfect or imperfect until we make the judgment and attach the label. Otherwise, it just is. It is merely what it is. Nothing more. Nothing less.

Being mindful is not some new age concept – it is a way of living and being. Just like driving a car; it is neither spiritual nor unspiritual – it just is. You bring the spiritual element to driving, by driving mindfully, not cutting people off, driving by the speed limit, etc. So it is with mindful living. It is just a way of living and being by noticing without judgment.

Being mindful as Franciscans simply means living as Jesus and Saint Francis of Assisi – as our Holy Rule states. **It simply means being aware. But a certain kind of awareness – a non-judgmental awareness, present moment awareness, non-resistant awareness.**

Mindfulness, the practice of nonjudgmental awareness, can help us communicate more effectively and meaningfully with others in our personal, professional and fraternal lives. By talking to another person mindfully – that is, with awareness and giving them the full attention they deserve – we create connection and real opportunities for fraternal engagement and growth.

This is being mindful. This is communicating mindfully. Love, by its nature, is communication because it leads to openness and sharing.

## *Engaging as Jesus and Francis*

What if we changed the way we think about our conversations? What if, in those heated moments, we chose dialogue over debate? What if we chose to have mindful conversations? When we engage in mindful conversation or dialogue, we flip the script. We replace our ego and desire to win with a sense of curiosity, empathy and a desire to learn. Instead of coming from a place of judgment, we are genuinely interested in the other person: their experiences, values and concerns.

*“What we say and how we say it, our every word and gesture, ought to express God’s compassion, tenderness and forgiveness for all. Love, by its nature, is communication; it leads to openness and sharing. If our hearts and actions are inspired by charity, by divine love, then our communication will be touched by God’s own power.” ~ Pope Francis, World Communications Day 2016*

Think about your last handful of conversations. Were they safe spaces to share ideas, experiences and dreams? Or, could they very well have been in boxing rings where you came out fighting and the one with the loudest or strongest opinion won? And if so, did that leave you feeling fulfilled or flat?

Getting to a place of mindful dialogue or communication can be difficult. We tend to get fired up about what we are passionate about – especially when discussing politics or social justice issues. We can let our ego get in the way of truly hearing the other person’s perspective. As we tend to hear from our own experiences and perspectives anyway, mindful listening becomes even more challenging. When you are having a dialogue, practice mindful listening. Suspend your own judgment and story about what the other person is saying.

The 13th century Franciscan theologian Blessed John Duns Scotus described the term, *haecceitas*, Latin for “**thisness**” or the essence of a person or thing. It is what makes you, you – the distinct qualities, properties or characteristics of a person or thing that makes it that particular person or thing. Every single being on this planet was created and fashioned by God and worthy to be heard and understood.

Be curious about the “other”; their ideas, concerns, perspectives. Be willing to listen to them, even when you disagree; and by putting aside your ego and preconceived ideas, you are opened to limitless learning. And by asking questions, it allows the use of mindful dialogue to get to a place of true understanding. It allows you to disagree agreeably.

***“Between stimulus and response, there is a space. In that space is our power to choose our response. In our response lies our growth and our freedom.”***

~ Viktor Frankl, WWII Concentration Camp survivor and psychologist

You have that space. What are you choosing to fill it with? In your conversations, how are you filling that space?

We must engage in mindful and meaningful conversations that move us forward – not backward, or worse, not at all.

## ***Obstacles to Mindful Communication***

### **Unconscious Bias**

- automatic associations; the things that automatically come to mind when we experience certain stimuli
- an unaware, non-premeditated assumption that people make – could be verbal or non-verbal; can malign, insult, or snub people who are different (color, age, gender, physical ability, culture, language, etc.)
- your initial and automatic gut reactions or assumptions

***“Our minds reach conclusions without our knowledge.”*** ~ Malcolm Gladwell

## **Conflicts**

- competitive or opposing action of incompatibles;
- antagonistic state or action (as of divergent ideas, interests, or persons)
- mental struggle resulting from incompatible or opposing needs, drives, wishes, or external or internal demands

Conflicts are going to happen and that is a good thing. Conflicts are inevitable. Destructive conflicts are not. There are three conflict management styles: those who avoid; those who attack; and those who face the conflict as a challenge and move toward a resolution.

## **Dealing with Conflict**

Dealing with individuals who are belligerent, hostile, or noncompliant can be an everyday occurrence. Your effective response to this defensive behavior is often the key to avoiding a physical confrontation with an out-of-control individual.

### **Remain calm.**

This may be easier said than done, especially when the person is screaming, making threats, or using abusive language. Remember that the verbally escalating person is beginning to lose control. If the person senses that you are also losing control, the situation will probably get worse. Try to keep your cool, even when challenged, insulted, or threatened.

### **Isolate the individual.**

Onlookers, especially peers of the verbally escalating person, tend to fuel the fire. Try to isolate the person with whom you are verbally intervening. You will be more effective one-on-one than in a group setting.

### **Watch your body language.**

As a person becomes increasingly agitated, he will pay less attention to your words and more attention to your body language. Be aware of your use of space, posture, and gestures. Don't get too close to the person, and avoid gestures that might seem threatening. Make sure your nonverbal behavior is consistent with your verbal message.

