

Saint Francis Fraternity

Ongoing Formation

February 2014

Article 8

As Jesus was the true worshipper of the Father, so let prayer and contemplation be the soul of all they are and do.

Let them participate in the sacramental life of the Church, above all the Eucharist. Let them join in liturgical prayer in one of the forms proposed by the Church, reliving the mysteries of the life of Christ.

Food for thought

Often, without moving his lips, St. Francis would meditate for a long time and, concentrating, centering his external powers, he would rise in spirit to heaven. Thus, he directed his whole mind and affections to the one thing he was asking of God. He was not then so much a man who prayed, as a man who had become a living prayer.

~ Celano, *Second Life*, 95

St. Francis set his eyes on the example of Christ in his practice of prayer, and he urged his followers to do the same. From the time St. Francis discovered God as his Father, he developed a heart-to-heart contract with God whom he came to know in prayer. His constant life of prayer is the best explanation of the spiritual success of his life.

~ Philip Marquard OFM, *Called to Live the Dynamic Power of the Gospel*

Prayer was so keenly important because it was for Francis the most basic experience and expression of faith. In like manner, prayer as an essential element of our Franciscan way of life puts us in intimate communication with God, puts us in touch with our own identity, and gives us the energy, strength, and determination to live the gospel life more effectively.

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Article Eight of the rule directs all Secular Franciscans to stress the primacy of worship in their lives – the interior prayer of contemplation as well as the exterior liturgical

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prayer of the Church. The article also urges Secular Franciscans to have an active participation in the sacramental life of the Church, above all the Eucharist, and in the Liturgy of the Hours. When this article is lived fully, each Secular Franciscan will be a true worshipper, always involved with Christ and conscious of his presence in oneself and in others.

~ Adelaide N. Sabath OFS, *Called to Follow Christ*

Questions for meditation and discussion

- How has being a Secular Franciscan changed your prayer life?
- What can we do to infuse every aspect of our lives, our work, our recreation, our in between times, with prayer (to “become a living prayer”)?