Congratulations and Welcome



as a

Fraternity Council Member

to the

Five Franciscan Martyrs Region

**Welcome to the Office of Minister**

***CONGRATULATIONS on your election!***

**You are a servant leader and,**

**your attitude sets the tone for your fraternity.**

Jesus shows us a perfect example of the servant leader. In Mark 10:45,

He urges us to serve and even "give our lives" for the sake of others.

The picture of a servant leader is shown no better than

in Jesus washing the disciples’ feet (John 13).

“The servant-leader is servant first…

It begins with the natural feeling that one

wants to serve, to serve first.

Then conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead.”

*Robert Greenleaf*

***Vision Statement***

***Five Franciscan Martyrs Region***

*Five Franciscan Martyrs Regional*

*MISSION STATEMENT*

*(2/1/2018)*

*The mission of the Five Franciscan Martyrs Region of the Secular Franciscan Order is to walk in the spirit of St. Francis of Assisi by bringing gospel to life and life to the gospel and promoting a sanctified family life.*

The **Minister**, is responsible for 1)setting a goal, 2) giving a good example and 3)accomplishing the following tasks:

* A yearly current roster of membership is send to the Region.
* Professions, withdrawals, moves, and deaths in your fraternity are recorded in to the Fraternity Register. The Region is notified immediately so they may update their records and either add or remove the name from the database and National Register for TAU.
* The Fair Share assessment from your Common Fund is sent to the Regional Treasurer annually. As of January 1, 2017 this is $55.00 per professed member and candidates. (example: 23 active profess, plus 2 excused, plus 1 candidate = 26 X $55.00 = $1430.00) This should be the first ‘bill’ your fraternity pays before giving any monies to other charities. This should be paid at the beginning of each year i.e. in January. (See Rule, Constitutions, Statutes, Guidelines)
* The Regional newsletter goes to every member of your fraternity
* Fraternity gatherings open and close with a prayer in the Ritual, pg. 35 which includes

a brief scriptural/Franciscan reading. The Liturgy of the Hours follows.

* Council meetings also open and close the same way – Ritual, pg. 38
* Ceremonies of Introduction and Welcoming are celebrated – Ritual, pg. 9
* The Rite of Admission is celebrated – Ritual, pg. 11
* The Rite of Profession or Permanent Commitment to the Gospel Life is celebrated solemnly with the Mass and a Franciscan priest – Ritual, pg 18
* Convoke and preside at the meetings of the local fraternity council.

* Maintain a Minister’s binder containing: your agendas, annual regional reports, results of the visitation, copies of your advertizing, job descriptions for each council member, retreats that were offered, and fraternity rosters.
* Your certificate of establishment should be displayed. (In the event of a loss, copies are made available to/from the Region.)

* The historian does a brief history of the fraternity annually which is checked every three years and the photographer takes photos of various events for your records.
* The Local Secretary takes Council meeting minutes and a copy is kept in the fraternity records. These records must be available to the Regional Executive Council in the pastoral/fraternal visitation.

