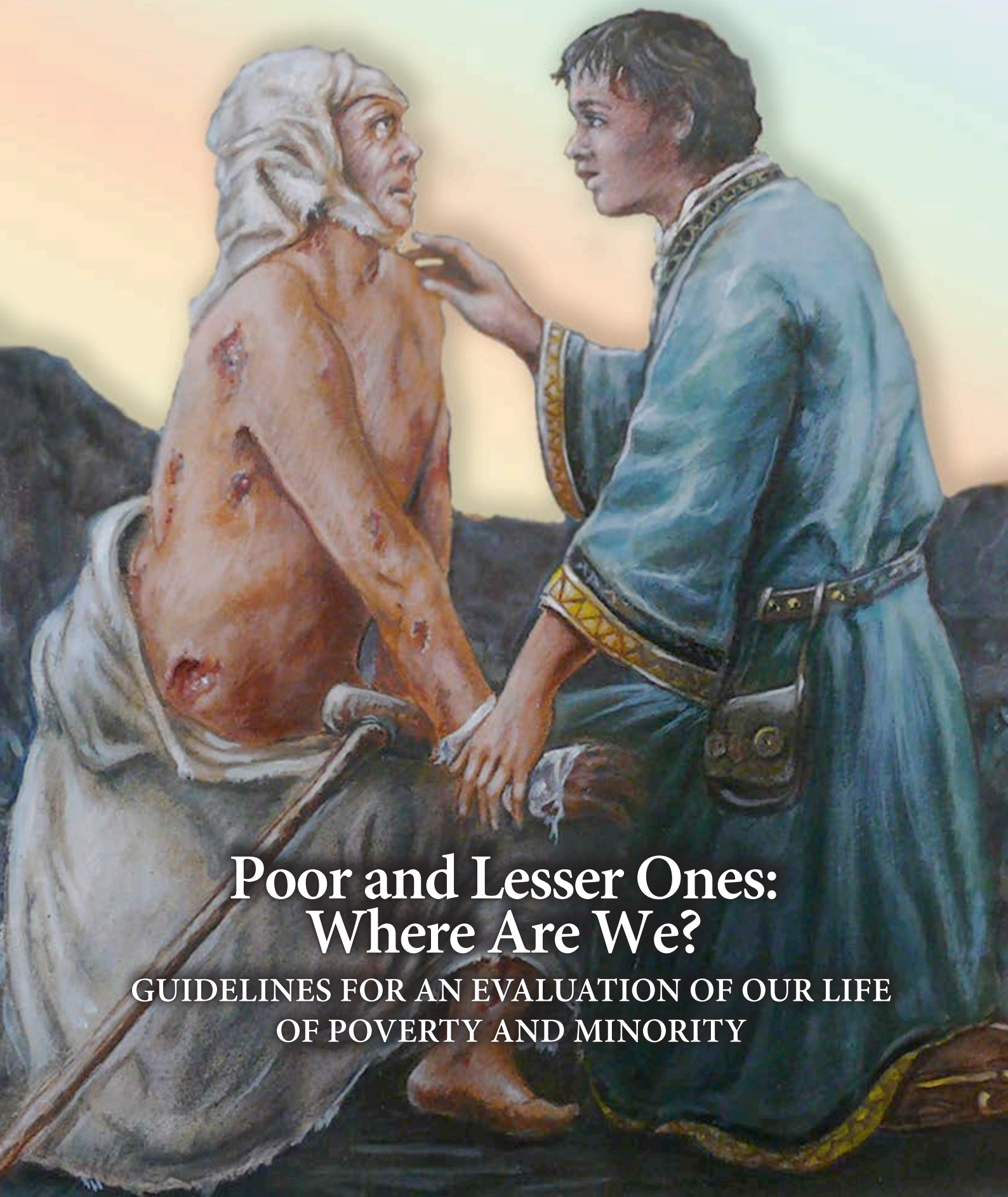


ORDO FRATRUM MINORUM



Poor and Lesser Ones: Where Are We?

GUIDELINES FOR AN EVALUATION OF OUR LIFE
OF POVERTY AND MINORITY

ROME 2016

ORDER OF FRIARS MINOR

**POOR AND LESSER ONES:
WHERE ARE WE?**

**Guidelines for an Evaluation of our
Life of Poverty and Minority**

Rome 2016

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FOREWORD

In the *Little Flowers of St. Francis*, we read a very telling episode where Francis is open to learning a profound lesson from a simple country man:

“Tell me,” he said, “are you Brother Francis of Assisi?” And when Francis assured him that he was, the peasant said, “Well, then, try to be as good as everyone thinks you are, because many people have great faith in you. So I urge you, never let there be anything in you different from what they expect of you.”¹

As followers of St. Francis, this simple and direct call to authenticity is an ever present challenge for us Lesser Brothers. When Cardinal Bergoglio chose the name Francis, a call to authenticity of life was sent to the heart of all our endeavors. In fact, Pope Francis, through his simple way of living, preaching, and teaching has brought fresh attention and a specific direction to the term ‘*Franciscan*’. It has become widely synonymous with a way of life that is materially poor, unassuming, ecologically sensitive, centered on kinship with all living things, and especially concerned with peace and justice for the poor of our world. So many people look to us to be *Poor and ‘Lesser Ones’*. The renewed challenge is for us to identify as closely as possible with our brothers and sisters who are living at the margins of social, cultural, economic, and political life; the modern day ‘powerless’. They are the ones at greatest risk of global climate changes since they will bear the greatest consequences for any failure by the community of nations to act immediately and decisively to reduce our human impact on the environment.

