

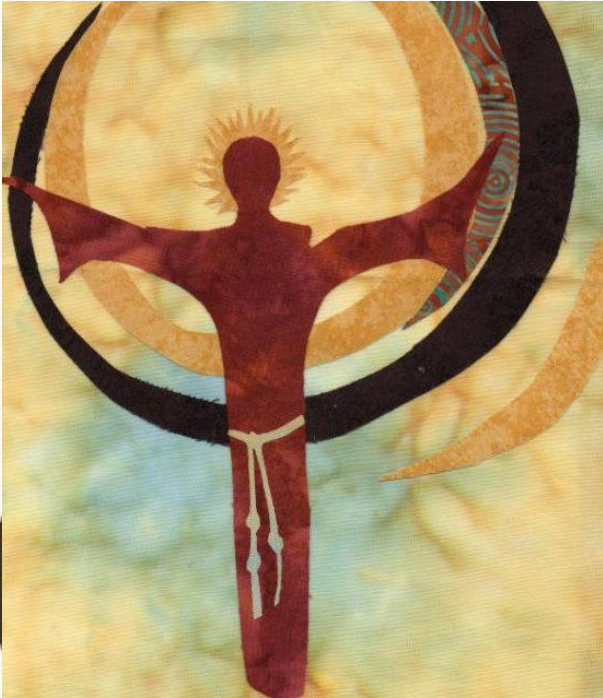
Secular Franciscan Formation

The Spirituality of the Formator

What is “spirituality?”

- Not something reserved or compartmentalized for “Church” only
- Encompasses the totality of our lives
- Spirituality is who we are and what we do because of what we believe and because of what we have experienced.
 - Nothing is left out—worldview, beliefs and relationships we hold dear and are a part of our lives
- Our spirituality is formed by our experience—
 - principally our experience of God—not just knowledge about God
 - Demands awareness

What is the song written on your heart?



- When have you heard the song of God written on your heart? Are you in tune with the song?
- When have you realized/experienced God's lavish love?
- When have you been touched by God's lavish care?
- When have you wondered at God's imaginative creativity?
- When have you appreciated God's unconditional acceptance?
- When have you been nudged by God's disquieting challenge?

Our study, reflection and conversation tells us *about* God but our **EXPERIENCES** of the God that we *know about* deepen even more who we are and form/shape our spirituality.

Our job as Franciscan Formators is to deepen our God-awareness in our own lives and then walk with people, meeting them where they are and encouraging and empowering them to become attuned to the experience of God in their lives. To help them to become attentive, aware, active-contemplatives and disciples and, in the process, to discern whether their experience resonates with the Franciscan vision.