* The Treasurer makes a report at each monthly council meeting and that is attached to the council meeting minutes. Appropriate forms for the financial health of the fraternity may be found at <http://www.nafra-sfo.org/form/index.html>
* The 1st or 3rd Order Friar Provincial Spiritual Assistant to whom you are bonded should be known, appreciated and kept informed
* With the consent of the local council, every three years, convoke the elective chapter of the local fraternity. This must be coordinated with the Regional Council who must be in attendance for the elections to be valid. (See Norms of Elections in or General Constitutions and other documents).
* Coordinate, animate and guide the local fraternity and its commission’s activities. Records of these should also be maintained by the chairperson.
* Attend or send a fraternity representative (and/or the entire fraternity) to Family Meetings, Transitus services, the annual gathering of the entire Five Franciscan Martyrs Regional Ministers.
* With the council and local fraternity formation director and/or formation team, coordinate good initial formation. This will entail knowing what initial formation materials are recommended by the Regional Formation Director/team. (Formation materials such as the Fun Manual with chapters from Franciscan Journey and Fully Mature with the Fullness of Christ periodically for variety;.
* Well documented and confidential records are kept on the steps of formation of those in the initial formation program at the local fraternity level. This should be done in cooperation with the local fraternity formation director. If help is needed contact Five Franciscan Martyrs Regional Formation Director – see Five Franciscan Martyrs Regional Directory.
* A yearly report is drawn up for the fraternity in cooperation with the fraternity treasurer. Remember your spiritual assistant does not vote on money issues.
* With the council and the local fraternity formation director/team, a good ongoing formation program should be executed. Records of items used for this ongoing formation should be kept and shared with your Regional Formation Director. The Regional Formation Director is a valuable resource and can be contacted regularly. The Regional formation director can also be asked to present ongoing formation as the need arises. (Ongoing Formation materials such as– Handbook for Secular Franciscan Servant Leadership can be purchased at Smoky Valley Printing, Box 189, Linsborg, KS 67456 Phone: 785-227-7364, Fax 785-227-3360, E-mail lindabce@kans.com)
* Any forms and/or questionnaires sent to you by the Regional Executive Council and Minister should be complete in a timely fashion. If necessary, you may call a special gathering of your local council to complete the forms. Since it is acceptable to complete business electronically (see National Statutes Article 5 #6) you may gather the needed information before and after your monthly council meeting and return the forms ASAP**.**
* The annual Five Franciscan Martyrs meeting (last weekend in April of each year) attendance is mandatory. The registration forms are sent to the local minister and it is his/her responsibility to see that this form is duplicated and given to all.
* If the local Fraternity Minister is unable to be present at a fraternity Council meeting, the meeting may be held with the Vice Minister conducting the business (General Constitutions). Business should be accomplished each and every month (including summers) so as not to hinder the life and growth of the fraternity.
* The Rule, Constitutions, and Statutes guide our fraternal life. Read them, study them, and implement them.
* Once during the 3 year term of your office, you are to request a pastoral and fraternal visitation with the consent of the council, from the Five Franciscan Martyrs Minister or delegate and a Regional Spiritual Assistant. Along with these visitations come a financial responsibility to pay for the mileage of the visitors and a stipend.

* A minister of a local fraternity is to share its newsletters and work collaboratively with all of the other ministers in their area!
* Train your replacement!

*Anatomy of an Agenda:*

**Fraternity Name**

**Secular Franciscan Order**

**Day, Date and Time**

**Agenda**

1.Opening Prayer - page 35.

S*omeone should proclaim a Gospel or Scripture Reading then share inspirations.*

*Another member can lead the Liturgy of the Hours if gathering does not follow Mass*.

2. Reports from various members may include:

A. Secretary: Roll Call & Minutes

B. Formation

C. Treasurer

3. On-Going Formation - *is the most important part of the gathering & may be presented by different members or group of members. BUT the members should be divided into smaller groups of 3 or 4 to so ALL will have a chance to speak, listen and learn. They both give and gain!*

4. Social (can be before, during or after gathering) - Hospitality Coordinator: Name of SFO

5. Old Business: *(Anything that was tabled, etc.*)

6. New Business: (*Up-Coming Events from the region, new duties of the fraternity, etc.*)

7.Other Standing Committee Reports: (If any)

A. Justice, Peace & Integrity of Creation (JPIC) Committee, FAN, etc

B. Update on Excused Members (if desired)

C. Any Other Questions or Comments

8. Closing Prayer - Ritual Book p. 36 & *any other special prayers the fraternity has chosen*

9. Closing Song -

*The above is simply a sample outline of a good meeting. An agenda and the above components are important but other than the opening and closing prayers, they may be arranged in any order. Try to involve as many members as possible. Substituting a movie or a*

*party is fine once a year but not more often. The members come “to be spiritually inspired, communally nourished, and animated to act” by the Minister and the Council - not the other way around! This takes time and thought so council meetings are vital to the life of the fraternity because it is the nucleus of the fraternity.*

**Pointers for a Successful Fraternity Gathering** (from a Ministers’ Meeting discussion)

Most of the work for a good gathering is done between fraternity gatherings.

Know and acknowledge your weak points so you can supplement them. Examples:

You aren’t a good organizer and leave things for the last minute so have trouble putting out an agenda to Council - Appoint another council member who is organized to do it.

You know you sometimes talk too long - Ask a council member to give you a sign to stop

You know you are not creative with activities - Someone who is, will be trilled you asked

Your Council’s main job is to support the Minister...to be sure he/she is a success. Why?...

