



Formation Commission

SERVANT LEADERSHIP

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Gospel to Life Part 2 – The Word of God

In the last article I mentioned that our Profession is to live our lives from Gospel to Life and Life to Gospel. As the final piece of the puzzle, I want to reflect on the Word of God, especially important for us as Franciscans.

The best place to start is at the very beginning:

^{1†} In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He was in the beginning with God.

We know that this Word of God, the one who was also from the beginning, was with God and is God. We know He is the Beloved Son, Jesus. So when we speak of the Gospels, we are speaking about the words uttered by Jesus; we are speaking about the words of the Word, the very Word of God. OK, enough of the confusing theology. How does the Word ring true in our understanding of Gospel to Life?

³ All things came to be through him, and without him nothing came to be.

God utters a word and it becomes, it enters into being through and for the beloved Son. All that ever existed and ever will exist comes to be through the Word. To expand some on Bonaventure, God continually utters words that create, because our Triune God is love overflowing, always total, complete, and fertile, and in this unbounded love expressed within and overflowing from the Trinity, creation happens.

Through Jesus as the eternally begotten Word of God, we, yes, you and me, are uttered and become “little” words of God, little, but still words spoken into existence by the Father, uttered in love and filled with grace.

¹² But to those who did accept him, he gave power to become children of God, to those who believe in his name, ¹³ who were born not by natural generation nor by human choice nor by a man’s decision but of God.

¹⁶ From his fullness we have all received, grace in place of grace,

The prologue to John’s Gospel challenges those who truly accept God to recognize the reality that we also are ultimately from God. We came into being because we are unique words uttered by God. Here is the foundation for each of us becoming the Gospel; we are all the little words of God. AND the words of God are “Good News.”

At Profession we also spoke words, the words where we offered ourselves, our lives, as our gifts back to the Father who first uttered us into being. Exercising our office as priest, we became the Eucharistic oblation and sacrificed ourselves to return love for love. In words and in action we make known the secrets of our hearts, as the Father reveals His heart through Jesus, who is love incarnate.

The injustice we do, in my opinion, is to look at the Gospels, the words of the Word, as a third party story to witness to faith. It’s not a wrong approach; it just

[†]Confraternity of Christian Doctrine. Board of Trustees, Catholic Church. National Conference of Catholic Bishops, & United States Catholic Conference. Administrative Board. (1996). *The New American Bible: Translated from the original languages with critical use of all the ancient sources and the revised New Testament* (Jn 1:1–16). Confraternity of Christian Doctrine.

does not go far enough. It allows us to detach from the Gospel and hear it as an example and not the book of life itself.

We are called to enter the Gospel, it's not just a story for or about us, IT IS US! Jesus' unique Word unites with our unique word and then the Gospel of life, this good news happens yet again, and over and over, always breathing new life into the world.

Yes, dear brothers and sisters, we are each a word uttered by our very loving God, a word that can blossom into a living gospel, countless numbers of gospels all aimed at allowing God to breathe through us, to heal through us, to give a kindness for a hurt, and to allow God to love through us.

We are called to co-create with God, and through our words united with His Word, to call into being a space and place where God's love can be freely experienced and in this place, a people can be free and safe to begin to transform and recreate themselves into the gospels they are meant to become.

Every word uttered by God is a word of love and beauty, and every word creates. This understanding was expressed by Francis in his consuming love for everything, animate and inanimate, that was created. Everything expressed the dynamic love of the Trinity. Seeing everything in terms of love and beauty meant everything has value and worth because it exists as a sign of the love of God. Creation, all of it, is to be loved and shepherded, valued and preserved, simply because it is of God, and given for our use, not abuse.

As my last "official" article as your formation chair, I want to thank you for your love and support over these years, and for allowing me the honor of serving you. My prayers and blessings are on each one of you and on our Order, that through the power of the Holy Spirit, we will all be transformed and the world will once again know we follow Jesus by the great love we show for all of God's creation.

May the Lord always hold you in His peace

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