



ORDO FRANCISCANUS SAECULARIS
- Initial Formation for Candidates -

Module 6: "Fraternity & St Francis"
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 possession, 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, kindness, lowliness, meekness, and patience' [Col 3.12]



I understand this. But what I want to know is how this relates to being in an Order? If every Christian is to be holy, why be a 'Franciscan'?

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