This resource booklet asks the question, “*Where are we?*” in regard to our commitment to a way of life that is lived in simplicity and solidarity both at a personal and community level. It encourages us to examine seriously questions about simplicity of life, proximity to our brothers and sisters living on the margins, and the relationship between our individual lives and what is taking place in the world today in order that we might embrace our vocation in new and fresh ways.

1 First Consideration on the Stigmata

This document's relationship to other Franciscan texts and to our most recent General Chapter is clearly set out in the Introduction, which indicates a distinctive approach - in that this booklet is a practical tool, with an inductive rather than deductive approach. Our values, and the practical living out of those values, are at the heart of the evaluation process that we are proposing to all the brothers world-wide, with the goal of encouraging greater commitment to a way of life that honestly expresses who we profess ourselves to be. This way of life is rooted in the experience of our Lord Jesus, "*Who, existing in the form of God, did not consider equality with God something to cling to, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in human likeness.*"²

The document invites us to focus on four areas: being 'Lesser Ones'; living Gospel Poverty; being poor amongst the poor; and working in a spirit of fidelity and devotion. All of these are firmly grounded in our Franciscan Gospel tradition and concern our relationships with God, with one another and with our world. We also wish to take up the insights of Pope Francis who speaks of

*"the intimate relationship between the poor and the fragility of the planet, the conviction that everything in the world is connected, the critique of new paradigms and forms of power derived from technology, the call to seek other ways of understanding the economy and progress, the value proper to each creature, the human meaning of ecology, the need for forthright and honest debate, the serious responsibility of international and local policy, the throwaway culture and the proposal of a new lifestyle."*³

I encourage you my dear brothers to read, reflect, and act upon the challenging words of this brief document in your personal lives, and also with the brothers of your local fraternity. May the Holy Spirit work in our hearts so that we may be brought to a continued conversion of life.

November 1st, 2016
Feast of All Saints

Br. Michael A. Perry, OFM
Minister and Servant

Prot. 106651

2 Philippians 2:5,6

3 Laudato Si, 16.



INTRODUCTION

The theme of the General Chapter of 2015 was “*Friars and ‘Lesser Ones’ in our time*”. During this fraternal meeting – taken up with prayer, evaluation, dialogue and discernment – we deepened the sense of our vocation to the fraternity and to minority.

The study conducted by Fr. R. Mion, SDB, (*Research Report on the State of the Order*), and completed prior to the General Chapter – subsequently summarized in the *Lineamenta* and *Instrumentum Laboris* of the Chapter – showed that, notwithstanding everything, the Order has many institutions which serve the poor, the elderly and the sick, and that one quarter of the friars still wish to work with drug addicts, people affected by AIDS or dependent on alcohol, with immigrants, and with homeless people. In addition, the majority of the friars interviewed expressed a desire to live a simpler life. The study highlighted the fact that 64% of the friars recognize that the lifestyle of our fraternities is too secular, and feel that life in Initial Formation is too easy. We should note, however, that the number of friars who are directly involved in the actual lives of the poor and marginalized is a minority at present.

On May 26th Pope Francis received us in audience and directed an appeal to us to live our vocation faithfully as friars and reminded us that “*minority requires us to be and to feel small before God, entrusting ourselves totally to his infinite mercy*”. He told us that minority means “going beyond structures – which are also useful if used wisely – going beyond habits and securities, in order to witness real closeness to the poor, the needy, and the marginalized in an authentic attitude of sharing and service”. Concluding the talk the Pope remarked.....

*“...You have inherited an authority amongst God’s people through minority, brotherhood, meekness, humility, poverty. Please, keep it safe! Don’t lose it! The people wish you well, they love you. May the esteem of these good people, and the affection and appreciation of pastors be of encouragement to you on your faith journey....”*⁴

4 Discourse of Pope Francis to the participants of the General Chapter of the Order of Friars Minor, Sala Clementina, Tuesday, 26th May, 2015.

The Final Document of the General Chapter (nos. 22-23) quotes the last words of the story of Bartimaeus: “*And immediately he received his sight and followed Jesus along the road*”, it goes on to declare that we too are called to “*follow the footsteps of Jesus in the emptying of ourselves, in humble love, becoming ever closer to the poor and those for whom no one is caring*”, and continues with the thought-provoking affirmation: “*The Risen Lord is already present and alive in the peripheries!*”

It was in this context we came to formulate **DECISION NO. 8:**

The General Definitory is to draw up a study guide to assist Ministers Provincial, Custodes, and all the friars, in animating and evaluating regularly how honestly, concretely and authentically we live as “poor and lesser ones” among the poor in order to ensure that all the Entities and local fraternities might become communities of presence and solidarity “with” and “in” the service of the poor.

Recent documents from the General Definitory already examine the subject of minority in depth:

- *Ratio Formationis Franciscanae. Order of Friars Minor, Rome 2003.*
- *Pilgrims and Strangers in this World. Resource for Ongoing Formation from Chapter IV of the OFM General Constitutions, Rome 2008.*
- *Franciscan Management of Finances, A Formation aid from the General Definitorium: The Use of our Economic Resources in ways that are Transparent, Ethical and in Solidarity, Rome 2014.*

Given the above, the intention of this new resource document is to suggest fundamental *guidelines*, so as to facilitate an evaluation of our lives of poverty and minority at all levels.

