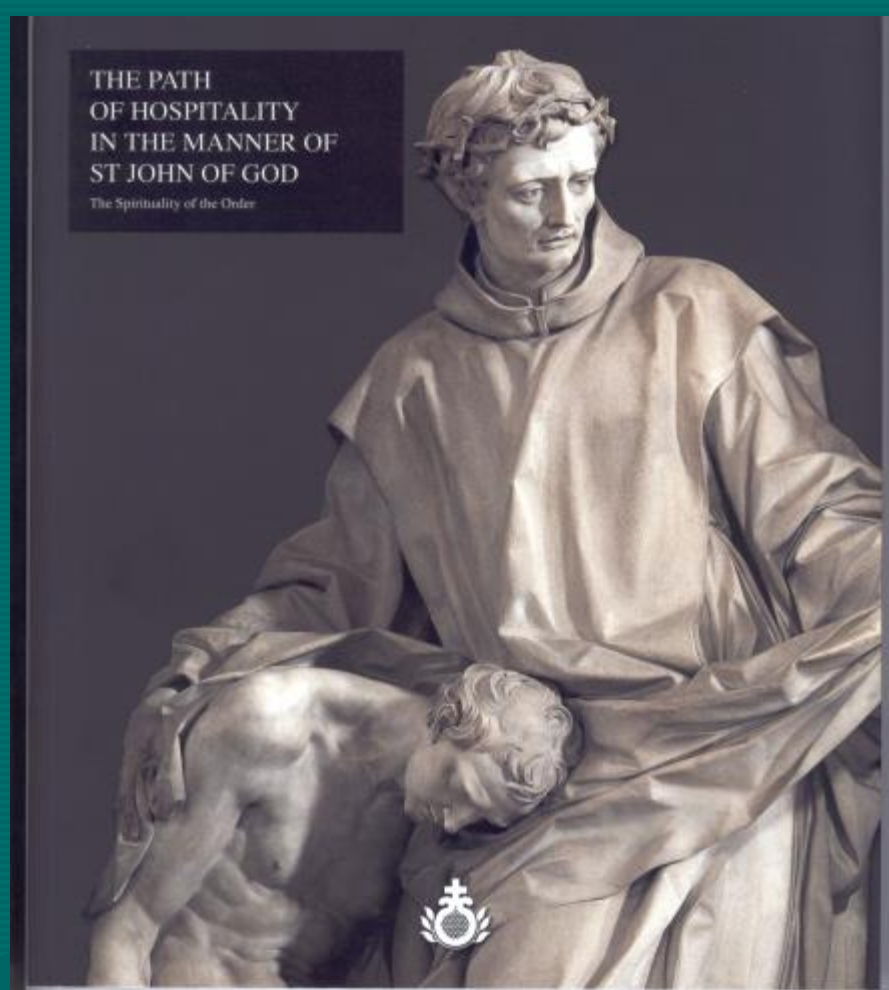


An introduction to the new Order document on its Hospitaller spirituality.

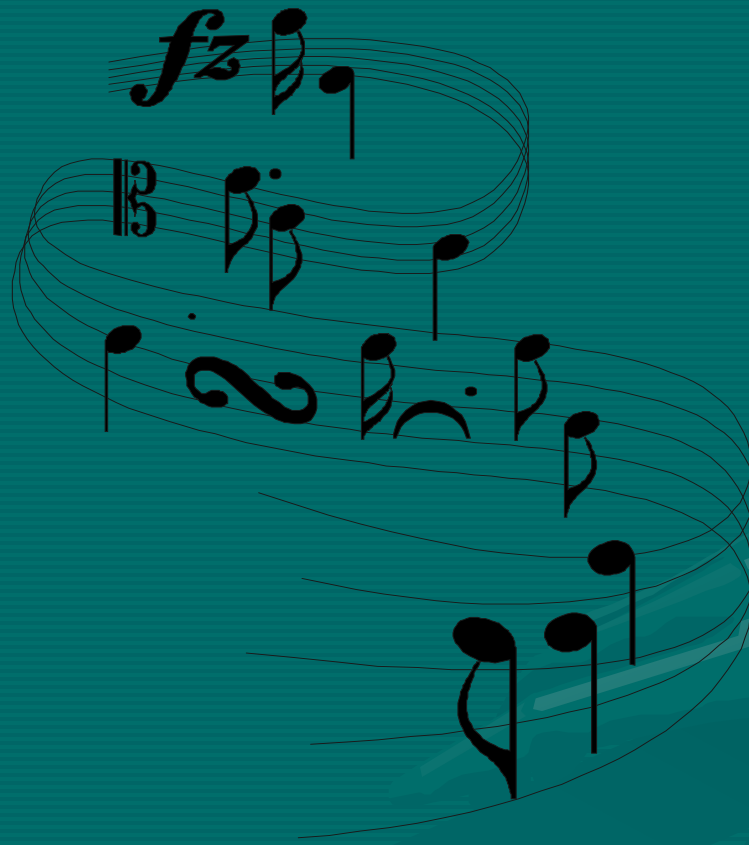


“The Path of Hospitality in the Manner of St. John of God”.

- This presentation is only an introduction to the document.
- There is not enough time to go through the document point by point.
- This introduction will only try to show the beauty and the scope of the document.

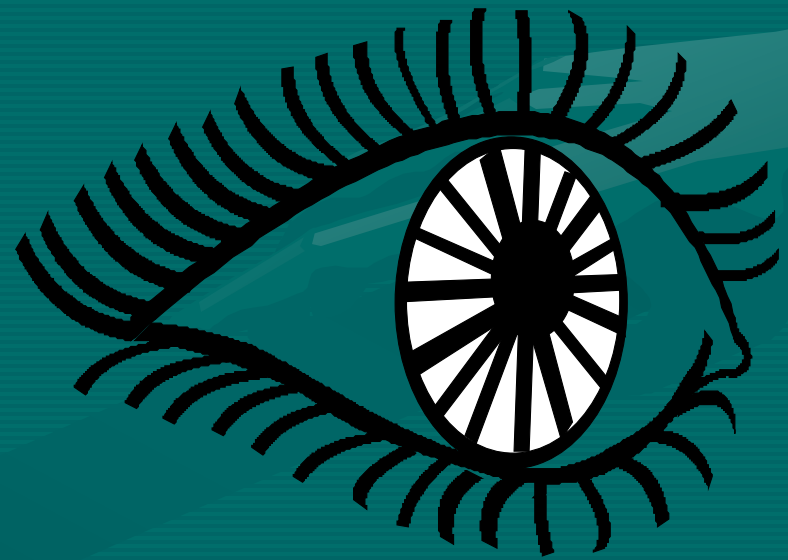
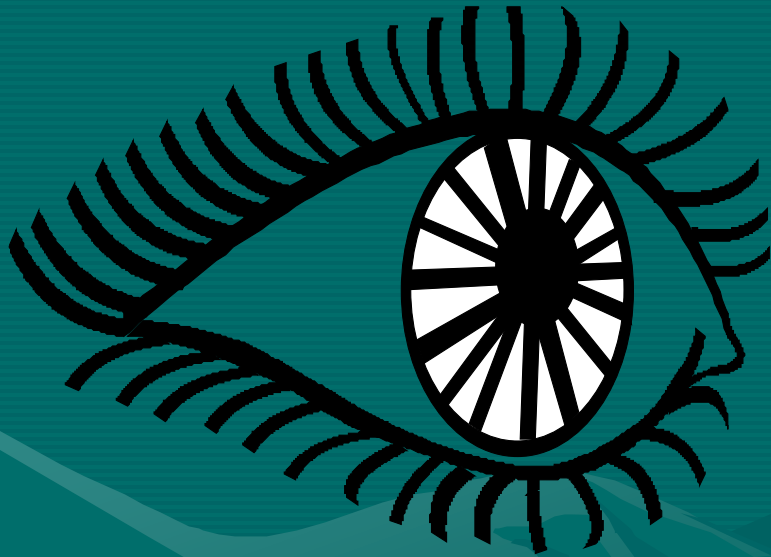
The document has five sections:

1. An Introduction
2. Chapter One: MEMORY and how our Order's memory of St. John of God helps it rediscover its original objectives and enthusiasm.
3. Chapter Two: BASICS and on how they – **MERCY** and **HOSPITALITY** are the two strongest elements of the spirituality of the Order.
4. Chapter Three: SPIRITUAL PATH and how John of God leads us on a path to the Reign of God.
5. A Conclusion



Study of this document helps us - Brothers and Co-workers - to further develop our own spiritualities so that they harmonise, and resonate, with that of St. John of God.

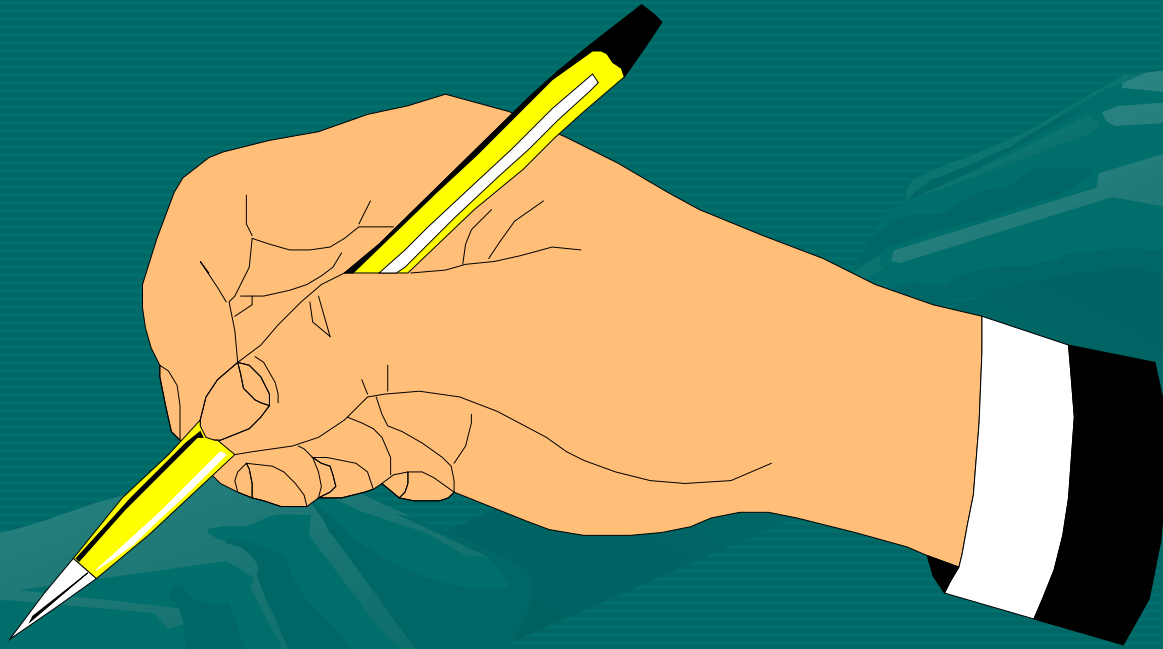
How can we see a spirituality?



How can we study a spirituality?



How can we describe a spirituality?

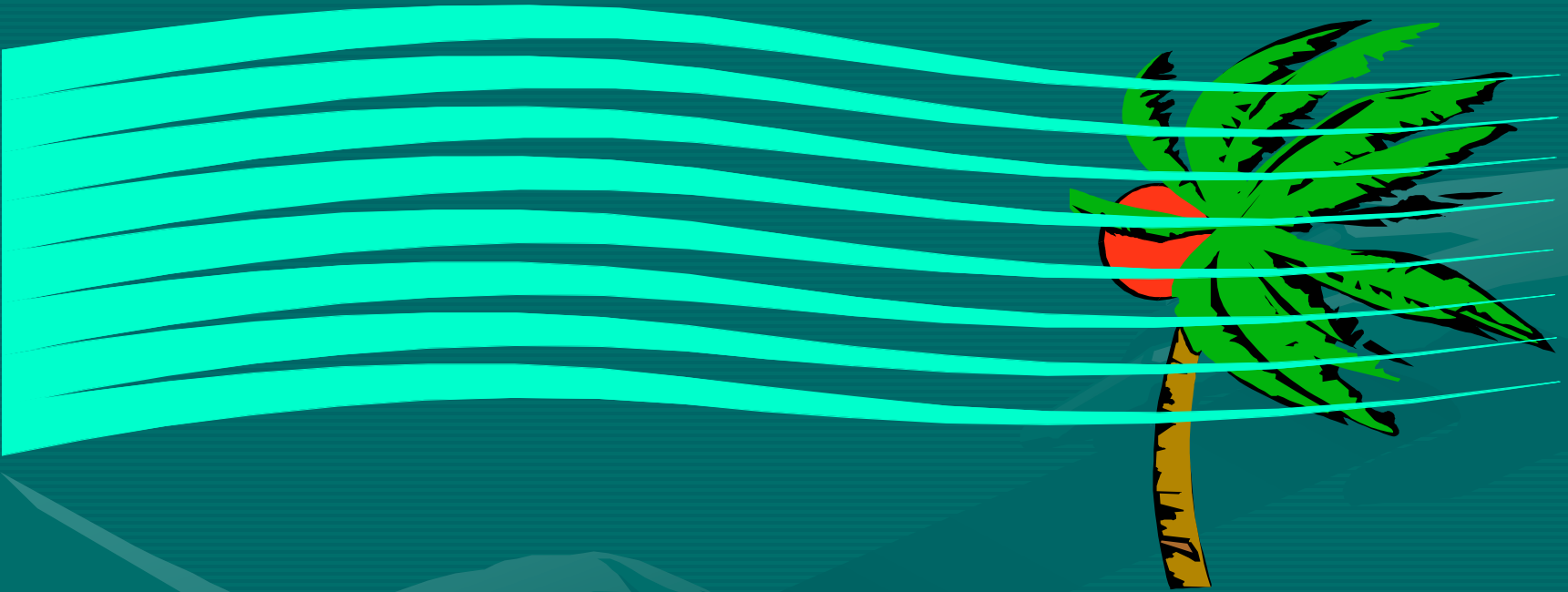


We can observe and know a spirit by
what it does.



Just as we can observe and know a
wind by the way that it moves the
leaves on a tree.

The wind is invisible



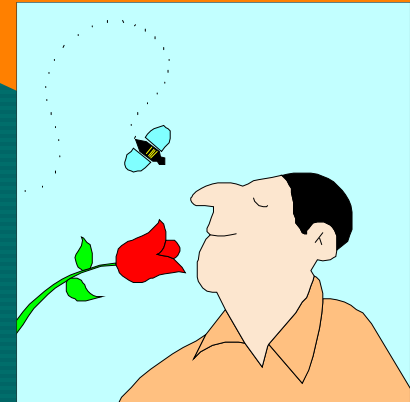
But we can imagine it looking like
this



Imagine a
spirituality as a
light wind, or
breeze

A breeze can stir the autumn
leaves.

A breeze can bring
various scents to
our nose.



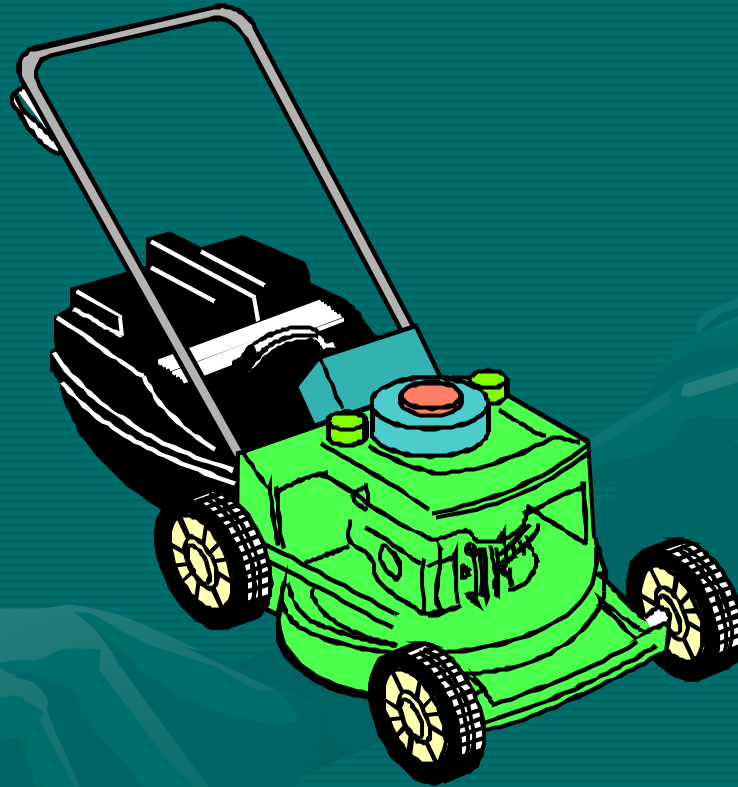
Scents like that of freshly baked
bread



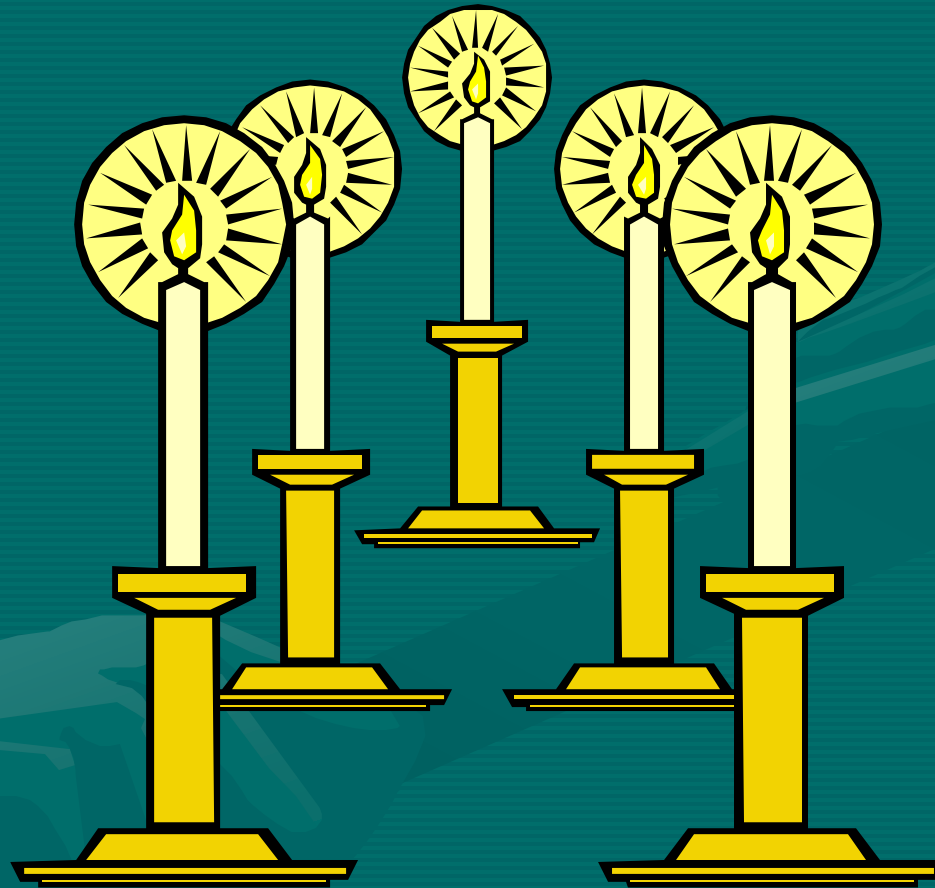
Scents like that of the Ocean



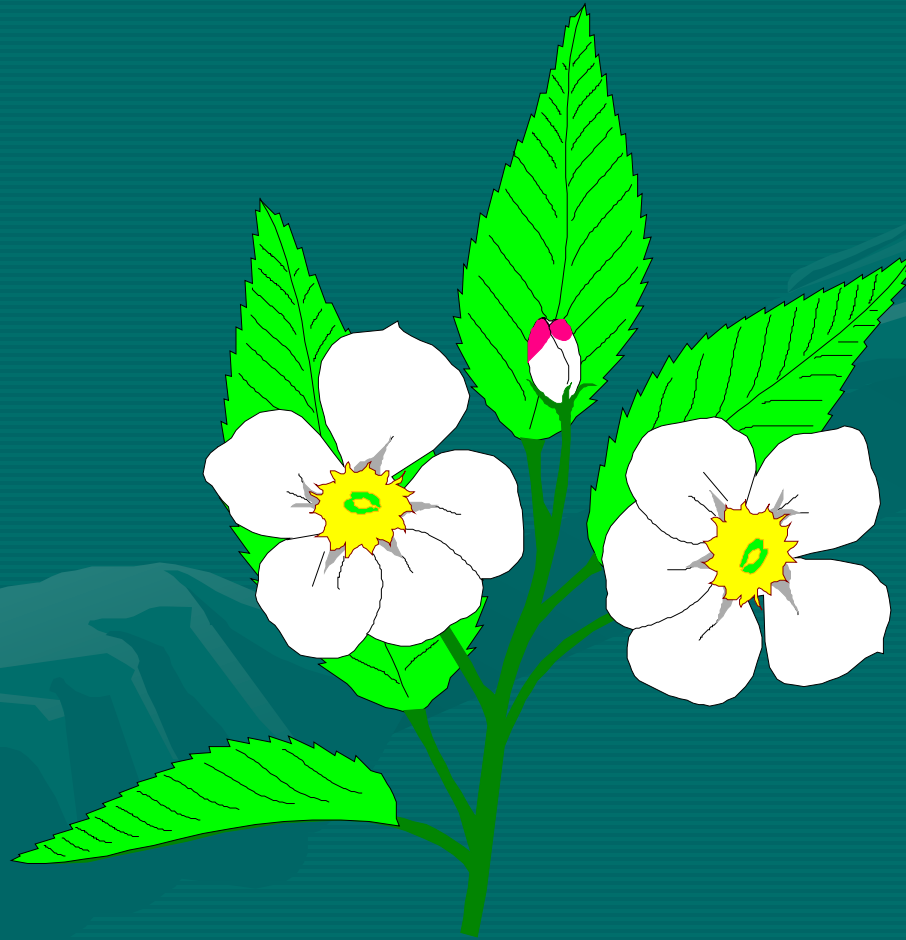
Scents like that of newly cut grass



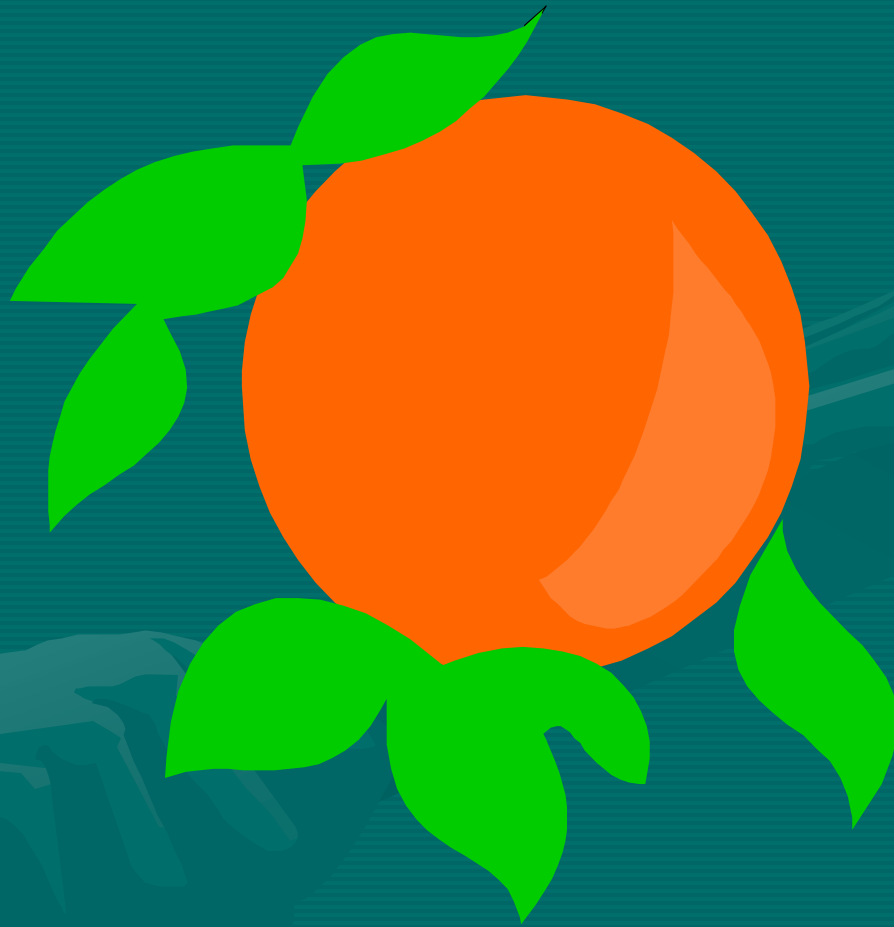
Scents like that of incense in a church



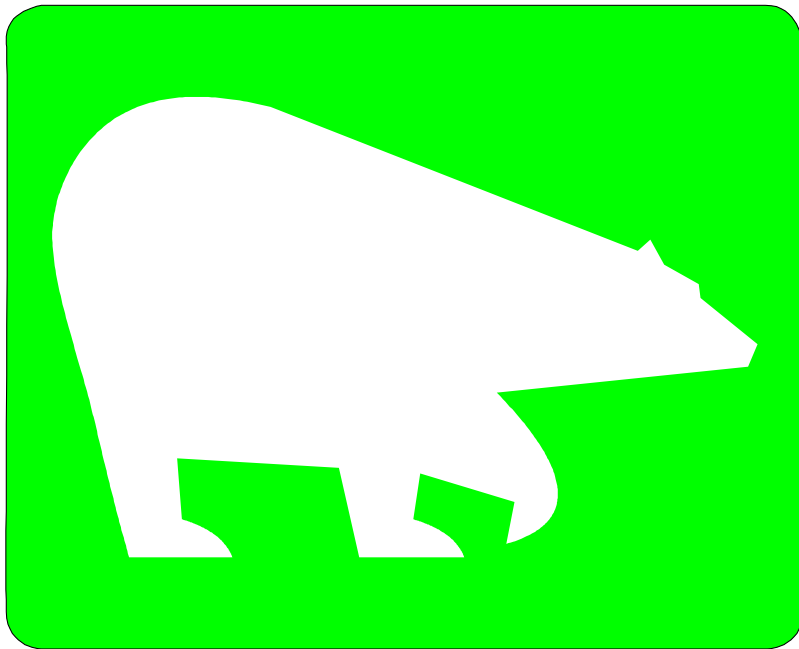
Scents like that of a flower



Scents like that of oranges blossoms



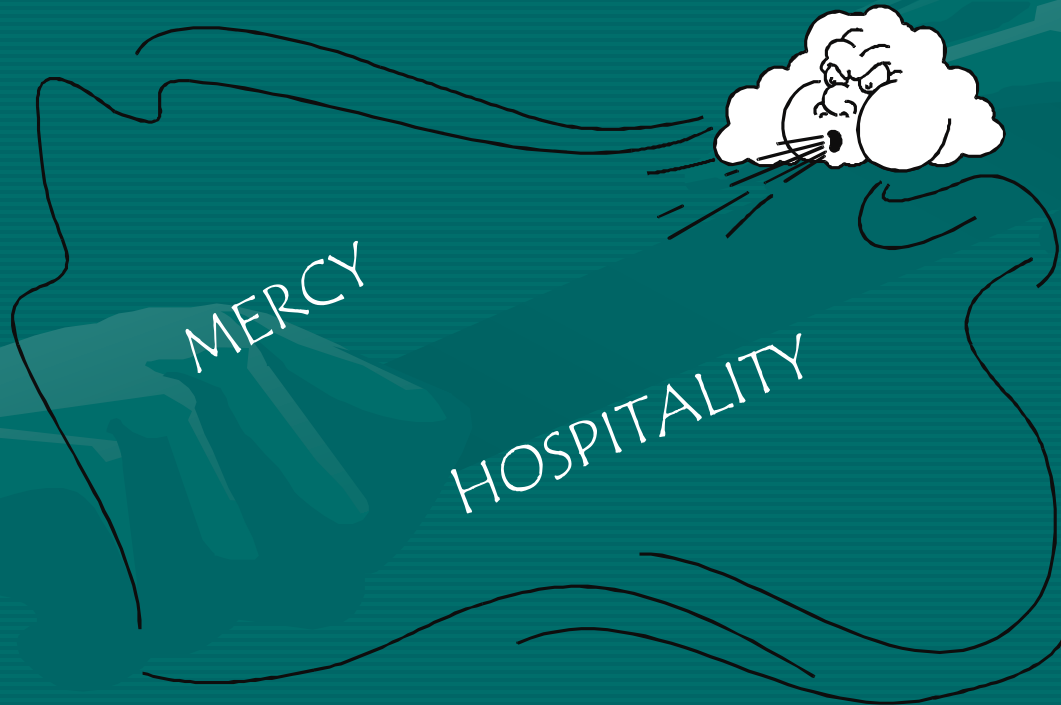
And sometimes a combination of scents ...

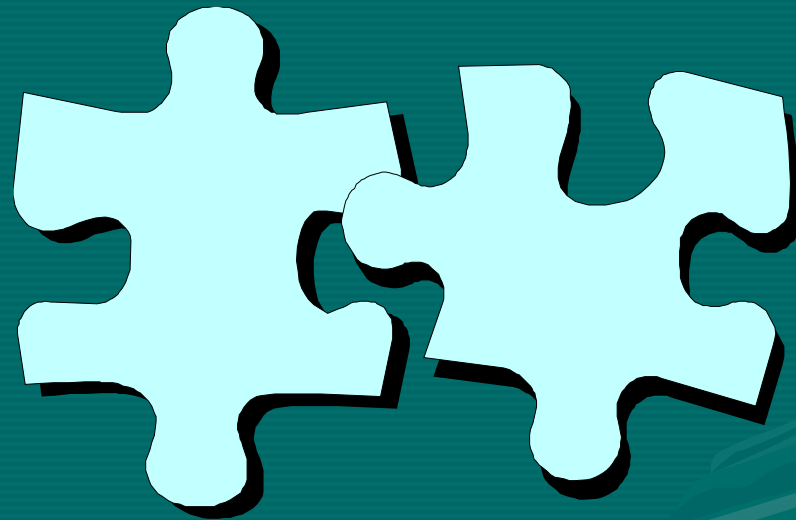


We humans can detect different scents on a breeze.

But some animals, like the Polar Bear, can detect such combinations over long distances, and even through ice!

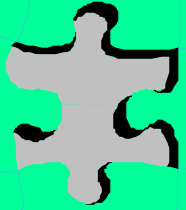
We say that the breeze that is the spirituality of the Order carries two strong scents – the scent of **MERCY** and the scent of **HOSPITALITY**.



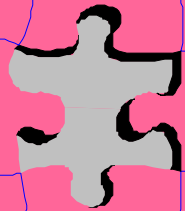


Or, another image

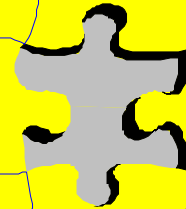
Different Spiritualities



Franciscan

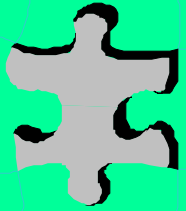


Dominican

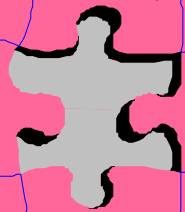


**St.
John
of God**

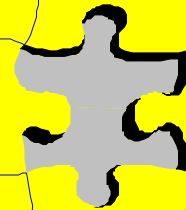
Strongest element in different Spiritualities



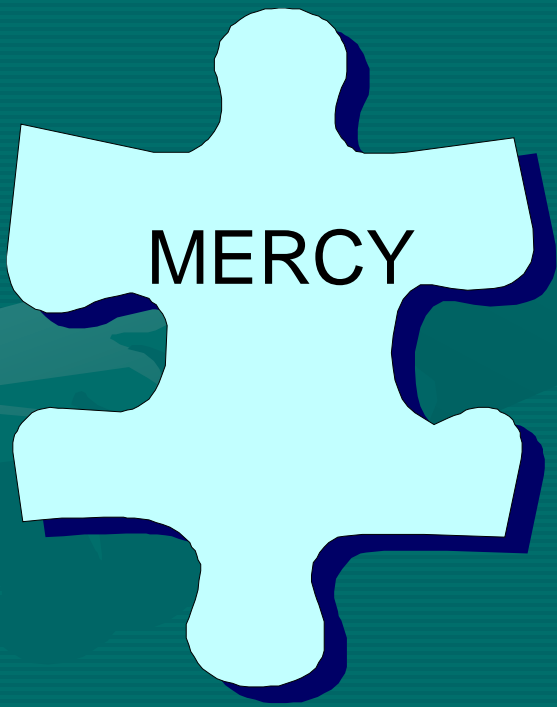
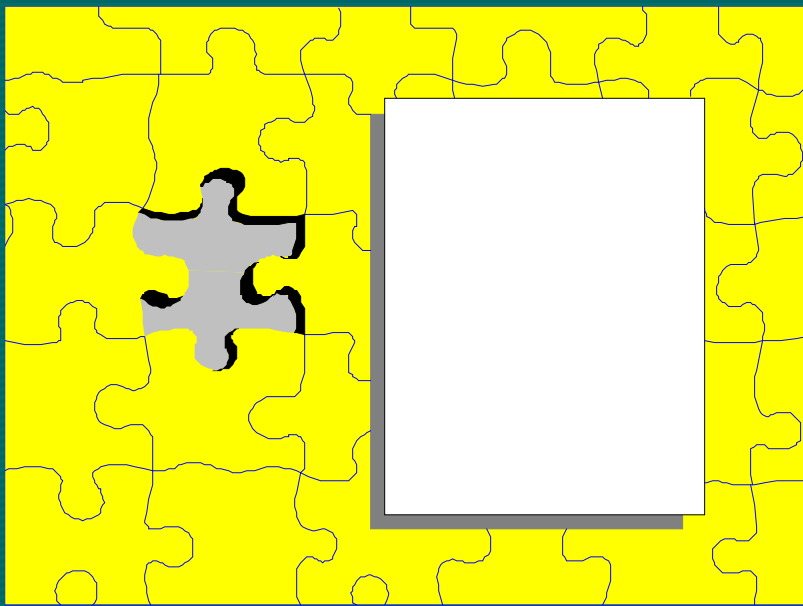
Poverty



Truth



Hospitality



Respect

Solidarity

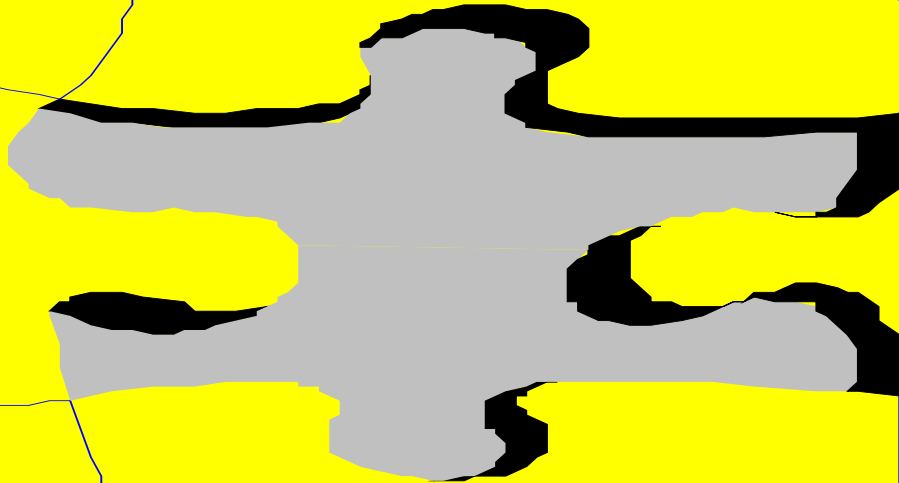
Patience

Humility

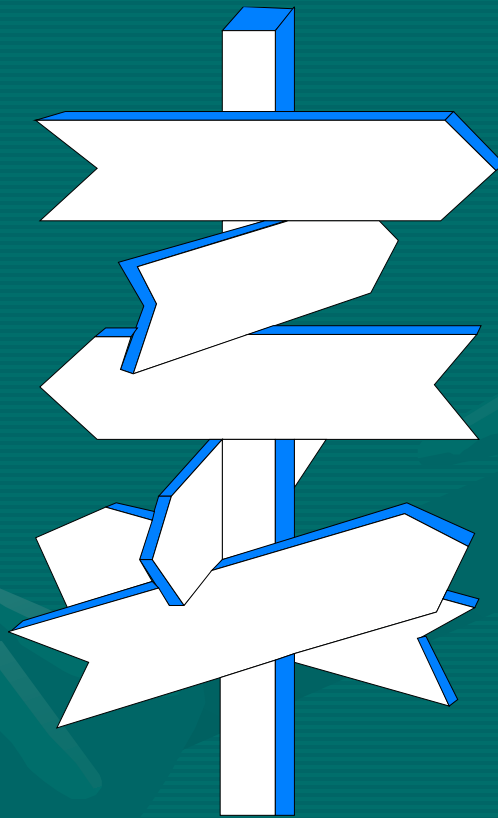
Professionalism

Service

Lovingkindness



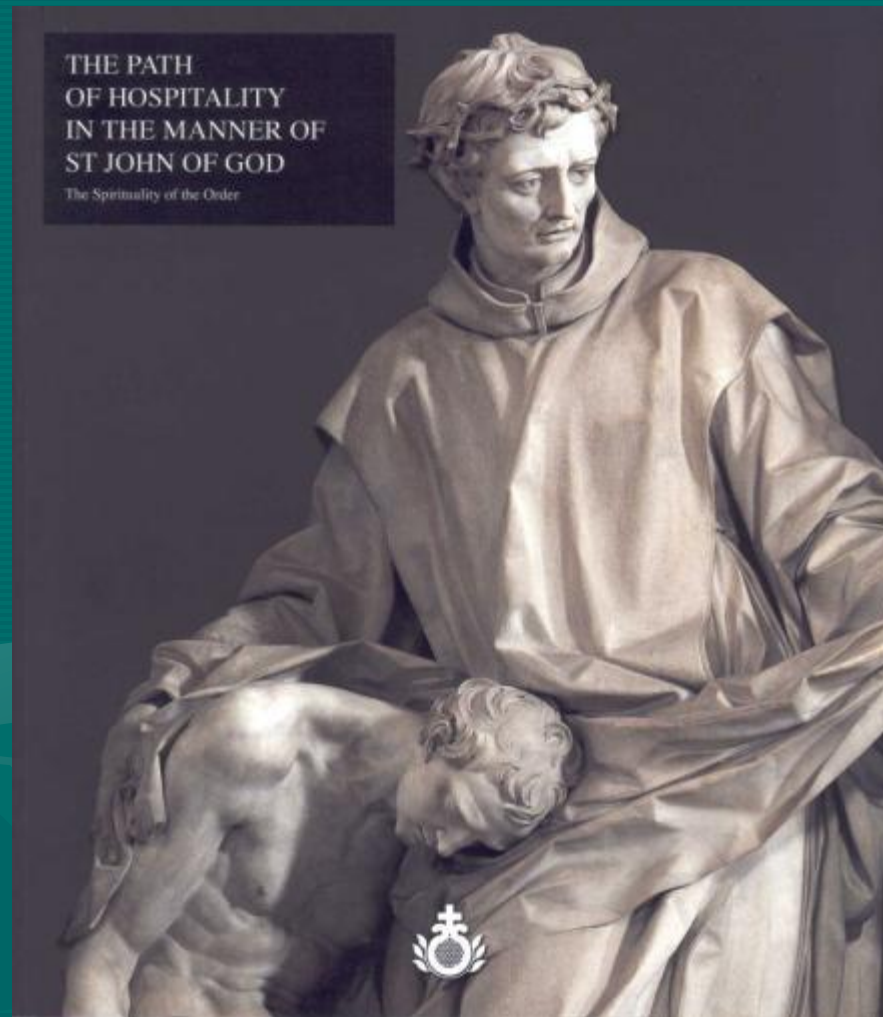
Where are we now in history, as we read this new document?



