

Below are some excerpts from a request by the world-wide Order of Friars Minor, the Franciscans, for participation by friars and those we minister with to form an evangelization plan for the world. As we are working at a strategic plan or orientation for the life and ministry of the Mountain, the Order is doing the same.

We have accepted the call to live the Gospel in the following of Christ, and it is here that we hear the mandate of Jesus to go out into the world, adhering to the vocation received by Francis while listening to the Gospel at the Portiuncula. It is here that we discover our call as missionary disciples. Evangelizing for us means, first of all allowing ourselves to be converted by the Gospel of Christ, which is spirit and life, to live it as brothers (and sisters) and minors, accepting the call to participate in the work of God who in the Spirit transforms the world on the path towards the Kingdom of God. This is why we are called by our way of life to “let the Gospel be seen.” Wherever we are and whatever activities we promote, we can thus be a witness to the incarnate presence of God in creation, in people’s lives and in the different realities and signs of the times. Evangelizing means collaborating with the work of the Father of Jesus Christ, who, in the power of his Spirit, wants to transfigure the world towards the fulfillment of his Kingdom. In this perspective, every fraternal presence of ours is in itself already a testimony aimed at Evangelization. This is why we speak of (the need for) a Ratio Evangelizationis (An Evangelization Plan) as an orientation for our mission in this world.

With respect for every man and woman, we want to increasingly promote the safeguarding of persons as a constitutive part of our missionary evangelization. On such a path, solicitude and concern for every person are explicitly manifested. To avoid any form of abuse, it is necessary to follow the local civil laws, the general teaching of the Church and the Bishop’s Conferences, and the Order’s directives.

Few, like Francis have recognized that the dignity of human beings is also linked to his relationship with all creatures, recognized as brothers and sisters of humanity. Our evangelizing commitment, therefore, also takes care of creation.

Our relationship with people and creation requires that we first allow ourselves to be evangelized based on our conversion to God, to return to the primordial communion between people and all creation. It is a conversion that places us at the service of the growth of others according to God’s plan of love, which includes a commitment to justice, peace and the integrity of creation.

God’s goodness is spread through our evangelizing activities. This requires that our presence becomes dynamic and creative through ever-new forms of service according to the needs and requirements of the different times and places. We seek to manifest God’s saving presence in this world through the proclamation of love and mercy.

God's presence through us must also manifest itself in a contemplative dimension that is nothing other than nourishing our filial relationship with the Father through the son in the Spirit.

The whole document with reflection questions will be available to you. We are hoping that you will be able to read the whole document and in a few weeks we can have a zoom discussion on what we all feel is important for the Order to hear and include in an Evangelization Plan. Thanks very much!