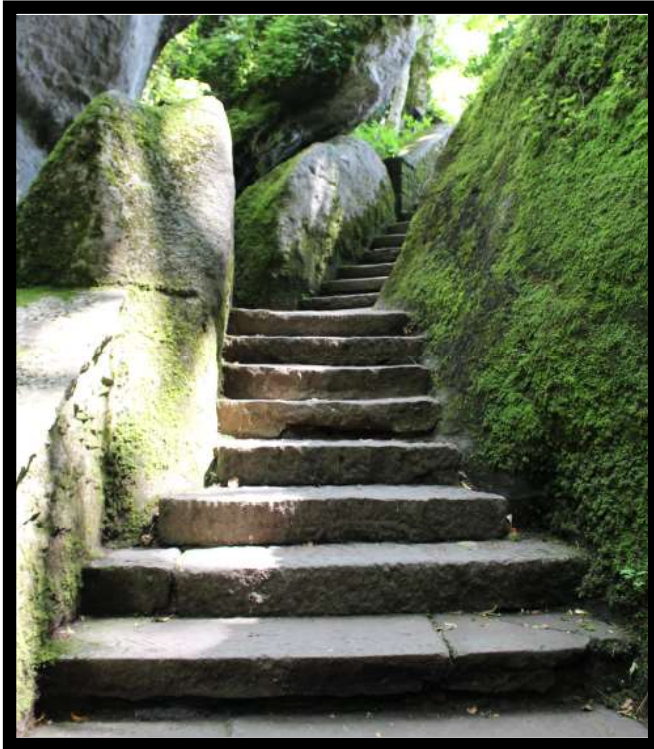


Fratelli Tutti Study Guide (Introduction)



Photographer: Andy Tretow

Sanctuary of La Verna, Mount Penna, Italy

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Margaret Carney, OSF and Pat McCloskey, OFM coordinated this study guide series.

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Summary of Introduction

This section has eight paragraphs that note the inspiration for this encyclical, its connection to *Laudato Si'*, and its connection to Francis' visit to Sultan Malik-el-Kamil. After acknowledging his debt to Ecumenical Patriarch, Grand Imam Ahmad Al-Tayyeb, and the 2019 Abu Dabi document "Human Fraternity for World Peace and Living Together," Pope Francis describes this encyclical as a help toward forming a new vision of fraternity and social friendship.

He concludes by noting that the COVID-19 epidemic has made promoting human fraternity more difficult, invites readers to dream together, "brothers and sisters all."

—Pat McCloskey, OFM

Quotes from the Introduction

- Francis of Assisi sowed seeds of peace and walked alongside the poor, the abandoned, the

infirm and the outcast, the least of his brothers and sisters (2).

- Francis did not wage a war of words aimed at imposing doctrines. He became a father to all and inspired the vision of a fraternal society (4).
- The best way to dominate and gain control over people is to spread despair and discouragement, even under the guise of defending certain values (15).

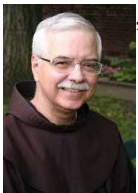
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Questions for Group Discussion or Personal Reflection

1. Have you experienced people who consider Francis of Assisi heroic and yet simultaneously dismiss him as someone who was unrealistic? If so, how can you show Francis as ultimately more practical than his critics?
2. What practical steps can be taken as a group to promote a more fraternal society? What steps can we take as individuals?
3. Certain language can disguise a person's real objective (e.g., opposing all immigration). How can we speak the truth in love, challenging what justifies seemingly acceptable language for a particular action or inaction on a morally significant issue? How did Francis handle this challenge?

Author



Pat McCloskey, OFM is Franciscan Editor of *St. Anthony Messenger* magazine. His latest book is *Peace and Good: Through the Year with Francis of Assisi*. (Franciscan Media)
He lives in Cincinnati, Ohio.