Vatican II reminded us
that we Christians are a
Pilgrim People.



The Order has a new, updated, road-map for making the journey:



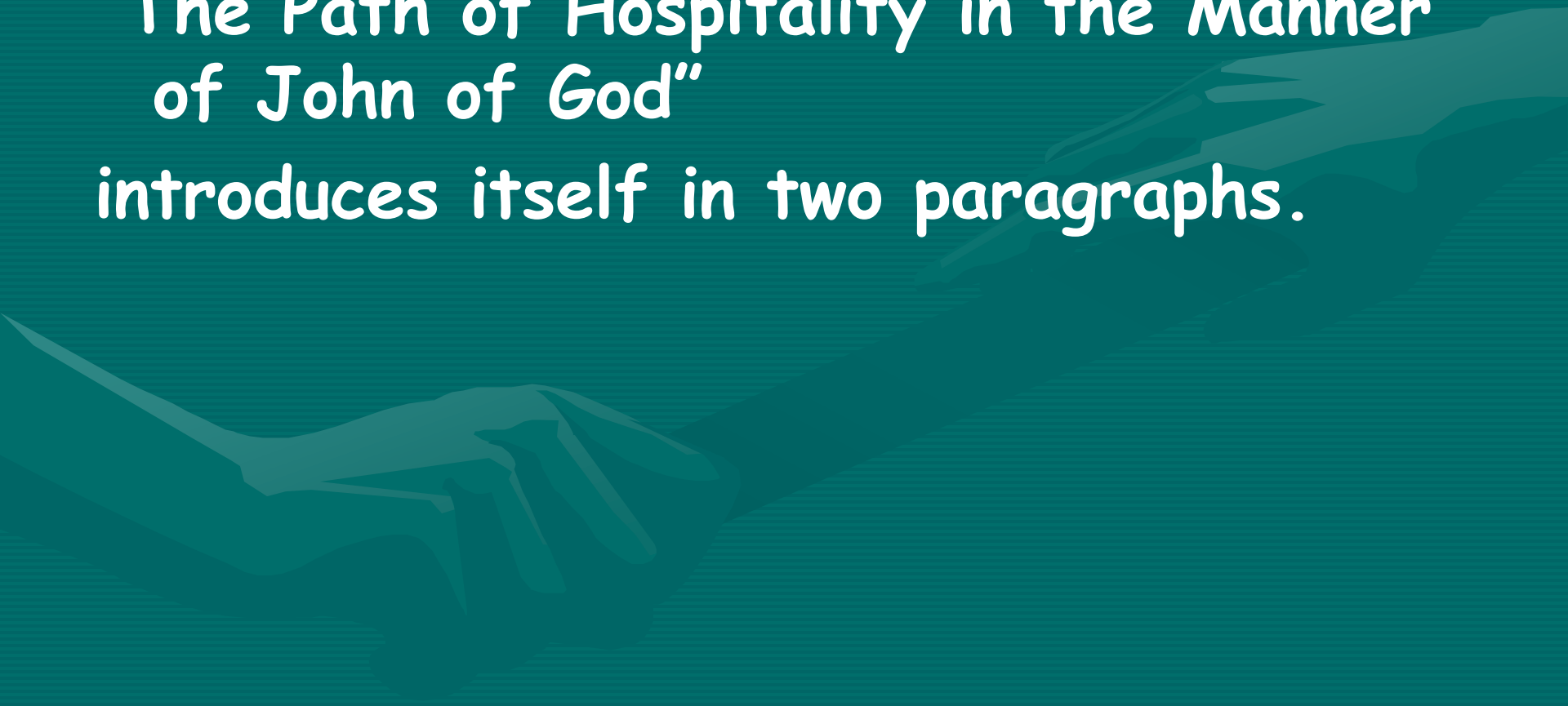
INTRODUCTION

The first section of “The Path of Hospitality in the Manner of St. John of God” reads the signs of our times – globalisation, localisation and post-modernity.

It then talks about how the Order must adapt to the changed times in which we now live.

"The Path of Hospitality in the Manner
of John of God"

introduces itself in two paragraphs.



In the first paragraph the document offers two proofs that spirit and charism of St. John of God are authentic.



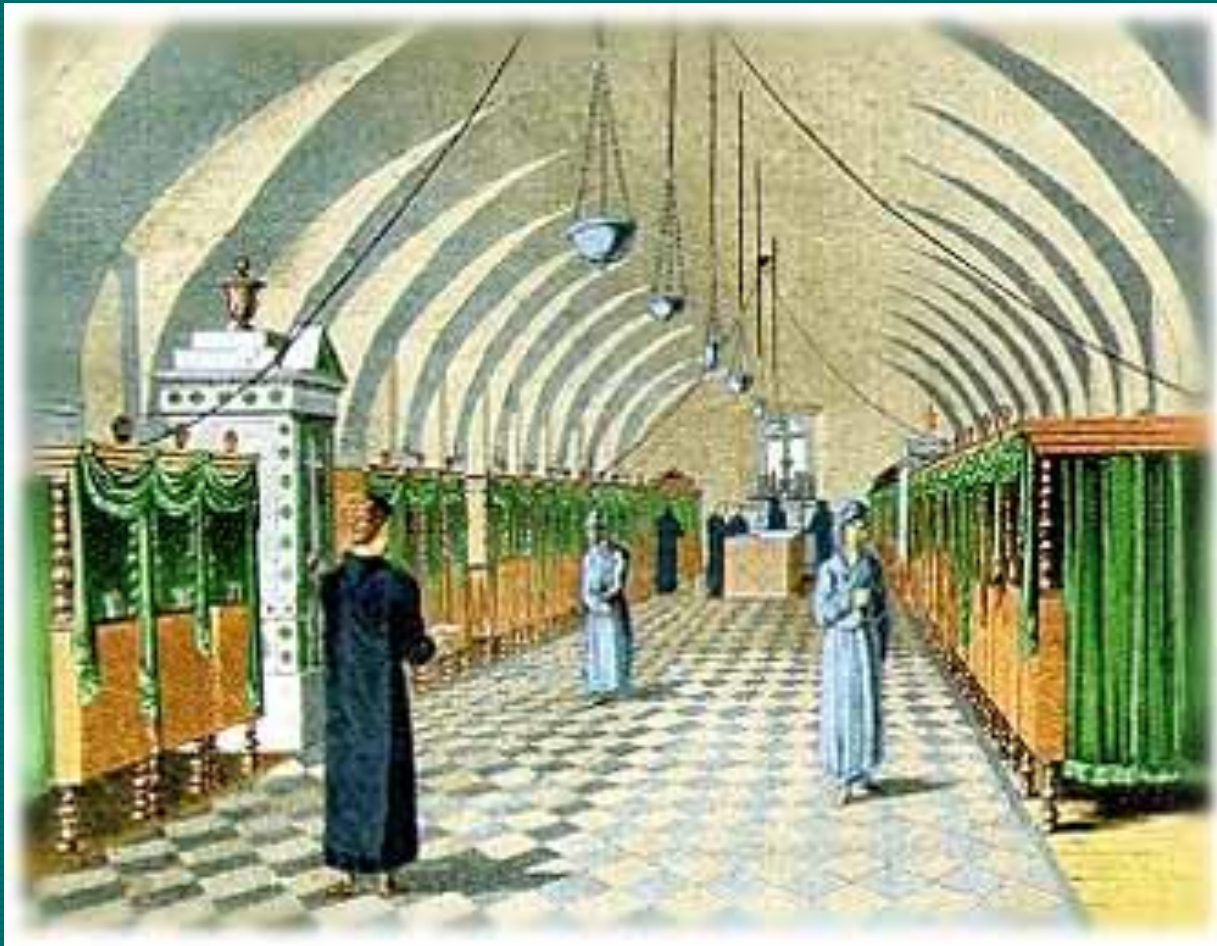
The two proofs:

The Order believes that we can be sure that our spirituality and charism are authentic because:

- 1) of **the very long life** that the spirit and charism have had, and
- 2) by the influence they have had on **many, many** people.



The second paragraph of the document reminds us that we are living in a time of very fast and very sweeping change.



The document tells us that our past ways of thinking, acting and living are becoming outdated.



Many of the old ways of dealing with needs and problems and many old institutions no longer work.

That has always been our Order's experience

In our
health
care
field we
have
always
had to
move
with the
times.



Surgery in the 16th century

The conclusion?

If we want to be true followers of St. John of God, it is not enough to receive and preserve the charism of hospitality from St. John of God.



We have to live out that
charism in new ways,
in new cultural forms and
with new energy.

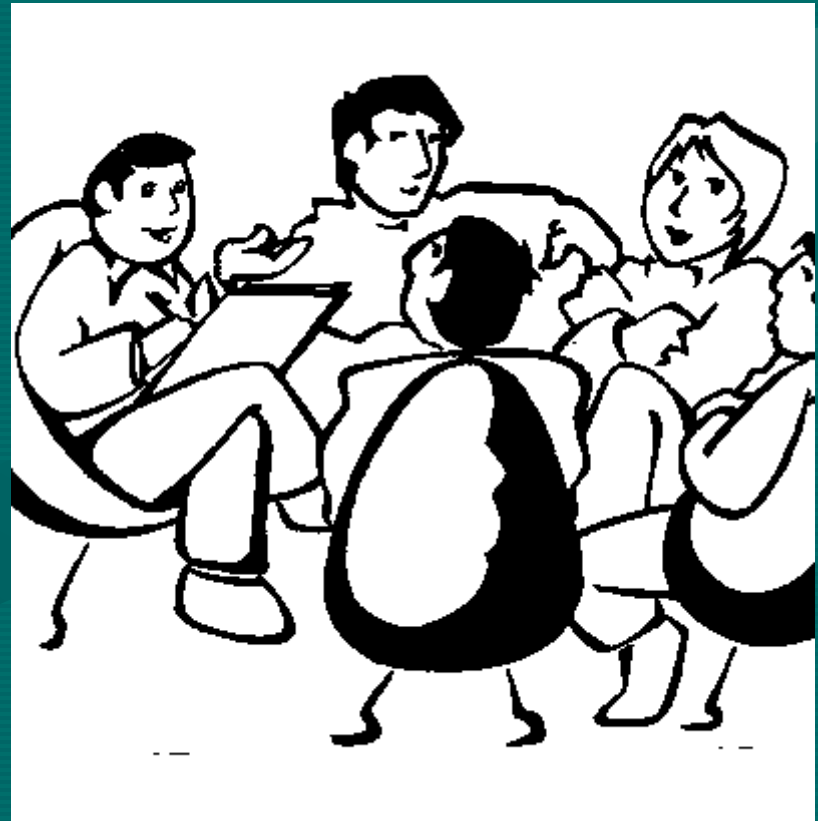


1. THE CHANGE OF AGE



Signs of our times ...

The document then goes on and tries to give a common vision of the signs of our particular times.



The document says that these are:

globalisation and
localisation, and
post-modernity.



We have heard plenty about
'globalisation'.





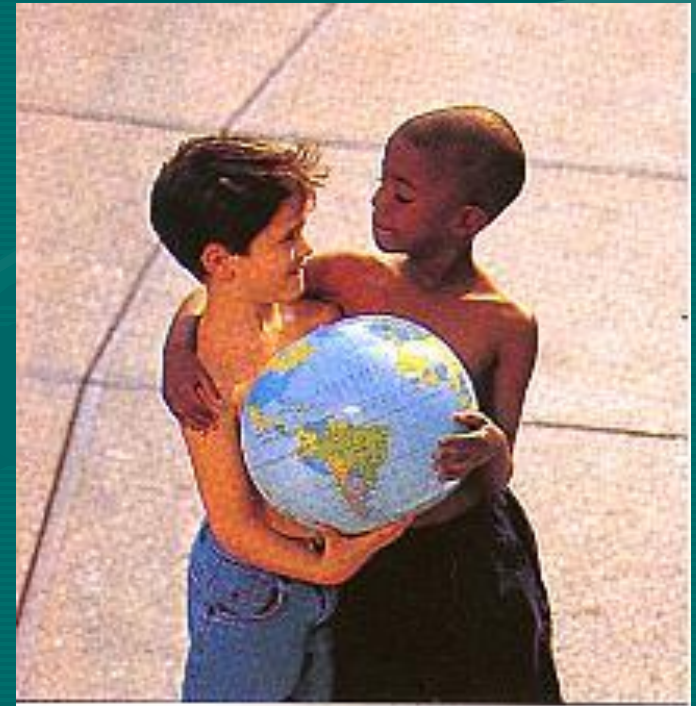
We have seen demonstrations against globalisation in our countries - at least on TV and in the newspapers.

Globalisation and Localisation:

People today often say that the world has become a *Global Village*

made up of world-wide networks of

- markets,
- business,
- defense and
- politics.



"The Path of Hospitality in the Manner of St. John of God"

tells us that, while these networks can be bad for people, they can also bring good to individuals and countries in

- development,
- scientific advances,
- increased health care and
- emergency aid.

So, the spirituality of John of God

God

Finds some positive significance in the 'sign of our times' that is globalisation.



The Order says that:

We want to globalise solidarity,
kindness and charity.

And we want to defend the value of
what is local and the individuality of
each person.

Post-modernity brings us to prefer humble and partial explanations of reality, and the introduction of small rather than wholesale changes.



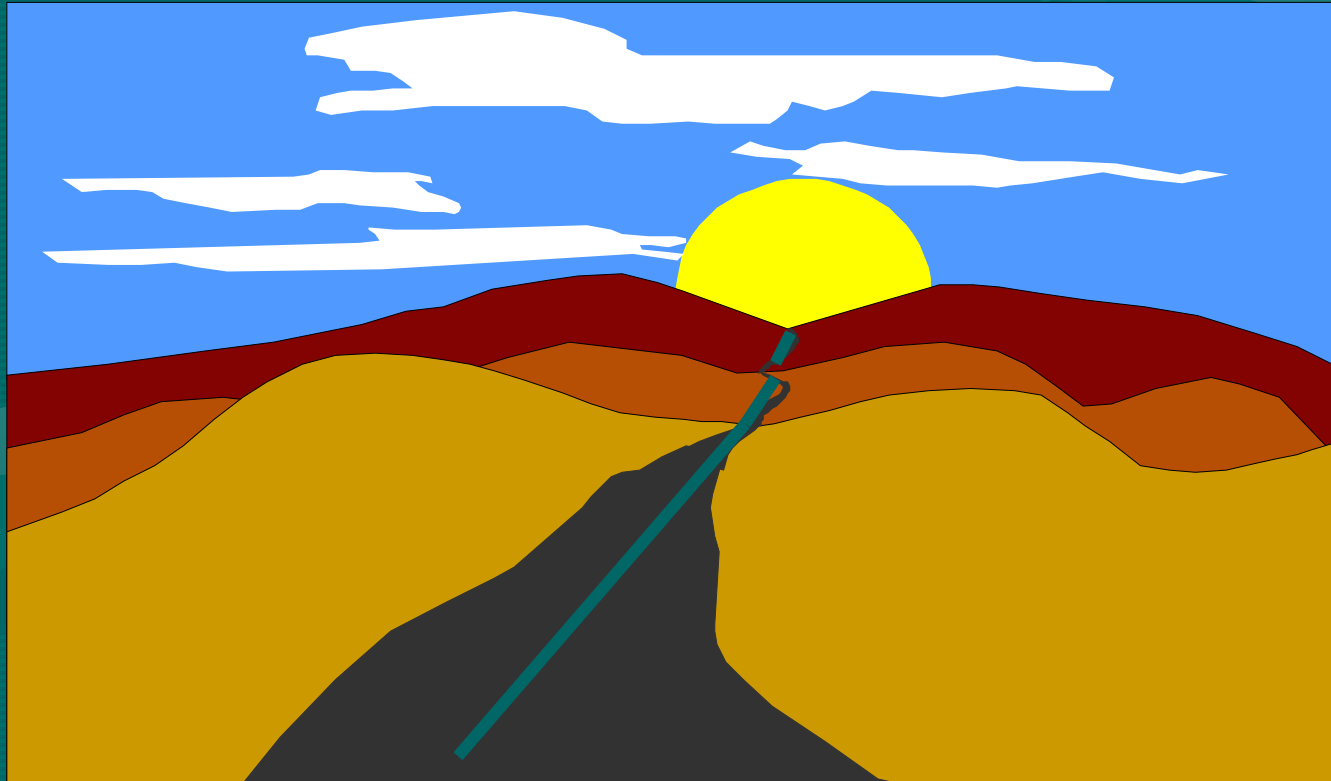
2. THE CHURCH AND THE ORDER IN THIS CONTEXT



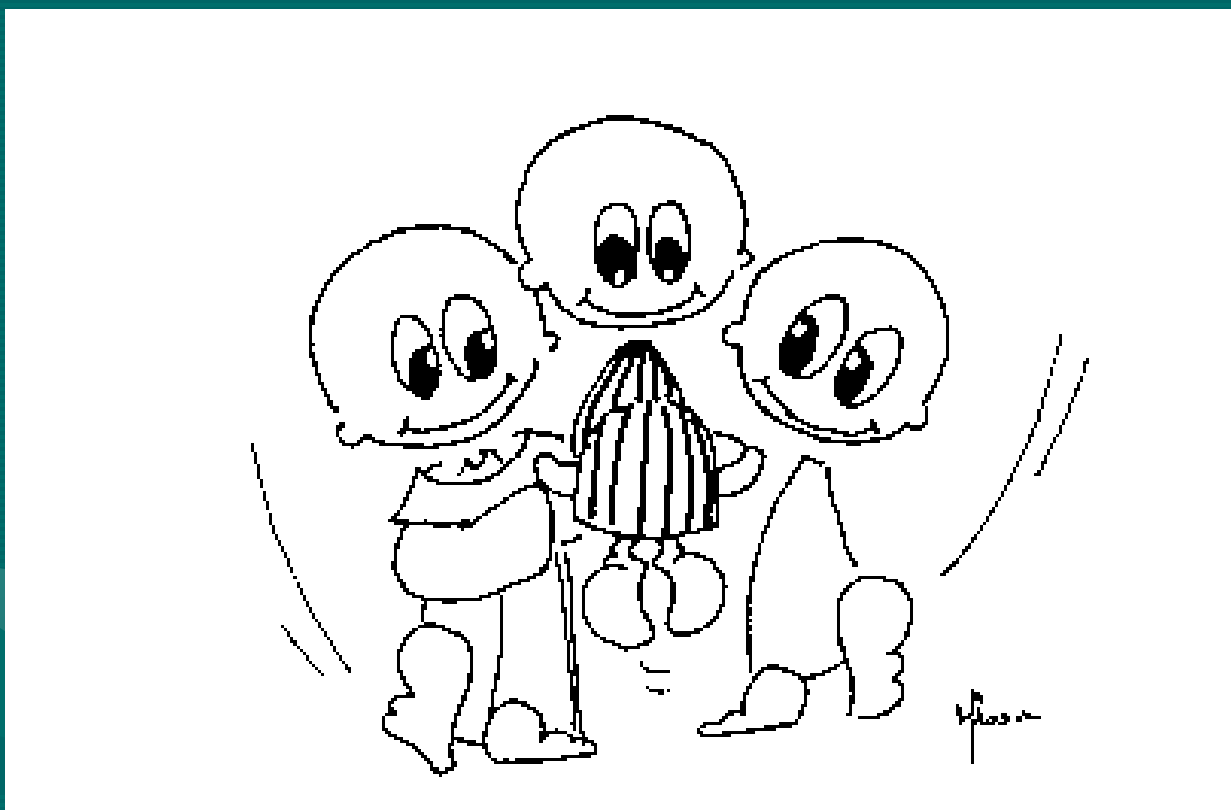
Both the Church and the Order are coming to accept pluralism and diversity, and to show more tolerance and hospitality to those who are different to us.



Post-modernity challenges us to see our spirituality more as a way, a path, than as a moral law or some abstract requirement.



This brings us to talk about a shared mission, a shared charism, and a shared life.



I. MEMORY

The first Chapter of “The Path of Hospitality in the Manner of St. John of God”

tells us that if we remember the way things were at the beginning of our life as an Order

we will see more clearly our original plan and we will regain our early enthusiasm.



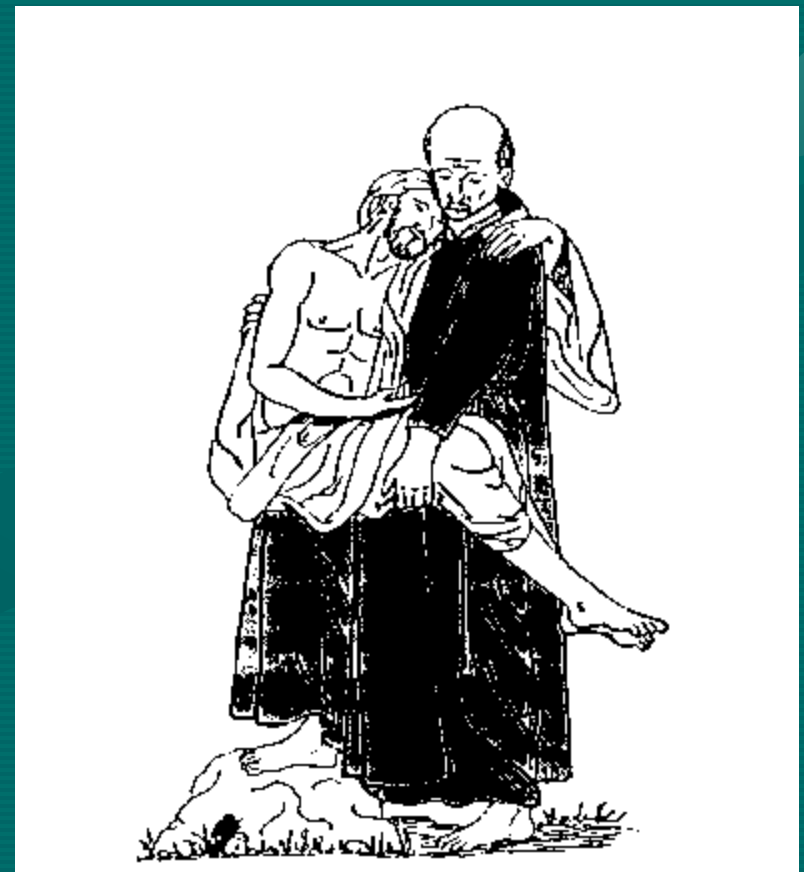
We remember
that ...

9. *"St. John of
God was a man
on the move, a
wanderer,
he went on
pilgrimages
and long treks"*

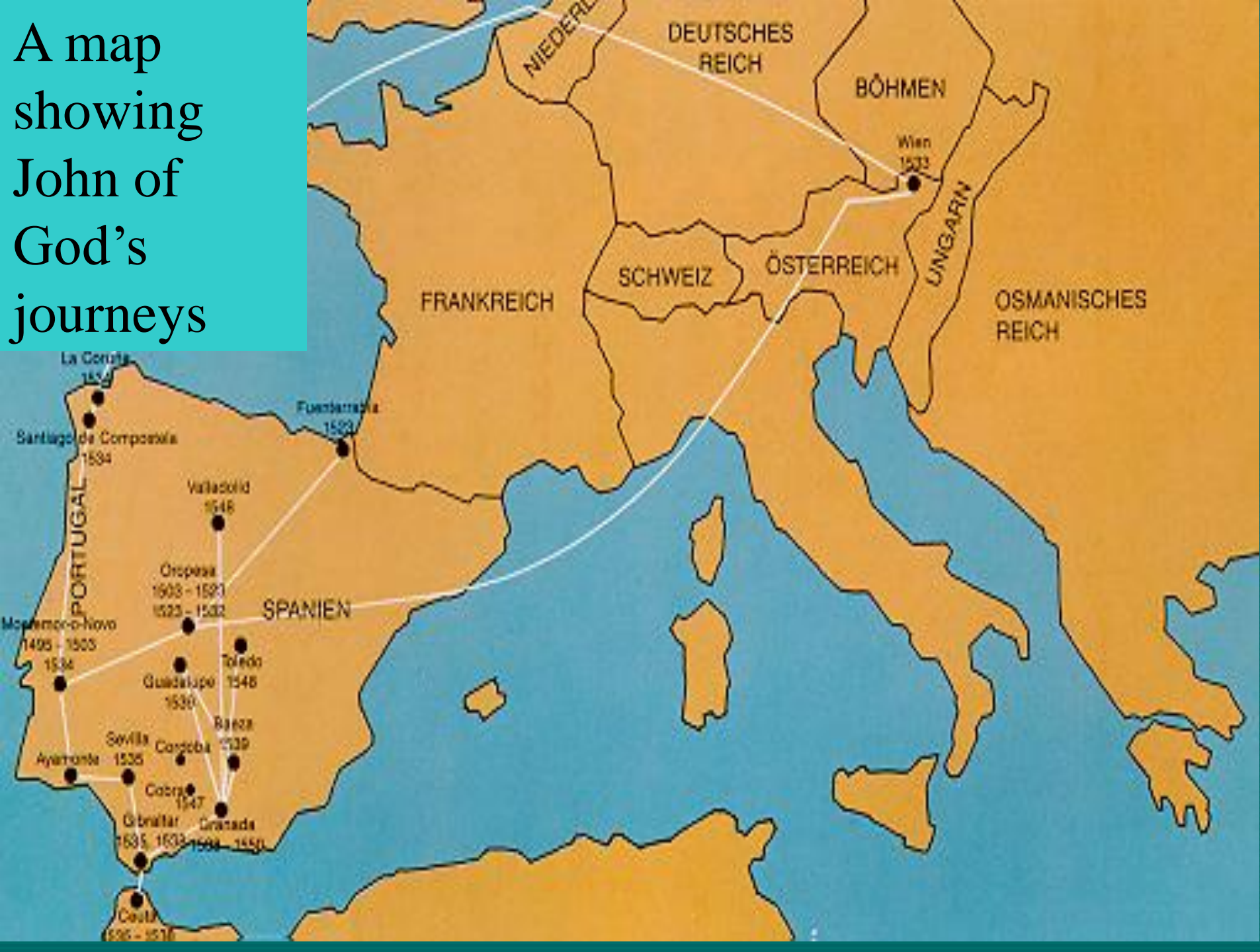
Consequently,

the idea of being on a journey is important to our Brotherhood.

John of God was himself a journeying man.

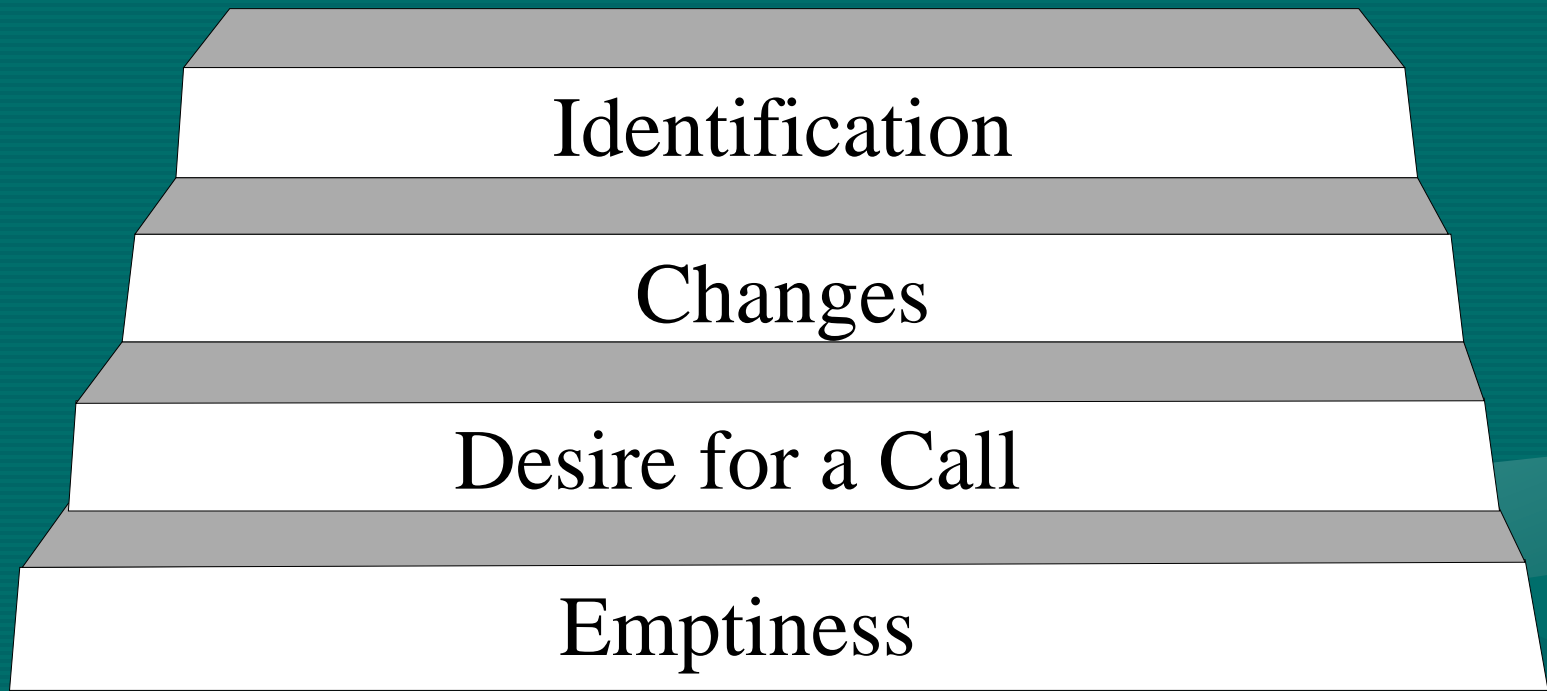


A map showing John of God's journeys



John expected his companions to be ready to journey also.





“The Path of Hospitality in the Manner of St. John of God” says that the life journey of John of God went through four phases:

1. One, his failures taught him the 'emptiness' of a life too attuned to the world and its values.
2. Two, he came to desire a call from God to His service.
3. Three, he changed his way of living and his system of values;
4. Four, he identified himself, like Jesus, with the poor and needy.

a) Emptiness

Making room for Grace – the first
stage



The Order tells us that John of God was a man who knew the experience of failure.