This evaluation tool may be used by individual friars, at local Chapter meetings, by a Committee or Definitory, or by all the friars of a Province or Custody.

TWO CHALLENGES IN THE USE OF THIS EVALUATION TOOL:

1. *Who am I to judge?* It might be tempting to approach a tool such as this and interpret it as “making judgements”. Please don’t do this. The goal of the assessment is to stimulate reflection, encourage discussion, and lead to strategies for change; and all of this in the context of a sincere respect for the circumstances of each individual, and the individual pace of personal change.
2. *And God saw that it was good.* The aim of the evaluation is not just to bring to light those things that are negative, or in some way lacking. The goal is to recognize that so many of us are good people who do good things. But there is always room to work with the good.... and make it better. That’s the objective!

THE CONTENTS OF THE STUDY GUIDE:

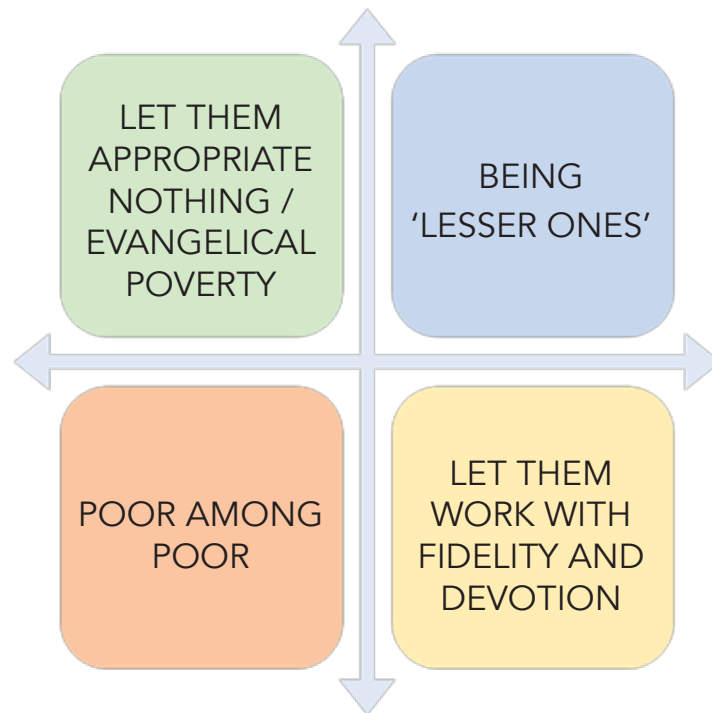
This guide contains:

- *a series of texts, that can be read and meditated upon personally. They are subdivided into four “subject areas”;*
- *self-assessment charts that can be used at individual or community level (Local Chapter, Committee, Definitory, Province or Custody). They are grouped according to two “aspects” – values and practices.*

A FOUR STEP EVALUATION:

1. Evaluate the strength of values that demonstrate an understanding of being ‘lesser ones.’
2. Evaluate the practices in one’s own personal life (or in life of a group) that are expressions of being ‘lesser ones.’
3. *Compare* values with practices, and develop an action plan for greater commitment to a life lived as a ‘lesser one.’
4. To re-visit/re-think the plan annually.

THE FOUR “SUBJECT AREAS” PROPOSED IN THIS EVALUATION



The area of **BEING 'LESSER ONES'** concerns one's own *general approach* (feelings, attitude, thoughts and outlook) as regards people, situations, possessions....

The area of **GOSPEL POVERTY** principally concerns one's *relationship with God* and is an invitation to assess how this relationship is brought about, strengthened and maintained.

The area of **POOR AMONGST THE POOR** concerns how one's views are expressed externally; the *choices made in line with one's stance in the world*; that which each person recognizes oneself as being.

The area of **WORKING WITH FIDELITY AND DEVOTION** concerns what *we actively do to support ourselves*.

I. BEING ‘LESSER ONES’

AT A PERSONAL LEVEL

1. In light of the texts provided, what does it mean to me to be a “lesser one”?
2. Do I acknowledge that there are attitudes in my life which contradict this?
3. What are the attitudes that make me a “lesser one”?

AT THE LEVEL OF FRATERNITY

Consistent with the life of the Son of God made man, minority should first of all bring us to live a simple and modest lifestyle, with a personal manner that is humble, peaceful, merciful and concerned with service.

1. Do you think that this is the manner and lifestyle that you and your fraternity have - in your daily life, relationships, and your service of others? Give three reasons which back up your reply, either in a positive or negative sense.
2. What are the implications of this?

1C 38

For when it was written in the Rule, “Let them be lesser ...” at the uttering of this statement, at that same moment [Francis] said, “I want this fraternity to be called the Order of Lesser Brothers.” They were truly lesser who, by being subject to all, always sought the position of contempt, performing duties which they foresaw would be the occasion of some affront. In this way they might merit to be grounded on the solid rock of true humility and to have the well-designed spiritual structure of all the virtues arise in them.