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Fratelli Tutti Study Guide (Chapter 1)

Chapter 1: Dark Clouds Over A Closed World



Credit: Dudarev Mikhail

A Word about Inclusive Language

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Summary of Chapter 1

St. Francis' Canticle of Creatures sings "Praised be You, my Lord, through all your creatures..." Together we praise God in our own voices and God hears it as one song. Pope Francis calls us to remember that all peoples have a common father and therefore we are all brothers and sisters. But today, there are many trends that hinder fraternity. Our human family is becoming more divided, more isolated, more fearful, and more selfish in spite of more technology that is supposed to bring us together. Our faith is one of hope and there is much hope for stronger universal fraternity if we do our part in embracing the dignity of the all human persons.

The shared dream of unity St. Francis sang over 800 years ago is fading. Extremism and aggressive nationalism are on the rise fomenting a feeling of "us versus them." A lack of appreciation for history opens up one to be influenced by divisive ideologies furthering the breakdown of unity increasing despair which increases polarization. Despair leads

to a throwaway culture where the value of created things is secondary to selfish greed. The COVID-19 pandemic calls us to unite as a global community.

Communication is key in fostering fraternity. Digital connectivity helps us to communicate with people all over the world. The anonymity of social media fosters the breakdown of responsible communication and hinders privacy which increase alienation. Entertainment is laughing at a person's misfortunes or mishaps with no regard for their dignity.

True dialogue centered in reality is needed to build wisdom which fosters unity. Listening to one another helps us to truly listen to God's voice. Our faith always calls us back to hope for "God continues to sow abundant seeds of goodness in our human family," Pope Francis wrote. Let us reflect on how we can foster unity in our homes, in our communities and in our world.

—Caryn Crook, OSF

Quotes from Chapter 1

- In this world that races ahead, yet lacks a shared roadmap, we increasingly sense that "the gap between concern for one's personal well-being and the prosperity of the larger human family seems to be stretching to the point of complete division between individuals and human community (31).
- There is a problem when doubts and fears condition our way of thinking and acting to the point of making us intolerant, closed and perhaps even —without realizing it— racist (41).
- Together, we can seek the truth in dialogue, in relaxed conversation or in passionate debate. To do so calls for perseverance; it entails moments of silence and suffering, yet it can patiently embrace the broader experience of individuals and peoples (50).

Questions for Group Discussion or Personal Reflection

1. What trends listed by Pope Francis in Chapter 1 resonate with you? Which trend is God

calling you to address in your own attitudes and actions?

2. St. Clare's prayer style of Gaze, Consider, Contemplate, and Imitate helps us to respond with love and not react out of anger. In this time of political and religious division, especially on social media, how is God calling you to be an instrument of peace and unity in our world?
3. Wisdom is readily perceived by those who love her and found by those who seek her. (Wisdom 6:12) What role does wisdom play in building fraternity and hope in our world?

Author



Caryn Crook, OSF, is the Vocation Minister for Sisters of St. Francis of the Neumann Communities.

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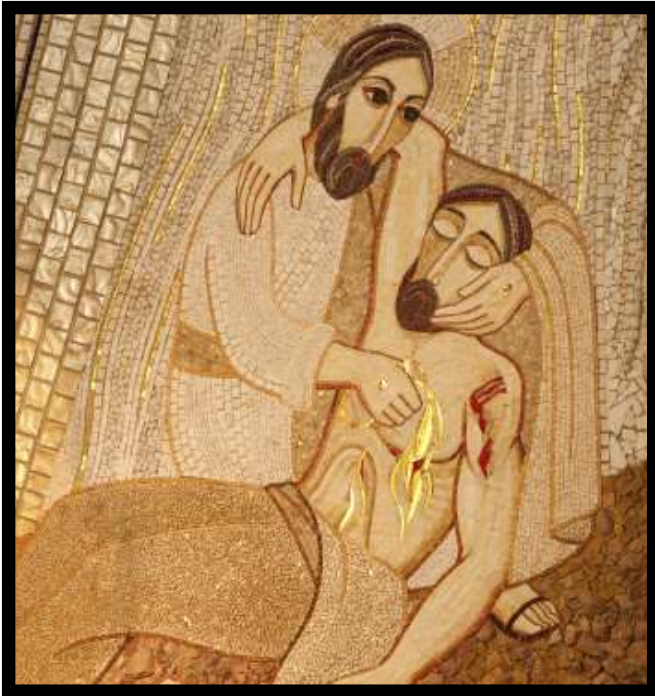
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Fratelli Tutti Study Guide (Chapter 2)

