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Creation and Fraternity: one family, one mission - 800 years of the Canticle of the Creatures

Tuesday, July 15

8:00 The Holy Mass (Chapel)

LITURGICAL TEXTS for Tuesday, July 15

First Reading

Ex 2:1-15a

A reading from the Book of Exodus

A certain man of the house of Levi married a Levite woman, who conceived and bore a son. Seeing that he was a goodly child, she hid him for three months. When she could hide him no longer, she took a papyrus basket, daubed it with bitumen and pitch, and putting the child in it, placed it among the reeds on the river bank. His sister stationed herself at a distance to find out what would happen to him.

Pharaoh's daughter came down to the river to bathe, while her maids walked along the river bank. Noticing the basket among the reeds, she sent her handmaid to fetch it. On opening it, she looked, and lo, there was a baby boy, crying! She was moved with pity for him and said, "It is one of the Hebrews' children." Then his sister asked Pharaoh's daughter, "Shall I go and call one of the Hebrew women to nurse the child for you?" "Yes, do so," she answered. So the maiden went and called the child's own mother. Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Take this child and nurse it for me, and I will repay you."The woman therefore took the child and nursed it. When the child grew, she brought him to Pharaoh's daughter, who adopted him as her son and called him Moses; for she said, "I drew him out of the water."

On one occasion, after Moses had grown up, when he visited his kinsmen and witnessed their forced labor, he saw an Egyptian striking a Hebrew, one of his own kinsmen. Looking about and seeing no one, he slew the Egyptian and hid him in the sand. The next day he went out again, and now two Hebrews were fighting! So he asked the culprit, "Why are you striking your fellow Hebrew?" But the culprit replied, "Who has appointed you ruler and judge over us? Are you thinking of killing me as you

killed the Egyptian?" Then Moses became afraid and thought, "The affair must certainly be known."

Pharaoh, too, heard of the affair and sought to put Moses to death. But Moses fled from him and stayed in the land of Midian.

Responsorial Psalm
Ps 69:3, 14, 30-31, 33-34

℟. (see 33) Turn to the Lord in your need, and you will live.

I am sunk in the abysmal swamp
  where there is no foothold;
I have reached the watery depths;
  the flood overwhelms me.

℟. Turn to the Lord in your need, and you will live.

But I pray to you, O LORD,
  for the time of your favor, O God!
In your great kindness answer me
  with your constant help.

℟. Turn to the Lord in your need, and you will live.

But I am afflicted and in pain;
  let your saving help, O God, protect me;
I will praise the name of God in song,
  and I will glorify him with thanksgiving.

℟. Turn to the Lord in your need, and you will live.

"See, you lowly ones, and be glad;
  you who seek God, may your hearts revive!
For the LORD hears the poor,
  and his own who are in bonds he spurns not."

℟. Turn to the Lord in your need, and you will live.

Gospel

Mt 11:20-24

✠ A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew

Jesus began to reproach the towns where most of his mighty deeds had been done, since they had not repented. “Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the mighty deeds done in your midst had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would long ago have repented in sackcloth and ashes. But I tell you, it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon on the day of judgment than for you. And as for you, Capernaum:

Will you be exalted to heaven? You will go down to the nether world.

For if the mighty deeds done in your midst had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. But I tell you, it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom on the day of judgment than for you.”

9:00 Breakfast

10:00 Canticle of the Creatures: Proposal for the people of today.
Fr Salvador Jiménez Durán OFM (Conference Room)

CANTICLE OF THE CREATURES: PROPOSAL FOR THE PEOPLE OF TODAY
Fr Salvador Jiménez Durán OFM

0. INTRODUCTION

The Canticle of the Creatures inaugurates a new vision of things, fraternal, united to the vision of Christ himself. It is an invitation to all creatures to praise the Lord (1 Celano 115). It is a hymn to the humility of the transcendence that is manifested in the AGAPE. It is the fruit of the Incarnation, in which Christ enters the world to stay. We could say that it evangelizes creation from the depths of creation. The creatures are transfigured in this way, so that in contemplating the creation we are called to praise the Creator.

For everyone the Canticle becomes the song of a saved man (Legend Perugia 83; 2 Celano 213). A man reconciled in totality: with himself, with his roots and with God, in brotherhood with all creatures and all reality. The Canticle is a CELEBRATION, because nothing remains outside the mystery of salvation realized in, through and with Christ. It is, therefore, an invitation to be in the world, to look at the world, to feel it and to live it.

