

JPIC supplement to candidacy formation
by Andrew Conradi, ofs (JPIC National Animator), 2016
Some ideas/points that could be included at the discretion of the formator

CANDIDACY

Chapter 16 “When you pray ...”

The Franciscan Journey (Updated version 2010) by Lester Bach, OFM Cap.

Note: *Understanding JPIC (UJPIC)* can be found here:

<http://www.franciscanvoicecanada.com/> Click on “Understanding JPIC” at the foot of the page. [It is best to get it from this source as it will post the amendments quickly after they are made so you will get the latest updated version here]

For chapter 16 of **Franciscan Journey** I suggest you read **UJPIC’s** entire section **3.4. Fourth – The link between Prayer and Action** (approx. 12 pages).

It covers:

Fourth - The Link between Prayer & Action	3.4.
The Eucharist	3.4.1.
OFS Rule	3.4.8.
St Clare’s Path to Prayer	3.4.10.
<i>Lectio divina</i>	3.4.13.
Meditation and Contemplation	3.4.18.
<i>Lex orandi, lex credendi</i>	3.4.28.
The Way, or Stations, of the Cross	3.4.29
Franciscan Crown Rosary	3.4.35.
The Peace Prayer of St Francis	3.4.41.
A Franciscan Blessing	3.4.47.
St Bonaventure on prayer	3.4.48.

But if you do not have time then let the following four points here below suffice! The connection to action for JPIC is obvious!

1.

p 176 Constitutions – article 12.3

“ They should seek to discover the presence of the Father in their own heart, in nature, and in the history of humanity in which His plan of salvation”

in nature reminds us that the integrity of creation and its protection flow from this awareness of the presence of God the Creator.

the history of humanity should remind us that history is being made today and our actions can shape it, indeed it is our duty to what we can however seemingly insignificant.

His plan of salvation is linked to bringing about the Kingdom of God.

From UJPIC :

“2.0.2.a. As the OFM (Rozansky and Felipe, 2009, 20) explains it, JPIC values: “... Living JPIC values will affect our prayer and fraternity, and also the way we see reality, the economy, style of life and mission. Living JPIC values makes our prayer and our celebration of the Eucharist more present to the realities of our society and the world around us. It encourages us to apply the Word to these realities, to read Scripture from the perspective of the poor,” We should always include the poor, justice, peace and creation in our thoughts, prayers and actions.”

“3.1.2. Above all, JPIC values are values of the Kingdom of God. “The Kingdom of God is ... Justice, Peace and Joy in the Spirit.” (Rm 14:17). OFS Rule 14 informs us: “Secular Franciscans, together with all people of good will, are called to build a more fraternal and evangelical world so that the kingdom of God may be brought about more effectively.” The “Kingdom of God” could be described in contemporary terms as a just world order -- one with compassion, solidarity and the common good at its centre. As such, God Himself is involved in, and committed to, the task of making the world a place that is just and reconciled, providing a dignified life to all creatures. St Francis of Assisi was aware of God’s mission as Creator, Liberator and Redeemer. Pope Francis writes: “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. Both Christian preaching and life, then, are meant to have an impact on society.” (2013, *Evangelii Gaudium*, n. 180)”

“3.1.4. The core of the Good News proclaimed by Jesus is salvation as a gift of God. It is salvation from all oppression, especially from sin and evil. Kingdom and salvation are two keywords in the teaching of Jesus. He proclaims the Kingdom of God untiringly in His preaching, “a completely new teaching in a spirit of authority” (*Mk* 1:27), and through many signs. “And among these signs there is the one to which he attaches great importance: the humble and the poor are evangelized, become His disciples and gather together ‘in His name’ in the great community of those who believe in Him.” (Paul VI, 1975, *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, n.12)

3.1.5. Among the values of the Kingdom of God, justice and peace receive a central place. In the Beatitudes, the *Magna Carta* of the Kingdom of God, Jesus declares that those are blessed who hunger and thirst for justice; and for those who are persecuted for this reason, “theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven” (*Mt* 5, 6.10). Equally blessed are the “peacemakers; they shall be called children of God” (*Mt* 5, 9).

3.1.6. Jesus clearly indicates what is important in Christian life: “Seek first the Kingdom of God, and His righteousness” (*Mt* 6, 33). He showed a hunger and thirst for justice and was persecuted because of it. He Himself is the source, the giver and the cause of peace. Francis echoed this: “Seek first the Kingdom of God and His justice.” (*Rule Herm.3*)”

2.