**He was a failure as a soldier when
searching for food for his companions.
(10)**

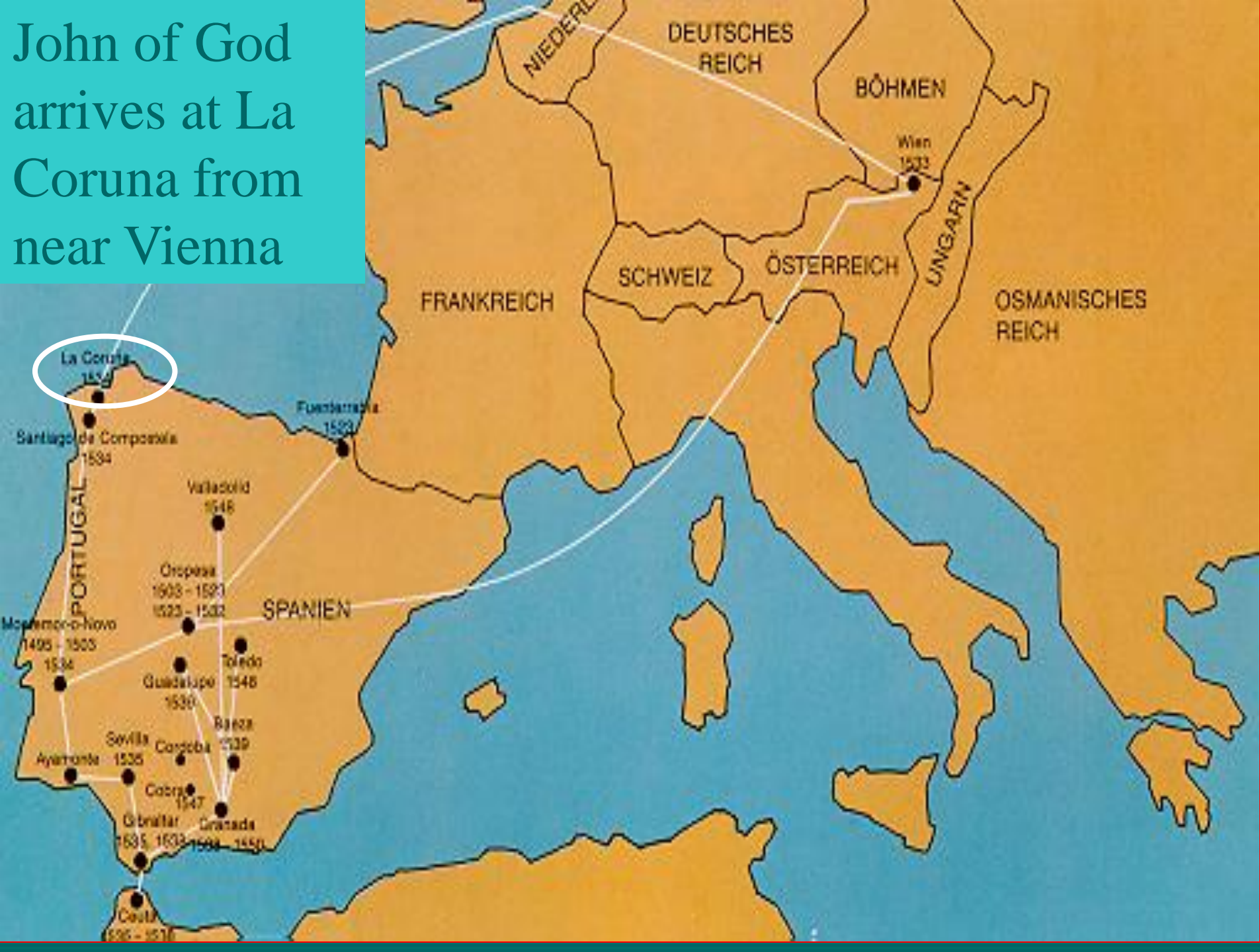
He was a failure as a soldier, when he allowed thieves to steal things that he was guarding – for which he was nearly executed!





Nine years later, after being in the army of the Emperor to fight against the Turks near Vienna, he landed in La Coruña.

John of God
arrives at La
Coruña from
near Vienna





From Coruña he went to his birthplace hoping to see his parents from whom he had been taken away at the age of eight.



He was very unhappy when he learned that, in his absence, his parents had died. (10)

John felt that he had failed his parents.

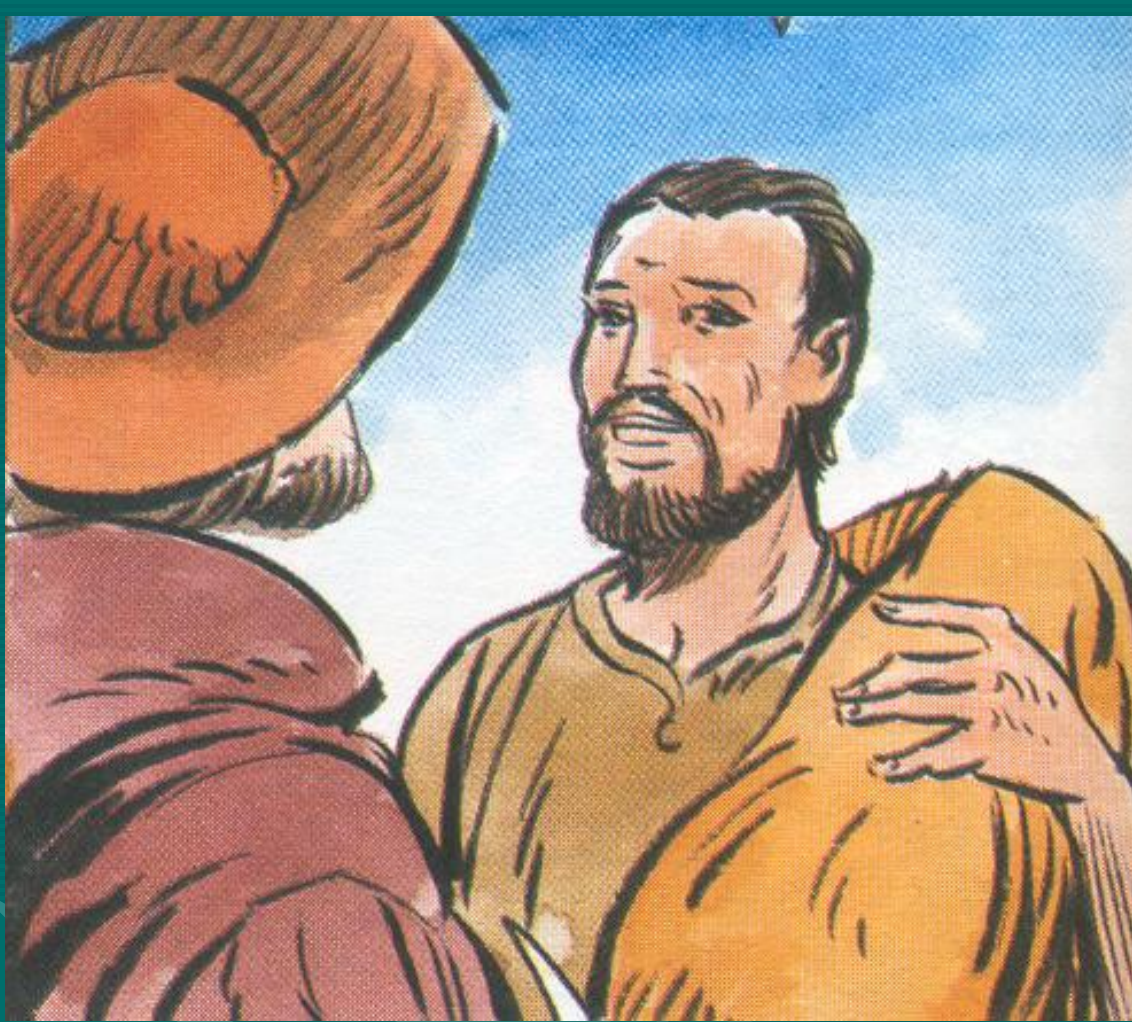
Castro says:

“John of God showed such great remorse and sorrow for having been the cause of his parents' death that his uncle began to weep.”

(Chapter III)

However, John did not let failure make him bitter and dejected:

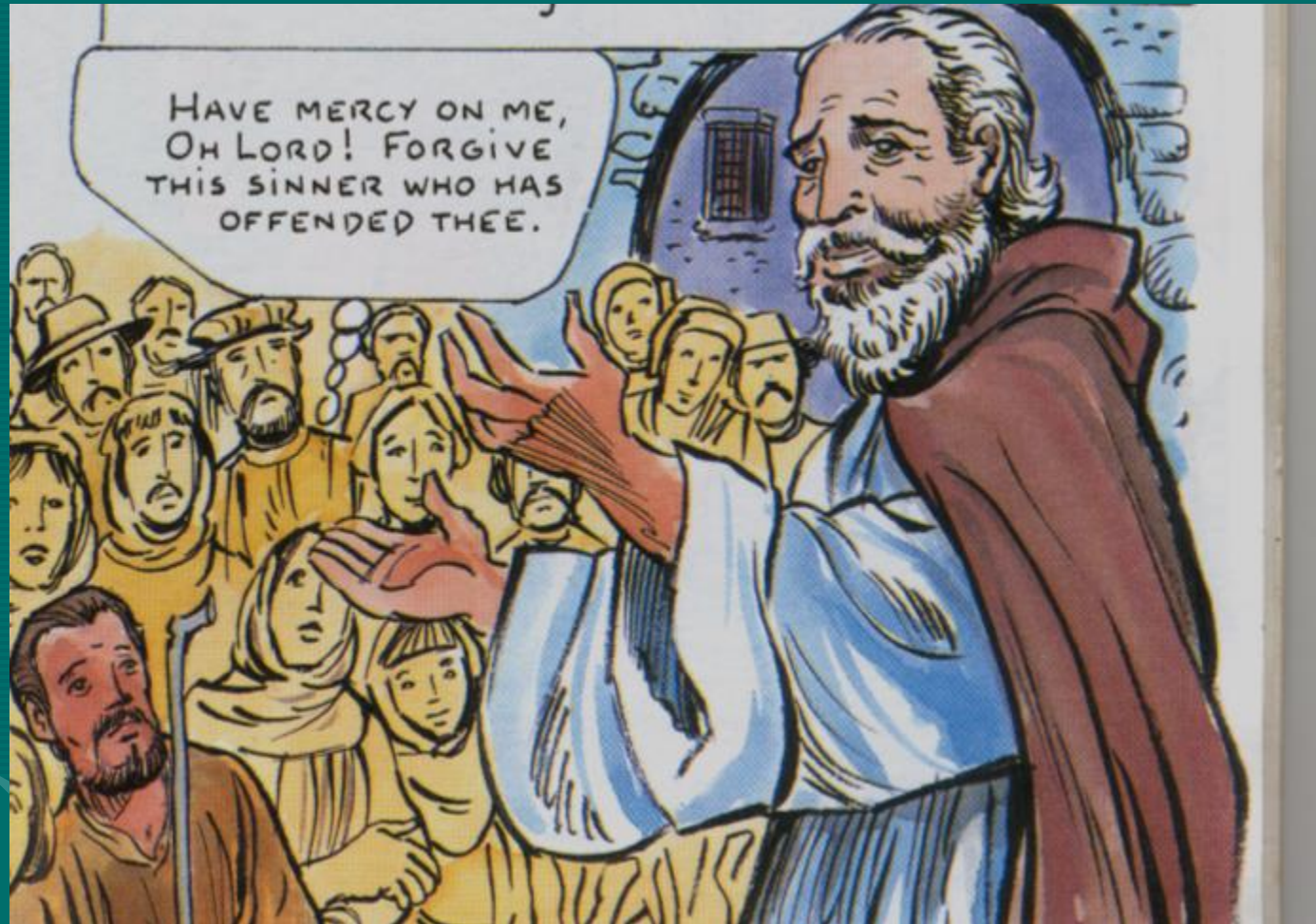




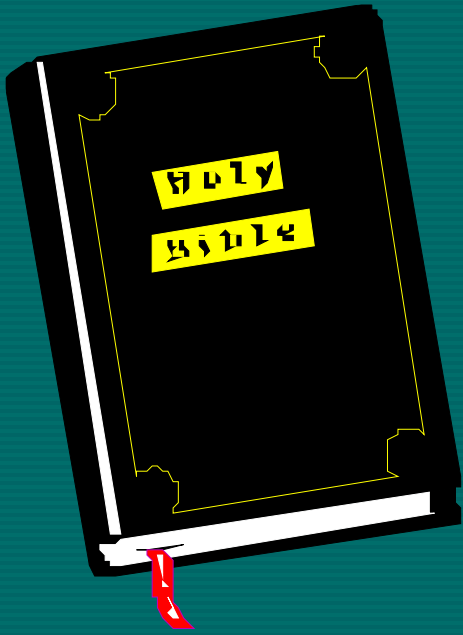
John of God left his birthplace after his return visit there as an adult to “*search of a way to serve Our Lord...*”



Listening for the call of God John traveled down the Iberian peninsula and to North Africa until he arrived at Granada.



And it was here that he finally heard God's call through Master John of Ávila on the Feast of St. Sebastian.



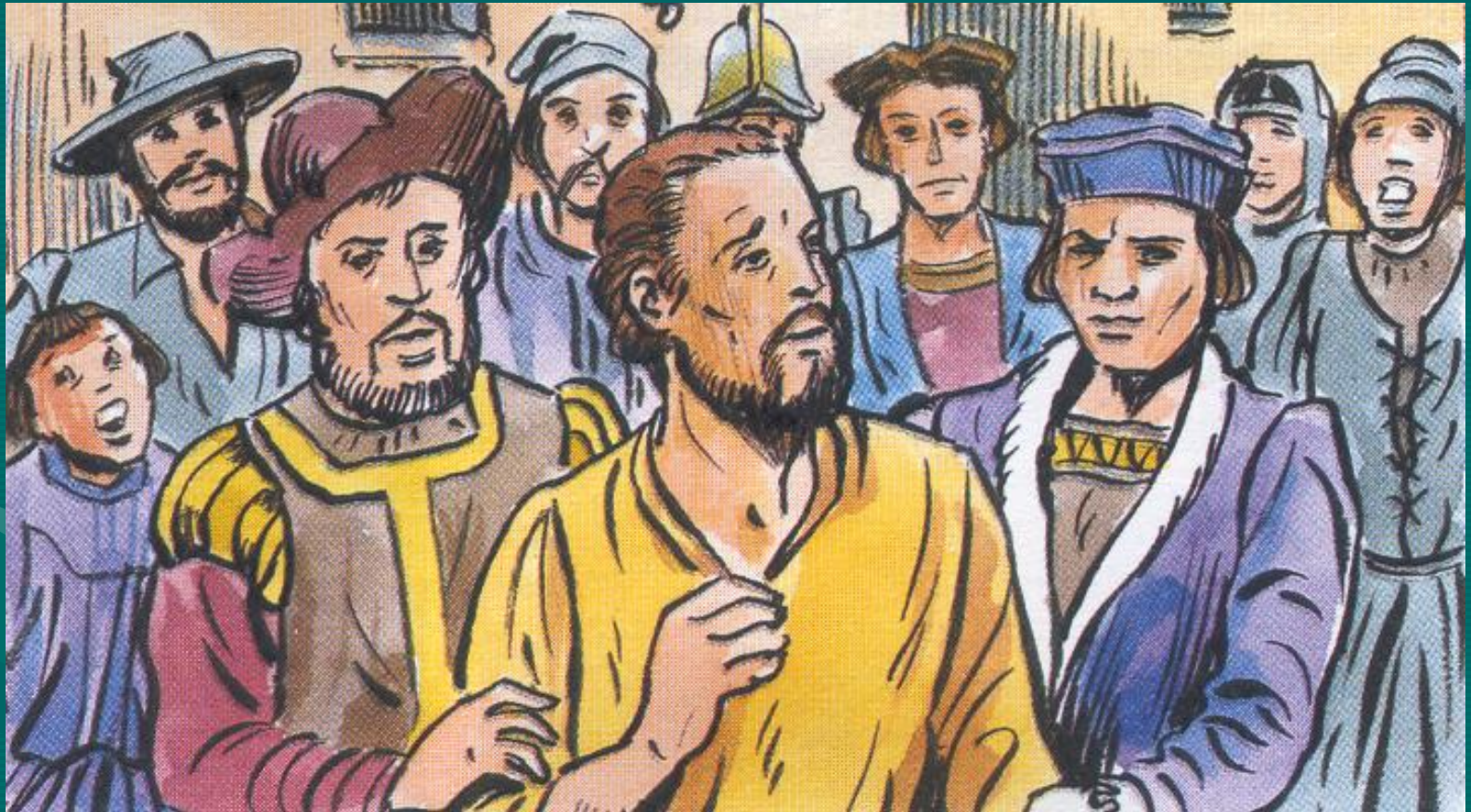
c) Change

Transformed by the Word of God –
the third stage

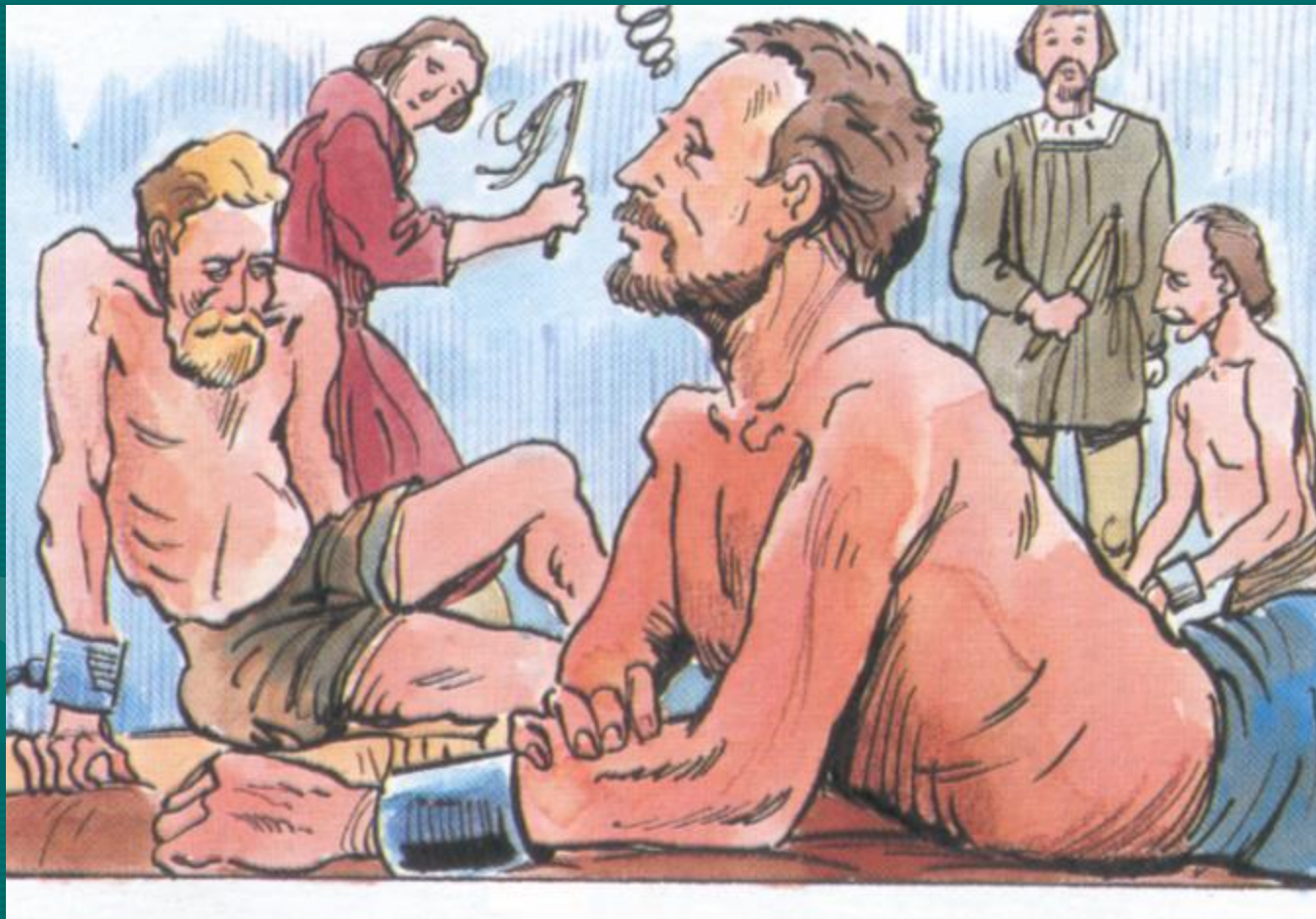


John of God's vocation was “an intense desire to follow the naked Jesus Christ, and to become totally poor for the One who had become poor for him.” (14)

From the streets of Granada " *Two respectable gentlemen of the city took John to the Royal Hospital.*"

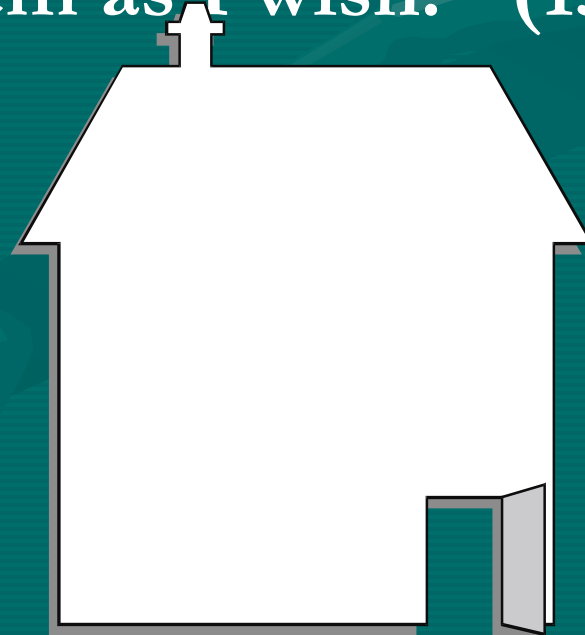


Looking about at the insane patients being punished along with him, he made a prayer.



His prayer was:

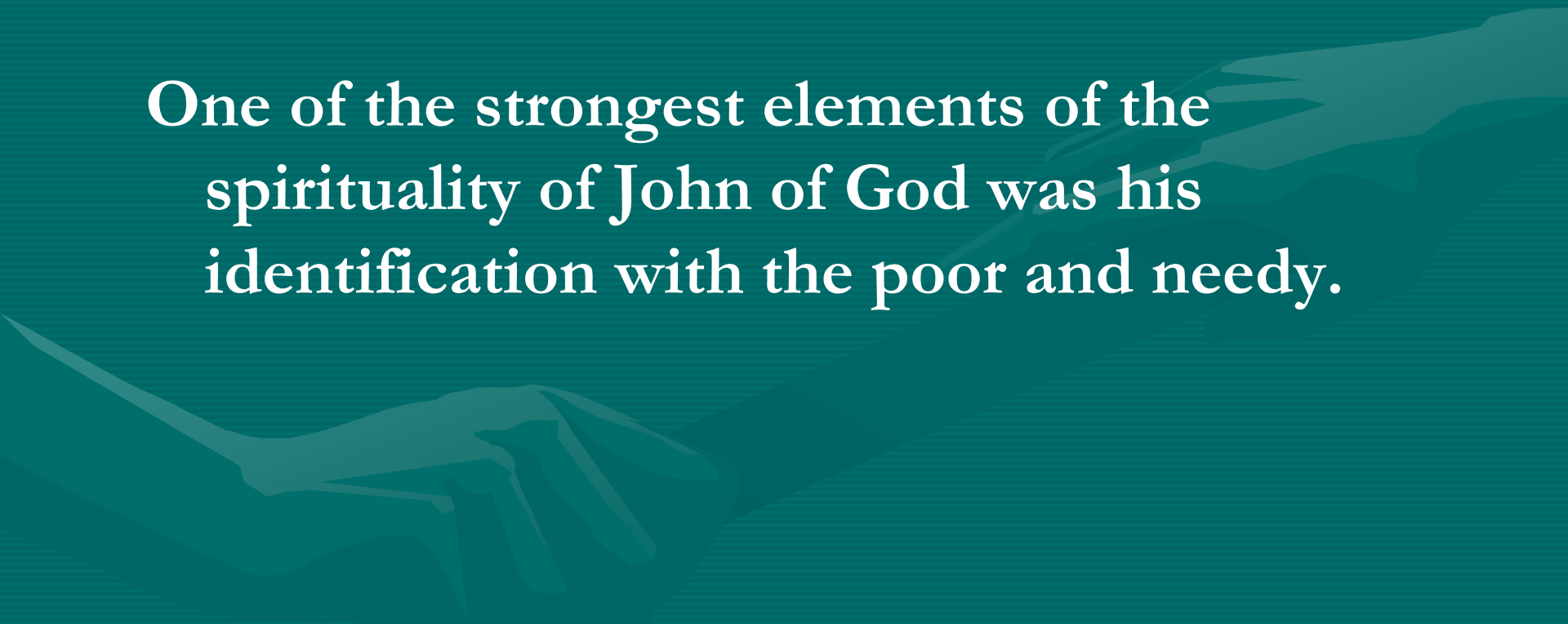
"May Jesus Christ eventually give me the grace to run a hospice where the abandoned poor and those suffering from mental disorders might have refuge and that I may be able to serve them as I wish." (15)



d) Identification

Like the poor Jesus and like the
poor humanity

One of the strongest elements of the spirituality of John of God was his identification with the poor and needy.



The document tells us “he took the first steps of his new and final Path by gathering firewood and selling it.” (17)



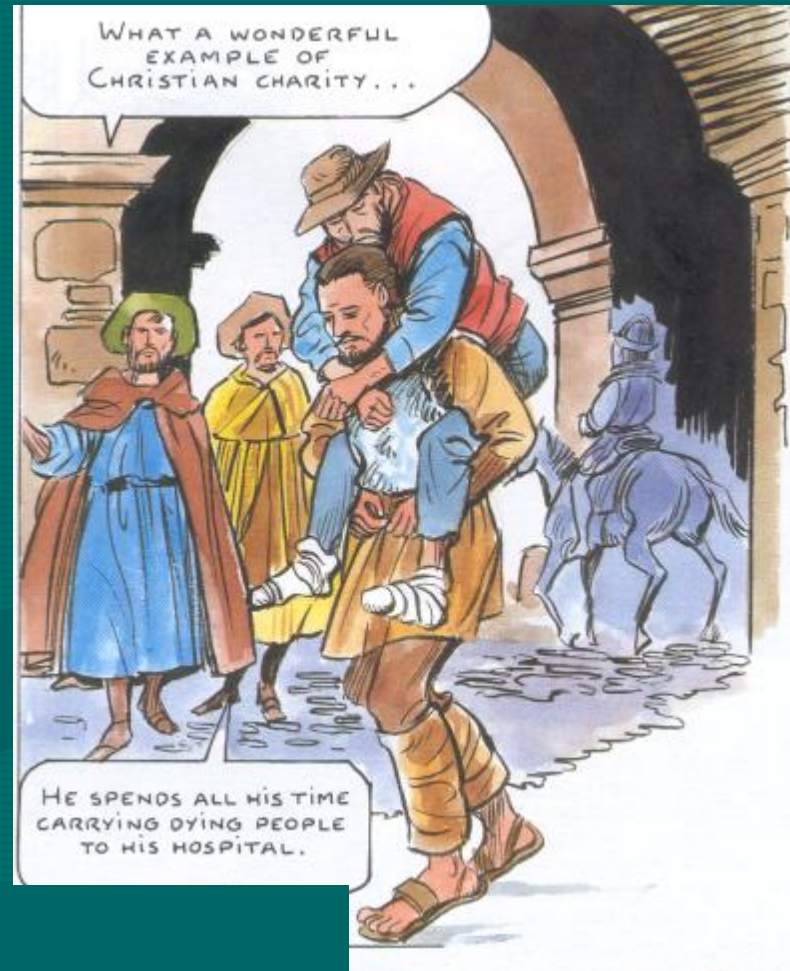
DO GOOD FOR LOVE OF GOD.
ALWAYS DO GOOD.



TAKE THIS FOR
YOUR PATIENTS.

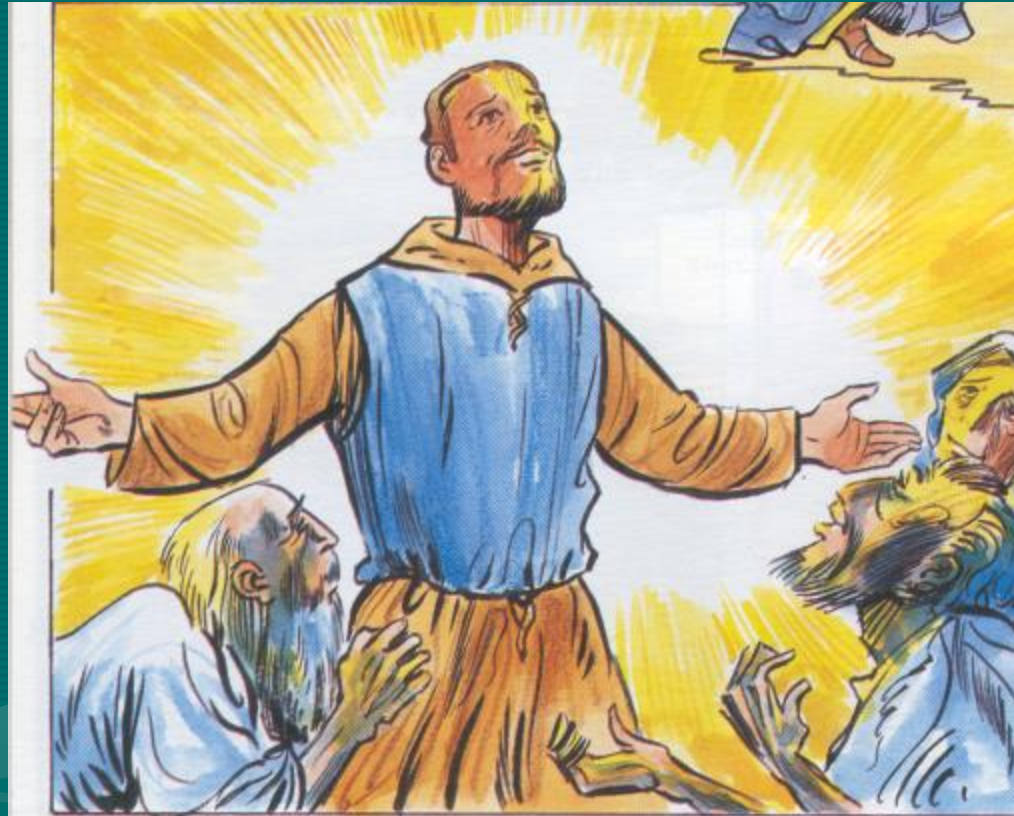
Then he decided to become a beggar in order to get what he needed to alleviate the sufferings and the misery of his suffering brothers and sisters. (17)

When John saw the poor "turned away from doorways, frozen, ragged and covered with sores. He was so moved with compassion ... that he decided to do something about it as soon as possible." (18)



He contemplated "the great mercy of God" until *he came to personify mercy and self-sacrifice: (20)*





He became the brother of all in Hospitaller solidarity.

So, the four phases of John of God's spiritual journey are:

- emptiness,
- calling,
- change
- identification.



In the second part of the First Chapter, “The Path of Hospitality in the Manner of St. John of God” deals with ...

- a) **Tradition: handing on the spirit of the Founder and Father; and**
- b) **The "topical relevance" of John of God's charism today.**

We have said that we recall to mind the origins of our charism in order to refresh our vision and our enthusiasm for the journey.



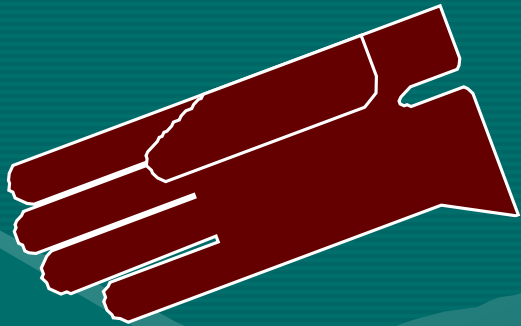


To illustrate that idea I would like
to use the following parable or story

....

Imagine in your mind...

a family that owns a successful business
making leather goods.



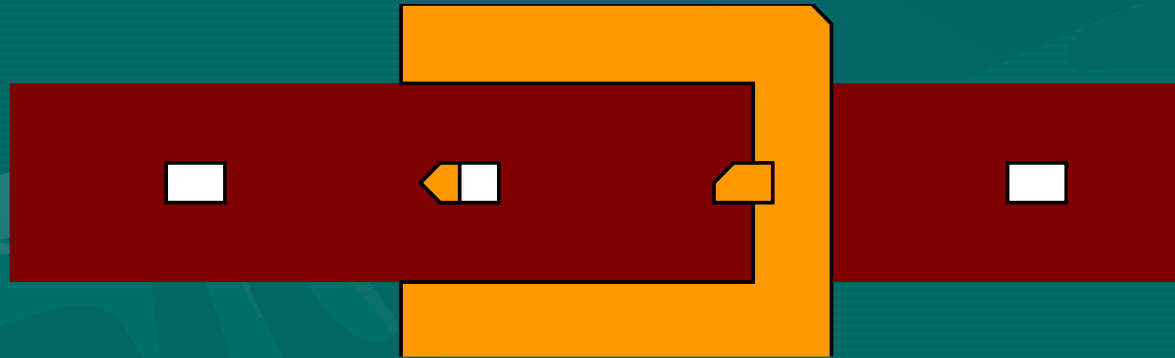


Today, the material for making shoes, bags, gloves etc comes in bales to the family leather-goods factory already prepared.

The materials are fairly odourless – in fact the processed leather looks more like plastic than leather.

One day some members of the family go into a room of the factory that has been closed up for a long time.

They are looking for an empty room that could give them some extra space for manufacturing a new line: belts.





The room that they go into is the one that, in the early days of the business, their father, now dead, used to prepare the leather from skins that he purchased from local farmers.

The air in the room still carried the strong odours of the leather 'tanning' that their father had done.

The odours that came to those family members had a profound effect on them.



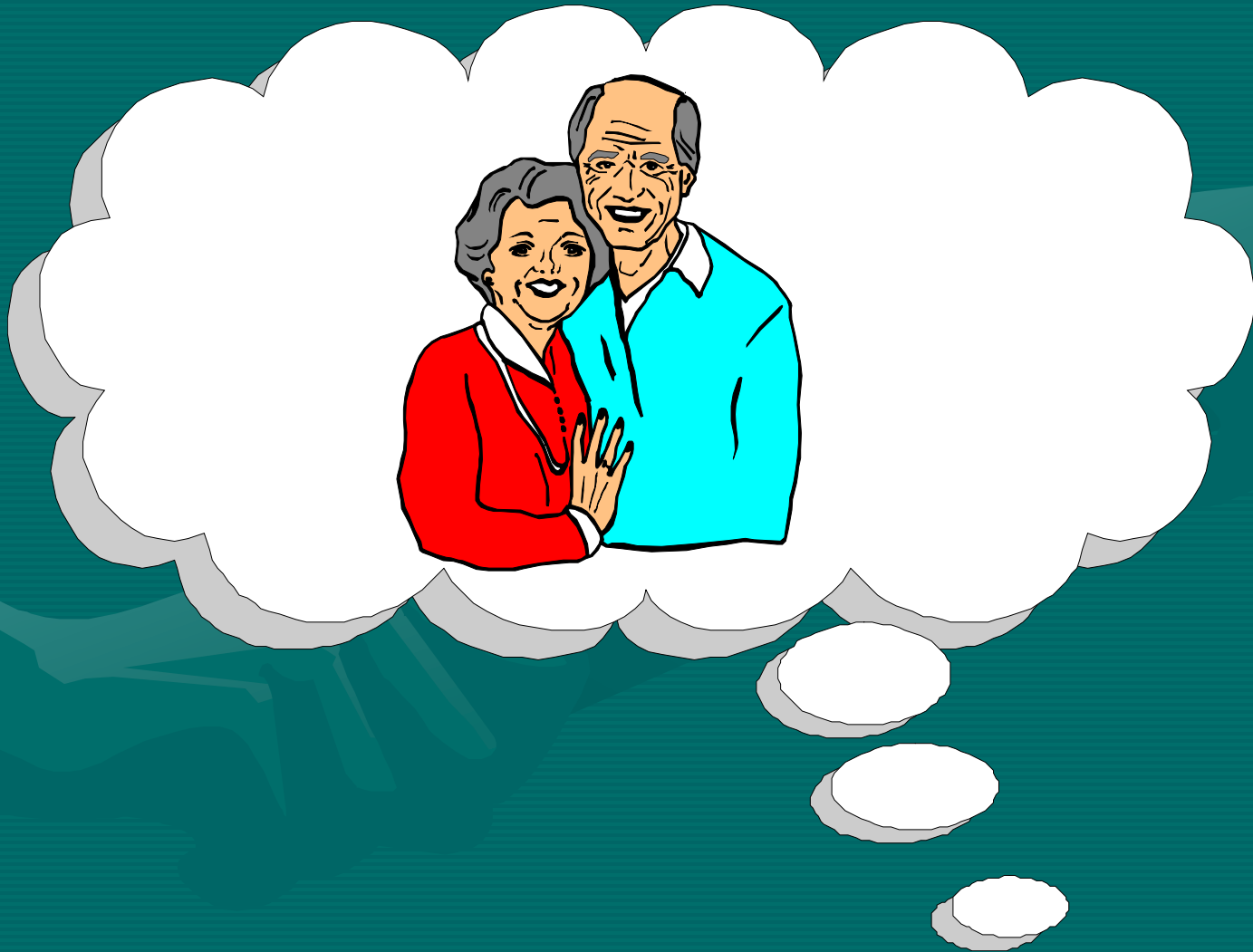
The odours that they smelled brought back to them memories of how hard their father had worked, but with what enthusiasm they had helped him;

How their mother had combined caring for them with also working in the factory.