At the same time, in the Canticle of the Creatures, Saint Francis gives us keys to a new model of RELATIONSHIP. Therefore, although the song is a praise to the Creator, it is also a proposal to relate differently in our daily lives: with ourselves, with others, with creation, and with God. In a poetic way,

and if we go further, it opens our understanding so that we may respond differently to so much darkness around us.

Let us recover a DIFFERENT VIEW, from within, so that, looking in this way, our actions are informed by this profound truth. This way is to enter into the humility of creation to know who God is and who we are. Cosmic realities speak to us of other, deeper and more intimate values that give light to human life.

It becomes an invitation to reconciliation at all levels. It is an invitation to communion and participation, an invitation to mission. For us, it is to make the canticle a decisive commitment, our mission, to bring communion and participation in the form of reconciliation to all creatures and to all men and women in need of this reality in their lives (as the words of Leo XIV remind us in his address to us as newly elected pope). The canticle had an indescribable power of reconciliation in its time and for us today as well: it is a path to reconciliation.

Francis of Assisi calls them brother, sister, and mother. He creates communion, shares in the life of creatures, and together with them fulfills his mission to praise, bless, and give praise, glory, and blessing to his Creator. This invitation becomes a challenge and a mission for all people.

We will especially follow the thought-provoking ideas of Víctor Herrero de Miguel, who, in his work cited in the bibliography, has hit the nail on the head for this conference. We compile his quotes and ideas, enriched by other articles by Franciscan specialists who have studied the Canticle of the Creatures. It should also be noted that the text is written as personal notes for the presentation; it is not intended as an article in itself, nor as a lecture read as such, but rather as the notes of a Franciscan friar who will share them with other brothers on the path of formation.

1. A LITTLE HISTORY

The Canticle of the Creatures is Saint Francis's most famous composition. It is also important because it was the first written in the modern Italian language (Umbrian dialect). After the Bible, it is the Italian text translated into the most languages, worked on in many disciplines, and has a strong ecumenical impact.

Francis intended it to be sung, and so he dictated it, sang it, and the brothers transcribed and set it to music. The oldest copy of the Canticle dates back to 1250 and appears in CODEX 338, which is kept in the Library of the Sacred Convent of Assisi. The space of the score is preserved, but not the notes (see: https://www.internetculturale.it/jmms/iccuviewer/iccu.jsp?id=oai%3Awww.internetculturale.sbn.it%2FTeca%3A20%3ANT0000%3APG0213_ms.338&mode=all&teca=MagTeca+-+ICCU The Canticle is found on pages 33r-34r, to search for it, type c338b0033r with the cursor).

It has a precedent in time in the Exhortation to the Praise of God (composed between 1219-1223) that was in the hermitage of Cesi in Terni (see: https://www.franciscanos.org/esfa/exhad.html). It would not be bad to read this text and compare it with the Canticle, while recovering it for our use and prayer for the richness it contains.

The most likely date of composition is the spring of 1225, with the final two stanzas added in 1226 in the face of the conflict between the bishop and the podestà and just before his death. He composed it in the convent of San Damiano, where he arrived after receiving the stigmata, blind from an eye disease and in the midst of a personal crisis over the situation of the order.

Added to this is a plague of mice that prevented him from even resting.

It is the fruit of a vision he has (Legend of Perugia 83) in which the Lord assures him the following: **"Well then, brother," said the voice, "rejoice and be glad in the midst of your illnesses and tribulations, for otherwise you must feel as much at peace as if you were already in my kingdom." To which he responds: "For I ought to be overflowing with joy in my illnesses and tribulations, find my consolation in the Lord and give heartfelt thanks to the Father, to his only Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the Holy Spirit, because He has given me this grace and blessing. He has deigned in his mercy to assure me, his poor and unworthy servant, while I still live in the flesh, a share in his kingdom. Therefore, I wish to compose for his glory, for our consolation and the edification of our neighbors, a new praise of the Lord through his creatures. (…) He sat down, concentrated for a moment, and began to say: "Most High, omnipotent, good Lord…" And he composed a melody for this praise that he taught his companions to sing. His heart was filled with such sweetness and consolation that he wanted to send someone to find Brother Pacifico, in that century king of verses and very courtly master of singers, so that, in the company of some good and spiritual brothers, he could go throughout the world preaching and praising God.Francisco por tanto es un hombre convertido que se siente salvado, no es un ambientalista y un pacifista. Francisco es un CREYENTE. El Cántico por tanto es fruto de su experiencia de fe y de su camino, es su manera de restituir al Creador todo lo que gratuitamente le había dado. El Cántico de las criaturas es el Cántico al Creador. Es una alabanza a Dios por sus criaturas, a las que ya por su enfermedad no ve, pero que irradian las cualidades del Creador.**