### **Keep it simple.**

Be clear and direct in your message. Avoid jargon and complicated choices.

### **Use reflective questioning.**

Put the person's statements in your own words and then check with him to see if you have understood what he meant. By repeating or reflecting the person's message in the form of a question, you'll give him an opportunity to clarify that message. This reflective questioning is also a powerful way to let the person know that you care enough to listen carefully to his words.

### **Use silence.**

Surprisingly, silence is a very effective verbal intervention technique. Silence on your part allows the individual time to clarify her thoughts and restate her message. This often leads to valuable insight and clearer understanding of the true source of the person's conflict.

### **Watch your paraverbals.**

Paraverbal communication refers to the **tone**, **volume**, and **cadence** (rate and rhythm) of your speech. Many identical statements can have completely opposite meanings, depending on your paraverbals. For example, the question, “What’s wrong?” could be stated in a caring, supportive way or in an impatient, condescending way. Avoid double messages by making sure that your paraverbal communication is consistent with the words you use.

**While there is no guarantee that the person in your charge will not physically act out, following these seven principles will help you reduce the anxiety and defensiveness that often precede dangerous behavior.**

### **Lack of Empathy**

**Empathy** is the ability to imagine yourself in another's place and understand the other's feelings, desires, ideas, and actions; putting yourself in the shoes of the other. Instead of empathy, we tend instead to have a strong urge to give advice or reassurance and to explain our own position or feeling. Empathy requires focusing full attention on the other person’s message. We give to others the time and space they need to express themselves fully and to feel understood.

#### **Obstacles to Empathy**

- Advising: “I think you should...” “How come you didn’t...?”
- One-upping: “That’s nothing; wait’ll you hear what happened to me.”
- Educating: “This could turn into a very positive experience for you if you just...”
- Consoling: “It wasn’t your fault; you did the best you could.”
- Story-telling: “That reminds me of the time...”
- Shutting down: “Cheer up. Don’t feel so bad.”
- Sympathizing: “Oh, you poor thing...”
- Interrogating: “When did this begin?”
- Explaining: “I would have called but...”
- Correcting: “That’s not how it happened.”

Believing we have to “fix” the situation and make others feel better prevents us from being present. *The key ingredient of empathy is presence: we are wholly present with the other and what they are experiencing.*

*“People will forget what you said, people will forget what you did,  
but people will never forget how you made them feel.”*

## *Active Listening*

When we hear, we hear with just the ears. When we listen, we listen with the whole body – ears, eyes, heart, posture, mind – open and empty. Many people wrongly assume that listening is a passive process of being silent while another person speaks. We may even believe that we are good listeners, but what we are often doing is listening selectively, making judgments about what is being said, thinking of ways to end the conversation or redirect the conversation in ways more pleasing to ourselves.

*“One of the easiest human acts is also the most healing.*

*Listening to someone. Simply listening.*

*Not advising or coaching, but silently and fully listening. . . .*

*If we can speak our story, and know that others hear it, we are healed by that.”*

~ Margaret J. Wheatley

## *What is Ours To Do?*

Practice, practice, practice! Remember, practice does not make perfect if you are practicing the wrong thing. Practice only makes permanent! Practice each and every day living and being mindful. Speaking mindfully. Listening mindfully. And mindful silence. Soon, everything you do in your daily life will be a reflection of mindful living.

*Be Bold. Be Blessed.  
Live and Love Like Jesus!*



## PRAY THE OFS RULE

O Lord, our God, we intend to make present the charism of our Seraphic Father Francis in the life and mission of the Church, in various ways and forms but in life-giving union with one another. By our profession, we pledge ourselves to live the Gospel in the manner of St Francis by means of our Rule approved by the Church (Arts. 1-3). Help us, we pray, so that daily we may:

- observe the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ by following the example of Saint Francis, going from gospel to life and from life to the gospel (Art. 4);
- seek to encounter the living and active person of Jesus Christ in our brothers and sisters, in sacred scripture, in the Church and in the Eucharist (Art. 5);
- go forth as witnesses and instruments of the Church's mission among people, proclaiming Christ by our life and words (Art. 6);
- conform our thoughts and deeds to those of Christ by the radical interior change which the Gospel calls “conversion”, making use of the sacrament of reconciliation on the way to renewal (Art. 7);
- let prayer and contemplation be the soul of all we are and do (Art. 8);
- imitate the Virgin Mary's complete self-giving in her openness to your every word and call (Art. 9);
- faithfully fulfill the duties proper to our various circumstances in life (Art. 10);
- seek the proper spirit of detachment and purify our hearts from every tendency and yearning for possession and power (Art. 11);
- acquire the purity of heart needed to set ourselves free to love God and our brothers and sisters (Art. 12);
- accept all people as your gift, Lord, and an image of Christ (Art. 13);
- exercise our responsibilities competently in the Christian spirit of service (Art. 14);
- be in the forefront of promoting justice by the testimony of our human lives and by courageous initiatives (Art. 15);
- esteem work both as a gift and as a sharing in the creation, redemption and service of the human community (Art. 16);
- cultivate the Franciscan spirit of peace, fidelity and respect for life in our families, striving to make it a sign of a world already renewed in Christ (Art. 17);
- respect all creatures, animate and inanimate “as bearing the imprint of the Most High” (Art. 18);
- be bearers of peace and messengers of perfect joy in every circumstance, as immersed in the resurrection of Christ, we serenely tend towards Sister Death and our ultimate encounter with you, our Father (19).

