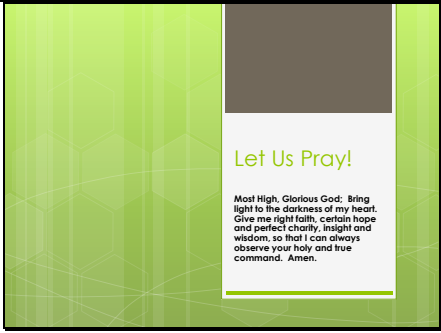


Slide  
1

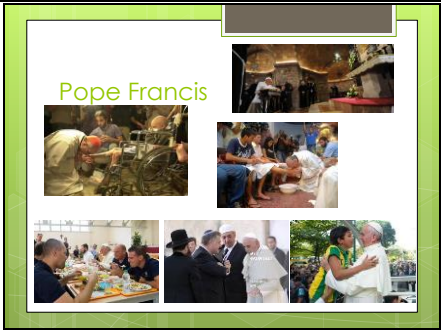


Slide  
2



Saint Francis; our “seraphic Father”, who followed in the footsteps of Jesus & very demonstratively showed us how to rebuild the church, follow the Franciscan path, who sought to be a living Gospel for all to hear, introduced us to our Franciscan Family, wrote our Rule of Life and taught us our Charism.

Slide  
3



Pope Francis, our “Holy Father” has inspired us into conversations and reflection on the meaning of Christian discipleship. He is challenging us to “preach by our deeds”, just as St. Francis did. He is showing us how to wash the feet of others, what to do/how to act in the marketplace, how to pray, and have unswerving devotion to the poor and the social gospel of the Church. He is touching the hearts of all of us! We are seeing the Church in a new light. Our love of the poor is the evangelical poverty that inspired St. Francis to kiss the leper, to give all his wealth to the poor and to see Lady Poverty as freedom from the shackles of wealth.

Slide  
4

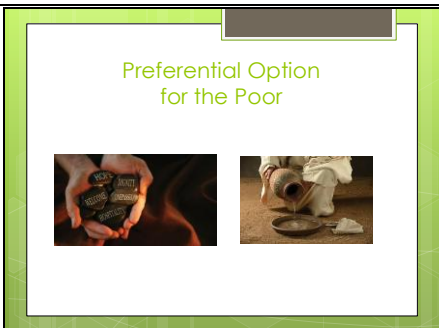


On Nov. 24, 2013, the Solemnity of Jesus Christ, the King of the Universe, in conclusion to the Year of Faith, Pope Francis published the apostolic exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium* (The Joy of the Gospel) that followed up the Synod of Bishops held in Rome in 2012 on “The New Evangelization for the Transmission of the Christian Faith.” // *Evangelii Gaudium* is a long document, yet, it is easy to follow. Its central message is how a personal relationship with Jesus Christ in His Body the Church naturally drives us out joyfully to evangelize others.

During Jeff’s presentation on vocations, the question was asked, “How do we get more people?” *The Joy of the Gospel* may be answering that question for us. It’s all about Evangelization. The word Evangelization can be a scary word because we think of the word **pros•e•lyt•ize** which reminds us of the Church of Latter Day Saints or Jehovah’s Witnesses who come knocking at our door trying to convert us to their faith. (Quote page 8 EG)

This exhortation has five chapters. In Chapter One (19-41), the Holy Father begins with the church and how we need to transpose everything into a missionary key, going beyond our comfort zones to take the Good News of Christ joyfully to the peripheries. In Chapter Two (50-109) Pope Francis discusses the crisis of community in the modern world, brought about in part by trickle-down economics and consumer culture, which generates individualism and indifference. In Chapter Three (110-175) he explores certain aspects of evangelization, such as the need to enculturate the Gospel and the role of preaching.

