



- A RESOURCE FOR ONGOING FORMATION -

Part 1: The Essence of Franciscan Spirituality

Chapter 4. God is Love—his love for us

...the first emphasis of Franciscan spirituality is the realisation that God is love (1 John 8.16). The second is that Christ is our brother in God's love, and we are all brothers and sisters in Christ. Francis rediscovered the plain truth of the Gospels: Christ is not only God; he is human. He is a true man with a real body, real mind, real will, real emotions, just like all his brothers and sisters, minus sin and the personal results of sin.

Foley, Weigel & Normile *To Live as Francis Lived : a guide for Secular Franciscans* Reflection 5 (p 19)

Christ, the gift of the Father's love, is the way to him, the truth into which the Holy Spirit leads us, and the life he has come to give us abundantly. Secular Franciscans should devote themselves especially to the careful reading of the Gospel, **going from Gospel to Life, and Life to Gospel.** Rule 4

• Complete the following Scripture verses:

John 3.16 "For God so loved...

Such love, pure as the whitest snow;
such love weeps for the shame I know;
such love, paying the debt I owe;
O Jesus, such love.

Such love, stilling my restlessness;
such love, filling my emptiness;
such love, showing me holiness;
O Jesus, such love.

Such love springs from eternity;
such love, streaming through history;
such love, fountain of life to me;
O Jesus, such love.

Graham Kendrick

God who created man out of love also calls him to love—the fundamental and intimate vocation of every human being. For man is created in the image and likeness of God who is himself love.

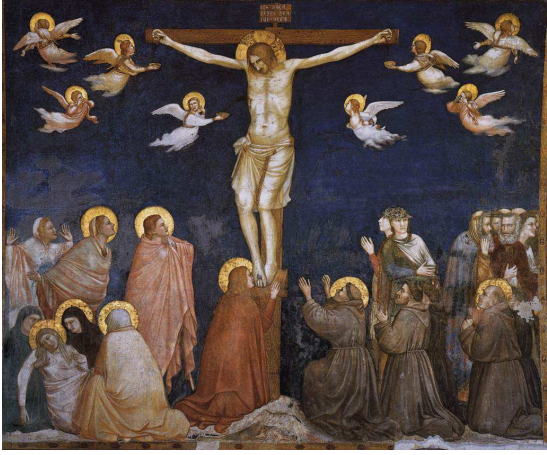
Catechism of the Catholic Church
1604 (p 359)

'God so loved the world'. These are astounding words. God has every reason to be angry and wipe us out of the world as a frightful enemy, and yet there is no greater lover than God and no more desperate scoundrel than the world. To love the world and to wish it well is beyond me. If I were God, I would give it hell-fire. But instead of consuming the world in anger, God loves the world with such unspeakable and overflowing love that he gave his Son. My powers are not adequate to reach to the bottom of this tremendous affirmation. This love is greater than the fire seen by Moses [in the burning bush], greater even than the fire of hell. Who will despair if God so loves the world?

Luther Meditations on the Gospels cap 5 (p 95)

Lk 15.20 "But while he was still far off...

Rom 5.8 "But God proves his love for us...



Scripture—

Rom 8. 31-35, 37-39

What then are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us? He who did not withhold his only Son, but gave him up for all of us, will he not with him also give us everything else? Who will bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. Who is to condemn? It is Christ Jesus, who died, yes, who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who intercedes for us. Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, or life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, for anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.