What great hopes the family had when it was able to increase the size of the factory.

How their father had always insisted that quality came before making a profit. Etc.

Memories – and their power!



Brother Pascual Piles says in his Introduction to “The Path of Hospitality in the Manner of St. John of God” ...

“Enriched by the tradition of the Order this part of the document leads us to a certain conclusion.

That conclusion is firmly anchored in the contemporary world,

with a mission being performed jointly by Brothers and Co-workers,

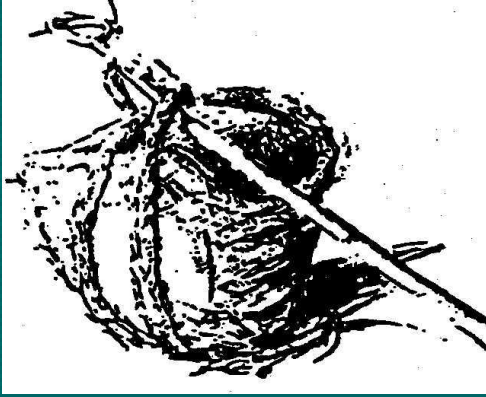
and a need for inculturation in the fifty countries in which we are present today.”

*So, we can say that the spirituality
of the Order*

is firmly anchored in the contemporary
world,

manifests itself in a mission performed
jointly by Brothers and Co-workers,

and is today incultured in the fifty
countries in which we are present
today.



Tradition is important to us because we not only receive from it but we also give to it.

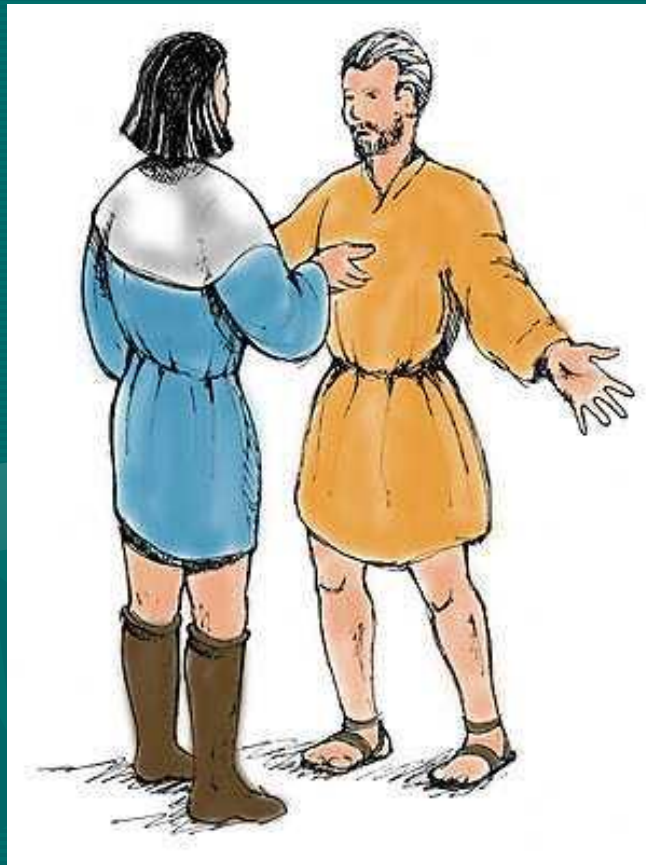
Tradition is a two-way street

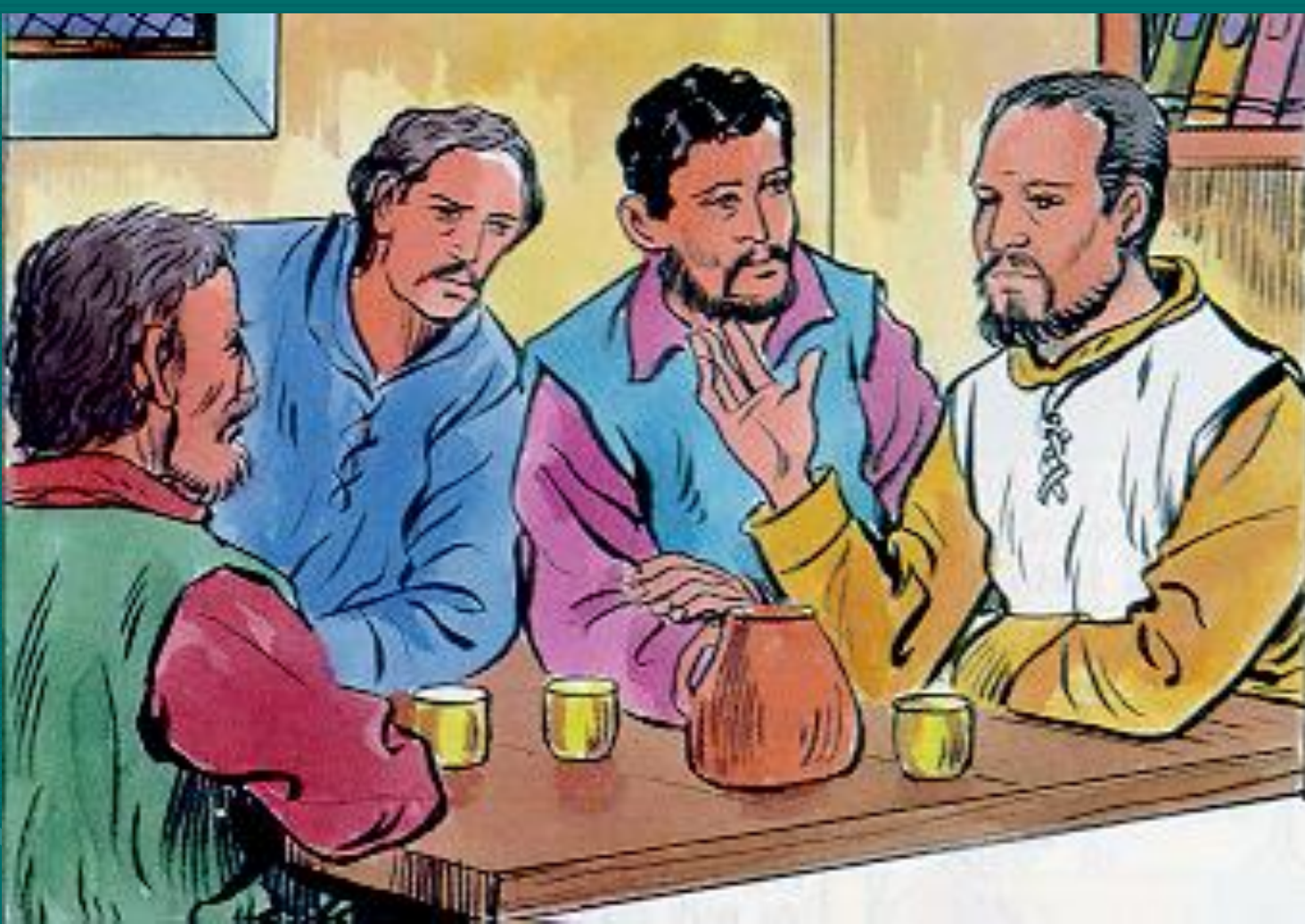


**a) A father and a brother
in the spirit**

The first Brothers

Some of the first people who felt a call to follow John of God adopted his lifestyle as a new manner of following and imitating Jesus. (25)

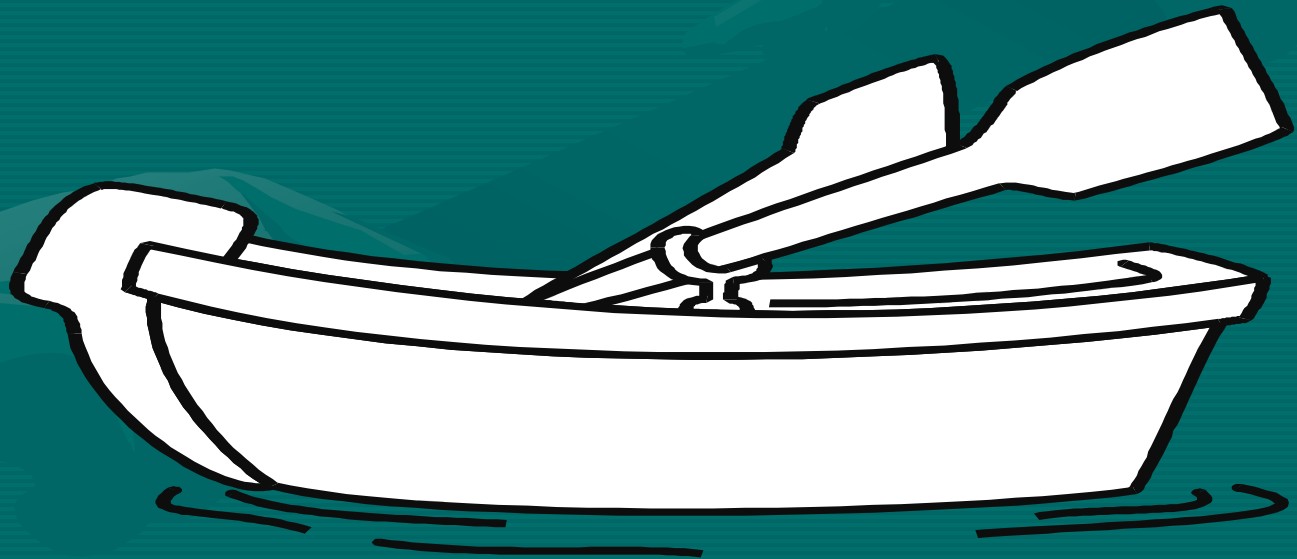




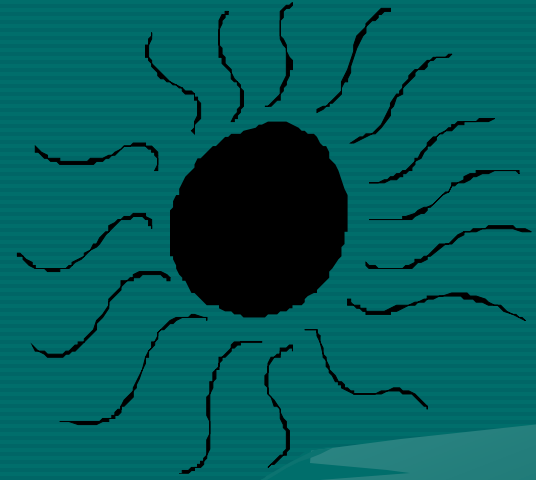
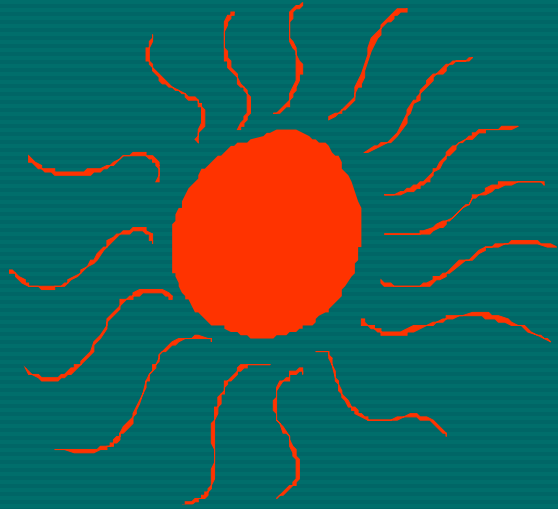
The only rule of life John of God needed to give these men – who became his Brothers – was his own way of living. (25)

John of God told those who wished to follow him that they would have to empty themselves and "*leave the flesh and everything else behind*"

- overcoming doubts and insecurity and not drifting around "*like a rudderless boat ...*". (26)




So, the tradition that comes from the spirituality of St. John of God includes self emptying for the sake of God and neighbour.



He warned his first Brothers that they
would have to become

*"accustomed to toil and distress and to the
alternation of very bad days with very
good ones". (26)*

So, the tradition that comes from the spirituality of St. John of God includes a readiness for the work and suffering that is part of serving others.

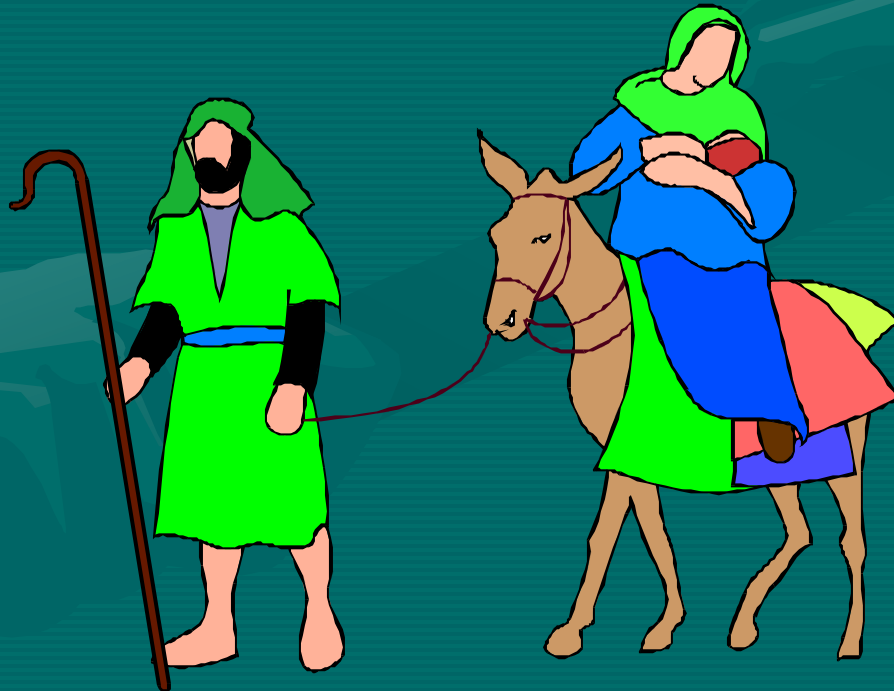


Just as part of the spirituality of parenthood is a readiness for the hard work, and suffering, that is involved in bringing children into the world and raising them.



A spirituality of parenthood?

Do you not think that the lives of Mary and Joseph were an expression of the spirituality of parenthood?



John of God recommended personal self-sacrifice since it is

"good for you to go and mortify your flesh for a while and suffer a hard life, hunger and thirst, disgrace and weariness, distress and anxiety, and misfortune;

all... for God's sake,

because if you come here you must suffer all this for the love of God'.

(26)

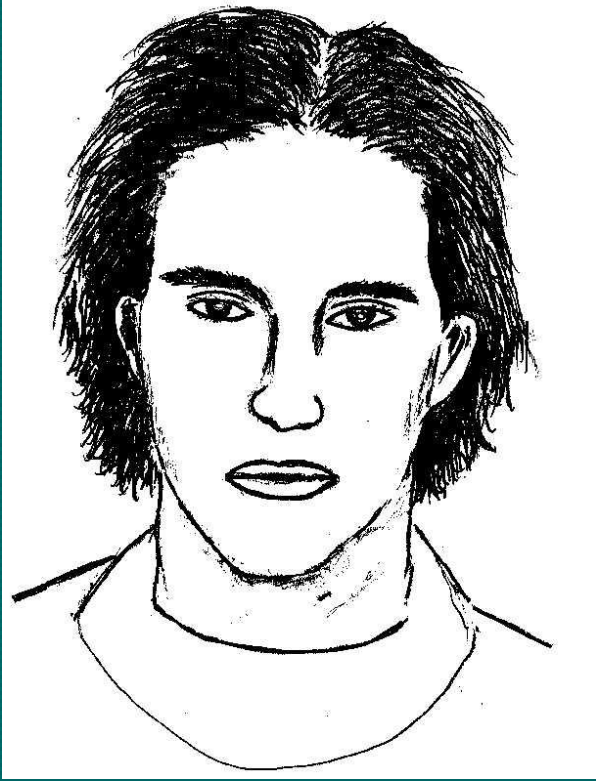
So, the tradition that comes from the spirituality of St. John of God includes recourse to prayer and mortification of bodily demands.



For John of God there could be no half measures.

He sought the highest possible level of love:

"Remember Our Lord Jesus Christ and his blessed Passion and recall how he gave back good for the evil they did him.



*“You must do likewise, my son
Bautista, so that when you
come to the house of God you
can recognize both good and
evil”. (26)*

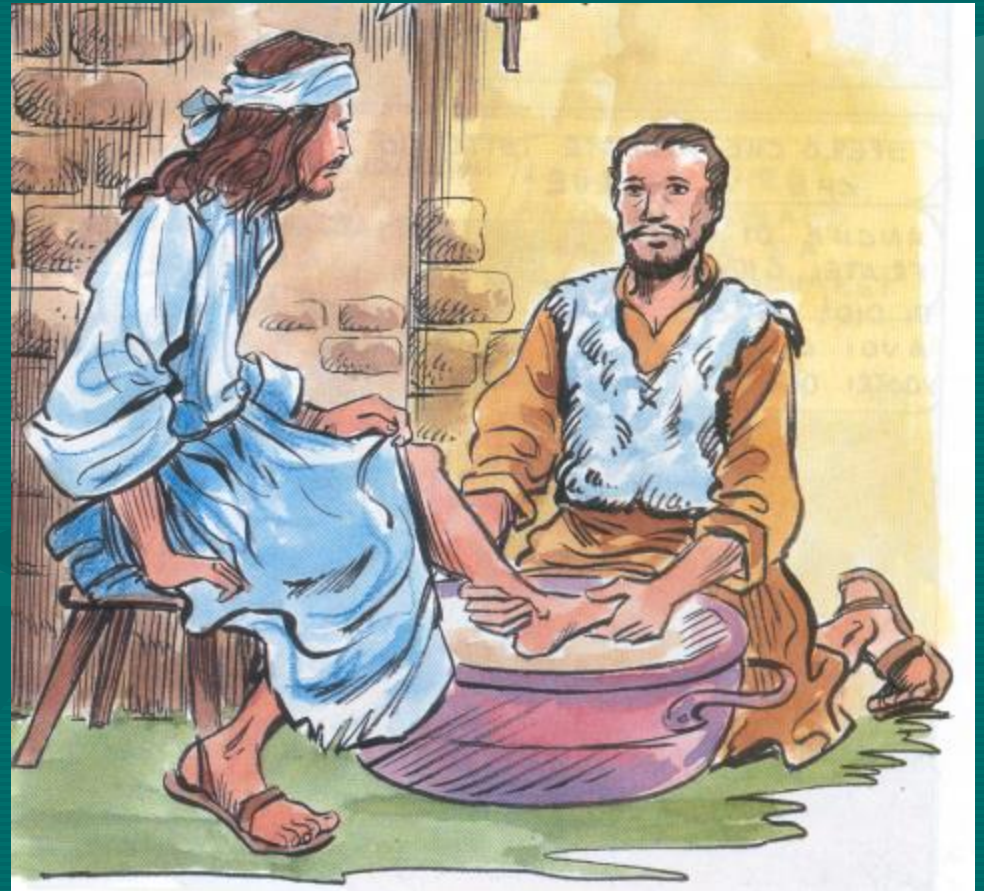


**Anton
Martin**

**Pedro
Velasco**

**John of God wanted his Brothers to be men
who were aware of having received the
mercy of God. (27)**

By his example John of God passed on to his Brothers an unshakeable confidence in the faith and charism they had received.



b) The Spirit of Hospitality bequeathed to us a legacy



"The Path of Hospitality in the Manner of St. John of God" tells how

John of God's first *companions* participated in his Spirit of Hospitality and disseminated it.



It names a long list of Brothers,
starting with Antón Martín and Pedro
Velasco

who had been touched by the mercy of God
through John's example of forgiveness,
reconciliation and brotherhood.

There were many other Brothers
throughout history who lived for the
poor and sick, giving their lives for them
in service and even martyrdom. (28)



St. John Grande

At the end of the long list of Brothers "The Path of Hospitality in the Manner of St. John of God" says:

“The Spirit of Hospitality has also been handed on to our Co-workers who have taken part in the mission and shared in the charismatic spirit.” (30)



“handed on to our Co-workers who have taken part in the mission and shared in the charismatic spirit”



Then the document tells us (starting on page 26) what the spiritual *values* are that have driven this long history of Hospitality. (31)
They are:

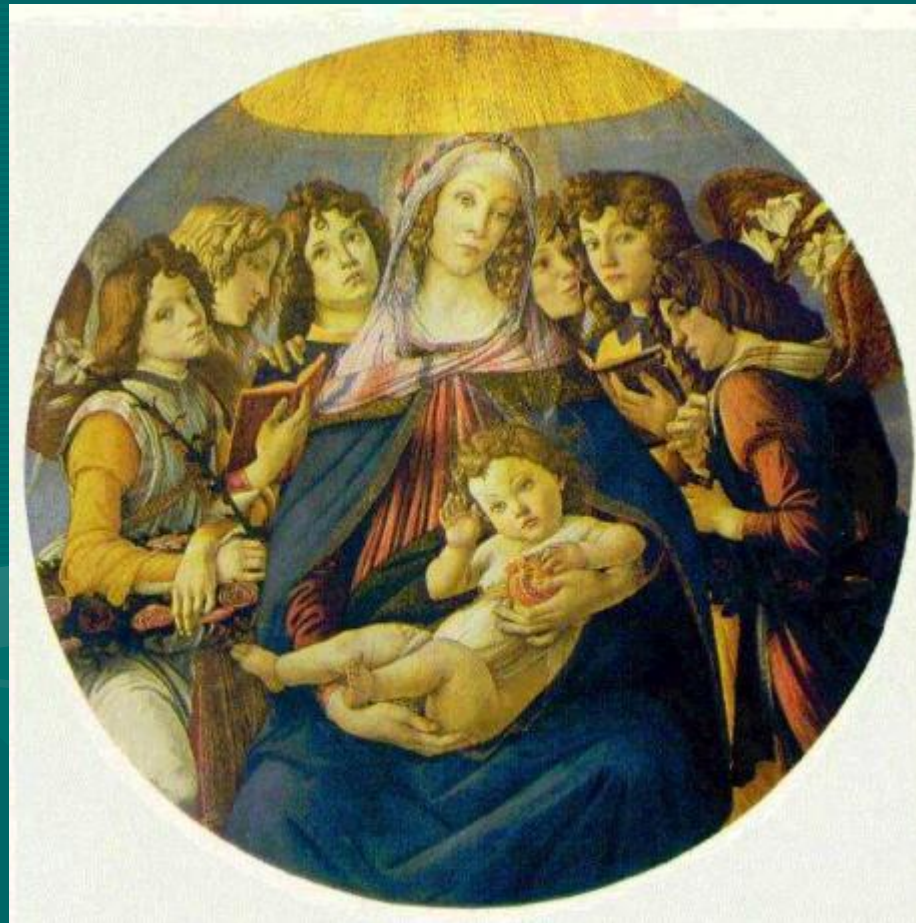


*The value
of a
profound
experience
of God's
"grace"
and
"mercy".*

*The value of following the
compassionate and merciful
Jesus:*



The value of devotion to the Virgin Mary



*The value of harmonious
and comprehensive
experience of the love of
God and love for our needy
neighbour. (31)*



*The value of spiritual constancy
when faced with obstacles:*



The value of radiating hospitality.



*The value of caring for the sick
and needy*



*The value of
professionalism:*



The value of a spirit of self-giving unto death:



*The value of inculturation among
the poor, or Hospitaller humility:*





*And to give expression to our desire
to do what our spirituality calls on
us to do in the immediate future.*

3. The “Topical Relevance of John of God’s Charism Today

So let us see now what the document says about the “topical relevance” of John of God’s charism today.

John-of-God hospitality has always been expansive, attracting even those who are not of the Christian faith.



The charism has spread with remarkable creativity to meet the needs of different times and places. (33)





We are becoming increasingly aware that the charism of John-of-God hospitality is not reserved to men who have made religious profession in the Order.



We see the Order today as a "family" in which we want to share our charism, spirituality and mission with others. (33)

This vision challenges us to identify
with our mission in such a close way
that our Co-workers feel that they
want to do the same. (33)



We are driven to do this by the great complexity of many of the apostolic works of the Order



The Brothers who have given themselves to the mission "ad gentes" have extended the charism of John of God far and wide and brought about its inculturation.





From inculturation we are moving to the *embodiment of the charism and the mission* through our indigenous Brothers. (34)

The Order must gradually move away from 'first world' patterns to practice a hospitality that responds with every real-life situation.

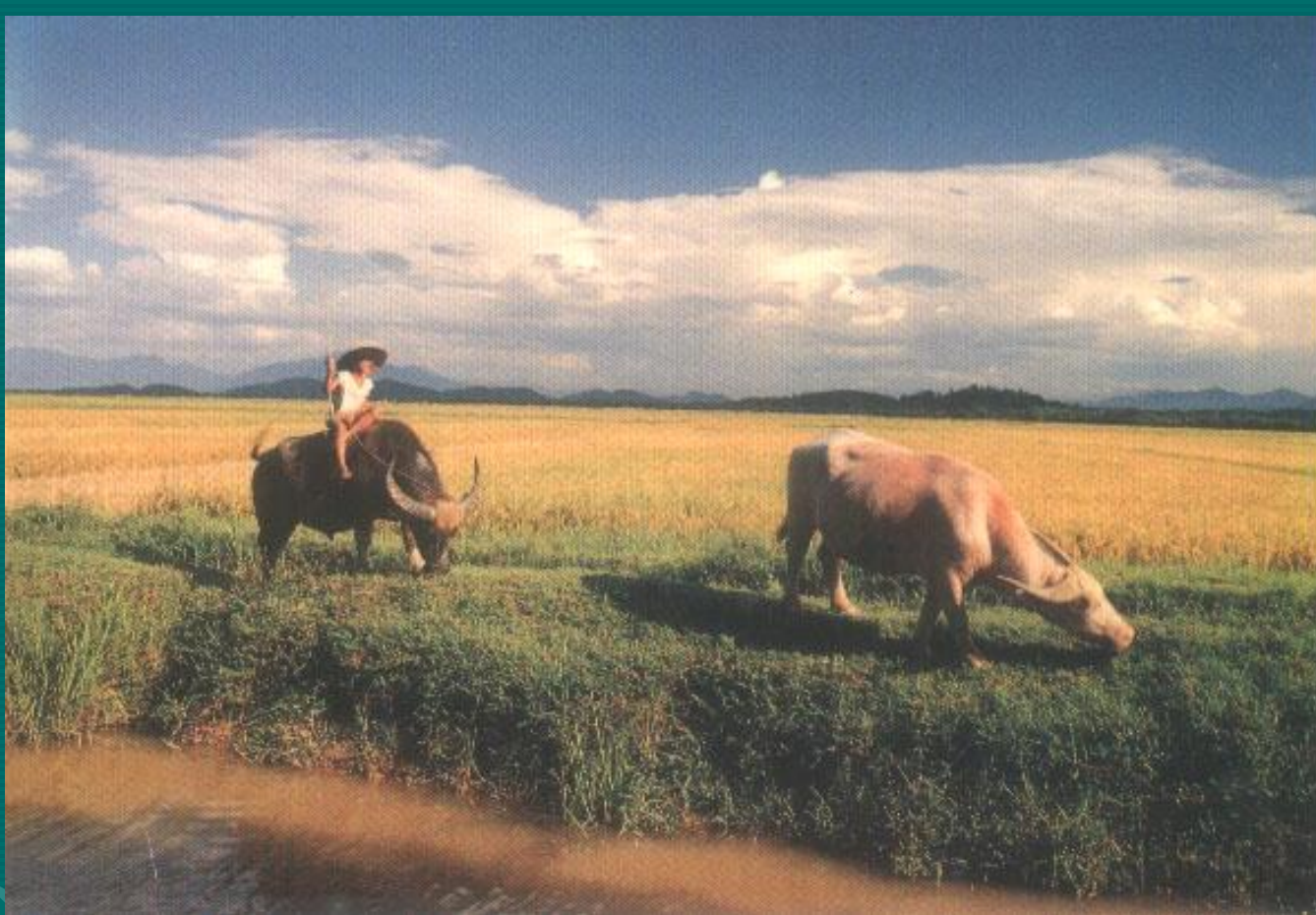




We must do this without renouncing the Order's traditional value of providing the best possible care in terms of qualified personnel, science and technology. (34)

In this way, we enrich the charism of John of God by the values of every culture and serve as a critical conscience where there is a lack of medical and social services.





We also promote the development of health care and welfare structures that are accessible to everyone, especially the most deprived. (35)

Part II of “The Path of Hospitality in the Manner of St. John of God” tells us about the basis of the Spirituality of the Order: MERCY AND HOSPITALITY

- 1. It deals with how mercy and hospitality, guilt and violence are opposites.**
- 2. It then deals with Mercy**
- 3. And with Hospitality**
- 4. And helps us to rethink Mercy and Hospitality in our age.**

The Order sees two qualities as
the basis of its spirituality:

Mercy

&

Hospitality



So,
if John of God is a gentle breeze,
the scents that he usually carries to us are
MERCY and HOSPITALITY.

Mercy

Is the fundamental thing that we need from God – we are all sinners – Scripture tells us that if we say we are not sinners we sin by that very statement which is a lie!

Is one of the things that we can do for one another that puts us into the company of God: “forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us”.

Hospitality

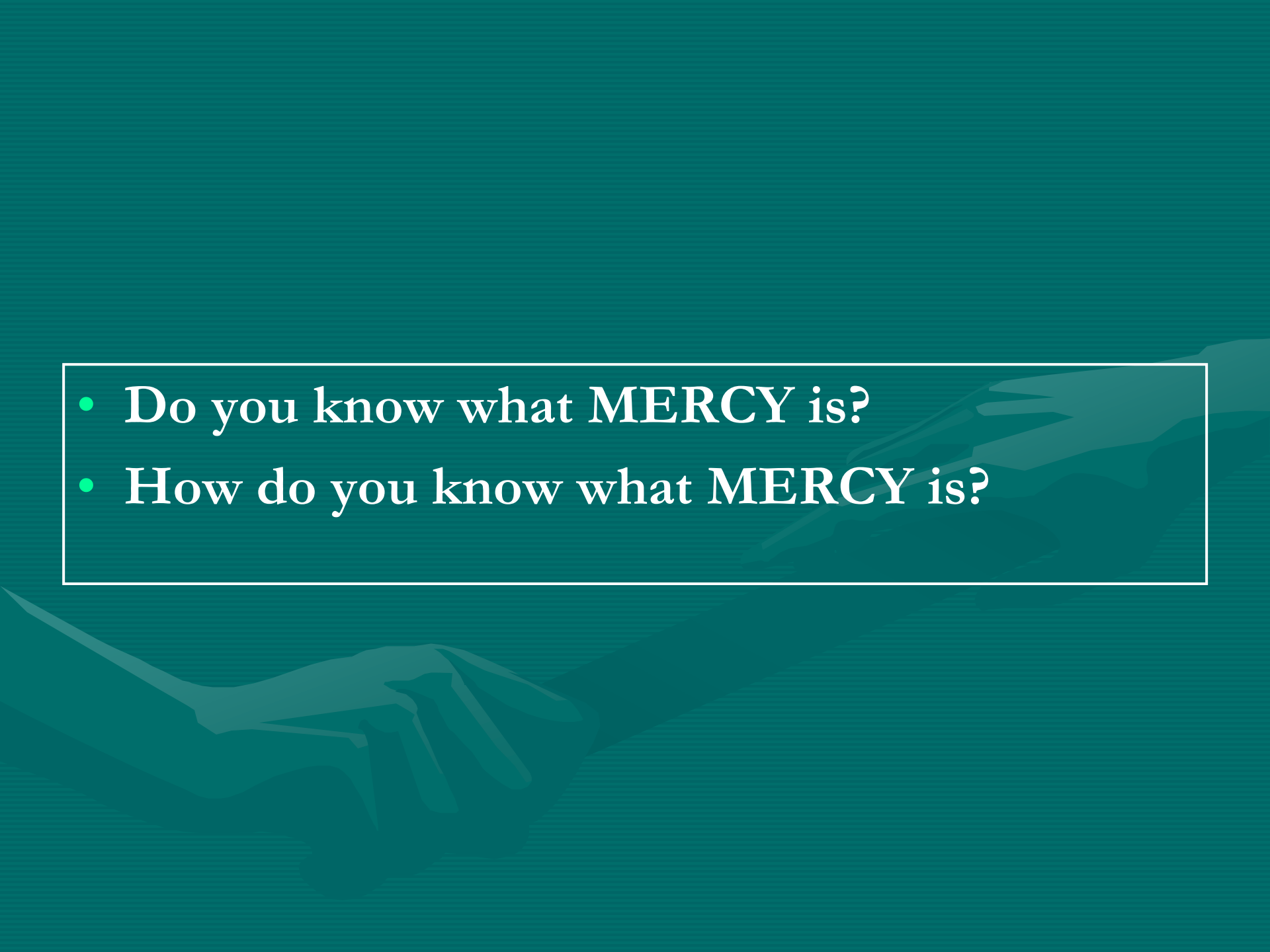
Is the capacity to open up and reach out to others –
it is the opposite to hostility or violent attitudes and actions that push others away from us.

Religious violence pushes others away because “God is with us!” If we are to preserve this exclusive relationship with God then others must die –
but we kill them in the name of God.

a) The God of Mercy

The Old Testament tells us that the supreme feature of God is mercy, and not violence.

"In overflowing wrath for a moment I hid my face from you, but with everlasting love I will have compassion on you." (Is 54,8).

- 
- Do you know what **MERCY** is?
 - How do you know what **MERCY** is?

Do you know what MERCY is because
someone has defined it for you?