Slide  
5



Chapter Four (176-258) is about the social dimension of the Church’s mission, especially her preferential option for the poor – “I want a Church that is poor for the poor” – and the need to build peace, justice and fraternity. The Holy Father concludes the exhortation with a brief chapter on the spirituality of being a missionary disciple (259-288). // Like Benedict XVI, Pope Francis is aware that the cross looms large when we claim to be disciples of the Son of God – when we seek to live the Gospel sacrificially in our particular corners of creation.

Slide  
6



**The Joy of the Gospel**

But the vision of the Church held by Pope Francis and his predecessor includes Christians giving witness that crosses need not be avoided out of fear – especially fear that when we give all that we are, we will be left with nothing. Rather, we will have more than we could expect – fulfillment, meaning and joy. In *Evangelii Gaudium*, Pope Francis exhorts us to ponder, interiorize, and then share the truth with a dark and waiting world.

But the vision of the Church held by Pope Francis and his predecessor includes Christians giving witness that crosses need not be avoided out of fear – especially fear that when we give all that we are, we will be left with nothing. Rather, we will have more than we could expect – fulfillment, meaning and joy. // In *Evangelii Gaudium*, Pope Francis exhorts us to ponder, interiorize, and then share the truth with a dark and waiting world.

Slide  
7



**Conversion to Transformation**

- Head to Heart...and then to others
- The vertical & horizontal pieces of the wood of the Cross
  - Vertical = head to heart. The longest journey is between our brain & heart...between knowledge and "knowing" love.
  - Horizontal piece of the Cross = our outreach to our neighbor because of our "knowing" love.

EG Chapter 4 tells us, enlightens us, guides us on The Social Dimension of Evangelization which include:

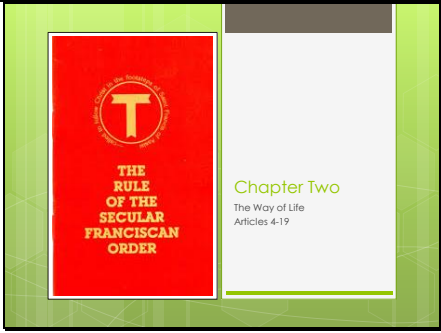
- Communal and Societal Repercussions of the Kerygma (kerygma means: to cry or proclaim as a herald; preach the Good News to the poor, the blind, and the captive.)
- The Inclusion of the Poor in Society
- The Common Good and Peace in Society, and
- Social Dialogue as a Contribution to Peace

EXPreSS this IDEA!

This is a beautiful summary of points of who we are and how we transition of the "head smart" of the FUN Manual to the "heart smart" of transformation!

We have learned from the FUN Manual more about our Church, more about our Franciscan Identity and Sense of Belonging, Franciscan Theology, and much more, these past 3 years. Have we let it touch our hearts? Have we let this information speak to us? Have we let Jesus speak to us through all of the information? Or, have we kept it in our heads? Has this wonderfully FUN informational time moved us? .....moved us to own it, to love it, to delve deeper into our Catholic faith and our Franciscan way of life? I hope so!

Slide  
8

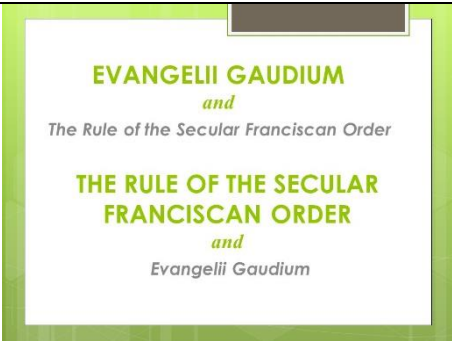


Article 4: The rule and life of the Secular Franciscan is this: to observe the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ by following the example of Saint Francis of Assisi, who made Christ the inspiration and the center of his life with God and people.

Article 5: Secular Franciscan, therefore, should seek to encounter the living and active person of Christ in their brothers and sisters, in Sacred Scripture, in the Church, and in liturgical activity.

