



- A RESOURCE FOR ONGOING FORMATION -

Part 2: A Life of Penance and Daily Conversion

Chapter 5. Poverty and Simplicity of Lifestyle

Trusting in the Father, Christ chose for himself and his mother a poor and humble life, even though he valued created things attentively and lovingly. Let the Secular Franciscans seek a proper spirit of detachment from temporal goods by simplifying their own material needs. Let them be mindful that according to the gospel they are stewards of the goods received for the benefit of God's children. Thus, in the spirit of 'The Beatitudes', and as pilgrims and strangers on the way to the home of their Father, they should strive to purify their hearts from every tendency and yearning for possession and power.

Rule 11

The forms and tasks of life are many but holiness is one—that sanctity which is cultivated by all who act under God's Spirit and obeying the Father's voice and adoring God the Father in spirit and in truth, follow Christ, poor, humble and cross-bearing, that they may deserve to be partakers of his glory...In a special way also, those who are weighed down by poverty, infirmity, sickness and other hardships should realise that they are united to Christ, who suffers for the salvation of the world...Mother Church rejoices that she has within herself many men and women who pursue more closely the Saviour's self-emptying and show it forth more clearly, by undertaking poverty with the freedom of God's sons, and renouncing their own will; going beyond...precept...so as to conform themselves more fully to the obedient Christ.

Vat II *Lumen Gentium* 41, 42



- 1. Why did Jesus choose to live a poor and humble life?**
- 2. Why did St Francis speak of 'Lady Poverty'?**
- 3. In what specific ways can Secular Franciscans live the teaching of the Rule (11)?**

St Francis said:

Holy Poverty confounds the desire for riches, greed, and the cares of this world.

Holy Humility confounds pride, all people who are in the world and all that is in the world.

(Armstrong, Hellmann, Short
Francis of Assisi: early documents
Vol I Salutation of the Virtues (p 165)



Scripture—

II Cor 6. 8b-10

We are treated as impostors, and yet are true; as unknown, and yet are well known; as dying, and see—we are alive; as punished, and yet not killed; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing everything.

Lk 12. 15, 33-34

And he said to them, ‘Take care! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; for one’s life does not consist in the abundance of possessions.’

‘Sell your possessions, and give alms. Make purses for yourselves that do not wear out, an unfailing treasure in heaven, where no thief comes near and no moth destroys. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.’