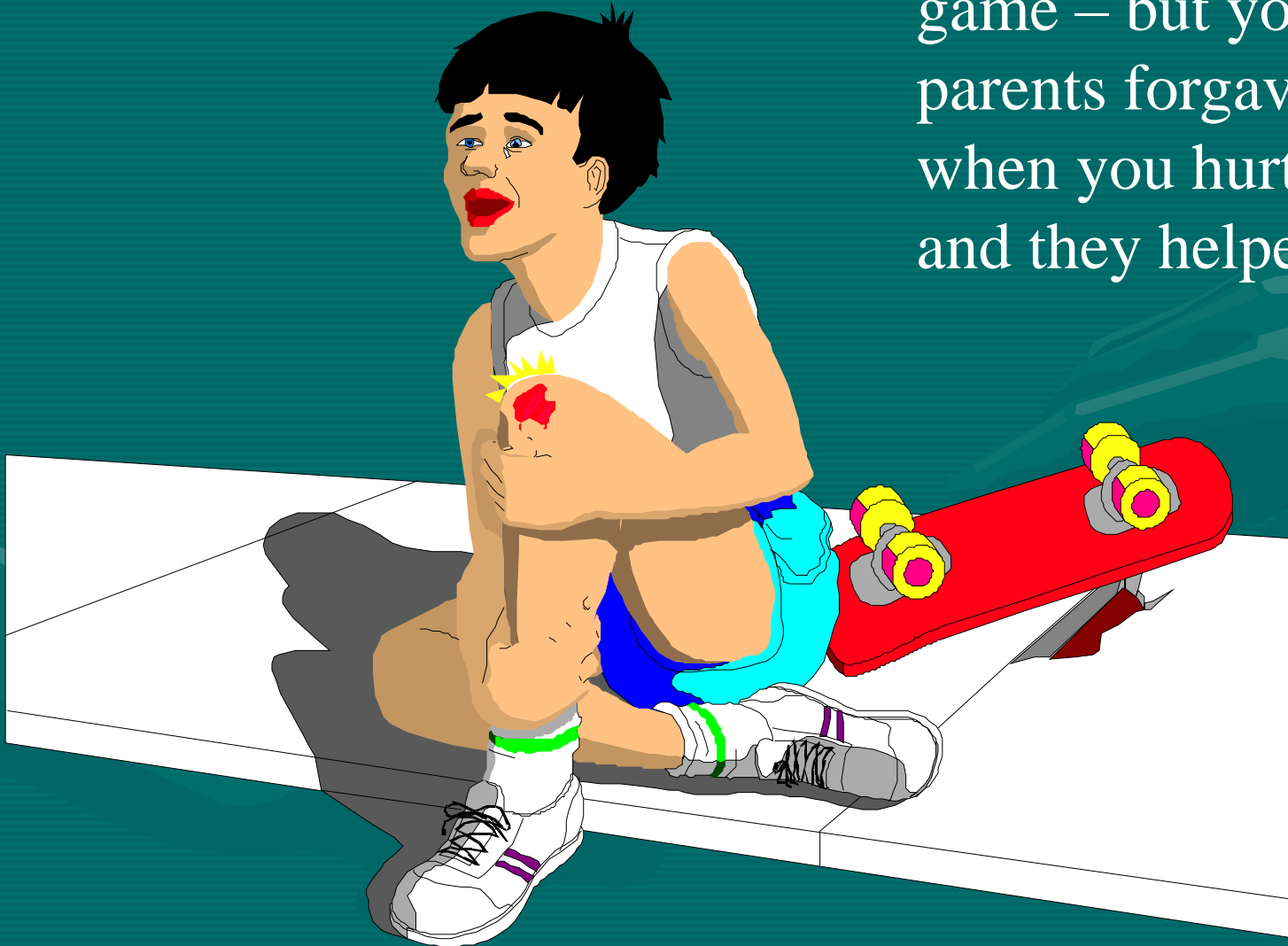


“Mercy is first and foremost
the capacity to show
understanding,
compassion and
forgiveness.” (37)

Or, do you know what **MERCY** is because someone has been merciful to you?

Probably your first experience of mercy was when your mother or father reacted to some bad action on your part by showing “understanding, compassion and forgiveness.” (37)

You had been told not to play a dangerous game – but your parents forgave you when you hurt yourself and they helped you.



And do you also know what MERCY is
because you have felt moved to show MERCY
to someone?

You have seen a person in a certain situation and you
have found in yourself the capacity to
understand his/her situation,
have felt their suffering as though it was your own
and were able to 'forgive' them.

Probably this formative experience in being merciful occurred in your own family.

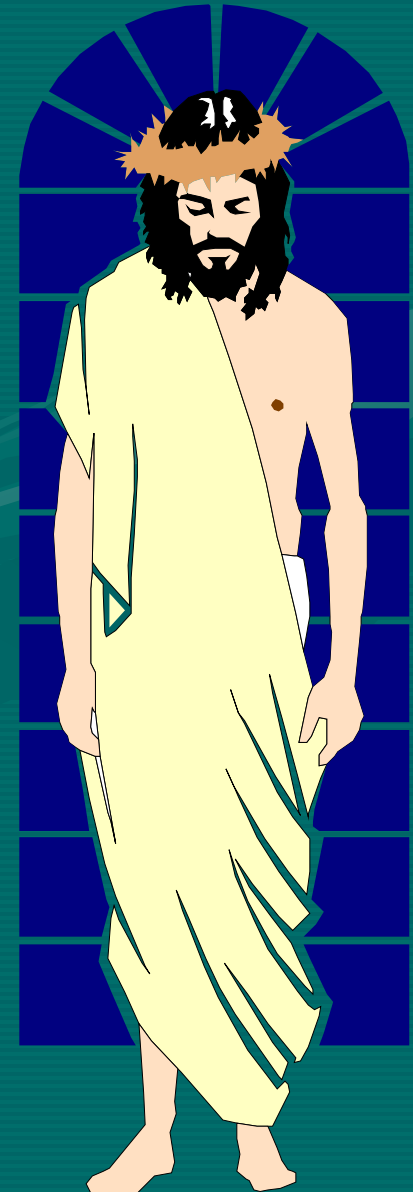


Why is God merciful?

God, surely, is merciful because he understands every aspect of our situation, He feels our suffering as though it was His own (after all He too is human) And He is able to 'forgive' us.

b) The embodiment of Mercy

We, by forgiving,
practising mercy, are
doing what God did to
reveal himself as God to
us human beings.



The child says: "I can do that!"

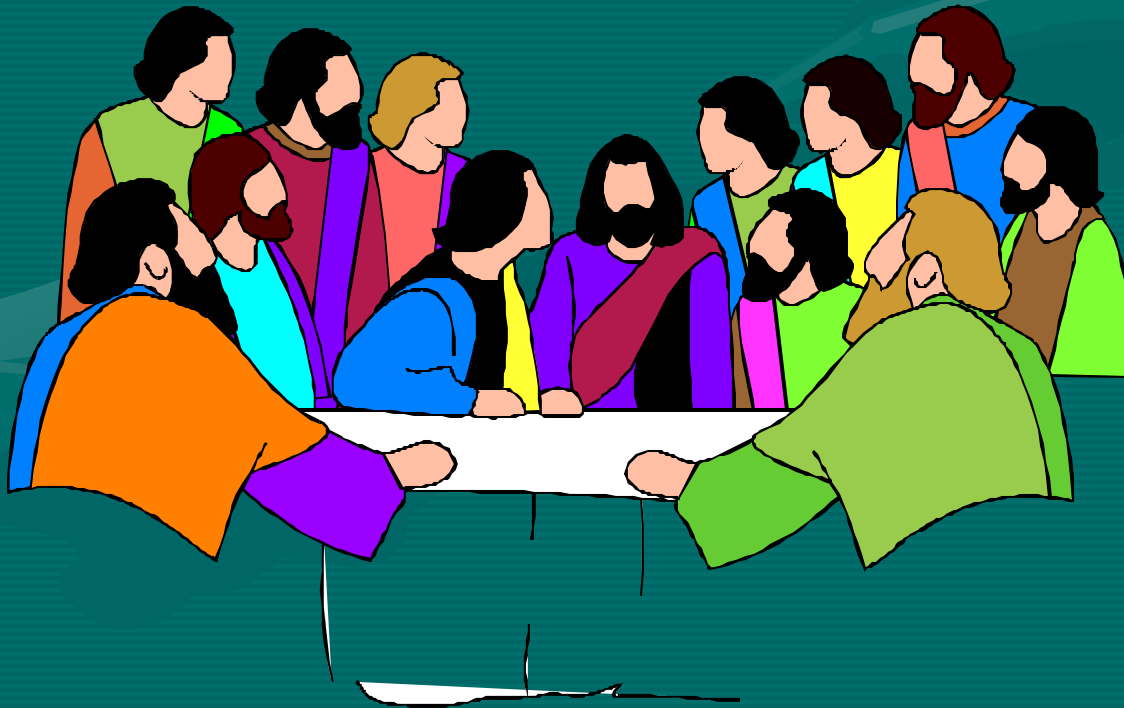




One day, this baby will grow to the stage at which he will say to his carpenter father, Joseph, “I can do that!”

John 10:34-35

Jesus answered them, "Is it not written in your Law, *'I have said you are gods'*, and if he called them 'gods,' to whom the word of God came--and the Scripture cannot be broken—"

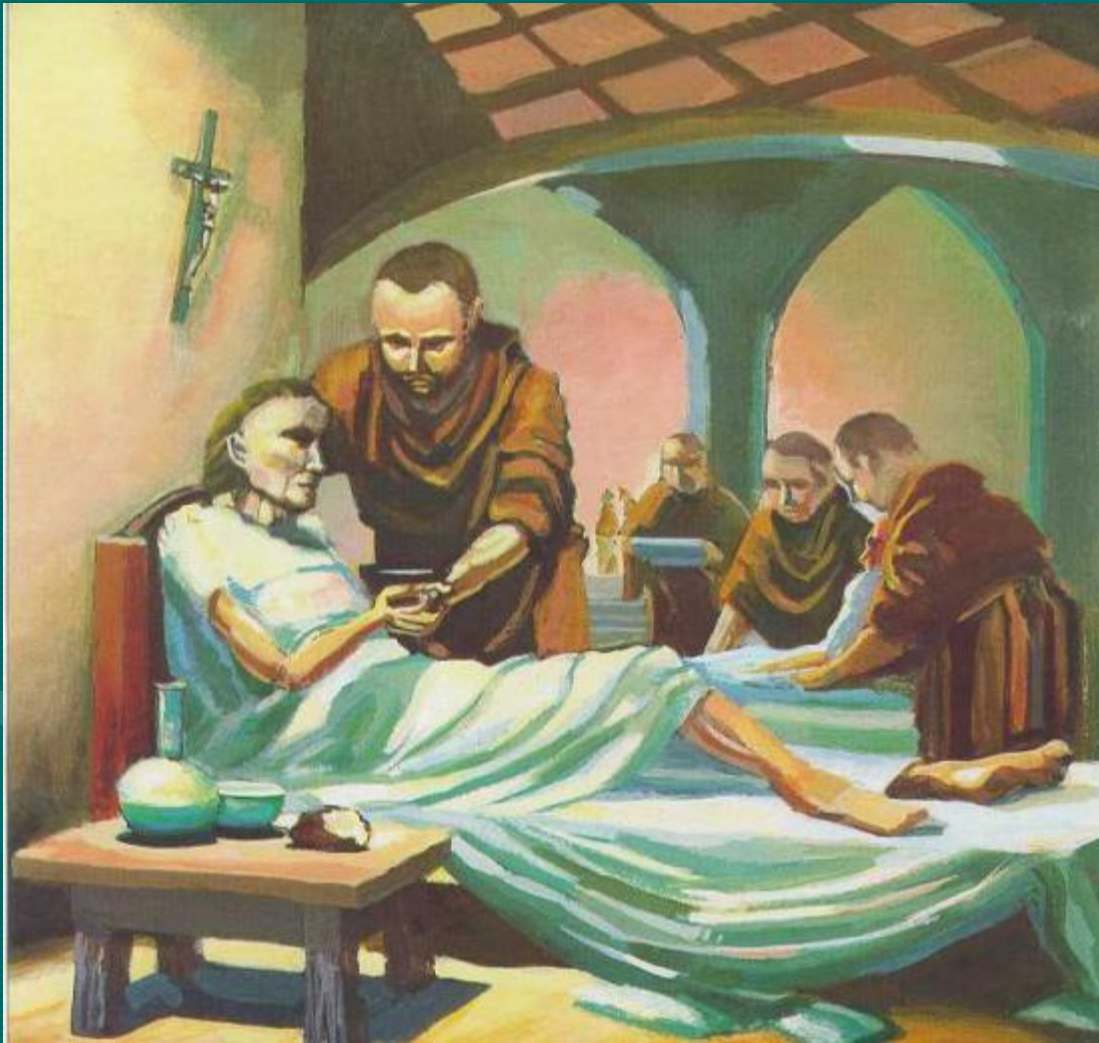


C) Mercy in the Order's Charism



"Mercy" is the key to the charism and the spirituality of John of God and his Order.

We seek to be a living and collective icon of Mercy in the Church.



Brother Fortunatus



In German: *Barmherzigen Bruder*

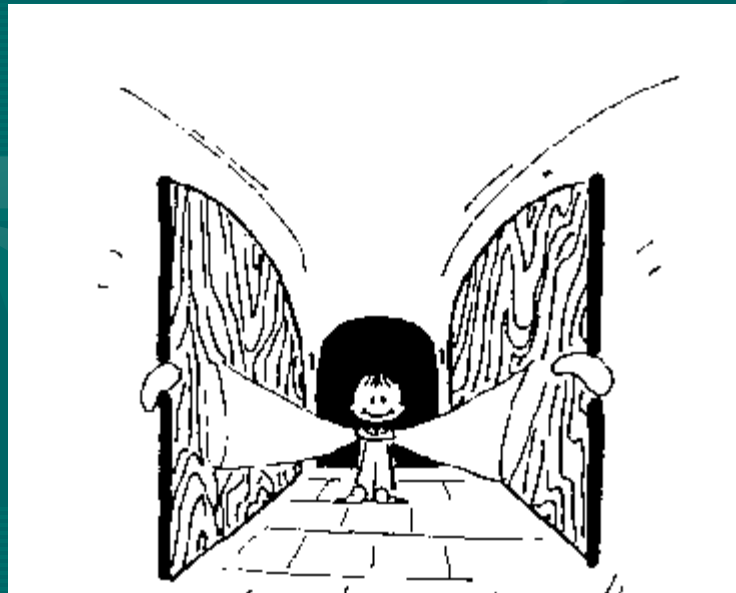
In English: *Brother of Mercy*

3) HOSPITALITY



a) What is Hospitality

- *Hospitality is virtually universal*
- *Hospitality is virtually sacred*
- *Hospitality is an event*



Universal



Everywhere in the world people need to
be received.



People of all places and cultures place a high value on being hospitable.



True hospitality does not depend on the guest having 'satisfactory' qualities.



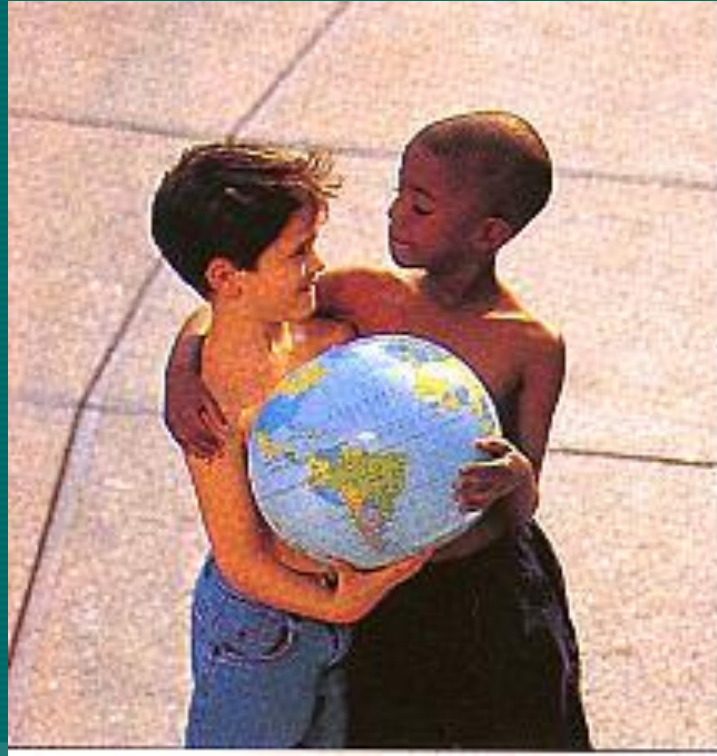
True hospitality reaches out to every other inhabitant of this world.



True hospitality receives people who are "different" and gives the guest freedom to be different from us.

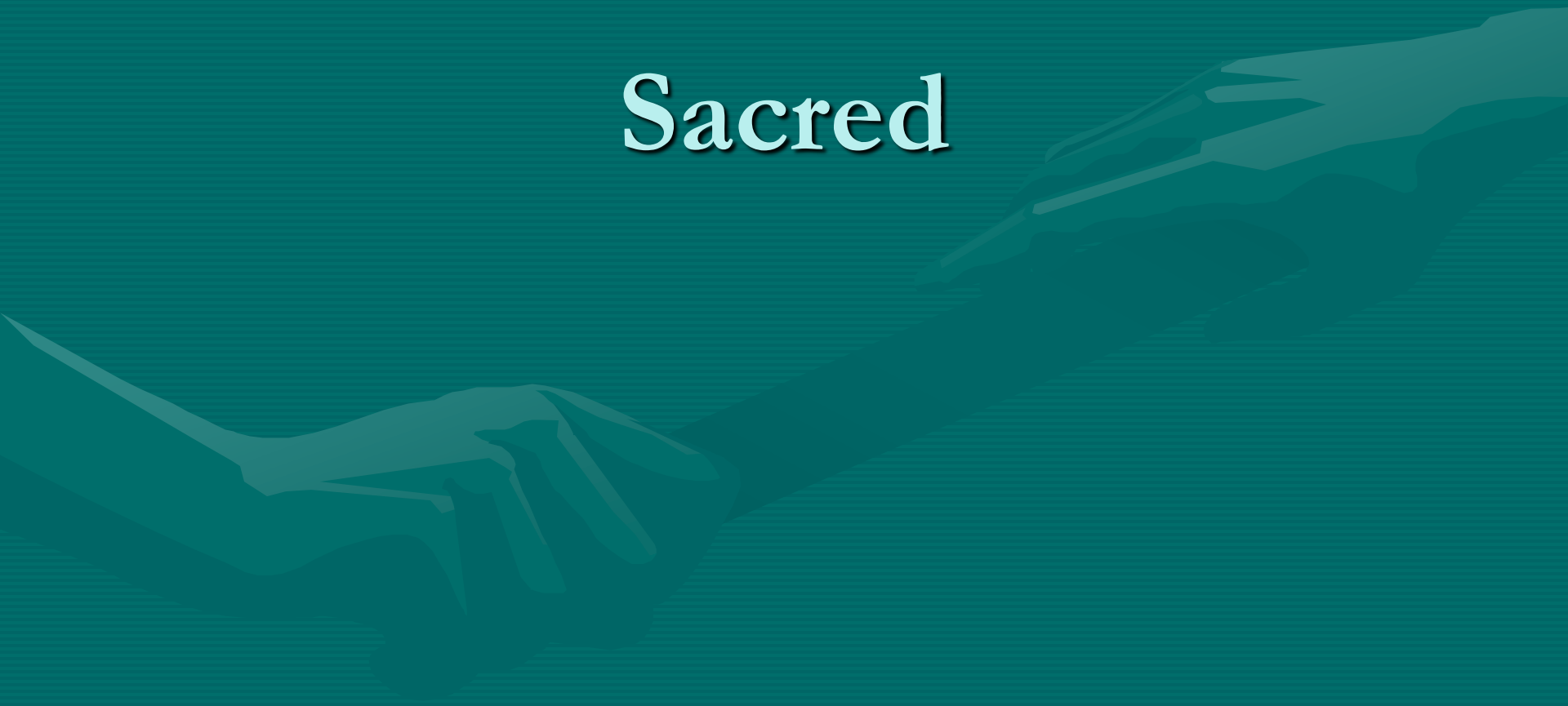


In all those ways



the need for Hospitality
and the opportunities to be
hospitable are universal

Sacred



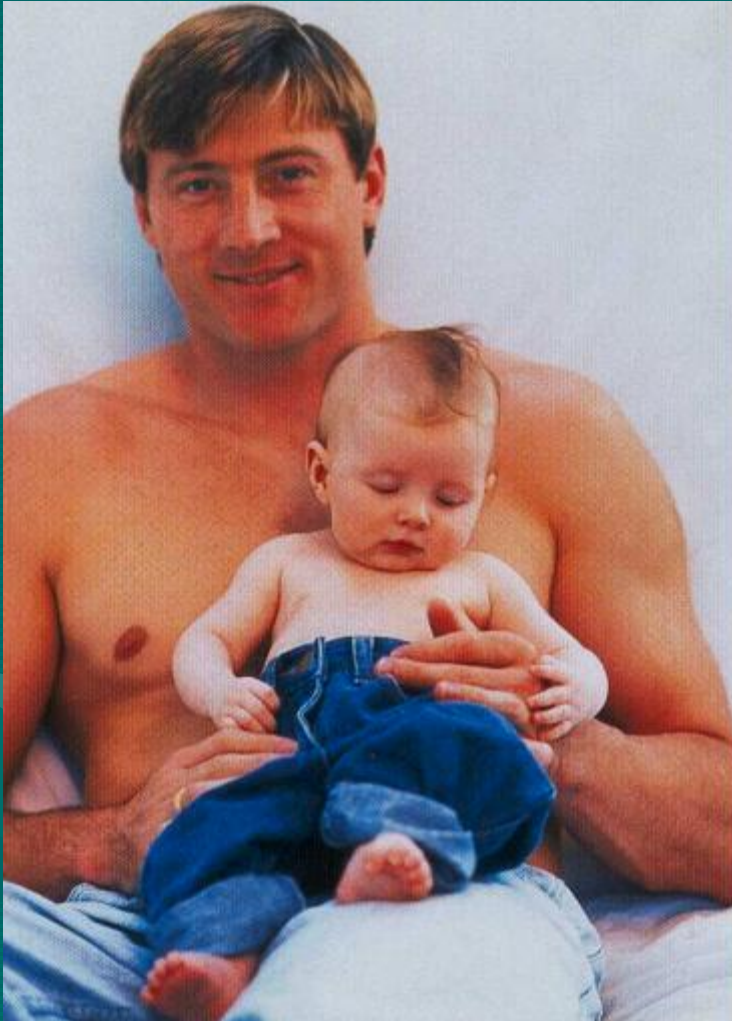
In many peoples there is a sense that this "other person", the guest, is enshrouded in mystery.



Paul says that some have hosted
angels without knowing it (*Heb*
13,2).

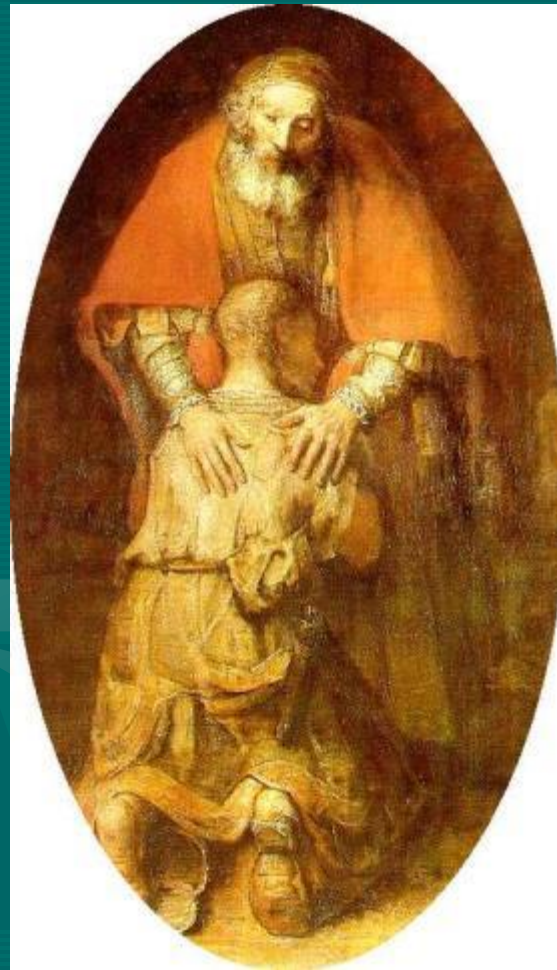


We have to treat others as if their presence is a visit from God.



Russell Crowe:
“My baby son
is a kiss from
God.”

When the other is taken in, a meeting occurs between beings of different orders:



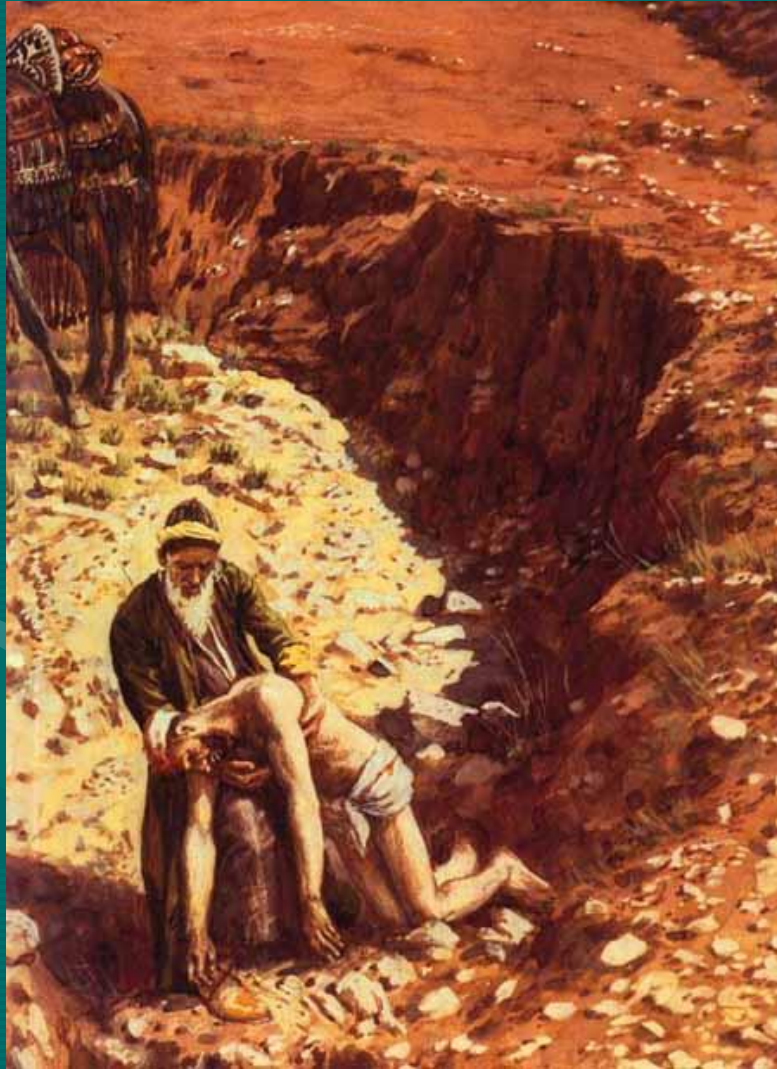
the divine, the distant, the boundless, the
inconceivable, is taken into a human
environment.



Event



b) Hospitality in Revelation



The great
Christian parable
of hospitality is
the parable of
the Good
Samaritan.

What is important for Jesus is that one can take on the status of a neighbour by exercising mercy to those in need of it.



This is why the lawyer did not have to be concerned about going out to look for people in need, but to make himself a neighbour, and exercise mercy himself, as the Samaritan had done.

In this parable hospitality and mercy are merged.



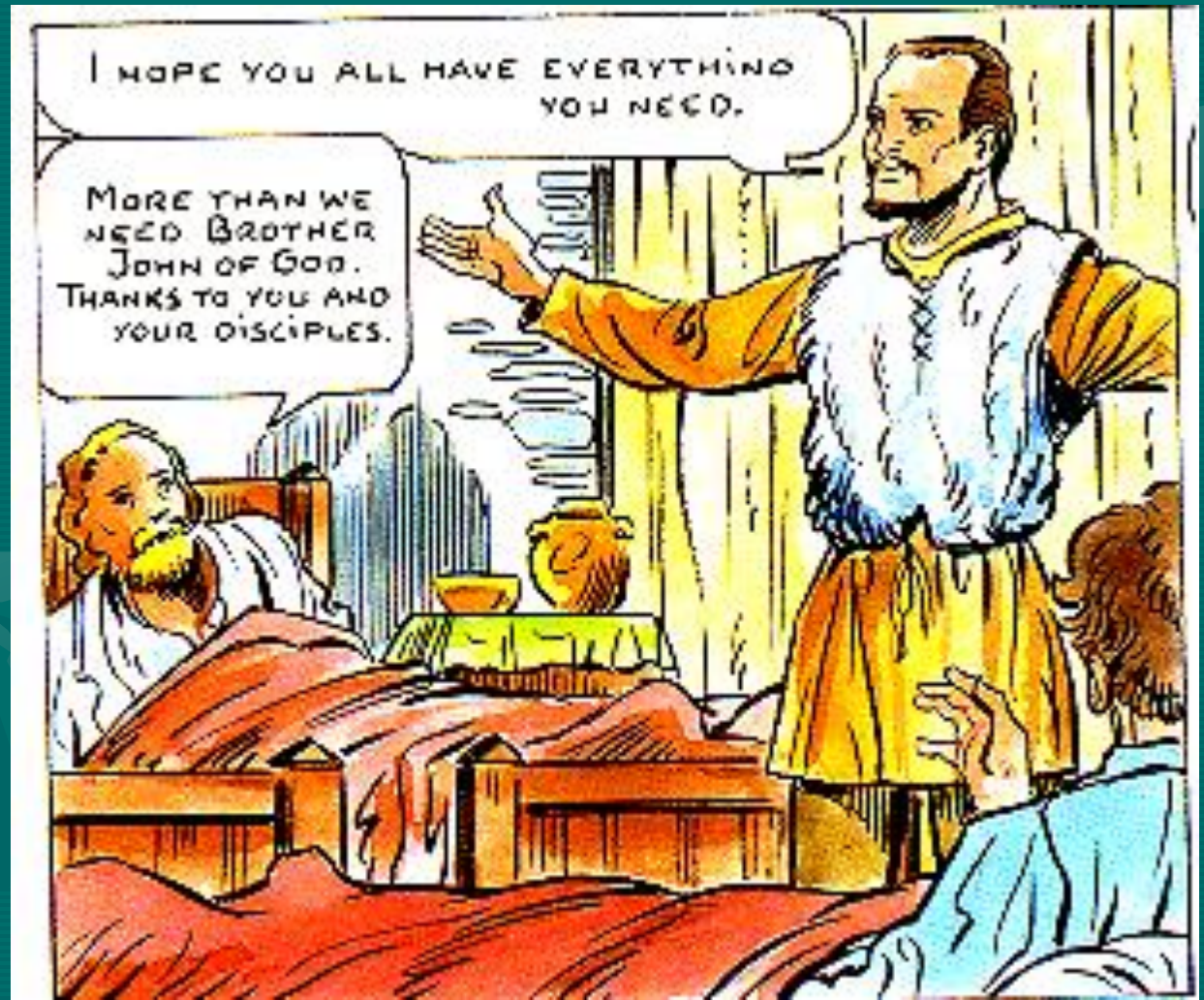
c) Hospitality in our
Father St. John of God



John of God felt called
to give hospitality to
the poorest,
to those human beings
who were most
degraded,
the physically and
mentally ill,
without any exclusion
or discrimination.



His form of hospitality was to welcome in and serve the sick as a brother and a neighbour.





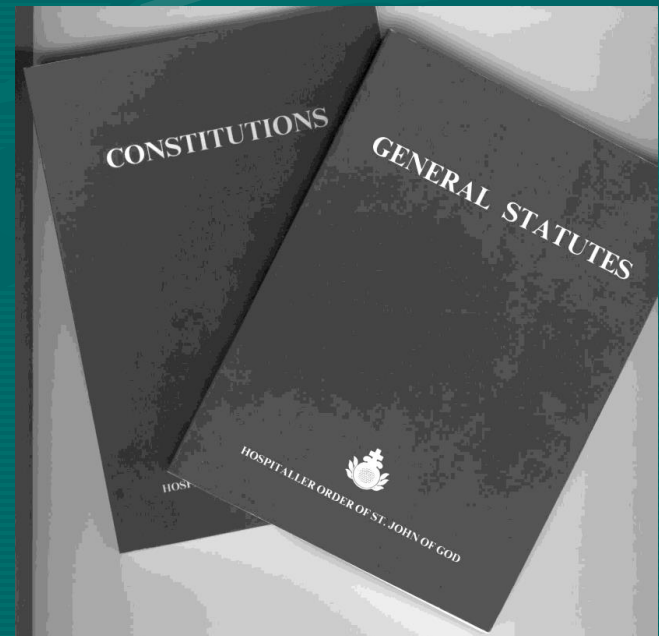
John's charity was very creative.

John of God's creativity comes out very clearly in one of the descriptions of his hospital:
"Since this house is for everybody, without making any distinctions we take in people suffering from every disease and people of every type, so that there are cripples, the maimed, lepers, mutes, the insane, paralytics, people with ringworm, and also very old people and many children - and this is without counting the large numbers of other pilgrims and wayfarers who come here."

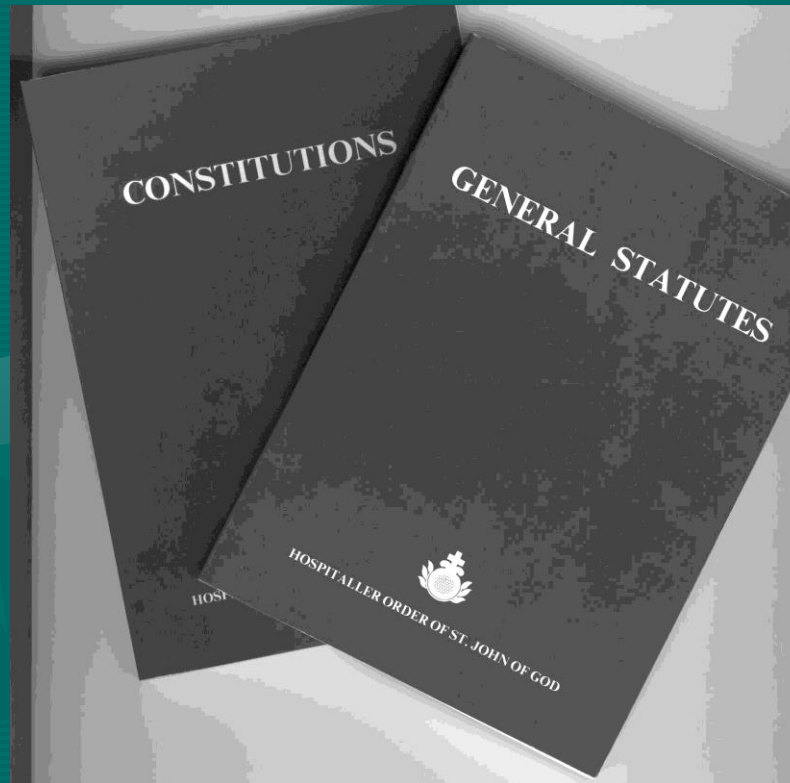


Like Jesus, John of God taught more through his deeds than his words.

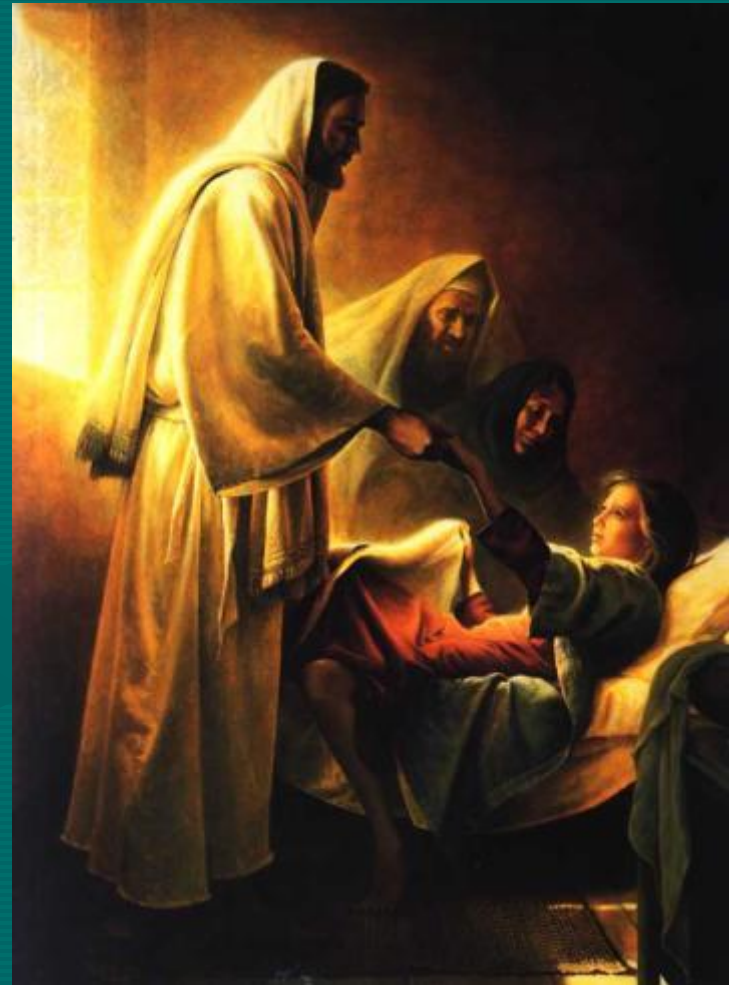
The Brothers who followed his way of life learned from him to take in, serve and love the poor sick people that were taken up later in the Constitutions of the Order, to perpetuate the model of Hospitality inherited from our Founder.



d) Hospitality in the Constitutions and writings of the Order



The rationale of the vocation of the Brothers of St John of God is to "keep the merciful presence of Jesus of Nazareth alive".