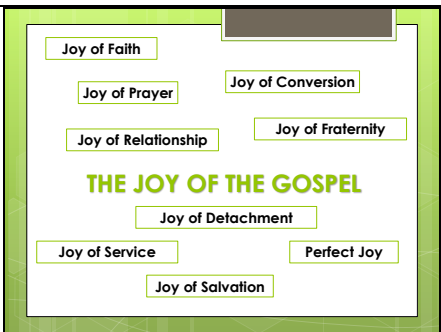
Article 6: They have been made living members of the Church by being buried and raised with Christ in baptism; they have been united more intimately with the Church by Profession. Therefore, they should go forth as witnesses and instruments of her mission among all people, proclaiming Christ by their life and words.  
.....and so on.....

Slide  
9



The Secular Franciscan Rule and the Apostolic Exhortation have so much in common that you would think that the Holy Father was holding our Rule in his hand as he worked on the document. Of course, what inspired him and what inspired our Rule is the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ whom St. Francis tried to follow in every way until he was transformed inside and out into another Christ.



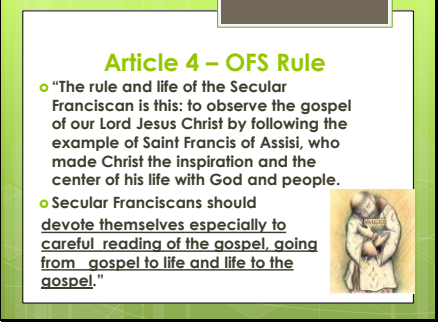
Slide  
10







As followers of St. Francis we are called to be joyful followers of Jesus, and Evangelii Gaudium leads us in that direction. If we think of our vocation as Catholics and as Franciscans we can name the joys and probably add even more:



- The Joy of Faith
- The Joy of Prayer
- The Joy of Conversion
- The Joy of Relationship
- The Joy of Fraternity
- The Joy of Detachment
- The Joy of Service
- Perfect Joy
- The Joy of Salvation

**This is where the Joy of the Gospel is leading us. It is leading us outside of ourselves---from self-centeredness to selflessness.**



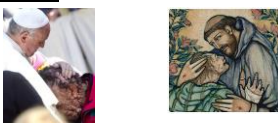
		<p>So then, just as we are challenged by our Rule, <b>Pope Francis is challenging all Catholics, but, I believe, especially those of us who are Franciscans to live up to the Rule we have professed and thereby to live up to the Gospel.</b></p>
<p>Slide 12</p>		<p>Among the challenges presented to us as Catholics and as Franciscans we are asked to do the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Meditate on Scripture</b></li> <li>• <b>Live the message of the Gospel</b></li> <li>• <b>Pray and contemplate</b></li> <li>• <b>Seek justice and peace—reach out to the poor</b></li> <li>• <b>Thrive in Community-Fraternity</b></li> <li>• <b>Strive for personal daily conversion</b></li> </ul> <p><b>It comes as no surprise then, that we can line up the Joy of the Gospel with our Rule.</b></p> <p>The next part of this presentation is not so much a talk on the document as it is a meditation on what calls out to us as Franciscans and Catholics both <b>from the document and from our Rule.</b></p>
<p>Slide 13</p>		<p>In a talk at our region retreat this summer, Fr. Dan Horan spoke about Franciscan spirituality. He said that there is really nothing so “special” about it—It is simply to live the gospel. He said “simply”—but we know that it’s not so simple. We strive for this every day of our lives as we attempt to go from Gospel to life and life to the Gospel.</p> <p>As we meditate on this Apostolic Exhortation, we need to take time to think about <u>who we are</u> in our relationship with God.</p>

