

OUR LADY OF THE ANGELS

LOCAL FRATERNITY COUNCIL HANDBOOK



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SECTION A

THE RULE OF THE ORDO FRANCISCANUS SAECULARIS

Prologue: Exhortation of St. Francis to the Brothers and Sisters of Penance (circa 1210-1215) Concerning Those Who Do Penance

All who love the Lord with their whole heart, with their whole soul and mind, with all their strength, and love their neighbors as themselves and hate their bodies with their vices and sins, and receive the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, and produce worthy fruits of penance.

Oh, how happy and blessed are these men and women when they do these things and persevere in doing them, because the spirit of the Lord will rest upon them and he will make his home and dwelling among them, and they are the sons of the heavenly Father, whose works they do, and they are the spouses, brothers, and mothers of our Lord Jesus Christ.

We are spouses, when by the Holy Spirit the faithful soul is united with our Lord Jesus Christ, we are brothers to him when we fulfill the will of the Father who is in heaven.

We are mothers, when we carry him in our heart and body through divine love and a pure and sincere conscience; we give birth to him through a holy life which must give light to others by example.

Oh, how glorious it is to have a great and holy Father in heaven! Oh, how glorious it is to have such a beautiful and admirable Spouse, the Holy Paraclete.

Oh, how glorious it is to have such a Brother and such a Son, loved, beloved, humble, peaceful, sweet, lovable, and desirable above all: Our Lord Jesus Christ, who gave up his life for his sheep and prayed to the Father saying:

"Oh holy Father, protect them with your name whom you gave me out of the world. I entrusted to them the message you entrusted to me and they received it. They have known that in truth I came from you, they have believed that it was you who sent me. For these I pray, not for the world. Bless and consecrate them, and I consecrate myself for their sakes. I do not pray for them alone; I pray also for those who will believe in me through their word that they may be holy by being one as we are. And I desire, Father, to have them in my company where I am to see this glory of mine in your kingdom."

Concerning Those Who Do Not Do Penance

But all those men and women who are not doing penance and do not receive the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ and live in vices and sin and yield to evil concupiscence and to the wicked desires of the flesh, and do not observe what they have promised to the Lord, and are slaves to the world, in their bodies, by carnal desires and the anxieties and cares of this life.

These are blind, because they do not see the true light, our Lord Jesus Christ; they do not have spiritual wisdom because they do not have the Son of God who is the true wisdom of the Father. Concerning them, it is said, "Their skill was swallowed up " and " cursed are those who turn away from your commands ". They see and acknowledge, they know and do bad things and knowingly destroy their own souls.

See, you who are blind, deceived by your enemies, the world, the flesh and the devil, for it is pleasant to the body to commit sin and it is bitter to make it serve God because all vices and sins come out and

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“proceed from the heart of man “as the Lord says in the Gospel. And you have nothing in this world and in the next, and you thought you would possess the vanities of this world for a long time.

But you have been deceived, for the day and the hour will come to which you give no thought and which you do not know and of which you are ignorant. The body grows infirm, death approaches, and so it dies a bitter death, and no matter where or when or how man dies, in the guilt of sin, without penance or satisfaction, though he can make satisfaction but does not do it.

The devil snatches the soul from his body with such anguish and tribulation that no one can know it except he who endures it, and all the talents and power and knowledge and wisdom which they thought they had will be taken away from them, and they leave their goods to relatives and friends who take and divide them and say afterwards, " Cursed be his soul because he could have given us more, he could have acquired more than he did." The worms eat up the body and so they have lost body and soul during this short earthly life and will go into the inferno where they will suffer torture without end.

All those into whose hands this letter shall have come we ask in the charity that is God to accept kindly and with divine love the fragrant words of our Lord Jesus Christ quoted above. And let those who do not know how to read have them read to them.

And may they keep them in their mind and carry them out, in a holy manner to the end, because they are spirit and life.

And those who will not do this will have to render an account on the day of judgement before the tribunal of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Chapter I - The Ordo Franciscanus Saecularis

1. The Franciscan family, as one among many spiritual families raised up by the Holy Spirit in the Church, unites all members of the people of God--laity, religious, and priests-- who recognize that they are called to follow Christ in the footsteps of St. Francis of Assisi.

In various ways and forms but in life-giving union with each other, they intend to make present the charism of their common Seraphic Father in the life and mission of the Church.

2. The Secular Franciscan Order holds a special place in this family circle. It is an organic union of all Catholic fraternities scattered throughout the world and open to every group of the faithful. In these fraternities the brothers and sisters, led by the Spirit, strive for perfect charity in their own secular state. By their profession, they pledge themselves to live the gospel in the manner of St. Francis by means of this rule approved by the Church.
3. The present rule, succeeding Memoriale Propositi (1221) and the rules approved by the Supreme Pontiffs Nicholas IV and Leo XIII, adapts the Secular Franciscan Order to the needs and expectations of the Holy Church in the conditions of changing times. Its interpretation belongs to the Holy See and its application will be made by the General Constitutions and particular statutes.

Chapter II - The Way of Life

4. The rule and life of the Secular Franciscans is this: to observe the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ by following the example of Saint Francis of Assisi, who made Christ the inspiration and the center of his life with God and people.

Christ, the gift of the Father's love, is the way to him, the truth into which the Holy Spirit leads us, and the life which he has come to give abundantly.

Secular Franciscans should devote themselves especially to careful reading of the gospel, going from gospel to life and life to the gospel.

5. Secular Franciscans, therefore, should seek to encounter the living and active person of Christ in their brothers and sisters, in Sacred Scripture, in the Church, and in liturgical activity. The faith of Saint Francis, who often said "I see nothing bodily of the Most High Son of God in this world except his most holy body and blood," should be the inspiration and pattern of their Eucharistic life.

6. They have been made living members of the Church by being buried and raised with Christ in baptism; they have been united more intimately with the Church by profession. Therefore, they should go forth as witnesses and instruments of her mission among all people, proclaiming Christ by their life and words.

Called like Saint Francis to rebuild the Church and inspired by his example, let them devote themselves energetically to living in full communion with the pope, bishops, and priests, fostering an open and trusting dialogue of apostolic effectiveness and creativity.

7. United by their vocation as brothers and sisters of penance, and motivated by the dynamic power of the gospel, let them conform their thoughts and deeds to those of Christ by means of that radical interior change which the gospel itself calls conversion. Human frailty makes it necessary that this conversion be carried out daily.

On this road to renewal the sacrament of reconciliation is the privileged sign of the Father's mercy and the source of grace.

8. As Jesus was the true worshipper of the Father, so let prayer and contemplation be the soul of all they are and do.

Let them participate in the sacramental life of the Church, above all the Eucharist. Let them join in liturgical prayer in one of the forms proposed by the Church, reliving the mysteries of the life of Christ.

9. The Virgin Mary, humble servant of the Lord, was open to his every word and call. She was embraced by Francis with indescribable love and declared the protectress and advocate of his family. The Secular Franciscans should express their ardent love for her by imitating her complete self-giving and by praying earnestly and confidently.

10. United themselves to the redemptive obedience of Jesus, who placed his will into the Father's hands, let them faithfully fulfill the duties proper to their various circumstances of life. Let them also follow the poor and crucified Christ, witness to him even in difficulties and persecutions.

11. Trusting in the Father, Christ chose for himself and his mother a poor and humble life, even though he valued created things attentively and lovingly. Let the Secular Franciscans seek a proper spirit

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of detachment from temporal goods by simplifying their own material needs. Let them be mindful that according to the gospel they are stewards of the goods received for the benefit of God's children.

Thus, in the spirit of the Beatitudes, and as pilgrims and strangers on their way to the home of the Father, they should strive to purify their hearts from every tendency and yearning for possession and power.

12. Witnessing to the good yet to come and obliged to acquire purity of heart because of the vocation they have embraced, they should set themselves free to love God and their brothers and sisters.

13. As the Father sees in every person the features of his Son, the firstborn of many brothers and sisters, so the Secular Franciscans with a gentle and courteous spirit accept all people as a gift of the Lord and an image of Christ.

A sense of community will make them joyful and ready to place themselves on an equal basis with all people, especially with the lowly for whom they shall strive to create conditions of life worthy of people redeemed by Christ.

14. Secular Franciscans, together with all people of good will, are called to build a more fraternal and evangelical world so that the kingdom of God may be brought about more effectively. Mindful that anyone who follows Christ, the perfect man, becomes more of a man himself, let them exercise their responsibilities competently in Christian spirit of service.

15. Let them individually and collectively be in the forefront in promoting justice by the testimony of their human lives and their courageous initiatives. Especially in the field of public life, they should make definite choices in harmony with their faith.

16. Let them esteem work both as a gift and as a sharing in the creation, redemption, and service of the human community.

17. In their family, they should cultivate the Franciscan spirit of peace, fidelity, and respect for life, striving to make of it a sign of a world already renewed in Christ.

By living the grace of matrimony, husbands and wives in particular should bear witness in the world to the love of Christ for his Church. They should joyfully accompany their children on their human and spiritual journey by providing a simple and open Christian education and being attentive to the vocation of each child.

18. Moreover, they should respect all creatures, animate and inanimate, which bear the imprint of the Most High, and they should strive to move from the temptation of exploiting creation to the Franciscan concept of universal kinship.

19. Mindful that they are bearers of peace which must be built up unceasingly, they should seek out ways of unity and fraternal harmony through dialogue, trusting in the presence of the divine seed in everyone and in the transforming power of love and pardon.

Messengers of perfect joy in every circumstance, they should strive to bring joy and hope to others.

Since they are immersed in the resurrection of Christ, which gives true meaning to Sister Death, let them serenely tend toward the ultimate encounter with the Father.

Chapter III - Life In Fraternity

20. The Secular Franciscan Order is divided into fraternities of various levels--local, regional, national, and international. Each one has its own moral personality in the Church. These various fraternities are coordinated and united according to the norm of this rule and of the constitutions.
21. On various levels, each fraternity is animated and guided by a council and minister (or presidents) who are elected by the professed according to the constitutions.

Their service, which lasts for a definite period, is marked by a ready and willing spirit and is a duty of responsibility to each member and to the community.

Within themselves the fraternities are structured in different ways according to the norm of the constitutions, according to the various needs of their members and their regions, and under the guidance of their respective council.
22. The local fraternity is to be established canonically. It becomes the basic unit of the whole Order and a visible sign of the Church, the community of love. This should be the privileged place for developing a sense of Church and the Franciscan vocation and for enlivening the apostolic life of its members.
23. Requests for admission to the Secular Franciscan Order must be presented to the local fraternity, whose council decides upon the acceptance of new brothers and sisters.

Admission into the Order is gradually attained through a time of initiation, a period of formation of at least one year, and profession of the rule. The entire community is engaged in this process of growth by its own manner of living. The age for profession and the distinctive Franciscan sign are regulated by the statutes.

Profession by its nature is a permanent commitment.

Members who find themselves in particular difficulties should discuss their problems with the council in fraternal dialogue.

Withdrawal or permanent dismissal from the Order, if necessary, is an act of the fraternity council according to the norm of the constitutions.
24. To foster communion among members, the council should organize regular and frequent meetings of the community as well as meeting with other Franciscan groups, especially with youth groups. It should adopt appropriate means for growth in Franciscan and ecclesial life and encourage everyone to a life of fraternity. This communion continues with deceased brothers and sisters through prayer for them.
25. Regarding expenses necessary for the life of the fraternity and the needs of worship, of the apostolate, and of charity, all the brothers and sisters should offer a contribution according to their means. Local fraternities should contribute toward the expenses of the higher fraternity councils.
26. As a concrete sign of communion and co-responsibility, the councils on various levels, in keeping with the constitutions, shall ask for suitable and well-prepared religious for spiritual assistance. They should make this request to the superiors of the four religious Franciscan families, to whom the Secular Fraternity has been united for centuries.

To promote fidelity to the charism as well as observance of the rule and to receive greater support in the

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life of the fraternity, the minister or president, with the consent of the council, should take care to ask for a regular pastoral visit by the competent religious superiors as well as for a fraternal visit from those of the higher fraternities, according to the norm of the constitutions.

BLESSING OF SAINT FRANCIS (1226):

*May whoever observe all this be filled in heaven
with the blessing of the most high Father,
and on earth with that of his beloved Son,
together with the Holy Spirit, the Comforter.*

General Constitutions 2000

CHAPTER I THE SECULAR FRANCISCAN ORDER

Article 1

1. All the faithful are called to holiness and have a right to follow their own spiritual way in communion with the Church.¹
2. *Rule 1* There are many spiritual families in the Church with different charisms. Among these families, the Franciscan Family, which in its various branches recognizes St. Francis of Assisi as its father, inspiration, and model, must be included.
3. *Rule 2* From the beginning, the Secular Franciscan Order² has had its own proper place in the Franciscan Family. It is formed by the organic union of all the Catholic fraternities whose members, moved by the Holy Spirit, commit themselves through profession to live the Gospel in the manner of St. Francis, in their secular state, following the Rule approved by the Church.³
4. The Holy See has entrusted the pastoral care and spiritual assistance of the Secular Franciscan Order (OFS), because it belongs to the same spiritual family, to the Franciscan First Order and Third Order Regular (TOR). These are the "Institutes" who are responsible for the *altius moderamen*, referred to by Canon 303 of the Code of Canon Law.⁴
5. The Secular Franciscan Order is a public association in the Church.⁵ It is divided into fraternities at various levels: local, regional, national, and international. Each one has its own juridical personality within the Church.

Article 2

1. The vocation to the OFS is a specific vocation that gives form to the life and apostolic activity of its members. Therefore, those who are bound by a perpetual commitment to another religious family or institute of consecrated life cannot belong to the OFS.
2. The OFS is open to the faithful of every state of life. The following may belong to it:
 - the laity (men and women);
 - the secular clergy (deacons, priests, bishops).

¹ See Can. 210; 214; *Lumen Gentium* 40.

² It is also called "Secular Franciscan Fraternity", or "Franciscan Third Order" (TOF). See *Rule 2*, footnote 5. Canon 303 of the CCL defines third orders: "Associations whose members live in the world, but share in the spirit of some religious institute, under the overall direction (*altius moderamen*) of the same institute, and who lead an apostolic life and strive for Christian perfection, are known as third orders, or are called by some other suitable title."

³ After the Rules approved by Pope Nicholas IV in 1289 and by Pope Leo XIII in 1883, the present Rule was approved by Pope Paul VI, June 24, 1978.

⁴ See *General Constitutions OFS* 85,2. When the Constitutions are cited without any other specification, the reference is to the present text.

⁵ See Can. 116; 301,3; 312; 313.

Article 3

1. The secular state characterizes the spirituality and the apostolic life of those belonging to the OFS.
2. Their secularity, with respect to vocation and to apostolic life, expresses itself according to the respective state, that is:
 - for the laity, contributing to building up the Kingdom of God by their presence in their

life-situations and in their temporal activities;⁶

— for the secular clergy, by offering to the people of God the service which is properly theirs, in communion with the bishop and the presbytery.⁷

Both are inspired by the gospel options of Saint Francis of Assisi, committing themselves to continue his mission with the other components of the Franciscan Family.

3. The vocation to the OFS is a vocation to live the Gospel in fraternal communion. For this purpose, the members of the OFS gather in ecclesial communities which are called fraternities.

Article 4

1. The OFS is governed by the universal law of the Church, and by its own: the Rule, the Constitutions, the Ritual, and the particular statutes.
2. The Rule establishes the nature, purpose, and spirit of the OFS.
3. *Rule 3* The Constitutions have as their purpose:
 - to apply the Rule;
 - to indicate concretely the conditions for belonging to the OFS, its government, the organization of life in fraternity, and its seat.⁸

Article 5

1. *Rule 3* The authentic interpretation of the Rule and of the Constitutions belongs to the Holy See.
2. The practical interpretation of the Constitutions, with the purpose of harmonizing its application in different areas and at the various levels of the Order, belongs to the General Chapter of the OFS.
3. The clarification of specific points which require a timely decision is the competence of the Presidency of the International Council of the OFS (CIOFS). Such a clarification is valid until the next General Chapter.

⁶ See Can 225, and the Discourse of Pope John Paul II to the OFS, September 27, 1982 in *L'Osservatore Romano*, September 28, 1982.

⁷ See Can. 275 ff, *Presbyterorum ordinis* 12; 14; 15 ff.

⁸ See Can. 304.

Article 6

1. The international fraternity of the OFS has its own statutes approved by the General Chapter.
2. National fraternities have their own statutes approved by the Presidency of the International Council of the OFS.
3. The regional and the local fraternities may have their own statutes approved by the council of the higher level.

Article 7

All regulations not in accordance with the present Constitutions are abrogated.

CHAPTER II FORM OF LIFE AND APOSTOLIC ACTIVITY

Title I: THE FORM OF LIFE

Article 8

1. The Secular Franciscans commit themselves by their profession to live the Gospel according to Franciscan spirituality in their secular condition.
2. They seek to deepen, in the light of faith, the values and choices of the evangelical life according to the Rule of the OFS:
 - *Rule 7* in a continually renewed journey of conversion and of formation;
 - *Rule 4,3* open to the challenges that come from society and from the Church's life situation, "going from Gospel to life and from life to Gospel;"
 - in the personal and communal dimensions of this journey.

Article 9

1. *Rule 5* The spirituality of the Secular Franciscan is a plan of life centered on the person and on the following of Christ,⁹ rather than a detailed program to be put into practice.
2. *Rule 4,3* The Secular Franciscan, committed to following the example and the teachings of Christ, must personally and assiduously study the Gospel and Sacred Scripture. The fraternity and its leaders should foster love for the word of the Gospel and help the brothers and sisters to know and understand it as it is proclaimed by the Church with the assistance of the Spirit ¹⁰.

Article 10

Rule 10 "Christ, poor and crucified", victor over death and risen, the greatest manifestation of the love of God for humanity, is the "book" in which the brothers and sisters, in imitation of Francis, learn the purpose and the way of living, loving, and suffering. They discover in Him the value of contradictions for the sake of justice and the meaning of the difficulties and the crosses of daily life. With Him, they can accept the will of the Father even under the most difficult circumstances and live the Franciscan spirit of peace, rejecting every doctrine contrary to human dignity.

⁹See *Rule* of 1221, Chapt. 22; *Second Letter to All the Faithful* 51.

¹⁰See *Dei verbum* 10.

Article 11

Mindful that the Holy Spirit is the source of their vocation and the animator of fraternal life and mission, Secular Franciscans should seek to imitate the faithfulness of Francis to His inspiration. They should listen to the exhortation of the Saint to desire above all things "the Spirit of God at work within them."¹¹

Article 12

1. Gaining inspiration from the example and the writings of Francis and, above all, filled with the grace of the Holy Spirit, each day the brothers and sisters faithfully live the great gift which Christ has given: the revelation of the Father. They should bear witness to this faith before all:
 - in their family life;
 - in their work;
 - in their joys and sufferings;

- in their associations with all men and women, brothers and sisters of the same Father;
- in their presence and participation in the life of society;
- in their fraternal relationships with all creatures.

2. *Rule 10* With Jesus, obedient even to death, they should seek to know and do the will of the Father. They should give thanks to God for the gift of freedom and for the revelation of the law of love. In order to carry out the will of the Father, they should accept the help which is offered to them through the mediation of the Church by those who are constituted as authority in her and by their confreres. They should take on the risk of courageous choices in their life in society with decisiveness and serenity.
3. *Rule 8* The brothers and sisters should love meeting God as His children and they should let prayer and contemplation be the soul of all they are and do. They should seek to discover the presence of the Father in their own heart, in nature, and in the history of humanity in which His plan of salvation is fulfilled. The contemplation of this mystery will dispose them to collaborate in this loving plan.

Article 13

1. *Rule 7* Secular Franciscans, called in earlier times "the brothers and sisters of penance," propose to live in the spirit of continual conversion. Some means to cultivate this characteristic of the Franciscan vocation, individually and in fraternity, are: listening to and celebrating the Word of God; review of life; spiritual retreats; the help of a spiritual adviser, and penitential celebrations. They should approach the Sacrament of Reconciliation frequently and participate in the communal celebration of it, whether in the fraternity, or with the whole people of God.¹²

¹¹*Rule of 1223, Chapt. 10.*

¹²*Ordo Poenitentiae. Praenotanda 22 ff.*

2. In this spirit of conversion, they should live out their love for the renewal of the Church, which should be accompanied by personal and communal renewal. The fruits of conversion, which is a response to the love of God, are the works of charity in the interactions with the brothers and sisters.¹³
3. Traditional among Franciscan penitents, penitential practices such as fasting and abstinence should be known, appreciated, and lived out according to the general guidelines of the Church.

Article 14

1. Aware that God wanted to make of us all a single people and that he made his Church the universal sacrament of salvation, the brothers and sisters should commit themselves to a faith inspired reflection on the Church, its mission in today's world and the role of the Franciscan laity within it. They should take up the challenges and accept the responsibilities that this reflection will lead them to discover.
2. *Rule 8* The Eucharist is the center of the life of the Church. Christ unites us to himself and to one another as a single body in it. Therefore, the Eucharist should be the center of the life of the fraternity. The brothers and sisters should participate in the Eucharist as frequently as possible, being mindful of the respect and love shown by Francis, who, in the Eucharist, lived all the mysteries of the life of Christ.
3. They should participate in the sacraments of the Church, attentive not only to personal sanctification, but also to fostering the growth of the Church and the spreading of the Kingdom. They should collaborate in achieving living and conscious celebrations in their own parishes, particularly in the celebrations of baptism, confirmation, marriage, and the anointing of the sick

4. The brothers and sisters, as well as the fraternities, should adhere to the indications of the Ritual with respect to the different forms of participating in the liturgical prayer of the Church, giving priority to the celebration of the Liturgy of the Hours¹⁴.
5. In all places and at all times, it is possible for true worshippers of the Father to give him adoration and to pray to him. Nevertheless, the brothers and sisters should try to find times of silence and recollection dedicated exclusively to prayer.

Article 15

1. *Rule 11* Secular Franciscans should pledge themselves to live the spirit of the Beatitudes and, in a special way, the spirit of poverty. Evangelical poverty demonstrates confidence in the Father, creates interior freedom, and disposes them to promote a more just distribution of wealth.
2. Secular Franciscans, who must provide for their own families and serve society by means of their work and material goods, have a particular manner of living evangelical poverty. To understand and achieve it requires a strong personal commitment and the stimulation of the fraternity in prayer and dialogue, communal review of life, and attentiveness to the instructions of the Church, and the demands of society.
3. Secular Franciscans should pledge themselves to reduce their own personal needs so as to be better able to share spiritual and material goods with their brothers and sisters, especially those most in need. They should give thanks to God for the goods they have received, using them as good stewards and not as owners. They should take a firm position against consumerism and against ideologies and practices which prefer riches over human and religious values and which permit the exploitation of the human person.
4. They should love and practice purity of heart, the source of true fraternity

¹³See *Second Letter to All the Faithful* 25 ff.

¹⁴*Ritual OFS*, Appendix 26, 27.

Article 16

1. *Rule 9* Mary, Mother of Jesus, is the model of listening to the Word and of faithfulness to vocation; we, like Francis, see all the gospel virtues realized in her.¹⁵
The brothers and sisters should cultivate intense love for the most holy virgin, imitation, prayer, and filial abandonment. They should manifest their own devotion with expressions of genuine faith, in forms accepted by the Church.
2. Mary is the model of fruitful and faithful love for the entire ecclesial community.
Secular Franciscans and their fraternities should seek to live the experience of Francis, who made the Virgin the guide of his activity. With her, like the disciples at Pentecost, they should welcome the Spirit to create a community of love.¹⁶

¹⁵*Salutation of the Blessed Virgin Mary*.

¹⁶See *2 Celano*, 198.

Title II: ACTIVE PRESENCE IN THE CHURCH AND IN THE WORLD

Article 17

1. *Rule 6* Called to work together in building up the Church as the sacrament of salvation for all and, through their baptism and profession, made "witnesses and instruments of her mission," Secular Franciscans proclaim Christ by their life and words. Their preferred apostolate is personal witness¹⁷ in the environment in which they live and service for building up the Kingdom of God within the situations of this world.
2. The preparation of the brothers and sisters for spreading the Gospel message "in the ordinary circumstances of the world"¹⁸ and for collaborating in the catechesis within the ecclesial communities should be promoted in the fraternities.
3. Those who are called to carry out the mission of catechists, presiders of ecclesial communities, or other ministries, as well as the sacred ministers, should make the love of Francis for the Word of God their own, as well as his faith in those who announce it, and the great fervor with which he received the mission of preaching penance from the Pope.
4. Participation in the service of sanctification, which the Church exercises through the liturgy, prayer, and works of penance and charity, is put into practice by the brothers and sisters above all in their own family, then in the fraternity and, finally, through their active presence in the local Church and in society.

For a Just and Fraternal Society

Article 18

1. Secular Franciscans are called to make their own contribution, inspired by the person and message of Saint Francis of Assisi, towards a civilization in which the dignity of the human person, shared responsibility, and love may be living realities.¹⁹
2. *Rule 13* They should deepen the true foundations of universal kinship and create a spirit of welcome and an atmosphere of fraternity everywhere. They should firmly commit themselves to oppose every form of exploitation, discrimination, and exclusion and against every attitude of indifference in relation to others.
3. *Rule 13* They should work together with movements which promote the building of fraternity among peoples: they should be committed to "create worthy conditions of life" for all and to work for the freedom of all people.

¹⁷See *Rule 1221, 17,3; Legend of the Three Companions 36; Second Letter to All the Faithful 53.*

¹⁸ *Lumen Gentium 35*

¹⁹See *Gaudium et Spes 31 ff.*

4. Following the example of Francis, patron of ecologists, they should actively put forward initiatives that care for creation and should work with others in efforts that both put a stop to polluting and degrading nature and also establish circumstances of living and environment which would not be a threat to the human person.

Article 19

1. *Rule 14* Secular Franciscans should always act as a leaven in the environment in which they live through the witness of their fraternal love and clear Christian motivations.
2. In the spirit of minority, they should opt for relationships which give preference to the poor and to those on the fringe of society, whether these be individuals or categories of persons or an entire people; they should collaborate in overcoming the exclusion of others and those forms of poverty that are the fruit of inefficiency and injustice.

Article 20

1. *Rule 14* Secular Franciscans, committed by their vocation to build the Kingdom of God in temporal situations and activities, live their membership both in the Church and in society as an inseparable reality.
2. As the primary and fundamental contribution to building a more just and fraternal world, they should commit themselves both to the generous fulfillment of the duties proper to their occupation and to the professional training that pertains to it. With the same spirit of service, they should assume their social and civil responsibilities.

Article 21

1. *Rule 16* For Francis, work is a gift and to work is a grace. Daily work is not only the means of livelihood, but the opportunity to serve God and neighbor as well as a way to develop one's own personality. In the conviction that work is a right and a duty and that every form of occupation deserves respect, the brothers and sisters should commit themselves to collaborate so that all persons may have the possibility to work and so that working conditions may always be more humane.
2. Leisure and recreation have their own value and are necessary for personal development. Secular Franciscans should maintain a balance between work and rest and should strive to create meaningful forms of using leisure time.²⁰

Article 22

1. *Rule 15* Secular Franciscans should "be in the forefront ... in the field of public life." They should collaborate as much as possible for the passage of just laws and ordinances.
²⁰See *Gaudium et Spes* 67; *Laborem exercens* 16 ff.
2. The fraternities should engage themselves through courageous initiatives, consistent with their Franciscan vocation and with the directives of the Church, in the field of human development and justice. They should take clear positions whenever human dignity is attacked by any form of oppression or indifference. They should offer their fraternal service to the victims of Injustice.
3. The renunciation of the use of violence, characteristic of the followers of Francis, does not mean the renunciation of action. However, the brothers and sisters should take care that their interventions are always inspired by Christian love.

Article 23

1. *Rule 19* Peace is the work of justice and the fruit of reconciliation and of fraternal love.²¹ Secular Franciscans are called to be bearers of peace in their families and in society:
 - they should see to the proposal and spreading of peaceful ideas and attitudes;
 - they should develop their own initiatives and should collaborate, individually and as a

- fraternity, with initiatives of the Pope, the local Churches, and the Franciscan Family;
- they should collaborate with those movements and institutions which promote peace while respecting its authentic foundations.
2. While acknowledging both the personal and national right to legitimate defense, they should respect the choice of those who, because of conscientious objection, refuse to bear arms.
 3. To preserve peace in the family, the brothers and sisters should, in due time, make a last will and testament for the disposition of their goods.

In the Family

Article 24

1. *Rule 17* Secular Franciscans should consider their own family to be the first place in which to live their Christian commitment and Franciscan vocation. They should make space within it for prayer, for the Word of God, and for Christian catechesis. They should concern themselves with respect for all life in every situation from conception until death.
Married couples find in the Rule of the OFS an effective aid in their own journey of Christian life, aware that, in the sacrament of matrimony, their love shares in the love that Christ has for his Church. The way spouses love each other and affirm the value of fidelity is a profound witness for their own family, the Church, and the world.
2. In the fraternity:
 - the spirituality of the family and of marriage and the Christian attitude towards family problems should be a theme for dialogue and for the sharing of experiences;
 - they should share the important moments of the family life of their Franciscan brothers and sisters and they should give fraternal attention to those — single, widows, single parents, separated, divorced — who are living difficult situations;
 - *Rule 19* they should create conditions suitable for dialogue between generations;
 - the formation of groups of married couples and of family groups should be fostered.
3. The brothers and sisters should collaborate with the efforts undertaken in the Church and in society to affirm both the value of fidelity and respect for life and to provide answers to the social problems of the family.

²¹ See *Gaudium et Spes* 78

Article 25

Out of the conviction of the need to educate children to take an interest in community, “bringing them the awareness of being living, active members of the People of God”²² and because of the fascination which Francis can exercise on them, the formation of groups of children should be encouraged. With the help of a pedagogy and an organization suitable to their age, these children should be initiated into a knowledge and love of the Franciscan life. National statutes will give appropriate orientation for the organization of these groups and their relationship to the fraternity and to Franciscan youth groups.

Messengers of Joy and Hope

Article 26

1. Even in suffering, Francis experienced confidence and joy from:
 - the experience of the fatherhood of God;

- the invincible faith of rising with Christ to eternal life;
- the experience of being able to meet and praise the Creator in the universal fraternity of all creatures.²³

Rule 19 Following the Gospel, Secular Franciscans, therefore, affirm their hope and their joy in living. They make a contribution to counter widespread distress and pessimism, preparing a better future.

2. In the fraternity, the brothers and sisters should promote mutual understanding and they should see to it that the atmosphere of their meetings is welcoming and that it reflects joy. They should encourage one another for the good.

Article 27

1. *Rule 19* The brothers and sisters, progressing in age, should learn to accept illness and increasing difficulties and to give a deeper sense to their life. This should be undertaken with increasing detachment as they set out for the Promised Land. They should be firmly convinced that the community of those who believe in Christ and who love one another in Him will go forward into eternal life as the "communion of saints."
2. Secular Franciscans should commit themselves to create in their environment and, above all, in their fraternities, a climate of faith and hope so that "Sister Death" may be regarded as a passage to the Father, and all may prepare themselves with serenity.