2C 148

Francis bowed before the Bishop (The Cardinal of Ostia) and said: “Lord, my brothers are called ‘lesser’ precisely so they will not presume to become ‘greater’. They have been called this to teach them to stay down to earth, and to follow the footprints of Christ’s humility, which in the end will exalt them above all others in the sight of the saints. If

you want them to bear fruit in the Church of God, keep them in the status in which they were called and hold them to it. Bring them back down to ground level even against their will. And so I beg you, Father, never allow them to rise to become prelates, otherwise they will just be prouder because they're poorer, and treat the others arrogantly.”

CC.GG ART. 64

As followers of Jesus Christ, “Who humbled himself, even to accepting death”, and faithful to their specific calling as Minors, the friars are to go through the world “in joy and gladness” as the servants and subjects of all, peaceful and humble of heart.

ER 6:3

Let no one be called “*prior*”, but let everyone in general be called a lesser brother. Let one wash the feet of the other.

ER 9:1-4

Let all the brothers strive to follow the humility and poverty of our Lord Jesus Christ [...] They must rejoice when they live among people considered of little value and looked down upon, among the poor and the powerless, the sick and the lepers, and the beggars by the wayside. When it is necessary, they may go for alms. Let them not be ashamed and remember, moreover, that our Lord Jesus Christ, *the Son of the all-powerful living God, set His face like flint* and was not ashamed

CC.GG ART. 66

§1 In order that they may follow more closely and express more clearly the self-emptying of the Savior, the friars are to have the life and condition of the little ones in society, always living among them as minors. In this social environment they are to work for the coming of the Kingdom.

LR 3:10-12

I counsel, admonish and exhort my brothers in the Lord Jesus Christ *not to quarrel or argue* or judge others when they go about in the world; but let them be meek, peaceful, modest, gentle, and humble, speaking courteously to everyone, as is becoming. They should not ride horseback unless they are compelled by an obvious need or an infirmity.

CC.GG ART. 66

§2 By their way of life, as a fraternity and as individuals, the friars are to behave in such a way that no one is kept from them, particularly those who usually are socially and spiritually neglected.

CC.GG ART. 67

Constantly denying themselves and in an uninterrupted conversion to God, the friars are to display a prophetic image by the example of their lives, in order to refute “the false values” of our age.

CC.GG ART. 91

The friars are not to seek or accept privileges for themselves or their fraternities,⁵ except that of minority. As Saint Francis pointed out, the friars bear fruit in the Church of God if, as minors, they remain in the status proper to their vocation.⁶

ADM 12

A servant of God can be known to have the Spirit of the Lord in this way: if, when the Lord performs some good through him, his flesh does not therefore exalt itself, because it is always opposed to every good. Instead he regards himself the more worthless and esteems himself less than all others.

2LTF 42-43

Instead, let the one to whom obedience has been entrusted and who is considered the greater be the lesser and the servant of the other brothers. And let him have and show mercy to each of his brothers as he would want them to do to him were he in a similar position.

CC.GG ART. 65

Conscious “that what a man is before God that he is and nothing more”, the friars are to acknowledge God as their supreme and only good; they are to strive to please him always in all things, and they are to be glad that they are thought of as worthless, simple and despicable.

5 Cf. Test 25-26.

6 Cf. 2Cel 148; cf. LegPer 115.

II. LET THEM NOT APPROPRIATE ANYTHING / GOSPEL POVERTY

AT A PERSONAL LEVEL

1. How do I set about experiencing Gospel poverty in daily life?
2. Am I aware of the fact that at times I appropriate to myself houses, places, ideas, ministries, people?
3. When I have to make decisions regarding the use and acquisition of material things, do I know how to distinguish between necessity and desire?

AT THE LEVEL OF FRATERNITY

1. Given the dominant consumerism of our society, are we, by means of our minority, signs of an alternative model of life which is convincing and prophetic to the men and women of our time?

Give three reasons which back up your reply, either in a positive or negative sense. What are the implications of this?

2. Do you think management of goods is conducted properly and transparently by yourself, your fraternity, and your Province?

Give three reasons which back up your reply, either in a positive or negative sense. What are the implications of this?

LR 1:1

The Rule and Life of the Lesser Brothers is this: to observe the Holy Gospel of Our Lord Jesus Christ by living in obedience, without anything of one's own, and in chastity.

LR 6

Let the brothers not make anything their own, neither house, nor place, nor anything at all. As pilgrims and strangers in this world, serving the Lord in poverty and humility, let them go seeking alms with confidence, and they should not be ashamed because, for our sakes, our Lord made Himself poor in this world. This is that sublime height of

most exalted poverty which has made you, my most beloved brothers, heirs and kings of the Kingdom of Heaven, poor in temporal things but exalted in virtue. Let this be your portion which leads into the land of the living. Giving yourselves totally to this, beloved brothers, never seek anything else under heaven for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Wherever the brothers may be and meet one another, let them show that they are members of the same family. Let each one confidently make known his need to the other, for if a mother loves and cares for her son according to the flesh, how much more diligently must someone love and care for his brother according to the Spirit! When any brother falls sick, the other brothers must serve him as they would wish to be served themselves.

TESTAMENT 16

And those who came to receive life gave whatever they had to the poor and were content with one tunic, patched inside and out, with a cord and short trousers.