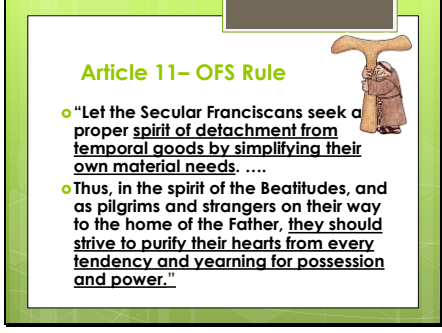
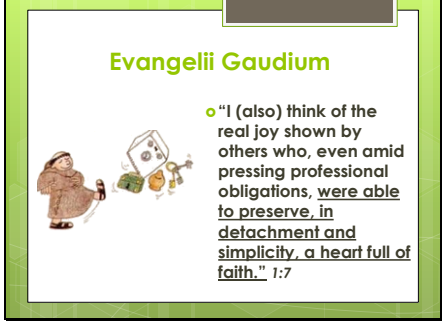
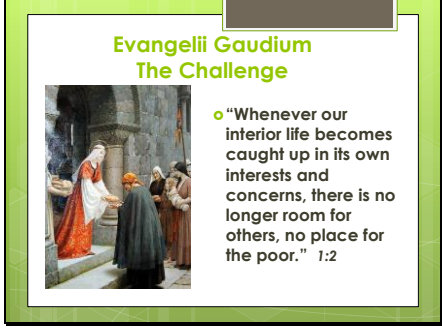
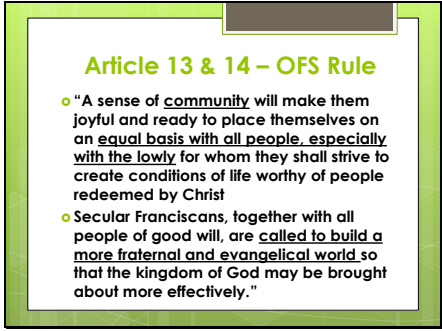
<p>Slide 14</p>	 <p><b>Evangelii Gaudium</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ "The best incentive for sharing the Gospel comes from <u>contemplating it with love, lingering over its pages and reading it with the heart.</u>" 5:264</li> <li>◦ "The study of the sacred Scriptures must be a door opened to every believer. It is essential that the revealed word radically enrich our catechesis and all our efforts to pass on the faith." 3:175</li> </ul>	<p>In paragraph 152 Pope Francis suggests a way that we can do this. "There is one particular way of listening to what the Lord wishes to tell us in his word and of letting ourselves be transformed by the Spirit. It is what we call Lectio Divina." 152</p> <p>As we linger over those pages let us remember <b>St. Clare who tells us to Gaze on him, consider him, contemplate him, imitate him</b></p> <p>What is truly ours as Franciscans is the action/ imitation called for in the Scripture. <b>St. Clare calls us to transform our very being.</b></p>
<p>Slide 15</p>	<p><b>Evangelii Gaudium The Challenge</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ "Reading the Scriptures also makes it clear that the Gospel is not merely about our personal relationship with God. Nor should our loving response to God be seen simply as an <u>accumulation of small personal gestures to individuals in need, a kind of 'charity à la carte,' or a series of acts aimed solely at easing our conscience.</u>" 4:180</li> </ul>	<p>So, what is he challenging us to do? First he tells us what the Gospel is NOT—"accumulation..."</p> <p>In this quote the Holy Father is apparently telling us more what NOT to do—all the little things that make us feel good don't necessarily change us—instead, he is asking us to "put on Christ."</p>
<p>Slide 16</p>	<p><b>Evangelii Gaudium The Challenge</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ "The Gospel is about the kingdom of God (cf. Lk 4: 43); it is about loving God who reigns in our world. To the extent that he reigns within us, the life of society will be a setting for universal fraternity, justice, peace and dignity. <u>Both Christian preaching and life, then, are meant to have an impact on society.</u>" 4:180</li> </ul>	<p>Then he goes on to challenge us – every one of us is meant to <u>have an impact on society--</u></p> <p>Who are we? – are we walking the walk and talking the talk? Are we Being transparent—are <b>we</b> the open gospel that people will see and will want more?</p>
<p>Slide 17</p>	 <p><b>Article 5– OFS Rule</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ "Secular Franciscans, therefore, should seek to <u>encounter the living and active person of Christ in their brothers and sisters,</u> in Sacred Scripture, in the Church, and in liturgical activity."</li> </ul>	<p>Our Rule calls us to encounter the living person of Jesus in one another – usually not so difficult in a room full of Franciscans, but we are also called to the same thing in a room full of those who couldn't be more different than we are. Maybe even those whom we don't like very much...</p>