²²*Apostolicam actuositatem* 30.

²³See 2 *Celano*, 125; *Legend of Perugia* 43; *Major Life*, 9.

CHAPTER III LIFE IN FRATERNITY

Title I: GENERAL ORIENTATIONS

Article 28

1. The fraternity of the OFS finds its origin in the inspiration of Saint Francis of Assisi to whom the Most High revealed the essential gospel quality of life in fraternal communion.²⁴
2. *Rule 20* "The OFS is divided into fraternities of various levels," the purpose being to promote, in an orderly form, the union and mutual collaboration among the brothers and sisters and their active and communal presence in both the local and the universal Church. The OFS shall also support the commitment of the fraternities in their service to the world, and specifically to the life of society.
3. The brothers and sisters gather in local fraternities established in connection with a church or a religious house, or in personal fraternities, constituted for specific and valid reasons recognized in the decree of establishment.²⁵

Article 29

1. Local fraternities are grouped into fraternities at various levels: regional, national and international according to criteria that are ecclesial, territorial, or of another nature. They are coordinated and connected according to the norm of the Rule and the Constitutions. This is a requirement of the communion among the fraternities, of the orderly collaboration among them, and of the unity of the OFS.

2. *Rule 20* These fraternities, that each have their own juridical personality in the Church, should acquire, if possible, a civil juridical personality for the better fulfillment of their mission. It pertains to the national councils to give guidelines concerning the motivations and the procedures to be followed.
3. National statutes should indicate the criteria for the organization of the OFS in the nation. The application of these criteria is left to the prudent judgement of the leaders of the fraternities concerned and of the national council.

Article 30

1. The brothers and sisters are co-responsible for the life of the fraternity to which they belong and for the OFS as the organic union of all fraternities throughout the world.
2. The sense of co-responsibility of the members requires personal presence, witness, prayer, and active collaboration, in accordance with each one's situation and possible obligations for the animation of the fraternity.
3. *Rule 25* In a family spirit, each brother and sister should make a contribution to the fraternity fund, according to each one's means, to provide the financial means needed for the life of the fraternity and for its religious, apostolic, and charitable works. The brothers and sisters ought to provide the means necessary for supporting the activities and the operations of the fraternities at higher levels, both by their financial assistance and by their contributions in other areas as well.

²⁴See *Constitutions* 3,3; *Testament* 14.

²⁵See Can. 518.

Article 31

1. *Rule 21* "On various levels, each fraternity is animated and guided by a council and minister (or president)." These offices are conferred through elections, in accordance with the Rule, the Constitutions, and their own Statutes. Only by way of exception or in the first phase of their establishment may fraternities exist without a regular council. The council of the higher level will make the arrangements necessary for this inadequate situation only for the specific amount of time it takes to get a fraternity back on sure footing or to establish a new fraternity; to give its leaders the proper formation and to carry out the elections.
2. The office of minister or councilor is a fraternal service, a commitment to hold oneself available and responsible in relation to each brother and sister and to the fraternity so that each one will realize his or her own vocation and each fraternity will be a true community, ecclesial and Franciscan, actively present in the Church and in society.
3. The leaders of the OFS at every level should be perpetually professed, convinced of the validity of the Franciscan evangelical way of life, attentive to the life of the Church and of society with a broad and encompassing vision, open to dialogue, and ready to give and receive help and collaboration.
4. The leaders should see to the spiritual and technical preparation and animation of the meetings, both of the fraternities and of the councils. They should seek to inspire life and soul into the fraternities by their own witness, suggesting appropriate means for the development of the life of the fraternity and of apostolic activities in the light of the fundamental Franciscan options. They should see to it that the decisions made are carried out and they should promote collaboration among the brothers and sisters.

Article 32

1. The ministers and councilors should live and foster the spirit and reality of communion among the brothers and sisters, among the various fraternities, and between them and the Franciscan family. They should, above all, cherish peace and reconciliation in and around the fraternity.
2. *Rule 21* The ministers' and councilors' task to lead is temporary. The brothers and sisters, rejecting all ambition, should show love for the fraternity with a spirit of service, prepared both to accept and to relinquish the office.

Article 33

1. In the guidance and co-ordination of the fraternities and of the Order, the personality and capacity of the individual brothers and sisters and of the individual fraternities should be promoted. The plurality of expressions of the Franciscan ideal and cultural variety must be respected.
2. The councils of higher levels should not do what can be adequately carried out either by the local fraternities or by a council of a lower level. They should respect and promote their vitality so that they fulfill their duties properly. The local fraternities and councils concerned should commit themselves to carry out the decisions of the international council and of the other councils of higher levels, and to implement their programs, adapting them when necessary to their own situation.

Article 34

Where the situation and the needs of the members require it, sections or groups which gather members sharing particular needs, common interests, or the same choices, may be established within the fraternity under the guidance of the one council.

Such groups can give themselves specific norms relative to their meetings and activities, firmly remaining faithful, however, to the requirements which arise from membership in the one fraternity. National statutes may establish criteria suitable for the formation and functioning of these sections or groups.

Article 35

1. Secular priests who recognize that they are called by the Spirit to participate in the charism of Saint Francis of Assisi within the secular fraternity should find in it specific attention in conformity with their mission among the People of God.
2. Secular Franciscan priests may also gather in personal fraternities in order to pursue the ascetical and pastoral incentives which the life and doctrine of Francis and the Rule of the OFS offer them to live their vocation in the Church better. It is proper that these fraternities have their own statutes which envision concrete forms for their composition, their fraternal meetings and for spiritual formation as well as for making their communion with the whole Order living and functional.

Article 36

1. The brothers and sisters who commit themselves with private vows to live in the spirit of the beatitudes and to make themselves more disposed to contemplation and to the service of the fraternities, can be a great help in the spiritual and apostolic development of the OFS.
2. These brothers and sisters may gather in groups according to statutes approved by the national council, or when these groups spread beyond the borders of a nation, by the Presidency of the International Council of the OFS.
3. Such statutes should be in harmony with the present Constitutions.

Title II: ENTRANCE INTO THE ORDER AND FORMATION

Article 37

1. *Rule 23* Membership in the Order is attained through a time of initiation, a time of formation, and the profession of the Rule.
2. The journey of formation, which should develop throughout life, begins with entrance into the fraternity. Mindful that the Holy Spirit is the principal agent of formation and always attentive to collaboration with Him, those responsible for formation are: the candidate, the entire fraternity, the council with the minister, the master of formation, and the assistant.
3. The brothers and sisters are responsible for their own formation, developing in an ever more perfect way the vocation received from the Lord. The fraternity is called to help the brothers and sisters in this journey by means of a warm welcome, prayer, and example.
4. The elaboration and adoption of means of formation, adapted to the local situations and offered as a help to those responsible for formation in the individual fraternities, belong to the national and regional councils in common agreement.

The Time of Initiation

Article 38

1. *Rule 23* The time of initiation is a phase preparatory to the true and proper time of formation and is intended for the discernment of the vocation and for the reciprocal acquaintance between the fraternity and the aspiring member. It should guarantee the freedom and the seriousness of entrance into the OFS.
2. The duration of the time of initiation and the forms employed in its development are established by the national statutes.
3. It belongs to the fraternity council to decide possible exemptions to this time of initiation, keeping in mind the guidelines of the national council.

Admission to the Order

Article 39

1. *Rule 23* The request for admission to the Order is presented by the aspirant to the minister of a local or personal fraternity by a formal act, in writing if possible.
2. Conditions for admission are: to profess the Catholic faith, to live in communion with the Church, to be of good moral standing, and to show clear signs of a vocation.²⁶
3. The council of the fraternity decides collegially on the request, gives a formal answer to the aspirant, and communicates this to the fraternity.
4. The rite of admission is performed according to the Ritual.²⁷ The act is to be registered and preserved in the records of the fraternity.

The Time of Formation

Article 40

1. *Rule 23* The time of formation lasts at least one year. The national statutes can establish a longer period. The purpose of this period is the maturation of the vocation, the experience of the evangelical life in fraternity, and a better knowledge of the Order. This formation should be carried out with frequent meetings for study and prayer and with concrete experiences of

service and of apostolate. These meetings should be held, as far as possible and opportune, in common with the candidates of other fraternities.

2. The candidates are guided to read and meditate on Sacred Scripture, to come to know the person and writings of Francis and of Franciscan spirituality, and to study the Rule and Constitutions. They are trained in a love for the Church and acceptance of her teaching. The laity practice living their secular commitment in the world in an evangelical way.
3. Participation in the meetings of the local fraternity is an indispensable presupposition for initiation into community prayer and into fraternity life.
4. A style of teaching which is Franciscan in character and which fits the mentality of the persons concerned should be adopted.

The Profession or Promise of Evangelical Life

Article 41

1. *Rule 23* Having completed the time of initial formation, the candidate submits to the minister of the local fraternity a request to make his or her profession. Having heard the master of formation and the assistant, the fraternity council decides by secret ballot on the admission to profession, gives its reply to the candidate, and informs the fraternity.
2. The conditions for the profession or promise of evangelical life are:
 - attainment of the age established by the national statutes;
 - active participation in the time of formation for at least one year;
 - the consent of the council of the local fraternity.
3. Where it is held to be opportune to lengthen the time of formation, it must not be extended to more than a year beyond the time established by the national statutes.

²⁶See Can. 316.

²⁷See *Ritual OFS*, Preface n. 10 ff.; Chapt. I.

Article 42

1. Profession is the solemn ecclesial act by which the candidate, remembering the call received from Christ, renews the baptismal promises and publicly affirms his or her personal commitment to live the Gospel in the world according to the example of Francis and following the Rule of the OFS.
2. *Rule 23* Profession incorporates the candidate into the Order and is by its nature a perpetual commitment. Perpetual profession, because of objective and specific pedagogical reasons, may be preceded by a temporary profession, renewable annually. The total time of temporary profession may not be longer than three years.²⁸
3. Profession is accepted by the minister of the local fraternity or by his or her delegate in the name of the Church and of the OFS. The rite is carried out according to the norms of the Ritual.²⁹
4. Profession does not only commit those professed to the fraternity, but also, in the same way, it commits the fraternity to be concerned with their human and religious well-being.
5. The act of profession is registered and preserved in the records of the fraternity.

Article 43

The national statutes establish:

- *Rule 23* the minimum age for profession which, however, may not be less than eighteen years completed;
- the distinctive sign of membership in the Order (the "Tau" or other Franciscan symbol).

Continuing Formation

Article 44

1. Begun by the preceding stages, the formation of the brothers and sisters takes place in a permanent and continuous way. It should be understood as an aid in the conversion of each³⁰ and everyone and in the fulfillment of their proper mission in the Church and in society.
2. The Fraternity has the duty to give special attention to the formation of the newly professed and of the temporarily professed, to help them become fully mature in their vocation and develop a true sense of belonging.
3. Ongoing formation – accomplished by means of courses, gatherings, and the sharing of experience – aims to assist the brothers and sisters:
 - *Rule 4* in listening to and meditating on the Word of God, "going from Gospel to life and from life to Gospel;"
 - in reflecting on events in the Church and in society in the light of faith, and with the help of the documents of the teaching Church, consequently taking consistent positions;
 - in discerning and deepening the Franciscan vocation by studying the writings of Saint Francis, Saint Clare and Franciscan authors.

²⁸ See *Ritual OFS*, Preface n. 18.

²⁹ *Ritual OFS*, Preface n. 13 ff.; Part I, Chapter II.

³⁰ See *Constitutions* 8; *1 Celano* 103

Promotion of Vocations

Article 45

1. The promotion of vocations to the Order is a duty of all the brothers and sisters and is a sign of the vitality of the fraternities themselves.
The brothers and sisters, convinced of the validity of the Franciscan way of life, should pray that God may give the grace of the Franciscan vocation to new members.
2. Although nothing can substitute for the witness of each member and of the fraternity, the councils must adopt appropriate means to promote the Secular Franciscan vocation.

Title III: THE FRATERNITY AT THE VARIOUS LEVELS

The Local Fraternity

Article 46

1. *Rule 22* The canonical establishment of the local fraternity belongs to the competent religious major superior at the request of the brothers and sisters concerned and with the prior consultation and collaboration of the council of the higher level to which the new fraternity will be related according to the national statutes.

The written consent of the local Ordinary is necessary for the canonical establishment of a fraternity outside the houses or churches of the Franciscan religious of the First Order or the TOR.³¹

2. For the valid establishment of a local fraternity, at least five perpetually professed members are required. The admission and profession of these first brothers and sisters will be received by the council of another local fraternity or by the council of a higher level which will have provided for their formation in appropriate ways. The acts of admission and profession and the decree of establishment are preserved in the records of the fraternity. Copies are sent to the council of the higher level.
3. If there is not yet a fraternity of the OFS in a nation, it belongs to the Presidency of the International Council of the OFS to make provision in this regard.

Article 47

1. *Rule 22* Each local fraternity, the primary cell of the one OFS, is entrusted to the pastoral care of the religious Franciscan Order that canonically established it.
2. A local fraternity may pass to the pastoral care of another religious Franciscan Order in the ways determined by the national statutes.

Article 48

1. In the case of cessation of a fraternity, the patrimonial goods of the same, the library and the records are acquired by the fraternity of the immediately higher level.
2. In the case of revival according to the canonical laws, the fraternity will repossess any remaining goods, its own library, and records.

³¹ See Can. 312.

The Fraternity Council

Article 49

1. The council of the local fraternity is composed of the following offices: minister, vice-minister, secretary, treasurer, and master of formation. Other offices may be added according to the needs of each fraternity. The spiritual assistant of the fraternity forms part of the council by right.³²
2. The fraternity, meeting in an assembly or chapter, discusses questions regarding its own life and organization. Every three years, in an elective assembly or chapter, the fraternity elects the minister and the council in the way established by the Constitutions and statutes.

Article 50

1. It is the duty of the council of the local fraternity:
 - to promote the initiatives necessary for fostering fraternal life, for improving the human, Christian, and Franciscan formation of its members and for sustaining their witness and commitment in the world;
 - to make concrete and courageous choices, appropriate for the situation of the fraternity, from among the numerous activities possible in the field of the apostolate.
2. The duties of the council are also:
 - a. to decide on the acceptance and admission to profession of new brothers and sisters;³³
 - b. to establish a fraternal dialogue with members in particular difficulties and to adopt consequent measures;
 - c. to receive the request for withdrawal and to decide on the suspension of a member from the fraternity;
 - d. to decide on the establishment of sections or groups in conformity with the Constitutions and the statutes;
 - e. to decide on the destination of available funds and, in general, to deliberate on matters concerning financial management and the economic affairs of the fraternity; to assign duties to the councilors and to the other professed members;
 - f. to request from the competent superiors of the First Order and the TOR suitable and prepared religious as assistants;
 - g. to perform such other duties as are required by these Constitutions or which are necessary to carry out its proper purposes.

The Offices in the Fraternity

Article 51

1. While firmly upholding the co-responsibility of the council to animate and guide the fraternity, the minister, as the primary person responsible for the fraternity, is expected to make sure that the directions and the decisions of the council are put into practice and will keep the council informed about what he or she is doing.

³²See *Constitutions* 90,2.

³³See *Constitutions* 39, 3; 41, 1.

2. The minister also has the following duties:
 - a. to call, to preside at, and to direct the meetings of the fraternity and council; to convoke, every three years, the elective chapter of the fraternity, having heard the council on the formalities of the convocation;
 - b. to prepare the annual report to be sent to the council of the higher level after it has been approved by the council of the fraternity;
 - c. to represent the fraternity in all its relations with ecclesiastical and civil authorities. When the fraternity acquires a juridical personality in the civil order, the minister becomes, when possible, its legal representative;
 - d. to request, with the consent of the council, the pastoral and fraternal visits, at least once every three years.
 - e. to put into effect those acts which the Constitutions refer to his or her competence.

Article 52

1. The vice-minister has the following duties:
 - a. to collaborate in a fraternal spirit and to support the minister in carrying out his or her specific duties;
 - b. to exercise the functions entrusted by the council and/or by the assembly or chapter;
 - c. to take the place of the minister in both duties and responsibilities in case of absence or temporary impediment;
 - d. to assume the functions of the minister when the office remains vacant.³⁴
 2. The secretary has the following duties:
 - a. to compile the official acts of the fraternity and of the council and to assure that they are sent to their respective proper recipients;
 - b. to see to the updating and preservation of the records and the registers, noting admissions, professions, deaths, withdrawals, and transfers from the fraternity;³⁵
 - c. to provide for the communication of the more important facts to the various levels and, if appropriate, to provide for their dissemination through the mass media.
 3. The master of formation has the following duties:
 - a. to co-ordinate, with the help of the other members of the council, the formative activities of the fraternity;
 - b. to instruct and enliven the inquirers during the time of initiation, the candidates during the period of initiation formation, and the newly professed;
 - c. to inform the council of the fraternity prior to profession, concerning the suitability of the candidate for a commitment to live according to the Rule.
 4. The treasurer, or bursar, has the following duties:
 - a. to guard diligently the contributions received, recording each receipt in the appropriate register, with the date on which it was given, the name of the contributor, or the one from whom it was collected;
 - b. to record in the same register the items of expense, specifying the date and the purpose, in conformity with the directions of the fraternity council;
 - c. to render an account of his or her administration to the assembly and to the council of the fraternity according to the norms of the national statutes
- ³⁴⁾ See *Constitutions* 81,1.
- ³⁵⁾ Each local fraternity is to have at least a register of enrollments (admissions, professions, transfers, deaths, and every other important annotation relative to the individual members), the register of minutes of the council and the register of administration.
5. The provisions regarding the rights and duties of the vice-minister, the secretary and the treasurer apply, with the appropriate adaptations, to all levels.

Participation in the Life of the Fraternity

Article 53

1. *Rule 24* The fraternity must offer to its member's opportunities for coming together and collaborating through meetings to be held with as great a frequency as allowed by the situation and with the involvement of all its members.
2. *Rule 6; 8* The fraternity should come together periodically, also as an ecclesial community to celebrate the Eucharist in a climate which strengthens the fraternal bond and characterizes the identity of the Franciscan family. Where, for whatever reason, this particular celebration may not be possible, they should participate in the celebration of the larger ecclesial community.

3. Insertion into a local fraternity and participation in fraternity life is essential for belonging to the OFS. Appropriate initiatives should be adopted according to the directives of the national statutes, to keep those brothers and sisters united to the fraternity who — for valid reasons of health, family, work, or distance — cannot actively participate in community life.
4. The fraternity remembers with gratitude its brothers and sisters who have passed away and continues its communion with them by prayer and in the Eucharist.
5. The national statutes can indicate special forms of association with the fraternity for those who, without becoming a member of the OFS, want to participate in its life and activities.

Article 54

1. In cases where the fraternity of whatever level has property or real estate at its disposal, the procedures necessary for that fraternity to acquire a juridical personality in the civil order must be followed in conformity with the national statutes.
2. Based on the respective civil legislation, the national statutes must establish precise criteria regarding the purpose of the juridical person, the administration of its material goods and the relevant internal controls. They must also contain instructions so that the establishing document may provide for the disposal of its property in case the juridical person ceases to exist.
3. The national statutes must also set up precise criteria for local fraternities that possess or minister property or real estate, so that the respective council, before its term of office is finished, has the fraternity's financial and real estate situation audited either by an expert who is not a member of the council or by the fraternity's board of examiners.

Transfer

Article 55

If a brother or sister, for any reasonable cause, desires transfer to another fraternity, he or she first informs the council of the fraternity to which he or she belongs and then makes the request, including the reasons for the transfer, to the minister of the fraternity to which he or she wishes to belong. The council makes its decision after having received the necessary information in writing from the fraternity of origin.

Temporary Provisions

Article 56

1. *Rule 23* Members who find themselves in difficulty may ask, with a formal act, temporary withdrawal from the fraternity. The council will evaluate the request with love and prudence, after a fraternal dialogue between the minister and the assistant with the person concerned. If the reasons appear to be well founded, after the brother or sister in difficulty has been given time to reconsider, the council agrees to the request.
2. The repeated and prolonged default in the obligations of the life of the fraternity and other conduct in serious opposition to the Rule have to be discussed by the council in dialogue with the person at fault. Only in the case of obstinacy or relapse may the council decide, with a secret vote, to suspend someone. It communicates its decision in writing to the person concerned.
3. Voluntary withdrawal or the provision for suspension must be noted in the registers of the fraternity. It involves exclusion from the meetings and activities of the fraternity, including the

right of active and passive voice, but membership in the Order itself is not affected.

Article 57

1. In the case of voluntary withdrawal or of suspension from the fraternity, the Secular Franciscan may ask to be readmitted by addressing an appropriate written request to the minister.
2. After examining the reasons offered by the person involved, the council evaluates whether the causes which led to the withdrawal or suspension can be considered as overcome. If the conclusion is affirmative, it readmits him or her and the decision is recorded in the proceedings of the fraternity.

Definitive Provisions

Article 58

1. The brother or sister who intends to withdraw definitively from the Order, communicates so in writing to the minister of the fraternity. The minister and the assistant of the local fraternity, with charity and prudence, discuss the matter with the person concerned and keep the Council informed. If the brother or sister confirms the decision in writing, the Council takes notice and communicates it in writing to the person concerned. The definitive withdrawal is recorded in the register of the fraternity and communicated to the council of the higher level.
2. In case of serious causes, provided that they are external, imputable, and juridically proven, the minister and the assistant of the local fraternity, with charity and prudence, discuss the matter with the brother or sister concerned and keep the council informed. The brother or sister is given time to reflect and to discern, eventually with the help of an external and competent expert. If the time set aside for reflection passes without any result, the council of the fraternity requests the council of the higher level to dismiss the brother or sister from the Order. The request must be accompanied by all the documentation relative to the case. The council of the higher level will issue the decree of dismissal after having collegially examined the request with the relative documentation and having verified observance of the directives of the Law and of the Constitutions.
3. The brother or sister who publicly rejects the faith, or defects from ecclesiastical communion, or upon whom an excommunication is imposed or declared, by the fact itself ceases to be a member of the Order. This does not mean, however, that the council of the fraternity should not discuss the matter with the person concerned or offer fraternal help. The council of a higher level, upon request of the council of the local fraternity, collects the proofs and officially declares that the person has ceased to be a member of the Order.
4. The decree of dismissal or the declaration that the person has ceased to be a member of the Order, in order to become effective, must be confirmed by the national council to whom all the documentation will be sent.

Article 59

If anyone is convinced that he or she has been wronged by a measure adopted, that person may appeal within three months to the council above the one that adopted the decision in question and, in successive cases, to further levels all the way up to the Presidency of the International Council of the OFS and, in the final instance, to the Holy See.

Article 60

What is said in these Constitutions with respect to the local fraternities is valid, to the extent that it is applicable, for the personal fraternities also.

The Regional Fraternity

Article 61

1. The regional fraternity is the organic union of all the local fraternities existing in a territory or which can be integrated into a natural unity, either by geographic proximity, or by common problems and pastoral circumstances. It assures the link between the local fraternities and the national fraternity in respect to the unity of the OFS and in accord with the cooperative efforts of the Franciscan religious orders to provide spiritual assistance within the area.
2. It is for the national council to compose the regional fraternity according to the Constitutions and to the national statutes. The competent religious superiors, from whom spiritual assistance must be sought, should be informed of it.
3. The regional fraternity:
 - is animated and guided by council and a minister;
 - is ruled by the national statutes and by its own statutes;
 - has its own seat.

Article 62

1. The regional council is constituted according to the provisions of the national statutes and of its own regional statutes. At the heart of the regional council there can be set up an executive council (or board) whose duties are determined by those same statutes.
2. The regional council has the following duties:
 - a. to prepare the celebration of the elective chapter;
 - b. to promote, animate, and co-ordinate the life and activities of the OFS and its insertion into the local Church within the regional area;
 - c. to detail the action plan of the OFS within the region according to the directives of the national council and in collaboration with it and to publicize that program to the local fraternities;
 - d. to communicate the directives of the national council and of the local Church to the local fraternities;
 - e. to provide for the formation of those responsible for animation;
 - f. to offer to local fraternities' activities which support their formative and operative needs;
 - g. to discuss and approve the annual report to the national council;
 - h. to schedule, when circumstances recommend so, the fraternal visit to the local fraternities, even if it is not requested;
 - i. to make decisions regarding the use of available funds and, in general, to deliberate on matters regarding the financial management and the economic affairs of the regional fraternity;
 - j. to have, before its term of office is finished, the regional fraternity's financial and real estate situation audited either by an expert who is not a member of the council or by the fraternity's board of examiners;
 - k. to perform such other duties as are indicated by the Constitutions or necessary to achieve its own aims.

Article 63

1. While firmly preserving the co-responsibility of the council for the animation and guidance of the regional fraternity, it is the duty of the minister, who has the primary responsibility, to see that the directions and decisions of the council are put into practice. He or she will keep the council informed concerning his or her activities.
2. In addition, the regional minister has the duty:
 - a. to convoke and preside at the meetings of the regional council; to convoke every three years the elective chapter of the fraternity after having listened to the council on the formalities of the convocation;
 - b. to preside at and to confirm the elections of the local fraternities either in person or through a delegated member of the regional council, with the exception of the spiritual assistant;
 - c. to make fraternal visits to the local fraternities, personally or through a delegate who is a member of the council;
 - d. to participate in the meetings called by the national council;
 - e. to represent the fraternity whenever it has acquired a juridical personality in the civil order;
 - f. to prepare the annual report to the national council;
 - g. to request the pastoral and fraternal visits with the consent of the council, at least once every three years.

Article 64

The regional chapter is the representative organ of all the fraternities existing within the confines of a regional fraternity, with elective and deliberative power.

The national statutes provide for the formalities of convocation, its composition, frequency and powers.

The National Fraternity

Article 65

1. The national fraternity is the organic union of the local fraternities existing within the territory of one or more states which are joined and coordinated among themselves through regional fraternities, wherever they exist.
2. It is the duty of the Presidency of the International Council of the OFS to provide for the establishment of new national fraternities upon request and in dialogue with the councils of the fraternities concerned. The competent religious superiors of the nation, of whom spiritual assistance will be requested, should be informed.
3. The national fraternity:
 - is animated and guided by a council and a minister;
 - is governed by its own statutes;
 - has its own seat.

Article 66

1. The national council is constituted according to the provisions of the national statutes. At the heart of the national council there can be set up an executive council (or board) whose duties are determined by those same statutes.
2. The national council has the duty:
 - a. to prepare the celebration of the national elective chapter, according to its own statutes;
 - b. to make known and to promote the Secular Franciscan spirituality in the whole area of its own national fraternity;
 - c. to decide upon programs of annual activities of a national character;
 - d. to seek, indicate, publish, and distribute the necessary instruments for the formation of the Secular Franciscans;
 - e. to animate and co-ordinate the activities of the regional councils;
 - f. to maintain the connection with the Presidency of the International Council of the OFS;
 - g. to make sure that the national fraternity be represented in the international council and to assume the responsibility for the expenses involved;
 - h. to discuss and approve the annual report to Presidency of the International Council of the OFS;
 - i. to see to the presence of the OFS in the ecclesial bodies at the national level;
 - j. to schedule, when circumstances recommend so, the fraternal visit to the regional and local fraternities, even if it is not requested;
 - k. to make decisions regarding the management of the available funds and, in general, regarding the economic affairs of the fraternity;
 - l. to have, before its term of office is finished, the national fraternity's financial and real estate situation audited either by an expert who is not a member of the council or by the fraternity's board of examiners;
 - m. to perform such other duties as are indicated by the Constitutions or necessary to achieve its own aims.

Article 67

1. While firmly preserving the co-responsibility of the council for the animation and guidance of the national fraternity, it is the duty of the minister, who has the primary responsibility, to see that the directions and decisions of the council are put into practice. He or she will keep the council informed concerning his or her activities.
2. In addition, the national minister has the duty:
 - a. to convoke and preside at the meetings of the national council; to convoke every three years the elective chapter of the national fraternity, according to the national statutes, after having listened to the council on the formalities of the convocation;
 - b. to direct and co-ordinate with the national leaders the activities at the national level;
 - c. to give a report to the national council and chapter on the life and activity of the OFS in the country;
 - d. to represent the national fraternity in contacts with ecclesiastical and civil authorities. When the national fraternity has a civil juridical personality, its legal representation belongs to the minister;
 - e. to preside at and to confirm the elections of the regional fraternities either in person or through a delegated member of the national council, with the exception of the spiritual assistant;
 - f. to make fraternal visits to the regional councils, personally or through a delegate who is a member of the national council;
 - g. to request the fraternal and pastoral visits, with the consent of the council, at least once every six years.

Article 68

1. The national chapter is the representative organ of the fraternities existing within the confines of a national fraternity. It has legislative, deliberative, and elective powers. In conformity, with the Rule and the Constitutions, it may make legislative decisions and give norms valid within its national confines. The national statutes determine the composition of the national chapter, its frequency, its powers, and how to convoke it.
2. The national statutes may envisage other forms of meetings and assemblies to promote the life and apostolate at the national level.

The International Fraternity

Article 69

1. The international fraternity is constituted by the organic union of all the Catholic Secular Franciscan fraternities in the world. It is identical to the OFS. It has its own juridical personality within the Church. It is organized and it functions in conformity with the Constitutions and its own statutes.
2. The international fraternity is guided and animated by the International Council of the OFS (CIOFS), with its seat in Rome (Italy), by its Presidency and by the general minister or international president.

Article 70

1. The international council is composed of the following members, elected according to the norms of the Constitutions and its own statutes:
 - professed brothers and sisters of the OFS;

— representatives of the Franciscan Youth.

In addition, the four General Assistants to the OFS form part of the international council.

2. The Presidency of the International Council of the OFS is constituted within the international council of which it forms an integral part.
3. The International Council convened in General Chapter is the highest governing body of the OFS with legislative, deliberative, and elective powers. It can make legislative decisions and give norms in conformity with the Rule and the Constitutions.
4. The international council meets every six years in elective general chapter, and at least once between two elective general chapters, according to the norms established by the Constitutions and by the international statutes.

Article 71

1. The purposes and duties of the International Council of the OFS are:
 - a. to promote and sustain the evangelical life according to the spirit of Saint Francis of Assisi within the secular condition of the faithful living throughout the world;
 - b. to increase the sense of unity of the OFS while respecting the pluralism of the persons and groups, and to strengthen the bond of communion, collaboration, and sharing among the national fraternities;
 - c. to harmonize the sound traditions, according to the original nature of the OFS, with advances in theological, pastoral, and legislative fields, with a view to a specific evangelical Franciscan formation;
 - d. to contribute, in line with the tradition of the OFS, to the spreading of ideas and initiatives which are valuable for promoting the availability of Secular Franciscans in the life of the Church and of society;
 - e. to determine the orientations and establish priorities for the actions of its Presidency;
 - f. to interpret the Constitutions according to article 5,2.
2. The international statutes specify the composition of the international council and how to convoke its meetings.