Chapter 2: A Stranger on the Road



Credit: Pater Rupnik

Modern mosaic of *Good Samaritan*

A Word about Inclusive Language

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Summary of Chapter 2

After painting the dark landscape of our global situation in chapter one, Pope Francis leads us to light through the Parable of the Good Samaritan (Lk 10:25-37). This parable teaches that the grief and anguish of one of us is that of all of us. The story echoes in our hearts because aspects of each of its characters are part of our own lives.

It answers classic scriptural questions: "Am I my brother's keeper?" (Cain in Gen 4:9) and "Who is my neighbor?" (the lawyer in Lk 10:29). Indifference to injustice or the suffering of others has no justification. Why? Because we all come from the same creator who loves all creatures. Because we too were once in dire straits (cf. the Jewish people once having been slaves in Egypt).

We are used to thinking of our neighbors as those who are most like and closest to us. However, the Scriptures increasingly expand our understanding of "neighbor." Love does not care where someone

is from. Instead, it builds bridges. We are citizens of the world, not only our nation. God sees no boundaries; only we do. Pope Francis often speaks of those on the “peripheries.” Here he also calls them those “abandoned on the wayside.” There are only two kinds of people: those who care for the hurting and those who pass by. These difficult choices are the real test of being a follower of Jesus.

Suffering people are not the cause of division in the world; they are its symptom. It is easy to blame the victims or remain detached from what is going on around us. Yet, each day offers a new opportunity to take on the attitude of Christ. The question is not who our neighbor is but whether we will become a neighbor to all.

Quotes from Chapter 2

- [Human] compassion is for [one’s] neighbour, but the compassion of the Lord is for all living beings (59 and Sir 18:13).
- Those who do not love a brother or sister whom they have seen, cannot love God whom they have not seen (61 and 1 Jn 4:20).
- The sight of a person who is suffering disturbs us. It makes us uneasy, since we have no time to waste on other people’s problems. These are symptoms of an unhealthy society (65).

Questions for Group Discussion or Personal Reflection

1. Read the Parable of the Good Samaritan (Lk 10:25-37). Imagine yourself to be each of its characters: victim, robber, lawyer, priest, Levite, Samaritan, and innkeeper. Explore each character’s goals, values, and spiritual imagination. How are you like each character?
2. Who are your neighbors as manifested by your actions? Is your circle of neighbors expanding or contracting? Why?
3. How might an expanding notion of being neighbor affect you on some of the hot-button issues of our day: homelessness, immigration, interracial relations, health insurance,

unemployment, global warming, etc. How would you want to be treated if you were someone affected by this list?

4. Who are the modern thieves who victimize those abandoned on the wayside? How do we confront the robbers and console the victims?

Author



Father William Hugo, OFM Cap., has ministered as a formation and vocation director for the Midwest Capuchins. His most recent book with Joanne Schatzlein, OSF, is *Studying the Life of Saint Clare of Assisi: A Beginner’s Workbook* (New City Press).

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Fratelli Tutti Study Guide (Chapter 3)

Chapter 3: Envisaging and Engendering an Open World



Credit: John Theodor

Beautiful sunset over Old City Jerusalem

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Summary of Chapter 3

Our Holy Father calls us to recognize the dignity of each and every person and the inherent desire that each of us has for loving relationships in our lives (88,89). Love means a growing concern for everyone's personal, communal, national, and international good (93-96). We need to locate those who are in need, abandoned, ignored, disabled, elderly or of a different race: the "hidden exiles on the margins" (98), peacefully recognizing and celebrating the differences we find in them.