The song of Brother Sun is a cry for reconciliation in the face of our conflicting vision of reality. Francis is a man reconciled with himself, with suffering, with others, and with creation, who invites us to live beyond constant conflict. The Canticle becomes a cry of joy that it is possible to live in a state of reconciliation. He animates inanimate objects, calls them brothers and sisters, and is at peace with everyone and everything, manifesting his reconciled and reconciling heart.

Francis feels so loved that he does not exclude anyone or anything in the exercise of his vocation, which is to praise the Creator, from the Sun to the Earth, reaching out to the person who forgives or endures illness and tribulation.

To announce that all creation praises the Creator is to remind man that he has a mission. As a singular work of creation, he has this mission, which he has forgotten. The song of the creatures reminds him that this is his task: to restore, man, all that has been given to you by grace. If creatures praise the Creator, you praise him even more. They will teach us how to praise him, on what points to praise him, how to restore to him what has been given to you by pure grace. Creatures serve the Creator much better than man because they obey. Man distances himself from this task through his disobedience (Admonition 5).

2. LET'S GO STEP BY STEP

The Canticle of Creatures is, therefore, for us an ever-present sermon. Today, 800 years later, it continues to have force in our lives. Saint Francis's praise of the Creator is for us today an invitation to make decisions, to live in a concrete way. It particularly becomes a call to reconciliation, to peace: with yourself, with God, with others, with creation. All will be familiar, creatures are your sisters (the first time this term is used). The Canticle is not only a praise, but an invitation to service: praise, bless, give thanks, and serve him with great humility. This is Saint

Francis's challenge. May we be able to embrace it and respond to it in our lives and as a fraternity.

We are not going to make an exhaustive analysis; that is not the point. We will try to make a practical application for each person's life, especially for someone who tries to live the Christian and Franciscan life in their everyday life, simply. Welcoming St. Francis' invitation to serve him not in any way, but with great humility. Each creature is highlighted by St. Francis, discovering his or her own vocation. This vocation speaks something to each of us.

2.1. MOST HIGH, ALMIGHTY AND GOOD LORD

Most High, all-powerful, good Lord, Yours are the praises, the glory, the honor, and all blessings. To You alone, Most High, do they belong, and no man is worthy to mention Your name. Praise and bless my Lord, and give Him thanks, and serve Him with great humility.

For St. Francis, it is a fundamental concept. He recognizes the radical difference between God and man. Our goal is to reach him because he is the only one who can respond to our hopes. Although no one can make mention of Him, we are drawn and impelled to praise Him. We continue to give thanks to the Creator. He decides to join in praise with the creatures. He accepts his condition as a creature cordially, and he expects them to help him praise the Creator. Thus, there is an affective fusion with the whole of creation. Thus, man can praise and give thanks to the Creator and, above all, serve him with great humility.

PROPOSAL:

a. Recognize that God is God. I am not God, I need God. I exist because He loves me and has called me to love. Remind the world of this. In fact, the number of adults who return to God is increasing (for example, baptisms in France): https://www.aciprensa.com/noticias/112283/record-historico-de-bautismos-de-adultos-en-francia-revela-un-auge-entre-los-jovenes).

b. **If we know God we cannot be far from the world.** The creatures, the world are not enemies of my believing life. To enter into the mystery of the Trinitarian God is to participate in the dynamic of love and care for creation.

c. In order to relate correctly with ourselves, with nature, Francis of Assisi challenges us to **relate correctly with God**, without distancing ourselves from Him and reading His signs. Francis of Assisi invites us on this journey of conversion and encourages us to praise from humility.

d. **Manifest in our lives praise, glory, honor and blessing.** Recognize and praise goodness. Do it in public. Make our lives a blessing. Distinct from "fame" desired rapidly and instantly (e.g., TV, influencers...). Show a more realistic and authentic path, not a virtual one. Show a more realistic path in our lives.

2.2. THE CELEBRATION OF BROTHER SUN

Praised be You, my Lord, with all your creatures; especially Brother Sun, who is the day, and through whom You give us light. And he is beautiful and radiant with great splendor, and bears a likeness to You, Most High One..