Article 72

1. The Presidency of the International Council of the OFS is composed of:
 - the general minister;
 - the vice-minister;
 - the presidency councilors;
 - a member of the Franciscan Youth;
 - the general assistants of the OFS.
2. The presidency councilors are elected according to the international statutes, which determine their number and the areas represented.

Article 73

The duties and tasks of the Presidency are:

- a. to see that the decisions and orientations of the general chapter are carried out;
- b. to co-ordinate, animate, and guide the OFS at the international level, in order to make the interdependence and reciprocity of the OFS a reality at the various levels of fraternity;
- c. to intervene in a spirit of service, according to the circumstances, providing fraternal aid in the clarification and resolution of grave and urgent problems of the OFS, informing

- the national council concerned and the next general chapter;
- d. to strengthen reciprocal relationships of collaboration between the OFS and the other components of the Franciscan family at the world level;
- e. to organize meetings or assemblies, according to the norms of the international statutes, to promote the life and the apostolate of the OFS at the international level;
- f. to collaborate with organizations and associations which defend the same values;
- g. to fulfill the other duties indicated in the Constitutions or needed in order to reach its own proper goals.

Article 74

1. While firmly preserving the co-responsibility of the Presidency of the International Council of the OFS in the guidance and animation of the international fraternity, it belongs to the general minister, who has the primary responsibility, to see that the directions and decisions of the general chapter and of the Presidency are put into practice and to inform them concerning his or her activities.
2. In addition, the general minister has the duty:
 - a. to convoke and preside at the meetings of the Presidency according to its own statutes;
 - b. to convoke the meetings of the general chapter, with the consent of the Presidency, and to preside at them;
 - c. to be a visible and effective sign of the communion and life-giving reciprocity between the OFS and the general ministers of the Franciscan First Order and the TOR, among whom he or she represents the OFS, and to preserve the bond with the conference of general assistants;
 - d. to represent the OFS at the world level before ecclesiastical and civil authorities. When the international fraternity has a civil juridical personality, its legal representation belongs to the minister;
 - e. to make the fraternal visit to the national councils, personally or through a delegate;
 - f. to preside at the elections of the national councils, personally or through a delegate;
 - g. to request, with the consent of the Presidency, the pastoral visit by the Conference of the General Ministers of the First Order and the TOR;
 - h. to intervene in urgent cases, informing the Presidency of them;
 - i. to sign the official documents of the international fraternity;
 - j. to exercise, with the consent of the Presidency, the property rights of the international fraternity together with another councilor of the Presidency designated by that same body;
 - k. before every general chapter, have the financial and property situation of the international fraternity verified by a qualified accountant who is not involved in the economic and financial management of the Presidency.

Article 75

The specific duties of the international councilors are determined by the international statutes.

Title IV: ELECTION TO AND TERMINATION OF OFFICES

Elections

Article 76

1. The elections at the various levels will take place according to the norms of the law of the Church³⁶ and of the Constitutions.
The convocation should be carried out at least one month in advance, indicating the place, the day, and the time of the election.
2. The elective assembly, or chapter, will be presided over by the minister of the immediately higher level, or by his or her delegate, who confirms the election.
The president or the delegate cannot preside over the elections in his or her local fraternity, nor the elections of the council of a higher level, of whose council he or she is a member. The spiritual assistant of the immediately higher level or his delegate is to be present as a witness of the communion with the First Order and the TOR.
A representative of the Conference of General Ministers of the First Order and the TOR presides at and confirms the elections of the Presidency of the International Council of the OFS.
3. The president of the chapter and the assistant of the higher level do not have the right to vote.
4. The president of the chapter designates, among the members of that chapter, a secretary and two tellers.

Article 77

1. In the local fraternity, the perpetually professed of the same fraternity have active voice, that is can elect, and passive voice, that is can be elected. The temporarily professed have only active voice.
2. At the other levels, the following have active voice: the secular members of the outgoing council, the representatives of the immediately lower level and of the Franciscan Youth, if professed. It belongs to the particular statutes to establish more concrete norms in application of the preceding norm, taking care to assure the broadest elective base. The perpetually professed Secular Franciscans of the corresponding area have passive voice.
3. Both the national and the international statutes – each for its own area – can establish objective qualifications regarding who can be elected to the various offices.
4. The presence of more than half of the number of those having the right to vote is required for the valid celebration of an elective chapter. For the local level, the national Statutes can establish a different norm.

³⁶ See Can. 164 ff.

Article 78

1. An absolute majority of the votes of those present, cast in secret, is required for the election of the minister. After two inconclusive ballots, the voting continues between the two candidates who have obtained the largest number of votes or, in case there are more than two, between the two candidates who are oldest by profession. If there is still a tie after the third ballot, the older by profession will be considered elected.
2. The election of the vice-minister proceeds in the same manner.
3. For the election of the councilors, after a first ballot without an absolute majority, a relative majority of the votes of those present, cast in secret, is sufficient, unless the particular statutes

require a greater majority.

4. The secretary announces the result of the elections; the president confirms the election according to the Ritual³⁷ if all has been carried out properly and those elected have accepted their office.

Article 79

1. The minister and vice-minister may be elected for two consecutive terms of three years each. For a third and final successive election to the office of minister or vice-minister, a majority of two-thirds of the votes of those present, which must be obtained on the first ballot, will be necessary.
2. The out-going minister cannot be elected vice-minister.
3. The councilors may be elected for additional successive terms of three years. Beginning with the third successive election, a majority of two-thirds of the votes of those present, which must be obtained on the first ballot, will be necessary.
4. The general minister, vice-minister and presidency councilors can only be elected for two consecutive terms of six years.
5. The council of the higher level has the right and duty to invalidate the elections and to call them anew in all cases of inobservance of the preceding norms.

Article 80

The particular statutes may include further directives concerning elections, as long as they are not contrary to the Constitutions.

³⁷ See *Ritual OFS*, Part II, Chapt. II.

Vacant Offices

Article 81

1. When the office of minister remains vacant as a result of death, resignation or other impediment of a definitive character, the vice-minister assumes the office until the end of the term for which the minister was originally elected.
2. If the office of vice-minister becomes vacant, one of the councilors is elected to the office of vice-minister by the council of the fraternity, to serve until the next elective chapter.
3. When the office of councilor becomes vacant, the council will proceed to substitute for him or her in conformity with its own statutes, to serve until the next elective chapter.

Incompatible Offices

Article 82

The following are incompatible:

- a. the office of minister at two different levels;
- b. the offices of minister, vice-minister, secretary and treasurer at the same level.

Resignation of Office

Article 83

1. When a minister of whatever level resigns during a chapter, that same chapter can accept the resignation.

When a minister resigns outside the time of chapter, that resignation must be presented to the council. If the resignation is accepted, it must be confirmed by the minister of the higher level; if the general minister is resigning, the confirmation comes from the Conference of General Ministers of the First Order and the TOR.

2. The resignation of other offices is presented to the minister and to his or her council, who are competent to accept the resignation.

Removal

Article 84

1. In the case in which the minister does not fulfill his or her duties, the council concerned manifests its concerns in a fraternal dialogue with the minister. If this does not produce positive results, the council should inform the council of the higher level whose competence it is to examine the case and, if needed, by secret ballot, decide to remove the minister.
2. For a serious, public, and proved reason, the council of a higher level, after a fraternal dialogue with the person concerned, may, by a secret ballot, order the removal of a minister of a lower level.
3. When there is a serious reason to remove those who hold other offices of the council, it is the responsibility of that council to which they belong to make its decision by a secret ballot after there has been a fraternal dialogue with the person involved.
4. A recourse, which by itself suspends the action to remove someone from office, can be presented within thirty days to the council of the level immediately higher than the one which imposed the sanction.
5. The removal of the general minister belongs to the competence of the Conference of the General Ministers of the First Order and the TOR.
6. When there is a case of serious lack of concern or evidence of irregularities on the part of a minister or a council, the council of the next higher level conducts a fraternal visit of the council in question and, eventually, requests a pastoral visit. With charity and prudence, it will evaluate the circumstances uncovered and decide on the best way to proceed, not excluding the eventual removal of the council or leaders involved.

Title V: SPIRITUAL AND PASTORAL ASSISTANCE OF THE OFS

Article 85

1. As an integral part of the Franciscan family and called to live the charism of Francis within the secular dimension, the OFS has particular and close relations to the First Order and the TOR³⁸.
2. The spiritual and pastoral care of the OFS, entrusted by the Church to the Franciscan First Order and the TOR, is the duty, above all, of their general and provincial ministers. The *altius moderamen*, of which Canon 303 speaks, belongs to them. The purpose of the *altius moderamen* is to guarantee the fidelity of the OFS to the Franciscan charism, communion with the Church and union with the Franciscan family, values which represent a vital commitment for the Secular Franciscans.

Article 86

1. The general and provincial ministers exercise their office with respect to the OFS through:
 - the establishment of fraternities;
 - the pastoral visits;
 - the spiritual assistance to the fraternities at the various levels.They may exercise this office personally or through a delegate.
2. This service of the religious ministers completes but does not substitute for the secular councils and ministers to whom belong the guidance, co-ordination, and animation of the fraternities at the various levels.

Article 87

1. For all that concerns the OFS as a whole, the *altius moderamen* must be exercised by the general ministers collegially.
2. It belongs to the Conference of General Ministers of the First Order and the TOR:
 - a. to take care of the relations with the Holy See concerning the approval of the legislative or liturgical documents, which need to be approved by the Holy See;
 - b. to visit the Presidency of the International Council of the OFS;
 - c. to confirm the election of the Presidency of the International Council of the OFS.
3. Each general minister, for his own Order, sees to the interest of the religious for the OFS and to their preparation for service to it according to the respective Constitutions and the Constitutions of the OFS.

³⁸ From Franciscan history and from the Constitutions of the First Order and the TOR, it is clearly evident Orders recognize that they are committed to the spiritual and pastoral assistance of the OFS in virtue of their common origin and charism and by the will of the Church. See Constitutions OFM, 60; Constitutions OFM Conv., 116; Constitutions OFM Cap., 95; Constitutions TOR, 157; Rule of the Third Order of Pope Leo XIII, 3,3; Rule approved by Paul VI, 26.

Article 88

1. The provincial ministers and the other major superiors, in the area of their own jurisdiction, guarantee the spiritual assistance to the local fraternities entrusted to the jurisdiction. They see to it that their own religious are interested in the OFS and that capable and well-prepared persons are appointed for the service of spiritual assistance.

2. It is the specific competence of the major superiors, in name of their jurisdiction:
 - a. to establish, canonically, new local fraternities and guarantee them spiritual assistance;
 - b. to animate spiritually and visit the local fraternities assisted by their own jurisdiction;
 - c. to keep themselves informed on the spiritual assistance given to the OFS.
3. The major superiors are responsible for the spiritual assistance to the local fraternities which they have established.
4. The major superiors with jurisdiction in the same territory, are to establish together the most adequate means to guarantee spiritual assistance to local fraternities which, because of causes beyond their control, could remain without such assistance.
5. The major superiors with jurisdiction in the same territory, are to establish together the most adequate means for carrying out collegially their mission with respect to the regional and national fraternities of the OFS.

Article 89

1. By virtue of the vital reciprocity between the religious and the secular members of the Franciscan Family and in regard to the responsibilities of major superiors, spiritual assistance to the fraternities of the OFS at all levels must be assured as a fundamental element of communion.
2. The spiritual assistant is the person designated by the competent major superior to carry out this service for a specific fraternity of the OFS.
3. To be a witness of Franciscan spirituality and of the fraternal affection of the religious towards the Secular Franciscans, and to be a bond of communion between his Order and the OFS, the spiritual assistant should be a Franciscan religious, member of the First Order or the TOR.
4. When it is not possible to give such a spiritual assistant to the fraternity, the competent major superior can entrust the service of spiritual assistance to:
 - a. religious brothers or sisters of other Franciscan institutes;
 - b. diocesan clerics or other persons, specially prepared for such service, who are members of the OFS;
 - c. other diocesan clerics or non-Franciscan religious.
5. The previous authorization of the superior or the local ordinary, when needed, does not exempt the Franciscan major superior of the responsibility for the quality of the pastoral service and of the spiritual assistance given.

Article 90

1. The principal task of the assistant is to communicate Franciscan spirituality and to co-operate in the initial and continuing formation of the brothers and sisters.
2. The spiritual assistant is by right, with vote, a member of the council of the fraternity to which he or she gives assistance and collaborates with it in all activities. The spiritual assistant does not exercise the right to vote in financial questions.
3. Specifically:
 - a. the general assistants give their service to the Presidency of the International Council of the OFS, form a conference, and collegially see to the spiritual assistance to the OFS as a whole;

- b. the national assistants give their service to the national council, see to the spiritual assistance to the OFS in the whole territory of the national fraternity and, at the national level, to the co-ordination of the regional assistants. If they are more than one, they form a conference and give their service collegially;
- c. the regional assistants give their service to the regional council and see to the spiritual assistance to the regional fraternity. If they are more than one, they form a conference and give their service collegially;
- d. the local assistants give their service to the local fraternity and its council.

Article 91

1. The council of the fraternity at each level requests suitable and prepared assistants from the competent superiors of the First Order and the TOR.
2. Specifically:
 - a. the Presidency of the International Council of the OFS requests the general assistant from the respective general minister;
 - b. the national council requests the national assistant from the major superior, indicated collegially by the major superiors with jurisdiction in the territory of the national fraternity;
 - c. the regional council requests the assistant from the major superior, indicated collegially by the major superiors with jurisdiction in the territory of the regional fraternity;
 - d. the local council requests the assistant from the major superior of the jurisdiction responsible for the assistance.
3. The competent major superior, having heard the council of the fraternity concerned, appoints the assistant according to the norms of these Constitutions and of the *Statutes for Spiritual and Pastoral Assistance to the Secular Franciscan Order*.

Title VI: THE FRATERNAL VISIT AND THE PASTORAL VISIT

Article 92

1. *Rule 26* The purpose of both the pastoral and fraternal visits is to revive the evangelical Franciscan spirit, to assure fidelity to the charism and to the Rule, to offer help to fraternity life, to reinforce the bond of the unity of the Order, and to promote its most effective insertion into the Franciscan family and the Church.
2. With the consent of the appropriate council, the request for the fraternal visit as well as for the pastoral visit is made:
 - a. by the minister of the local and regional fraternity, at least every three years, to the council of the immediately higher level and to the respective conference of spiritual assistants;
 - b. by the national minister, at least every six years, to the Presidency of the International Council of the OFS and to the conference of general assistants;
 - c. by the general minister, at least every six years, to the Conference of General Ministers.
3. For urgent and serious reasons or in case of failure on the part of the minister or the council to request it, the fraternal and pastoral visit may be carried out upon the initiative of the respectively competent council or conference of spiritual assistants.

Article 93

1. In the visits to the local fraternities and to the councils at the various levels, the visitor will verify the evangelical and apostolic vitality, the observance of the Rule and Constitutions, and the insertion of the fraternities into the Order and into the Church.
2. In the visits to the local fraternities and to the councils at the various levels, the visitor will in time communicate the object and the program of the visit to the interested council. He or she will examine the registers and the records, including those relative to the preceding visits, to the election of the council and to the administration of goods.
The visitor will draw up a report of the visit carried out, appending it to the records in the appropriate register of the fraternity visited, and will inform the council of the level which has held the visit.
3. In the visit to the local fraternity, the visitor will meet with the entire fraternity and with the groups and sections into which it is divided. He or she will give special attention to the brothers and sisters in formation and to those brothers and sisters who may request a personal meeting. Where required, he or she will proceed to the fraternal correction of the shortcomings eventually encountered.
4. If it is useful for the service of the fraternity, the two visitors, secular and religious, may make the visit at the same time, agreeing beforehand on the program, in a way most consonant with the mission of each of them.
5. The fraternal and pastoral visits, carried out by the immediately higher level, do not deprive the visited fraternity of the right to appeal to the council or to the conference of spiritual assistants of a higher level.

The Fraternal Visit

Article 94

1. The fraternal visit is a moment of communion, an expression of the service and concrete interest of the secular leaders at the various levels, so that the fraternity may grow and be faithful to its vocation.³⁹
2. Among the various initiatives to achieve the purpose of the visit, the visitor will give special attention:
 - to the validity of the formation, both initial and permanent;
 - to the relations entertained with other fraternities at the different levels, with Franciscan youth, and with the entire Franciscan family.
 - to the observance of the directives and of the guidelines of the International Council of the OFS and of the other councils;
 - to the presence in the local Church.
3. The visitor will check the report of the previous audit or verification of the financial and property management of the Council, the register of the accounts and every document pertaining to the property of the fraternity and, if applicable, the condition of the juridical personality in the civil order, including the fiscal aspects. In the absence of the required audit of the financial and property management of the council, the visitor can commission such an audit, to be paid by the visited fraternity, to an expert who is not a member of the council concerned. Wherever he or she deems it opportune, the visitor will obtain the assistance of a competent person in these aspects.

4. The visitor will check the records of the election of the council. He or she will evaluate the quality of the service offered to the fraternity by the minister and by the other leaders, and will study with them the solution to problems which may arise.
If, for whatever reason, he or she should find that their service does not meet the needs of the fraternity, the visitor will promote appropriate initiatives, taking into account also the provisions concerning resignation and removal from office, given special circumstances⁴⁰.
5. The visitor may not carry out the visit of his or her own local fraternity, nor of the council of another level of which he or she is a member.

The Pastoral Visit

Article 95

1. The pastoral visit is a privileged moment of communion with the First Order and the TOR. It is carried out also in the name of the Church and serves to guarantee and promote the observance of the Rule and the Constitutions and fidelity to the Franciscan charism. The visit is carried out with respect to the organization and the law proper to the OFS itself.
³⁹ Cfr. *Constitutions* 51,1c; 63,2g; 67,2g.
⁴⁰ Cfr. *Constitutions* 83; 84.
2. Having verified the canonical establishment of the fraternity, the visitor will give attention to the relations between the fraternity and its spiritual assistant and the local Church. The visitor will meet the pastors (bishop or parish priest) when this is opportune for fostering communion and service for building up the Church.
3. The visitor will promote collaboration and a sense of co-responsibility among the secular leaders and the religious assistants. The visitor is to examine the quality of the spiritual assistance given to the visited fraternity, encourage the spiritual assistants in their service and promote their continuing spiritual and pastoral formation.
4. The visitor will give special attention to programs, methods and experiences of formation, to the liturgical and prayer life, and to the apostolic activities of the fraternity.

Title VII: THE FRANCISCAN YOUTH

Article 96

1. The OFS, by virtue of its very vocation, ought to be ready to share its experience of evangelical life with the youth who feel attracted to Saint Francis of Assisi and to seek the means of adequately presenting it to them.
2. The Franciscan Youth (YouFra), as understood by these Constitutions and in so far as the OFS considers itself to be particularly responsible for it, is formed by those young people who feel called by the Holy Spirit to share the experience of the Christian life in fraternity, in the light of the message of Saint Francis of Assisi, deepening their own vocation within the context of the Secular Franciscan Order.
3. The members of the Franciscan Youth consider the Rule of the OFS as an inspirational document for the growth of their own Christian and Franciscan vocation either individually or in a group. After a suitable period of formation, of at least one year, they confirm this option with a personal pledge before God and in the presence of the brothers and sisters.
4. The members of the Franciscan Youth who wish to belong to the OFS should satisfy the requirements of the Rule, the Constitutions, and the Ritual of the OFS.

5. The Franciscan Youth has a specific organization, methods of formation, and teaching methods adequate for the needs of the world of youth, according to the existing realities in the various countries. The national statutes of the Franciscan Youth should be approved by the respective national council of the OFS, or in its absence, by the Presidency of the International Council of the OFS.
6. The Franciscan Youth, as a component of the Franciscan family, requests from the competent secular leaders and religious superiors, respectively, fraternal animation and spiritual assistance.

Article 97

1. The OFS fraternities will promote the vocation to the Franciscan Youth by means of appropriate and dynamic initiatives. They should see to the vitality and the expansion of the Franciscan Youth fraternities and will accompany the youth in their journey of human and spiritual growth with proposals for specific activities and contents.
2. The OFS fraternities commit themselves to give to the Franciscan Youth fraternities a fraternal animator, who together with the spiritual assistant and the council of the Franciscan Youth guarantees an adequate Secular Franciscan formation.
3. To promote a close communion with the OFS, all leaders of the Franciscan Youth at the International level and at least two members of the national council of the Franciscan Youth are to be professed Secular Franciscan youth.
4. A representative of the Franciscan Youth is to be designated by his or her council to form part of the OFS council of the corresponding level; a representative of the OFS, designated by his or her own council, forms part of the council of the Franciscan Youth of the same level. The representative of the Franciscan Youth has a vote in the OFS council only if he or she is a professed Secular Franciscan
5. The representatives of the Franciscan Youth in the international council of the OFS are elected according to the international statutes which also determine how many there are, what fraternities they represent, and what their responsibilities are supposed to be.

Title VIII: IN COMMUNION WITH THE FRANCISCAN FAMILY AND THE CHURCH

Article 98

1. *Rule 1* Secular Franciscans should seek to live in life-giving reciprocal communion with all the members of the Franciscan family. They should be ready to promote common initiatives or participate in them with the religious of the First, Second and Third Orders, with Secular Institutes, and with other lay ecclesial groups that recognize Francis as a model and inspiration in order to work together to spread the Gospel, remove the causes of marginalization, and serve the cause of peace.
2. They must cultivate a special affection, which expresses itself in concrete initiatives of fraternal communion, towards the sisters of the contemplative life who, like Saint Clare of Assisi, bear witness in the Church and in the world and by whose mediation they expect the abundance of grace for the fraternity and for the works of the apostolate.

Article 99

1. *Rule 6* As a living part of the people of God and inspired by the Seraphic Father, the Secular Franciscans, "living in full communion with the Pope and the bishops", should seek to know

and deepen the doctrine proposed by the teaching Church through its more important documents and they should be attentive to the presence of the Holy Spirit who vivifies the faith and charity of the people of God.⁴¹ They should collaborate in the initiatives promoted by the Holy See, in a particular way in those areas in which they are called to work by virtue of their secular Franciscan vocation.

2. The OFS, as an international public association, is connected by a special bond to the Roman Pontiff from whom it has received the approval of its Rule and the confirmation of its mission in the Church and in the world.

Article 100

1. The vocation to "rebuild" the Church ought to induce the brothers and sisters sincerely to love and to live the union with the local Church in which they develop their own vocation and realize their apostolic commitment, aware that in the diocese the Church of Christ is truly functioning⁴².
2. The Secular Franciscans should fulfill with dedication the duties with which they are occupied in their relations to the local Church. They should lend their help to activities of the apostolate

⁴¹ *Lumen Gentium* 12.

⁴² *Christus Dominus* 11; Can. 396; See 2 *Celano* 10; 1 *Celano* 18.

as well as to the social activities existing in the diocese.⁴³ In the spirit of service, they should make themselves present, as the fraternity of the OFS, within the life of the diocese. They should be ready to collaborate with other ecclesial groups and to participate in pastoral councils.

3. Fidelity to their own charism, Franciscan and secular, and the witness of building fraternity, sincerely and openly, are their principal services to the Church, which is the community of love. They should be recognized in it by their "being," from which their mission springs.

Article 101

1. The Secular Franciscans should collaborate with the bishops and follow their directions in so far as they are the moderators of the ministry of the Word and of the Liturgy and the coordinators of the various forms of apostolate in the local Church.⁴⁴
2. The fraternities are subject to the vigilance of the Ordinary in so far as they perform their activities within the local Churches.⁴⁵

Article 102

1. The fraternities established in a parish church should seek to co-operate in the animation of the parochial community, in the liturgy and in fraternal relations. They should integrate themselves into the pastoral apostolate as a whole, with preference for those activities more congenial to the Secular Franciscan tradition and spirituality.
2. In the parishes entrusted to Franciscan religious, the fraternities constitute the mediation and the secular witness of the Franciscan charism in the parochial community through their exercise of the fruitful life-giving reciprocity. Therefore, united with the religious, they see to the spreading of the gospel message and of the Franciscan lifestyle.

Article 103

1. Remaining faithful to their own identity, the fraternities will take care to make the most of each occasion for prayer, formation, and active collaboration with other ecclesial groups. They should welcome with pleasure those who, without belonging to the OFS, wish to share its experiences and activities.

2. The fraternities will promote, wherever possible, fraternal relations with non-Catholic associations inspired by Francis.

Approved by the Vatican December 8, 2000

⁴³ See Can. 311.

⁴⁴ See Can. 394; 756; 775 ss.

⁴⁵ See Can. 305; 392

**OUR LADY OF THE ANGELS
REGIONAL FRATERNITY
COUNCIL
MISSION STATEMENT**

We, the Regional Council, in the spirit of Christian service, will promote, animate, and coordinate the Franciscan life and activities of our brothers and sisters of the Our Lady of the Angels Regional Fraternity. By the power of the Holy Spirit, we seek to observe the Gospel, in the spirit of St. Francis of Assisi, in order to bring about a more fraternal, evangelical and peaceful world to more effectively build the Kingdom of God.

SECTION B

LOCAL FRATERNITY

Directory of Fraternities

British Columbia	Coastal
Fraternity	Meeting Location
St Anthony of Padua-Richmond	St Joseph's the Worker Church 4451 Williams Rd Richmond BC V7E 1J7
<i>Meeting Time</i>	<i>3rd Sunday @1:30 PM</i>
St Anthony of Padua-Maple Ridge	St Luke's Parish (Library) 20285 Dewdney Trunk Road Maple Ridge BC V2X 3C9
<i>Meeting Time</i>	<i>1st Sun @ 1:30pm</i>
St Clare- Chilliwack	St Mary's Parish (Meeting Room) 8908 St Mary's Street Chilliwack BC V2P 4J4
<i>Meeting Time</i>	<i>3rd Saturday @10:00 AM</i>
St Clare of Assisi -Coquitlam	St Clare's of Assisi Parish (Basement Room) 1320 Johnson St Coquitlam BC V3B 4T1
<i>Meeting Time</i>	<i>4th Sat of the month Sep-Jun</i>
St Francis of Assisi-Vancouver	St Francis of Assisi (Church Basement) 2025 Napier St Vancouver BC V5L 2N8
<i>Meeting Time</i>	<i>3rd Sunday @1:30 PM</i>
Little Portion-Victoria	St Joseph's Friary (Basement) 1076 Joan Crescent Victoria BC V8S 3L5
<i>Meeting Time</i>	<i>3rd Sun @ 1:00PM</i>
St Agnes of Assisi-Coquitlam	Our Lady of Fatima Church (Library) 315 Walker St Coquitlam BC V3K 4C7
<i>Meeting Time</i>	<i>4th Saturday @ 10:00 AM</i>

St Pio-North Delta	Immaculate Conception Church (Room 4) 8842-119 th St Delta BC V4C 6M4
<i>Meeting Time</i>	<i>3rd Thursday @ 7:00 PM</i>
St. Francis of Assisi- Surrey	St Andrew Kim Church 10222-161 St Surrey BC V4N 2J8
<i>Meeting Time</i>	<i>4th Saturday @ 12:30 PM</i>

British Columbia	Interior
Fraternity	Meeting Location
St Francis of Assisi- Prince George	Sacred Heart Cathedral 887 Patricia Blvd Prince George BC V2L 3V5
<i>Meeting Time</i>	<i>3rd Sun Sept-June After 9:00 Mass</i>
San Damiano – Salmon Arm	St Joseph Worker 90 th First St SE Salmon Arm BC
<i>Meeting Time</i>	<i>2nd Sun</i>
Little Flowers of St Francis -Kelowna	St.Charles Garnier 3645 Benvoulin Rd Kelowna, BC V1W 4M7
<i>Meeting Time</i>	<i>2nd Sun</i>
St. Pio Pietrelcina –Kamloops Emerging Fraternity	Holy Family Parish 2797 Sunset Dr. Kamloops BC V2C 4K7
<i>Meeting Time</i>	<i>4th Mon</i>

Southern Alberta	
Fraternity	Meeting Location
Our Lady Queen Of Peace – Pincher Creek	St Michael's Church 958 Christie Ave Pincher Creek AB
<i>Meeting Time</i>	<i>4th Sunday noon</i>

St Mary's Fraternity - Calgary	Canadian Martyrs 835 Northmount Dr NW Calgary AB <i>Meeting Time</i> 3 rd Sunday @ 1:30PM
Holy Spirit-Olds	St Mary's Parish 4302 57 th Ave Olds AB <i>Meeting Time</i> 1 st Wednesday @ 7:30PM
St Maximillian Kolbe – Red Deer	Sacred Heart Parish 5508 48 th Ave Red Deer AB <i>Meeting Time</i> 1 st Sun 1:30-3:45PM 2 nd Sun on long weekend

St Padre Pio -Red Deer	St Mary's Parish 6 McMillan Close Red Deer AB T4N 5X8 <i>Meeting Time</i> 1 st Monday @ 5:30PM
St. Padre Pio Korean -Calgary	St. Anne's Parish 910-21th Ave SE Calgary AB T2G 1N1 <i>Meeting time</i> 1 st Sun @ 3:00PM
Blessed Fr. Frederick Jansoonne -Airdrie Discerning Fraternity	St Paul's Parish 1305 Main Street Airdrie, AB T4B 1C5 <i>Meeting Time</i> 3 rd Thursday @ 10:00AM

Northern Alberta	
Fraternity	Meeting Location
St Elizabeth of Hungary -Edmonton	St Alphonsus Parish 11828 85 th St Edmonton AB T5B 3E9 <i>Meeting Time</i> 3 rd Sunday @ 12:15 PM

St Berard - Sherwood Park	Our Lady of Perpetual Help 13 Bower Dr Sherwood PK AB T8H 1Y7
<i>Meeting Time</i>	<i>Last Monday 7:00 PM</i>
St Clare Fraternity –Pickardville Westlock	St Mary of the Assumption 10020 100 Ave, Pickardville Westlock AB T7P 2J2
<i>Meeting Time</i>	<i>3rd Friday @ 7:30 PM</i>
St Louis and Zelig Martin-Edmonton	St Theresa's Catholic Parish 7208 29 th Ave Edmonton AB T6K 3Y8
<i>Meeting Time</i>	<i>3rd Wed. 7:15 pm</i>
St.Clare Emerging Fraternity-Edmonton Korean	Jung Ha Sang parish 8350-77Ave Edmonton AB T6C 0L4
<i>Meeting Time</i>	<i>2nd Sun 7.45 pm</i>

Saskatchewan & Manitoba	
Fraternity	Meeting Location
St Elizabeth of Hungary -Saskatoon	St Joseph's 535 8 th St East Saskatoon SK
<i>Meeting Time</i>	<i>3rd Sunday</i>
Immaculate Conception-Winnipeg	Holy Mary Mother of the Church 85 Kirkbridge Dr Winnipeg MB R3T 5S7
<i>Meeting Time</i>	<i>4th Sunday @ 2 PM Sept-June</i>
St Anthony - Winnipeg	Franciscan Friary 211 Edmonton St Winnipeg MB
<i>Meeting Time</i>	XXXXXXXXXXXX

LOCAL FRATERNITY

1.0 ELECTIONS

- 1.1 The local fraternity Minister has the duty to convoke, every three years, the elective Chapter of the Fraternity (cf. GC art.51.1 [a]).
- 1.2 The local fraternity Minister shall advise the Regional Minister regarding the need for an Elective Chapter at least 4 months before the proposed date for the Elective Chapter.
- 1.4 The Elective Minister or his/her delegate, confirms the election (cf. GC art.75.2).
- 1.5 The Minister and Council shall prepare for the Elective Chapter as per the written instructions provided by the Fraternal Visitor(s). (See Appendix PP. 104-106)
- 1.6 The Elective Chapter shall proceed according to the appropriate articles of the General Constitutions (cf. GC art.76-84) and the Statutes of the National Fraternity of Canada.
- 1.7 Council vacancies shall be resolved according to the appropriate articles of the General Constitutions (cf. GC art.81-84).