The Good Samaritan (Chapter 2) was himself living on the margin, not fitting into the larger society there (99-101). Too often we organize ourselves into social groups that exclude and limit our contacts to those who serve our purposes. To build a fraternal society open to all, we must exercise a universal love ready to dialogue about the values of mutual enrichment.

Individualism too often serves as a deception in

that we cling to our own idea of the common good without being open to the view of the other (102-106). Unless dignity and integral development are built on love and respect for the rights of all peoples, humanity will not survive (107).

The pope stresses the need for a universal fraternity that focuses on the common good without neglecting individual rights and needs that must be ordered to the greater good of society. Otherwise, conflict and violence will follow.

Solidarity means building a common future through social systems that encourage thinking and acting, for the good of the whole, looking beyond the self or one's group (114-117). Pope Francis reminds us that the world belongs to all of us, not simply privileged people. Created goods are for the common use; all of us are responsible for their care. Business interests must be directed ultimately to reducing and eliminating poverty (118-123).

Because a country's goods cannot be denied to citizens of other countries, we need to build up international relationships based on shared human rights and dignity, reflecting a global ethic of solidarity and cooperation for the purpose of developing a shared responsibility for the whole human family (124–127).

—Mary Esther Stewart, OFS

Quotes from Chapter 3

- To claim economic freedom while real conditions bar many people from actual access to it, and while possibilities for employment continue to shrink, is to practice doublespeak (83).
- Words like freedom, democracy or fraternity prove meaningless, for only when our economic and social system no longer produces even a single victim, a single person cast aside, will we be able to celebrate the feast of universal fraternity (110).
- Every society needs to ensure that values are passed on; otherwise, what is handed down are selfishness, violence, corruption in its various forms, indifference and, ultimately, a life closed to transcendence and entrenched in individual interests (113).

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Questions for Group Discussion or Personal Reflection

1. What, in your opinion, are the greatest deterrents to envisaging and engendering an open world?
2. How does your thinking compare with that of Pope Francis?
3. How can political entities (e.g., states, countries) maintain their identity while attempting to establish attitudes and practices that would bring about an open world?

Author



Mary Esther Stewart, OFS, M.Ed., a Secular Franciscan living in northern Arizona, has written *Meet Our Brother Bonaventure* (Tau Publishing). She gives retreats and parish missions on Franciscan themes.

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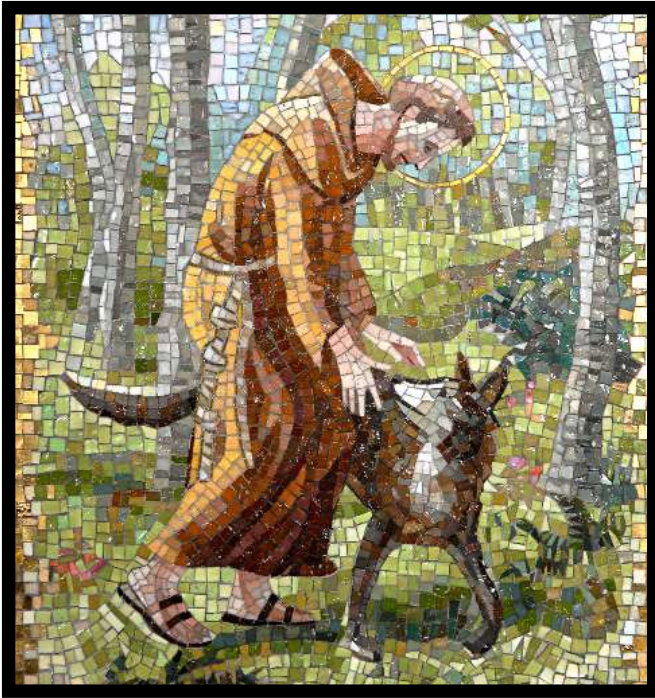
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Fratelli Tutti Study Guide (Chapter 4)

Chapter 4: A Heart Open to the Whole World



Credit: Fr. Paul Reczek, OFM

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Summary of Chapter 4

This chapter has three sections: Borders and Their Limits; Reciprocal Gifts; and Local and Universal. It treats issues that come to the fore when we move from generalizations about "a global village" and must deal with the complexities of immigration: racial and ethnic diversity, the need for global systems, and the preservation of unique cultures.