NEMO DAT QUOD NON HABET

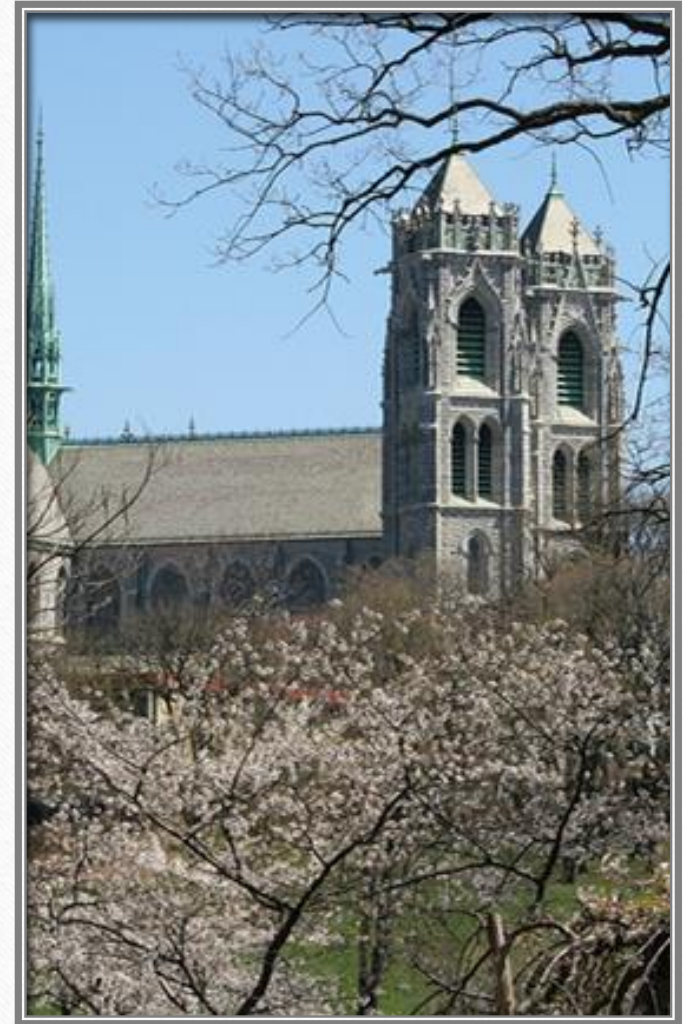
A Diversity of Spiritualities

- Related to who we are and our life stage
- Lay
- Married or single
- Vocation/job
- Parent/grandparent
- Friend
- Expressions flowing from traditions of great Saints
- Franciscan, Dominican, Benedictine, Augustinian, Jesuit, Carmelite, etc.
 - Expressions form various cultures
- Celtic, Hispanic, Native American
- Various contemporary Ecclesial movements
- Charismatic, Cursillo, Sant'Egidio
 - Unique but not contradictory
 - Flow from same Christian heritage
 - Same goal: to live and love as Jesus
 - Difference is a matter of emphasis



Focus on different elements of discipleship

- Hospitality
 - Seeing God in all things
 - Commitment to the poor
 - Contemplation in action
 - Devotion to truth
 - Living simply
 - Living and promoting community
 - Prophetic signs to the world
- Living and bringing compassion to the world



Your spirituality “initials”

Religious Order community designations:

O.F.M., T.O.R., O.F.M.Cap. O.F.M. Conv., O.S.F., O.F.S.

O.P., S.J. O.S.B., O.A.R. O. Cist.

What about other things that form us?

H.F.C.—Husband, Father, Caregiver

A.D.T.—Aunt, Dreamer, Teacher

C-C. F.—Creation-centered Friend

D.W.M.—Daughter, Wife, Mother

P.G.C.—Protector, Grandparent, Catechist

What roles, experiences, people in your life help to form you?

Who helps you realize there is more to life than meets the eye?



Characteristics of a Christian Spirituality

- Communal
- Trinitarian
- Christ-centered
- Sense of Sacramentality
- Seeing with God's eyes
- Hope
- Compassion



If someone were to observe you closely for a week, what might that person think are the characteristics that guide your life?



Universal Call to Holiness

- For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. (Gal. 3:27)
- So be perfect, just as your heavenly Father is perfect... (Mt. 5:48)
- But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people set apart...(1Pet. 2:9)
- It is evident to everyone that all the faithful of Christ of whatever rank or status are called to the fullness of the Christian life and to the perfection of charity. (LG #40)
- In the various types and duties of life, one and the same holiness is cultivated by all who are moved by the Spirit of God....(LG #41)

Franciscan Spirituality

Goodness of Creation—God revealed— vestigia Dei

Joy-opportunity

Incarnation—Word of God becomes Incarnate to transform
the World into a communion of love—Duns Scotus—
Incarnation was always in the mind of God

Universal Kinship

Living Simply-Littleness—identifying with the Poor and
marginalized

Gospel Centered—living the Gospel

Peacefulness

Conversion



Spirituality of the Formator

- **People who are called**—an invitation to live out our Baptismal and Franciscan calling in a unique way— “God doesn’t call the qualified, he qualifies the called...” He doesn’t call the “Ready” he calls the “willing”
- **People who live the Mission**-People who are sent—Mt 28: 19-20
- **Planters of Seeds**—Mt. 13: 1-9
- **Companions on the Journey**—Lk 24: 13-35

- **People of Witness**

Emerson: “Who you are thunders at me so loudly, I can’t hear what you are saying.”

Paul VI: “Modern man listens more willingly to witnesses than to teachers, and if he does listen to teachers, it is because they are witnesses.”

(Evangelii Nuntiandi, 41.)

