

Reflection Session
PCO VI
“Living Poverty in Brotherhood”
Assisi 1998

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Plenary councils of the Order (PCO) are held periodically and often once during each 6-year period between General Chapters. They began after the Capuchin renewal that followed Vatican II as a way to help the General Minister govern the Order and have developed into major chapters that explore a single theme in greater detail. To date, there have been seven PCOs since Vatican II.

A PCO is different from the normal General Chapter of the Order that occurs each six years to elect a General Minister and Definitory, and to conduct business of the Order. The General Chapter is the highest authority in the Order. PCOs have no authority, but exercise influence through the convincing logic of its documents.

PCO VI was on “Living Poverty in Brotherhood.” It produced a document of 45 propositions that received support from the majority of brothers who were capitulars of the PCO. There is no necessary logic or order to the 45 propositions; each one was meant to stand on its own. However, the propositions obviously have strong relationships with various other propositions.

To prepare for our reflection, print and read the propositions from PCO VI, which are found at: <http://www.db.ofmcap.org/ofmcap/allegati/2573/vicpo-proposizioni-en.pdf>

While or after reading the document, attempt to answer in writing as many of the following questions as possible. When we gather for our reflection on this topic, we will have a simple discussion, using our reflections and answers. The discussion will be quite free, though the leader might gently try to keep us on-topic when necessary or push us to greater depth of reflection.

1. How do you define the Capuchin vow of evangelical poverty and why were/are you attracted to it?
2. How is self-sacrifice part of your life? In what new way would you like it to be part of your life?
3. How might Capuchin-Franciscan poverty be different from other Orders' observance of poverty?
4. Twice (#1+3), PCO VI says poverty is not an end in itself but a means. What does that mean? How do you observe it to be true in your experience?
5. How do (1) our vow of evangelical poverty, (2) simple living, and (3) our option or preference for poor people influence each other? How do these connections make a real difference in your life as a Capuchin?
6. How do you see your province best living evangelical poverty and simple living, and making an option for the poor?
7. After your perpetual profession, how would you dream of living Capuchin-Franciscan poverty?
8. What about Evangelical poverty frightens you?
9. How are poverty and minority related in your personal experience?
10. What is the relationship between poverty and building or repairing relationships? How might/do you experience this dynamic relationship?