Describing the problems created by current migrations that create critical situations in host nations, Pope Francis describes the process by which immigrants should be integrated into the receiving country in four words: "welcome, protect, promote and integrate" (110). Beneath each of these terms is a world of political choice regarding legal remedies and citizens' response to immigrant populations as they become enculturated in their new home. We do well to study the list of fifteen specific policy issues (130). This is thoughtful study of the legal policy standards that exist—or are negated—in nations where immigration requires governmental response.

The encyclical moves then to consider the difficulties that arise when cultures are in conflict or are a source of division within a community, whether it is a locality or an entire nation. Here there is no tendency to brush over the real work that is entailed in creating a healthy climate of unity and diversity combined. Pope Francis points to the problems created when a group is a victim of “cultural sclerosis” (134)—the inability to welcome and to benefit from what the “other” brings to it. He also points to the evidence of “local narcissism” (146) that refuses to accept what enrichment may occur by a real exchange of cultural goods. The antidote would be found in “universal [mutuality] and social friendship” (142).

We realize as we ponder this chapter that these terms are laden with significance. They are “shorthand” for a sustained commitment to create the kind of intelligent governance that can overcome the crises created by forced migration. The closing proposal is that educators focus on real love of neighbor—the kind of political charity that knows that “common good” (153) must be realized in solidarity among nations and within nations.

—Margaret Carney, OSF

Quotes from Chapter 4

- We need to develop the awareness that nowadays we are either all saved together or no one is saved (137).
- Let us realize that as our minds and hearts narrow, the less capable we become of understanding the world around us (147).
- A living culture, enriched by elements from other places, does not import a mere carbon copy of those new elements, but integrates them in its own unique way (148).
- No one people, culture, or individual can achieve everything on its own: to attain fulfillment in life we need others (150).

Questions for Group Discussion or Personal Reflection

1. Describe an experience in which you were enriched by real encounter with another culture.

Were you required to “give up” some personal bias or beliefs?

2. Fifteen practices that will improve the lives of immigrants are listed as responses to people fleeing “grave humanitarian crises” (130). Are you engaged in the development or support of any one of these proposals? (This includes engagement through advocating to legislators or support of agencies that respond to these needs.)
3. Education that seeks to promote love of neighbor—as described by the pope—is clearly an education that goes beyond the catechism. What evidence do you see that our Catholic and Franciscan schools (at all levels) are striving for this?

Author



Sister Margaret Carney, OSF, is co-chair of the Commission of Charism Services for the Franciscan Federation and president emeritus of St. Bonaventure University.

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Fratelli Tutti Study Guide (Chapter 5)

Chapter 5: A Better Kind of Politics



A Word about Inclusive Language

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— Sr. Nancy Celaschi, OSF

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Summary of Chapter 5

Pope Francis says some terms used politically have lost their true meaning and move us toward intense polarization. For example, "popular," "populist," and "liberal" are used to place individuals, groups, and governments into categories that exclude and tend to misconstrue what is meant by "people." Pope Francis states, "To be part of a people is to be part of a shared identity arising from social and cultural bonds" (158). Exploiting these bonds appeals to the worst in us, undermining institutions and the law.

"People" is a living dynamic, open to growth because differences are welcomed. The current political system fails for the most part to see this and address the underlying issues. Some liberal approaches tend toward individualism and deny a freedom not noted in a shared narrative.

