

Words and Deeds

The Example of Francis of Assisi





VERBVM CARO FACTUM EST

THE WORD WAS MADE FLESH













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Children of the Heavenly Father

- The Spirit of the Lord will rest upon all those men and women who have done these things [*what Jesus commands in the Gospel*] and It will make a home and dwelling place in them.
- And they will be the children of the heavenly Father, Whose works they do.
- And they are spouses, brothers and mothers of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Spouses, brothers, mothers

- We are spouses when the faithful soul is united by the Holy Spirit to Our Lord Jesus Christ.
- We are brothers, moreover, when we do the will of His Father Who is in heaven;
- mothers when we carry Him in our heart and body by love and a pure and sincere conscience, and give Him birth through a **holy activity** which must shine before others by **example.**”



Admonition VII

- The Apostle says: *The letter kills, but the spirit gives life.* Those people are put to death by the letter who only wish to know the words alone, that they might be esteemed wiser than others and be able to acquire great riches to give to their relatives and friends.
- And those religious are put to death by the letter who are not willing to follow the spirit of the divine letter but, instead, wish only to know the words and to interpret them for others.

“the spirit of the divine letter”

- And those people are brought to life by the spirit of the divine letter who do not attribute every letter they know, or wish to know, to the body but, by word and example, return them to the most high Lord God to Whom every good belongs.



JEREMIAH 45 46

...I will watch over you, says the Lord, and I will not let you be destroyed. For I am the Lord your God, and I will be with you in the time of your distress. I will bring you back to your land, and you will build a city, and you will dwell in it. For I will be a father to the fatherless, and a husband to the widow, says the Lord. For I will be a father to the fatherless, and a husband to the widow, says the Lord. For I will be a father to the fatherless, and a husband to the widow, says the Lord.

CHAPTER 46

...I will be a father to the fatherless, and a husband to the widow, says the Lord. For I will be a father to the fatherless, and a husband to the widow, says the Lord. For I will be a father to the fatherless, and a husband to the widow, says the Lord.



Hearing the Gospel

- One day the Gospel was being read in that church about how the Lord sent out his disciples to preach. In order to understand better the words of the gospel, he humbly begged the priest after the Mass to explain the Gospel to him. The priest explained it all to him, line by line.
- When he heard that Christ's disciples should not possess gold or silver or money, or carry on their journey a wallet or a sack, nor bread nor a staff, not to have shoes nor two tunics, but that they should preach the kingdom of God and penance, Francis immediately exulted in the spirit of God.

Doing the Gospel

- “This is what I want,” he said, “this is what I seek, this is what I desire with all my heart.” He did not delay before he devoutly began to put into effect what he heard.
- Immediately he took off the shoes from his feet, put down the staff from his hands, and, satisfied with one tunic, exchanged his leather belt for a cord. ... As for the other things he heard, he set about doing them with great care and reverence.”
– (Thomas of Celano, Life of St. Francis, #22).



Earlier Rule, Chap. 22

- My brothers: let us pay attention to what the Lord says: “Love your enemies and do good to those who hate you,”
- for our Lord Jesus Christ, Whose footprints we must follow, called His betrayer a friend and willingly offer Himself to His executioners.

“our friends”

- Our friends, therefore, are all those who unjustly inflict upon us distress and anguish, shame and injury, sorrow and punishment, martyrdom and death.
- We must love them greatly for we shall possess eternal life because of what they bring us.