In his canticle, St. Francis highlights the luminosity, beauty, and joy. Despite his condition (he couldn't endure the light), he looked at the creatures full of admiration and gratitude. So he does with the sun, the only one he calls "lord" (he refers to God as my Lord). In him he sees the manifestation of God rising over the good and the bad. The sun therefore carries great significance for its author. Christ is the sun that shines from above, the light that illuminates us, and the great sacrament. And the lord Brother Sun brings news about its author.

PROPOSAL:

a. La creación no es un obstáculo para entrar en comunión con Dios, pero tampoco es un absoluto. A través de la creación podemos entrar en comunión con Dios.

b. Nuestra única vocación es la alabanza. Llegamos al amor a través de la belleza. Descubrimos el Amor de Dios en la bondad. Bondad y belleza van unidos, no pueden ir separados. Así veremos a Dios en todas las cosas y a todas las cosas en Dios.

c. El sol nos rescata de las sombras. Estamos llamados a dar luz. Cuando "no veamos la luz" los creyentes estamos llamados a dar luz, reproducir la significación del sol en un mundo lleno de oscuridades, de tinieblas y de falta de luz.

d. ¿Prefieres alumbrar o brillar? Por desgracia nuestra sociedad propone a los jóvenes el éxito fácil, sin esfuerzo: brillar como una estrella, se un YouTuber de éxito... ¿Es esta la vocación de un cristiano? ¿no estamos llamados mejor a alumbrar oscuridades o a iluminar caminos de vida?

2.3. THE CLARITY OF THE NIGHT

Praised be You, my Lord, through Sister Moon and the stars; in heaven You formed them clear and precious and beautiful.

Saint Francis doesn't only look at the light and the day, the Lord Brother Sun also looks upon the night, but with a particular gaze. He doesn't see the darkness of the night, the gloom and darkness, but rather the light. The moon and the stars help us see beyond. Their value is for their being, not for what they do. They are valuable because they are clear, precious, and beautiful. They are also the feminine principle (the sun has that masculine accent). Therefore, for Francis, the face of woman, of the maternal womb. They invite us to interiority and depth. How much we resonate with our Mother Saint Clare in these creatures!

PROPOSAL:

a. Creation is not an obstacle to entering into communion with God, but neither is it an absolute. Through creation, we can enter into communion with God.

b. Our only vocation is to praise. We come to love through beauty. We discover the Love of God in goodness. Goodness and beauty go together; they cannot be separated. Thus, we shall see God in all things and all things in God.

c. The sun rescues us from the shadows. We are called to give light. When we "do not see the light", we believers are called to give light, to reproduce the significance of the sun in a world full of darkness, gloom and lack of light.

d. Do you prefer to light or shine? Unfortunately, our society offers young people effortless success: shine like a star, be a successful YouTuber... Is this the vocation of a Christian? Aren't we better called to illuminate darkness or paths of life?

2.4. THE SONG OF WIND AND WATER

Praised be You, my Lord, through Brother Wind, and through the air, cloudy and serene, and every kind of weather through which You give sustenance to Your creatures. Praised be You, my Lord, through Sister Water, which is very useful and humble and precious and chaste.

Again, the masculine and the feminine are united. The wind is related with water (Genesis, Exodus, and St. John). And little by little descending to the earth. The wind has no quality; it is only associated with God's creative work: it gives sustenance. It embraces the entire creation. God's active and attentive presence in the creation. Thus, water and wind become one: born of water and the Spirit. It does not reflect the threatening or destructive part of either creature. It praises the creator for his essence, for his being.

PROPOSAL:

a. **All-weather.** It reminds us of the diverse nature of life and our condition as pilgrims. It highlights the impossibility of fully defining God, who is beyond simple descriptions. We are so much more, and God is so much more—from the gentle breeze to the storm. In the praises of the Most High God, he shows us this. He invites us to the mission of celebrating the feast of variety: pain and joy, a new model of religious life, approaching those who are distant and hostile (thief, wolf, sultan...).

b. **We are pilgrims.** Today's man should not forget this dimension; we are called to move through the world as a sacred place that leads us to the goal of the encounter with God.

c. You provide sustenance. Pope Francis stated: I'm not sure if this crisis is nature's revenge, but it is undoubtedly its response. John Paul II said: if man doesn't follow the Creator's plan, nature rebels and no longer recognizes him as a ruler. Nature provides us with sustenance, so we owe it a response. It reminds us that we owe ourselves a blessed belonging. We are connected. Learning from water to be:

✓ **USEFUL.** Offering the best of ourselves and welcoming the best of others. It's not just about using what we need, but also to appreciate that things. We appreciate the blessings that God has given upon all beings.