Because of transnational economics, the financial sectors tend to win out over the political. Pope Francis calls for a reform of the United Nations, economic institutions, and international finance, that will place

legal and enforceable limits, preventing both power being co-opted by a select few nations and cultural impositions or restrictions based on ideological differences.

Political Love and Charity

Pope Francis warns against politics totally subject to the economy and an economy dependent upon a technocracy. Neither the marketplace nor technology can solve every problem. We need to work toward a political order that has social charity as its soul. We need politics that looks to the common good in the long term, uses an interdisciplinary approach, reforms and coordinates institutions, and replicates best practices. Our current crises cannot be solved piecemeal or with quick fixes. “Only a healthy politics, involving the most diverse sectors and skills, is capable of overseeing this process” (179).

When we seek and work toward social fraternity and social justice for all, for a social and political order with social charity as its soul, this is charity at its most vast: political charity. This love, this charity, is found not only in our personal relationships, but also in the social, economic, and political realms.

—Michelle Balek, OSF

Quotes from Chapter 5

- Everything, then, depends on our ability to see the need for a change of heart, attitudes, and lifestyles. Otherwise, political propaganda, the media and the shapers of public opinion will continue to promote an individualistic and uncritical culture subservient to unregulated economic interests and societal institutions at the service of those who already enjoy too much power (166).
- We need a model of social, political and economic participation “that can include popular movements and invigorate local, national and international governing structures with that torrent of moral energy that springs from including the excluded in the building of a common destiny” (169).
- Good politics will seek ways of building communities at every level of social life, in order to recalibrate and reorient globalization

and thus avoid its disruptive effects (182).

Questions for Group Discussion or Personal Reflection

1. How might you, like St. Francis in his time, make room for the tender love of others, near or far—a love that “draws near and becomes real”?
2. Pope Francis asks: “How much love am I putting into my work? What am I doing for the progress of our people? What real bonds am I creating? What positive forces am I unleashing?”
3. How much social peace am I sowing?

Author



Michelle Balek, OSF is a Dubuque Franciscan sister. She currently ministers as a member of the congregation's Charism Team, coordinating the Franciscan Common Venture volunteer service program.

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Fratelli Tutti Study Guide (Chapter 6)

Chapter 6: Dialogue and Friendship in Society



Credit: Shutterstock

A Word about Inclusive Language

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and security in one person while causing someone else to feel threatened or repulsed. In any conversation or dialogue, both parties need not only to listen to the words, but also to delve into what the other is saying. I personally find it encouraging that the English translators of this encyclical show some sensitivity to the issue by leaving the incipit in Italian.

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Summary of Chapter 6

Pope Francis calls on the witness of his namesake: "Francis' fidelity to his Lord was commensurate with his love for his brothers and sisters [and] Francis went to meet the Sultan with the same attitude that he instilled in his disciples: [do] not 'engage in arguments or disputes, but...be subject to every human creature for God's sake'"(3). Saint Francis urged that a humble and fraternal 'subjection' be shown to those who did not share his faith" (3).

Saint Francis called followers in the early communities to go into the world to transform it by living minority (being servants of the Gospel). Pope Francis challenges us to do the same. As Saint Francis stood with the Sultan, so Pope Francis calls us to stand with people with whom we stand opposite. The call is not to engage the divide but to understand which in us, is common: human dignity.

In the chapter's four sections—Social Dialogue for a New Culture, The BASIS of Consensus, A New Culture, and Recovering Kindness—Pope Francis

engages us to look beyond retrenchment into individualism and isolation in light of the pluralistic societal reality of the current world. His call is a dynamic call to move forward in an attitude of encounter, willing to engage the strengths of the societies we find around us—instead of standing in perpetual opposition.

Francis notes that consumerist individualism and relativism offend human dignity. The monologues fostered by these two positions divide our society. “Feverish exchange of opinions” lead self-isolated audiences to “parallel monologues” (200). This dichotomy, fueled by half-truth, corrupted information, or outright lies, prevents what is true, wholesome, and authentic to be known in the people and cultures we call “other.”