2.0 PASTORAL AND FRATERNAL VISITS

- 2.1 The local fraternity Minister, with the consent of the Council, shall request Pastoral and Fraternal Visit at least every three years (cf. GC art.93, 94).
- 2.2 The local fraternity Minister shall advise the Regional Minister regarding the need for a Fraternal Visit at least 4 months before the proposed date. Fraternal Visits may be held in conjunction with the Elective Chapter.
- 2.3 The local fraternity Minister shall advise the Regional Spiritual Assistant regarding the need for a Pastoral Visit at least 3 months before the proposed date. Although Pastoral Visits may be held in conjunction with the Fraternal Visit, (cf. GC art.92.5).

3.0 COUNCIL DUTIES

- 3.1 It is the duty of the Council of the local fraternity:
 - a) to meet regularly in order to promote the initiatives necessary for fostering fraternal life, for improving the human, Christian and Franciscan formation of its members and for sustaining their witness and commitment in the world;
 - b) to make concrete and courageous choices, appropriate for the situation of the fraternity, from among the numerous activities possible in the field of the apostolate;
 - c) to decide on the acceptance and admission to Profession of new brothers and sisters, and record same in the Council minutes;
 - d) to establish a fraternal dialogue with members in particular difficulties and to adopt consequent measures;
 - e) to receive the request for withdrawal and to decide on the suspension of a member from the fraternity;
 - f) to decide on the establishment of sections or groups in conformity with the General Constitutions and the National Statutes;
 - g) to decide on the destination of available fund,
 - h) to assign duties to the Councilors and to the other Professed Members;
 - i) to request from the competent Superiors of the First Order and the TOR suitable and prepared religious as Spiritual Assistants;
 - j) to perform such other duties as are required by the General Constitutions or which are necessary to carry out its proper purposes (cf. GC art.49-52)

LOCAL FRATERNITY

- k) to maintain an updated Fraternity Register which includes admissions, professions, transfers, deaths and every other important annotation relative to the individual members (cf. GC art.52.2 footnote 40).
- l) to maintain a Register of minutes for regular meetings, a register of minutes for council meetings and a Financial register.

4.0 FORMATION

- 4.1 Insertion into the Secular Franciscan Order is attained through a time of Initiation, a time of Formation and the Profession of the RULE (cf. RULE art. XXIII, GC art.37-45).
- 4.2 Letters of Application: the potential member shall present to the local fraternity Minister a letter of application prior to entering the Period of Inquiry, and Letters of Intent prior to entering the Period of Candidacy and Profession (cf. GC art. 39).
- 4.3 Letters of Reference: the potential member is asked to supply two letters of Reference; one from a Roman Catholic Priest or Religious, and the other, preferably, from someone who has some knowledge of Franciscan Spirituality.
- 4.4 Interviews: the local fraternity Minister shall be responsible for arranging interviews with the potential member prior to each stage in the Formation process (i.e. Period of Inquiry, Period of Candidacy, Profession). The Spiritual Assistant and Formation Director, shall be involved in the interviews at appropriate stages
- 4.5 Observers: Fraternities may require interested persons to attend a minimum number of regular meetings before they begin orientation/inquiry.
- 4.6 Orientation: Fraternities may include a period of orientation prior to the Period of Inquiry. This is that period of time between the initial attendance at a fraternity meeting and the written Letter of Application to enter into the Period of Inquiry. It is during this time that the Observer is experiencing the professed members' authentic witnessing of living the Secular Franciscan vocation and discerning whether he/she is called to this way of life.
- 4.7 Period of Inquiry: this period of formal study is at least 6 months in length. The length may only be modified for an important reason, and by a majority vote of the Council. Materials approved by the Our Lady of the Angels Regional Council are recommended. (The *Franciscan Journey* by Lester Bach OFM, *Catch Me a Rainbow Two* by Lester Bach OFM, *Fully Mature* by Fr. Funk and the *Triennial Plan* put out by National Council).
- 4.8 Period of Candidacy: this period of formal study and prayer is at least 12 months in length. It begins with the Rite of Admission page 11, and end with the Rite of Profession page 18 of the Ritual of the Secular Franciscan Order. Materials approved by the Our Lady of the Angels Regional Council are recommended (cf. GC art. 40; Ritual pg. 25 - New Testament, metal Tau or oval Tau pendant, candle, and possibly, Secular Franciscan Companion).
- 4.9 Application Forms shall be kept in the Minutes of the Council or in the register ledger. After Profession, the Letters of Intent shall be returned to the member, and the Formation Director shall destroy Letters of Reference.

*Refer to appendix for forms

5.0 REGULAR MEETINGS

- 5.1 The Minister shall chair regular Meetings of the Council. He/she is also responsible for preparing the agenda, which is subject to approval of the Council.
- 5.2 Regular Meetings of the Fraternity shall have an appropriate balance of Prayer, Ongoing Formation, Social Activity and Business.

6.0 CANONICAL ESTABLISHMENT

LOCAL FRATERNITY

- 6.1 Some of our fraternities may not be Canonically Established as required by the RULE (art. XXII) and the General Constitutions (art. 46). In addition, some fraternities that were Canonically Established in the past may be unable to find the appropriate documentation. Our Lady of the Angels Council is prepared to proceed with canonically establishing these fraternities on a “request basis”, using a procedure that has been approved by the Council of the National Fraternity of Canada. If your fraternity wishes to proceed with the canonical establishment procedure, please mail a written request to the Regional Minister.
- 6.2 The local fraternity Minister, in concert with the Council, shall request that the Regional Spiritual Assistant canonically establish the fraternity. The canonical establishment shall follow the norms of the National Fraternity. (cf. RULE, art. XXII, GC art. 46-48)

7.0 NEW FRATERNITIES

- 7.1 For the valid establishment of a local fraternity, at least five professed members are required (cf. GC art.46.2).
- 7.2 Emerging Fraternities.
Any individuals wanting to form a Franciscan Fraternity are asked to follow the Policy Process.
*Refer to for forms pg. 79Handbook
*APPENDIX pg. 133-138
*INFORMATION pg. 162-163

FRATERNITY MEETING (SUGGESTED FORMAT)

*See also INFORMATION pg. 155: "Planning a Fraternity Meeting".

The following is a sample or model fraternity meeting. Meetings must be punctual, spiritual, welcoming, interesting and orderly in order to remain inviting and fruitful. The business meeting should be brief and separate from the spiritual part of the meeting.

Welcome Opening – Minister

1. Prayer
 - Suggestions are the Liturgy of the Hours, Franciscan Crown Rosary, follow the guide lines in our Ritual Book.
2. Article of the Rule – Team Approach
 - It is suggested not compulsory each month, one or more fraternity members on a rotating basis, take charge of the meeting. In larger fraternities, the Formation Director will have a team that can be drawn from. It is important to get as many members involved at the meetings. The topics and schedule are organized by Council.
3. Presentation by Team (Ongoing Formation)
 - 10 Minutes (See Suggested Resources for Ongoing Formation (refer to appendix)
4. Small Group Sharing on the Topic Presented by the Team
 - 30 Minutes how do you personally identify with the topic of the evening?
5. Fraternity Sharing
 - In large fraternities, it may be necessary to form sharing groups with 2 to 4 people per group - One person appointed by each small group will report on a key idea or action for the month. (Some fraternities like to give each member an opportunity to share on their Franciscan apostolate or something spiritual. It is important to keep such personal sharing to 2 minutes' maximum. There is a further opportunity to share during the SOCIALIZING portion of the meeting.)
6. Message from Spiritual Assistant/Resource Person
7. Socializing
8. Business Meeting (Suggested Format) Chair, Minister
 - Minutes of previous meeting
 - Treasurer's Report
 - Formation Team's Report
 - Pastoral Care Report – cards, visits
 - New Business Report/Recommendations from Council
9. Closing prayer

Refer to suggested forms of Liturgical Prayer, from Ritual Book

COUNCIL MEETING (SUGGESTED FORMAT)

The following is a sample or model of a council meeting. Meetings must be punctual, spiritual, welcoming, interesting and orderly in order to remain inviting and fruitful.

Servant Leadership in the Secular Franciscan Order requires an ongoing formation, as much as does membership in the Order, therefore councils are encouraged to implement on-going formation as part of their meetings.

Welcome and Opening – Minister

1. Prayer
 - See suggested forms of Liturgical Prayer (Ritual Prayer Book OFS Pg. 38)
2. Article of the General Constitutions – Leader of the Month/Meeting
 - Each month, a council member, on a rotating basis, prepares this material.
 - The schedule may be organized by Council.
3. Presentation (Ongoing Formation)
 - 5-10 minutes
 - Handbook for Secular Franciscan Servant Leadership published by the National Documents of Vatican II-(see Suggested Resources for Ongoing Formation – Resources Pg. 139)
4. Small Group Sharing on the Topic Presented by the Team
 - 15-20 minutes
5. Message from Spiritual Assistant/Resource Person (if present)
6. Business Meeting
 - Minutes of previous meeting
 - Ministers report
 - Vice Ministers report
 - Treasurers report
 - Formation Director/Team report
 - Spiritual Assistant/Resource Person report
 - Infirmarian/ Pastoral Care report
 - New Business
 - Recommendations from Council
7. Closing Prayer
 - See suggested forms of Liturgical Prayer (Ritual of the OFS Pg. 38)
8. Socializing

LITURGICAL PRAYER – SUGGESTED FORMAT

1. Council Meetings:
 - see Ritual page 38
 - Liturgy of the Hours for day
 - (recommended) Rule of the SFO
 - Scripture Readings, see Ritual pages 55-66
 - Franciscan Readings, see Ritual pages 67-80
 - Francis and Clare: The Complete Works
 - Prayers of St. Francis see Ritual pages 81-102
 - Seasonal Prayers; example, Prayers for deceased in November; see Ritual page 104 #7
2. Regular Meetings:
 - *See Ritual of the Secular Franciscan Order page 35
 - Liturgy of the Hours for the day
 - Recommended Rule of the OFS
 - Liturgical Services (according to stages of Formation of Inquirers/Candidates)
 - Scripture Readings, see;* Ritual pages 55-66
 - Franciscan Readings,*Ritual pages 67-80, or
 - Francis and Clare: The Complete Works
 - Prayers of St. Francis;*Ritual pages 81-102
 - Seasonal Prayers; example, Prayers for deceased in November; *see Ritual page 104 #7
3. Formation Sessions:
 - Liturgical Services from (according to stages of Formation of Inquirers/Candidates)
 - Liturgy of the Hours (recommended in the candidacy stage)
 - Prayers to the Holy Spirit and Studies on Francis and Clare.
 **Ritual of the Secular Franciscan Order*
4. Individual commitment to prayer:
 - *Refer to *Ritual of the Secular Franciscan Order* appendix II pages 103-104

FRATERNAL VISITATIONS – HOW TO PREPARE

1. Request a visitation from the Regional Minister at least 4 months in advance.
The Vice Minister will arrange for a Fraternal Visitor. The Vice-Minister Councilor, will contact the Minister of Our Lady of the Angels Fraternity to set the date of the Fraternal Visitation.
2. Prior to the Fraternal Visitation, a questionnaire will be sent to the Minister to be filled out by the Minister with the Fraternity Council regarding life in the fraternity. The questionnaire should be returned to the Fraternal Visitor prior to the visitation. (see APPENDIX pg. 104)
3. The Fraternity Council provides the Fraternal Visitor with the fraternity records, as listed in the introductory letter, for review. Usually the Fraternity provides a quiet location for the Visitor to review the records for a period up to two hours.
4. The Fraternal Visitor will attend a regular meeting of the Local Fraternity. It is important that this meeting reflect the usual format of the regular meetings of the fraternity.
5. The Fraternal Visitor will make a report to the Regional Council (usually at the time of the Regional Council Meetings) and that report will be sent to the Local Fraternity Minister to share with the local council and fraternity.

FRATERNAL CHAPTER OF ELECTIONS – HOW TO PREPARE

1. Request a visitation from the Vice-Minister at least 4 months in advance.
The Vice-Minister of Our Lady of the Angels will contact the Minister of the local fraternity to confirm the date of the Chapter of Elections. The fraternity names a person or persons to serve as a Nominations Chair or Committee, who will be responsible for coordinating nominations for the various positions on council.
2. Nomination forms will be sent to the Minister/Nominations Chair or Committee prior to the Local Chapter of Elections to be filled out and to be returned to the Regional Visitor prior to the Chapter.
3. The Fraternity prepares for a shortened version of a regular meeting on the day of the Chapter of Elections, allowing time for the Regional Visitor to speak to the Fraternity. The meeting is handed over to the Regional Visitor for the Elections.
4. Following the Elections, the Installation of Officers takes place, simply or during liturgy or Eucharist, and according to the Ritual Handbook Pg. 41.
5. The Regional Visitor will make a report to the Regional Council and that report will be sent to the Local Fraternity Minister to share with the local council and fraternity.

*See APPENDIX : Election Procedures on pg. 107-116

*See INFORMATION: pg. 153

FORMATION

INITIAL FORMATION RESOURCES

The following resources are a few of the vast resource materials available and are intended to stimulate your fraternity to become joyful seekers of knowledge. A creative Orientation and Initial Formation program at each fraternity meeting adds vitality to the proceedings.

Orientation/Inquiry/ Candidacy

**The Franciscan Journey*, Lester Bach OFM Cap Published by Smokey House Printing
(See regional website for integrated lessons on JPIC) www.ofswesterncanada.ca

*Primary source for Orientation/Inquiry/ Candidacy

**Fully Mature in the Fullness of Christ-third edition*, by Benet A. Fonck, OFM, published by Franciscan Press, revised 1983. (Requires updating)

*Supplementary Only to *The Franciscan Journey*

Living Fraternity www.ofsnational.ca

Recommended Biographies:

***See SECTION E for more recommended resources pg. 140**

THE ROLE OF THE FRATERNITY IN THE FORMATION PROCESS

The Council:

- must be warm, hospitable, and give authentic witness of living the Secular Franciscan vocation. decides, through prayerful discussion and discernment, on the acceptance and admission of candidates into the various stages of formation and to Profession.
- gains additional personal insight about the candidates by participating in periodic formation sessions.

The Formation Director/Minister/Spiritual Assistant

- receives the Inquirer's request to begin a formal program of formation.
- requests that the petition be given in writing and that the Inquirer supplies two letters of reference.
- receives the written Application to the Period of Inquiry and letters of reference, and brings them to a subsequent Council meeting.
- decides collegially with the Council whether the Inquirer exhibits the necessary criteria to hold the first in a series of three interviews. (refer to const. 41.1)
- conducts the first interview of the Inquirer with the Spiritual Assistant/Minister.
- decides collegially with the Council whether welcoming the Inquirer into a formal period of study is in the best interest of the fraternity and the Order.
- the fraternity receives the Inquirer's written request to enter the Period of Candidacy.
- conducts the second interview of the Inquirer with the Spiritual Assistant and the Formation Director. decides collegially with the Council whether the Inquirer shows initial signs of having a calling to the Secular Franciscan Order.
- receives the Inquirer into the Period of Candidacy. participates in the formation process as often as possible.
- receives the Candidate's written request for admittance to Profession.
- conducts the third interview of the Candidate with the Spiritual Assistant, the Formation Director and Sponsor.
- decides collegially with the Council whether to admit the Candidate to Profession receives the Candidate's Profession.

The Spiritual Assistant/Spiritual Resource Person:

- participates with the Minister in conducting the three interviews of the candidate.
- provides whatever assistance the Formation Director may require during the course of the formation program.
- participates, as a member of Council, in the decision-making regarding the acceptance and admission of candidates into the various stages of formation and to Profession.
- The role of the Spiritual Assistant/SPR in regards to formation is to "cooperate in initial and ongoing formation with the Council and Minister (art 2-Statutes)
- It is not their responsibility to lead on-going formation on a regular basis.

The Formation Director:

- uses adult methods of education during the formation program sessions.
- a facilitator of growth and development rather than just a conveyor of information.
- presents himself/herself as a big brother or sister who accompanies the Inquirers and Candidates along their discovery of the Franciscan evangelical life.
- replicates by word and action this striving for holiness in the Secular Franciscan way.
- tells his/her own “story” of embracing and maintaining permanent commitment to Gospel living.
- helps the Inquirers/Candidates to choose a sponsor from among the professed members of the fraternity. helps candidates to become involved in fraternity or other apostolates
- participates, as a member of Council, in the decision-making regarding the acceptance and admission of candidates into the various stages of formation and to Profession.

The Sponsor:

- accompanies the candidate through the formation program.
- a person with whom the candidate will want to share prayer, study, apostolic work, dialogue and leisure.
- gives a lived experience of Franciscan fraternity and introduces practical ways of living out the Franciscan vocation.
- provides participates in the third interview of his/her Candidate.
- additional information/insight to the Council regarding growth to the Franciscan way of life.

The Fraternity Members:

- must be warm, hospitable, and give authentic witness of living the Secular Franciscan vocation.
- adds fullness to the candidates’ development by participating in periodic formation sessions and presenting their own lived experience in ongoing conversion.
- should be open to becoming a candidate’s sponsor.

FORMATION INTERVIEWS

What is an Interview?

An Interview is a face-to-face meeting between individuals for specific purposes such as evaluation of one of the individuals. An interview is also a dialogue whereby individuals share ideas, questions etc.

Why the Interview?

For the Secular Franciscan Order, the purposes of the interview are as follows:

- to welcome the prospective candidate to the Order;
- to ascertain eligibility of the prospective candidate;
- to explain the purpose of the Secular Franciscan Order and what our Rule of Life involves;
- answering any questions that the candidate may have;
- to give out pertinent material such as brochures, books, etc.;
- to gather information that will assist the process of discerning the authenticity of the candidate's vocation.

N.B. The interview is not an interrogation and/or counseling session.

Who May Interview?

The Fraternity Minister-Spiritual Assistant/Spiritual Resource Person (SRP)

Formation Director- In the third interview- Candidate's Sponsor

When Should The Interviews Take Place?

Ideally, at the time of each application (i.e., application to enter the Period of Inquiry, application to enter the Period of Candidacy, application for Admission to Profession).

The date and time of day should be one that is convenient for all the participants.

Where Should The Interviews Take Place?

The interviews should take place in a clean, comfortable and quiet room, somewhere where you will not be disturbed. Privacy and confidentiality are essential and should be respected.

See APPENDIX:Pg. 122: Guidelines for Interviews

Pg. 125: Suggested Format for Interview

Pg. 126: Sample Pre- Profession Interview

*SRP (Spiritual Resource Person)

The Franciscan Journey, Lester Bach OFM Cap

Published by Smokey House Printing

Preface

Assisting newcomers to embrace the Secular Franciscan way of life is the responsibility of the local OFS Council, formation personnel and the membership, guided by the Holy Spirit. They invite newcomers to become people: (pgs. I, ii)

1. with a Franciscan spirit, perspective, and ideals
2. with the ability to reflect gospel values in their lives and accept conversion as needed;
3. with a willingness to accept the OFS as a primary and permanent commitment;
4. with a desire to build up the Church and the Kingdom of God
5. with a sense of Franciscan responsibility for social action;
6. with a desire for contemplative prayer.

Periods of Formation (pgs. 3, 4)

1. Orientation

- a. Orientation is a time for determining a person's interest, eligibility and disposition to enter into initial formation process.
- b. The period of orientation shall consist of not less than three (3) months.

2. Initial Formation

- a. Inquiry- The period of inquiry, which begins with the ceremony of Introduction and Welcoming.
- b. Candidacy-The period of Candidacy which begins with the rite of Admission. It shall consist of not less than twelve (12) months and not more than thirty-six (36) months.
- c. All persons in initial formation, in attending to attending their formation sessions, must participate in the meetings of the local fraternity as this is an indispensable presupposition for initiation into community prayer and into fraternity life.
- d. To be admitted to the OFS in Canada a person must be a fully initiated member of the Catholic Church i.e. having received the sacraments of Baptism, Chrismation/ Confirmation, and Holy Eucharist) in addition to being and actively practicing Catholic.

The Franciscan Journey, Lester Bach OFM Cap

Published by Smokey House Printing

Embracing the Franciscan Vision

See also APPENDIX pg. 121 Franciscan Journey Lesson Plan

The Franciscan Journey Contents

Chapter one	Orientation on the OFS
Chapter two	Three Orders...Structures...Discernment
Chapter three	Francis...Clare...Catholic doctrine

Initial Formation

Chapter four	Inquiry in the OFS
Chapter five	Lay Secular Spirituality
Chapter six	Writings and stories of St Francis/St Clare
Chapter seven	OFS History-Development of the OFS Rule
Chapter eight	Scripture in OFS life
Chapter nine	Vatican II-OFS Rule & Constitution

Candidacy

Chapter ten	Candidacy in the OFS
Chapter eleven	The OFS Rule
Chapter twelve	A focus on Jesus
Chapter thirteen	Encounters with Christ
Chapter fourteen	A Rebuilding Task
Chapter Fifteen	Gospel, Conversion, & Reconciliation
Chapter sixteen	When you Pray
Chapter seventeen	The Mother of God & our Mother
Chapter eighteen	Being Faithfull
Chapter nineteen	A Simple way to Live
Chapter twenty	Freedom to love
Chapter twenty-one	How to Love People
Chapter twenty-two	Foundations for the Kingdom
Chapter twenty-three	Justice in Franciscan Life
Chapter twenty-four	The Gift of Work
Chapter twenty-five	In their Family
Chapter twenty-six	Universal Kinship
Chapter twenty-seven	Bearers of Peace
Chapter twenty-eight	Fraternities: Gathering as One
Chapter twenty-nine	Servant Leadership
Chapter thirty	Fraternity Life
Chapter thirty-one	Membership on the OFS
Chapter thirty-two	Enriching the Franciscan spirit
Chapter thirty-three	Franciscan Family Connections

At the Formation Meeting:

1. Reflection: Take turns reading – The OFS Rule states, The Lord speaks, St. Francis writes, St. Clare writes. Read together – The Church prays.
2. Text for Study: The Formation Director gives a brief overview of the assigned text. As an alternative, all present take turns reading ONLY the sentences they have highlighted (with a colored hi-lighter). This is meant to refresh everyone's memory.
3. Break into Sharing Groups: Spend 20 to 30 minutes sharing the answers to your questions and any insights you may have. Each group should have 3 to 5 persons. Make sure that everyone has an equal opportunity to share.
4. LITURGICAL SERVICE: Follow the service as closely as possible – and as appropriate for the occasion.

Please Note: *"Fully Mature with the Fullness of Christ"* is an excellent resource containing excerpts from Church Documents, the Rule, writings of St's. Francis and Clare, out-of-print Franciscan resources and more. Keep your copy for future use.

For Homework:

- Follow the Session Guidelines as outlined.
 - Record your answers to "Questions for Group Sharing" in a notebook or journal.
- *Remember there are no wrong answers. This is an informal record of your personal and Spiritual growth

**Official Formation Program-National
Fraternity of Canada**

www.ofsnational.ca/Index_En.asp

FORMATION PROCESS FROM OBSERVER TO PROFESSED MEMBER

Someone aspiring to become a member of the Secular Franciscan Order should display at least the following criteria:

- ✓ a Roman Catholic who receives the sacraments on a regular basis;
- ✓ a prayerful person;
- ✓ a person of peace and justice;
- ✓ one who wants to be of service to others;
- ✓ one who wants to live more simply, more detached from material things, etc.;
- ✓ a person who is well in mind, emotions, psyche, etc.;
- ✓ one who understands the implications of a commitment and is willing to make a commitment to the Secular Franciscan Order;
- ✓ a person of integrity and honesty;
- ✓ a person who knows how to bring balance and harmony into her/his life;
- ✓ one who has leadership and/or follower ship qualities or skills;
- ✓ one who has an interest in actively learning (i.e. ongoing formation);
- ✓ one who understands the concept of ongoing conversion and desires to do so;
- ✓ one who understands that profession is also a commitment to the fraternity and, therefore, he/she wants to live in fraternity.

It is necessary to confirm the genuineness of a candidate's vocation before admitting him/her to final profession. This is done through a process of discernment by both the fraternity Council and candidate that begins with his/her first visit to a fraternity.

The fraternity members welcome the observer to join them and whenever the opportunity arises, any questions he/she may have regarding the Secular Franciscan Order are answered. If he/she returns for a second visit, one probably has an idea that he/she may be called, and the fraternity assumes that also, for the time being.

The fraternity and the observer are still trying to get to know each other. He/she particularly wants to observe authentic witnessing on the part of the professed members of the fraternity that he/she is visiting. The above continues for successive meetings until one of two things happen:

1. the observer discerns that he/she is not being called to this way of life, doesn't need to return to any further meetings and, therefore, the process is ended.
2. the observer returns and asks to begin a formal program of formation.

The fraternity may require the observer to go through a Period of Orientation prior to beginning the Period of Inquiry. These study sessions are intended to help the observer to understand the Secular Franciscan Order better before embarking on a formal formation program. The program could run from 3 months on ward. *Franciscan Journey* Pg. 1-21

The Fraternity Minister then asks the observer to put the petition in writing with a reason as to why he/she wishes to begin [such] a formal program of formation, and to supply two (2) letters of reference (one from a Roman Catholic priest, the other from a lay person who has some knowledge of Franciscan spirituality.) See APPENDIX Pg.130: Sample Application to the Period of Inquiry.

After the letter of request and letters of reference are received, the fraternity Council discusses them and discerns whether or not to conduct the first of three (3) interviews. If the Council discerns “no”, the process is ended; if the Council discerns “yes”, then the fraternity Minister and Spiritual Assistant interview the potential inquirer. The additional information is brought back to the Fraternity Council, for further discernment: If the applicant appears to lack some of the expected criteria, the process is ended; if the expected criterion is evident, then the observer is welcomed into a Period of Inquiry that may last between three (3) to six (6) months.

Discernment of a vocation by both the Inquirer and the fraternity continues and the process may stop at any time, but if he/she continues to the end of the Period of Inquiry, he/she makes a written request to enter the into candidacy stage.

Period of Candidacy: The fraternity Minister, Spiritual Assistant and Formation Director interview the potential candidate and bring this information, plus the written request, to the fraternity Council for further discernment. If no signs of a vocation are evident, the process is ended; if a vocation appears to be developing, then the Inquirer is formally received, during a Para Liturgy, into the Period of Candidacy. The act of admission is registered and preserved in the records of the fraternity. (Fraternity registrar)

The Candidate continues his/her formation program and this phase may last between twelve (12) to thirty-six (36) months. The Candidate is given a sponsor to assist him/her on this journey. Discernment by both the Candidate and the fraternity continues and the process may stop at any time. If he/she continues to the end of the Period of Candidacy and believes that the Secular Franciscan Order is the way of life to which he/she is being called, he/she makes a written request to be admitted to Profession. After receipt of the written request, the third in the series of three interviews is held. The fraternity Minister, Spiritual Assistant, Formation Director and Sponsor present information to the Council for further discernment. If there is doubt about the authenticity of the candidate’s vocation, the process is ended; if all the information and actions of the Candidate verify the presence of a vocation, he/she is admitted to Profession.

The Rite of profession is most often celebrated during Mass because the nature of permanent commitment as a public and ecclesial act is closely tied to the celebration of the Eucharist. The Minister of the fraternity receives the Profession at a suitable place in the sanctuary; the act of Profession is registered and preserved in the records of the fraternity.

* Refer to *Ritual of the Secular Franciscan Order* Page 18

*See INFORMATION on pg 157 for Checklist for:

The Rite of Profession or Permanent Commitment to the Gospel Life within the Mass
See

Temporary Profession

Determined by the candidate and Formation Director and Fraternity Council

* Refer to *Ritual of the Secular Franciscan Order* Page 27 for temporary profession.

SUGGESTED STUDY PROGRAM: FRATERNITY COUNCIL UNDERSTANDING AND IMPLEMENTING THE 15 RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE FRATERNITY COUNCIL, BY CARL SCHÄFER, OFM

Explanation Of Outline

The fifteen points of the Responsibilities of the Fraternity Council, each one subdivided into:

Part 1, Part 2 and Part 3 can be summarized as follows:

Part 1 describes the Council's responsibilities toward Fraternal Life:

1. to enable the members to experience brotherhood/sisterhood;
2. to animate and guide the fraternity;
3. to discern the fraternity needs;
4. to develop the sense of being Church, Apostles and Franciscans.

Part 2 concerns the Council's promotion of healthy membership:

1. to discern genuine vocations to the OFS;
2. to look after the formation program;
3. to sustain permanent commitment;
4. to help members in difficulty;
5. to arrange for withdrawal or dismissal.

Part 3 explains the council's role in strengthening the Fraternity:

1. to hold regular council and fraternity meetings;
2. to meet with other Franciscans;
3. to provide for continuing education;
4. to raise support for the OFS's needs;
5. to look for spiritual assistance;
6. to assure fidelity to the Rule and Franciscan charisma.

Use of Material

It is suggested that you take one point for each council meeting over a period of fifteen months. All the councilors are asked to prepare, in writing, an example and a plan of action for putting the particular point into practice in the local fraternity. This is to be done during the month before the council meeting. These examples and plans should all be kept by the Secretary in a "Responsibilities" file, for future reference when the fraternity compiles its "Manual of Responsibility".

One councilor is to be designated each month to present his/her example and plan at the next council meeting.

THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE FRATERNITY COUNCIL

(AS FOUND IN THE SECULAR FRANCISCAN PAULINE RULE OF 1978) www.francisanfriarstor.com

Part 1: Fulfilling the Characteristics of Fraternal Life

1. to build up the spirit and reality of fraternity on different levels (art. 20)
 - a. modeling and actualizing a basic evangelical community of laity
 - b. making happen a “lived experience of togetherness”, not just a club or sodality
2. to animate and guide fraternity life (art. 21a)
 - a. animate (giving life, inspiration, motivation) as principle of unity
 - b. guide (giving direction, definition, organization, service) as principle of movement
3. to discern the needs of the fraternity and help the community express itself according to those needs (art. 21b)
 - a. discovering the “personality” of the fraternity
 - b. shaping the characteristics of this personality according to those needs
4. to develop within the fraternity a sense of Church, as sense of the apostolate, a sense of being Franciscan (art. 22)
 - a. actualizing the function of a fraternity in relationship to the Church and the Franciscan Family
 - b. harvesting the “divine seed” planted within the fraternity to produce apostolic, Ecclesial and Franciscan activity.