CC.GG. ART. 8

§1 By their vow of poverty, Friars Minor follow Jesus Christ who “made himself poor for us in this world”,⁷ they renounce the right to use and dispose of material goods without the permission of their Ministers and Guardians; indeed, after solemn profession they also renounce the right of ownership. As humble servants they entrust themselves to the providence of the heavenly Father.⁸

§2 The friars are to recall that the highest poverty has its source in Christ and his poor Mother; mindful of the words of the Gospel, “Go, sell all that you own and distribute the money to the poor”,⁹ they are to seek to share the lot of the poor.

§3 For the poor life of the Friars Minor, it is not sufficient that they submit totally to their Ministers and Guardians in the use of things; rather they ought to be poor materially and spiritually and ought to lead an industrious and sober life¹⁰. After the example of Christ they ought

7 ER 6:3.

8 Cf. CIC 600.

9 LK 18:22.

10 2LtF 47; CIC 600.

to rejoice “when they live among people [who are considered to be] of little worth and who are looked down upon, among the poor and the powerless, the sick and the lepers, and the beggars by the wayside”¹¹. They ought to give clear evidence of all these things in an individual and communal manner as well as in new ways.

CC.GG. ART. 72

§1 As pilgrims and strangers in this world, having given up personal property, the friars are to acquire neither house nor place nor any other things for themselves, in accordance with the Rule. Therefore they are to dedicate themselves and everything they use for their life and work to the service of the Church and the world in poverty and humility.

§2 The buildings that are constructed for the friars and everything which the friars buy for themselves or which they use are to be in keeping with poverty according to the circumstances of places and times.

§3 Goods that are given for the use of the friars are to be shared for the benefit of the poor in accordance with what the particular Statutes legitimately prescribe.

11 ER 9,2.

III. POOR AMONG THE POOR

AT A PERSONAL LEVEL

1. When I speak or pray for the poor, are they real to me?
2. Am I willing to live among and with the poor?

AT THE LEVEL OF FRATERNITY

As '*lesser ones*', our lives and work must express our closeness to the poorest of our societies.

1. Do you think that your lifestyle and your opinions, as well as those of your fraternity, reflect a closeness to, and compassion for the poor, thus conveying a serious commitment to justice and peace? Can you give three reasons to back up your response, whether positive or negative?
2. What are the implications of this?

ER 9:2

They must rejoice when they live among people considered of little value and looked down upon, among the poor and the powerless, the sick and the lepers, and the beggars by the wayside.

TEST 1-3

The Lord gave me, Brother Francis, to begin doing penance in this way. While I was in sin, it seemed very bitter to me to see lepers. And the Lord Himself led me among them and I had mercy on them. And when I left them, what had seemed bitter to me was turned into sweetness of soul and body. And afterwards I lingered a little and left the world.

LMJ 8:5

Emptying himself
through a wonderful tenderness of compassion
for anyone with a bodily affliction,
in the sweetness of his pious heart,
her turned back to Christ

any need, any lack he might notice in anyone.
He certainly had an inborn kindness
doubled by the piety of Christ poured out on him.
Therefore his soul melted for the poor and the infirm;
to those to whom he could not extend a hand
he extended his affection.

Once it happened that one of the brothers responded more gruffly to a poor man begging alms at an inconvenient time. When the pious lover of the poor heard this, he ordered the brother to strip naked, prostrate himself at that poor man's feet, confess his fault, and beg for his prayers and forgiveness. When he had done this with humility, the father added gently: "Brother, as long as you see a poor person, a mirror of the Lord and his poor Mother is placed before you. Likewise in the sick, look closely for the infirmities which He accepted"

In all the poor
that most Christian poor man also saw before him
a portrait of Christ;
he not only gave freely to those he met
the necessities of life, if these had even been given to him,
but he also resolved that they should be returned,
as if they truly belonged to them.

It happened once that a poor man met him on his return from Siena, when, because of an illness, he was wearing a short mantle over his habit. When his kind eye observed the man's misery, he said to his companion: "We must give back to this poor man his mantle, for it is his! For we accepted it on loan until we should happen upon someone poorer than we are." But his companion, seeing the need of his pious father, objected to this stubbornly, lest by providing for someone else, he neglect himself. But he said: "The great Almsgiver will accuse me of theft if I do not give what I have to someone in greater need."

Therefore of all that was given him to relieve the needs of his body,
he was accustomed to ask the permission of the donors
so that he could give it away
should he meet someone in greater need.

He spared nothing at all,
neither mantles nor tunics,
neither books nor even appointments of the altar:
all these he gave to the poor, when he could,
to fulfill his obligation of piety.

Frequently,
whenever he met poor people burdened with heavy loads,
he would carry their burdens on his own weak shoulders.

CC.GG ART. 82

§1 All the friars are to use money in a way that befits the poor and with a strong sense of responsibility to the fraternity, “as is fitting for servants of God and followers of the most holy poverty”.

§2 In the use of money the friars are to be wholly dependent on the Ministers and Guardians, not only as regards asking permissions, but also in presenting an accurate account of income and expenditures.

§3 The friars, especially the Ministers and Guardians, are to avoid carefully any kind of accumulation, bearing in mind the needs of the poor.

IV. LET THEM WORK WITH FIDELITY AND DEVOTION

AT A PERSONAL LEVEL

1. Do I think work is important in our way of life?
2. What have been my significant work experiences?
3. Am I willing to take on domestic tasks in my fraternity?

AT THE LEVEL OF FRATERNITY

Work is a sign of our identity as *'lesser ones'*. Work should be done by all of the friars, according to their particular circumstances, and with a preference for simple jobs. We need to keep in mind that the fraternity is principally supported by work.