Pope Francis calls the developed world to open hearts, minds, and awareness to indigenous cultures to encounter a way forward. Cultural tolerance is more than “putting up with” another way of thinking, living or being. A culture of encounter is not surmising who I am and who “they” are. A culture of encounter is the “art” of “transcending our differences and divisions” (215). A culture of encounter facilitates perceiving and honoring the common good.

— Charlie McCarthy, OFM Conv.

Quotes from Chapter 6

- Monologues engage no one (200). In a pluralistic society, dialogue is the best way to realize what ought always to be affirmed and respected apart from any ephemeral consensus (211). Three realities [the interests of society, consensus and the reality of objective truth] can be harmonized whenever, through dialogue, people are unafraid to get to the heart of an issue (212).
- “Life, for all its confrontations, is the art of encounter” (204). The word *culture* points to [the] most cherished convictions [of a people’s] way of life.
- A people’s culture...has to do with their desires, their interests and...the way they live their lives. To speak of a “culture of encounter” means that we, as a people, should be

passionate about meeting others, seeking points of contact, building bridges, planning a project that includes everyone...an aspiration and a style of life. The subject of this culture is the people (216).

Questions for Group Discussion or Personal Reflection

1. When have you felt shut down by someone closed to a thought or opinion you expressed? What was that experience like? What similarity/difference has this experience to bullying? What could have made the experience different?
2. When have you cut someone off, or rejected an opinion out of hand, totally disinterested in what the person was thinking? What similarity/difference has this experience to bullying? What was that experience like? How could you have handled it differently?
3. What is the process of coming to know a culture other than my own? How does a person start?

Author



Charles McCarthy, OFM Conv., serves Native Americans in New Mexico. He is the author of “Our Household Church: Sunday Agape in Time of Pandemic” (swfranciscans.org/sundayagape).

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Fratelli Tutti Study Guide (Chapter 7)

Chapter 7: Paths of Renewed Encounter



Credit: Fr. Paul Reczek, OFM

A Word about Inclusive Language

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Summary of Chapter 7

Pope Francis asks us to cultivate a penitential memory, one that can accept the past in order not to cloud the future with our own regrets, problems and plans. Only by basing themselves on the historical truth of events will they be able to make a broad and persevering effort to understand one another and to strive for a new synthesis for the good of all."

Artists and Architects of Peace

Working to create a path and a way of living in peace is a life-long process requiring each person's gifts, talents, and creativity. Every human being has a place in this world. Every person must be recognized for the innate and indelible imprint of God's creative purpose. Embracing this truth, we are called to bring our unique perspectives and gifts to the process of peacemaking. However, each person in bringing a gift is called to see and offer it in service to others and for the common good of all.

Individually and together we must commit and work to eradicate the oppression and selfish greed

that dehumanizes others for personal or national gain. “There is no end to the building of a country’s social peace, rather, it requires us to place at the centre of all political, social and economic activity the human person, who enjoys the highest dignity, and respect for the common good” (232).

Currently, we are facing the divisive words, attitudes, and violence of racism, many social injustices and economic disparities. Will this convergence wake us up from myths of peace and equality that we have created?

In Catholic Social teaching, the preferential option for the poor and the vulnerable encourages us to imitate and embody Christ’s love for the poor by working to create a culture where the needs of the poor are always considered first. *Fratelli Tutti* affirms that the poor and the vulnerable are our sisters and brothers. They are not a nameless multitude.

Forgiveness and reconciliation are central teachings of Jesus. “True reconciliation must preserve the dignity of all, especially those who *have been* oppressed. True love for an oppressor means seeking ways to make him cease his oppression; it means stripping him of a power that he does not know how to use, and diminishes his own humanity and that of others” (241).

War and the Death Penalty

Wars have been justified by world leaders to stabilize a region or support humanitarian causes. War and its devastation offend human life and the environment. “Every war leaves our world worse than it was before.”