✓ **HUMBLE.** Water is humble because its greatest source of drink is found underground. In the face of the superficiality of our lives, we are called to other paths. The water cycle is silent, but what if we lived our Christian lives with less noise and caring for the processes that generate life and encounter with Christ?

✓ **PRECIOUS.** It is valuable because of its crystalline nature, which reflects the beauty of those who gaze upon it. Our mission would be to reflect the goodness of those who approach it, and to show them that goodness, as well as to help them recovering that goodness and that beauty. May those who meet us leave with a newfound appreciation of their own beauty.

✓ **CHASTE.** Water is pure because of the way it embodies love. It loves in an orderly manner, generates life, gives itself, and does not keep itself for itself. The wider the shore, the more it loves, and the more those who approach it benefit. Are we willing to love like this? Faced with the models of love we encounter, we are invited to love differently, following Christ's example.

2.5. BROTHER FIRE

Praised be You, my Lord, through Brother Fire, through whom You light the night; and he is beautiful and playful and robust and strong.

Saint Francis loved fire above all other creatures (EP 116, 2C 165-166). A powerful attraction and absolute respect. It is a symbol of eternal light, similar to God: vital, creative, energetic, and warm… This fire symbolizes God's love that transforms, illuminates, and evangelizes. It invites us to have the capacity to love at all times and in an exceptional way. It attracts us and seduces us. Only love that leads us to communion, and draws us, will save us. We are called to be powerful witnesses of the fire of God's love.

PROPOSAL:

Let us learn from fire to be:

✓ **BEAUTIFUL AND JOYFUL.** Fire is beautiful, and the world seeks for genuine beauty combined with goodness. Let us be truly attractive, reflecting the beauty that comes from being created in the image of God. Not concerned with appearances. That beauty is united with joy. Fire moves, dances with its flames, its shapes, and colors. A beauty is united with joy, with the play that helps us regain joy in this sad and gray world that surrounds us. A true journey of evangelization: truth, beauty, goodness, and joy.

✓ **ROBUST AND STRONG.** The life of Christ strengthens us, makes us robust. In a fluid, even gaseous, world, we are called to offer firm elements, pillars to lean on. Fire encourages us to be brave, and dare everything. It invites us to grow in resilience, to trust in the strength that comes from God and is a gift of the Holy Spirit. In our weakness, God becomes strong. We boast about our weaknesses because they reveal God's strength in us. We must not live our lives based on appearances.

✓ **ILLUMINATE.** Remember the God who illuminates our hearts (cf. Prayer before the Christ of San Damiano) as fire does in the night. How much the world needs those who are willing to shine a light in the darkness, not for fame (as influencers or YouTube followers), but to illuminate. You have beenSISTER EARTH OUR MOTHER called to illuminate.

2.6. SISTER EARTH OUR MOTHER

Praised be You, my Lord, through Sister Mother Earth, who sustains us and governs us and who producesvaried fruits with colored flowers and herbs.

I do not dominate the earth or make it fruitful, but it is she who "sustains and governs" me, for she is both a sister and a mother, and she responds accordingly. She serves us, and this type of government is contrary to domination.

That is why she is more than just a mother; she is also a sister. This means that although she sustains us, she also depends on the Creator Father; she is also a creature. This contradicts the pantheism that grounds many ideologies.

Saint Francis is often in contact with his sister mother Earth:

- Long stays in caves and caverns (1 C 71, 1 C 6-7, 1 C 10-11, 1 C 85-86, LM X, 7, 2 C 35...)

- Places where the first fraternities were located: Greccio, La Verna, Le Carceri... among the best known.

- Dream of the Tree (1 C 33)
- And above all, his last wish: to lie naked on the bare earth at the moment of his death (2C 217)

PROPOSAL:

a. **Mission: to restore family bonds.** Young people are also called to rediscover the value of family. It is a great current battle. Reestablish the importance of goodness and family relationships: habits, care, respect, protection, gestures, and details that build and repair family relationships.

b. **The earth is a sister who acts like a mother.** It is not dependence, but rather connection. It is not just outputs but also presence. Conjugate three verbs in your young life:

- To sustain, to give shelter, to protect
- To guide, to lead through education
- To produce, to give what we need to live.

c. **Value the usefulness of beauty.** Fruits cannot grow if there are no flowers. Value flowers—appreciate what seems useless. Reject the throwaway culture. Care for small and insignificant things. Value the minor and the small. It is a way of enjoying little.

d. Claim the right to education. The family is the primary educational agent; it should not replace the family in its educational role. As young people, we should cherish and recognize the value that our families place on us. We are called to strengthen the bonds within our families, communities, and among fraternities. Furthermore, each person should fulfill their role, respecting the role of others: father, mother, children, siblings.

