

Listen

Discern

Go Forth

OR...

How do we “do”
Social justice
In today’s
politically-charged
world?

Let us Begin...

A dark blue, solid-colored shape that starts as a thin line at the bottom left and expands diagonally upwards and to the right, filling the bottom right portion of the slide.

“Go Forth”

Come, Lord Jesus, let me feel Your presence, and hear Your voice.

Open the eyes of my heart,

Illuminate within it places of eternal Lent where I have not permitted your love entry.

Help me to open these places.

Root out that which needs to leave, and make room for the joy of Your resurrection.

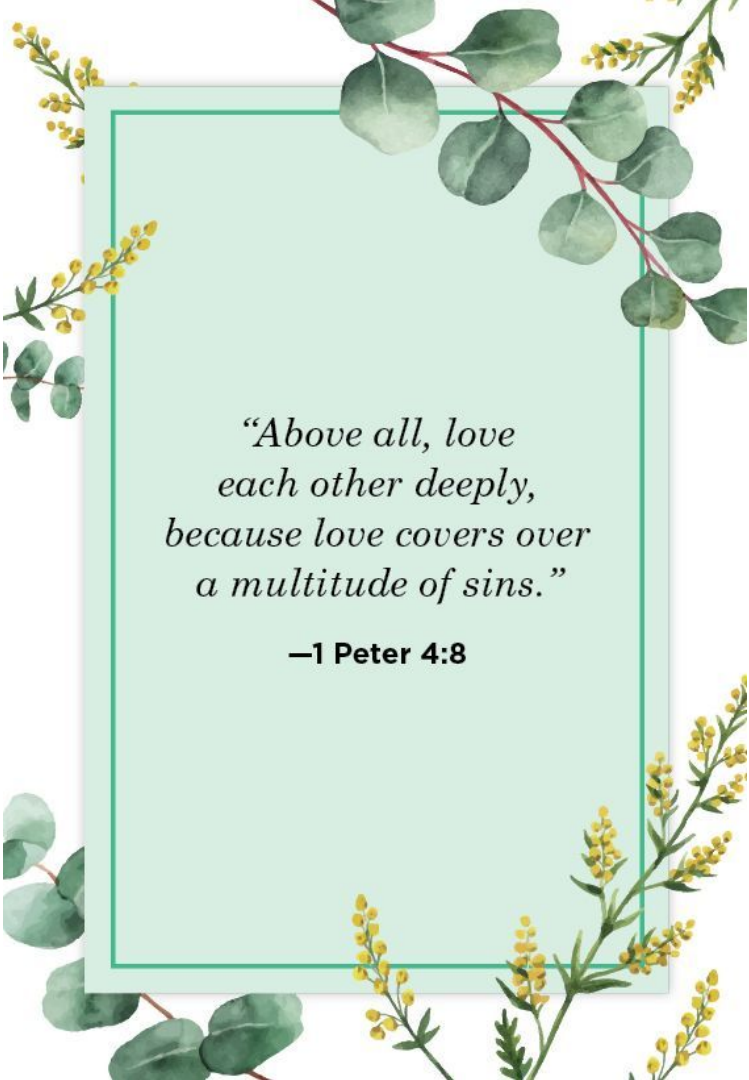
Open the eyes of my heart to see You

In those with whom I live and work and share fraternity.

Come to those broken places in me,

In those relationships with others, in the world around me,

In need of reconciliation, with the healing of Your resurrection.

A decorative border of green eucalyptus leaves and small yellow flowers surrounds the central text box. The leaves are arranged in a circular pattern, with some flowers interspersed among them.

*“Above all, love
each other deeply,
because love covers over
a multitude of sins.”*

—1 Peter 4:8

BUT...

How do we do that in
a world of profound
vitriol?

Listen

Discern

Go Forth

Notice the blank space.

(We'll get back to that
later)

Listen

...with a Franciscan Heart.

What is the difference
between listening as a
Franciscan and listening as a
non-Franciscan?

Listening is easy if...

We strive to see Christ in every human being we encounter

AND...

Are able to focus on the absolute and inherent dignity of every person.

Discern

Rule 15: Let them individually and collectively be in the forefront in promoting justice by the testimony of their human lives and their courageous initiatives. Especially in the field of public life, they should make definite choices in harmony with their faith.

Discern

-Discernment is what happens after we've listened with a Franciscan heart. How do we "do" it? How do we take what we've heard (and seen and felt) and put it into action in a Franciscan way?

-Discernment is all about making decisions. In the case of social justice, where we are called to action, the decision has to be less about us and more about them.

That's where the Holy Spirit comes in.

As professed Franciscans, we are tasked with emptying ourselves so that God's love can shine through us. Therefore, our discernment of how we are to act should involve focusing less on what WE want and more on what God wants.

Asking the Holy Spirit to help us to discern what it is God wants is vital for us when making any decision on how to act.

So let's make our own definition of discernment.