Part 2: Preserving the Vitality of Membership

5. to discern the vocation of newcomers and admit them into the Order (art. 23a)
 - a. knowing who is in formation and knowing the qualifications for membership in the Order
 - b. knowing how to implement the prayerful process of discernment of vocation
6. to oversee the formation program (art. 23b)
 - a. choosing, training and evaluating the directors/team of formation
 - b. discovering or adopting the most suitable process of formation to lead to commitment
7. to sustain the permanent commitment of the professed (art. 23c)
 - a. providing for the professed a sustaining support system within the community
 - b. securing an ongoing group spiritual direction to discover and sustain “God in my life.
8. to help fraternity members who are having particular difficulties (art. 23d)
 - a. establishing an atmosphere of trust and dialogue to allow people to come
 - b. taking the initiative when problems arise
9. to arrange for the withdrawal of permanent dismissal from the community when this is necessary (art. 23e)
 - a. knowing the operative conditions for withdrawal or dismissal or dispensation
 - b. acting with kindness and gentleness and using recourse to higher levels

Part 3: Strengthening the Sustaining Forces of Community

10. to plan and carry out the regular and frequent meeting of the fraternity (art. 24a)
 - a. drawing up and carrying out the meeting’s agenda and time frame: prayer, work, study, dialogue, leisure
 - b. holding regular council meetings: “discern, decide, do”

11. to participate in meetings with other Franciscan entities (art. 24b)
 - a. taking the initiative and responding to invitations: spiritual life, communal activities, and common ministries
 - b. participating actively and appropriately in higher levels of fraternity
12. to provide for the continuing education of the fraternity (art. 24c)
 - a. maintaining a continuing education program: content and personnel
 - b. developing a resource center for the fraternity: texts, materials, people
13. to engage the member's support for the needs of the local fraternity and the higher levels of fraternity (art. 25)
 - a. drawing forth the investment of members' time, talent and ~~energy~~.
 - b. getting enough money to fulfill life in fraternity on various levels
14. to provide for the spiritual wellbeing of the members and for the vital reciprocity or interchange with Franciscan religious through spiritual assistance (art. 26a)
 - a. making sure that the whole fraternity has the right spiritual guidance that it needs: for the council, for formation, for the fraternity at large
 - b. continuing to establish and maintain good interactive relations with the Franciscan religious
15. to assure the proper living out of the Secular Franciscan Rule and the fidelity to the Franciscan chrism (art. 26b)
 - a. making the formal request for the pastoral and fraternal visits
 - b. preparing the fraternity spiritually, psychologically and physically for the pastoral and fraternal visit

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE FRATERNITY COUNCIL

(AS FOUND IN THE SECULAR FRANCISCAN PAULINE RULE OF 1978)

Rule: It takes particular inspiration from the Rule's references to the necessity of conversion especially in Chapter II, Article 12, as it enjoins the Secular Franciscans to "set themselves free to love God and their brothers and sisters." Later in Chapter II, Article 14, Secular Franciscans "are called to build a more fraternal and evangelical world so that the kingdom of God may be brought about more effectively...let them exercise their responsibilities competently in the Christian spirit of service." It is to the enablement of these ends that the Regional Formation Commission dedicates its efforts.

Goals:

1. To develop the qualities and skills of fraternity leadership.
2. To act as a resource group for Secular Franciscan Fraternities.
3. To develop formation materials, resources, processes, and guidelines for practice of formation.
4. To review and coordinate the promotion of existing formation materials.
5. To support and serve (upon request) the efforts of Secular Franciscan Fraternities in developing their own formation efforts.

SECTION C

REGIONAL OLOTA POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

1.0 Regional Council Meetings

- 1.1 The location of the Council Meetings shall be planned from meeting to meeting.
- 1.2 The agenda for each meeting of Council shall be the duty of the Minister. It shall be sent to the Councilors (and resource persons, where appropriate) with relevant materials at least one week before the meeting date.
- 1.3 The Council shall prepare an annual budget and advise the local fraternities of the amount of contributions required from each toward the expenses of the higher levels. Presently, the fraternity contribution is set at \$___per active member. (Con.94)
- 1.4 Travelling expenses shall be paid as per the following:
 - a. \$.0.50/km for meetings; any other expenses occurred approved by council.
 - b. \$.0.50/km for Pastoral and Fraternal Visits.
- 1.5 Regional Fraternity delegates shall be reimbursed for airfare and related expenses incurred relevant to their attendance at Chapters
- 1.6 A copy of the Minutes of each Regional Meeting shall be supplied to each member of Council.
- 1.7 The Regional Minister shall prepare an annual report to the National Council on the form received from the National Council. It shall be discussed by the Regional Council, revised if necessary, and approved before the report is sent to the National Council.

2.0 Fraternal Visits and/or Chapters of Elections

- 2.1 The Minister, upon the request and co-operation of local ministers, shall set dates for Fraternal Visits and/or Chapters of Elections.
- 2.2 If a request for a Fraternal Visit and/or Chapter of Elections has not been received by four (4) months prior to the due date, the Regional Vice Minister shall initiate the communication with the local minister regarding Visit and/or Chapter of Elections.
- 2.3 After the date for a Fraternal Visit has been set, the Vice-Minister shall send to the local minister a "Questionnaire in Preparation for a Fraternal Visit", plus guidelines to facilitate the Visit.
- 2.4 See APPENDIX pg. 104
- 2.5 The Vice-Minister(s) shall examine the records of the visited fraternity.
- 2.6 The Vice-Minister(s) shall make notes regarding the quantity and quality of the fraternity's records, and observations made from attendance at the fraternity meeting. These notes shall be used in formulating a typed report to the visited fraternity.
- 2.7 The completed report shall include:
 - a. name and location of the fraternity;
 - b. date of the visit and of Vice-Minister(s);
 - c. functions performed by the Vice-Minister(s);
 - d. an assessment of the quality of the records and observations made during the Visit;
 - e. affirmation for the fraternity's strengths;
 - f. suggestions for strengthening various area of weakness;
 - g. the names of the elected Council, etc., if a Chapter of Elections was held in conjunctions with the Fraternal Visit.
- 2.8 The completed report shall be discussed at the subsequent meeting of the Regional Council, to be revised and/or approved. If the length of time between the Visit and the subsequent Regional Council meeting is inappropriately long, the report shall be vetted by corresponding with the Regional Councilors. The report shall then be sent to the minister of the visited fraternity.

- 2.9 The fraternity Council shall discuss the report and how to resolve the various suggestions for improvement at its next meeting. The local minister shall share the Vice-Minister(s)' Report and the Council's decisions regarding the suggestions with the fraternity. The report shall be placed in the fraternity's Record of Minutes of Fraternity Meetings.
- 2.10 A true copy of the Vice-Minister(s)' Report shall be placed in the Regional Fraternity Record of Fraternal Visits or in the Vice Minister(s) fraternal visits.
- 2.11 The Vice-Minister(s) shall be reimbursed for expenses associated with a Pastoral/Fraternal Visit and/or Chapter of Elections (e.g. meals, travel,) Accommodations provided by Local Fraternity.

3.0 Pastoral Visits

- 3.1 The Pastoral Visit is a privileged moment of communion of the First Order and the TOR with the OFS. It is carried out also in the name of the Church and serves to revive the evangelical Franciscan Spirit, to assure fidelity to the chrism and to the Rule, to offer help to fraternity life, to reinforce the bond of the unity of the OFS, and to promote its most effective insertion into the Franciscan Family and the Church.
The Spiritual Assistant strengthens the fraternity in its presence and mission in the Church and in society; verifies the relation between the secular and religious fraternities; gives special attention to apostolic activities of the fraternity; gives attention to the collaboration and sense of co responsibility among the secular leaders and the spiritual assistants; examines the quality of the service and promotes their continuing spiritual and pastoral formation. (cf. GC art. 92, 93 & 95, Statutes for Spiritual Assistance to the OFS art. 14).
- 3.2 The Spiritual Assistant will ask to see the register of reception and profession to note if it is up to date. The Spiritual Assistant may ask the fraternity to fill out a self-evaluation Pastoral Visitation Form and return it to him. In fraternal dialogue, the visitor will ascertain how well the fraternity is fulfilling the above paragraphs. A Visitation Report will be sent to the Minister. He/she is asked to share the report with the council and fraternity. A copy of the Visitation Report shall be placed in the fraternity's register of minutes. A copy of the report will be given to the members of the OLOTA Regional Council.

4.0 Regional Fraternity

- 4.1 The mission statement for Our Lady of the Angels:
"We, the Regional Council, in the spirit of Christian Service, charity and justice will promote, animate and coordinate the Franciscan Life and activities of our Brothers and Sisters of Our Lady of the Angels Regional Fraternity. By the power of the Holy Spirit, we will seek to observe the gospel according to our Rule, in the spirit of St. Francis of Assisi, in order to bring about a more fraternal, evangelical and peaceful world, to more effectively build the Kingdom of God today."
- 4.2 Each local fraternity shall send the "Annual Census Form" with its financial contributions to the expenses of the higher-level fraternities, to the Regional Treasurer by January 31st of each year.
- 4.3 The "Annual Local Fraternity Report to the Regional Council" shall be sent to the Vice Minister's by January 31st of each year. This information will assist the Vice Minister's in compiling his/her annual report to the Regional Council.
- 4.4 The Regional Newsletter, in general, shall be prepared 2 times a year, on a seasonal basis.
- 4.5 The newsletter shall be available by post or email, to all fraternity members, with the exception of those who request to unsubscribe. Additional copies shall be sent to the regional members, Spiritual Assistants and National
- 4.6 A professed member who leaves his/her local fraternity because of a transfer, voluntary withdrawal or suspension, may be required to redo part or the entire Formation program after

REGIONAL OLOTA POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

returning as an active member. The decision regarding redoing the Formation Program will depend upon various circumstances such as number of years of being inactive, significant changes in the Formation program during his/her absence, etc. This decision shall be made by the local fraternity council and recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

- 4.7 A member of the Regional Fraternity wishing to communicate on behalf of the Regional Fraternity, shall have authorization from the Regional Council before the representation be done. Such request and authorization shall be entered into the minutes of the Regional Council.
- 4.8 A Regional Meeting shall be held twice a year. The agenda for this meeting shall be prepared by Regional minister and council. (Regional Statutes 3.2 (a))
- 4.9 A Regional Chapter of Elections shall be a weekend in length, and shall be held every 3 years. The convocation of this Elective Chapter shall be the responsibility of the Regional Minister, in concert with the Regional Council and National Minister. (Regional Statutes 4.1 a GC 63.2a)
- 4.10 In addition to the chapter, every 3 years hold one Spiritual Conference Workshop within the mandate of the Regional Council.
- 4.11 Regional Workshops for members of local fraternities shall be sponsored by the Regional council on a needs basis. The presenters may be members of the Regional Council and/or others selected because of their expertise with the workshop topic.
- 4.12 The establishment of a new fraternity shall follow the procedures outlined in this handbook.
- 4.13 The Canonical Establishment of emerging Fraternities shall follow the procedures and use the documents provided by the National Council of Canada.

The Canonical Establishment of those Fraternities, which presently make up the OLOTA and are not canonically established, may request same from the OLOTA Council.

OLOTA REGIONAL STATUTES

The Regional Council has the authority to make provisional amendments to the Statutes, subject to the approval of the Regional Chapter and the National Council. Any proposed amendments must be forwarded to the local fraternity ministers at least three months prior to the Chapter for consultation with their membership. The proposed amendments shall require a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the Regional Chapter for approval.

***(Regional Statutes on OLOTA Website <https://www.olota.org/>)**

POLICY FOR FORMING AND ESTABLISHING A NEW FRATERNITY

(APPROVED CHAPTER OF ELECTIONS, MAY 2005)

1.0 Phase 1: Setting up newly forming groups.

- 1.1 Newly forming groups are those who are exploring the possibility of establishing a Secular Franciscan Fraternity. There may or may not be any professed Seculars in the group.
- 1.2 If those wishing to form a new group belong to an existing fraternity, they submit a written request for approval to the council of that fraternity. If approved, the group is given the status of a "newly forming group". The minister of the fraternity informs the Our Lady of the Angels Regional Council of the existence and development of this newly forming group.
- 1.3 If those wishing to form a new group do not belong to an existing fraternity, or desire to separate themselves from their existing fraternity, they would submit a written request for approval to the Our Lady of the Angels Regional Council, which acts on the request. If approved, the group is given the status of a "discerning group" and is assigned to a sponsoring fraternity.
- 1.4 If no local fraternity is available as a sponsor for a given group, Our Lady of the Angels Regional Fraternity --- in extraordinary circumstance --- will act as the sponsoring fraternity in accord with General Constitution Article 62.2.
- 1.5 Once the "newly forming group" is approved, it:
 - a. Chooses one of its members as a leader/contact person and begins to meet on its own to build community.
 - b. Requests a Spiritual Assistant for their "newly forming group".
 - c. Appoints a formation director if any of the professed members of the newly forming group qualifies for this responsibility. Otherwise, the sponsoring fraternity or Our Lady of the Angels Regional Council will provide a suitable person. In any case, the formation team or Director of the sponsoring fraternity will oversee the formation of new members in the newly forming group.
 - d. Participate in the activities of the sponsoring fraternity, such as days of recollection, retreats, prayer services, socials, and some fraternity meetings.
 - e. The leader sends an annual report to Our Lady of the Angels Regional Council
- 1.6 Admissions and professions of new members will be approved by the sponsoring fraternity council and will be received by the minister of the sponsoring fraternity. (see General Constitution Article 46.2)
- 1.7 After the completion of at least one (1) year with five professed members, the newly forming group, after seeking the approval of the sponsoring fraternity council may submit a written request to Our Lady of the Angels Regional Council that it be given the status of "emerging" Fraternity. At the same time, they will request a Pastoral and Fraternal Visitation in order to assess its suitability for the status of an "emerging" Fraternity

2.0 Phase 2: Developing emerging Fraternities.

- 2.1 Upon completion of the pastoral and fraternal visitation Our Lady of the Angels Regional Council acts on the request of the newly forming group. If approved the group is given the status of "emerging" fraternity.
- 2.2 A designate council is formed and members choose a name for this "emerging" fraternity. The group begins to function as a fraternity with fraternity meetings, council meetings, and keeping minutes, records and financial accounts. All professed members move to this new emerging fraternity.
- 2.3 Admissions and professions of **new** members will be approved by the council of the "emerging" fraternity and will be received by the minister of the "emerging" fraternity, recording this in their own Register. Members who belong to the Mother Fraternity will have their records transferred to the Register of the new fraternity following Canonical Establishment.
- 2.4 The Council sends an annual report to Our Lady of the Angels Regional Council.
- 2.5 Our Lady of the Angels Regional Council informs the National Council of the existence and development of the emerging fraternity, the place of meeting and the contact name.
- 2.6 The "emerging" fraternity following the guidelines establishes its structures and procedures necessary for:
 - a. Its operation (including prayer, ongoing formation, charities, ministries, communications, socializing).
 - b. Vocation promotion
 - c. Formation of inquirers and candidates
 - d. Opportunities of interaction outside the fraternity meeting
 - e. Regular interaction with other fraternities, especially its sponsoring fraternity.
- 2.7 After the completion of at least one year, the "emerging" Fraternity may submit a written request to Our Lady of the Angels Regional Council for its Canonical Establishment.
- 2.8 Before it accedes to the request Our Lady of the Angels Regional Council authorizes a fraternal and pastoral visitation. The visits are to ascertain the community's permanent viability for the life in fraternity, its faithful observance of the Rule and Constitutions

3.0 Phase 3: Canonical Establishing a Fraternity.

- 3.1 Upon the completion of the pastoral and fraternal visitation, Our Lady of the Angels Regional Council acts on the request of the emerging community to be Canonically Established. If approval, the procedures of the National Council will be followed. (see Canonical Establishment of a Fraternity of the Secular Franciscan Order)
- 3.2 The ceremony of canonical establishment is celebrated according to the Ritual. During the ceremony, the documents are signed and dated by the delegate of First Order Minister Provincial, by Our Lady of the Angels Regional Minister and by the two witnesses.
- 3.3 One copy of the official document is sent to the regional council to be kept, a second is sent to the diocesan chancery for filing, and the third copy is preserved in the newly established fraternity's records.

***See APPENDIX Forms Pg. 133-138 flow Chart and forms for Establishing a Fraternity**

***See INFORMATION Pg.162**

OLOTA DIRECTOR FOR JUSTICE, PEACE AND INTEGRITY OF CREATION (JPIC)

<https://www.olota.org/>

OLOTA Statutes:

3.3.9 The Regional Director For Justice, Peace and The Integrity Of Creation (JPIC) shall:

- a) Animate and promote formation and action in the field of JPIC in light of the OFS Rule especially n. 15 (justice); n. 18 (creation/ environment) and no. 19 (peace) in the OLOTA Council and local fraternities.

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OLOTA DIRECTOR OF YOUTH

<https://www.olota.org/>

- For access to the **OLOTA FRANCISCAN YOUTH PAGE**.
- For access to the power point presentation called;
 " How to start a Franciscan Youth Group in Your Parish."

OLOTA Statutes:

3.3.7 The Regional Director of Youth Shall:

- GC 96.1-6
- a) Encourage fraternities to be proactive in sharing Franciscan life and Franciscan spirituality with youth
 - b) Share throughout the Region" the results of youth related projects and programs being done by local fraternities.
 - c) Encourage youth participation within the Secular Franciscan Order as it is outlined in the General Constitutions of the OFS.

CELEBRATIONS IN THE FRATERNITY OF THE FRANCISCAN YOUTH

- 1) Preface**
- 2) Celebration of Admission**
- 3) Celebration of Promise**
- 4) Celebration of Election of the Council**
- 5) Prayer of the Franciscan Youth**

1) Preface

This document has a normative nature. At the same time, it shall be open to legitimate adaptation to different cultures.

I. The nature of personal and formal commitment made before God and the fraternity of Franciscan Youth

1. Franciscan Youth is the communion of all YouFra local fraternities existing around the world. It is an integral part of the Franciscan Family, living the experience of Christian life in the light of the message of St. Francis of Assisi and deepening its vocational journey in the midst of the Secular Franciscan Order. (*Cfr. Conclusions of the 1st YouFra International Assembly – Introduction; cfr. GG.CC. Art. 96.2*)
2. The members of Franciscan Youth, either individually or in a group, consider the Rule of the OFS an inspirational document for the growth of their own Christian and Franciscan vocation. After a suitable period of formation of at least one year, the candidate confirms this option with a personal pledge before God and in the presence of their brothers and sisters. (*Cfr. GG.CC. Art. 96.3*)

II. The celebrations that accompany the way of vocation in Franciscan Youth

3. The members of the Franciscan Youth deepen their own way of vocation in the light of the message of St. Francis. After their initial getting to know the fraternity, they incorporate themselves into the life of the fraternity with the Celebration of Admission. Later they confirm their way of vocation in YouFra with the Celebration of Promise. (*Cfr. YouFra: A Way of Franciscan Vocation, n. 19; 21; 22*)
4. In both celebrations, the president of the local fraternity into which the young member is to be incorporated, or of the fraternity with which the youth commits to, will perform the welcoming. If there is no brother or sister in the local fraternity who has made his or her promise, as in the case of an emerging fraternity, the president of the higher level of fraternity will be responsible for the welcoming. When this is not possible, the minister of the local OFS fraternity or delegate will be responsible for the welcoming. The role and the presence of the spiritual assistant during the above- mentioned celebrations are means to guarantee fidelity to the Franciscan charism, communion with the Church, and union with the Franciscan family. (*Cfr. YouFra: AWay of*

Franciscan Vocation, n. 21, 28; *cfr. Conclusions of the 1st YouFra International Assembly*)

III. The Celebration of Admission into the Franciscan Youth Fraternity

5. The time of admission into YouFra is a time of searching, of establishing initial contacts, of understanding and acceptance, which culminates in the decision to begin the time of formation. (*A Sample Draft of National Statutes*, Art. 24)
6. The Celebration of Admission into a YouFra fraternity precedes the period of formation for the Promise in YouFra. The celebration should be simple and modest. It is advisable that before the celebration, the young Franciscan has received the Sacrament of Confirmation. (*Cfr. Conclusions of the 1st YouFra International Assembly*)
7. The Celebration is conducted during a time of prayer in the fraternity and not during the Mass. After the celebration, the Gospel and other YouFra documents may be given to the youth. (*Cfr. Conclusions of the 1st YouFra International Assembly*)

IV. The Celebration of Promise

8. After a period of formation of at least one year, the candidate may confirm his or her decision by making a personal promise before God and in the presence of the brothers and sisters. The fraternity council makes the decision on the candidate's petition, and after making the promise, the young person is fully incorporated into the fraternity. YouFra members who have made their promises should remember to renew them each year, as it is defined in the National Statutes. (*Cfr. YouFra: A Way of Franciscan Vocation*, n. 21; *cfr. A Sample Draft of National Statutes*, Art. 27-28; *cfr. Conclusions of the 1st YouFra International Assembly*)
9. Before the Celebration of Promise, the candidate should attend a specially designed spiritual retreat intended for those preparing for this promise to enter into the YouFra fraternity. (*Cfr. Conclusions of the 1st YouFra International Assembly*)
10. Whenever possible, the YouFra promise should be made within the Eucharistic celebration and open to all the community. The young Franciscan will be given a T A U – possibly a specially designed one. (*Cfr. A Sample Draft of National Statutes*, Art. 28; *cfr. Conclusions of the 1st YouFra International Assembly*)
11. The nature of the promise in the fraternity of YouFra includes:
 - a) Renewal of baptismal promises
 - b) Personal and public acceptance to live the Gospel in the fraternity, according to the example of St. Francis
 - c) Acceptance of the OFS Rule as the document of inspiration (*Cfr. YouFra: A Way of Franciscan Vocation*, n. 6;21)
12. Members of the local OFS fraternity, if there is one, are to be invited to the Celebration of Promise, because the OFS is considered to be particularly responsible for YouFra and ought to be ready to share its experience of evangelical life with it.

Sample Text for:

2) CELEBRATION OF ADMISSION INTO THE FRANCISCAN YOUTH

OPENING

The celebration begins with a suitable song, the sign of the cross and with a few words of greeting from the spiritual assistant who presides and exercises the role of the celebrant or, if he or she is not a cleric, of the prayer leader.

The President of the fraternity or delegate explains the meaning of the Celebration and encourages participation, using these or similar words:

President or delegate

The Lord has called us to live the Gospel way of life in fraternity as he showed it to St. Francis of Assisi. He brings us together today to receive those who, moved by the Holy Spirit, have asked to be admitted into the Franciscan Youth and want to begin their time of formation, which will culminate in their promise.

Let us call upon the presence of the Holy Spirit in order to help us witness to our brothers and sisters a proper Christian and Franciscan life.

Celebrant or Prayer Leader

Let us pray. Lord our God, you have sent your Son Jesus Christ to be for us the way, the truth, and the life. Grant that these young people, who are asking to be admitted into the Franciscan Youth, may hear the words of the Gospel fully and may observe them attentively like St. Francis. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

SHORT READING

A suitable reading may be chosen.

- 1) Rom 6:3-11 – *“Let us live a new life”*
- 2) Mk 1:12-15 – *“Repent, and believe the Good News”*
- 3) Eccles 11:7-10; 12:1 – *“Remember your Creator in the days of your youth.”*
- 4) Jer 1:4-10 – *“Say not, ‘I am too young’, To whomever I send you, you shall go; Whatever I command you, you shall speak.”*

The celebrant or the prayer leader may give a spiritual reflection.

CELEBRATION OF ADMISSION

The candidates express their desire to enter the Franciscan Youth. The president of the fraternity or delegate receives their request in these or similar words:

President or delegate

Would those who are asking to be admitted into the fraternity, please come forward, namely, N.N.

The candidates stand up answering one by one:

Candidate

Here I am!

Then, the candidates respond all together:

Candidates

Brothers and sisters, we here present ask to enter this fraternity of the Franciscan Youth, so that we may live more intensely and faithfully the grace and dedication of our baptism by following Jesus Christ, according to the teachings and example of St. Francis of Assisi. We want to be persistent and attentive listeners to God's Word and persistent in personal and common prayer. We want to enjoy God's love in the Sacrament of Reconciliation and Eucharist.

Let Mary, Mother of Jesus and our Mother, recommend to the Lord our desires and prayers.

President or delegate

With joy in our hearts, this fraternity is pleased to accept your request and welcomes you to begin your time of formation.

Celebrant or Prayer Leader

The Church and the Franciscan Family, especially the OFS, acknowledge and rejoice with your sincere intentions. May the Lord give you peace and perseverance in this decision.

All: Amen. Thanks, be to God.

Celebrant or Prayer Leader

Let us thank God for these brothers and sisters by praying together the Lord's Prayer:
Our Father, who art in heaven...

At the end of the celebration, the Prayer of the Franciscan Youth may be said. The celebration ends with the blessing of St. Francis and a suitable song.

If it is suitable, the president may give to each member the distinctive sign (the Gospel and other YouFra documents).

Sample Text for:

3) CELEBRATION OF PROMISE IN FRANCISCAN YOUTH
Within the Mass.

If possible, the promise of YouFra members should be done within the Eucharistic celebration. After the reading of the Gospel the president of the fraternity or delegate, invites those who are to make promises to present themselves and to express their intentions publicly.

President of the fraternity or delegate

Let those who want to make (renew) their promise of living the Gospel in the fraternity of Franciscan Youth please come forward.

The president or delegate reads the names of the candidates.

The candidates after their name has been read, stand up and express their readiness by answering:

Candidate

Here I am!

Delegate of the group of candidates

We are a group of young people who want to share the experience of the Christian life in the fraternity of the Franciscan Youth (for one year) and in this way, respond to the love of Jesus Christ. We want to be a community of faith, which has the Gospel as a guide, the Eucharist as the center, the Church as a mother and the poor and the humble ones as brothers and sisters.

All: Amen.

Homily

The celebrant gives a homily to those present drawn from the readings of the Mass. After the homily, the celebrant invites those present to pray.

Celebrant

Dear brothers and sisters, all of you long for a better world where love and joy reign. However, there are often not enough workers to build this better world. "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few", says the Lord. Therefore, we thank God for this group of young people, which, in communion with the Franciscan Family, is ready to give its valuable contribution to this goal. We pray that God in his goodness may help you in witnessing to the love and joy of the Gospel in our world.

After a short moment of silence, the celebrant prays in these or similar words:

God, good Father, source of joy and strength for the weak, watch over these young people who, inspired by the example of St. Francis, are giving their youth to build a better world. Give them the grace to be strong and generous, through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

Then follows the act of making the promise. The formula of the promise can be expressed either individually, or by one candidate speaking in the name of all (if there is a bigger group of young people).

Since there is one single formula, care should be taken to avoid confusion between those renewing their promise and those doing it for the first time.

Formula for the promise

I, N.N., by the grace of God, renew my baptismal promises and commit myself to the service of the Kingdom of God, following the example of St. Francis of Assisi and drawing inspiration from the Rule of the Secular Franciscan Order. Therefore, I (renew my) promise to live the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ in the fraternity of the Franciscan Youth (for one year) by observing its way of life. I promise to respond to every call of good, to take strength from the Eucharist, to recognize in the poor and humble ones the face of the suffering Christ, and to seek and do God's will. May the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary and our Seraphic Father St. Francis help me on this journey. Amen.

Then the celebrant responds:

Celebrant

May the Lord confirm your decision and bless your youth! In the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit! Amen.

All: Amen.

When all this is finished, the promised members may come forward to receive the suitable sign (the Tau which represents belonging to the Franciscan Family, or New Testament, or OFS Rule as a document of inspiration...) while a hymn may be sung. The signing of the document shall be done after the Eucharistic celebration.

The Celebration of Promise can finish with the Prayer of The Franciscan Youth. The Mass continues with the Prayer of the Faithful.

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Sample Text for:

4) CELEBRATION OF THE FRATERNITY'S ELECTIVE ASSEMBLY IN FRANCISCAN YOUTH

Celebration of the Elective Assembly starts with suitable hymn and the sign of the cross, after which follows the invocation of the Holy Spirit.

Spiritual Assistant

In the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

All: Amen.

The Presider of the elections encourages in these or similar words:

Presider

Dear brothers and sisters, the Lord calls us today to be responsible: to choose several of our brothers and sisters who will, in the name of God, lead, animate and coordinate this fraternity of the Franciscan Youth. Let us call upon the Holy Spirit to guide us.

Hymn to the Holy Spirit or suitable song.

Come, Holy Ghost, Creator blest

Come, Holy Ghost, Creator blest,
And in our souls take up your rest;
Come with your grace and heavenly aid
To fill the hearts which you have made.

O Comforter, to you we cry,
O heavenly gift of God Most High,
O fount of life and fire of love,
And sweet anointing from above.

You in your sevenfold gifts are known;
You, finger of God's hand we own;
You, promise of the Father, you
Who do the tongue with power imbue.

Kindle our senses from above,
And make our hearts overflow with love;
With patience firm and virtue high
The weakness of our flesh supply.

Far from us drive the foe we
dread, And grant us your peace
instead; So shall we not, with you
for guide, Turn from the path of
life aside.

Oh, may your grace on us
bestow The Father and the Son
to know;
And you, through endless times
confessed, Of both the eternal Spirit blest.

Now to the Father and the Son,
Who rose from death, be glory given,
With you, O holy Comforter,
Henceforth by all in earth and
heaven.

Amen.

SHORT READING

A short reading from Sacred Scriptures or from the writings of St. Francis may be chosen.

- 1) Col 3:9-17 – *“Clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience... And over all these virtues put on love.”*
- 2) Mt 5:1-12 – *“How happy are the poor in spirit, the gentle, the merciful.”*
- 3) Mt 11:20-30 – *“You have hidden these things from the learned and the clever and have revealed them to mere children.”*
- 4) Lk 10:1-9 – *“Start off now; I am sending you.”*
- 5) Lk 1:26-38 – *“Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word.”*
- 6) John 13:1-15 – *“If I, therefore, the master and teacher, have washed your feet, you ought to wash one another's feet.”*
- 7) Writings of St. Francis: *The Exhortation to the Brothers and Sisters in Penance*
- 8) Writings of St. Francis: *Letter to All the Faithful*
- 9) Writings of St. Francis: *Unconfirmed Rule of 1221*, chapters 22 and 23

The spiritual assistant addresses those present with some encouraging words.

Presider

And now, after the invocation of the Holy Spirit and the reading we have heard, without any personal interest, you will choose the ones who will act for the benefit of this fraternity. Do you promise to vote according to your conscience, in full freedom, and for the benefit of the fraternity?

All: We do.

The election process follows by electing president, vice-president and the members of the Council, as defined in regulations of the elections.

