

CONFERENCE TWO

FRANCISCANS AND THE PASSION

A. Francis and brothers inaugurate era of Christian encounter with a suffering Christ

1. Francis is frantic to bring to people a realistic sense of the human experience of Jesus

a. The infancy---Greccio

b. The Passion—Office of the Passion

c. The place of Jesus in the world of real people and events

B. Not an invitation to morbid imagining but to contemplate immense love

a. Modern examples of this vision (e.g., St. M Kolbe)

b. Artists and musicians strive to present this as well

C. Development of the Stations of the Cross

- a. Place the experience of the pilgrims in the midst of ordinary people
- b. Lead them to sorrow, compassion, conversion of life
- c. Use physical means to arouse feelings of sorrow, contrition
- d. e.g. The “Seven Churches” of Bologna

D. Annual Lenten challenge

1. Contemporary practice seeks to tie Lenten devotion to current causes of suffering of people
2. Older practice focused on personal response to suffering of Jesus crowned by making a “good Easter”
3. Still a challenge to balance both aspects
4. In a visual culture, how do we dramatize this holy Death?