Dictionary
Definition of “To
Discern”:

*verb (used without
object): to distinguish
or discriminate.*

Our Franciscan
definition:



How 'bout this
definition?

To Discern: to determine,
through prayer, how the Holy
Spirit wishes us to act?

We have become increasingly polarized and decreasingly unable to think for ourselves. Our political party says _____, so we believe, subscribe to, and fight for _____. It becomes easier to embrace ideologies than to consider our Rule.

In other words:

It's easier to let others tell us how to think and act, but the only person we need to help us discern is the Holy Spirit...

...and that takes courage...


To act as God wants us to act
Instead of how WE want to act...

WHEW!

That's definitely not easy!

And now the
missing piece...

Communicating



...and that's
where we get
into trouble.

Now let's have
some fun!

Rule Scavenger Hunt

Shout out a rule that has something to do with communicating. See how many we can come up with.

The reality

Speaking in the language of Christ in today's world is threatening and offensive to so many.

So...communicating

...

If we are to LISTEN with a Franciscan heart,

And DISCERN with the guidance of the Holy Spirit,

We must learn to SPEAK with a Franciscan voice.


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And...

Here comes the Holy Spirit
again!

If our discernment of how to act comes from the Holy Spirit, then why shouldn't our communication come from the same source?

I'm just sayin'!



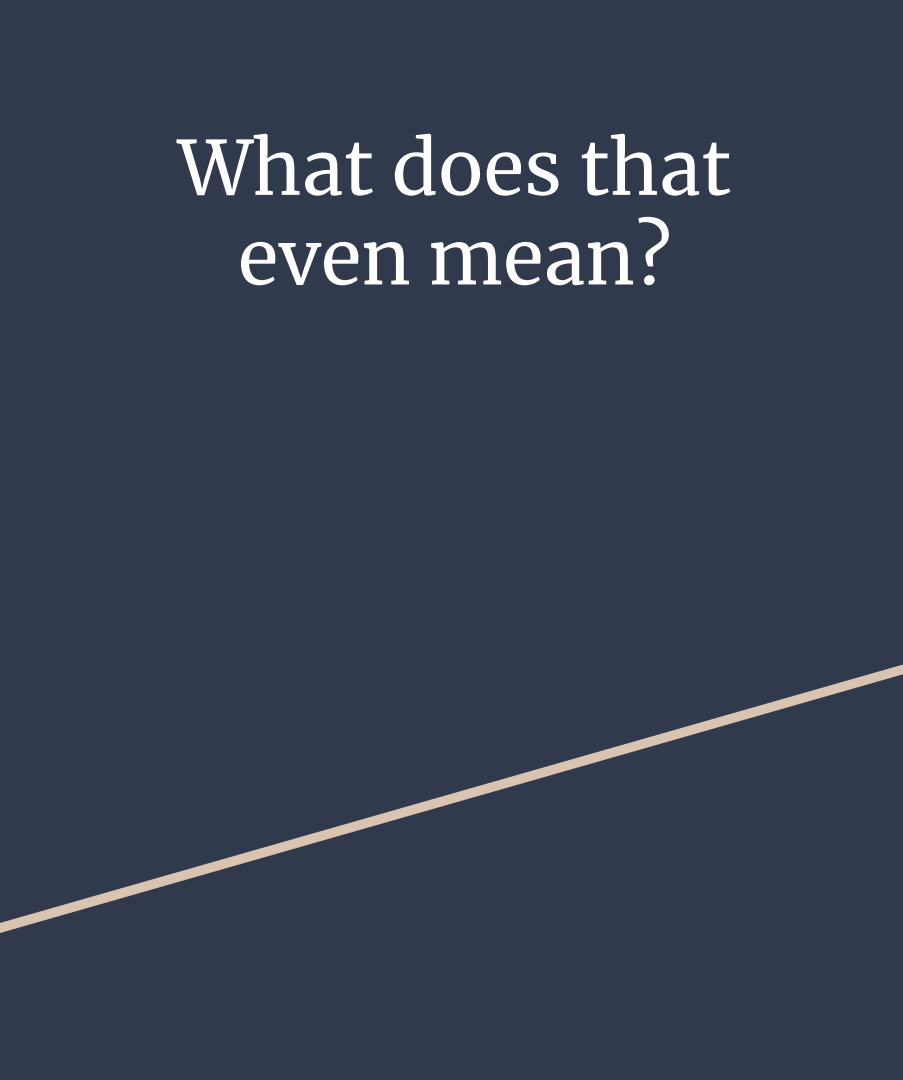
One thing that has begun to get in the way of true Franciscan communication is the casual throwing around of labels used in a derogatory way.

What do you mean, Becky?

Let's look at one,
shall we?

“Woke”

What does that
even mean?



Dictionary.com says:

Verb: a simple past tense of [wake](#).

Yeah, okay, but what does it mean as it's being used nowadays?

