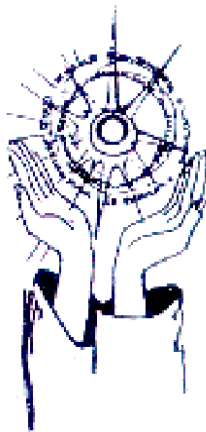


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THE EUCHARIST CENTER OF FRANCISCAN LIFE



Ask anyone what is characteristic of Franciscan spirituality and the likely answer is poverty. Though this is not wrong, there is yet another aspect of Franciscan spirituality that the Poverello of Assisi had left as a legacy to his followers: an intense reverence for the Body and Blood of Christ, also known as the Eucharist. In his letter to the Order, St. Francis urged "I implore all of you brothers to show all possible reverence and honour to the most Holy body and Blood of our Lord Jesus".

In the Eucharist, St. Francis found the ideal form of poverty - Almighty God in the humble form of bread and wine. The Eucharist is poverty made manifest. It was form of Incarnation of God's Son that St. Francis found inspiration for his own way of life. To appreciate the uniqueness of this spirituality we must first understand the historical background of medieval Europe and its predominant spirituality.

At the time prior to Francis' birth, monastic spirituality predominated. This spirituality was usually centered on the Risen Lord. It reflected the grandeur and glory of the triumph over death and sin. Hence the beautiful hymns which reflected the heavenly liturgy; the huge ornate churches reflected the wonders of heaven and earth. The ideal of medieval religious life was the monk, practitioner of the contemplative life, free to meditate on higher things, set apart from the world and its temptations. But it was far removed from the majority of the people who suffered poverty. The realities of medieval life was backbreaking labor for the majority of the population. At the same time, an intense debate and reflection on the Eucharist developed. Transubstantiation was declared at the 4th Lateran Council in 1215. Pope Urban IV established the feast of Corpus Christi in 1264.

pls. turn to page 2

THE EUCHARIST ... from page 7

Thomas Aquinas wrote his classic statement on the Eucharist in his *Summa Theologica* in 1272.

But Francis saw Christ in the grime and sweat of daily medieval Italy, beyond the walls of the monastery and theology. His experience of poverty found all around him convinced that Christ was equally among the poor people. For Francis, this self emptying into poverty was manifested in 3 ways: (1) when the Son of God took flesh to become like one of us, (2) when the Son of God took the form of Scriptures, and (3) when the Son of God took the form of bread and wine.

The FMM sisters adore the Eucharist daily for at least half an hour. The aim is to be another poor and helpless "Esther" interceding for her people, while at the same time transforming oneself. This is the greatest source of strength for an active-contemplative life that can be very demanding in the modern world. Blessed Mary of the Passion use to say *The greatest missionary of the Institute is Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament exposed and adored*. Set aside one and a half hours each for personal prayer and Eucharistic adoration; when this is not possible, compensate by intensive periods of prayer on a weekly basis; Christ whom we contemplate sends us out to our brothers and sisters in whom we discover his hidden presence. And our brothers and sisters send us back to the contemplation of Christ.

-from Franciscan Horizon



Sharing the charism to young people

Psalm 23 - For the Work Place

The Lord is my real boss, and I shall not want. He gives me peace, when chaos is all around me. He gently reminds me to pray and do all things without murmuring and complaining.

He reminds me that he is my source and not my job. He restores my sanity everyday and guides my decisions that I might honor him in all that I do.

Even though I face absurd amounts of e-mails, system crashes, unrealistic deadlines, budget cutbacks, gossiping co-workers, discriminating supervisors and an aging body that doesn't cooperate every morning, I still will not stop -- for He is with me! His presence, His peace, and His power will see me through.

He raises me up, even when they fail to promote me. He claims me as His own, even when the company threatens to let me go. His Faithfulness and love is better than any bonus check.

His retirement plan beats every 401k there is! When it's all said and done, I'll be working for Him a whole lot longer and for that, I BLESS HIS NAME!!!



**Need some quiet time
with the Lord?**

JOIN!

Young Professionals Retreat FMM Retreat House Tagaytay City

- Module III - Knowing and Encountering Jesus
September 15-16, 2007
- Module IV - Discipleship and Mission
December 15-16, 2007

Monthly Recollection

Starting August 19, 2007

Where: Stella Maris College—Cubao, Q.C.

