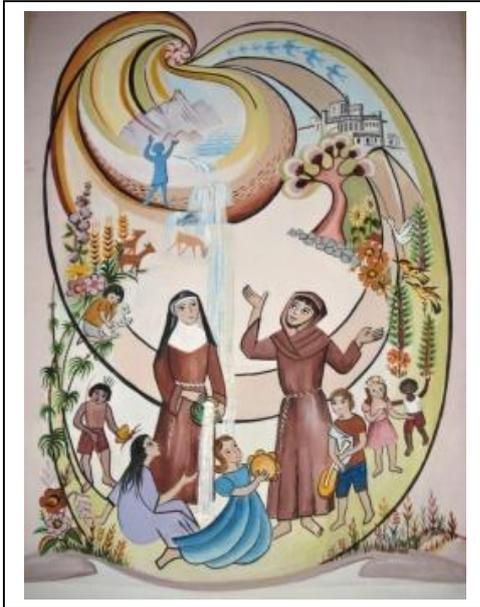


## Francis and Clare of Assisi: A New Movement Begins



Francis, Clare and their early companions initiated a movement which to this day has a task to fulfill in the Church and in society. What is the task of the Franciscan movement? What significance does it have for the world? What significance does the world have for the Franciscan family? There is a need for clear answers to these questions. The need for a critical look at the essential elements of the Franciscan life and mission charism will be more evident when the Franciscan movement has a clearer vision of its role in society and of its significance in relation to the present-day world.

It is important to realize that the *Comprehensive Course on the Franciscan Mission Charism* (CCFMC) is being used in all continents of the world. For we (Franciscans) do not live and work in

isolation. We are one in our search for a new understanding of our place in the Church and in today's world. We are confronted by the same questions everywhere: in Asia, Africa, Latin America, Europe and in the United States and Canada. We are inspired by the same message and, therefore, we can serve the Church and the world as a global Franciscan family.

The Franciscan Family can create an impact in society when we stop belittling ourselves and listen to Jesus' reminders: "You are the light of the world"; "You are the salt of the earth!" "You are a city built on a hill!" Indeed, we have a vision of life, a message to share and a life style that others are searching for.

Francis and Clare of Assisi lived a unique form of religion, which sought to make human beings more truly human and this world a better place to live in. Thus, in Francis and Clare, we witness to a God who is involved in this world. We point to a mystery that is present: to a God who wills our liberation from all forms of bondage. We are witnesses of the Incarnation!

*CCFMC, Lesson Unit 1, A*