



FRANCISCAN VOCATION MINISTRY

SACRED HEART PROVINCE

A Gospel Movement

June 2009

CHANGE... CHANGING THE RULES... OUR RULE... The Rule and life of the Friars Minor is this, namely, to observe the Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. OUR RULE CHANGES EVERYTHING... BECOME A FRANCISCAN: www.befranciscan.com

More Than A Plan



Vocation discernment is not the same thing as planning one's life. Planning is good and necessary, but it should be done within the framework of the vocation one has discerned, not in place of discernment.

Typically, people who plan but don't discern organize their lives in light of goals that promise personal satisfaction. This may even be the satisfaction that comes from generous, altruistic deeds. But even where that's so, the difference between discerning and planning stands. The central issue for people who plan is: "What will make me happy? How can I get the most satisfaction for myself?" For those who discern, the fundamental question is: "What does God want from me?"

Paradoxically, of course, the disinterested approach turns out to be more satisfying - and more exciting. Fr. Walter Ciszek, S.J., the Polish-American priest who spent many years in prisons and prison camps in the Soviet Union during and after World War II, caught the essence of it in these words:

"God has a special purpose, a special love, a special providence for all those he has created. God cares for each of us individually, watches over us, provides for us. The circumstances of each day of our lives, of every moment of every day, are provided for us by him. .

Eucharistic Celebration Homily



"I feel that the Spirit is saying to us today: Friars Minor:

'courage!', 'don't be afraid' to allow yourselves to be conquered by Christ in order to be a prolongation of His humanity into the advance parties of the mission.

'courage!', 'don't be afraid' to broaden the space of your tent in order to go to the ends of the earth and to make the joys and the sadness of the poorest and of those who suffer your own.

'courage!', 'don't be afraid' to live more dependent on Christ each day, because in this way you will be better able to serve Him in others, especially in His suffering faces.

'courage!', 'don't be afraid' to allow yourselves to be seduced by the forgotten and inhuman cloisters, where the beauty and dignity of the person are continually stained because in embracing the lepers of today, you will be embracing Christ Himself, and while you are evangelising them, they will evangelise you.

'courage!', 'don't be afraid' to set up or re-establish constantly the dialogue of charity there where the present-day world is torn apart by ethnic hatred and homicidal madness. Be peace-makers, for in this way you will be witnesses to the God who is love.

Go, Friars Minor, the Spirit of the Lord continues to say to us today, not as owners of the truth, but as humble servants, and freely give what you received free. Go and announce their condition of sons and daughters of the same Father and your brothers to whoever you meet on the roads or in the city squares. Go and remember that the more your community life is fraternal, the more authentically will you be evangelisers. Go and, on the basis of a profound harmony with the person and work of Jesus Christ,

.. [This] means . . . that every moment of our life has a purpose, that every action of ours, no matter how dull or routine or trivial it may seem in itself, has a dignity and worth beyond human understanding. No man's life is insignificant in God's sight."

We find our personal vocations, and we accept or reject them, live them out or fail, in "the circumstances of each day of our lives, of every moment of every day." Not so coincidentally, finding God's will for oneself, accepting it, and living it out are what it means to be a saint.

Russell Shaw is the Washington correspondent for Our Sunday Visitor newspaper.

Jesus' Call for Disciples



Friars gather in front of Santa Maria Degli Angeli

Good men and women today are choosing religious life and the priesthood. Unfortunately, these usually aren't the ones who make the headlines. These people represent a wide range of backgrounds, ages and experiences. Perfect people from perfect homes--NOT! Yet they are wholesome and creative people who feel inspired to serve the people of God in a unique way.

The Church needs to strengthen its priestly and religious ranks with happy, healthy people who have a desire to make a difference in the Church and the world--even in the midst of struggle and confusion. We are looking for people for whom God is significant and who have a burning desire to be of service to others. The Church needs people who have leadership skills and can work well with a variety of people. No one is born a sister, brother or priest. Vocations are God-inspired and home-made.

When we look at the life of Jesus, we quickly notice that he was not halfhearted in calling

open up to new forms of presence and of evangelisation. Go and evangelise in company with the laity, men and women, young and old. Go, and wherever and whatever the activity you develop, give witness to evangelical values by being on the side of those people who do not know Jesus yet."

*Michael Perry, OFM
Vicar General*

Justice, Peace, and Integrity



Through the work of our Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation Office in Rome, and work of similar offices throughout the world, we raise the voice of those who are most affected and defend their fundamental human rights. Through our work with Franciscans International at the United Nations, a work that involves all branches of the Franciscan movement worldwide and with a collective voice of more than 800,000, we work with the international community in order to promote economic, political, cultural and social systems that respond to the needs of human beings and contribute to world peace and greater care for the environment.

We are not silent when human rights are violated anywhere in the world. We do not stand by when governments or corporations engage in unethical use of natural resources. Nor are we silent in the face of the more than 600,000 human beings, primarily women, girls and children, who are bought and sold - trafficked - for commercial sex or degrading labor. We are not silent because the Gospel and the invitation of St. Francis of Assisi, and that of the Church, require this of us as "brothers" to all of humanity and to creation.

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forth principles. Compelled to bring God's healing presence and reign into the world, he looked potential followers right in the eye and invited them to join him in his enterprise. He had a mission to fulfill and a message to share, and was not about to be stopped by challenges.

Jesus' call for disciples and co-workers must go out today as boldly as ever. His message and mission are still eminently worth sharing. To be a brother, priest or sister is a way of responding dramatically to that call, not the only way, but a highly significant way. Those who open themselves to the power of the Spirit and pursue these options today with faith are surely helping to bring about anew dawn in the Church.

The underlying goal is not to push more people into priesthood and religious life as if we were simply playing a numbers game. The goal is rather to call forth those among us who have what it takes to live and serve in this way. There is no denying that there are unresolved issues in today's Church and world. But as we continue to shape the Church of the future, we need generous and creative ministers among us. Consider it! This could be you, or someone you know.

Cathy Bertrand, a School Sister of Notre Dame

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We welcome you to the Franciscan vision of the world, a world where love is more powerful than hate, forgiveness more powerful than revenge, hope more powerful than despair, community more powerful than isolation and God is more powerful than all that mitigates against goodness and hope.

Become an instrument of change. Become a messenger of peace. Belong to something bigger than yourself...



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