Time: 9:00 a.m.— 12:00 noon

For more information:

Contact: 0920-5582340

Endless Love

A mother recalls her daughter's vocation

Ten years ago, one Saturday afternoon in July, my daughter told me, "Mom, I want to be a nun and I am entering the Convent." I was totally taken aback, for I never thought that she would have such an aspiration. I could not hold back my tears and cried, asking her why she had decided to become a nun. She said that she wanted to serve others, or other reasons that I did not want to know. I just told her, "My daughter, have you ever considered that carefully? Your decision just makes me feel bad!" She consoled me saying, "Mom, just let me try. If it is not suitable for me, I will come home" The days before she left, I could hardly eat or sleep. I did not even dare to mention this to her Dad.

Only in mid August did she break the news to her Dad, who was outraged. From that day on, he did not talk to her anymore. We all experienced sadness in the family. What worried me was that she would not get used to the ascetic life in the convent. I feared that she would be bullied... All because she is very dear to us and I felt that I had the responsibility to protect her.

Our daughter finally left for the Convent in Shatin in August; and in September, she was accepted and had her initiation ceremony that only her brothers and sisters attended. Her Dad and I did not join them. At first, she would pay us a visit every two weeks or at least once a month. I would prepare her beddings, just to let her feel that we are still expecting her. A year passed but she had no intention to return home. She told us instead that she would like to pursue the way of life that she had started off. Besides, she would not be visiting us in the following two years since she would be undergoing formation. My expectation was shattered and I was disappointed.



*Sr. Josephine Suen, FMM (left)
with her family*

But if she could not visit us, I could still visit her! From then on, I went to visit her in the convent all by myself. I brought her favourite food but the nuns told me that I do not have to do that. Yet how could I bear the sight of her slim figure?

Although I could see that life was happy for her and the other nuns treated her well, I was still attached to her. I did not want to tell others that my daughter went to the nunnery, fearing that they would throw queer looks on her. I waited for ten years. What she did confirmed to me that she really wanted to become a nun. Even if I was not a Catholic and did not know about her religion, I respected her decision as a grown up. I would be happy if she is happy. Now I have the courage to tell my relatives and friends that my daughter is a nun and her dad has accepted the fact.

I was so glad every time when I knew that she would be visiting us, and would prepare her favorite dishes. However, when departure came, naturally, I did not want her to leave. I do treasure the days when my daughter comes home. I always recommend that she take care of herself, especially when she has to go on a long journey, and to let us know her whereabouts, so that we will not worry about her. No matter what decisions in life she has taken, I feel that she is still my dear daughter.

Source: Franciscan Horizon

Finding Your Mission in Life



Knowing the purpose of our life is one of the most crucial insights we can have. But it is not an easy one to discover. The people around us, especially the elders, tend to consciously or unconsciously impose upon us their own values and missions, that many of us get confused as what our life mission really is.

Here are five things that can be done to help find one's life mission, according to Dr. Mark Thurston in his book *Soul-Purpose*, a work based on the teachings of Edgar Cayce:

*** Review your biography.**

List down event that crated a special feeling for you , those that make you feel that the "real you" is coming through, that you are doing something right. What does the list look like? Do you recognize any pattern in these events, like the use of certain talents, or involving interactions of a certain type?

*** What is your fantasy of an ideal day?**

Not the day when you are in vacation, but an ideal day in the midst of activities and responsibilities. What talents are being used? What are the things meaningful to you?

*** How do you want to be remembered after your death?**

What accomplishments and qualities do you wish to known for? If there is a brief biographical description of you after your death, what would you like it to contain?

*** How can your talents best work together?**

If you have four key talents, how can these talents work together like a team?

*** Make use of dreams to help uncover your life mission.**

Dreams can be doorways to deeper levels of our consciousness that will allow your inner self to manifest itself. You can deliberately prepare for this by thinking and

writing about your life mission before going to sleep. Then ask certain questions to yourself, such as " what is my mission in life?" As you are drifting to sleep, keep this questions in your mind. Upon awakening, write down your dreams and see whether there is anything relevant to your question. If not, try again another evening.

From the above, you maybe ready to write down your mission statement in this life. Before writing it, enter into a meditative frame of mind. Your first attempt maybe a tentative one. Review it later and improve upon it.

Source: Peace Ideas No. 27



*When one door closes,
another door opens;
but we often look so long
& so regretfully upon
the closed door that we do not see
the one which has opened for us.*
ALEXANDER GRAHAM-BELL

*Do not be afraid that your
life will end
Be afraid that it has not begun*



*Start life
with the Franciscans!*

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