PROCLAMATION OF THE ELECTED MEMBERS

Newly elected members approach the presider and the spiritual assistant. After an official proclamation of the results of the election, the presider asks for their acceptance.

Presider

Do you accept the service that the fraternity has entrusted to you by the election process and by the will of God?

Elected member

I do.

Presider

May the Lord give you his grace that you may humbly serve this fraternity in the ways entrusted to you.

All: Amen.

The spiritual assistant says this prayer:

Spiritual Assistant

Lord of Heaven and Earth,
who invite your people to collaborate in your plan of
salvation, assuming that they will become builders of Thy
kingdom, which is based on love, peace and self-giving to
neighbor, bless these our brothers and sisters
elected for the service of councilors and servants of this fraternity.

Let them be filled with your Spirit in order
to penetrate into the truth of your Word,
to lead their brothers and sisters on the path of
perfection, to animate when indifference occurs,
to encourage in moments of uncertainty, and
to be, in everything and always, heralds of Thy kingdom.

You gave them the example of our Seraphic Father Saint Francis,
give them now the strength that they may continue to be like him:
simple and caring, poor and generous,
spiritual, joyful witnesses,
bearers of peace and good wherever they go.

We ask this through the intercession of
Blessed Mary and her son Jesus Christ
Who lives and reigns forever and ever.

All: Amen.

The celebration ends with the Prayer of The Franciscan Youth, followed by the blessing of the Seraphic father St. Francis and a suitable song.

5) PRAYER OF THE FRANCISCAN YOUTH

Lord Jesus Christ,
you who are the light and the joy of our lives,
give us, we humbly ask you,
your Spirit of poverty, to protect us from all evil;
give us your Spirit of humility and simplicity
to free us from bondage to ourselves.

Give us wisdom and a generous understanding of the cross
so that we love only you, and with you and in you,
love all creation, all people and things.

Above all, Lord, give us pure hearts and bodies so
we are able to seed joy wherever we go,
to seek the good and be against evil;
that we help our brothers and sisters, in whom you are present,
to do good every day and be closer to you.

Look, O Lord, at our hearts and souls, which are ready to respond
to your every call.
Give us your joy so that we may be jubilant heralds of your kingdom.

This is what we ask of you, Lord,
with your mother and our mother, the Blessed Virgin Mary,
and with our Seraphic Father,
whom we have chosen as guide for our journey.

Amen!

REGIONAL OLOTA POLICIES AND PROCEDURES



Circ. 26/14-20

Prot. N. 2913/14-20

December 1, 2016

To the National Councils of YouFra
To the National Councils of the OFS
To the International Councillors of the OFS and YouFra

Dear brothers and sisters,

May the Lord give you peace!

After some time now, we are finally sending you the last document that was prepared for YouFra: *Celebrations in the fraternity of the Franciscan Youth*. With it, we have now a whole set of documents that should help to unify YouFra fraternities around the world in nature and organization, while respecting their diverse way of fulfilling their mission in the world.

The first document that explicitly dealt with YouFra, after the *OFS General Constitutions* (art. 96 and 97), was *Franciscan Youth: a Way of Franciscan Vocation* prepared in 2004. This document explained the identity and nature of YouFra as well as some organizational aspects that were further elaborated in a document called *YouFra: Sample Draft of National Statutes* (2004). The formation program which should be common for all YouFra fraternities was proposed in the document *YouFra Formation Program* (2004). After these basic documents prepared by YouFra members and CIOFS Presidency, we focused on defining the organization of YouFra at the international level with documents such as *YouFra International Regulation* (2007) and the conclusions of YouFra International Assemblies (Spain 2007, Croatia 2014).

After establishing these important foundations, we saw the need for a deeper look at YouFra's relationship with the OFS, which *considers itself to be particularly responsible* for YouFra (cf. GG.CC. art. 96.2). Thus, we prepared some reflections and guidelines on *Incorporation of the YouFra members into the Secular Franciscan Order* (2009) as well as the *Guidelines for Fraternal Animation* (2012). Since YouFra is becoming present in more and more places, we also prepared a *Guide for the establishment of a new YouFra fraternity* (2012) with some forms that should make easier the creation of a new fraternity. And finally, after the approval of the CIOFS Presidency at their meeting in November 2015, today we are sending you the document *Celebrations in the fraternity of the Franciscan Youth*. This resource should help us to identify ourselves as members of the Franciscan Youth by the promise made in front of God and our brothers and sisters to follow the example of St. Francis of Assisi – inspired by the *OFS Rule* – and to live the Gospel of Our Lord Jesus Christ in fraternity, wherever in the world we are.

REGIONAL OLOTA POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Up to now, fraternities have used different forms and different texts for their celebrations. Now, some fraternities will have to make changes in the procedures described in this document (procedures for admission, promise and election). We know it may be difficult to change the way these celebrations have been done up to now, but this new model was proposed and accepted at the 2nd YouFra International Assembly, held in 2014, where representatives of YouFra fraternities around the world, after some prayer and discussion, agreed upon it. We hope that every YouFra fraternity will embrace this document that was prepared with love, diligence and care, having in mind the basics that should be common for all, and open to adaptations to different cultures. We are convinced that it provides the necessary elements for each YouFra member and fraternity to pray together as they celebrate important moments in their journey of faith. We invite you to make use of them with a true spirit of faith and devotion, as well as with Franciscan joy and openness to the Spirit of God

who has inspired our vocation and nurtures it along the way.

All the above-mentioned documents are intended especially for YouFra members, but also for the OFS members and spiritual assistants that work closely with YouFra fraternities. We hope that in all these documents you will recognize the One who inspired and guided those who worked on them throughout these years. We pray that they will help the growth of YouFra according to His will, as we ask the intercession of Mary, the Holy Mother of God, St. Francis, St. Clare, St. Elizabeth of Hungary and St. Louis the King.

Fraternal greetings,



Councillor of the CIOFS Presidency
Tibor Kauser



YouFra International coordinator
Andrea Odak

SECTION D

APPENDIX



ANNUAL FRATERNITY REPORT FORM - CENSUS

Annual Fraternity Report Form- Census		Year 2020
	Please forward this report to your Regional Vice Minister	Report can be emailed or mailed
1.	Fraternity Name	
	Meeting Place	
	Meeting Day and Time	
	Minister Name	
	Mailing Address	
	Email	
	Date	
	Signature	
2.	Date of last fraternal visit of vice Minister	
	Name of last fraternal visitor or delegate	
	Date of last pastoral visit or delegate	
	Name of last pastoral visit	
	Date of upcoming Fraternity Elections	
3	Frequency of your Fraternity Meetings	
4.	Frequency of your Council Meetings	
5.	Does your council use the Handbook for Servant Leadership? (SL) What is your Fraternity Apostolate(s) Reference Pg. 44 SL	
6.	Other gatherings of your Fraternity outside of Fraternity Meeting?	
7.	Fraternity membership from register	
	a) Total number of professed members	Male_____ Female_____
	b) 18 – 35 years 36 – 50 years 50 – 65 years 66 and older *Vital Statistics for OLOTA	_____ _____ _____ _____
	c) Usual number of members who regularly attend your Fraternity Meetings	_____

Updated and approved by Regional Council on July 4, 2020



ANNUAL FRATERNITY REPORT FORM - CENSUS

	d) Name(s) of Member(s) deceased this year. Please forward names to Lanny Hui lanny.hui@gmail.com	
	e) Numbers of member(s) transferred this year. Leaving or arriving	_____
	f) Number of candidates	Male_____ Female_____
	g) Number of inquirers	Male_____ Female_____
	h) Number withdrawn (GC article 55-58)	_____
8.	Number of minutes devoted to meeting	Prayer _____ Business _____ Ongoing Formation _____ Social _____ Other _____
9.	Name of program(s) used during:	(Vice- Minister to report to Director of formation)
	a) Initial Formation	
	b) Ongoing Formation	
10.	Format of ongoing formation used at your regular Fraternity Meetings. (Vice- Minister to report to Director of formation)	
11.	Through the stages of formation briefly describe what you do to enable Observers, Inquirers, and Candidates to discern for signs for an authentic calling to the vocation of the OFS?	
12.	OLOTA Website Does your Fraternity Members utilize OLOTA Website for ongoing formation, or the National Ongoing Formation (Living Fraternity), other information such as the General Constitutions, OFS Rule, Statutes, and OLOTA Hand Book, etc.?	www.olota.org www.ofsnational.ca



ANNUAL FRATERNITY REPORT FORM - CENSUS

13.	Name of your Spiritual Assistant (SA) Name of your Spiritual Resource Person (SRP) How long has SA been with your fraternity? Role of SA at council and Fraternity meetings	
14.	Name of Justice Peace & Integrity of Creation Director (JPIC) Does your fraternity have a JPIC Action Plan in place? If so, describe some of the activities in which your fraternity carries out. (<i>Vice-Minister to report Director of JPIC</i>)	
15.	Youth Activities Does your Fraternity recite the suggested prayer for youth? Describe youth initiatives and activities that your fraternity is planning or involved in at this time. (<i>Vice-Minister to report Director of Youth.</i>)	
17.	Strengths of the Fraternity as we see them	
18.	Inter-Franciscan Relations	
	a) How do you engage other fraternities with yours?	
	b) Does the local fraternity have contacts between inter-regional fraternities?	
	c) Are there any contacts between your fraternity and the First, Second Order, or Third Order Religious? (OFM, Poor Clares, TOR, OSE, FMM etc.)	
19.	Do you have any area of concern or needs in which OLOTA can be of assistance? VM to report to the OLOTA Council.	



Contribution Form

Please complete this form and return it on or before January 31, 2021

Membership and Recommended Contribution as of December 31, 2020

OUR RULE: ARTICLE 25:

“Regarding expenses necessary for the life of the fraternity and the needs of worship, of the apostolate and of charity, all the brothers and sisters should offer a contribution according to their means. Local fraternities should contribute towards the expense of the higher Fraternity Council.”

Fraternity Name	
Address (street address, city, province, postal code)	

Numbers from fraternity register

Number of professed members (A) _____

Number of candidates (B) _____

Total contribution (A plus B) _____ X \$40.00 = _____

Date completed: _____

Minister

Treasurer

Signature

Signature

OUR LADY OF THE ANGELS FRATERNITY PRE-FRATERNAL VISIT & ELECTION QUESTIONNAIRE

- 1) Fraternity's Name _____
- 2) Name & Address of our meeting place

- 3) The following check-off items are our fraternity records that will be presented to the Visitor for examination [originals please no photocopies]
 - a. Register of Minutes for Council meeting []
 - b. Register of Meeting for regular Fraternity Meeting []
 - c. Financial Ledger []
 - d. Bank Book []
 - e. Fraternity Budget []
 - f. Directory of Member []
 - g. Record of Attendance []
 - h. Profession Register []
 - i. Register of Correspondence []
 - j. Record of Library Resources []
 - k. Photo Album / Scrapbook of Fraternity Activities []
 - l. Other []
- 4) Name of last Pastoral visitor _____ Date _____
- 5) Frequency of our regular Fraternity meetings _____
- 6) Frequency of our Council meetings _____
- 7) Other gathering of our Fraternity & their frequency

- 8) Fraternity membership
 - a. Number of Members _____
 - b. Usual number of members regularly attending _____
- 9) Our last Fraternity contribution to the expenses of the higher-level fraternities (through OLOTA) was paid on _____. The amount was \$ _____ which represented \$ _____ per member.

10) The number of minutes during our regular Fraternity meeting devoted to:

- a) prayer _____
- b) on-going formation _____
- c) social _____
- d) business _____
- e) other _____

11) Material(s) used during

- a) Initial Formation _____
- b) On-going formation _____

12) Number of Persons presently in Formation

- a) Period of Inquiry _____
- b) Period of Candidacy _____
- c) Describe the format of on-going formation used at our regular fraternity meetings

- d) Briefly describe how Inquirers and Candidates are checked for signs of an authentic vocation to the Secular Franciscan Order prior to the next stage of formation:

13) Name of our Spiritual Assistant / Resource Person _____

- a) Role of our Spiritual Assistant / Resource Person at Council meetings.

b) Role of Spiritual Assistant? Resource Person at our regular Fraternity Meeting.

- 14) The current Council was elected in _____. Councils may be elected for two consecutive terms of 3 years each. The third term requires a two-third majority on the first ballot. (See General Constitution Art. # 79) Please check off the appropriate box beside the name of each officer.

OFFICER	NAME	1 st TERM	2 nd TERM
Minister			
Vice-Minister			
Secretary			
Treasurer			
Formation Director			
JPIC Animator			
Director of Youth			

- 15) Please outline the strengths of your Fraternity as you see them

- 16) Please outline any concerns or things that need to be worked upon

- 17) Any other comments?

Minister Name [Print]

Signature

ELECTION PROCEDURES

1. Obtain a list of the fraternity members that are eligible to vote.
2. Designate persons for the following:
Secretary of elections and 2 scrutineers
3. Guards at the door (doors)
4. At this point if any one leaves the room they are not permitted to return until the elections are over.
5. A roll call of all the members that eligible to vote, respond by saying “present”. This is recorded in the minutes.
6. The position that is up for election is announced.
7. Nominations committee presents the nominations received.
8. A general call for nominations from the floor is also performed (nominator and seconder). This is made three times or until a motion is made to cease nominations, (nominator and seconder).
9. After each nomination, the candidate is asked whether he or she accepts the nomination.
10. The scrutineers distribute the ballots. The number of ballots should be the same as the exact number of eligible voter’s present.
11. The voting takes place. The scrutineers collect the ballots.
12. The numbers of ballots are counted by the scrutineers to ensure that the number of ballots does not exceed the number of voters.
13. Under the direct supervision of the President and Secretary of Elections the scrutineers separate the ballots by candidate.
14. The scrutineers count the number of ballots for each candidate.
15. The scrutineers present the results of the vote to the secretary of election, who in turn announces the results.
16. The president then confirms the election of each candidate according to the ritual

NOMINATION FORM

Regional Fraternity:

Name of Candidate _____

Address _____

City _____ Postal Code _____

E-mail _____

History of the Candidate

Date of Profession _____

Former positions held in the Fraternity _____

Information regarding life, work and/or training experiences

Any other comments by the candidate can be written on the back of this form.

Please attach a photo of the nominee. Candidates will be allowed two minutes to introduce themselves.

Nominated for the Office of:

____ Regional Minister

____ Vice-Minister - British Columbia Coastal

____ Vice-Minister - British Columbia Interior

____ Vice-Minister - Alberta North

____ Vice-Minister - Alberta South

____ Vice-Minister – Saskatchewan/Manitoba

____ Regional Secretary

____ Regional Treasurer

____ Regional Director of Formation

____ Regional Director of Communications

____ Regional Director of Youth

____ Regional Director of Youth

Name of Nominator _____

Signature of Nominator _____

Date _____

Name of Seconder _____

Signature of Seconder _____

Date _____

Signature of Candidate indicating willingness to stand for office:

Signature of Candidate _____

Date _____

NOMINATION FORM

Local Fraternity

Name of Candidate _____

Address _____

City _____ Postal Code _____

E-mail _____

History of the Candidate

Date of Profession _____

Former positions held in the Fraternity _____

Information regarding life, work and/or training experiences

Nominated for the Office of:

Minister []

Secretary []

Vice-Minister []

Treasurer []

Director of Formation []

Director Communications []

Director of Communications []

Director of Youth []

Director JPIC []

Name of Nominator _____

Signature of Nominator _____

Date _____

Name of Secunder _____

Signature of Secunder _____

Date _____

Signature of Candidate indicating willingness to stand for office:

Signature of Candidate _____

Date _____

Elections in the Fraternity

As of the date of :

CELEBRATION OF THE FRATERNITY'S ELECTIONS

Opening prayer : See OFS Ritual

Summary :

Invocation of the Holy Spirit

Reading of a text from the Sacred Scripture or the writings of St. Francis

Prayer by the person presiding the session of the elections. Come Holy Spirit

Election Procedures :

(Suggestion : have those professed members having the right to vote rise)

Nominations for the positions on the election secretariat among the delegated members :

1) Secretary of the election :

Nominated by :

Seconded by :

2) First scrutiner : _____

Nominated by :

Seconded by :

3) Second scrutiner :

Nominated by :

Seconded by :

4) Door Guards : _____

And _____(Optional)

Number of persons having the right to vote

Absolute Majority :

For the position of MINISTER :

Candidate 1 : _____

Nominated by : _____

Seconded by : _____

Accepted : _____ Declined : _____

Number of votes (1st turn) _____ (2nd turn) _____ (3rd turn) _____

Candidate 2 : _____

Nominated by : _____

Seconded by : _____

Accepted : _____ Declined : _____

Number of votes (1st turn) _____ (2nd turn) _____ (3rd turn) _____

Candidate 3 : _____

Nominated by : _____

Seconded by : _____

Accepted : _____ Declined : _____

Number of votes (1st turn) _____ (2nd turn) _____ (3rd turn) _____

Candidate 4 : _____

Nominated by : _____

Seconded by : _____

Accepted : _____ Declined : _____

Number of votes (1st turn) _____ (2nd turn) _____ (3rd turn) _____

Nominations closed : moved by _____ seconded by _____

Voting Results :

Minister elected : number of votes : _____; valid votes : _____; null votes :

Confirmation of the election result : according to the OFS Ritual, Chapter III (page 42)

For the position of VICE-MINISTER :

Candidate 1 : _____

Nominated by : _____

Seconded by : _____

Accepted : _____ Declined : _____

Number of votes (1st turn) _____ (2nd turn) _____ (3rd turn) _____

Candidate 2 : _____

Nominated by : _____

Seconded by : _____

Accepted : _____ Declined : _____

Number of votes (1st turn) _____ (2nd turn) _____ (3rd turn) _____

Candidate 3 : _____

Nominated by : _____

Seconded by : _____

Accepted : _____ Declined : _____

Number of votes (1st turn) _____ (2nd turn) _____ (3rd turn) _____

Candidate 4 : _____

Nominated by : _____

Seconded by : _____

Accepted : _____ Declined : _____

Number of votes (1st turn) _____ (2nd turn) _____ (3rd turn) _____

Nominations closed : moved by _____ seconded by _____

Voting Results :

Vice-Minister elected : number of votes : _____; valid votes : _____; null votes :

Confirmation of the election result : according to the OFS Ritual, Chapter III (page 42)

For the position of SECRETARY :

Candidate 1 : _____

Nominated by : _____

Seconded by : _____

Accepted : _____ Declined : _____

Number of votes (1st turn) _____ (2nd turn) _____ (3rd turn) _____

Candidate 2 : _____

Nominated by : _____

Seconded by : _____

Accepted : _____ Declined : _____

Number of votes (1st turn) _____ (2nd turn) _____ (3rd turn) _____

Candidate 3 : _____

Nominated by : _____

Seconded by : _____

Accepted : _____ Declined : _____

Number of votes (1st turn) _____ (2nd turn) _____ (3rd turn) _____

Candidate 4 : _____

Nominated by : _____

Seconded by : _____

Accepted : _____ Declined : _____

Number of votes (1st turn) _____ (2nd turn) _____ (3rd turn) _____

Nominations closed : moved by _____ seconded by _____

Voting Results :

Secretary elected : number of votes : _____ ; valid votes : _____ ; null votes :

Confirmation of the election result : according to the OFS Ritual, Chapter III (page 42)

For the position of TREASURER :

Candidate 1 : _____

Nominated by : _____

Seconded by : _____

Accepted : _____ Declined : _____

Number of votes (1st turn) _____ (2nd turn) _____ (3rd turn) _____

Candidate 2 : _____

Nominated by : _____

Seconded by : _____

Accepted : _____ Declined : _____

Number of votes (1st turn) _____ (2nd turn) _____ (3rd turn) _____

Candidate 3 : _____

Nominated by : _____

Seconded by : _____

Accepted : _____ Declined : _____

Number of votes (1st turn) _____ (2nd turn) _____ (3rd turn) _____

Candidate 4 : _____

Nominated by : _____

Seconded by : _____

Accepted : _____ Declined : _____

Number of votes (1st turn) _____ (2nd turn) _____ (3rd turn) _____

Nominations closed : moved by _____ seconded by _____

Voting Results :

Treasurer elected : number of votes : _____; valid votes _____; null votes :

Confirmation of the election result : according to the OFS Ritual, Chapter III (page 42)

For the position of DIRECTOR OF FORMATION :

Candidate 1 : _____

Nominated by : _____

Seconded by : _____

Accepted : _____ Declined : _____

Number of votes (1st turn) _____ (2nd turn) _____ (3rd turn) _____

Candidate 2 : _____

Nominated by : _____

Seconded by : _____

Accepted : _____ Declined : _____

Number of votes (1st turn) _____ (2nd turn) _____ (3rd turn) _____

Candidate 3 : _____

Nominated by : _____

Seconded by : _____

Accepted : _____ Declined : _____

Number of votes (1st turn) _____ (2nd turn) _____ (3rd turn) _____

Candidate 4 : _____

Nominated by : _____

Seconded by : _____

Accepted : _____ Declined : _____

Number of votes (1st turn) _____ (2nd turn) _____ (3rd turn) _____

Nominations closed : moved by _____ seconded by _____

Voting Results :

Director of Formation elected : number of votes : _____; valid votes : _____; null votes :

Confirmation of the election result : according to the OFS Ritual, Chapter III (page 42)

End of the Election process : refer to OFS Ritual, Chapter III (page 43).

Summary :

Spiritual Assistant : Final Prayer

Newly elected Fraternity Minister : Creed

Newly elected Council members : Common prayer

Minister : Congratulations to the newly elected members.

Destruction of the ballots : *At the end a motion must be made to have the ballots destroyed.

Moved by : _____

Seconded by : _____

End of the Chapter of Elections :

Moved by : _____

Seconded by : _____

Signatures for the report of the election results :

President of the session of Elections

Spiritual Assistant or his/her representative

Secretary of the session of Elections

Scrutiner

Scrutiner

Reference :

The elections follow in accordance with the General Constitutions Rome 2001, Chapter III, Title 4 Election to responsibilities and suspension - Elections, Articles 76 to 84 and the particular statutes.



Ordo Seculaire Franciscanus
OFFICIAL TRANSFER (GC Article 55)

NAME _____
Address _____

Information from Transferring Fraternity

Received into Candidacy in the OFS _____
(date)

Fraternity _____

City, Province _____

By _____
(name) (title)

OFS Profession _____ Permanent or Temporary
(date) (circle one)

Parish name _____

City, Province _____

By _____
(name OFS Minister or delegate) (title)

is hereby officially granted permission to transfer

FROM (fraternity name, city, and province): _____

To (fraternity name, city, and province): _____

Approved by _____
(transferring fraternity - Minister) (date) (telephone)

In case of fraternity cessation or inactive

Attested by: _____
(Attester: previous council member or spiritual assistant) (date) (telephone)

Receiving Fraternity: *Please record transfer in your Fraternity Register and return copy to the original fraternity.*

Recorded by: _____
(signature of OFS Minister or Secretary) (date)

blank

FORMATION PROCES FROM OBSERVER TO PROFESSED MEMBER

Someone aspiring to become a member of the Secular Franciscan Order should display the following:

1. A practicing Catholic
2. Has a desire to follow Jesus. Jesus and His Gospel are at the heart of the Franciscan way of life.
3. Has a personal faith relationship with Jesus, not simply intellectual knowledge about Him. Franciscans follow Francis' example in loving God, our sister earth and all people.
4. Is hope filled and is willing to deal with life's issues. Pessimists, nay-sayers and persons who want to hide from the world are typically not good candidates for the OFS.
5. Realizes that we are all sinful people in need of conversation. Perfect people do not need the OFS and the OFS certainly does not need them.
6. Has at least some knowledge of Francis and Clare of Assisi.
7. Is willing and able to make a commitment to the Rule of the OFS and to live in fraternity. Basic communication skills are needed to listen and to interact with our brothers and sisters in fraternity.
8. Trusts in God and realizes that God is needed in his/her life. Anyone who is prejudiced, arrogant and closed-minded will not make a good candidate for the OFS.
9. Has reverence for all of creation. Courtesy and respect are part of the spirit of reverence for all of creation.
10. Is willing to live the countercultural reality of life in fraternity. Secular Franciscans live in fraternity and are willing to share creative ideas and life with others.

Source: Adapted from Lester Bach, OFM, *Catch Me a Rainbow Too*

Signs that a person is NOT a good candidate for the OFS

1. A person already belonging to a religious Order may not belong to the OFS
2. A non-Catholic may not be received as an inquirer into the OFS, although may be able to participate to some extent in the life of a fraternity. Good dialogue can determine a healthy form of participation.
3. A person who has interpersonal problems, problems with relationships, or wants to escape home of family problems is not likely to be a good candidate for the OFS. The OFS is not a therapy group, society, although we do offer our members supportive encouragement.
4. A professional joiner is not a good candidate for the OFS.
5. A person who forces devotions and ideas on others is not a good candidate for the OFS.
6. A person who is too individualistic and self-centered is not likely to be a good candidate for the OFS. The OFS fraternity must be united by a common goal, a sense of mission and a common desire to integrate life and Gospel, going from Gospel to life and life to Gospel. (OFS rule, art. #4)
7. Someone living a life style that is obviously counter to the Gospel is not a good candidate for the OFS.
8. Someone who continuously gossips, or criticizes everything and everybody, or is irresponsible in family and /or work situations, or has addictions and does nothing to change (such as seeking professional help) is not a good candidate for the OFS.
9. Someone who has a rigid and unbending opinions and attitudes is not a good candidate for the OFS. The OFS does not need dictators! We are involved in servant leadership and need to work collaboratively.
10. Someone who uses violence, power or prestige to control life is not suitable for a Gospel way of life.

Source: Adapted from Lester Bach, OFM, *Catch Me a Rainbow To*

FRANCISCAN JOURNEY Lesson Plan

NAME _____

LESSON #	DATE COMPLETED	CATCH UP DATE
ORIENTATION		
#1		
#2		
#3		
INQUIRY FORMATION		
#4		
#5		
#6		
#7		
#8		
#9		
CANDIDACY		
#10		
#11		
#12		
#13		
#14		
#15		
#16		
#17		
#18		
#19		
#20		
#21		
#22		
#23		
#24		
#25		
#26		
#27		
#28		
#29		
#30		
#31		
#32		
#33		

GUIDELINES FOR INTERVIEWS

1. What is an interview?

An interview is a face-to-face meeting between individuals for specific purpose, such as an evaluation of one of the individuals.

It is essentially a dialogue between persons to share ideas, ask questions, give information, and to clarify certain points. It is important to remember the interview is not an interrogation or concealing session.

2. Why an in interview?

The purposes of the interview for Secular Franciscan Order are:

- a. To welcome the prospective member.
- b. To briefly explain the purpose of the Secular Franciscan Order and the commitment involved.
- c. To ask the prospect his/her understanding of the Secular Franciscan Order.
- d. To inquire of his/her motivation to look into the Secular Franciscan Order.
- e. To answer any questions the prospect or candidate may have.
- f. To ascertain eligibility of the prospect/candidate.
- g. To explain the phases of Orientation, Inquiry and Candidacy; to stress that final entrance into the Secular Franciscan Order is a mutual, dialogical process; his/her interest alone does not guarantee automatic admission.

3. Who May Interview

In the first interview, the Fraternity Minister, Spiritual Assistant, Formation Director; and in the third interview the candidate's sponsor is included.

4. When should the interviews take place?

Ideally at the time of each application:

- a. Application to enter the period of inquiry
- b. Application to enter the period of Candidacy
- c. Application for admission to Temporary Profession/Permanent Profession.

The date and time of day should be one that is convenient for all the participants.

5. Where should the interviews take place?

The interviews should take place in a clean, comfortable and quiet room, somewhere where you will not be disturbed. Privacy and confidentiality are essential and should be respected.

6. Qualities of an interviewer.

The qualities of an interviewer are the qualities of a good Formation Director, as well ideally the interviewer should possess as many of these qualities as possible:

1. Enthusiasm. The interviewer should be enthusiastic about being a Secular Franciscan and should be familiar with the Secular Franciscan vocation and Charism.
2. Prayerful. The interviewer must be a person of prayer.

3. Knowledgeable. The interviewer should have a basic knowledge of the Doctrines and Catholic faith, should be familiar with the documents of Vatican 11, especially as they relate to Lay Spirituality; and a good understanding of Franciscan Spirituality.
4. Good Listener. Being a good listener is absolutely essential to a good interviewer. Interrupting and contradicting during an interview should never take place.
5. Courtesy and warmth. Going for an interview for most people is stressful. Personal warmth, enthusiasm, and courtesy are important elements in making prospective/candidate feel comfortable.
6. Opening & accepting attitude. Every person we meet is a son and daughter of our Lord. That attitude should permeate the entire interview. Christian common sense is essential. The interviewer must accept all candidates as they are. Every effort should be made by the interviewer to curtail any tendency toward stereotyping the candidate or making judgments based on the candidate's speech, dress, behavior, or ethnic background.
7. Honesty. There is no substitute for honesty. If an interviewer does not know the answer to a question, the interviewer should simply say so and then make an effort to find the answer

7. The interview process

Interviews are never exactly alike since no two individuals are alike. Consequently, the art of interviewing is learned from constant practice. It is important that the interviewer try to improve interviewing techniques by evaluating after each interview with questions such as:

What was good about the interview? What could I have done to make the interview better? What skills need more practice? What skills do I need to acquire?

It is important that the interviewer keep records. A file might be made for each candidate where applications, interview material, and observations might be kept. All record keeping should be done immediately after the interview, never during the interview.

The following are suggestions for conducting the interview:

Beginning:

- a. Warmly greet the candidate
- b. Introduce yourself; interviewer might briefly share something about self, how long you are a Franciscan, an apostolate, etc.
- c. Explain the purpose of the interview.

Middle:

The middle part of the interview is the heart of the interview. It is during this part of the interview that the interview should be especially sensitive and observant. If the candidate is shy, the interviewer should be supportive, not impatient. Sometimes gentle questions about the candidate's family or parish activities will help the candidate gain confidence and open up.

- a. I see in your application the reason that you would like to become a Secular Franciscan. Could you tell me more about your reasons?
- b. Do you have any questions about the Secular Franciscan Order of Fraternity?
- c. Tell me a little about yourself.

Ending:

- a. Thank the candidate for coming to the interview and for showing interest in the Secular Franciscan Order.
- b. Invite the candidate to the next Fraternity meeting. (or Orientation meeting or Inquiry Session)
- c. Interviewer should give own phone number and address so that the candidate might reach the interviewer if he/she has any further questions.

8. Interview Follow up:

For initial interviews, following up is essential in the forming and maintaining of good relationships. Some helpful suggestions are:

- a. Phone the candidate about a week following the interview; ask if he/she has any further questions. Firm up plans to attend the next meeting or event.
- b. A written note expressing that's to the candidate for interest and a reminder of the date, date, time and place of the next meeting is also very welcome.
- c. If the candidate does not show up a next meeting, a phone call would be appropriate to inquiry why.

For interviews during the various phases of Formation, a short-written note with a message from the writings of St. Francis or St. Clare and a thank you note for the candidate's time and interest would be appropriate follow-up.