1. Do you believe that your work, and that of your fraternity, is consistent with our charism and identity? Can you give three reasons to back up your response, whether positive or negative?
2. What are the implications of this?

ER 7:1-2

None of the brothers may be treasurers or overseers in any of those places where they are staying to serve or work among others. They may not be in charge in the houses in which they serve nor accept any office which would generate scandal or be harmful to their souls. Let them, instead, be the lesser ones and be subject to all in the same house.

LR 5

Those brothers to whom the Lord has given the grace of working may work faithfully and devotedly so that, while avoiding idleness, the enemy of the soul, they do not extinguish the Spirit of holy prayer and devotion to which all temporal things must contribute. In payment for their work they may receive whatever is necessary for the bodily support of themselves and their brothers, excepting coin or money, and let them do this humbly as is becoming for servants of God and followers of most holy poverty.

TEST 20-21

And I worked with my hands, and I still desire to work; and I earnestly desire all brothers to give themselves to honest work. Let those who do not know how to work learn, not from desire to receive wages, but for example and to avoid idleness.

1C 39

During the day those who knew how worked with their own hands, staying in the houses of lepers or in other suitable places, serving everyone humbly and devoutly. They did not want to take any job that might give rise to scandal, but rather always doing what was holy and just, honest and useful, they inspired all they dealt with to follow their example of humility and patience.

2C 161

He used to say that the lukewarm, who do not apply themselves constantly to some work, would be quickly vomited out of the Lord's mouth. No idler could appear in his presence without feeling the sharp bite of his criticism. This exemplar of every perfection always worked, and worked with his hands, not allowing the great gift of time to go to waste. And so he would often say: "I want all my brothers to work and keep busy, and those who have no skills to learn some." And he gave this reason: "That we may be less of a burden to people, and that in idleness the heart and tongue may not stray into what is forbidden." But he would not have profit or payment for work left to the whim of the worker, but entrusted it to the guardian or the family."

CC.GG ART. 76

§1 Led by the spirit and example of Saint Francis, the friars, like those who are truly poor, are to consider work and service as a gift of God. For this reason they are to present themselves as little ones of whom no one is afraid, because they seek to serve and not to dominate.

§2 Recognizing that work is the ordinary and chief way of providing what is needed, each and every friar should serve and "should work faithfully and devotedly", fleeing idleness which is "the enemy of the soul".

CC.GG ART. 79

§1 In selecting any work or service, account is to be taken of fraternal life, both at local and provincial level from which no friar may exempt himself. Account is also to be taken of the talents of each friar in such a way that an activity may be taken on and carried out co-responsibly in fraternity, in accordance with the dispositions of the particular Statutes.

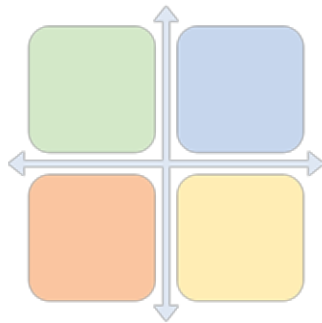
§2 As remuneration for their work the friars are to accept what is necessary, and they are to do this humbly. However, whatever they acquire by their personal labor, or on behalf of the Order, or whatever comes to them in any way through a pension, grant or insurance is acquired by the fraternity

CC.GG ART. 80

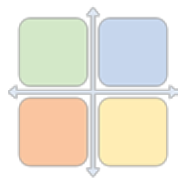
§1 As far as possible the domestic work in our fraternities is to be done by all the friars themselves.

§2 When others work for the fraternity, the norms of civil law must be observed with justice.

TWO ASPECTS: VALUES AND PRACTICES



SELF-ASSESSMENT CHARTS



VALUES ASSESSMENT



AGREE



NEUTRAL



DISAGREE



BEING 'LESSER ONES'

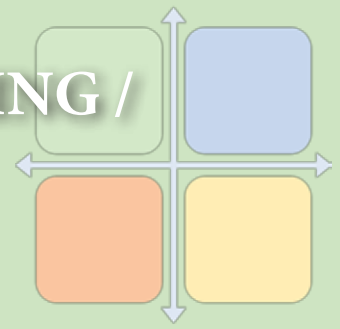
WHERE ARE WE?

- Initial and Ongoing Formation should be undertaken from the standpoint of minority.
- An appreciation of legacy, an historical perspective, is essential for creating a new future.
- The first thing to be considered is the type of investment, and only after that, what the return on the investment will be.
- Investment policies should include the principles of socially responsible investing.
- Investment policies should be based on Gospel values and our Franciscan charism.
- We cannot ask others to be responsible if we ourselves are not willing to be personally responsible.
- Transparency is essential in a Franciscan management of financial resources.
- Show me your budget, and I'll see your values and priorities.
- The accumulation of goods should be a topic of discussion and of interest to all the friars.

