

INTRODUCTION TO THE SPIRITUAL LIFE
SESSION THREE—FRANCISCAN SPIRITUALITY
THEMES

Gospel Life/Walking in the Footsteps of Jesus

If you wish to be perfect, go, sell what you have and give it to the poor, and you shall have treasure in heaven. *Matt. 19:21* Take nothing for your journey. *Luke 9:3*

If any man will come after me, let him deny himself. *Matt. 16:24*

The rule and life of the Friars Minor is this: to live in obedience, in chastity, and without anything of their own, and to follow the teaching and the footprints of our Lord Jesus Christ. *Early Rule, St. Francis*

Poverty

The brothers shall not acquire anything as their own....Instead, as pilgrims and strangers in this world who serve the Lord in poverty and humility, let them go begging for alms with full trust. *Rule, St. Francis*

If we had any possessions we should be forced to have arms to protect them, since possessions are a cause of disputes and strife, and in many ways we should be hindered from loving God and our neighbor. *St. Francis*

Do not be disturbed by the clamor of the world which passes like a shadow. Do not let the false delights of a deceptive world deceive you. *St. Clare*

Obedience, Humility and Penance

(St. Francis) strove to bend his own will to the will of God. *Thomas of Celano*

Do penance, performing worthy fruits of penance since we will soon die....Confess all your sins...Beware and abstain from every evil and persevere in good till the end. *Exhortation, St. Francis*

Sinners are led back to God by holy meekness better than by cruel scolding.
St. Francis

Harmony and Love

St. Francis walked the world like the Pardon of God. *G.K.Chesterton*

The friars are bound to love one another because our Lord says, "This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you." *St. Francis*

Joy in God's Created Order

Canticle of Brother Sun and Sister Moon (see separate sheet)

Prayer and Service/Contemplation and Action

Place your mind before the mirror of eternity! Place your soul in the brilliance of glory! Place your heart in the figure of the divine substance! And transform your whole being into the image of the Godhead Itself through contemplation! So that you too may feel what His friends feel as they taste the hidden sweetness of God Himself has reserved from the beginning for those who love Him. *St. Clare*

Always be lovers of God and your souls and the souls of your Sisters, and always be eager to observe what you have promised the Lord. *St. Clare*

Preaching

And the minister should take care not to grant (permission to preach) to anyone indiscriminately. All the brothers, however, should preach by their deeds. *Early Rule, St. Francis*

I also admonish and exhort these brothers that, in their preaching, their words be well chosen and chaste...in a discourse that is brief, because it was in few words that the Lord preached while on earth. *Rule, St. Francis*

(Source: Patricia Blakely for EDFP, Fall, 2004)