FJ p 178: “Contemplation”

There is widespread confusion in English between *meditation* and *contemplation*. Different people use the terms differently. I strongly recommend reading **UJPIC n.**

3.4.18. - 3.4.27. to help clarify what is meant by these terms. But here are some excerpts **from UJPIC:**

“3.4.19. They need a sharper definition. What distinguishes them? There is much confusion in the literature but for our purpose let us say that in the West meditation means continued, intense, focused thought and may involve a specific, directed mental exercise, such as visualization of a religious scene or consideration of a scriptural passage or even an injustice. This definition seems a better fit with Clare’s *gaze, consider, contemplate*; Bonaventure’s *contuition*; and the *meditatio* and *contemplatio* of *lectio divina* because they all lead directly to action (e.g. Clare: *imitate*). “For Clare and Francis, prayer is not a flight from the world in pursuit of a transcendent God; rather it centers on the mystical body of Christ and our participation in this mystery.” (Delio, 2004, 69)

3.4.21. Contemplation is a quiet, intentionally unfocused, content-free direction of the mind to God, and awareness of and listening to God. Contemplation in this sense may not be specifically Franciscan although some Franciscans practice it. It consists of clearing the mind of all distractions to be merely and humbly in the presence of God in mental silence. It is not easy, takes practice and is not normally achievable for more than a short period (say, 20-30 minutes at most) at a time. Thus after a period of contemplation one returns to the world hopefully refreshed and changed for the better. Thus contemplation’s effects also lead to a transformation and action though perhaps more indirectly than meditation.”

3.

FJ p 183: “Lectio divina”

From UJPIC:

3.4.13. In 1548 a Franciscan Friar, St Pedro de Alcántara published a watershed book in the area of *lectio divina* called "Treatise on Prayer And Meditation". It became popularly known as the "Golden Booklet". It was one of, if not the first attempt to systematize *lectio divina*. “Of course, he would be the first to say that prayer is a relationship and that the "system" only serves the relationship and is not to become the goal in itself,” (Gerry Clyne, OFM, email).

3.4.14. If we look at *Verbum Domini* (Apostolic Exhortation by Pope Benedict XVI, 2010) in Part Two^[1] under *The prayerful reading of sacred Scripture and "lectio divina"* we find this explanation at n.87:

“*Lectio* (reading): which leads to a desire to understand its true context: What does the biblical text say in itself?

Oratio (prayer): what do we say to the Lord in response to his word?

Contemplatio (contemplation): during which we take up, as a gift from God, his own way of seeing and judging reality, and ask ourselves what conversion of mind, heart and life is the Lord asking of us.

Actio (action): Putting it into practice. The process of 'lectio divina' is not concluded until it arrives at action ('actio'), which moves the believer to make his or her life a gift for others in charity."

Again let us note the confusion in differentiation between meditation and contemplation that in his use of the term *contemplatio* (contemplation), Benedict XVI is actually referring to what we would call meditation as defined previously above because it is "focused thought and may involve a specific, directed mental exercise, such as visualization of a religious scene or consideration of a scriptural passage or even an injustice." rather than contemplation defined as: "unfocused, content-free direction of the mind to God".

4.

FJ p 183: "Eucharist"

From UJPIC:

3.4.1. ... **The only question we should ask before the Eucharist is: What does my brother or sister or Mother Earth need of me now?**" (O'Mahony, OFM Cap, 1993, no page no)

3.4.4. As Bergeron (2008) asked us, when Jesus said: "**Do this in remembrance of Me**" what did He want us to remember? She pointed out that His *entire life of ministry* was marked by:

1. profound solidarity with the marginalised
2. denunciation of the unjust social, economic, political and religious conditions
3. refusal to accept injustice that created divisions in society
4. human relationships based on love, liberty and dignity
5. preaching of authentic worship
6. willingness to confront the powerful

3.4.7. "The Eucharist sends us out to labour in a responsible manner to safeguard creation." (Benedict XVI quoted in OMI, 2008, p 11). Pope Benedict XVI reminds us in *Deus Caritas Est* (2005, n.14): "A Eucharist which does not pass over into the concrete practice of love is intrinsically fragmented." Or as Fr Thomas Rosica, CSB (2013) said: "Without authentic evangelization, participation in the liturgy is ultimately hollow— a pastime or a momentary palliative; **without the works of justice and charity that flow from our masses, participation in the liturgy is ultimately deceptive, playing church rather than being church.**"