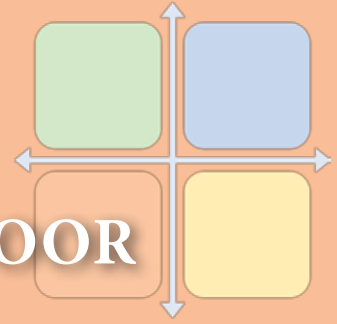
- As Friars Minor we must ensure that there is never even the perception that our financial dealings are inappropriate, immoral or illegal.
- "The friars are to use money in a way that befits the poor."* Using the poor of our time as a reference, we can be more effective and practical in the exercise of our poverty.
- It is possible to rethink the use of our buildings and property resources in terms of a better contribution to human development.
- It is important that financial solidarity between the Provinces of the Order be strengthened at all levels.
- It is possible to devise specific strategies in order to bring about economic practices that are fraternal and transparent, at the level of the entire Order, as well as in individual Provinces and local fraternities.
- The proper use of the world's natural resources is a Gospel and Franciscan value.

LET THEM APPROPRIATE NOTHING / EVANGELICAL POVERTY

WHERE ARE WE?



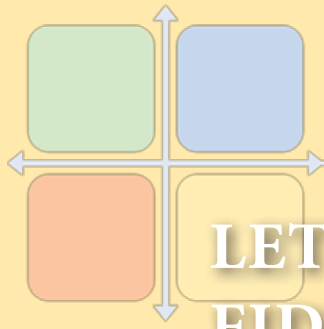
- Itineracy, making oneself available, the willingness to move on from where I am now, is an essential expression of obedience.
- The FIRST and primary exercise in prayer is to establish and build my personal relationship with God.
- Asceticism is the art of letting go of myself in order that God becomes more present.
- Prayer can be words, but it is also about listening.
- Prayer, to be genuine, requires response.
- Cross and redemption are necessary for embracing God's providence in one's life.
- The friar is never totally poor because the friar has the security of brotherhood.
- The worth of a person is more than the things they possess.
- People are the greatest gifts one has on their lives.
- It is important to always look beyond what is to what could be, beyond what one has to what one can have.
- To live *sine proprio* creates an openness for others, an attitude of welcome.
- Renunciation is more about justice than it is about charity.



POOR AMONG POOR

WHERE ARE WE?

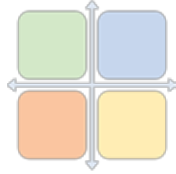
- It is important to welcome the stranger, the lesser, the abandoned into our lives.
- Insertion, the ability to enter into the lives of the poor and lesser ones, is an important step of moving beyond simply “accommodating” the poor into our lives.
- It is important to develop new forms of life, of service, of presence and gospel witness, especially in the “peripheries”.
- The establishment of inserted fraternities is of value, being a presence in the “peripheries”, living in closeness and service to the deprived, the poor, the invisible and the discounted.



LET THEM WORK WITH FIDELITY AND DEVOTION

WHERE ARE WE?

- Work is necessary for personal identity and dignity.
- The type of work one does says something about one's worth to society.
- The purpose of work is to better oneself.
- There is a higher goal to work than to better oneself.
- All work is a gift and has value.



ASSESSMENT OF PRACTICES

The pronoun “I” below can be replaced by the local fraternity, the Province or Custody, or a particular group



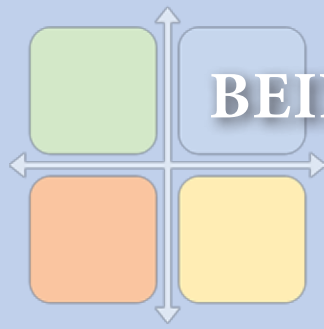
OFTEN



SOMETIMES



NEVER



BEING 'LESSER ONES'

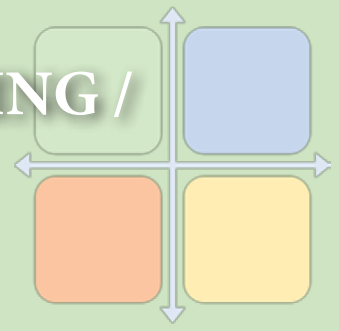
WHERE ARE WE?

- I seek peace and reconciliation in my own life.
- I feel welcomed in my fraternity.
- I easily welcome the brothers into my life.
- I have more than I need – my closets, rooms, trunks are full of things that I have not used in a long time.
- I am aware of the need to care for the environment.
- I am mindful of the resources I consume.
- I am generous in giving to others because I know that much has been given to me.
- I recognize and appreciate the past, what has been done by the friars, what is our legacy.
- I am aware of the financial resources of the fraternity and how they are used.

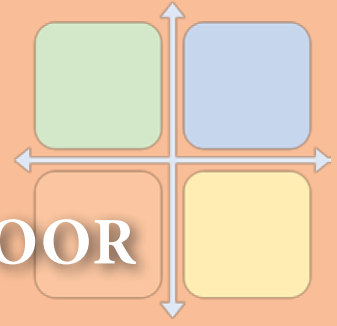
- I share my gifts – of person, of talents and skills, of character, of time, of possessions – generously with the fraternity.
- I use financial resources for social ends – for example, I share what I have with those who have less.
- I worry about an accumulation of funds I hold in reserve.
- I understand the concept of financial transparency and I am committed to it in my financial relationships.
- I have a personal bank account.
- In the area of financial management, I act morally and legally.

LET THEM APPROPRIATE NOTHING / EVANGELICAL POVERTY

WHERE ARE WE?