Adj: having or marked by an active awareness of systemic injustices and prejudices, especially those involving the treatment of ethnic, racial, or sexual minorities:

Adj: *Disparaging* of or relating to a liberal progressive orthodoxy, especially promoting inclusive policies or ideologies that welcome or embrace ethnic, racial, or sexual minorities.

WAIT...

“Having...an active awareness of systemic injustices and prejudices...”

“...promoting inclusive policies or ideologies that welcome or embrace...”

Isn't that what Franciscans do?

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WE'RE ALL GUILTY!

Here's an
interesting thought
to consider:

Whatever labels we throw
carelessly around in a
derogatory manner
automatically labels US as
the opposite.

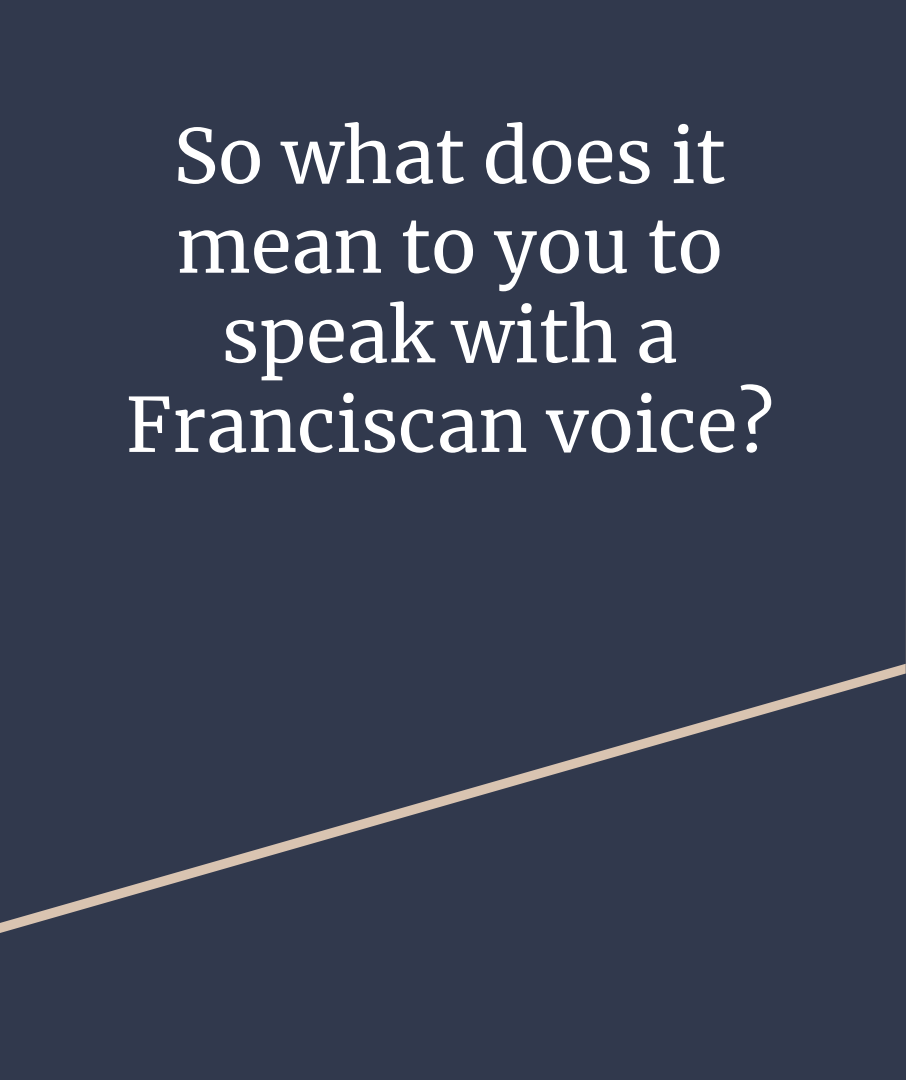
Is that label something we
willingly embrace?

The good news is:

We get points for trying!

(Plus, we have the sacrament
of Reconciliation)

So what does it
mean to you to
speak with a
Franciscan voice?



Go Forth

This is when we finally get to act!

But acting in such a politically-charged world can be tricky!

The right to vote is one of our most powerful rights , but, as our own Sister Theresa has rightly pointed out:
Neither party is pro-life.

Neither party embraces our Catholic beliefs completely and comfortably.



SIGH...

But if we've truly...

- LISTENED with a Franciscan heart,
- DISCERNED with the guidance of the Holy Spirit,
- and SPOKEN with a Franciscan voice...

...Then

...And ONLY then

Will we be able to

Act with a Franciscan Spirit!

Questions to reflect on:

1. Discuss examples of ways in which we Listen and discern with a Franciscan Heart.
2. Discuss examples of ways in which we speak with a Franciscan voice.
3. Give examples of times in your life when you've acted in a Franciscan way that has made you feel uncomfortable or put you at odds with someone else. Discuss how you felt. Did it make you regret your actions? Would you do it again?