

GATHERED INSPIRED SENT



There is one fear that I believe is part of the collective human experience and that is not having enough of what is most necessary for life: food, water and a shelter. We fear being without what we need for basic survival. We fear not having what we believe is necessary for our quality of life. We fear being alone. These fears are deeply imbedded and influence our thoughts and actions. The thought of being without can scare us into taking drastic measures to ensure that we will have what we need to live. It is the fear of being without, of not being taken care of, that can make the evangelical vow of poverty very frightening and even intimidating. To understand the vow of poverty is to develop a life of gratitude which depends on the providence of God. The Lord who is generously provident provides for our needs. An authentic living of the vow of poverty is learning to know the difference between one's wants and needs. It is growing in lessening one's dependence upon things and trusting that the Lord always provides for our needs.

The Constitutions of the Servite Order define the vow of poverty in the life of the friars. Article 57 says, "work, the sharing of goods and a moderate style of life constitute the witness to poverty voluntarily undertaken by Servite communities.

a) By our daily work, we share the lot of all men and women, collaborate in the creative work of the Father and associate

CALLED TO SERVE

ORDER OF FRIAR SERVANTS OF MARY

Vocation Newsletter

ourselves with the redemptive work of Christ.

b) Since we have chosen to follow the poor Christ and to live in fraternal communion, we are committed to placing all our energies, our abilities, our time and the fruit of our labor at the service of the

community and others. This sharing of goods fosters interior freedom and enables us to live the spirit of the Beatitudes.

c) The simplicity of our lifestyle, insofar as it removes whatever sets us apart from others, allows us to enter into communion



Allegory of Poverty, Assisi



with those we are called to serve and become one with them in Christ Jesus.”

Servites live poverty by undertaking ministerial work that proclaims the Gospel while affording an income to the community. The remuneration received for the work/ministry of a friar is directly given to the community. The community holds all such funds in common and from these funds provide for the needs of the friars: housing, food, clothing, books, spiritual direction, healthcare, annual

is the purpose of the vow of poverty. Trusting the Lord to provide for one’s needs frees the friar to generously serve without a worry or care. Poverty focuses the friar’s life on what is most important which is intensifying his union with God, joyfully serving others and experiencing God’s care within his community. The vow of poverty is Jesus’s invitation to live free knowing that the Lord provides and provides abundantly for all that one needs.

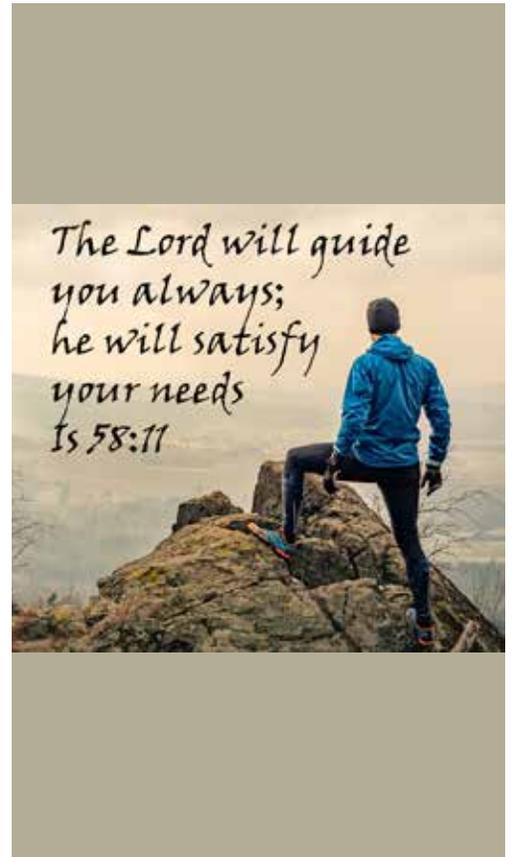
Questions for Reflection

- 1. What are my needs? What are my wants? What I need to give up to answer the Lord’s call to serve Him?**
- 2. In what ways does the vow of poverty challenge me? Why?**

retreat, transportation and recreation. Being poor for Christ is also selflessly serving the needs of the community. From cooking meals for the community to serving as house treasurer to servicing the community automobiles, the friar uses his personal gifts and talents to enhance the life of the brothers with whom he lives. Living vowed poverty is a life of stepping outside of oneself to minister to the friars of the community.

Servites live poverty by a simple lifestyle. All that a friar possesses belongs to the community because material, temporal possessions matter little in comparison to the desire to grow ever deeper in communion with Christ and expressing this communion in selfless service of others. Vowed poverty is most authentically expressed by a life of compassionate service to others in the example of Jesus.

The desire to live the vow of poverty is to grow in profound dependence on the Lord. By living a simple lifestyle, the friar does not worry about what he will eat or what he will wear, but puts his personal energy into growing in communion with the Lord. The Lord, who is the reason and fuel for the friar’s religious consecration,



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