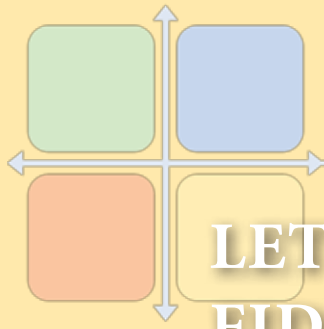
- I readily accept an invitation from the fraternity for a change in ministry and/or domicile.
- I am comfortable with and engage in contemplative prayer.
- I pray with the fraternity in which I live.
- I make time for private prayer.
- I experience prayer in the larger church.
- I am guided in my life by God's providence.
- I incorporate the Franciscan themes of incarnation, Eucharist, and redemption in my prayer.
- I celebrate Eucharist not only as a ritual but as the *source and summit* of my life.
- I have experience of the cross and redemption in my life.
- I choose time with the friars over time away from the fraternity.
- I recognize and acknowledge the gift of my brothers.
- In fraternity I am empowered to live *sine proprio*.
- I experience fraternity as a positive value in my life.
- I feel that I am loved.



POOR AMONG POOR

WHERE ARE WE?

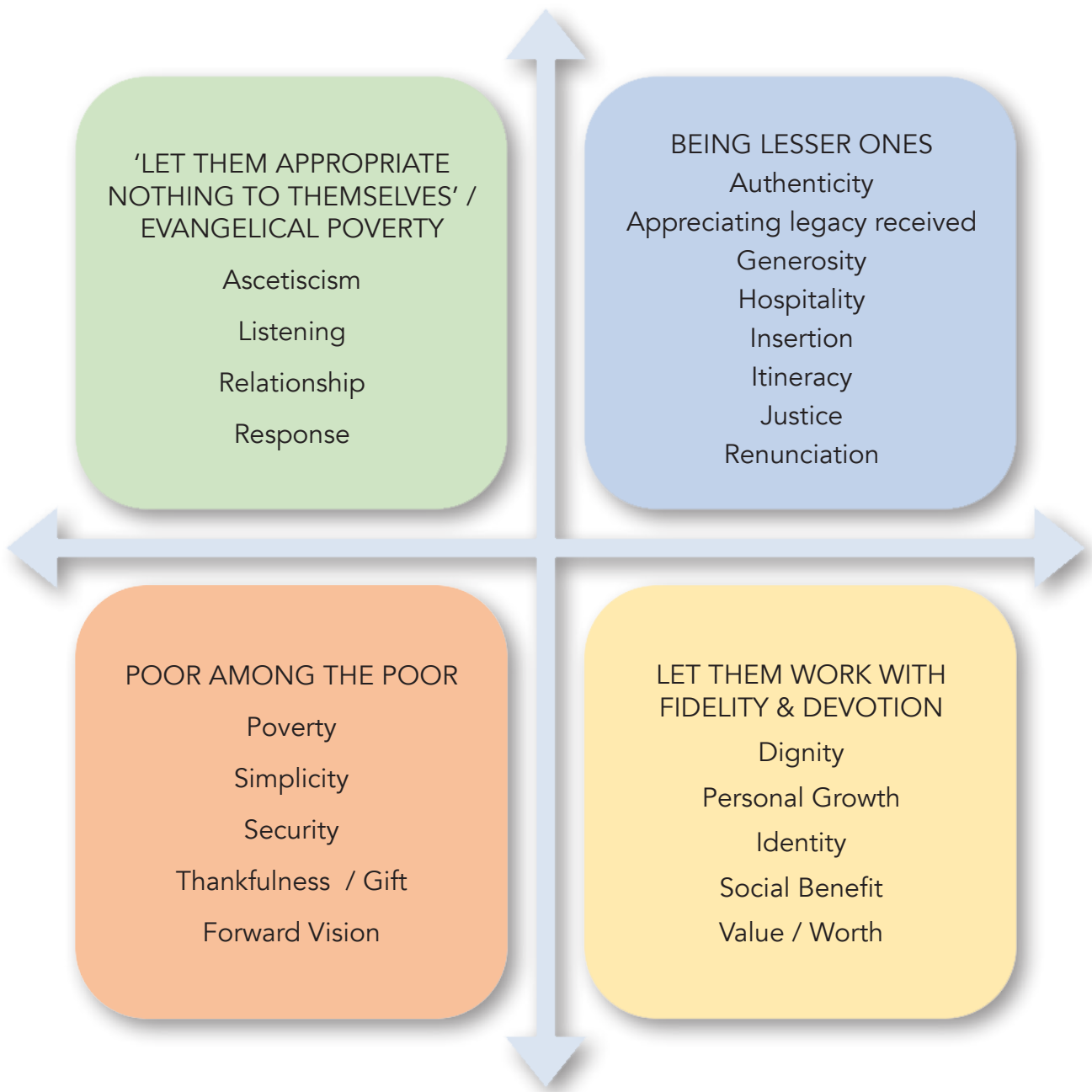
- I live among the economically poor.
- I freely share what little I have with those in need.
- I believe that my fraternity has more than it needs – land, buildings, financial resources.
- I participate in social movements that promote liberation.
- I am involved with initiatives which seek human rights and solutions to the problems of humanity.
- I see the '*lepers*' where I live.
- I interact with the '*lepers*' where I live.
- In prayer I find myself full of gratitude.



LET THEM WORK WITH FIDELITY AND DEVOTION

WHERE ARE WE?

- I work with the poor.
- I work for / minister to the poor.
- I see my work as a gift that builds up the Kingdom of God.
- I have unexpectedly stumbled into the ministry of evangelization.



SELF-ASSESSMENT CHARTS



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