<p>Slide 18</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Evangelii Gaudium</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ "...we must have sincere trust in our fellow pilgrims, putting aside all suspicion or mistrust, Trusting others is an art and peace is an art." 5:244</li> <li>◦ "If we are to share our lives with others and generously give of ourselves, we also have to realize that <u>every person is worthy of our giving.</u>" 5:274</li> </ul>	<p>The Holy Father goes on to say that every person is worthy of our giving. We are all pilgrims on the same road. Sometimes it's not so easy to trust our brothers and sisters (depending on how much we have been hurt)—how are we at trusting strangers? But, that is what is asked of us.</p>
<p>Slide 19</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Evangelii Gaudium The Challenge</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ "God's word teaches that <u>our brothers and sisters are the prolongation of the incarnation for each of us:</u> What these passages make clear is the absolute priority of <u>'going forth from ourselves toward our brothers and sisters'</u>" 4:179</li> </ul> 	<p>We are challenged by the Gospel to "go forth from ourselves"</p> <p>We find it in numerous places—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><i>"As you did it to one of these, the least of my brethren, you did it to me"</i></b> (Mt 25: 40).</li> </ul> <p>The way we treat others has a transcendent dimension:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><i>"The measure you give will be the measure you get"</i></b> (Mt 7: 2).</li> </ul> <p>It corresponds to the mercy which God has shown us:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><i>"Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful. Do not judge, and you will not be judged; do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven; give and it will be given to you... For the measure you give will be the measure you get back"</i></b> (Lk 6: 36-38).</li> </ul>
<p>Slide 20</p>	 <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Article 6– OFS Rule</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ "They have been made living members of the Church by being buried and raised with Christ in baptism; they have been united more intimately with the Church by Profession. Therefore, <u>they should go forth as witnesses and instruments of her mission among all people, proclaiming Christ by their life and words.</u>"</li> </ul>	<p>Our Rule exhorts us to be living examples of Christ's love and work in the world.</p>

<p>Slide 21</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Evangelii Gaudium</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o "The kerygma has a clear social content: <u>at the very heart of the Gospel is life in community and engagement with others.</u>" 4:177</li> <li>o "By preaching Jesus Christ, who is himself peace (cf. Eph 2: 14), the <u>new evangelization calls on every baptized person to be a peacemaker and a credible witness to a reconciled life.</u>" 4:239</li> </ul>	<p>This is speaking directly to us as Franciscans!</p>
<p>Slide 22</p>	 <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Evangelii Gaudium The Challenge</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o "Jesus wants evangelizers who <u>proclaim the good news not only with words, but above all by a life transfigured by God's presence.</u>" 5:259</li> </ul>	<p>"Let us all remember this: one cannot proclaim the Gospel of Jesus without the <b>tangible witness</b> of one's life."</p> <p>All that we teach in our formation programs, all that we learn at workshops and on retreats and through homilies and spiritual reading is not just information. We need to be open to <b>transformation</b>—to be so steeped in what we have learned that, like Francis, we become other Christs.</p>
<p>Slide 23</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Article 7– OFS Rule</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o "...motivated by the dynamic power of the gospel, let them <u>conform their thoughts and deeds to those of Christ by means of that radical interior change which the gospel itself calls conversion.</u> Human frailty makes it necessary that this conversion be carried out daily."</li> </ul>	<p>We start new every day—every day a little piece of the old us should die so that we are able to renew ourselves little by little in the image of Christ...</p>
<p>Slide 24</p>	 <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Evangelii Gaudium</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o "How good it feels to come back to him whenever we are lost! Let me say this once more: <u>God never tires of forgiving us; we are the ones who tire of seeking his mercy.</u>" 1:3</li> </ul>	<p>We should remember that we are the original brothers and sisters of penance. We have to go back and examine the original vision of Francis. Have we become complacent? Are we "humble and proud of it?"</p>



