

Franciscan values

Literature



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s Franciscan Values St. Francis of Assisi is regarded as one of the most influential leaders in both the political religious and as well as social realms. Being an influential preacher in the Catholic Church in the 13th century, St Francis abandoned his wealth and worldly life to live among the poor in a life of service to God (Robinson, P, 109). This earned him a lot of respect and he gained a lot of followers enabling him to form the Order of Friars Minor in the Catholic Church. Francis and his followers, commonly known as the Franciscans lived a very religious life full of values that earned him great admiration the world over (Robinson 127). Among the values spearheaded by the Franciscans include compassion, love, trust in God, peace, respect, service simplicity and joy. These values were also very influential in the history of both Romans and Greeks and were clearly brought up by various authors in their literature. One Franciscan value that was prevalent in a majority of the pieces of literature during this century is the value of compassion. The Franciscan value of compassion refers to the act of empathizing with others and sharing in their misery. Compassion is a very important component of leadership where leaders are expected to respond to the needs of their subjects and uplift them when they feel disillusioned. The value of compassion as understood by Franciscans is therefore tied to the concept of leadership. In one work of literature, Aeneids, written by Virgil, the Franciscan value of compassion has been clearly illustrated. In the text, Aeneas, the son of Anchises and Venus is the protagonist. He is identified by the gods to lead his people in building the foundations for a successful Roman Empire. Aeneas fate as Rome's founder takes a very historical design in the text where Aeneas decides to accept the prophecy and incorporate his destiny in his own actions despite having challenges that

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seem to destruct him from his fate. Aeneas is highly regarded as a hero among his community due to various acts of compassion that he engaged in with his followers. Aeneas is overwhelmingly concerned about the good of his people and their general welfare. As he moved with the Trojans from Carthage on their way to Italy, Aeneas' leadership skills strengthened from time to time (Virgil 90). Along the way he showed his compassion towards his subjects by being sympathetic with their state throughout the journey. He therefore gave the fleet of men with him a lot of encouraging speeches in order to raise their spirits higher. In Book V of Aeneids, he develops great compassion toward the unburied people that he observed in the underworld. He therefore made it his goal to bury all the people killed during his wars along the way, both his enemies and his people. Aeneas also had great compassion towards his own family. This is evidenced in the scene where he carries his old father on the back as he escorted him out of Troy. Aeneas also abandoned his relationship with Dido because he viewed it as destruction from his intended fate of serving and leading his people as it had been destined. This act of leaving his own emotional benefits and attending to his followers is regarded as one of the most compassionate acts a leader can express. Aeneas also showed compassion towards a Danaan sailor who had been left by Ulysses on the island because his clothes had disguised him as being an enemy of the Trojans (as in the Odysseus). Aeneas treats him like any one of their own and takes him in his team despite the sailor being a Greek (Gian 100). Aeneas also shows the same compassion towards another individual of a Latin decent who had died at his hands. He let the child know that he wouldn't strip of his amour and even opted to return him to his people for a proper burial. Aeneas is also distinguished from other heroes in <https://assignbuster.com/franciscan-values/>

the story such as Turnus, who is regarded as being highly skilled in battles and for his courage. Turnus is however a selfish and proud leader who interpreted the signs given to him by the gods for his own benefits. Unlike him, Aeneas compassion led him to interpret the signs he received from the gods for the benefit of everybody in the community (Gian 119). Works Cited Gian Biagio Conte, *The Poetry of Pathos: Studies in Vergilian Epic*. New York: Oxford, 2007. Print. Robinson, P., St. Francis of Assisi. In *The Catholic Encyclopedia*. New York: Robert Appleton Company, 2009. Print. Virgil, *The Aeneid*. Trans. by Robert Fagles. United States of America, Viking Press, 2006. Print.