2.7. AND YOU?

Praised be You, my Lord, through those who give pardon for Your love, and bear infirmity and tribulation. Blessed are those who endure in peace for by You, Most High, they shall be crowned.

And how does man praise the Creator? His way of praising the Creator is:
- To forgive out of love
- To endure sickness and tribulation
- To bear disease and tribulation peacefully.

This is the profound mission and task of man, which fulfills what Saint Francis asks in the prayer before Christ of San Damiano: GIVE ME PERFECT CHARITY.
Living in reconciliation is the way to be joyful, blessed, and crowned. Saint Francis becomes the model of a reconciled man. This is why man can praise the Creator; Saint Francis already lives it and serves a role model for all of us.
This verse is not separate from the Canticle, but rather its culmination. We cannot consider it as an addition because the Canticle expresses a man who lives complitely reconciled and creates a climate of reconciliation around him. The same Almighty reappears at the end of the Canticle, sealing man's vocation and task.

PROPOSAL:

a. **Stop seeing only with reason, look with the heart.** It is a way to change our way of relating to others. The more we are centered on Christ, the better we will face adversity and tribulations.

b. **Not only closer, but more brothers and sisters.** The media and social networks appear to bring us closer and more linked, yet we are progressively lacking networks of faces, hugs, tales, people, and reality. Seek more face-to-face interactions.

c. **Praise God in the most human aspects of humanity: conflict and forgiveness.** The canticle is a song for humanity, and humanity can praise Him in pain, illness, moral suffering, and tribulation. This verse demonstrates us how, in the case of other creatures, we can praise the Creator.

d. **Forgive out of love.** Not just as a human act. It originates from God's forgiveness.

Whoever feels forgiven forgives and shows the merciful face of the Father.

e. **To sustain everything in peace.** This is the great challenge. It is the true vocation of humanity. Fragility is part of our existence and is capable of sustaining it in peace. And it helps others sustain their weakness with the same peace of God.

2.8. OUR SISTER DEATH!

Praised be You, my Lord, through our Sister Bodily Death, from whom no living man can escape. Woe to those who die in mortal sin. Blessed are those whom death will find in Your most holy will, for the second death shall do them no harm.

I think this phrase sums up the canticle: The Canticle of Brother Sun is a hymn to life that confronts us with death. The shadow of death is projected over humanity, but the canticle makes us see that the Creator awaits us beyond it. Francis's reconciled vision of himself, of God, of creation, makes him see death even as his sister. This verse gives depth to everything Saint Francis said in the canticle.

The imprint of God and His sacramental presence marked the life of Saint Francis. He has understood God, man and his destiny. Everything is moved by Him, and everything leads us to Him. Death, therefore, is no longer an enemy or threat, but becomes a sister.

I don't know it from experience; I can't speak about it personally. I only have experience of life. Yet Saint Francis fraternizes with it. It is united in profound and cordial consent with life and opens existence to its full dimension. Saint Francis discovers it not as something alien or threatening, but as the expression of his desire for ultimate poverty: life does not belong to him, but surrenders it to the One who is its owner.

Death, for Saint Francis, is therefore the total and definitive dispossession of himself. From that moment on, he will exist only in the Lord; now, he has reserved nothing for himself, as had always been his desire. Our path, the path of creatures, is the path of eternity. Every moment of life is linked to the encounter with the eternal.

Therefore, the Canticle is a song of existence whose greatest treasure is eternity. Heaven and earth are united; life and death are united by the presence of the Most High who flourishes in all circumstances.

Therefore, more than bodily death, he fears the second death, for which we can also prepare ourselves by living in a certain way. The call is, as it was for Francis: to feel at peace now, as if you were already in my kingdom (LP 83).

PROPOSAL:

a. Become signs that always point the way to meet God.

b. Make this phrase our own: GIVE LIFE TO REALITIES OF DEATH. Our culture, often, even in the everyday, is a culture of death. Young people, and everyone, are called to reverse this trend. That is, we are called to always bet on life, in all its dimensions. Our fight is not against anything, but always in favor of life and true life. From the everyday, the small details, the daily situations, always bet on life. Above all, bet on life in personal relationships. Never be bearers of death, but rather of reasons for life.