The purpose of the Constitutions is to offer a framework of a new spirituality for the Order suitable to the new age.



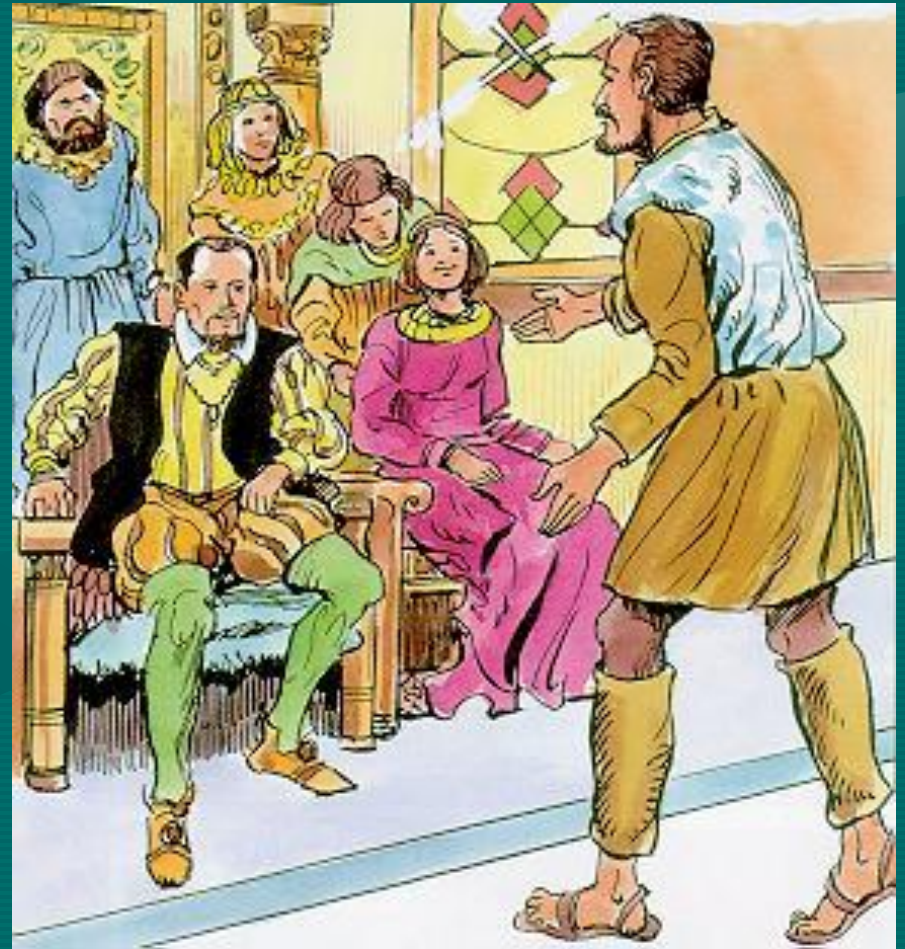
The primary purpose of the Order is to defend the dignity of the sick human being by humanising care. The Hospitaller apostolate is thereby identified with humanisation.



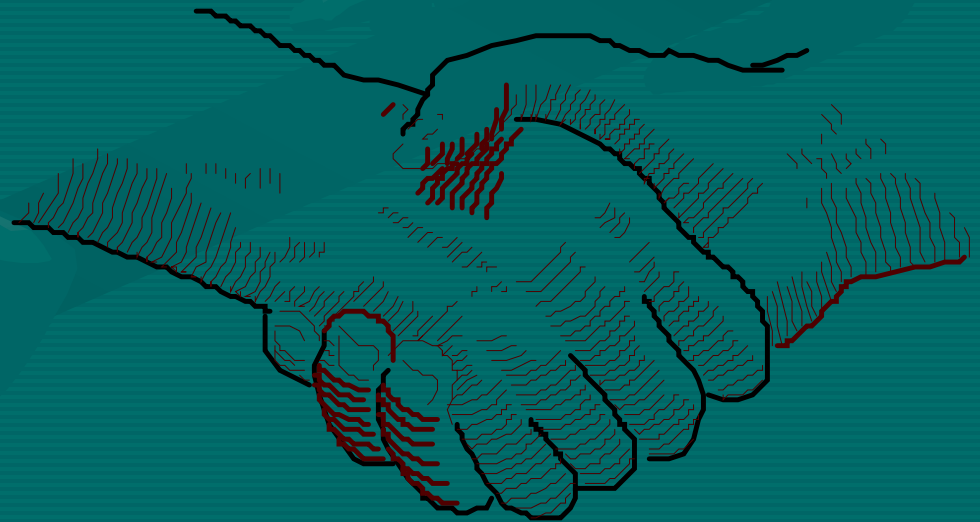
The purpose of the Hospitaller vocation is to enter into a Covenant with suffering people, which is the charismatic expression of our Covenant with God.



John of God felt that he was the brother of all: from the poorest of the poor to Prince Philip.



Creating bonds of brotherhood is one of the distinctive features of the Brother, beginning with his sense of being the brother of those who suffer and those who share with him the ministry of hospitality (45b; 46b.c; 23), professionals, volunteers and benefactors



Hospitality must be understood in terms of a preferential option for the poor and humanisation of our service to the sick and needy in general.



4) RETHINKING MERCY & HOSPITALITY IN OUR AGE

RELATIONS WITH THE
OUTSIDER

A faint, semi-transparent image of two hands shaking is visible in the background, centered behind the text. The hands are rendered in a light teal color, matching the background, and are positioned as if in a firm handshake.

a) Relations with “strangers”

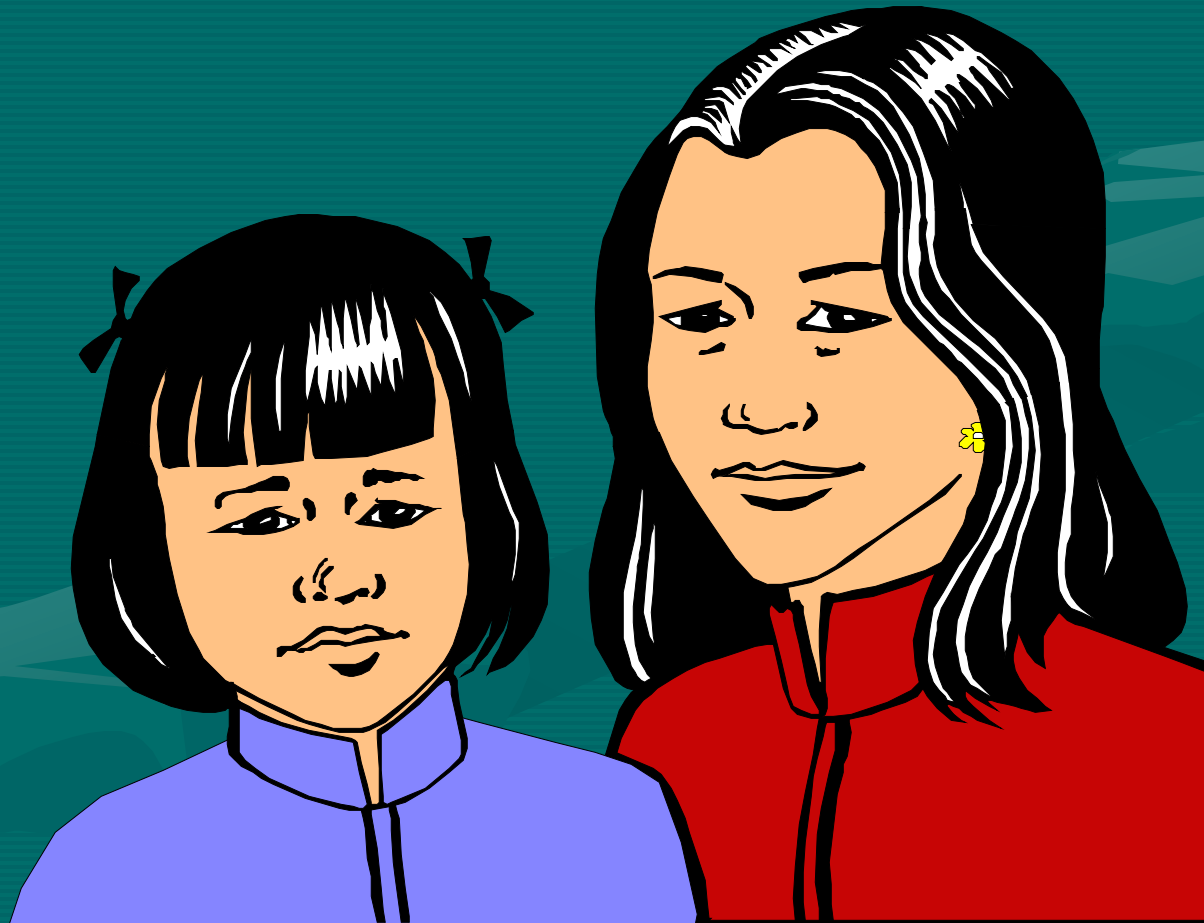


What is the document trying to say
to us?

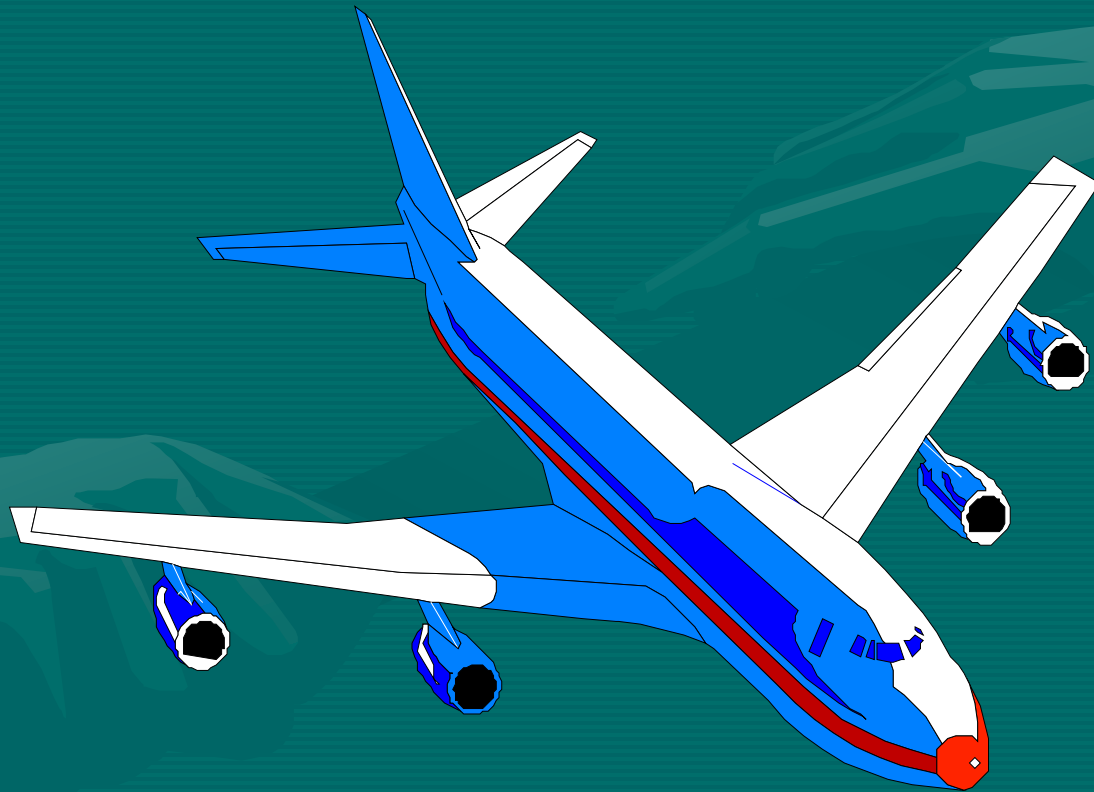
In earlier times most people lived all their lives in the same place – the same village, the same city, the same country.



Everyone they met had the same racial features – appearance, language, religion.



The globalisation brought about by easier travel and widespread migration means that in modern times we meet many “strangers”.



Meeting the "stranger" can make us react in many different ways: joy, welcome, solidarity, irritation, fear, curiosity, or interest in the exotic.



My own country, Australia, is at present meeting 'strangers' (we call them illegal immigrants) with irritation and fear.



Geographical

We all understand the challenge of meeting
“strangers’ from other places and cultures.



Time

Those who are truly alien are not so much those who live at a great distance from us, but those who live in a different time from ours.





Other people are slower or faster than we are, people who live in a time frame which, for whatever reason, is strange to us or seems alien to us.



The person who is marginalised is not living in some spatial periphery, but literally in another time.



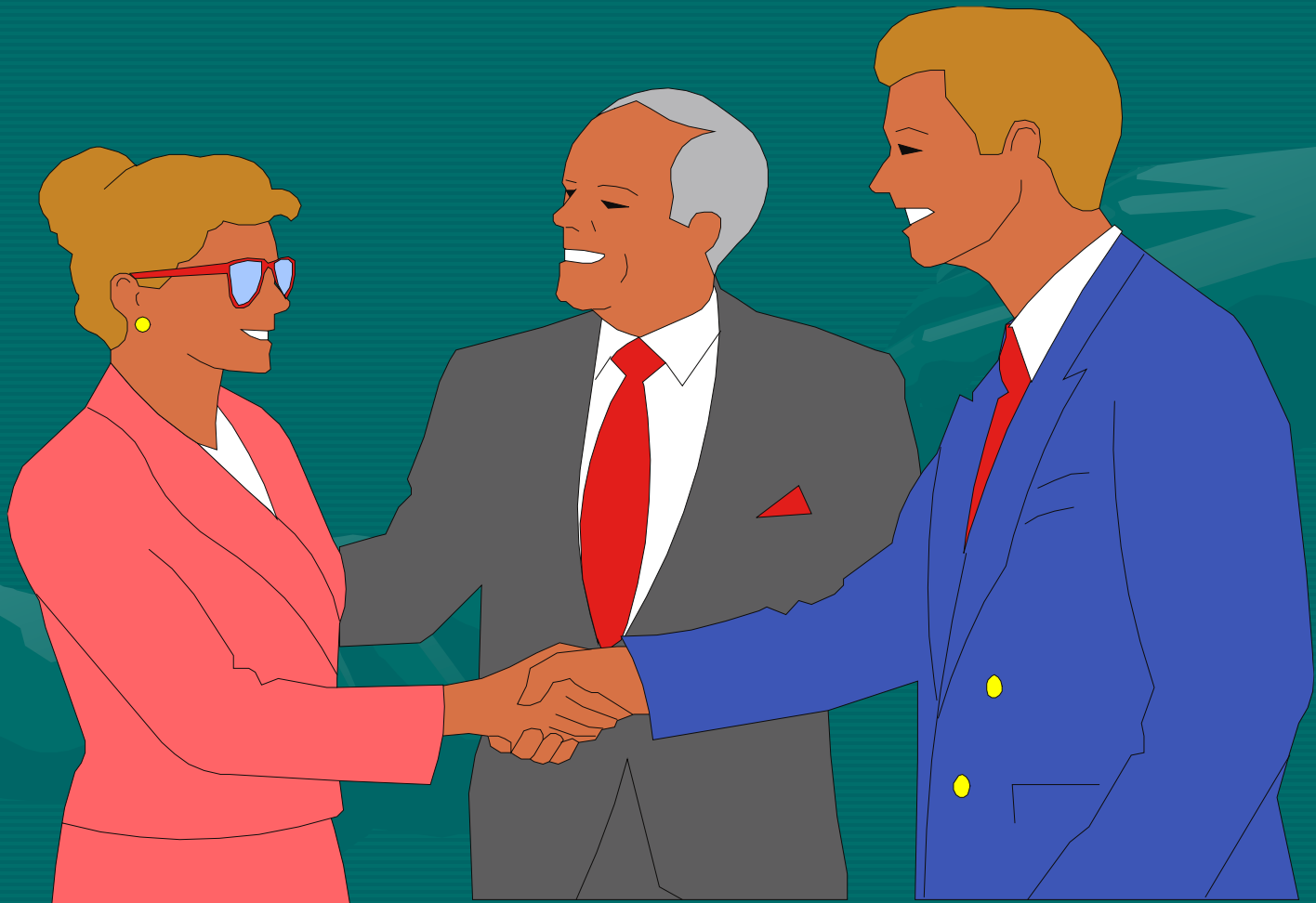
b) Apprenticeship in hospitality and mercy

A faint, semi-transparent image of two hands shaking is visible in the background, centered behind the text. The hands are rendered in a light teal color, matching the background, and are positioned as if in a firm handshake.

Hospitality needs to be understood as a 'transaction' in which we receive more than we give – this is a fundamental truth of human experience.



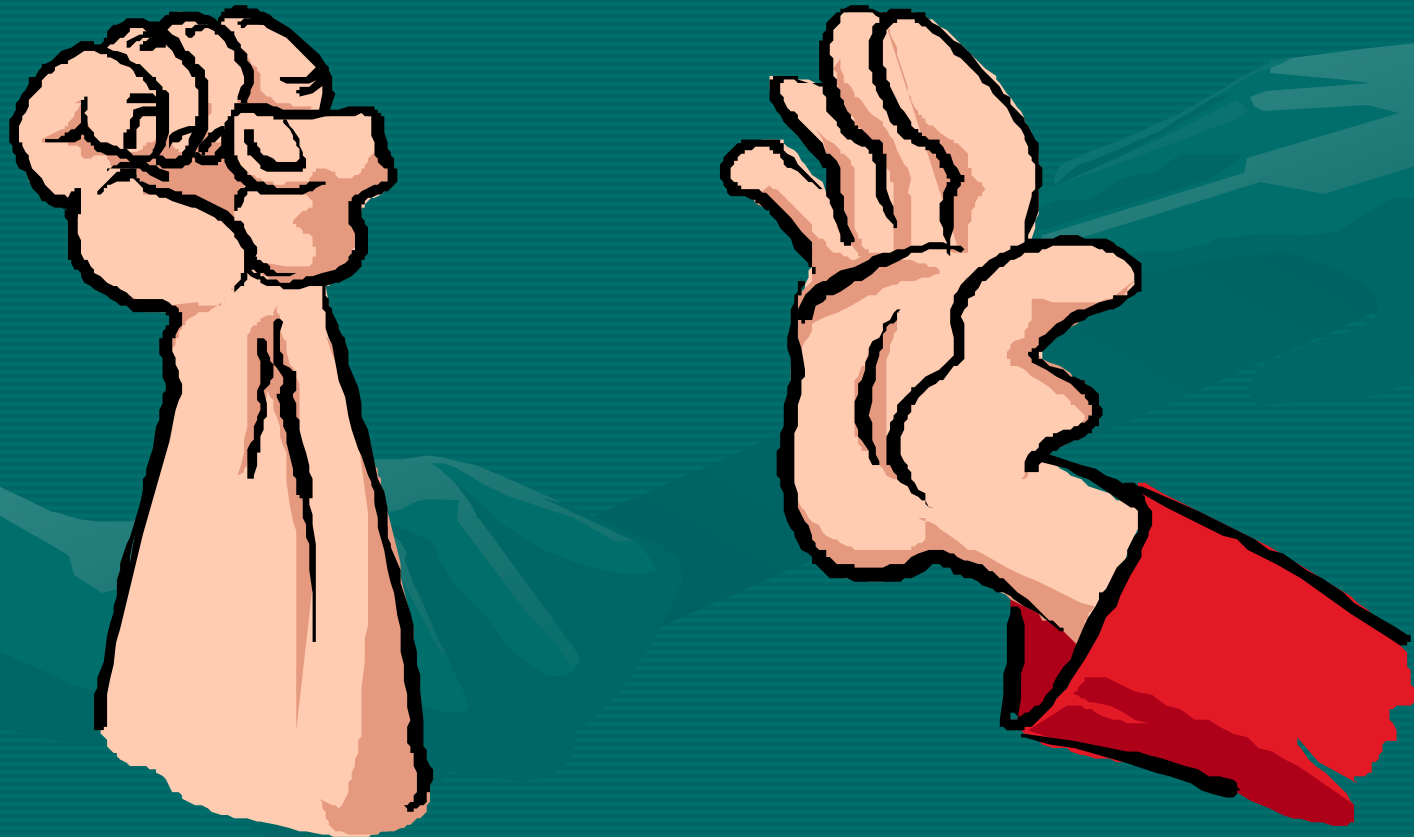
People discover themselves by going out to meet other people.



We know our rights and our duties to
the extent that we go out to meet
others.



We must learn to practise a type of hospitality and mercy which is not enslaving or indifferent.



We learn hospitality and mercy by learning to taking an interest in other people, 'strangers', respecting them and trying to take on board their peculiarities.



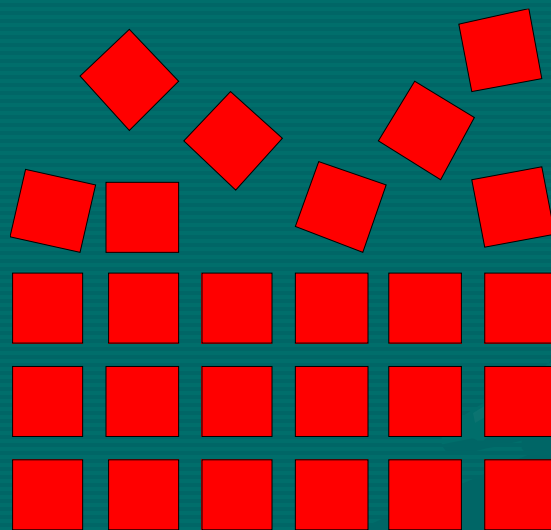
c) On a mission of mercy
and hospitality “today”



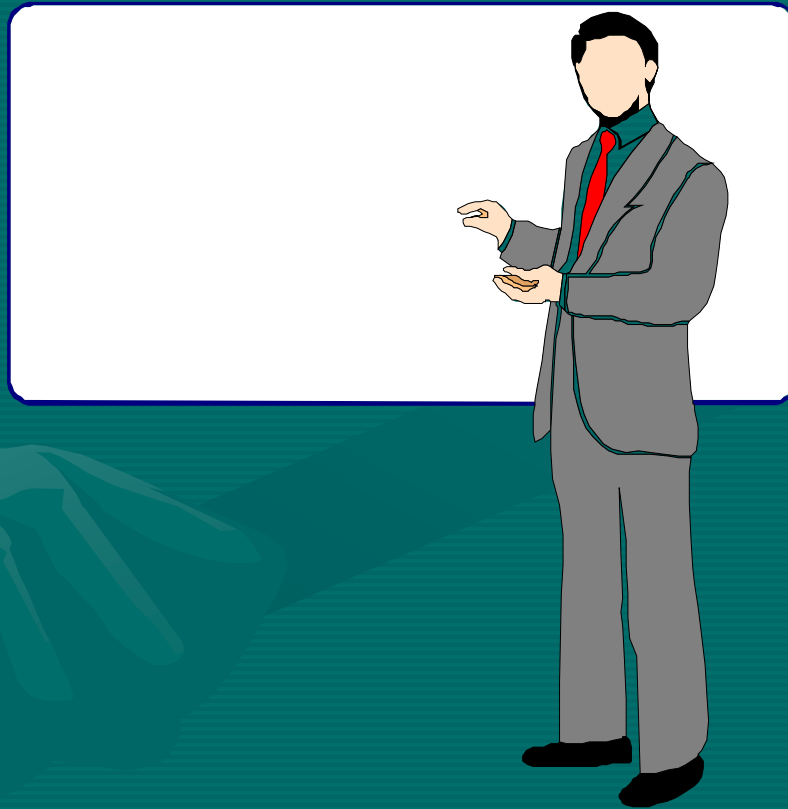
The number of poor and marginalised people is not declining, but growing.



The sacred view of the human being is giving way to idols before which modern societies bow and pay tribute.



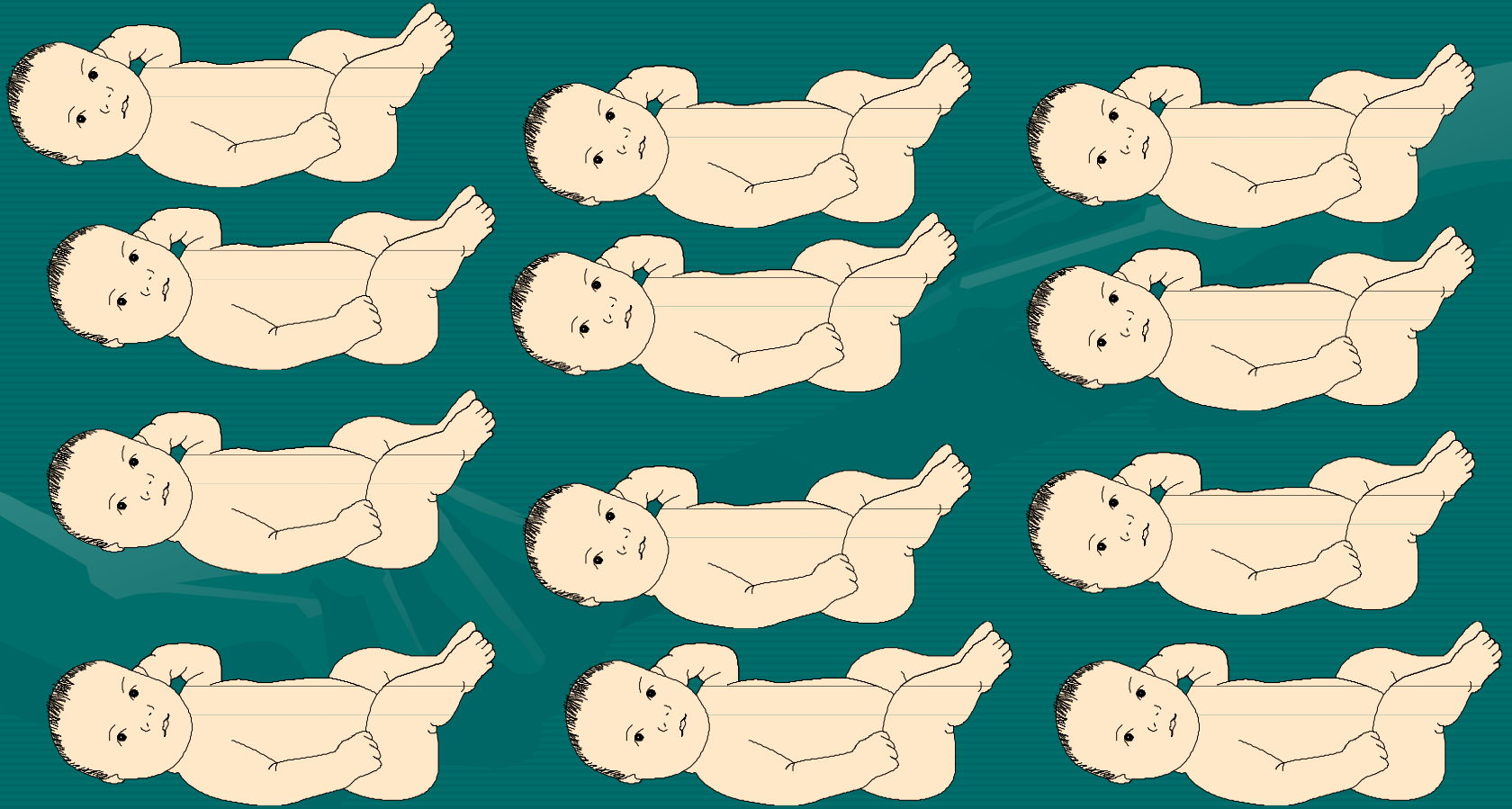
Education does not emphasise the value of hospitality, but places greater stress to individualism and a materialistic and hedonistic view of life.



With the degradation of humanity
there is also ecological
degradation (water, oceans etc.)



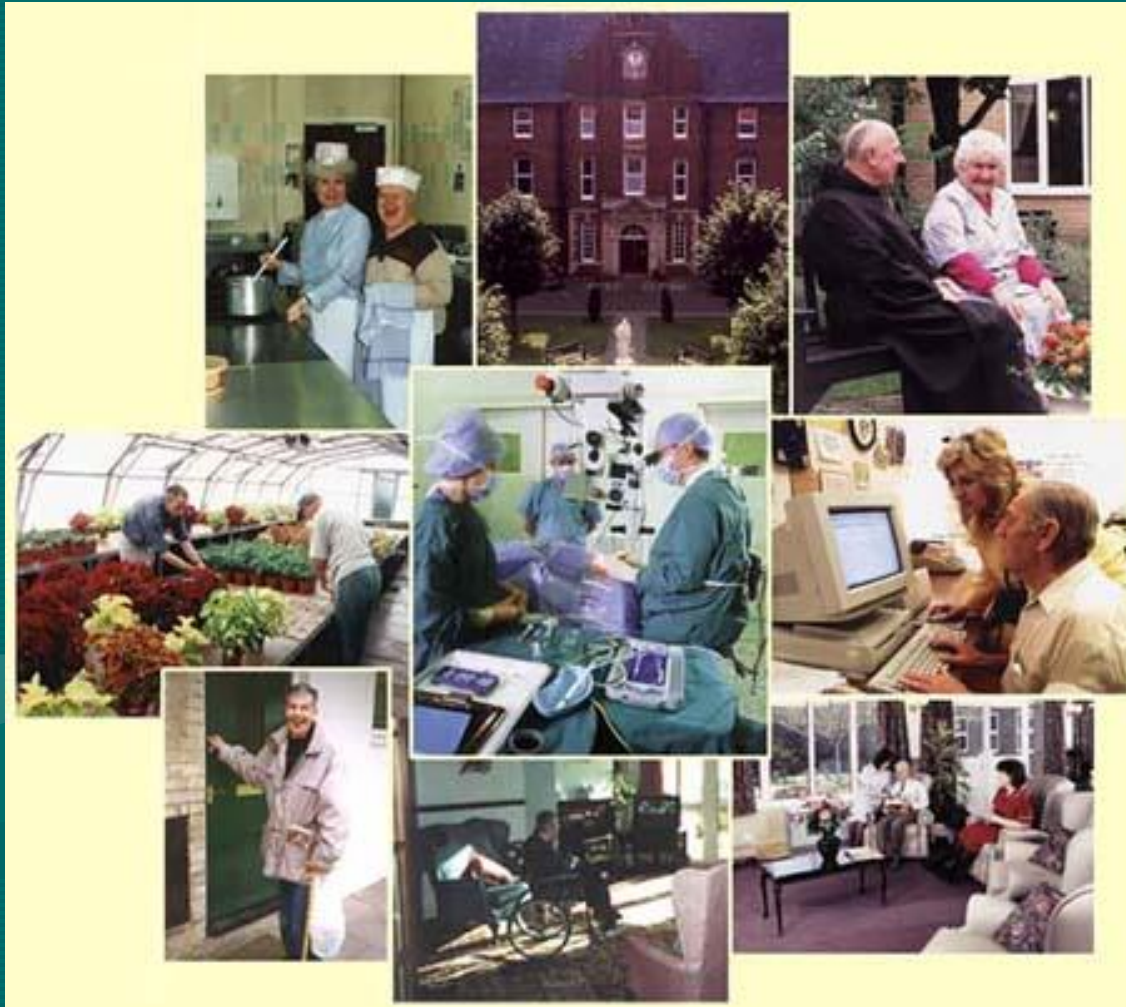
Our capacity for hospitality is being
sorely challenged by the population
explosion.



The attitudes of welcome and thanks, service and solidarity (hospitality!) of our contemporaries reveal all their splendour in:

- so many institutions and initiatives:
- voluntary services, NGOs,
- a wide range of different types of social institutions,
- peace armies,
- movements working for justice, for ecology, for human dignity,
- and for the rejection of all forms of xenophobia, etc.

Within this world, the Order is present,
with the weight of its tradition.



The Order wishes to be able to keep pace with the times and to respond with new vigour to its specific vocation, by offering places in which organisation, professionalism, technology and humanisation can be coupled harmoniously with attitudes and deeds of welcome, service, solidarity and the healing of physical and moral suffering.

This part is called:

**III. THE SPIRITUAL
PATH**

III. THE SPIRITUAL PATH -- TAKING THE PATH OF JOHN OF GOD "TODAY"

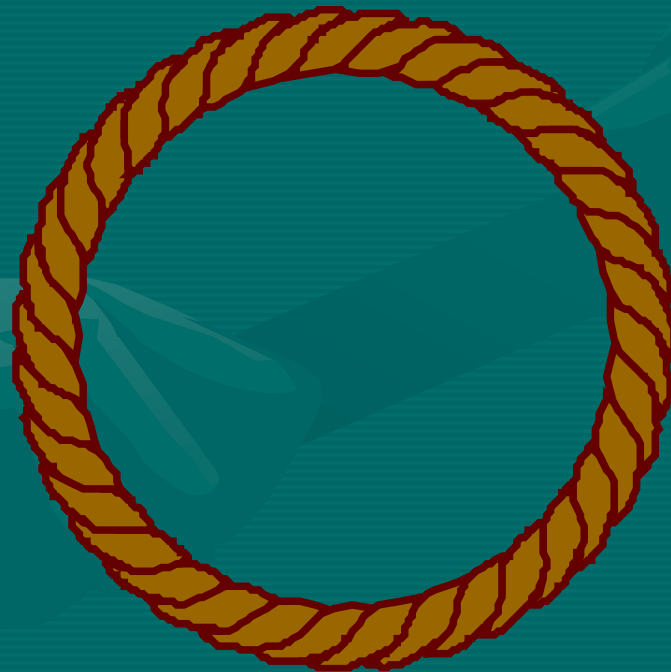
1. Spirituality today
2. The paradigm or model of our spiritual path
3. Taking part in the Path of the People of God
4. Participants in the Path of spirituality of the Order and its Communities
5. Our "personal" way of spirituality
6. Formation as a path of spirituality

The document tells us that in the Church and
the world there is a deep yearning for
spirituality.

And that men and women of today,
in the face of so many problems,
feel the need to connect with the Mysterious
Spirit
that gives stability
and a reason for living and being.

You, by your profession
as a Brother of St. John of God,
show that you have begun to discover the
nature of your personal spirituality.
And that you have looked for, and found,
in the Order
another spirituality
that promises to support and nurture yours
so that it reaches its full potential.

And we now recognise very clearly
that the two strongest strands in the
rope of your spirituality and the
Order's are **MERCY** and
HOSPITALITY.



The Order says to you that it is important to see spirituality as a process, as a path.

We divide it into various stages of growth.

