

Elements of Franciscan Unity

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Baptism

Our Franciscan Orders understand that our Franciscan unity springs from our shared relationship with God through Holy Baptism. The waters of our birth in the name of the Triune God signify our unity in one baptism by one God.

This unity through baptism is the underpinning for our shared worship and witness as Franciscans.

Vocation

Our call to Franciscan vocation implies being conformed to the image of our Lord Jesus Christ by means of the radical interior change that the Gospel defines as conversion – taking up our cross daily to follow Christ. Our particular vocation is to observe the Gospel by following the example of Saints Francis and Clare of Assisi.

As members of Franciscan orders, we pledge ourselves, with life long intent, to live out our Franciscan vocation in community with our brothers and sisters.

Charism

As Franciscans, we see in the life of St. Francis of Assisi these gifts of the Holy Spirit: Holy Poverty (humility), love and joy. Through our Rules and through the individual and collective work of our Orders, we seek to manifest these gifts.

In our unified emulation of Francis, we seek to express a life that witnesses to poverty, love and joy.

Christ Centered

Franciscan spirituality is Christocentric to the extent that Francis fell in love with Jesus. This love transformed Francis' life. All that Francis did was shaped by what he saw in the Incarnation, and in the ministry and Passion of Jesus.

Franciscan spirituality is a way of life that is centered on the person of Jesus. Our unified mission as Franciscans is to make Jesus known to all – and to pray and work for the reconciliation of all creation.

Prophetic Voice

Fundamental to Franciscan spirituality is a commitment to strive for justice and peace among all people – and to affirm the inter-relationship and holiness of all creation. In a world torn asunder by conflict, divisions, intolerance and exploitation, our unified prophetic witness is an expression of God's light on a dark planet.

In our shared understanding of the spirit of Francis, we are called

- to courageous initiatives in the field of peace making and justice,
- to make definite choices in harmony with our faith whenever human dignity is attacked by any form of oppression, violence or indifference, and
- to protect and restore all of creation.

Joint Committee on Franciscan Unity

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