All this we ask through Jesus Christ, our Lord and Brother. Amen.



## A Decalogue of Rules for Franciscan Dialogue

- Franciscan dialogue is animated by contemplative consciousness
- Enter the dialogue as a *minores*, avoiding quarrels and disputes while being subject to all
- Be honest and upright, bearing witness that you are a Christian
- Trust in the other, accepting his or her honesty and uprightness
- Live among others with different faith and life views without fear or suspicion
- Seize the initiative, as Pope Paul VI says “*We must be the first to ask people for a conversation, not waiting for them to request an encounter with us*”
- Share the Good News in word and deed, showing that this News is good more by what you do than by what you say
- Work for the betterment of your world, especially those in need
- Seek “*to understand rather than to be understood*” especially in your ability to listen
- And be an instrument of peace

God created this individual for whom I must have the utmost respect and reverence,  
which are virtues far beyond simple tolerance.

~ From **Build With Living Stones: Formation of Franciscan Life and Work**, 2015



## **The Peace Prayer**

(Attributed to Saint Francis of Assisi)

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace:  
where there is hatred, let me sow love;  
where there is injury, pardon;  
where there is doubt, faith;  
where there is despair, hope;  
where there is darkness, light;  
where there is sadness, joy.

O divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek  
to be consoled as to console,  
to be understood as to understand,  
to be loved as to love.

For it is in giving that we receive,  
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned,  
and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.  
Amen.



## A PRAYER FOR OUR EARTH

(From Laudato Si')

All-powerful God, you are present in the whole universe  
and in the smallest of your creatures.

You embrace with your tenderness all that exists.

Pour out upon us the power of your love,  
that we may protect life and beauty.

Fill us with peace, that we may live  
as brothers and sisters, harming no one.

O God of the poor, help us to rescue the abandoned and forgotten of this earth,  
so precious in your eyes.

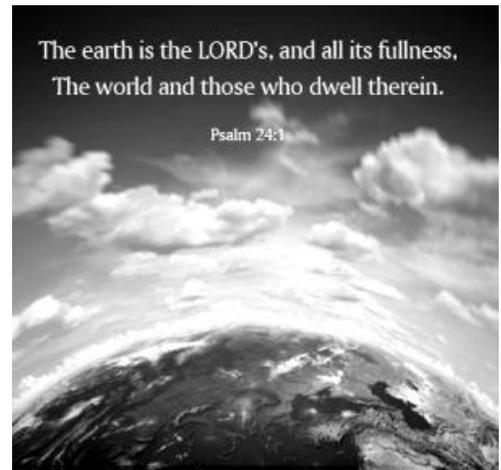
Bring healing to our lives,  
that we may protect the world and not prey on it,  
that we may sow beauty, not pollution and destruction.

Touch the hearts  
of those who look only for gain  
at the expense of the poor and the earth.

Teach us to discover the worth of each thing,  
to be filled with awe and contemplation,  
to recognize that we are profoundly united with every  
creature as we journey towards your infinite light.

We thank you for being with us each day.  
Encourage us, we pray, in our struggle  
for justice, love and peace.

Amen.



## **The Canticle of Creation**

*Most High, all-powerful, good Lord,  
Yours are the praises, the glory, and the honor, and all blessing,*

*To You alone, Most High, do they belong,  
and no human is worthy to mention Your name.*

*Praised be You, my Lord, with all Your creatures,  
especially Sir Brother Sun,  
Who is the day and through whom You give us light.  
And he is beautiful and radiant with great splendor;  
and bears a likeness of You, Most High One.*

*Praised be You, my Lord, through Sister Moon and the stars,  
in heaven You formed them clear and precious and beautiful.*

*Praised be You, my Lord, through Brother Wind,  
and through the air, cloudy and serene, and every kind of weather,  
through whom You give sustenance to Your creatures.*

*Praised be You, my Lord, through Sister Water,  
who is very useful and humble and precious and chaste.*

*Praised be You, my Lord, through Brother Fire,  
through whom You light the night,  
and he is beautiful and playful and robust and strong.*

*Praised be You, my Lord, through our Sister Mother Earth,  
who sustains and governs us,  
and who produces various fruit with colored flowers and herbs.*

*Praised be You, my Lord, through those who give pardon for Your love,  
and bear infirmity and tribulation.*

*Blessed are those who endure in peace  
for by You, Most High, shall they be crowned.*

*Praised be You, my Lord, through our Sister Bodily Death,  
from whom no one living can escape.*

*Woe to those who die in mortal sin.  
Blessed are those whom death will find in Your most holy will,  
for the second death shall do them no harm.*

*Praise and bless my Lord and give Him thanks  
and serve Him with great humility.*

**Notes**