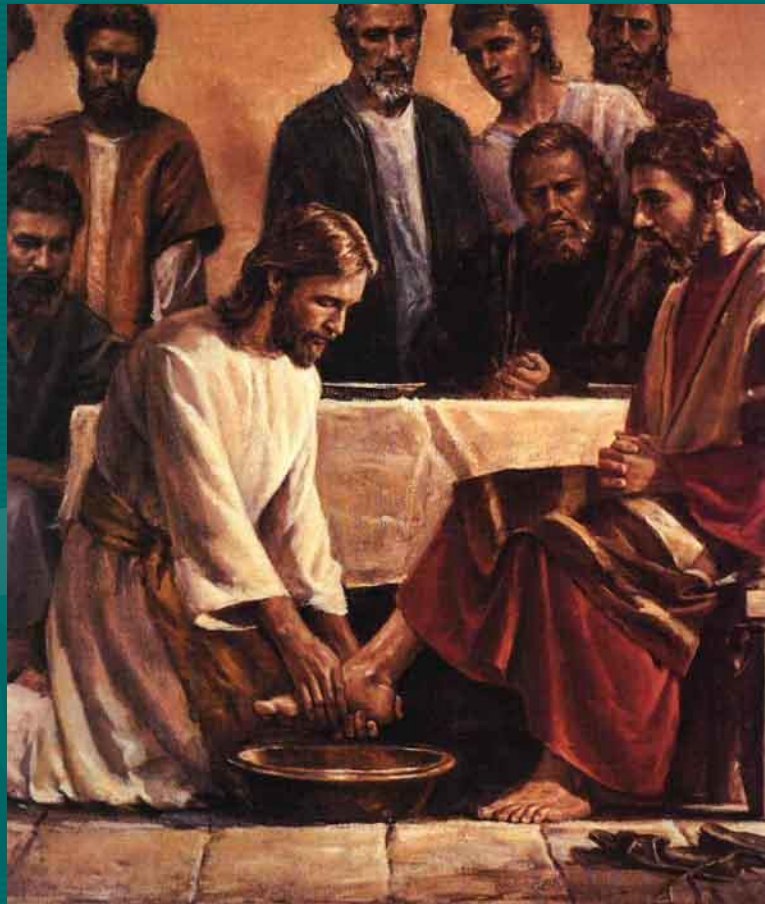
In our Constitutions we describe our goal – the destination at the end of the path we are on.

We have to find and follow the path in order to reach that goal.

2. THE PARADIGM OR MODEL OF OUR SPIRITUAL PATH



One of the main strands of our spirituality as an Order – hospitality – has its source in the life of Jesus of Nazareth.



That main strand of our spirituality as an Order – hospitality – is also a legacy left to us by our Father and Brother, John of God .




The stages through which John of God passed on his spiritual journey show us the stages that we too have to pass through.

1. Emptiness
2. Call
3. Change
4. Identification



a) Experiences of
emptiness: being
uprooted to be born
again.





ACOLA' E'
OROPESA...

In any journey,
we leave
one place
to reach
another.

This experience is reflected in the figure of
Moses and his people.



Moses, on his long path through the wilderness, discovered that he was being accompanied by Yahweh.



Moses welcomed the invitation of God to set up his tent, to walk forward overcoming obstacles and barriers:

mental barriers and feelings

(fear,

discouragement,

reluctance to make the effort that was necessary to achieve his promised future).

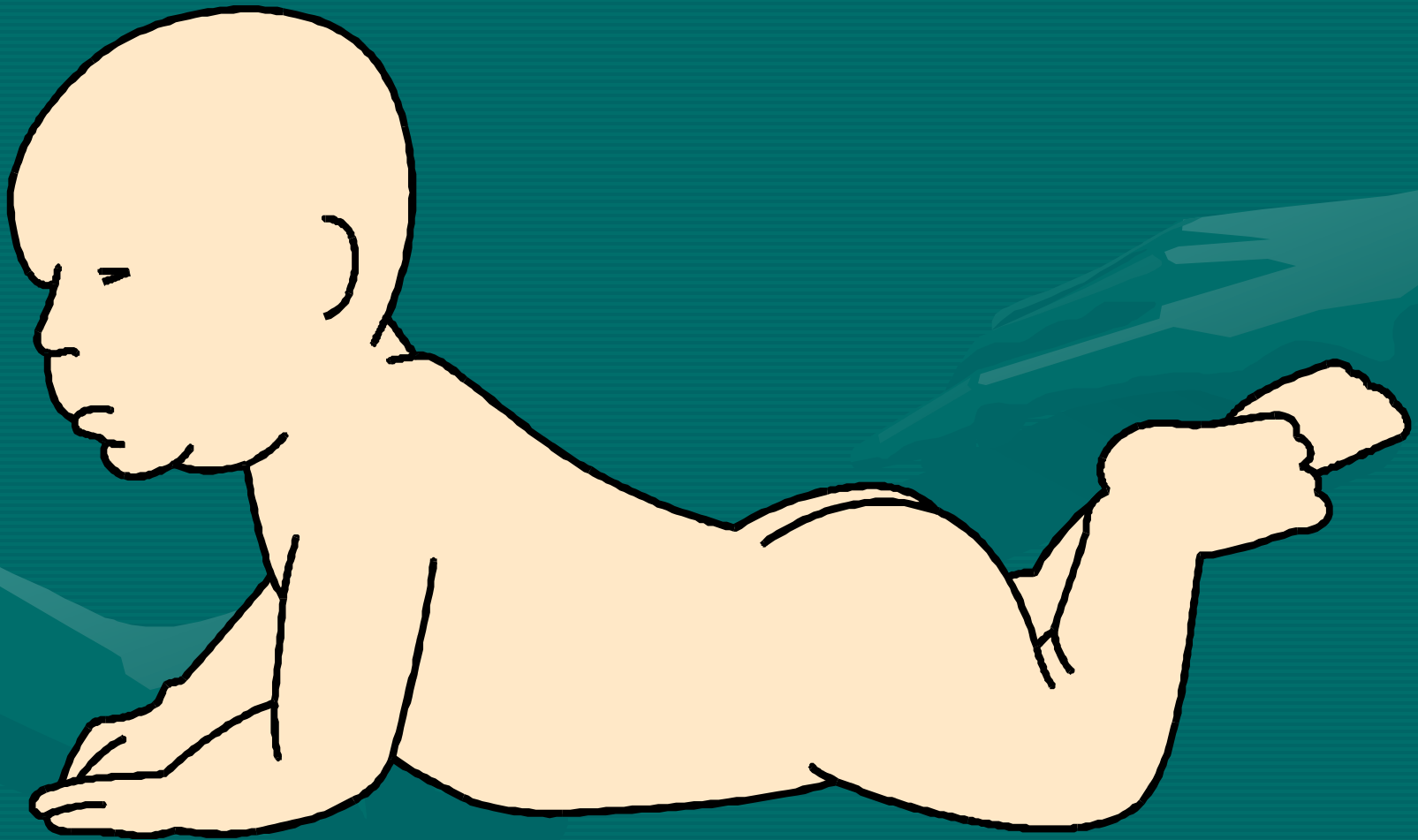
The call 'triggers' a change of direction on one's life path.

For you, your experience of being called to the life of a Brother of St. John of God was the first step towards a great change in your life.

The voice of God is powerful and it silences all other voices.

It invites us to go "further still", and engenders a yearning for spiritual fulfilment.

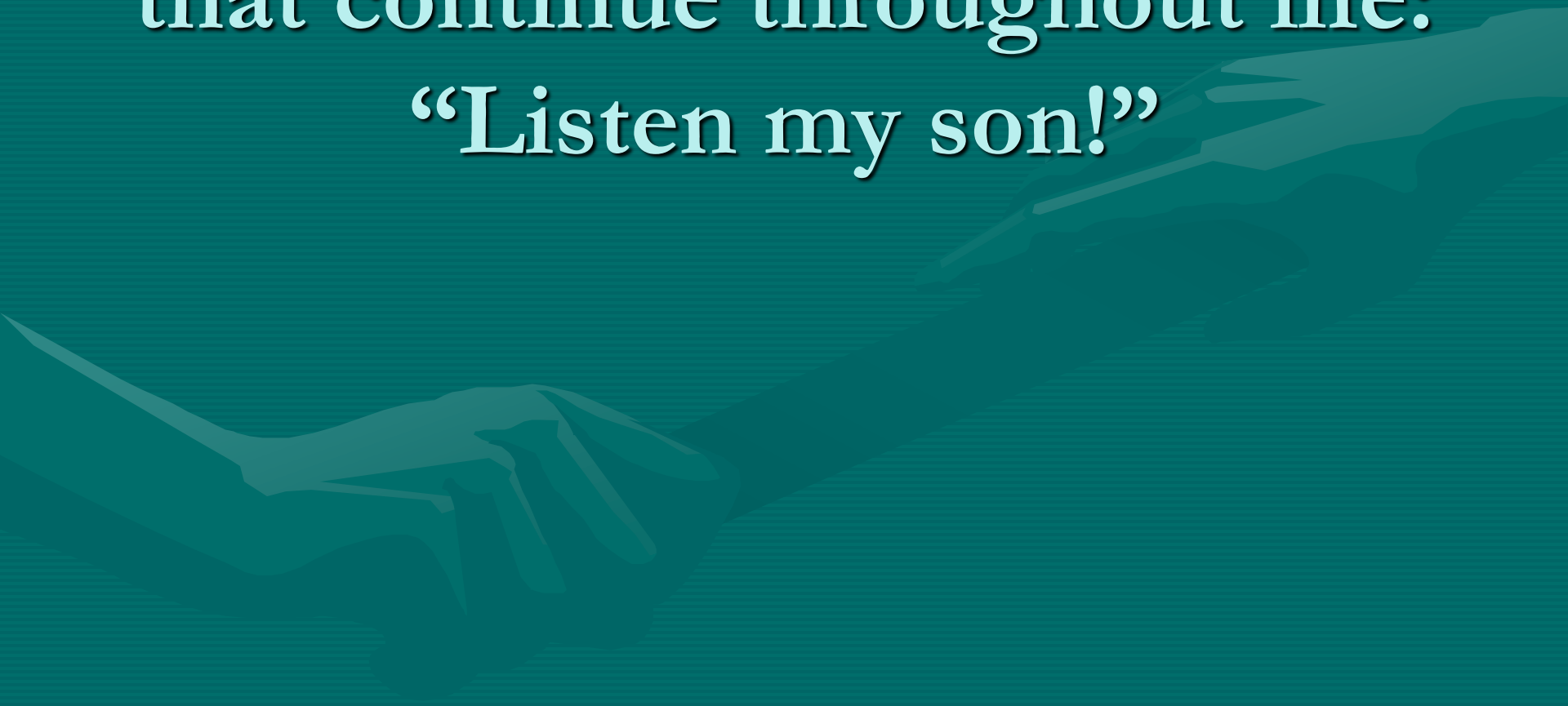
These are the moments in which we need to be “born again”.



This is the stage that ..

- Theresa of Jesus called “the first two mansions”.
- John of the Cross called the Ascent of Mount Carmel.
- John d’Avila called “unlistening to the language of the world, the flesh and the devil.”

b) The “call” and the calls
that continue throughout life:
“Listen my son!”



When you truly live your spirituality in
harmony with the Order's spirituality ...

The call that you first heard will echo out
again and again –
each time calling you a little bit further
along the path of Hospitality
already marked out for you by St. John of God.

Throughout life new calls occur.

Throughout life "new calls" occur, which deepen the first call, giving it more substance.

These are the moments in which we discover a new direction, when we feel called to change mentality (metanoia), in which we feel the interior need to be sent out to new mission frontiers.

Responding to God's call under these circumstances is as vital as it was to respond at the beginning.

If we fail to reply, the spiritual path is blocked.



The entrance to our spiritual path is certainly
our vocation.

but it must be accompanied by a response
that is expressed above all through prayer
and humble obedience and service.

St John of Ávila said: "listen only to God
who is the Supreme Truth".

c) Change and consecration



Whoever knows that they are being called to
live in the manner of St. John of God

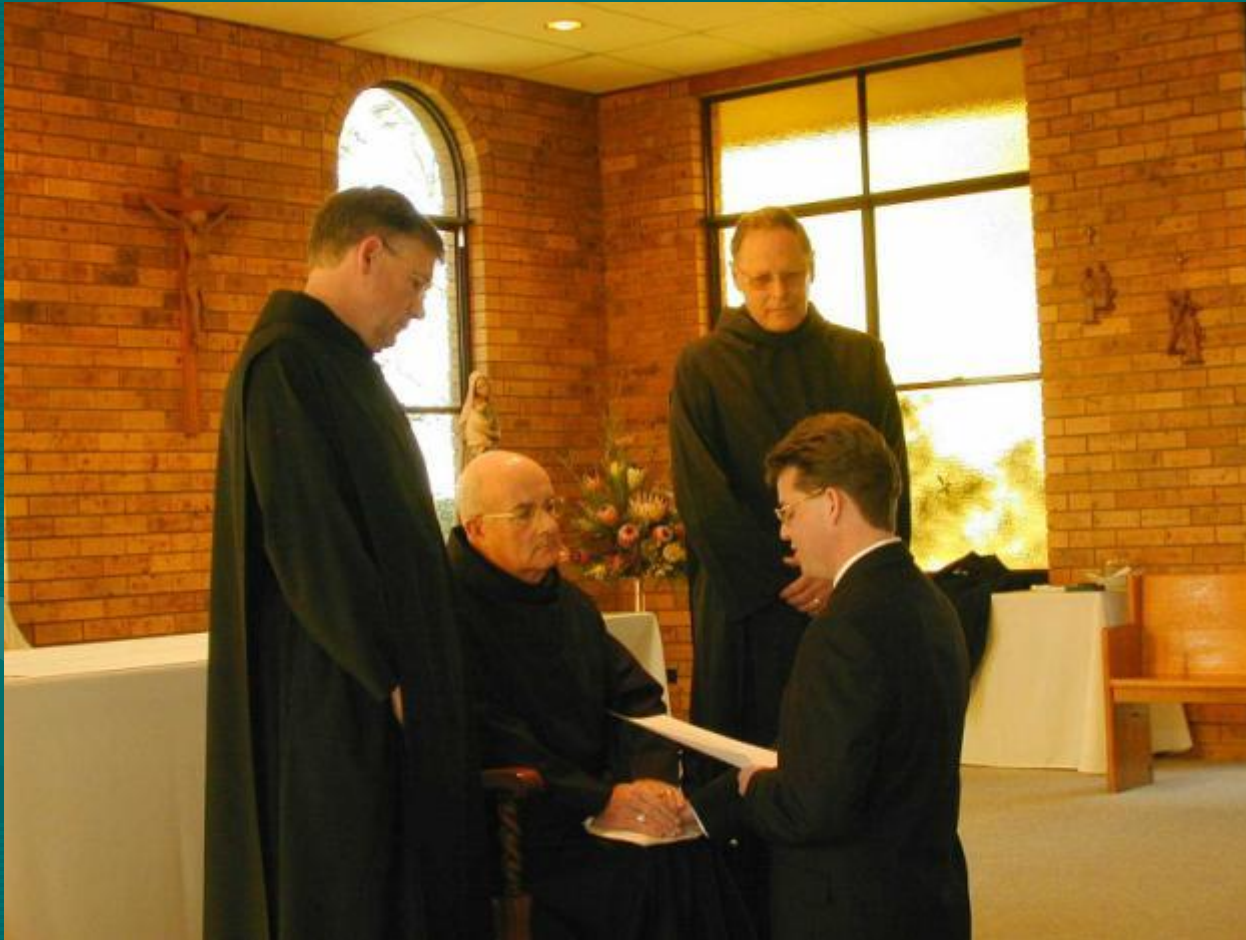
and answers that call can expect to experience
a mysterious and gradual interior
transformation,
as someone changed and consecrated,
prepared by the Spirit for a way of life,
stripped, and emptied of themselves.

God speaks to us through the cries of
humanity.

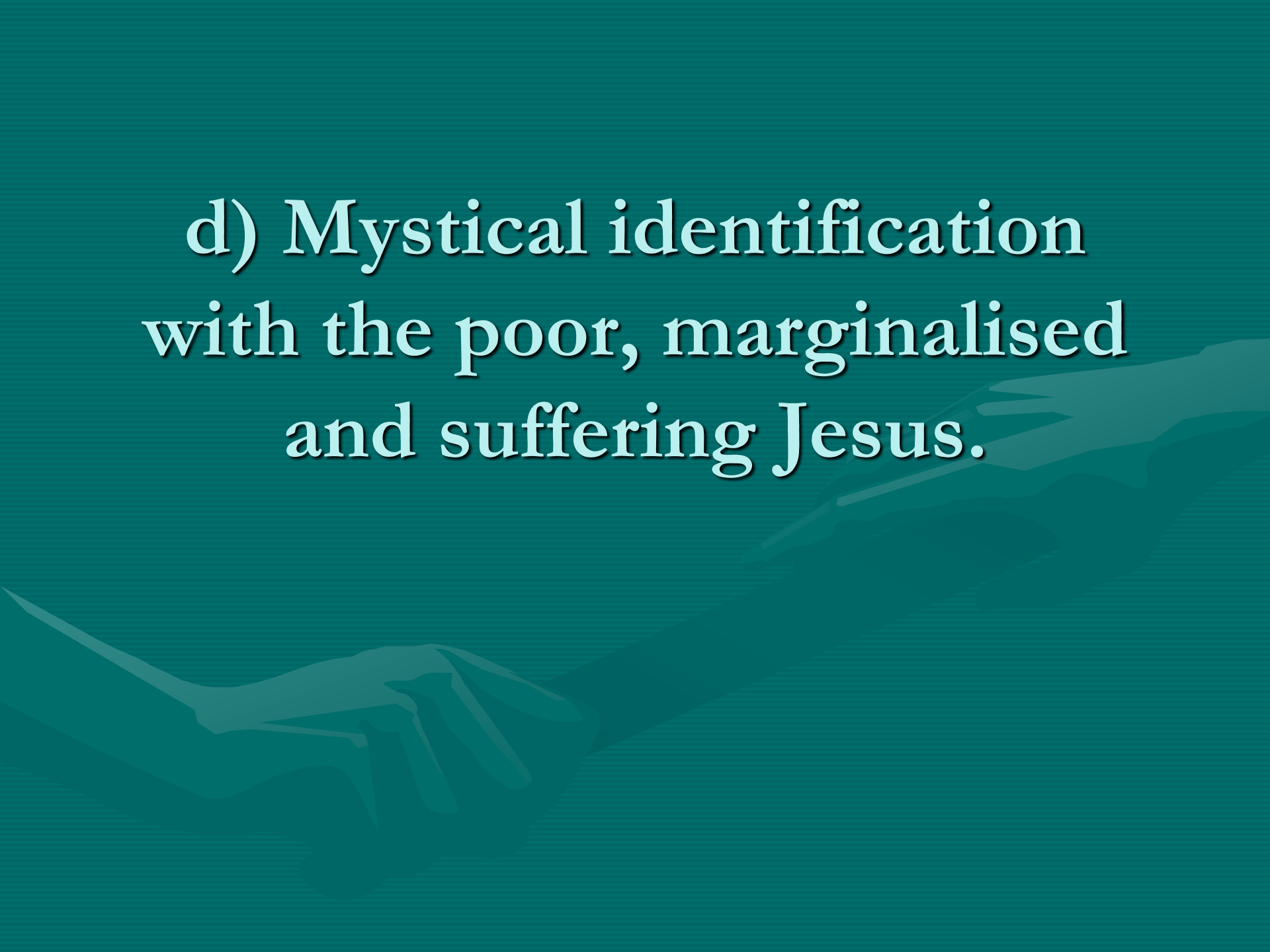
He awakens and strengthens in us
compassionate and merciful love,
outreach and welcome,
lovingkindness and
a sense of solidarity and fraternity.

This transforms the scale of values that had
previously defined our lives

This transforming action of the Spirit is celebrated and welcomed in the liturgical Religious profession.



d) Mystical identification
with the poor, marginalised
and suffering Jesus.

A faint, semi-transparent image of two hands shaking is visible in the background, centered behind the text. The hands are rendered in a light teal color, matching the background, and are positioned as if in a firm grip.

Walking in the spirit never ends in this life.

Living out our spirituality
as an individual and as Order
aims at total identification with the Lord
so that

*"It is not I who live but Christ who lives in
me" (Gal 2, 20).*

The Spirit manifests himself and acts in us as
Hospitality.

He configures us
with the
compassionate
and merciful
Christ of the
Gospel, in order to
keep *alive in time*
His merciful
presence (Const.
2).



3. TAKING PART IN THE PATH OF THE PEOPLE OF GOD

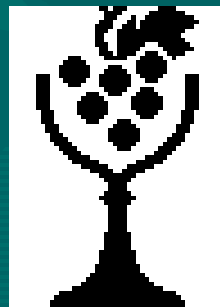
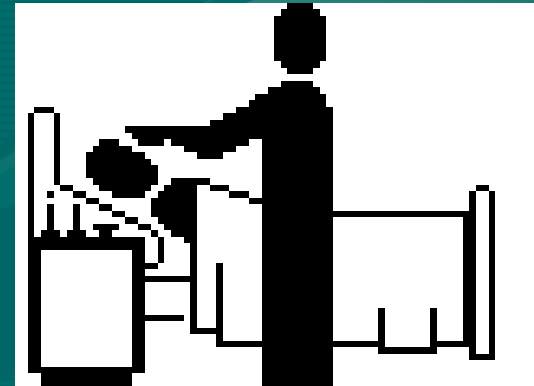


Our spiritual path is set in the great spiritual path of the People of God.



A path that makes its way through liturgical events of particular significance in our spirituality.

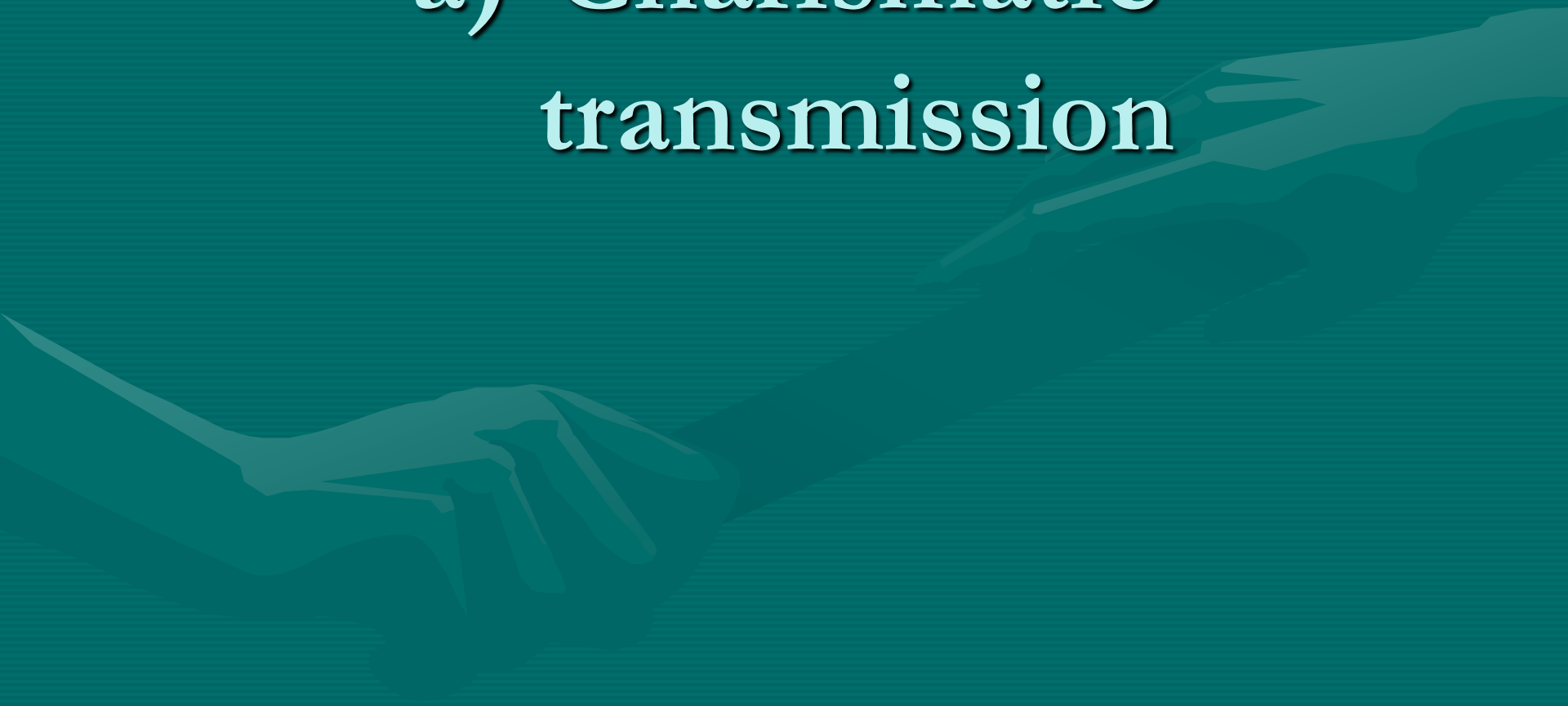
- Sharing in the Eucharist
- Reconciliation
- Anointing the Sick
- Liturgy of the Hours



4. PARTICIPANTS IN THE PATH OF SPIRITUALITY OF THE ORDER AND ITS COMMUNITIES



a) Charismatic transmission



Our spiritual path is that of the Order and our
community.



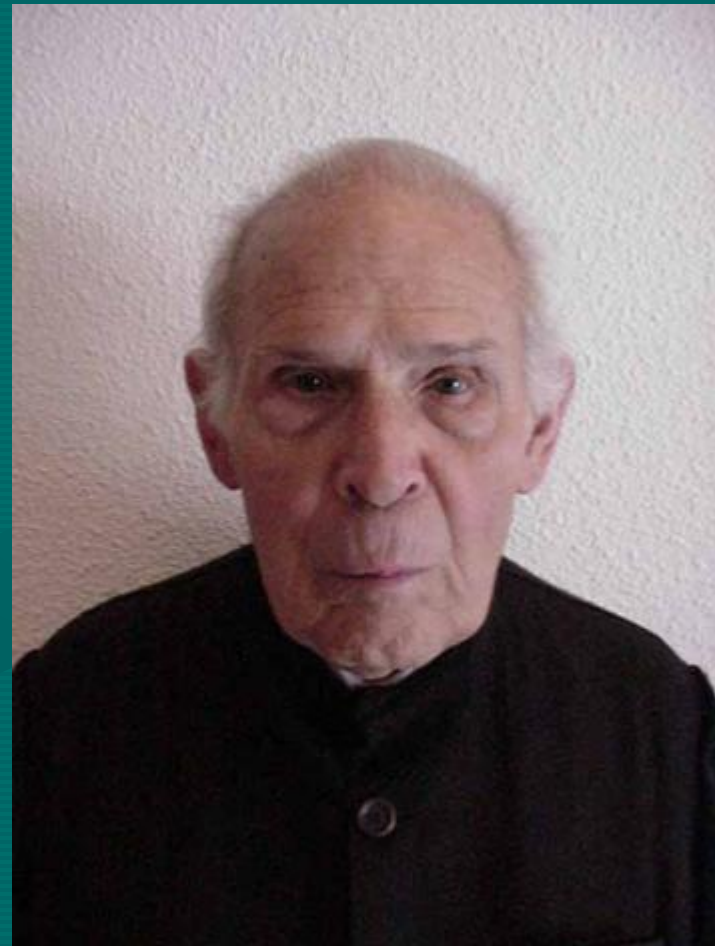
Entering a Community of the Order
means entering into a great spiritual
tradition,
and committing oneself with
creative fidelity to it,
so that the Spirit can quicken the
gift of hospitality,
through us,
in those who bear it.



The Brothers and earlier structures take on a new importance.

They stand as witnesses to a spirituality that has a fine tradition.

Contact with them is enlivening.



Their presence and influence is particularly important in places in which, due to the youth of the Brothers, there is a danger of losing contact with our origins.



**The older Brothers and the Brothers
who have been given their
formation within the Great
Tradition have to exercise the
function of charismatic paternity.**



b) Fraternal love

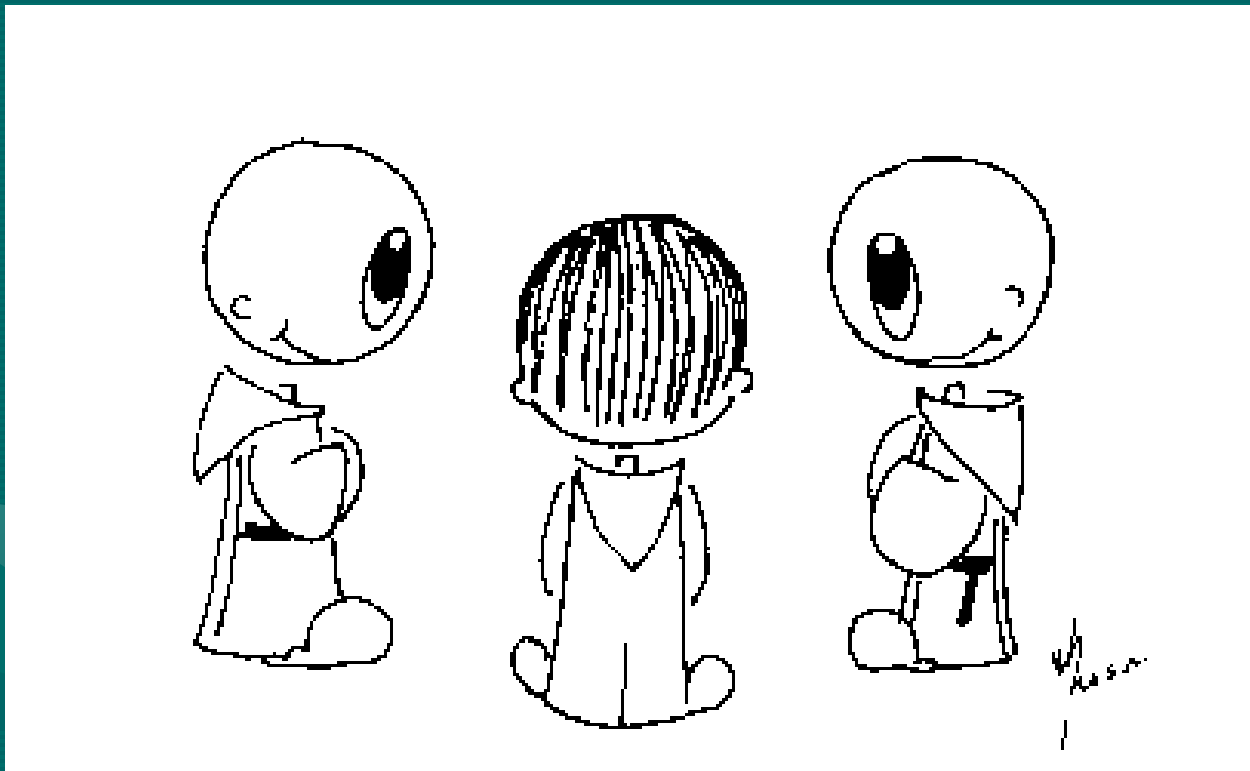


We are called to establish bonds of
brotherhood.

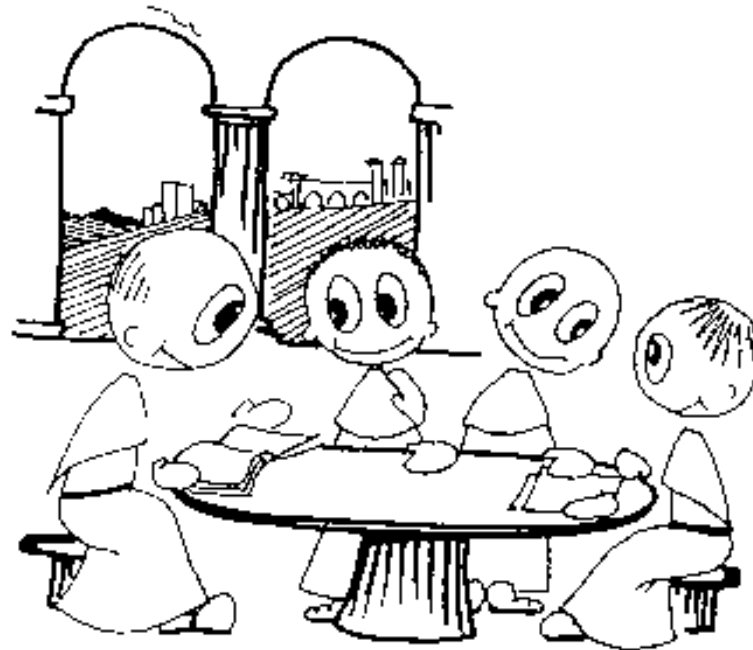
The document (in par. 105) addresses a big
contemporary challenge to our spirituality.

We recognise that there has been a loss of the
Brothers' social identity in our societies.
Society no longer recognises our role as
consecrated men.

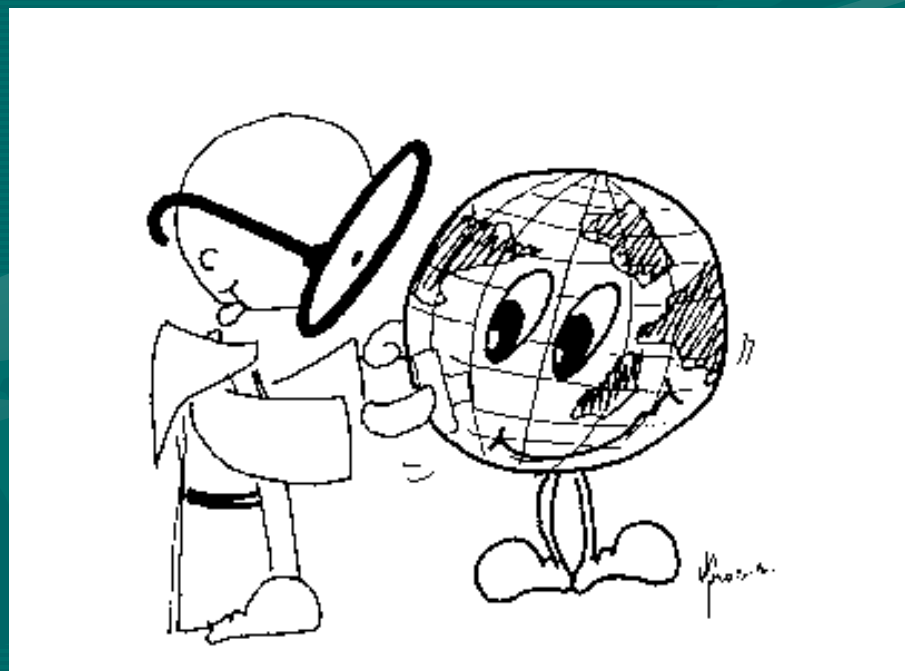
So, more than ever before, we Brothers
feel the need for a community where
there is the support we need to
strengthen our own identity.



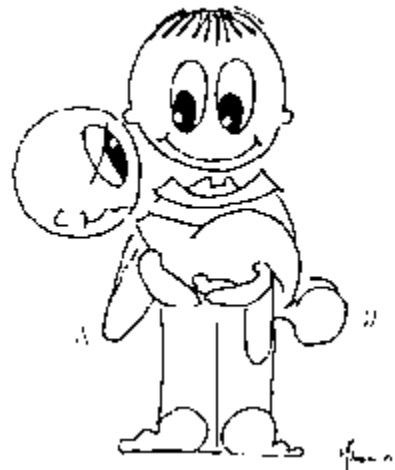
Our place *par excellence* for
finding the significance and
meaning of our identity is the
Community in which we live.



If, because of spiritual individualism, the Community does not support this deepest vocational reason for our whole existence as consecrated men, it is not surprising that there are Brothers who look for it outside.



Or who privatise this dimension, and try to identify socially through the activity they perform (nurses, social workers, etc.), reducing their community membership to the job they perform, no longer being identified by what they *are*, but what they *do*.



The spirit of Hospitality prepares us to live within our own Community.

Faithfulness to our spirituality makes differences of age, culture and ethnic origin become unimportant because our relationships are based on the values that support coexistence within humanity:

- appreciating the value of others, and
- accepting them for what they are.

The significance of the sign of brotherhood remains topical and vigorous.



c) Sharing the experience of
God and discerning His will
as a Community.

