Connection between Baptism and Profession

The Church invites us to renew our Baptismal promises during Easter. So, this may be an excellent time to reflect upon the connection between Baptism into the Catholic faith and Profession into the Secular Franciscan Order. The information below was taken from the FUN Manual and the third question was added to the other two from the chapter.

Taken from the FUN Manual in the chapter entitled, Profession and the Secular Franciscan: Theological and Liturgical Foundations by Fr. Richard Trezza, O.F.M. Information presented by Fr. Felice Cangelosi, then Vicar General of the Capuchin friars in November 2008 was the foundation for Fr. Richard’s session. Profession 3-23-2011 pages 9, 10, & 17 of 18

7) Baptism and Profession

In this section, we are reminded of the connection between Baptism and Profession. The grace of Profession helps one live out his/her baptismal commitment. Remember the effects of Baptism.

It consecrates a person. When we use the word consecration, we usually mean that moment within the Mass when the bread and wine are changed into the Body and Blood of Christ. Or we may be speaking of “consecrated” virgins; or in another time, the “consecration” of a bishop. In any case, in our mind, consecration is a big deal. And it is! We are consecrated through Baptism … the sacrament makes us holy – or at least puts us on the path of attaining holiness. Profession helps us to reach this goal.

Another effect of Baptism is that it configures us to Christ’s passion, death and resurrection. What Christ has endured, so shall we. Profession in the SFO aids us in our faithfulness in being persons made similar to Jesus – configured to Him.

Baptism also makes us living members of the Church … the People of God. Profession enables us to better understand this status. The liturgical act of Profession makes the connection with Baptism clear.

Cangelosi says, “Commitment to live out one’s baptism, in principle required of all Christians, arises for Secular Franciscans after profession as a result of a liturgical action and a saving event, which have an impact upon baptism itself. It seems to me, therefore, possible to say that although baptism is “one” and that Profession is not to be seen as a “new” Baptism, it is also true that Profession produces particular effects on the supernatural organism of a Christian, generated by Baptism. The Ritual highlights the specific action of Profession on Baptism by the use of the verbs renew, manifest and activate.”

Profession memorializes Baptism. I do not mean that it gives us a chance to merely remember the moment when we were baptized, but Profession actually revitalizes our promises and allows us to draw new strength from the baptismal promises made years ago. “Profession acts upon Baptism, impacts upon it, seals and develops it, founds a new entity and produces a new outpouring of the Spirit.” (Cangelosi)

1. What do you think of the idea of ‘consecration’?
2. What does it mean to live out the Paschal mystery of Christ?
3. Why is Profession linked to Baptism?

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