- **Sharers of a way of life**

- **Prophets of Hope and Courage**



Definitive Aim of Catechesis (Formation)

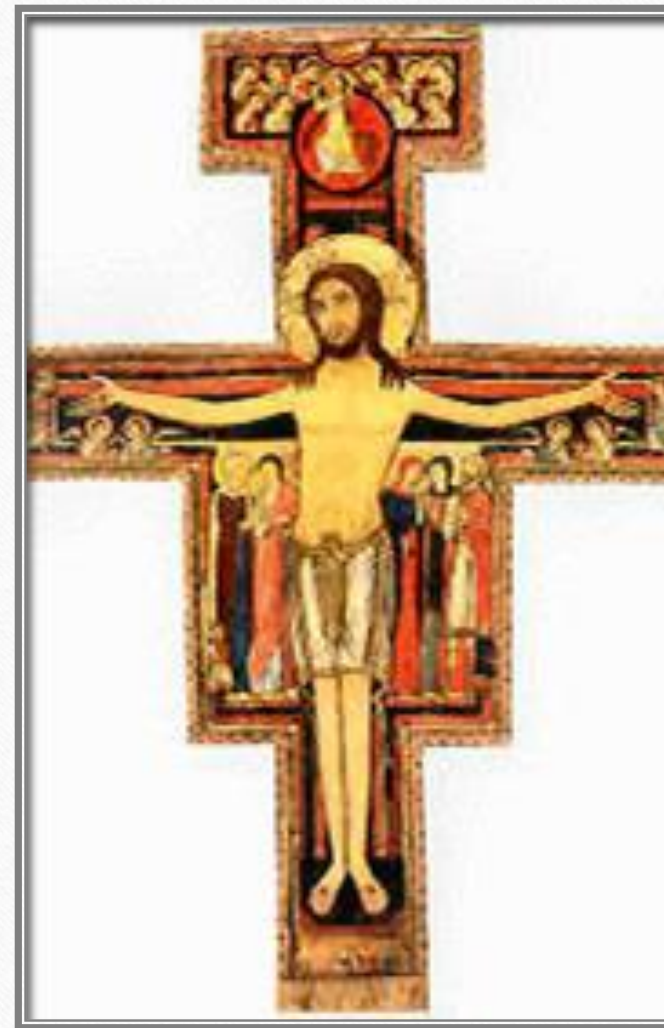
...to put people not only in touch but in communion, in intimacy, with Jesus Christ..

NDC p. 55

Article 37

2. The journey of formation, which should develop throughout life, begins with entrance into the fraternity. Mindful that the Holy Spirit is the principal agent of formation and always attentive to collaboration with Him, those responsible for formation are: the candidate, the entire fraternity, the council with the minister, the master of formation, and the assistant.

3. The brothers and sisters are responsible for their own formation, developing in an ever more perfect way the vocation received from the Lord. The fraternity is called to help the brothers and sisters in this journey by means of a warm welcome, prayer, and example.





...to put people not only in touch but in communion, in intimacy, with Jesus Christ..

The local fraternity is ...the basic unit of the whole Order and a visible sign of the Church, the community of love. This should be the privileged place for developing a sense of Church and the Franciscan vocation and for enlivening the apostolic life of its members

More Characteristics of Formator Spirituality

Eucharist-Centered: Broken, poured out in nourishment, as servants, to wash the feet of others

Committed to Growth—to our own on-going formation—we are not experts we are companions and co-learners on the journey

Hospitality—not just food and drink but warmth and welcome and willingness to listen, valuing others as worthwhile, remembering and inquiring about what is happening in others lives

Kindness— Col 3:12

Joy—G. K. Chesterton: “As Christians, joy is the underlying pulsation of our life.”
--appears in scripture more than 315 times

Gratitude-- foundational attitude and motivation (Eucharist)
Meister Eckhart: “If the only prayer you ever say is ‘thank you,’ that is enough.”



Prayer as a Foundational Practice

AWARENESS-Recognizing what we already have...whose we are—
recognizing the Divine Presence

RESPONSIBILITY for what we are praying about

SCRIPTURE-- especially the Gospels—Mantra for week

SILENCE



**You want to know the
difference between a
master and a beginner?
The master has failed
more times than the
beginner has ever tried.**

Spirit Science





Thank you