2.9. FOR YOU TODAY

Final thoughts:

- **Repair the house.** In the face of the throwaway culture, let's rediscover goods and human work so that the circular economy can re-emerge, relationships and balance can be restored, and everyone can feel at home again (everyone and all of creation).

- ***Practice joyful sobriety.*** *Francis strips himself in front of everyone; this gives him the freedom and happiness he sought. Living without regard for accumulation, he understands how to embrace the Father's providence, giving priority to the needs of the poor by reducing waste. Not wanting more than we truly need.*

- ***Create the fabric of fraternal bonds with all living beings.*** *Actualize Saint Francis's capacity to fraternize with everyone, remembering that they carry with them the meaning of God Almighty. As a result, reality is more than just an object that we use and discard. Let us build together a more fraternal and more evangelical world.*

- ***Unite the Canticle of Creatures with the Praises of the Most High God.*** The horizontal with the vertical. Dialogue with the diverse and the distinct. Look beyond, higher, and deeper.

- ***A prophetic gaze and leaving of our shacks for*** the new life that that awaits us without fear of searching deep within and discovering the reality that lies beyond. Reject this look in the face of so much disappointment. This concrete understanding of God will help us understand ourselves differently.

3. BIBLIOGRAPHY:

In particular:

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Just in case:

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In addition:

- Éloi LECLERC, *El Cántico de las Criaturas*, 2° Edición, Editorial Franciscana Aránzazu, Oñate (Guipúzcoa), 1988.
- Carlos DÍAZ, *Ecología y pobreza en san Francisco de Asís,* Editorial Franciscana Aránzazu, Oñate (Guipúzcoa), 1986.
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11.30 Break (coffee and pastries)
12.00 A Leadership of Service in the OFS-YouFra. Tibor, OFS General Minister and Felix, YouFra. International Coordinator (Presentations room)
13.30 Break
14.00 Lunch
16.00 swimming pool, rest
18.00 Workshop: Fraternal Activities. Groups designated by language. YouFra (adjacent rooms)
19.15 Feedback Session
19.45 Break
20.00 Prayer before the Christ of San Damiano . YouFra (Central patio)

PRAYER BEFORE THE CRUCIFIX OF SAINT DAMIAN



In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit Amen.

(The priest exposes the Blessed Sacrament).

The text is then read:

Francis left the town one day to meditate out-of-doors and as he was passing by the church of San Damiano which was threatening to collapse with age, he felt urged to go in and pray. There as he knelt in prayer before a painted image of the /crucified, he felt greatly comforted in spirit and his eyes were full of tears as he gazed at the cross. Then, all of a sudden, he heard a voice coming from the cross and telling him three times, "Francis, go and repair my house. You see it is all falling down". Francis was alone in the church and he was terrified at the sound of the voice, but hte power of its message penetrated his heart and he went into an ecstasy. Eventually, he came back to himself and prepared to obey the command he had received. He was quite willing to devote himself entirely to repairing the ruined church of San Damiano.

By St. Bonaventura (LM 2,1)

ALL:
Most High, glorious God, enlighten the darkness of my heart and give me true faith, certain hope, and perfect charity, sense and knowledge, Lord, that I may carry out Your holy and true command.

(Background music)

MONITOR 1:

Most High, glorious God...

By the time Francis recited this prayer, everything had become problematic for him. He had to clarify his own situation, his relationship with his father, his personal future. Instead, even though he is immersed in such circumstances, Francis does not look at himself, but contemplates the Almighty.

How often are we caught up in discord and disagreements, in problems and tasks to be resolved? We close ourselves off, in our fragile human certainties, in the circle of loved ones, in our reassuring routine.

When this happens to us, we drag ourselves along painfully, seeing no way out. We are unable to look ahead; we remain fixed where we are. In that case, it can be of great help to raise our gaze and pray slowly: Most High. Whoever prays like this recognizes: there is someone greater than I; I am the least, the younger brother, the younger sister. I want to turn to the Most Great, to establish myself in Him.

(Brief background music)

MONITOR 2:

Look attentively for a few moments at the Crucifix of San Damiano, that is, let yourself be gazed by the glorious Crucified One. What does it say to you?

Present your fears, your doubts, your anxieties to Him…

Present your plans to Him, too, place them in His hands….

(background music)

Why am I afraid, why do I have doubts... If nothing is impossible for You.

