

OPDO FRANCISCANUS SAECULARIS

- Initial Formation for Candidates -

Module 6: <u>"Fraternity & St Francis"</u>

sheet 6

6. Fraternity & Sanctification



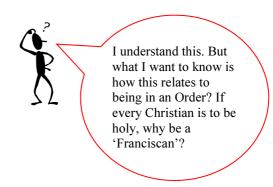
We must never forget that being brothers and living as brothers means and implies the exercise of a mutual ministry of sanctification.

 We must be particularly alive to this when God gives us new brothers, who by seeking Profession in the Order deliver themselves to our fraternity

'Sanctification' [being made holy] is the duty of every Christian. To be 'called out' by God [Greek, 'ekklesia' - ek + kaleo = called out] has its roots in the choice of Israel— 'For you are a people holy to the Lord your God; the Lord your God has chosen you to be a people for his own posssession, out of all the peoples that are on the face of the earth.' [Deut 7.6] His people were to be 'holy people' with a holy law, holy places, the Holy of Holies, the Holy Spirit.

This thinking is carried into the New Testament, where 'sanctification' is a sine qua non of being a believer:

- But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's won people, that you may declare the wonderful deeds of him who called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.'
 [I Pet 2.9]
- 'he chose us in him...that we should be holy and blameless before him.'
 [Eph 1.4]
- 'Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassion, kind- ness, lowliness, meekness, and pa-tience'
 [Col 3.12]



Okay. All are called to be holy, but not all are called to achieve this state of holiness in the same way. [see, 'Vocation, Charism & Mission', sheet 1] For the Franciscan, sanctification and fraternity go hand in hand. Franciscan fraternity helps bring about a Franciscan's holiness.

Note the following things—

- Fraternity extends to *all creatures* [Canticle of Creatures], animate and inanimate
- Fraternity is not an exclusive characteristic of Franciscans—
 it is fundamentally Christian ['you are all brothers' Matt 23.8], but the great religious thinkers [like Benedict, Dominic, Ignatius and Francis] understood fraternity to be lived in a way peculiar to them, offered for the good of the whole Church and of mankind
- Fraternity has its *source* in the one and only fraternity originating from the one and only heavenly Father
- Fraternity for Franciscans is a *paradigmatic* [a place where it is shown] *and fundamental* [something basic to it] value



Let all things their Creator bless, And worship him in holiness