<p>Slide 25</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Evangelii Gaudium</b> <b>The Challenge</b></p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ "Now is the time to say to Jesus: 'Lord, I have let myself be deceived; in a thousand ways I have shunned your love, yet here I am once more, to renew my covenant with you . <u>I need you. Save me once again, Lord, take me once more into your redeeming embrace.</u>' " 1:3</li> </ul>	<p>Anne Mulqueen: "The culmination of conversion is transformation."</p>
<p>Slide 26</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Article 8– OFS Rule</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ "So let prayer and contemplation be the soul of all they are and do. Let them participate in the sacramental life of the church, above all the Eucharist. Let them join in liturgical prayer in one of the forms proposed by the Church, reliving the mysteries of the life of Christ."</li> </ul> 	<p>Our Rule calls us to prayer</p>
<p>Slide 27</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Evangelii Gaudium</b></p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ "Without prolonged moments of adoration, of prayerful encounter with the word, of sincere conversation with the Lord, our work easily becomes <u>meaningless</u>; we lose energy as a result of weariness and difficulties, and our fervor dies out." 5:262</li> </ul>	<p>We are also called by this document to spend prolonged moments in prayer.</p> <p>"Spirit-filled evangelizers are evangelizers who pray and work." Chapter 5: 262</p> <p>We are very active in our servant leadership roles and get so busy that sometimes our prayer suffers.</p> <p>Once again on our retreat, Fr. Dan spoke about contemplation as "being, not doing;" emptying of self; seeing beyond the surface; listening to the Lord.</p>
<p>Slide 28</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Evangelii Gaudium</b> <b>The Challenge</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ "Jesus wants evangelizers who proclaim the good news not only with words, but above all <u>by a life transfigured by God's presence.</u>" 5:259</li> </ul> 	<p>Here it is again—a life transfigured by God's presence.</p>

<p>Slide 29</p>	 <p><b>Article 11- OFS Rule</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ "Let the Secular Franciscans seek a proper <u>spirit of detachment from temporal goods by simplifying their own material needs.</u> ....</li> <li>◦ Thus, in the spirit of the Beatitudes, and as pilgrims and strangers on their way to the home of the Father, <u>they should strive to purify their hearts from every tendency and yearning for possession and power.</u>"</li> </ul>	<p>Detachment, simplifying our needs</p> <p>Purify our hearts from every tendency and yearning for possession and power. We are called to be "servant leaders" – sometimes we forget this fact</p> <p>(Anne Mulqueen) "We must have faith in others to do what they have been called to do."</p>
<p>Slide 30</p>	 <p><b>Evangelii Gaudium</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ "I (also) think of the real joy shown by others who, even amid pressing professional obligations, were able to preserve, in <u>detachment and simplicity, a heart full of faith.</u>" 1:7</li> </ul>	<p><u>Each individual Christian and every community is called to be an instrument of God for the liberation and promotion of the poor, and for enabling them to be fully a part of society. This demands that we be docile and attentive to the cry of the poor and to come to their aid.</u> 187</p> <p>We <u>incarnate the duty of hearing the cry of the poor</u> when we are deeply moved by the suffering of others. 193</p>
<p>Slide 31</p>	 <p><b>Evangelii Gaudium The Challenge</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ "Whenever our interior life becomes caught up in its own interests and concerns, there is no longer room for others, no place for the poor." 1:2</li> </ul>	<p>Big challenge</p> <p>St. Elizabeth of Hungary stepped outside of her family traditions and expectations to serve the poor. Passion and spirit led her drive. She shows us that God gives you the strength.</p>
<p>Slide 32</p>	 <p><b>Article 13 &amp; 14 - OFS Rule</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ "A sense of <u>community</u> will make them joyful and ready to place themselves on an <u>equal basis with all people, especially with the lowly</u> for whom they shall strive to create conditions of life worthy of people redeemed by Christ</li> <li>◦ Secular Franciscans, together with all people of good will, are <u>called to build a more fraternal and evangelical world</u> so that the kingdom of God may be brought about more effectively."</li> </ul>	<p>As Franciscans we find out joy in fraternity—community—in interacting—being in relationship with one another and with all people.</p>