(Sister Glenda's song: Nothing is impossible for You.)
(background music)

MONITOR 1:

... give me true faith, certain hope, and perfect charity...

Before the light-filled Crucifix in the chapel of San Damiano, Francis has become aware of the darkness in his heart. This darkness consists, at its core, in his inability to free himself and give himself as the Crucified One gave himself. Therefore, he asks for attitudes that are an adequate response to the Lord's sacrifice on the cross. He asks for what constitutes and grounds Christian life, the three theological virtues: faith, hope, and charity. In faith, the human being gives himself, like Abraham, to the other... In hope, I look beyond myself... In charity, I give my deepest being and give a personal response to the "you." What human beings seek is love; human beings grow and perfect themselves when they love and are loved. They reach their perfection in giving themselves to others.

"When a person feels truly loved, they are inclined to love."

(background music)

MONITOR 2:

Before the Crucifix of San Damiano, do you feel loved by God?

(background music)

If you knew how I love you, if you knew how I search for you, if you knew how I dream of you... you would think of Me much more, God tells us.

(Sister Glenda's song: If you only knew how much I love you)

(background music)

MONITOR 1

... sense and knowledge, Lord...

First, Francis asked for the basic virtues, the "theological" virtues. What he asks for next concerns rather their capacities and spiritual strengths.

Thus, the words "sense" and "knowledge" refer to the whole human person, encompassing both the bodily and spiritual spheres. Man must fulfill God's commandment with heart and mind, body and soul, with all his strength. But, on our own, we are incapable of doing this. Francis recognizes this poverty of the human being, our dependence on God. That is why he exclaims: "Lord! Right sense and knowledge can only come from God." Even with regard to the virtues, the effort to do good, man is a beggar before God, but a beggar who can stretch out his hands with complete confidence and ask of Him: enlightenment of heart; faith, hope, and charity; sense and knowledge.

(background music)

MONITOR 2

Before the crucifix of San Damiano, like Francis of Assisi, ask him to give you: illumination of the heart, faith, hope, and charity; meaning and knowledge.

If your strength fails you, if your soul or body fails, ask the Lord...

(background music)

(Sister Glenda's song: Soul of Christ, sanctify me; Body of Christ, save me)

(background music)

MONITOR 3

Our father Saint Francis, forgetting his self, his own person, completely abandoned himself to the arms of the Father and became one person, one being in Him. And he recognized His greatness, knowing that there was only one You, but a You that made him recognize himself as the most insignificant of all beings, and at the same time, he trusted completely in God, knowing that everything came from Him.

Following the example of our father Francis, let us join him in praising the Most High God.

ALL:
You are holy, Lord, the only God, and Your deeds are wonderful.
You are strong.
You are great.
You are the Most High.
You are Almighty.
You, Holy Father, are King of heaven and earth.
You are Three and One, Lord God, all Good.
You are Good, all Good, supreme Good, Lord God, living and true.
You are love.
You are wisdom.
You are humility.
You are endurance.
You are rest.
You are peace.
You are joy and gladness.
You are justice and moderation.
You are all our riches, and You suffice for us.
You are beauty.
You are gentleness.
You are our protector.
You are our guardian and defender.
You are our courage.
You are our haven and our hope.
You are our faith, our great consolation.
You are our eternal life, great and wonderful Lord, God Almighty, merciful Savior. Amen.

Blessing with the Blessed Sacrament

Priest:
Blessed be God.
Blessed be His Holy Name.
Blessed be Jesus Christ, true God and true Man.
Blessed be the Name of Jesus.
Blessed be His Most Sacred Heart.
Blessed be His Most Precious Blood.
Blessed be Jesus in the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar.
Blessed be the Holy Spirit, the Comforter.
Blessed be the Incomparable Mother of God, the Most Holy Virgin Mary.
Blessed be Her Holy and Immaculate Conception.
Blessed be Her glorious Assumption.
Blessed be the Name of Mary, Virgin and Mother.
Blessed be Saint Joseph, her chaste spouse.
Blessed be God in His Angels and in His Saints.

Let us pray:

O God, who in this wonderful sacrament
left us the memorial of Your Passion;

We ask that you grant us such veneration
of the sacred mysteries of Your Body and Blood,
that we may constantly experience within ourselves
the fruit of Your redemption.

You who live and reign
for ever and ever.
Amen.

Song: Worship no one but him (can be played or sung)



21:00 Dinner
22:00 Fraternal Night (Tent)