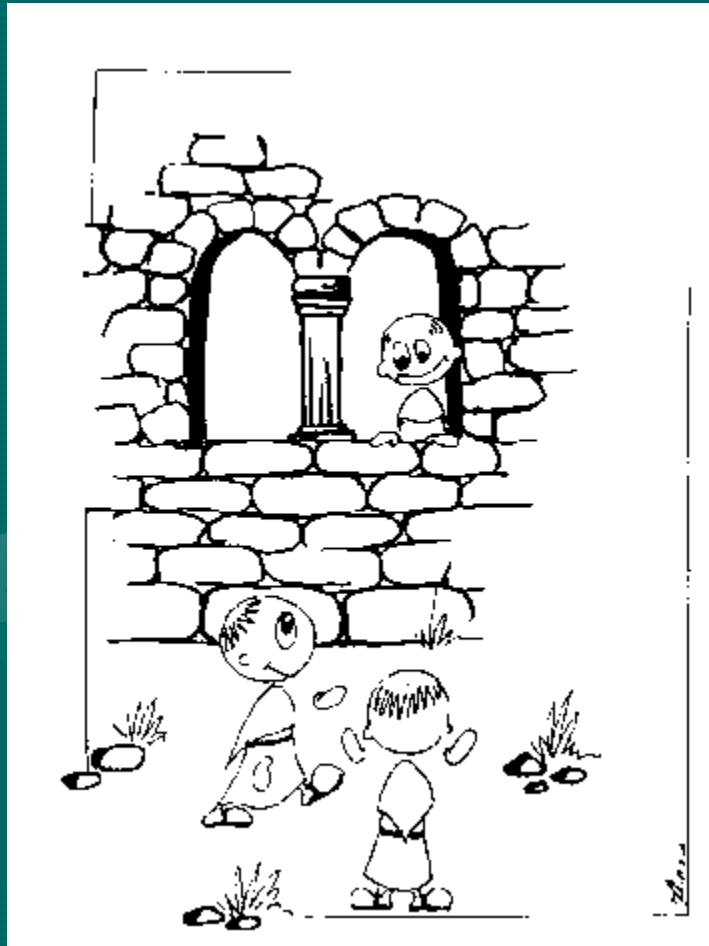
A faint, semi-transparent image of two hands clasped together, one from the left and one from the right, is visible in the background. The hands are rendered in a light teal color, matching the overall theme of the slide. The background is a solid, dark teal color.

The Community of merciful hospitality is the ideal environment for our spirituality.

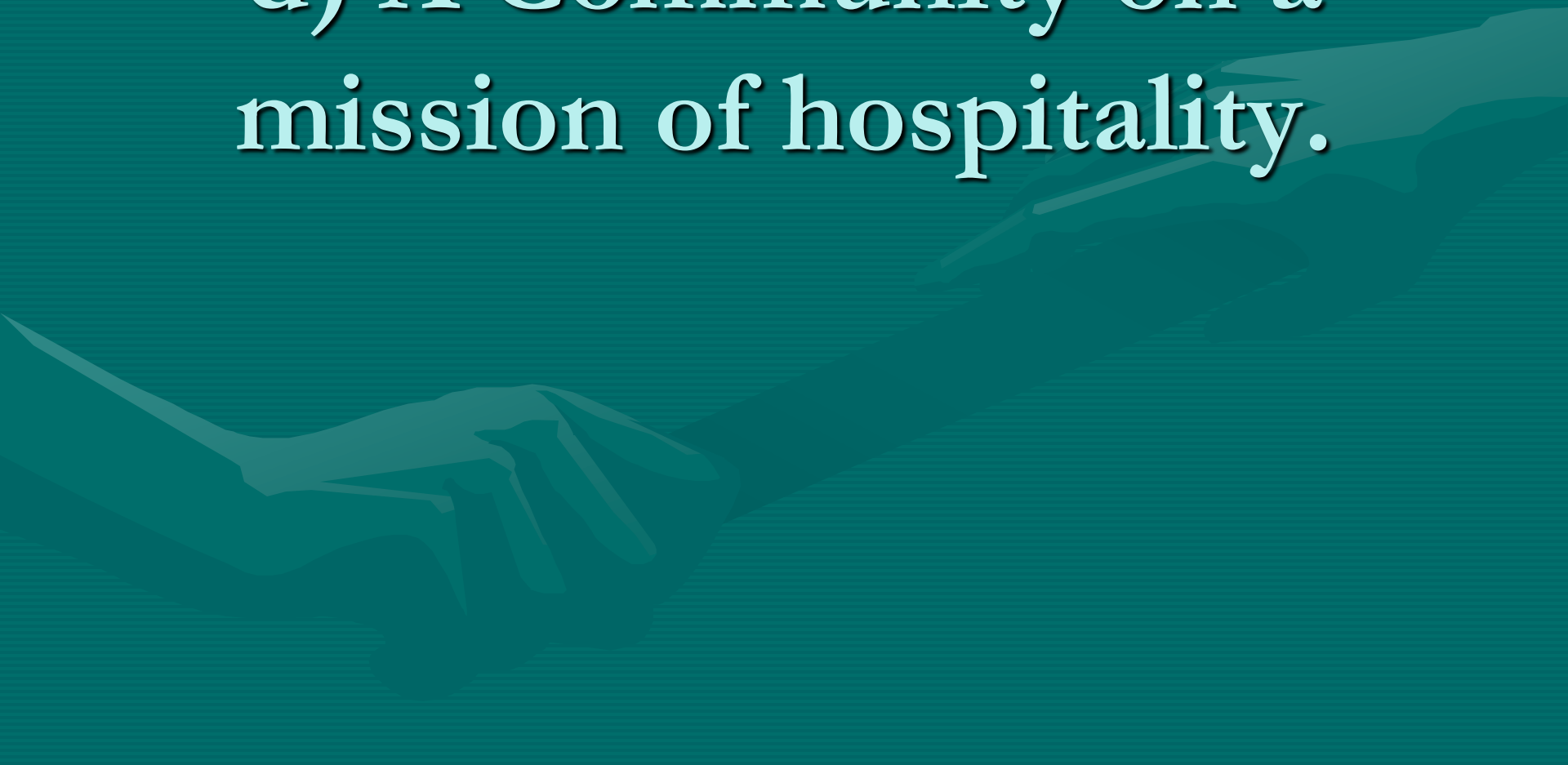
The Community will be a "school of spirituality"

to the extent that the Brothers remember that the basic reason that we have to come to know one another and live together is our personal experience of God.

Community events are opportunities for the fraternal communication and dialogue that promotes our spirituality.



d) A Community on a mission of hospitality.



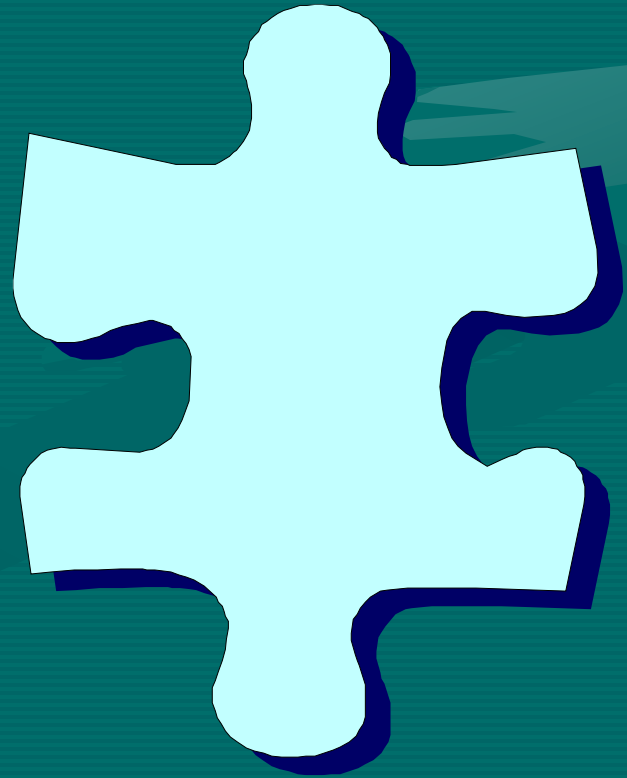
The mission of hospitality is present and embodied in the local community.

The mission of hospitality which is central to the life of the Order – is present and embodied in the local community.

Communion and mission require each other and complete one another (cf. Const. 41a; 43c).

We do not act on a personal basis.

We have a spirituality
that sees the
apostolic work of
each Brother as a
piece in the mosaic
or jigsaw that is the
mission of the
Order.



Our spirituality requires us to be “missioned”
to our work – wherever that might be.



Performing apostolic work does not entail
suspending community life.

Our spirituality today sees that “community
life is very powerfully expressed in the
dispersal of its members which is demanded
by the need to show mercy and hospitality to
the needy.

It is part of our spirituality to be aware of the bonds which unite us all, scattered in many different places.

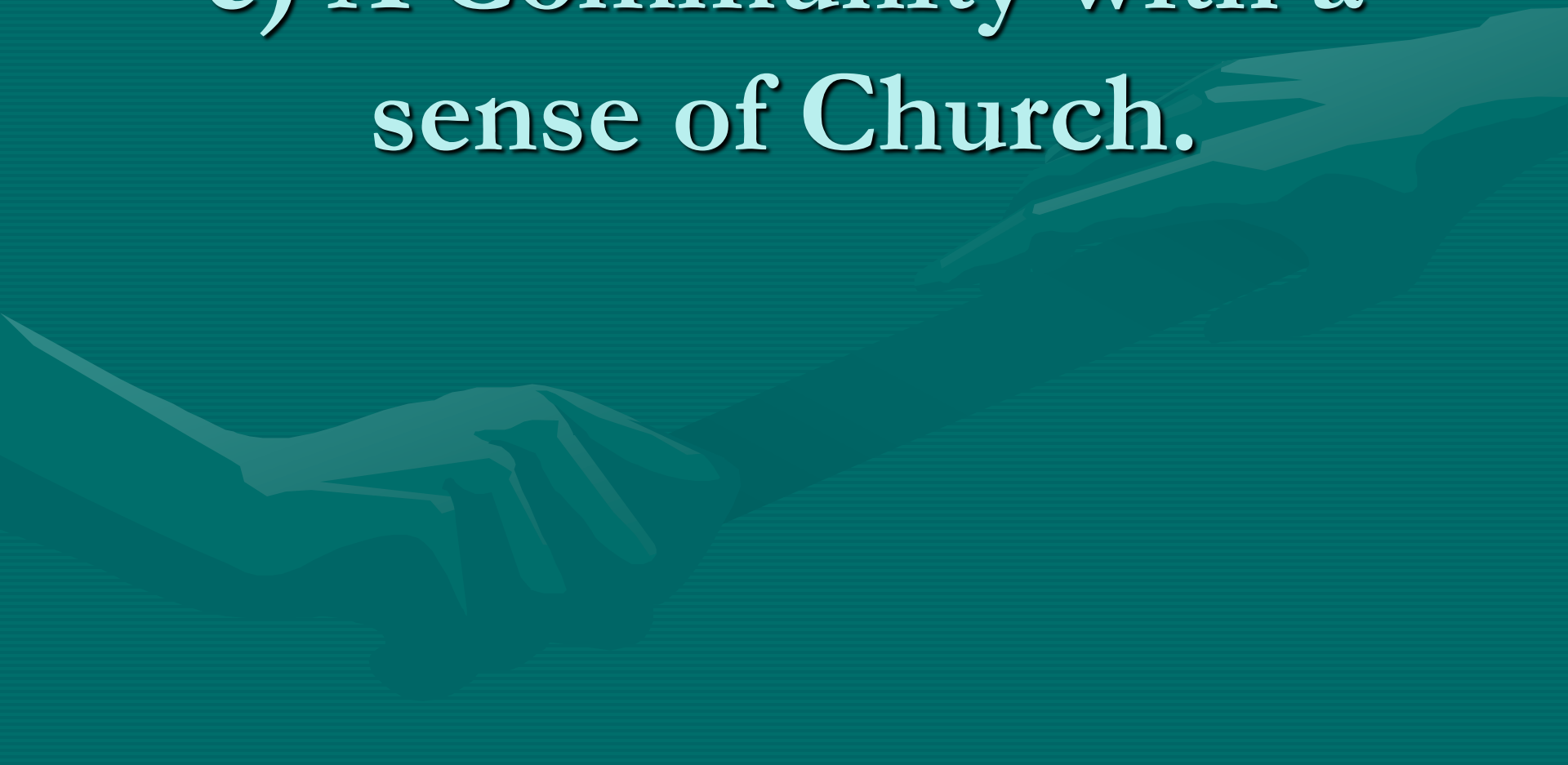


We have to live together at a distance, by participating in our community's spiritual programme.

We must never feel that we are alone.



e) A Community with a
sense of Church.

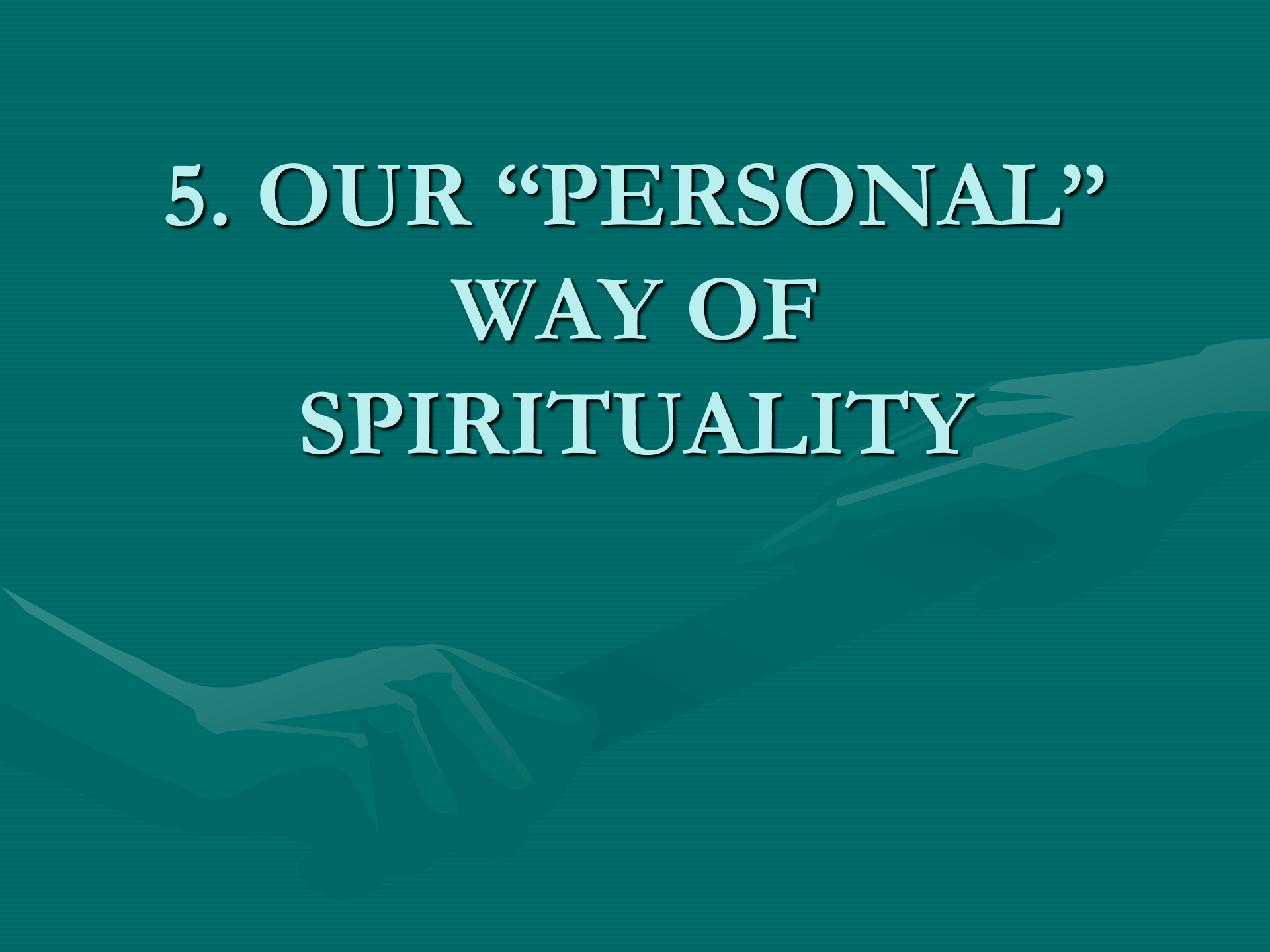


We must never forget that our community is part of the great community of the Church.

For this reason we
therefore let ourselves
be led by her spiritual
promptings,
her Magisterium,
and by the unforeseeable
action of the Spirit in
her



5. OUR “PERSONAL”
WAY OF
SPIRITUALITY

A faint, semi-transparent background image of two hands shaking, symbolizing agreement or partnership. The hands are rendered in a light teal color against the darker teal background.

It is not enough to follow and share the path
or way of the People of God.

Each one of us is a unique being.

On the spiritual path there is also an
individual dimension in which no one can
replace us

and which falls under our absolute and
personal responsibility
which we cannot delegate.

a) Personal prayer as a path of spirituality.



It is true that we do not know how to pray as we should.

The Holy Spirit comes to our aid (*Rom 8, 26-27*)

In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness.

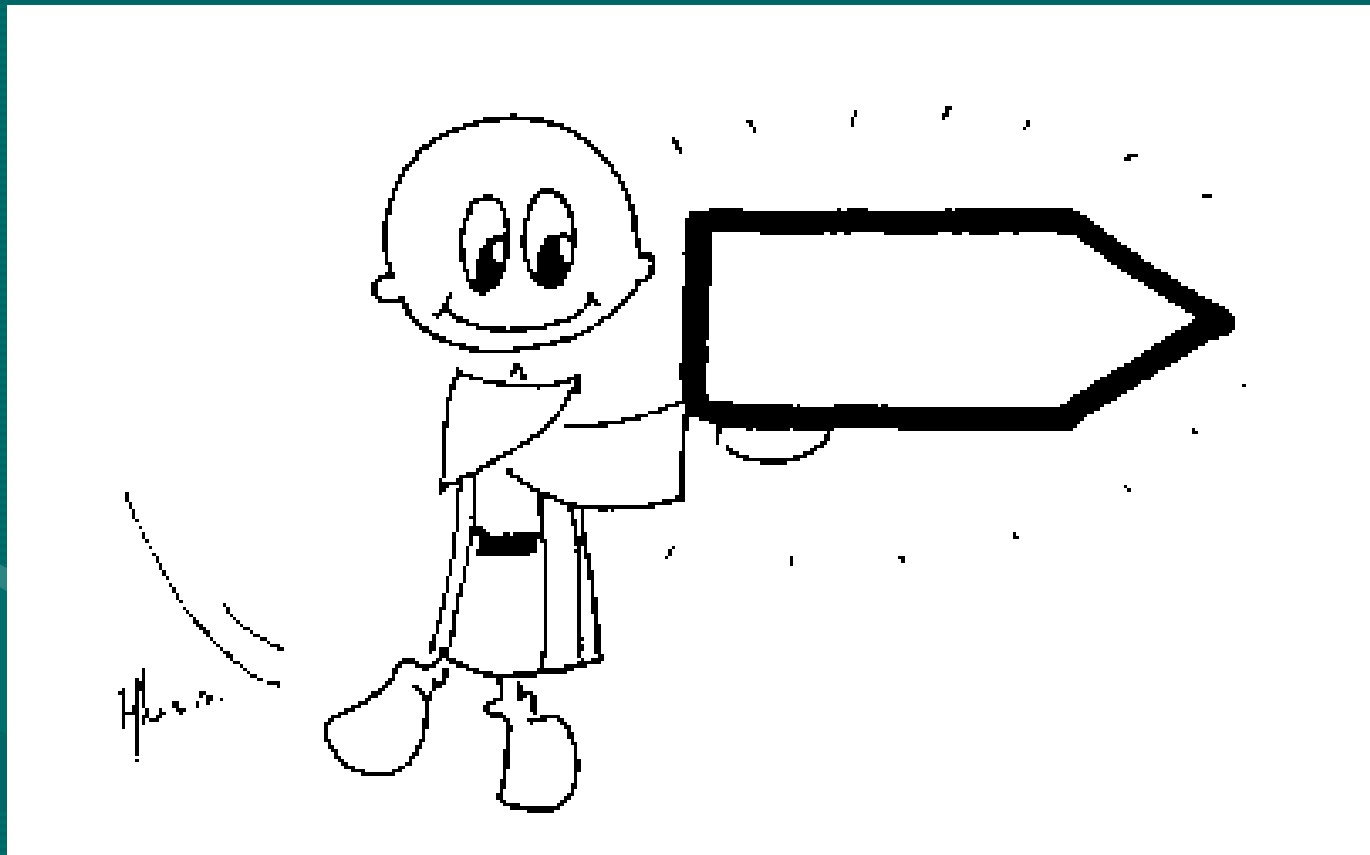
We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express.

And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints in accordance with God's will. (Rom. 8: 26-27)

b) A personal spirituality project



Our life project is our response to God and is focused on the coming Reign of God.



“Every Brother must

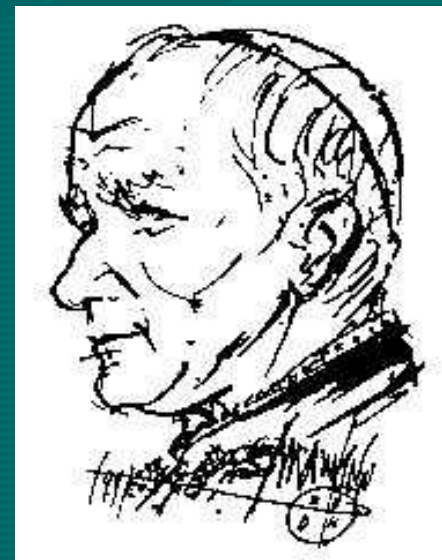
express his path of spirituality in the form of a
personal programme or project,
worked out seriously,
discerned with his director or companion
along the path of the Lord,
and as far as possible shared with the Brothers
in the Community.

An essential part of our life project is readiness
to serve as a Brother with:

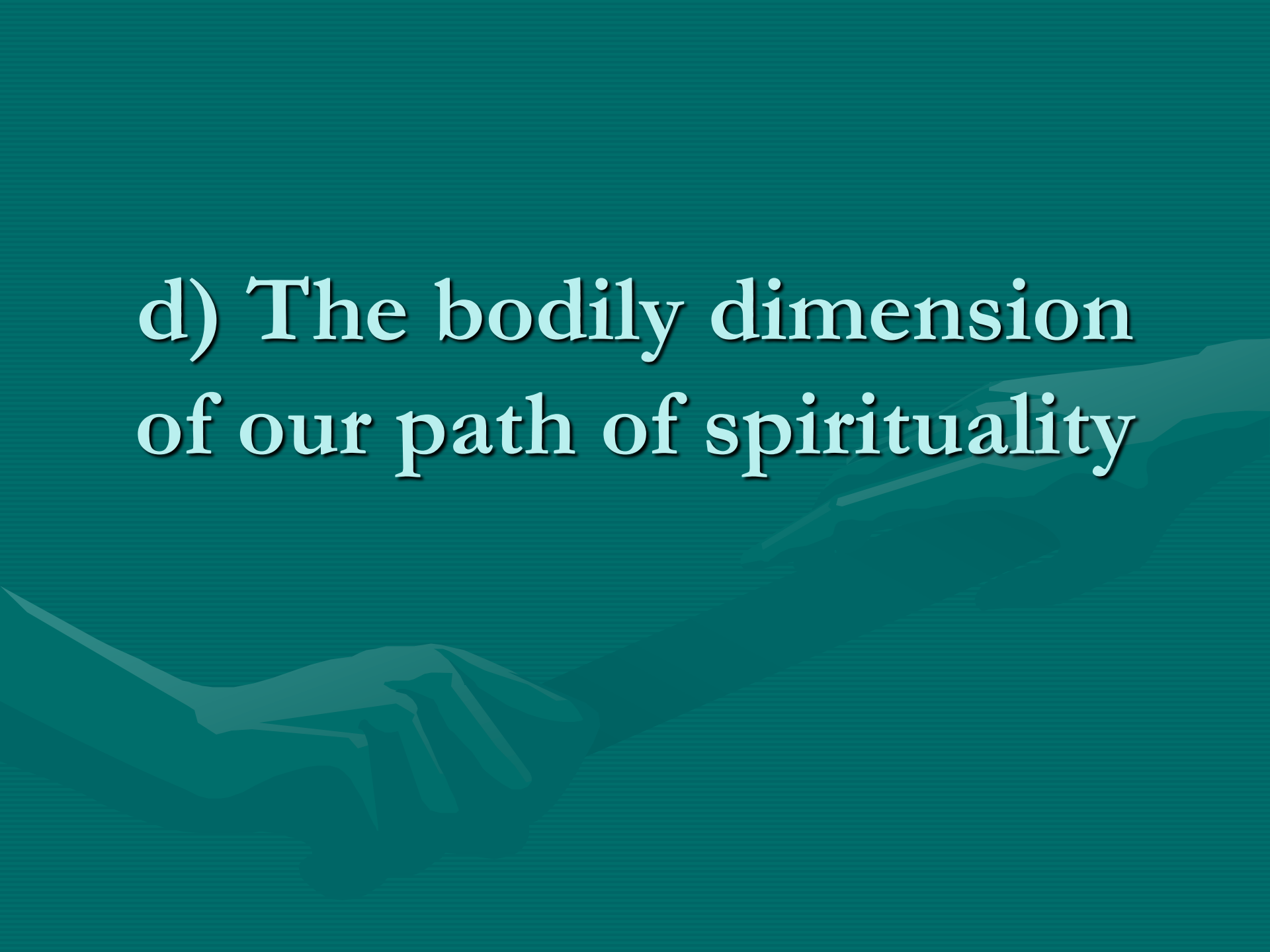
*“the attitudes and actions which characterise
the Brother of Saint John of God: humble,
patient and responsible service; respect for,
and faithfulness to, the person;
understanding, lovingkindness and self-
denial (Const. 3b).*

c) Contemplatives on the mission.

It is good for us to bear in mind that
"a constant danger with Gospel
workers is
that of allowing themselves to be
involved so much in their activity
for the Lord
that they forget the Lord of all
activities" (John Paul II).



d) The bodily dimension
of our path of spirituality

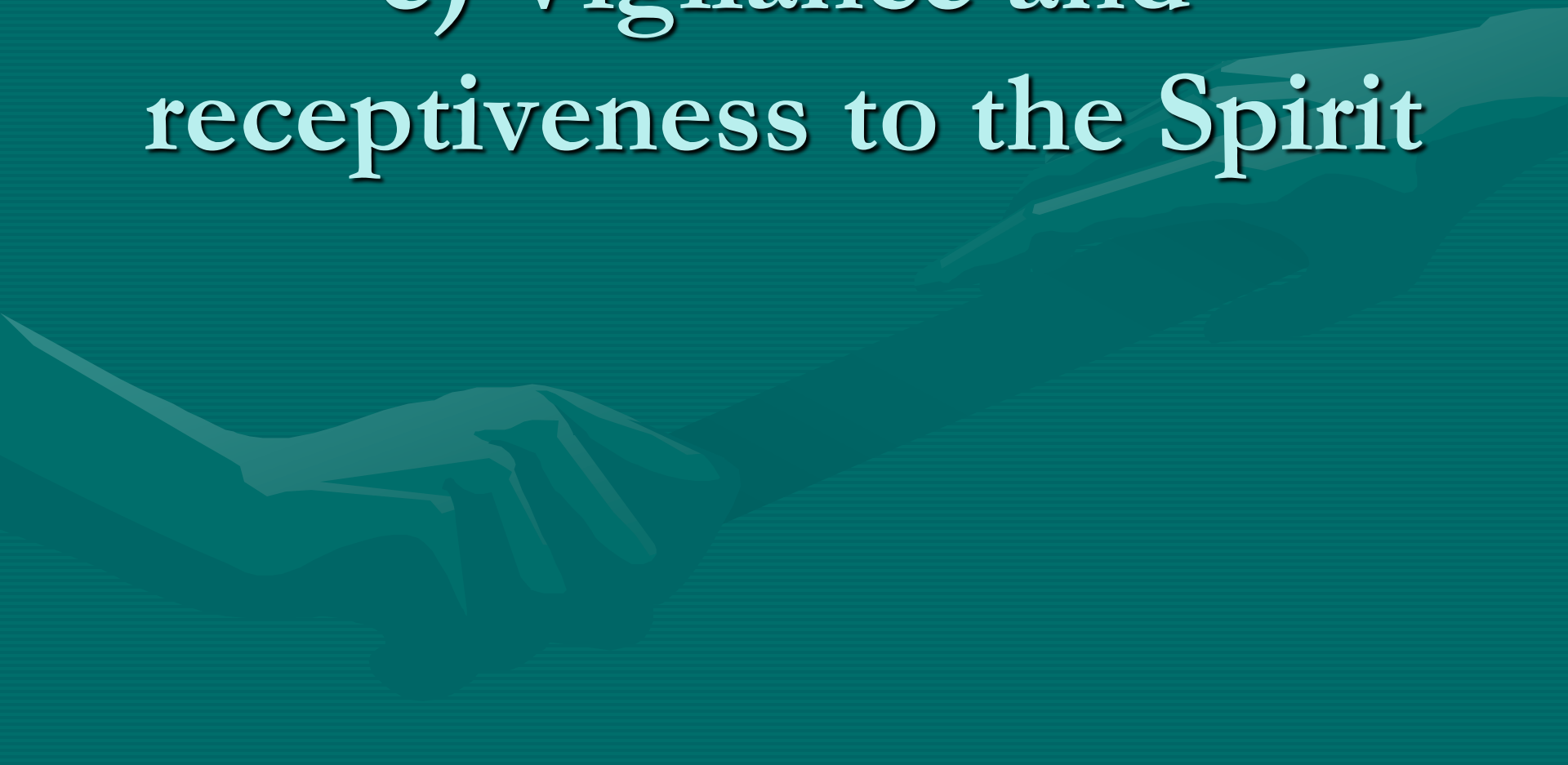
A faint, semi-transparent image of two hands shaking is visible in the background, centered behind the text. The hands are rendered in a light teal color, matching the background, and are positioned as if in a firm grip. The background itself is a solid, dark teal color.

The virtue of chastity,

lived as Hospitaller Brothers, is the seed of personal fecundity, because

"in this apostolate we carry out the mission of serving, protecting and encouraging life and affirm the dignity and value of the body" (Const. 10d).

e) Vigilance and receptiveness to the Spirit

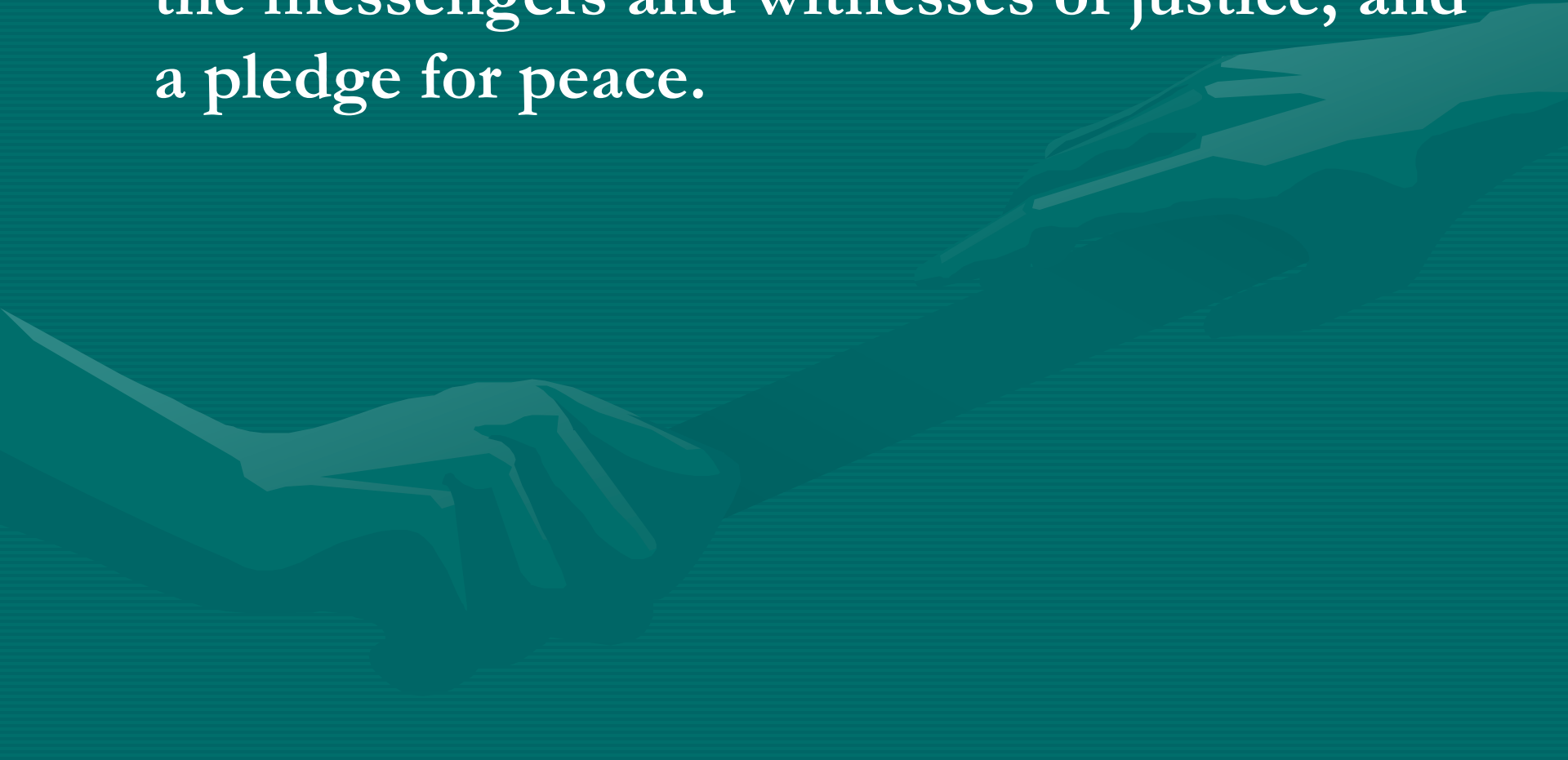


The Brother God wishes to remain vigilant to the action of the Spirit in our age and place.

- Thus we are witnesses in terms of a spirituality of kénosis and humility;
- in an attitude of communion with the laity, both women and men,
- discovering in them the energy we need for perseverance,
- to give ourselves "ad vitam", for a mutual relationship;

In situations of conflict

and under harsh conditions in which we are
the messengers and witnesses of justice, and
a pledge for peace.



6. FORMATION AS A PATH OF SPIRITUALITY

The path of spirituality involves "charismatic induction or initiation", and which occurs in the first few years of life in the Order, and then "continuing formation", which extends throughout the whole of our life

Formation and Spirituality

We are realistic about our own spirituality.

We are idealistic about our Order's spirituality.

Formation helps us cope with having to become realistic about expressions we see, and give, to the Order's spirituality.

CONCLUSION

The background is a solid teal color. In the lower half, there is a faint, semi-transparent image of two hands shaking, symbolizing agreement or conclusion. The word 'CONCLUSION' is centered in the upper half in a white, serif font with a slight drop shadow.



*When, as Brothers
of St John of God,*

*we allow the thirst for spirituality which we harbour to
flourish in us,*

Something new will be born within us.

Barriers will tumble.

The impossible will become possible.

Messengers



*We shall be joyful and enthusiastic messengers of the
Good News of Mercy and Hospitality.*

*We shall be a parable of a new world in the midst of the
world of suffering and marginalisation.*

Witnesses



*The people of God and the whole of humanity
are in need of our witness,
and our spirit has a humanising power.*

Receivers

*But we must also emphasise
the spiritual strength and energy
which we are given from the holy people of God
and of all humanity,
of which we form part.*



Spirituality developing



*This is why the more we feel that we are Church and the
people of God,
and members of humanity,
the more will our spirituality develop, and become more
profound and more relevant.*

As Prophets of Mercy,



*animated by the spirit of St John of God,
we take up the invitation which John Paul II has
extended to us*

*at the beginning of the Third Millennium
in his Letter Novo millennio ineunte:*

"Duc in altum!

Let us go forth in hope!"

Christ Jesus, our hope (1Tim 1,1)

will encourage us to remain faithful to our prophetic mission. NMI 58.