<p>Slide 33</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Evangelii Gaudium</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ "We are called to bear witness to a constantly <u>new way of living together in fidelity to the Gospel. Let us not allow ourselves to be robbed of community!</u>" 2:92</li> <li>◦ "Let everyone admire how you <u>care for one another, and how you encourage and accompany one another</u>: 'By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another'" (Jn 13: 35). 2: 99</li> </ul> 	<p>Falls easily off the tongue, have we become immune to the words? We can forget this easily when things get tough in our fraternities or in our families—this call is for every one of us every day.</p>
<p>Slide 34</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Evangelii Gaudium The Challenge</b></p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ "It is a fraternal love capable of seeing the <u>sacred grandeur of our neighbor, of finding God in every human being, of tolerating the nuisances of life</u> in common by clinging to the love of God, of opening the heart to divine love and <u>seeking the happiness of others</u> just as their heavenly Father does." 2:92</li> </ul>	<p>This speaks to us on every level... family life, fraternity life, working on a commission or committee, dealing with our neighbors. Seeking (stepping up and stepping out) the happiness of others is not easy, yet this is what we are called to do.</p> <p>Ann—we can fail even when we look successful if we do not lead with love. (Love is opening ourselves to be hurt)</p>
<p>Slide 35</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Article 15 – OFS Rule</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ "Let them individually and collectively <u>be in the forefront in promoting justice by the testimony of their human lives</u> and their courageous initiatives. Especially in the field of public life, they should make definite choices in harmony with their faith."</li> </ul> 	
<p>Slide 36</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Evangelii Gaudium</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ "Each individual Christian and every community is called to be an instrument of God for the liberation and promotion of the poor, and for enabling them to be fully a part of society." 4:187</li> <li>◦ "<u>The dignity of the human person and the common good rank higher than the comfort of those who refuse to renounce their privileges. When these values are threatened, a prophetic voice must be raised.</u>" 4:218</li> </ul>	<p>Powerful!</p>
<p>Slide 37</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Evangelii Gaudium The Challenge</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ "An authentic faith—which is never comfortable or completely personal—always involves a <u>deep desire to change the world, to transmit values, to leave this earth somehow better than we found it.</u>" 4:183</li> </ul> 	<p>Consequently, <u>no one can demand that religion should be relegated to the inner sanctum of personal life,...</u> <u>Who would claim to lock up in a church and silence the message of St. Francis of Assisi or Blessed Teresa of Calcutta?</u> They themselves would have found this unacceptable.</p> <p>We are always told to move forward toward our brothers and sisters, whoever they may be.</p>

Slide  
38

**As We Go Forth from this Place**



- We need to step outside of ourselves.
- Pope Francis challenges us to “be who we say we are.” (*Dan Horan, OFM*)

What should we remember?

Sometimes we need to “get over ourselves,” step out and step up.

Be who we say we are...

Be refreshed and renewed in our lives as Catholics and Franciscans

Slide  
39

**As We Go Forth from this Place**



- Who are we according to our Rule?
- What are the challenges that we have been given here at Chapter?
- What opened your heart?
- What will we take back to our regions and our fraternities?

Meditation

Inspired by the quotes

If at some point you can Change the “we” to “I” ...in all the statements...that really will be working toward personal transformation.

For now, join with a partner or in a triad and take a few minutes to begin the process.

Think in terms of our Rule

Think about how you felt “before and after” meditating on these quotes, being together here in this place.

We will ask for a brief sharing on what came out in your discussions.

We would like to follow up on your ideas

Slide  
40