9. Pre-Profession Interview

At the end of the period of formation and concluding a progressive journey towards temporary or permanent profession, the candidate officially asks to be professed. This request will be made at a meeting of the Minister, the Director of Formation, the sponsor and, if possible, the Spiritual Assistant.

The objectives of this interview are as follows:

- to allow the candidate to confirm his/her desire to be professed and to assess his/her spiritual journey;
- to allow those responsible to support the candidate on his/her way to profession (temporary or permanent) whichever is his/her wish;
- to allow the fraternity council to consider and officially reply to the candidate's request for Profession, by acceptance, postponement or rejection.

Throughout the formation journey, the inter-relation among those engaged in this journey should be constant; that is between the sponsor and the candidate, the candidate and the formation director, the formation director and the minister, the minister and the candidate and vice versa.

SUGGESTED FORMAT FOR INTERVIEW

- 1 Welcome and prayer by Minister
- 2 Introduction (Minister)
 - period of formation is a time of study and discernment;
 - profession is a time of decision and commitment.
- 3 Explanation to candidate of the purpose of the interview
 - to provide an opportunity for the candidate to ask questions concerning formation or commitment;
 - to emphasize the importance of this step in the life of a Secular Franciscan.
- 4 Sharing
 - ask the candidate to share a little of his/her personal life, background, etc.;
 - ask the candidate to explain what has drawn him /her to the Secular Franciscan Order (why she/he wishes to become a Secular Franciscan?)
 - how has the period of formation contributed to the candidate living a more enriched Christian life?
 - has the candidate had an opportunity to develop his/her prayer life?
- 5 Discussion of temporary or permanent Profession
 - use the Rite of Commitment to explain the decision required of the candidate;
 - discuss the permanent commitment to the Gospel Way of Life and to the Rule.
- 6 Other Questions.

SAMPLE PRE-PROFESSION INTERVIEW

To be conducted in person, by the formation Director when the Candidacy phase is completed.
Not to be completed in writing by the candidate.

1. How do you feel that you have grown, if at all, during the formation period?
2. Did your time in Formation meet your expectations regarding what you had hoped to learn about the Secular Franciscan way of life? What about your experience in the fraternity?
3. Do you sincerely expect to make a lifetime commitment to the Secular Franciscan Order especially to life within the fraternity?
4. Are you prepared to make your Profession-Commitment, a public declaration officially received by the Church, whereby you promise to strive for holiness by observing the Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to the Rule of the Secular Franciscan Order?
5. To what work or service within the OFS and the Fraternity do feel Jesus is calling you?
6. How would you like our Fraternity to grow in years to come?
7. What suggestions do you have for enhancing the formation program for future Candidates?
8. What do you feel is the most important quality for a Secular Franciscan to have? Why?

Interviewer _____

Date: _____

Following the interview, the Candidate is asked to write a letter of Intent regarding Profession

INITIAL FORMATION CHECKLIST

NAME _____

Period of Observation	Check	Date/Initials
1. Visitor for at least 3 regular fraternity meetings		
2. Application form completed		
3. Initial interview with Minister, Formation Director and (if available) Spiritual Assistant/Resource Person		
4. Application and letters of reference brought to Council for discussion and vote.		
Period of Orientation: Materials used		
5. Completion of a period of orientation		
Period of Inquiry: Material used		
6. Ceremony of introduction and welcome		
7. Start initial formation program		
8. Written Statement on intent to be in Candidacy		
9. Interview with Minister and Formation Director		
10. Letter of reference from parish priest.		
11. Letter of reference from a practicing Catholic.		

12. Statement of intent and progress interview. Report brought back to Council for discussion and vote.		
Period of Candidacy: Material used:		
13. Rite of Admission to the Secular Franciscan Order.		
14. Candidate's name entered into Fraternity Register.		
15.Sponsor for Candidate		
16.Written request for profession with the OFS		
17. Interviews with Spiritual Assistant/Resource Person Minister, Formation Director and Sponsor.		
18. Request and Progress interview report brought to Council for discussion and vote by secret ballot.		
19. Completion of Formation Program		
20. Request for Profession, page in the fraternity register.		
21. Plan Rite of Profession: Candidate, Spiritual Assistant/Resource Person Formation Director, and Sponsor(s)		
22. Rite of Permanent Profession		
23. Profession entered in Fraternity Register.		
24. Optional: Rite of Temporary Commitment when Permanent Profession not yet possible.		

SAMPLE APPLICATION FOR CANDIDATE

To the Applicant:

Your decision to be admitted to the Secular Franciscan Order is warmly received by this fraternity. We ask that you use the space below (and additional page if necessary) to explain your reasons for wishing to become a candidate. Please tell us how you intend to live out this commitment in your everyday life.

FRATERNITY_____

APPLICANT_____

SIGNATURE_____DATE_____

SAMPLE APPLICATION TO THE PERIOD OF INQUIRY

To the applicant – We are very happy that you have asked to begin a program of formation in the Secular Franciscan Order. To help us get to know you better, please provide the following information:

NAME _____ PHONE/EMAIL _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ PROVINCE _____ POSTAL CODE _____

OCCUPATION _____ DATE OF BIRTH _____

SINGLE _____ MARRIED _____ WIDOWED _____ SEPARATED _____ DIVORCE _____

REFERENCE 1:

PASTOR _____ PHONE _____

ADDRESS _____ PROVINCE _____ POSTAL CODE _____

EMAIL _____

REFERENCE 2:

NAME _____ PHONE/EMAIL _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ PROVINCE _____ POSTAL CODE _____

HOW DID YOU FIRST LEARN ABOUT THE FRANCISCAN ORDER?

Please tell us about yourself and state why you wish to become a member of the Secular Franciscan Order. For example, tell us about your background, spirituality, family history, hobbies, talents, interests, and anything else you might consider pertinent. If you are active in our parish please tell us about involvement (e.g. Lector, Eucharistic Minister, Choir member, etc.). If you are engaged in any apostolic works (e.g. visiting the sick, care for the poor, etc.) please tell us about these activities on the back of this form.

I UNDERSTAND THAT, BY SIGNING, I AM GIVING PERMISSION TO CONTACT REFERENCES AND TO VERIFY ALL INFORMATION.

SIGNATURE _____ DATE _____

SAMPLE APPLICATION FOR PROFESSION

To the applicant:

Your decision to become a professed member of the Secular Franciscan Order is warmly received by this fraternity. We ask you to use the space below (and additional page if necessary to explain the reasons for wishing to become a professed member. Please tell us how you intend to live out this commitment in your everyday life.

FRATERNITY _____

APPLICANT _____

SIGNATURE _____ DATE _____

SAMPLE LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION

An essential part of the initial application to the Secular Franciscan Order is two letters of recommendation. It is suggested that one be from a priest or religious, and another from a lay person who has some knowledge of Secular Franciscan spirituality.

The following is a suggested form letter the fraternity might use:

SECULAR FRANCISCAN ORDER

Fraternity Name

Address

Date:

Dear _____

_____ has applied for admission to the Secular Franciscan Order.
name of the applicant

Secular Franciscans are a community of men and women in the world who seek to pattern their lives after Jesus Christ in the spirit of St. Francis.

We would appreciate receiving a letter of recommendation from you regarding

(name of the applicant)

Please be assured all information will be kept confidential.

Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Director of Formation

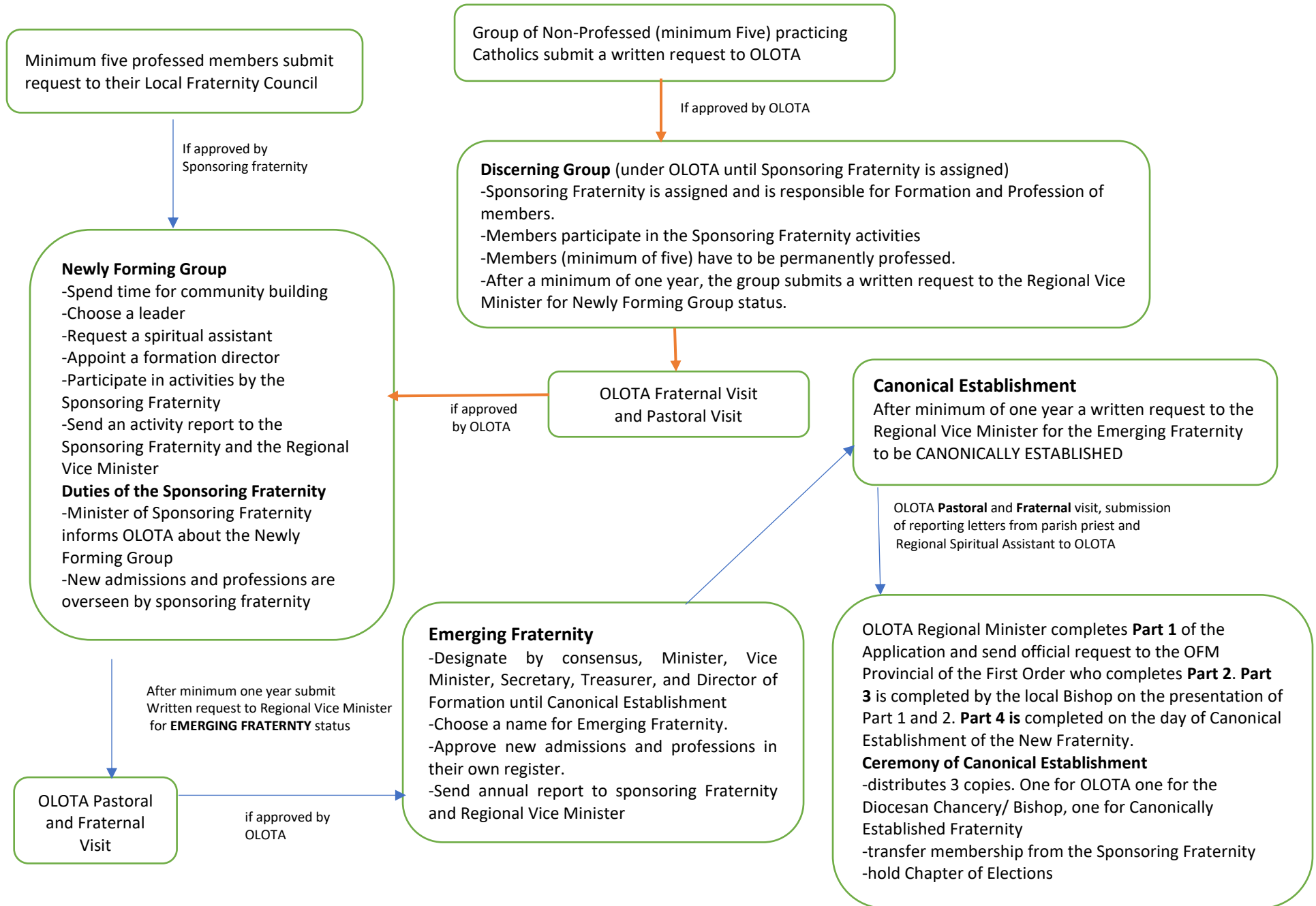


***CANONICAL ESTABLISHMENT
OF A FRATERNITY***

OLOTA CANONICAL ESTABLISHMENT FLOW CHART

STAGES OF FORMING AND ESTABLISHING A NEW FRATERNITY

Revised May 5, 2018





SECULAR FRANCISCAN ORDER

OUR LADY OF THE ANGELS REGIONAL FRATERNITY

Canonical Establishment of a Fraternity

PART 1 - REQUEST FROM THE REGIONAL COUNCIL

Upon request of the following emerging Secular Franciscan fraternity

<i>Name of the fraternity</i>	
<i>Meeting place/address in the Diocese, of</i>	

We, the OLOTA Regional Council of the Secular Franciscan Order, attest to the fraternity's viability and ask the Provincial Minister of

(name of Friar Province)

to canonically establish the new fraternity, with the permission of the Bishop of

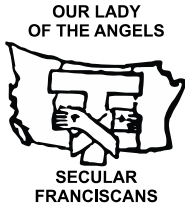
(name of Diocese)

and to provide spiritual assistance to the fraternity in accordance with the Ritual of the Secular Franciscan Order. The above fraternity is consequently attached to the OLOTA Regional Fraternity and to the National Fraternity of Canada

Signature of Regional Minister

Date: _____

Name of Regional Minister



SECULAR FRANCISCAN ORDER

OUR LADY OF THE ANGELS REGIONAL FRATERNITY

Canonical Establishment of a Fraternity

PART 2 - AUTHORIZATION OF THE FRIAR PROVINCIAL MINISTER

I, _____, Provincial Minister of the First Order Province,

(name of province)

agree to assume the canonical responsibility for the establishment of the new fraternity,

(name of local fraternity)

and spiritual assistance to this fraternity in accordance with Canon 303 of the Code of Canon Law.
In order to fulfill these provisions, I hereby request the local Bishop's consent.

Given in our house _____
(name of house)

at _____
(address)

(Signature of Minister Provincial)

(Seal)

Date _____



SECULAR FRANCISCAN ORDER

OUR LADY OF THE ANGELS REGIONAL FRATERNITY

Canonical Establishment of a Fraternity

PART 3 - BISHOP'S CONSENT

By this present document,

I, _____, Bishop of

(name of diocese)

hereby give my consent, in accordance with Canon 312 of the Code of Canon Law, to the canonical establishment of the Fraternity of

(name of the local fraternity)

In the Secular Franciscan Order.

(Signature of Bishop)

(Seal)

Date _____



SECULAR FRANCISCAN ORDER

OUR LADY OF THE ANGELS REGIONAL FRATERNITY

Canonical Establishment of a Fraternity

PART 4 - CANONICAL ESTABLISHMENT OF THE FRATERNITY

On the _____ day, of _____, of the year _____

in the Parish of _____
(name of parish)

at _____
(parish address)

We, the First Order Provincial Minister's delegate and the Regional Minister have canonically established the Fraternity

(name of local fraternity)

of the Secular Franciscan Order. This fraternity is assigned to the OLOTA Regional Fraternity and National Fraternity of Canada.

Signature of the First Order Provincial Minister's Delegate

Name of the First Order Provincial Minister's Delegate

Signature of the Regional Minister OFS

Name of the Regional Minister OFS

(Signature of first witness)

(Signature of second witness)

(Name of first witness)

(Name of second witness)

SECTION E

RESOURCES

Initial Formation Resources

- *The Franciscan Journey: Embracing the Franciscan Vision* – Lester Bach OFM Cap.

Purchase from: Smoky Valley Printing – Box 189, Lindsborg, KS 67456 USA

Phone: 785-227-2364

Email: lindabce@kans.com

Cost: \$18.00 plus shipping and handling (American Dollars)

For more than 10 copies the cost is \$14.00 plus S/H (American Dollars)

- **Fully Mature with the Fullness of Christ, 3rd Edition* – Benet A Fonck, OFM

Cost: \$25.00 plus shipping and handling (Canadian Dollars)

Purchase from Our Lady of the Angels, Treasurer

Our Lady of the Angels Regional Fraternity has copyright permission.

*To be used as a supplement such as the rituals and prayers.

- National Fraternity of Canada - http://www.ofsnational.ca/Index_EN.asp
- International Fraternity - <http://www.ciofs.org/en.htm>
- For monthly on-going formation material [Dossier] and for the official documents of the Order

Orientation

- *"Come and See", by Fr. Lester Bach, OFM Cap. & Teresa V. Baker, OFS*
- *"First Encounter with Francis of Assisi"* Damien Vorreux, Franciscan Institute Publications

Inquiry and Candidacy

- *"Come and See", by Fr. Lester Bach, OFM Cap. & Teresa V. Baker, OFS*
- *"The Franciscan Journey", by Fr. Lester Bach, OFM Cap*
- *"Imitating the Life of Francis", by Dorothy Henkes, OFS & Fr. Silas Baumann, OFM Cap*
- *"To Set Themselves Free, A Continuous Guide to the Life and Rule of The Secular Franciscans"* by Teresa Baker OFS (2005)
- *"Pick More Daisies, Ongoing Formation for Secular Franciscans", by Lester Bach OFM Cap (2004)*
This text looks at our Rule while coordinating it with the General Constitutions and Statutes of the Secular Franciscan Order.
- *"Formation Digests", by NAFRA / USA*
- *"Fully Mature With The Fullness of Christ", by Fr. Benet Fonck, OFM*

Resource Materials for Franciscan Spirituality - Franciscan Institute

TRILLIUM REGIONAL FRATERNITY
ADDITIONAL RESOURCES FROM APPROVED SOURCES

Heritage Series

[Heritage Series Volume 1](#) -- Vol. 1: ***The Franciscan Intellectual Tradition: Tracing its Origins and Identifying its Central Components***; by Kenan B. Osborne, O.F.M.; Franciscan Institute, St. Bonaventure University, 2003 - \$5.00.

- Historical Overview—30 C.E. to 1300 C.E.
- The Philosophical World of Aristotle
- The Gradual Development of the Franciscan Intellectual Tradition
- Distinctive Features of the Franciscan Intellectual Tradition

[Heritage Series Volume 2](#) -- Vol. 2: ***A Franciscan View of Creation: Learning to Live in a Sacramental World***; by Ila Delio, O.S.F.; Franciscan Institute, St. Bonaventure University, 2003 - \$5.00

- Francis of Assisi: Creation as Brother/Sister
- Bonaventure's Theology of Creation
- John Duns Scotus' Theology of Creation
- Conclusion: What is Ours to Do?

[Heritage Series Volume 3](#) -- Vol. 3: ***The Franciscan View of the Human Person: Some Central Elements***; by Dawn M. Nothwehr, O.S.F.; Franciscan Institute, St. Bonaventure University, 2005 - \$5.00

- Humans—Creatures Beloved of God in Christ: Some Central Elements in Francis and Clare
- Humans—Mediators of God: Some Central Elements in Bonaventure
- Humans—Uniquely God's in Mutual Relationships: John Duns Scotus

[Heritage Series Volume 4](#) -- Vol. 4: ***The Franciscan Vision and the Gospel of John: The San Damiano Cross, Francis and John, Creation and John*** by Michael Guinan, OFM, Franciscan Institute, St. Bonaventure University, 2006 - \$7.50. CD-ROM PowerPoint presentation of the San Damiano Cross is included.

[Heritage Series Volume 5](#) -- Vol. 5: ***Trinitarian Perspectives in Franciscan Theological Tradition*** by Maria Calisi, Franciscan Institute, St Bonaventure University, 2008.

To **order** volumes in this series or other materials, contact the distributor: [Franciscan Institute Publications at St. Bonaventure University](#) or e-mail franinst@sbu.edu

Additional resources in Franciscan Spiritual Tradition

- ***"Franciscan Prayer"*** Ila Delio OSF, St Anthony Messenger Press

- ***“Simply Bonaventure, An Introduction to his Life, Thought and Writings”*** Ilia Delio OSF, New City Press, 2nd printing 2003
- ***“The Humility of God, A Franciscan Perspective”*** Ilia Delio OSF, St Anthony Messenger Press, 2005
- ***“Scotus for Dunces, An Introduction to the Subtle Doctor”*** Mary Beth Ingham CSJ, Franciscan Institute, 2003
- ***“Crucified Love: Bonaventure’s Mysticism of the Crucified Christ”*** Ilia Delio OSF, Studies in Franciscanism, 1998 Franciscan Press
- ***“Finding Francis, Following Christ”*** Michael H. Crosby OFM Cap. Orbis Books, 2007
- ***“Clare of Assisi, Her Spirituality revealed in her letters”***, Clare Marie Ledoux, St Anthony Messenger Press, 2003
- ***“15 days of prayer with Saint Francis of Assisi”***, Thaddee Mature OFM, New City Press, 2009
- ***“Contemplating the Trinity, The Path to Abundant Christian Life”***, Raniero Cantalamessa OFM Cap, The Word Among Us Press, 2007
- ***“Life of the Beloved, Spiritual Living in a Secular World”***, Henri J.M. Nouwen, Crossroad Publishing Co. 1996

Ongoing Formation Texts:

- ***“Gospel Living Every Day of our Lives: A Formation Guide to the Rule of the Secular Franciscan Order”***, by Teresa Baker, OFS
- ***“St. Francis and the Foolishness of God”***, by Marie Dennis, Joseph Nangle, OFM, Cynthia Moe-Lobedo, Stuart Taylor
- ***“Through the Veil of Morning: An Inner Journey in the Pathways of Francis & Clare of Assisi”***, by Liam Francis Costello, OFM
- ***“To Live As Francis Lived: A Guide for Secular Franciscans”***, by Leonard Foley, OFM, Jovian Wiegel, OFM, Pattie Normile, OFS
- ***“Francis, The journey and the Dream”***, Murray Bodo, OFM

Critical Texts

- ***“The Misadventure of Francis of Assisi”*** Jacques Dalarun, Franciscan Institute Publications, 2002

- ***“Francis of Assisi in the Sources and Writings”*** Roberto Rusconi, Franciscan Institute Publications, 2008
- ***“St. Francis of Assisi”*** Raoul Manselli, Franciscan Herald Press, 1988
- ***“Francis of Assisi, writer and Spiritual Master” Thaddee*** Matura OFM, St. Anthony Messenger Press, 2005
- ***“Francis of Assisi, the Message in His Writings”*** Thaddee Matura OFM, Franciscan Institute Publications, 2004
- ***“St. Francis and the Third Order”*** Raffaele Pazelli TOR, Franciscan Herald Press, 1982

Secular Franciscan Resource Library -- 6 volumes

1. *“Called to Follow Christ: A Commentary on the Secular Franciscan Rule by the National Assistants Commentary Commission”, by Benet Fonck, OFM*
2. *“Called to Rebuild the Church: A Spiritual Commentary on the General Constitutions of the Secular Franciscan Order”, by Fr. Lester Bach, OFM Cap*
3. *“Called to Live the Dynamic Power of the Gospel: Commentary on the Rule of the OFS”, By Philip Marquard, OFM*
4. *“Called to Proclaim Christ: Short Reflections on the OFS Rule”, by Benet Fonck, OFM*
5. *“Called to Make Present the Charism” by Benet Fonck OFM, editor*
6. *“Called to Build a More Fraternal and Evangelical World, A Concordance to the OFS Rule” by Benet Fonck OFM*

Bibliography for Formation

A Work in Progress

"Through the study of books one seeks God, by meditation one finds Him."

St. Pio of Pietrelcina

Initial Formation Texts:

- **The Franciscan Journey – Embracing the Franciscan Vision** by **Lester Bach**, OFM Cap. Smokey Valley Press
- **"Franciscan Journey" JPIC Supplements** by Andrew Conradi, ofs (JPIC National Animator), 2016 ***The Franciscan Journey*** (Updated version 2010) by Lester Bach, OFM Cap does include JPIC material but not as in depth as a growing awareness in the Franciscan Family believe should be the case; especially in light of ***Laudato Si': On Care for our Common Home*** (2015) which ***The Franciscan Journey*** pre-dates. ***JPIC supplements*** contain additional material from Understanding JPIC by Andrew Conradi, ofs (National JPIC Animator) to integrate JPIC into Franciscan Journey at particular relevant places/times in formation. JPIC supplements aim to enrich our understanding of JPIC, Franciscan vision and values and their central place in the Franciscan charism and spirituality. A supplement is usually 1-7 pages long and its use, although entirely optional at the discretion of the formator, is strongly encouraged. The chapter supplements are found at: www.OFSvancouver.ca/jpic/franciscan-journey-jpic-supplements/

Ongoing Formation Texts:

There are numerous books throughout the list that may be used for Ongoing Formation
What theme would your fraternity like to read/study?

- **Francis of Assisi, Writer and Spiritual Master**, Thaddee Matura, ofm
- **Francis of Assisi, The Message in His Writings**, Thaddee Matura, ofm
- **Gospel Living Every Day of our Lives: A Formation Guide to the Rule of the Secular Franciscan Order**, Teresa Baker, OFS
- **St. Francis and the Foolishness of God**, Marie Dennis, Joseph Nangle, OFM, Cynthia Moe-Lobedo, Stuart Taylor
- **Through the Veil of Morning: An Inner Journey in the Pathways of Francis & Clare of Assisi**, Liam Francis Costello, OFM
- **To Live As Francis Lived: A Guide for Secular Franciscans**, Leonard Foley, OFM, Jovian Wiegel, OFM, Pattie Normile, OFS
- **To Set Themselves Free, A Continuous Guide to the Life and Rule of The Secular Franciscans** Teresa Baker OFS (2005)
- **Pick More Daisies, On-going Formation for Secular Franciscans**, by Lester Bach OFM Cap (2004).
- **"Seeking a Gospel Life by Lester Bach**, OFM Cap., Smokey Valley Printing
- **Share the Good News Series – On Going Formation for Secular Franciscans**– Fr. John Sullivan, OFM [can be downloaded at no cost at www.thefriars.org/OFS/KFFa.html]

Biographies about St. Francis:

- **God's Fool, the Life and Times of Francis**, Julien Green, Harper Collins Pub. (271 pages)
- **Saint Francis of Assisi**, G.K. Chesterton, Image Doubleday (149 pages)
- **St. Francis of Assisi**, Thomas of Celano, Francis Press, (327 pages)
- **Francis, the Journey and the Dream**, Murray Bodo, OFM, St. Anthony's Messenger (274 pa)
- **St. Francis of Assisi**, John Moorman, Francis Press (118 pages)
- **Francis of Assisi: Performing the Gospel Life**, Lawrence S. Cunningham, Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co. (2004)
- **St. Francis of Assisi: A Biography**, Omer Englebert
- **Francis, A Saint's Way**, James Cowan
- **The Reluctant Saint: The Life of St. Francis of Assisi**, Donald Spoto
- **The Poverello**, Mark Hiegener, OFM, Franciscan Press (92 pages)
- **The Roots of St. Francis**, Raphael Brown
- **Francis of Assisi: A Revolutionary Life**, Adrian House
- **Francis of Assisi, The Song Goes On**, Hugh Noonan, St. Anthony OFM, and Roy Gasnick OFM, St. Anthony Messenger Press, 1994 (41 pages)

Books about St. Francis:

- **Francis of Assisi, Early Documents**— This is pretty much updated and expanded Omnibus in 4 volumes: Regis Armstrong OFM Cap, J.A. Wayne Hellman OFM Conv., William Short OFM
- **Wisdom of the Poverello**, Eloi Leclerc, Franciscan Herald Press (1961)
- **Francis of Assisi, Performing the Gospel**, Lawrence Cunningham, Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co. (2004)
- **The Road to Peace in Assisi** by Bret Thoman, OFS, 2010 – Email him at bret.thoman@gmail.com
- **Finding Francis, Following Christ**, Michael H. Crosby OFM Cap., Orbis Books (2007)
- **In the Footsteps of Francis and Clare**, Roch Niemier, OFM, St. Anthony Messenger Press, 2006
- **Following Francis of Assisi – A Spirituality for Daily Living**, Patti Normile, OFS, St. Anthony's Messenger Press, 1996
- **Light in the Dark Ages: The Friendship of Francis and Clare of Assisi**, Jon M. Sweeney, Paraclete Press (2007)
- **Francis of Assisi and His Conversions** Pierre Brunette, ofm

Books about St. Clare:

- **Clare, a Light in the Garden**, Murray Bodo (1992)
- **Clare of Assisi, Early Documents, The Lady**, Regis Armstrong, OFM Cap., New City Press (2006)
- **Clothed with Gladness, the Story of St. Clare**, Sister Mary St. Paul, PCC, Our Sunday Visitor

(2000)

- **The Living Mirror, Reflections on Clare of Assisi**, Sister Frances Teresa OSC, Orbis Books (1995)
- **Clare of Assisi, A Heart Full of Love**, Ilia Delio, OSF, St. Anthony Messenger Press (2007)
- **In the Footsteps of St. Clare: Pilgrim's Guidebook**, Ramona Miller, osf
- **Clare: Her Light and Her Song**, Karen Karper
- **Clare of Assisi, Her Spirituality Revealed In Her Letters**, Clare Marie Ledoux, St. Anthony Press 2003
- **The First Franciscan Woman: Clare of Assisi and Her Form of Life**, Margaret Carney, osf

Books/Resources for Franciscan Spirituality

Incarnation

- **Living the Incarnation, Praying with Francis and Clare of Assisi**, Sister Frances Teresa OSC, Franciscan Press (1993)

Love of the Eucharist

- **The Eucharist, Our Sanctification**, Raniero Cantalamessa, OFM Cap., the Liturgical Press (1993)

Love of Scripture

- **Catholic Bible** – preferably with commentary
- **Francis of Assisi Return to the Gospel**, Eloi Leclerc, ofm

Compassion

- **Compassion: living in the Spirit of St. Francis**, Ilia Delio, OSF Franciscan Media 2011

Reliance upon the Holy Spirit

- **The Gift of God: The Holy Spirit**, Fr. Andrew Apostoli, CFR, Alba House (1994)
- **Contemplating the Trinity, The Path to Abundant Christian Life**, Raniero Cantalamessa, ofm cap

Devotion to the Mother of God

- **Mary, Mirror of the Church**, Raniero Cantalamessa, OFM Cap., the Liturgical Press (1992)
- **The Imitation of Mary**, Alexander De Rouville, Catholic Book Pub. Co. (1985)
- **True Devotion to Mary**, St. Louis De Montfort, TAN books (1941)

Dedication to Prayer

- **Christian Prayer: The Liturgy of the Hours (Divine Office)** Pauline Books and Media
- **Following Francis of Assisi: A Spirituality for Daily Living**, Patti Normile, ofs
- **Franciscan Prayer**, Ilia Delio, OSF, St. Anthony Messenger Press, (2004)
- **Praying with Francis of Assisi**, Joseph Stoutzenberger and John Bohrer, St. Mary's Press (1989)
- **The Prayers of Saint Francis**, compiled by W. Bader, New City Press

- **Ten Evenings with God**, Ilia Delio, OSF, Liguori, 2008
- **15 Days of Prayer with Saint Francis of Assisi**, Thaddee Matura OFM, New City Press (2009)
- **Secular Franciscan Companion**, compiled and edited by Marion A. Habig, O.F.M., Franciscan Herald Press
- **Francis and the San Damiano Cross: Meditations on Spiritual Transformation**, Susan Saint Sing, Ph.D., St. Anthony Messenger Press (2006)
- **The Saint Francis Prayer Book: A Guide to Deepen Your Spiritual Life**, by Jon M. Sweeney, Paraclete Press (2004)
- **The Saint Clare Prayer Book: Listening for God's Leading**, Jon M. Sweeney, Paraclete Press (2004)
- **The Geste of the Great King: Office of the Passion of St. Francis of Assisi**, Laurent Gallant, ofm
- **Through the Years with Francis of Assisi: Daily Mediations From His Words and Life**, Murray Bodo, ofm
- **The Journey into God, a 40 Day Retreat with Bonaventure, Francis and Clare**, J Raischl, OFS & A. Cirino ofm, St. Anthony Messenger Press (2002),

The Communal Life

- **Francis and the Foolishness of God**, Marie Dennis, Joseph Nangle, OFM, Cynthia Moe-Loebada, Stuart Taylor, Orbis Books (1993)

Poverty and Simplicity

- **The Lessons of Saint Francis: How to Bring Simplicity and Spirituality into your Daily Life**, John Michael Talbot and Steve Rabey, Penquin Groups USA (1998)
- **Poverty and Joy: The Franciscan Tradition**, William Short, ofm Orbis Books (1999)

Humility

- **The Humility of God**, Ilia Delio, OSF, St. Anthony Messenger Press ((2005)
- **Love, Humility and Service: The Life of St. Francis**, Lawrence Cunningham

A Joyful Spirit

- **St. Francis and the Cross, reflections on suffering, weakness, and joy**, Raniero Cantalamessa, OFM, and Carlo Martini, Charis-Servant Publications(1965)
- **God's Troubadour**, Sophie Jewett
- **Francis of Assisi: The Song Goes On**, Hugh Noonan and Roy Gasnick

Peace-Making

- **The Prayer of Saint Francis, a Message of Peace for the World Today**, Leonardo Boff, Orbis Books (2001)
- **Reflections on the Peace Prayer of Saint Francis of Assisi**, Albert Haase ofm St. Anthony Messenger (1989)
- **Road to Damiette**, Scott O'Dell
- **Peace of Heart**, John Kirvan
- **The Saint and the Sultan: The Crusades, Islam, and Francis of Assisi's Mission of Peace**, Paul Moses, Doubleday Religion (2009)

Solidarity with All Creation

- **Care for Creation [a Franciscan spirituality of the earth]**, Ilia Delio, OFS, Keith Douglass Warner, OFM, Pamela Wood, St. Anthony Messenger Press (2008)
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- **Franciscan Spirituality – Keeping Our Focus on Francis**– Fr. John Sullivan, OFM [can be downloaded at no cost at www.thefriars.org/OFS/KFFa.html]
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OFS Websites

- International Fraternity of the OFS <http://www.ciofs.org/en.htm>(International Fraternity of the OFS)
- National Fraternity of Canada - http://www.ofsnational.ca/Index_EN.asp
- Rule of the OFS <<https://www.nafra-OFS.org/OFSrule.html>>
- General Constitutions of the OFS <<http://www.ofscalgary.com/pdf/GeneralConstitutionsoftheOFS.pdf>>
- OLOTA public website <<http://www.OFSvancouver.ca>> OLOTA restricted website <<http://www.olota.org/moodle2/>>
- Franciscans of Canada (Fr. Joachim's Blog) <<http://www.franciscanfriars.ca/author/joachim-ostermann/>>
- Catholic Climate Covenant <<http://www.catholicclimatecovenant.org>>
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- Franciscan Voice
- Living Fraternity (National Website)

Movies

Can be purchased from amazon.ca, Franciscan Media, Pauline Media, Ignatian Press, other sites.

