

Conference of National Spiritual Assistants

Secular Franciscan Order

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Monthly Spiritual Message September 2020

THE MERCY OF GOD AND “LAUDATO SI” IN POPE FRANCIS AND ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI (Part 3)

We are also God’s gift to one another.

When we fail to acknowledge as part of our reality the worth of the poor person. A human embryo, a person with disabilities, it is difficult to hear the cry of nature itself.

This quality of life affects everyone on the planet.

The Pope calls on society as a whole, and states in particular to defend and promote the common good, showing in a special way solidarity with the preferential option for the poorest of our brothers and sisters.

The Pope writes: “Many things have to change course, but it is human beings above all who need to change.”

Appealing through the example of St. Francis of Assisi he points out that a healthy relationship creation is one dimension over all personal conversion. St. Francis’ life was marked by simplicity and sobriety. It was a liberating way of living to the full.

Francis shows us that we are capable of shedding unsatisfied needs, reducing our obsessions and weariness and even living on little.

Pope Francis then goes on to speaking about the need for being at peace with one’s own self, an inner peace closely related to care for our Mother Earth and for the common good.

In the context of love of creation, Pope Francis, challenges believers to return to the practice of giving thanks to remind us of our dependence on God for life, for the gifts of creation and for those who through their labors provide us with the necessities of life.

Pope Francis issues an impassioned plea: “We have had enough of immorality and the mockery of ethics, goodness, faith and honesty. It is time to acknowledge that light- hearted superficiality has done us no good. When the foundations of social life are corroded, what ensues are battles over conflicting interests, new forms of violence and brutality, and obstacles to the growth of genuine culture in care for the environment.”

Mercy is said to be a virtue of influencing one’s will to have compassion for, and if possible to alleviate another’s suffering.

Mercy also implies sin. God is love and mercy and that is what love looks like when it turns to the sinner.

Pope Francis very often calls the Church a field hospital as it is near the battlefield and so the seriously wounded are taken there for help and healing. The Church is near the People of God and so ministers to those seriously wounded by the dysfunction of society.

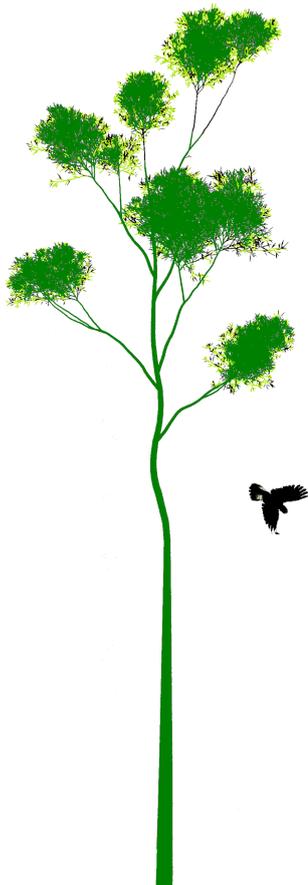
The Pope has often described himself as a sinner who is looked upon by the face of mercy.

He also speaks about the existence and actions of the Devil. There is one lie perpetrated by the Father of Lies that all are welcome in the Church on their own terms and not the person of Jesus Christ.

Peace and all good things!

Fr. Anthony P Fox OFMConv.
National Spiritual Assistant OFS

Please, distribute this Message to your Fraternity, including isolated members.



A sense of deep communion with the rest of nature
cannot be real
if our hearts lack tenderness, compassion and concern
for our fellow human beings.

It is clearly inconsistent
to combat trafficking in endangered species
while remaining completely indifferent to human trafficking,
unconcerned about the poor,
or undertaking to destroy another human being
deemed unwanted.

This compromises the very meaning of our struggle
for the sake of the environment.

It is no coincidence that,
in the canticle in which Saint Francis praises God
for his creatures, he goes on to say:
"Praised be you my Lord, through those who give pardon for your love".
Everything is connected!

Concern for the environment thus needs to be joined
to a sincere love for our fellow human beings
and an unwavering commitment to resolving the problems of society.

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