“Today, we state clearly that the ‘death penalty is inadmissible’ and the Church is firmly committed to calling for its abolition worldwide.” No one, no government and no judicial power has the right to take a life or “eliminate others.” If we truly are pro-life, if each human being holds that innate and indelible imprint of God, all life, even the lives of the most hardened and unrepentant criminals must be respected. We must work to reform our justice systems.

—Margaret Magee, OSF

Quotes from Chapter 7

- Working to overcome our divisions without

losing our identity as individuals presumes that a basic sense of belonging is present in everyone (230).

- Those who work for tranquil social coexistence should never forget that inequality and lack of integral human development make peace impossible (235).
- If I do not deny that dignity to the worst of criminals, I will not deny it to anyone (269).

Questions for Group Discussion or Personal Reflection

1. Francis of Assisi respected all people while speaking truth to everyone. How do you do that?
2. Perhaps the greatest challenge for some people in reading *Fratelli Tutti* will be Pope Francis’ call for the end to the death penalty. Do you agree with Pope Francis’ stance on the death penalty?
3. What would you say to someone who continues to support it?

Author



Sr. Margaret Magee, OSF, a Franciscan Sister of Allegany, NY, is the Congregational Associate Minister. She is past president of the Franciscan Action Network and continues to serve on its Board.

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Fratelli Tutti Study Guide (Chapter 8)

Chapter 8: Religions at the Service of Fraternity in Our World



Credit: Shutterstock

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Summary of Chapter 8

In the final chapter (271-287), Pope Francis talks about true religion and emphasizes that only erroneous interpretations of religious texts lead to terrorism. True religion is actually at the service of fraternity because it is rooted in transcendent truth that enables men and women to achieve full identity.

All religions are invited to enter into a journey of peace, thereby guaranteeing religious freedom for all. Walking together is a familiar theme in Pope Francis' thinking as well as working together and praying together. There is a particular role for the Catholic Church to play: that of going out of herself, "not restricting her mission to the private sphere" (276)—not engaging in politics but at the same time remaining engaged in the public dimension of life according to evangelical principles.

At the end of his letter, he returns to the agreement signed with the Grand Imam of Al-Azhar in 2019 at Abu Dhabi that makes a pressing appeal for peace,

justice, and fraternity.

Pope Francis concludes by returning to the principal intuition that has characterized his pontificate: “Remember the poor.” He does so by evoking the person of Blessed Charles de Foucauld, who sought to surrender himself to God by identifying himself with the poor—namely, to become “truly a brother of all!”.

—Jim Puglisi, SA

Quotes from Chapter 8

- We are convinced that “when, in the name of ideology, there is an attempt to remove God from a society, that society ends up adoring idols, and very soon men and women lose their way” (274).
- We Christians are very much aware that “if the music of the Gospel ceases to resonate in our very being, we will lose the joy born of compassion, the tender love born of trust, the capacity for reconciliation that has its source in our knowledge that we have been forgiven and sent forth” (277).
- The commandment of peace is inscribed in the depths of the religious traditions that we represent. As religious leaders, we are called to be true “people of dialogue,” to cooperate in building peace, not as intermediaries but as authentic mediators (284).

Questions for Group Discussion or Personal Reflection

1. If we are to “love our neighbors as ourselves,” what do I know about my neighbor’s religion (and my own!)? Knowing is not just noetic but is a deep personal knowledge of the person. It means overcoming fear. What do I fear most about getting to know my neighbor (and myself!)?
2. If the goal of dialogue is to establish friendship, peace, and harmony, how have I established these values within myself and thus become a person of authentic dialogue?
3. How consistent am I in my stance on sustaining life? Do I act equally in resisting certain positions (on arms, death penalty, ecology,

abortion, poverty, hunger, welcoming the stranger and so forth)—or am I selective and not coherent in my actions and thoughts?

Author



Jim Puglisi, SA, is `Director of the Centro Pro Unione in Rome. He is an international leader in Ecumenical and interreligious dialogue.

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