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- Flowers of St. Francis, 1950 black and white
- Clare and Francis 2007
- Francesco 1989 Mickey Rourke, Helen Bonham Carter
- Francis of Assisi 1960
- Reluctant Saint: Francis of Assisi, 2003
- Assisi: Home of St. Francis, documentary, narrated visit to Assisi
- In Search of St. Francis 2017 documentary by Ilia Delio, Regis Armstrong Walker Films

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 5. Your local Catholic bookstore.
 6. Many books can be ordered on line from amazon.ca or indigo.ca or for out of print books try abe.com

SECTION F

INFORMATION

Local Council Checklist for the Celebration of the Fraternity Chapter of Elections

Time period before Election Day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refer to Ritual pg.41 • Refer to Local Fraternity Council Handbook pg.54 &61 & APPENDIX pg.104-110
6 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Local Council reviews Election checklist. • The local Council decides on the Facilitator for the Election Day.
5 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Local Council passes a Resolution calling for an election. • The Local Fraternity Minister sends an Election request letter and copy of the Resolution to the Regional Vice-Minister (pg.54 Handbook). • Regional Vice-Minister coordinates (if needed) a Pastoral Visit. • Regional Vice-Minister starts to organise a Fraternal visit and convoke an Election. • If the Regional Vice-Minister is a member of the local fraternity that called the election, she cannot preside over her own fraternity. A replacement facilitator from the Regional Council is requested. • The Regional Vice-Minister is eligible to be elected for any position of the local council. (see explanation below)
4 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Fraternity reviews the roles of council positions. • The Local Fraternity Minister confirms availability of venue & dates. • The Local Fraternity Minister confirms availability of Facilitator/ MC
3 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Local Fraternity Minister sends a letter explaining the election process, together with nomination forms for all council positions to all fraternity members. • The Fraternity continues to review the roles of council positions.
2 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Fraternity continues to review the roles of council positions. • The Local Fraternity Minister to do list: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Confirms the Regional Vice-Minister accommodation and meals arrangements. 2. Mail a completed OLOTA Pre-Fraternal visit Election Questionair and submit a list of fraternity member that are eligible to vote to the Regional Vice-Minister. (pg.104 Handbook APPENDIX) 3. Designate a Secretary of election, two Scrutineers and door Guards. 4. Get ready the Ballot forms, a Ballot Box, pencils/pens, nomination forms, Secretary recording books/ forms. 5. Prepare the following fraternity records for audit: Minutes, Financial Journal, Formation Record and the Register.
1 month	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final review of Election preparations with Council, Fraternity and Facilitator.

Local Council Checklist for the Celebration of the Fraternity Chapter of Elections

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Go through the Election procedure with Regional Vice-Minister • The Local Fraternity Minister prepares the agenda for Election Day and coordinates with the guest speaker if one is coming. The suggested program layout of the Election Day will be made available. • The Local Fraternity Minister confirms the venue.
Election Day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Election Day starts with a Reflection. • Fraternal Visit audit (Pastoral Visit may be included). • Celebrations of the Fraternal Elections (pg. 104-116 Handbook pg. 41 of Ritual book) • First meeting, where old council transfer records to the new council • Mass (Installation of new Council Members)

* In general, there is no impediment to any of your Regional Vice-Ministers being candidates for the office of local fraternity minister. However, the following needs to be kept in mind. A vice-minister can occupy the office of the minister in two situations - **temporarily** (ie. acting in the position while the minister is absent or not able to perform his/her function) or **permanently** (ie. when the office of minister becomes vacant for whatever reason). In the first case, if the Regional Vice-Minister was called to act in the position of Regional Minister, and was also a local minister, s/he would need to have the local vice-minister assume his/her duties on the local level for the duration of the period while s/he was acting as Regional Minister. In the second case, if the Regional Minister was elected by the Regional Council following the vacating of the Regional Minister's position, s/he would have to resign as local fraternity minister; that is, the person could not occupy the offices of Regional Minister and local fraternity minister at the same time.(National office explanation November 20,2019)

Planning a Fraternity Meeting

Refer to the Ritual on pg.43-37 & the Local Fraternity Handbook on pg.57

1. GETTING READY....

- Pray...and ask the Lord for His Wisdom, and Wait upon the Lord.
- A good meeting **MUST BE PLANNED AHEAD!** May require Consultation with Council Members by mail or phone or with Fraternity Ministry Chair people... Communicate, communicate! Recall what the Fraternal Members had to say/ suggest.
- Seek Wisdom of the Holy Spirit to be creative, innovative and inspirational.
- Keep program interesting: Is it time for a guest speaker? Who? What? If so be certain you have Council's approval.
- Ongoing Formation: Keep lively, rotate leadership.
- Christian Prayer: let it be joyful, prayerful, spiritually nourishing.
- The Social half hour is unifying, must be pleasant, appealing, **SING!** Have someone play an Instrument, bring a CD, The Hospitality Ministry is critical to this event!

2. PLANNING AND WRITING THE AGENDA

- Format emphasizes the Spiritual part of the Day.
- Invite Professed members take various leadership roles, I.e.: Lead an opening song , decide who will lead Christian prayer, who to lead the ongoing formation, who to close the meeting with a prayer, encourage ALL to share in God's Action in their lives... this builds Faith in each other.
- Once you have all the leaders in place, then prepare the Agenda and email out to members 2-3 weeks in Advance of the upcoming Meeting.

3. THE MEETING

- How to chair: The Minister sets the environment (Share a spiritual reflection or invite the group to sing...this helps to set the tone)
- Welcome guest, acknowledge observers
- Listen
- Animate by involving others
- Keep order...apply the approved guidelines
- Be a Good MC... Keep the meeting moving to keep within the time frame...be gentle, peaceful, be a good listener, and be respectful of those wanting to share views.
- Acknowledge those giving reports from their Ministries... give feedback... keep notes.
- Announcements. Be open to suggestions on ideas/event presented... keep notes.
- Give Thanks.. acknowledge travellers. If a guest was present, have the Thank you card ready.

Planning a Fraternity Meeting

Refer to the Ritual on pg.43-37 & the Local Fraternity Handbook on pg.57

4. POST MEETING

- Immediately after the gathering, send out thank you or acknowledging email to members, Speakers etc.... such builds UNITY and HARMONY
- Review and approve the emailed Minutes promptly.
- Refer to any notes you may take at the past Fraternity meeting and begin to draft the new Agenda for the month, while you have the thoughts still in your mind or notes.
- If a speaker is to be invited, do so immediately out of respect to give them time to prepare; or if they cannot attend, then have a Plan B.
- If any reports, phone calls (to Regional) or tasks that fell to Minister as a result of the Fraternity Meeting, do so immediately.

Checklist for: Rite of Profession or Permanent Commitment to the Gospel Life within the Mass

Invitation and Announcements

- The local Minister prepares an invitation letter to ask the Bishop to officiate the Rite of Profession. Determine in which church the Profession can take place and ask the Formation Director to ask the Parish Priest if he is available to concelebrate the Mass. If the Bishop is not available, invite the Parish Priest to officiate.
- Those to be professed should send an invitation to their local Parish Priests.
- The Minister extend an invitation to the Regional Minister and other fraternities. Determine the number of guests to be invited.
- Prepare a bulletin announcement two weeks prior the Profession Celebration

To do list for Local Council

- The local council should pass a Motion to pay: Celebrant's honorarium, printing of the programs, gifts, lunches for priest and Regional Vice-Minister and expenses of approximately \$200,
- Permanent Profession Program Template can be obtained from the Regional Vice-Minister. The local council should review the draft Programs at the rehearsal and approve it before printing.
A Master copy is given to the Bishop by the Minister. A large copy print of the program is reserved for the Altar, the Chair, Lector and Minister. A detailed Program is created for the Professed Members and a short Program for the guests.
- Prepare a Franciscan theme decoration for the church and for the reception.
- Arrange for someone to take photos of the professed and of the whole group.
- Arrange for persons to clean up the church and reception area. Ensure all Franciscan items are stored. Have a final inspection before leaving the church.

Rehearsal

- Plan a **Rehearsal one week prior** to the Profession Celebration. Review the draft program and practice to routine of the Mass with person(s) to be professed, Minister, Director of Formation, Lectors, Eucharistic Minister(s), Gift bearers, Sacristan etc. Check with the Celebrant if white vestment is to be used.
- Arrange to be half hour early and ensure ushers and greeters are ready.
- The Minister starts the Profession Ritual. (pg.20) after the Gospel. Tau Crosses, Bibles, Membership Cards, Candles are ready to be handed to the persons to be professed.
- The Mass Readings are usually from the Saturday Mass or as suggested in the Ritual pg.18, or as proposed by the person(s) to be professed.

Checklist for: Rite of Profession or Permanent Commitment to the Gospel Life within the Mass

- Hymns can be selected by the person(s) to be professed. Suitable musicians should be arranged to accompany the Hymns

Reception

- The local council organizes the Reception. The CWL usually can cater. Money should be collected and the treasurer can write a cheque with a thank you card to be given at the reception. Professed members can pay for their guests.
- The Minister prepares a short talk at the Reception to acknowledge and thank the Bishop, Priests, and Regional Vice- Minister, visiting guests etc...

After the Profession

- The Minister writes a short article for OLOTA website and/or local Archdiocese newspaper.
- Ask the council secretary to update the Register of the fraternity.

Regional Vice-Minister Checklist for Local Council Elections & Fraternal/Pastoral Visit

A. Fraternal /Pastoral Visits.

Refer to the Ritual pg. 50-52 & Local Fraternity Council Handbook on pg. 54, 60, 75.

1. FRATERNITY GATHERING on the Day of Election includes a Fraternal visit of the Regional Vice-Minister and possibly a Pastoral Visit by Regional Spiritual Assistant.(pg. 50 of the Ritual)
2. Preparation for an Election starts four months before, with the local fraternity Minister writing a request to the Regional Vice-Minister. Together they agree on an Election date. The Regional Vice-Minister arranges for the Regional Spiritual Assistant to be in attendance at the Election.
A Pastoral Visit takes place every three years. If a Pastoral Visit cannot take place on the day of the Election, the local fraternity Minister can request a Pastoral Visit on a later date.
3. The Regional Vice-Minister sends to the local fraternity Minister a "Questionnaire form in preparation for a Fraternal Visit". A copy of the completed form should be returned to the Regional Vice-Minister. (pg.104 Handbook APPENDIX)
4. A Fraternal and/or Pastoral Visit on the Day of Election starts with prayers found on pg. 50 of the Ritual. The Regional Vice-Minister or the Regional Spiritual Assistant offer the opening and closing prayers with a blessing at the end. For the Fraternal Visit, the Regional Vice-Minister encourages dialogue with Fraternity members, discerning history, strengths, needs, aspirations, growth of the Fraternity.
5. The Regional Vice-Minister will conduct an audit of the Financial, Secretarial records of the Fraternity at a convenient time, before or after the Fraternal Visit. Verify the proper use of terminology in the Register(Art 55-58).
6. The Regional Vice-Minister completes a Report of the Fraternal (Pastoral) Visit for Regional Office and a copy is sent to the local Minister of the Fraternity.

B. Celebration of the Fraternity Elections.

Refer to the Ritual pg.41-43 & the Local Fraternity Council Handbook pg.107-116

1. Opening Song and Prayer is found on pg. 41 of the Ritual.
2. Regional Vice-Minister gives an overview of the Election Procedures.
3. Designated persons are verified:
 - Two Scrutinizers to pass out ballots. Ballots should have different colors for different positions. Other items needed are Ballot box, table, pens, blackboard or poster board, chalk or marker.
 - Door Guard, who will ensure anyone leaving cannot re-enter the room until the election is done.

Regional Vice-Minister Checklist for Local Council Elections & Fraternal/Pastoral Visit

- Recording Secretary, who completes the forms on pg.109- 116 of the Local Fraternity Council Handbook.
- 4. Roll Call.
Prior to Election Day, the local Fraternity Minister sends the Regional Vice-Minister a list of fraternity members list, who will be voting.
The Regional Vice-Minister calls the names to establish a Quorum. (One plus half of the total professed members listed for the Roll Call) This is important since an election CANNOT be conducted if there is no Quorum and so it is the responsibility of each fraternity members to be present at the Election to cast their ballot.
Temporary Professed can vote but they cannot be elected to any Council position.
- 5. Completed Nomination forms are presented by the Regional Vice-Minister and a general call for nominations from the floor is made three times. In situation where there may be only one person nominated, the ballot procedure must still take place.
- 6. Elections procedures(also refer to pg.107 of the Local Fraternity Council Handbook):
 - a. Presider calls out the name from the nomination form for the position of Minister and the candidate is asked if he or she accept the nomination. Following the response, the next candidate nominated is called upon to verify acceptance.
 - b. Nominations from the floor for the position of Minister are called three times. "Are there any nominations from the floor for the position of Minister?" If there are no more Nominations, the Presider declares that all nominations for the position of Minister is closed.
 - c. The Secretary records the Nominations from the floor on the form pg.109 from the Local Fraternity Council Handbook.
 - d. The names of Nominated persons are listed on a blackboard by the Recording Secretary.
 - e. Ballots are handed out by Scrutinizers: one ballot to each voting professed member.
 - f. Voting takes place by professed members.
 - g. The completed Ballots are gathered by Scrutinizers.
 - h. The Ballots are counted by reading names aloud. The Secretary keeps count on the blackboard. The presider announces the results and uses pg.42 from the Ritual.

THE ABOVE PROCEDURES ARE REPEATED IN THIS ORDER FOR EACH POSITION OF THE COUNCIL; MINISTER, VICE-MINISTER, SECRETARY, TREASURER, AND FORMATION DIRECTOR

- 7. Concluding Prayer of the Election is on pg. 42 of the Ritual.

Regional Vice-Minister Checklist for Local Council Elections & Fraternal/Pastoral Visit

8. The newly elected council members give witness together to their Franciscan calling and to their readiness to be of service. The text is found on pg. 42 -43 of the Ritual.
9. The Regional Spiritual Assistant will give the closing Blessing.
10. All Forms are completed, signed and dated. One copy is sent to Regional Office, one copy retained by Regional Vice-Minister.
11. Destruction of the ballots. A motion is made to destroy the ballots.
12. A council meeting of the new and past members is opened by the Regional Vice-Minister.
The new Fraternity Minister chairs the rest of the meeting and thanks the Presider for facilitating the Elections. Past council transfers all records to the newly elected council. A date and place is agreed for a meeting of the new council.
13. The meeting closes with a prayer.



Emerging Fraternity to Canonical Establishment Checklist

Refer the Ritual pg.44-49 & the Local Fraternity Handbook pg.134-138 and pg.79

1. After the Emerging Fraternity operates for a minimum of one year, the supporting Mother Fraternity writes a request letter to the OLOTA Regional Minister for a Fraternal/Pastoral visit. A copy of the request letter is forwarded to the Regional Vice-Minister. Four months' advance notice should be given for the Fraternal/Pastoral Visit. (Handbook pg.134 and pg.79)
2. Prior to the Fraternal Visit, the Emerging Fraternity completes the “ PRE-FRATERNAL VISIT “questionnaire(Handbook pg.104) and sends this to the Regional Vice-Minister.
3. The Fraternal/Pastoral Visit is carried out by the Regional Vice-Minister and the Regional Spiritual Assistants. Reports are sent to the OLOTA council and copies to the Mother and Emerging Fraternity.
4. Following the Fraternal/Pastoral visit, the Mother Fraternity writes a letter to the OLOTA Council to ask permission to proceed with the Canonical Establishment of the Emerging Fraternity. A copy of the letter is sent to the Regional Vice-Minister. (A sample letter is available at OLOTA upon request.)
5. Based on a satisfactory OLOTA Council review of the Fraternal/Pastoral Reports and the letter from the Mother Fraternity, the Emerging Fraternity is granted permission to advance with the Canonical Establishment.
6. The OLOTA Minister to do list for the Canonical Establishment:
 - ✓ fills out “**Part 1 : Request to the Regional Council**”(Handbook pg. 135
 - ✓ writes a formal request letter for Canonical Establishment of the Emerging Fraternity to the Provincial Minister of the First Order (OFM) and
 - ✓ sends “**Part 2: Authorization of the Friar Provincial Minister**” to the Provincial Minister to fill out. (Handbook pg.136) The completed Part 2 is returned to the OLOTA Minister, and forwarded to the Bishop, in which the Emerging Fraternity resides.
 - ✓ sends **Part 3: “Bishop’s Consent**” to the Bishop to fill out. (Handbook pg. 137)
 - ✓ keeps the Mother and Emerging Fraternity informed of all correspondence.

Emerging Fraternity to Canonical Establishment Checklist

Refer the Ritual pg.44-49 & the Local Fraternity Handbook pg.134-138 and pg.79

7. The Emerging Fraternity Canonical Establishment to do list: (Ritual pg.44)
 - ✓ decides together with the Mother Fraternity for the date and venue of the Canonical Establishment.
 - ✓ confirms with the Bishop the date and the venue.
 - ✓ sends invitations to Parish Priest, Regional Vice-Minister, Regional Spiritual Assistant, members of the Emerging and Mother and other Fraternities, etc..
 - ✓ completes **“Part 4: Canonical Establishment of the Fraternity”** at the official “Reading and Signing of the Document of Establishment” ceremony. (Ritual pg.47, Handbook pg. 138))
 - ✓ take Photographs.
 - ✓ prepare a Reception for after the Ceremony: Select organizing people to make sure: availability of the hall, set up of tables , catering arranged, numbers of people attending confirmed, cost established, greeters in place to welcome, a spot for speeches, prepare and print a program and , cleanup crew selected.
8. The signed “Certificate of Canonical Establishment” will be framed for the new Fraternity.
A photocopy of the signed Certificate is sent to OLOTA and to the Diocese Chancery office of the Bishop.
9. The Mother Fraternity fills out the transfer forms. (Handbook **pg.117**). Members will be removed for the Mother Fraternity Register and added to the new Fraternity Register.
10. The Regional Vice-Minister will conduct the Election for the new Fraternity and vote a new council. (Refer to: “Local Fraternity checklist for celebration of Chapter of Elections” & Handbook pg. 110 and 153.
11. The new council select a date for their first official meeting.
12. The new Minister and council sends out Thank you cards to: Bishop, Regional Council, and Mother Fraternity etc....

The Fraternity Register

A Fraternity Register is an important book in the life of a fraternity. The names of all professed Secular Franciscans and Candidates are listed in a Fraternity Register. The General Constitution of the Secular Franciscan Order states in Article 52.2 that the secretary has the duty to see to the updating and preservation of the records and the REGISTRY, noting admissions, professions, deaths, withdrawals and transfers from the fraternity. A sample page of the OLOTA Fraternity Register is on **page 167**. This suggested page is for your consideration to update or start a new Register.

WHAT IS AN ‘ACTIVE’ MEMBER? The following is quoted from the Regional Statutes: Section 3.1.2...

- A professed secular Franciscan or a Candidate
- One who regularly attends the meetings or a member who attends at least one meeting during the past year.
- One who contributes to the financial needs of the fraternity according to his or her means, or has made a financial contribution during the past year.
- A member who is excused for valid reasons of health, family, work or distance.
- In all cases, each legitimate absence mentioned above, each valid excuse shall be approved by the Fraternity Council.

WHAT DO YOU DO IF YOU HAVE NOT SEEN A MEMBER FOR A LONG TIME?

The following is a quote from the National Minister:

“Technically, there is no such word as “inactive” members. As Secular Franciscans are all “active”. If someone, for whatever reason, does not feel that they can continue to participate in the life of the fraternity, then the provisions of the General Constitution comes into force, i.e. ‘temporary, permanent withdrawal’ ..following up with individuals and regularizing their situation within the Order with appropriate annotations made in the Fraternity Register will assist in the purposes of statistical/census. All living Secular Franciscans that are listed in the Fraternity Register are professed members, unless they are permanently withdrawn from the fraternity or been dismissed.” (March 2020)

The Fraternity Register

Once a year, statistical data is requested from fraternities to be provided to your Regional Council. The data numbers are to be taken from the Fraternity Register, therefore, it is crucial that the appropriate annotations are made by each name: candidate, professed, transferred, deceased, withdrawn: Temporary, Permanent, Suspended, and Dismissed. The Fraternity Council should ensure the Fraternity Register is updated in regard to those members whom you have not had contact with for some time. A council member or minister makes contact with the absent member and finds out if help is needed. Always the personal touch as first contact is important....

TEMPORARY PROVISIONS GC Art 56:

Voluntary Temporary Withdrawal

- i. If a member has been ill, possibly they would like a member to visit or bring them up-to-date on what has been happening in the fraternity
- ii. or if a member no longer can drive, maybe an offer to pick them up for fraternity meetings is what is required
- iii. If an absent member is non responsive to attempted telephone contact a sample letter on **page 168** can be sent.
- iv. or if a member decides, because of aging, or having moved into a care facility and will not be returning, the **TEMPORARY WITHDRAWAL (Art. 56)** request can be made and in this latter case the Register notation is as such. Council agrees to send a letter of voluntary withdrawal of active attendance at meetings. Sample letter **on page 169**.

Examples of temporary withdrawal: Stopped attending meeting due changed life situation evaluated by council: Health issues, moved to assisted living, aging, dementia, absent member non responsive after attempts to call and/ or letter.

DEFINITIVE PROVISIONS GC Art 58:

Voluntary Definitive Withdrawal

The following is a quote from the National Minister:

Art. 58 in its entirety, deals with "**definitive**" provisions; in other words, provisions that have a definitive and final nature. You will note that **Art. 58.1** deals with a definitive provision that is requested voluntarily by the member him/herself.

Art. 58.1 The brother or sister who intends to withdraw definitively from the Order, communicates so in writing to the minister of the fraternity. The minister and the assistant of the local fraternity, with charity and prudence, discuss the matter with the person concerned and keep the Council informed. If the brother or sister confirms the decision in writing, the

The Fraternity Register

Council takes notice and communicates it in writing to the person concerned. The definitive withdrawal is recorded in the register of the fraternity and communicated to the council of the higher level.

As you will note in Article 58.1, the request must be made to the minister of the local fraternity, who in turn, meets with the person concerned (usually with the local fraternity's spiritual assistant). Following this meeting, the member(s) must confirm in writing that they wish to withdraw definitively from the Order (even if they had already written to the local minister before - this must happen after the meeting has taken place between the individual(s) concerned and the minister. Once this correspondence is received, the local fraternity council communicates in writing with the person(s) concerned to indicate that the council has "taken notice" of his/her/their decision. (Sample letter on **page 170**). **Note that the council does not need to "approve" this decision**, but simply take note of it, record it in the fraternity register and communicate that this has occurred to the regional council. The national council is not involved in definitive withdrawal at the local level, and does not need to be informed.

Articles 58.2, 58.3 and 58.4, on the other hand, all deal with "imposed" definitive provisions (including dismissal); that is, initiated by the fraternity as a result of some serious cause such as the member publicly rejecting the faith, or problems related to communion with the church.

(December 2020)

TRANSFER Art.55:

When a member notifies its fraternity that they are moving a Transfer form (on page 8) is filled out and given to that departing member to take to their new fraternityin this way, the original fraternity can record **TRANSFERRED (Art.55)** in the Register. The receiving fraternity signs the Transfer form and mails a copy back to the original fraternity.

Sample page OLOTA Fraternity Register



ORDO FRANCISCANUS SAECULARIS FRATERNITY REGISTER

Fraternity name: _____

City, Province _____

Member's Name: _____

Address: _____

• **Rite of Admission (Candidacy)**

Date: _____ *Place:* _____ *Witness:* _____

• **Rite of Temporary Commitment (optional)**

Date: _____ *Minister:* _____ *Witness:* _____

Renewal date: _____ *Minister:* _____ *Witness:* _____

Renewal date: _____ *Minister:* _____ *Witness:* _____

• **Rite of Permanent Profession:** *Date* _____ *Place* _____

Fraternity Minister

Celebrant

Transfer to our fraternity: *Date:* _____

from: _____

fraternity of origin, city, province, country

Transfer from our fraternity: *Date:* _____

to: _____

receiving fraternity, name, city, province, country

Temporary withdrawal:

Date: _____ *Place:* _____ *Witness:* _____

Re-admittance

Date: _____ *Place:* _____ *Witness:* _____

Permanent withdrawal:

Date: _____ *Place:* _____ *Minister:* _____

Death:

Date: _____ *Place:* _____ *Communication from:* _____

Remarks:

Page: ____



SAMPLE LETTER GC Art 56

When Absent Professed Member is non responsive to attempted telephone contacts

Date:

Address:

Dear _____

May God always hold you in the Palm of His Hand and His Love to be with you forever. On behalf of your Fraternity Family, this letter is filled with prayer and love for you.

Time has passed since the Fraternity Family has heard from you. The telephone number that we have for you is: _____. Does this telephone number remain in service?

Your Franciscan Sisters and Brothers would enjoy to visit with you. Is this possible? Our joy would be to hear from you. If it is convenient for you to call me, my telephone number is: _____. A call from you any day, any time would be welcomed.

Our Prayers continue to go with you, _____.
May St. Francis and St Clare continue to intercede for us all.

Faternally Yours,

_____ Minister

_____ Fraternity



SAMPLE LETTER GC Art 56

For Voluntary Temporary Withdrawal from Active Attendance at meetings

Date:

Address: _____

Dear _____

What a Blessing for me to talk with you recently. God Blesses you _____, and continues to keep you close to His most Sacred Heart. Your life situation may have changed, however, your Franciscan Spirit remains strong.

The Fraternity misses your presence, yet your fervent prayers are felt. Your many years of faithful service to the Fraternity is and will be experienced for years to come. What a Wonderful Blessed Legacy you give to _____ Fraternity.

The Fraternity members will commit themselves to hold you gently in their prayers and we ask for your continued fervent prayers for your Franciscan sisters and brothers.

The Fraternity records will show your voluntary withdrawal from active attendance at meetings, however, we will continue to enjoy the fruit of your Prayers.

May we mail to you any upcoming Franciscan newsletters or information that would be enjoyable for you to read? Am confirming your mail address: _____

God's Blessings are upon you _____. If you have any questions, please never hesitate to telephone me. My number is _____. It would be my delight to remain in contact with you.

Pax et bonum,

_____ Minister

_____ Fraternity



SAMPLE LETTER GC Art 58

For Voluntary Definitive Withdrawal from Active Attendance at Meetings

(date)

(name of professed member)

(address)

Dear _____

At its meeting of _____, **the Fraternity Council met to**
(date)

take notice of your prayerfully discerned decision to voluntarily
withdraw from _____ **Fraternity.**
(Fraternity name)

All the requirements of Article 58 of the Constitution for the provisions for a voluntarily definitive withdrawal by a professed member from the Order of Secular Franciscans and from our local Fraternity have been completed. This Council takes notice and informs you the definitive withdrawal is recorded in the Register of the Fraternity and such action will be communicated to the Council of higher authority (Our Lady of the Angels Regional Council) by copy of this letter.

May God Bless you with Peace as you continue your spiritual journey.

Pax et Bonum,

(name of Minister)

Cc: Minister, OLOTA

Local Fraternity archives:

Who is responsible?: Secretary.

Where to store?: Parish or friary

What to store?: Declaration/ Certificate for the Canonical Establishment
Register
Binders, USB, Google Drive storage info, for each period of three years (council term). Keep a hard copy and digital records.

- Minutes of Council and Fraternity meetings
- Annual Financial Statement
- Correspondence to the local Bishop or major Franciscan superiors
- Optional is newspaper article, special event/celebration

For How long? The archival material should be kept until the fraternity becomes inactive.
Inactive Fraternities must give their archives to the Regional Fraternity.
(Regional Statutes Art 8 and addendum)

OLOTA archives:

Who is responsible? Regional Fraternity to maintain the archives.

Where to store? Sacred Heart parish in Red Deer.

What to store?: Regional Council minutes
Minutes of the Elective Chapter
Approved Financial Statement
Correspondence with the Bishop and Franciscan superior
Reports to the National fraternity
Copies of regional newsletters
Conference agenda
Special event/celebration and/or other Regional records of historical record

Archiving Electronic Data:

Fraternities are encourage to scan the Canonical Establishment document. Optional is to digitalize old documents for storage. Most fraternities will have hard copy and digital records. Recommended is to store on External hard drive (must be accessible with current technology) and hard copy in addition to Google Drive cloud storage.

Google Drive cloud storage free 15GB