The greccio christmas: the word incarnate

# ThemE 1: Minority

Final document of the General Chapter 2021: nos. 11, 12, 13, 14, 17, 22, 23, 24, 35

Mandates and directions: 4, 14

How to apply these directions in our context?

## reflection: Francis reminds us of the poverty, hUmility and simplicity of jesus

### franciscan references

1Cel 84-87; Admonitions I, 16-21

With what does Francis associate the Incarnation?

What situations does Francis associate with the Child Jesus?

What are the emotions that accompany the celebration at Greccio?

### biblical References

Luke 1,1-7; Matt 2,1-23

How today, as a friar minor, is it possible to follow in the footsteps of a Christ born in a manger?

How do we live and how do we learn poverty?

Matt 10,42; 11,25; 18,1-14

What does the text mean to me/us? What does it mean to be the “least of all”?

What does “being simple” mean in my/our context?

### Topics to develop

The Poverello stops at Greccio because he wants to consider the concreteness of the Incarnation, that is, the simplicity, poverty and humility of the Son of God "who with infinite love gave himself for us" (1Cel 87). We find the same dynamic in the contemplation of the Eucharist. In fact, Francis invites us not only to see with the eyes of the body but also to contemplate with the eyes of the spirit, the humility and concreteness of divine love, which is offered in the Eucharist: "Behold, every day he humbles himself, as when he descended from the royal seat into the womb of the Virgin; every day he himself comes to us in an appearance of humility; every day he descends from the bosom of the Father on the altar" (Admonitions I, 16-18).

**Actions**

* Consider how to recover the awareness of daily life, with its joys and difficulties, as a privileged place of encounter with the Lord.
* Verify how we welcome the Word and how we live the liturgy, in terms of faith, dignity, humility and simplicity.
* Reflect, in light of the Incarnation, how to better live our corporeal nature and our sexuality, how we confront our weakness and incapacities. Examine where we have need of help and how we can be of help to our brothers.

# Theme 2: becoming incarnate in our world

Final document of the General Chapter 2021: nos. 16, 17, 18, 26, 27, 29, 30

Mandates and directions: 9, 28

How to apply these directions in our context?

## Reflection: Francis Celebrates the concreteness of the incarnation

### franciscan references

Office of the Passion of our Lord, Psalm XV (for Christmas)

Which characteristic of God does Francis recognize in the Child Jesus?

Which situations does he underline in respect of the Gospel narrative of the birth of Jesus?

What does the expression “He was born for us along the way” mean for you?

### biblical references

Jn 3,16; 1 Jn 3,16; Gen 1,26-28; Matt 25,31-46

What is the reason for the Incarnation? What follows from it for us?

On the basis of these texts, who is Man? What does the Incarnation mean?

In what way are we a part, or can we make ourselves part of the occurence of the

Incarnation?

Luke 5,12-16

Jesus can cure persons without touching them. Why then did he touch the leper?

Where can we touch the existential situations of people?

### Topics to develop

Remembering the centenary of the Nativity of Greccio invites us to consider not only what is the place that Jesus occupies in our hearts, but also if there is room there for those with whom he wanted to identify: "Truly, I say to you: all that you have done to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me" (Matt 25:40). Christ Jesus, with his Incarnation, eliminated all the distances that separated him from humanity and calls us to do the same, that is, to make ourselves close to our brothers and sisters to welcome them, to touch them with mercy, as the Magisterium of the Church reminds us: "St. Francis, with the simplicity of that sign, carried out a great work of evangelization [...] In a particular way, from the Franciscan origin the crib is an invitation to "feel", to "touch" the poverty that the Son of God chose for himself in his Incarnation. And so, implicitly, it is an appeal to follow him on the path of humility, poverty, and renunciation, which from the manger of Bethlehem leads to the Cross. It is an appeal to meet him and serve him with mercy in our brothers and sisters most in need" (*Admirabile signum* 3).

**Actions**

* Verify whether our pastoral service in church communities reflects the maternal dimension of the Church and is characterized by the humility and poverty, that are shown in the Incarnation and the Eucharist. i
* Bring the maternal care of the Church to our brothers and sisters who find themselves on the existential margins of our church communities and our society.
* Create space for reflection and the promotion of actions to favour the dignity of every human life, and the protection of the weakest (the unborn, minors, women, old people, the poor, the migrants, the variously abused) and of Mother Earth.
* Consider the social structures which hinder human dignity and politics which sustain the promotion of human dignity, the place of persons in society and the safeguarding of our common home.