Everyone comes to the fraternity gatherings to be INSPIRED and MOTIVATED! If the Minister fails, the entire fraternity fails! Therefore, be sure *everyone’s contributions are inspiring or motivating* during a gathering. If they are not, politely ask someone else for an opinion or go to the next thing on your agenda or ask if they would talk about it after the meeting to a council member so you can get the details. Complaints beget complaints and most members will be too intimidated to give a different, positive view. Keep the meeting in a positive tone... Franciscans & everyone else want to be joyful. Take the complaint to the Council meeting and let everyone brain storm about how to improve things.

On-Going Formation is the most important item on the agenda because it should inspire and animate. Use as many senses as possible: see, hear, touch, etc. and encourage fraternity members to be moderators

Love every person in your fraternity - love them! If you don’t, they will *feel* it. What you ARE speaks so loudly, they won’t hear what you say. Forgive each one. Don’t wait for an apology... you may never get one. Council Members, especially Ministers are held to a higher standard...

Praise and thank! And praise and thank some more, no matter how small the task was... and do it personally to the individual. “You baked great cookies; you read that so well; thank you for distributing those papers, etc.” Let every word from your mouth be praising, thanking, inspiring or motivating... never negative such as “I didn’t like .... or it was good BUT.... etc!” Save those for the council meetings where things can be corrected - not at an open fraternity gathering.

Every member is important! ... and each member should feel important. Give everyone some kind of job to do... even the excused members...then praise and thank them for doing it. Try to ask a member personally to do something rather than during a meeting -

Elections - Start looking for replacements the day after your election so you can start training them (more than one). If you do it this way, they will be ‘honored’ and ‘eager’ to do it. Look for someone SPIRITUAL and when the time comes, ask them personally to run! Many believe they aren’t ‘qualified’ until they are ASKED. This goes for the Councilors also. We are not a big corporation so if they can’t spell or do calculus and don’t know proper grammar, it doesn’t matter!!! Our main objective is to inspire and motivate!

**Welcome to the Office of Secretary**

***CONGRATULATIONS on your election!***

There are two sets of minutes: one for the Council meetings which is mandatory and an optional for the Fraternity Gatherings. Both sets of minutes, if kept, should be approved and signed.

A. Fraternity Gathering Minutes:

Fraternity members like to hear the minutes of the last gathering in order to recall the various events and to prepare them to listen to the new business if they could not attend the last meeting. However, a liaison may be used for this by means of a visit or call.

First and foremost, however, there should be a Roll Call. This may be on a graph sheet with the names on one side and the months on the top. They should be marked “E” for Excused or “A” for Absent. A member is marked excused if he/she alerts someone that they will not be attending and gives a valid reason. If the member does not come to the monthly gathering and does not inform anyone about their inability to attend, they are marked absent.

The Roll Call sheet is necessary and should be kept on file. The fraternity minutes, on the other hand, are not necessary but fraternity may choose to maintain the practice.

B. Council Meeting Minutes:

The council minutes are very important and must be maintained because they contain valuable and sometimes, very personal information. Every decision the council makes should be documented. This is especially true of:

a) Expenses - The council must vote on every fraternity expense. The money belongs to the entire fraternity, not just the minister, or treasurer, or formation director, etc. The intended expense should be presented/explained to the entire council, a vote taken for the expense, and documented in the minutes as to who opposed and who did not.

b) Replacing a Council Member - In the event one of the council members resigns, the council must vote on his/her replacement. This must be document in the minutes as above. A council member who has been approved in this manner, does not have “legal” voting rights

c) New Members - The Council should be kept up to date on the progress of each of the new people who wish to be professed. The documentation should be reviewed by the council and those seeking profession must be interviewed prior to profession. At one of the council meetings, the fraternity council decides by secret ballot on the admission to profession, gives its reply to the candidate, and informs the fraternity. (Article 41 in the General Constitutions). The results of the ballot are recorded in the council minutes.

d) Members Who Withdraw - If a member has not come to the fraternity meetings for some time and the Council has made several attempts to contact him/her (Be sure to document the conversations and/or letters), the council may vote to consider him lapsed. It is recommended that a certified letter concerning this decision be sent to the member, a copy put in his/her file and the decision documented in the minutes.

e) Members in Distress - Periodically, a member may be suffering financially, physically, etc. and the council must make a decision as to how to proceed. This is sensitive information but the decision must be recorded in the council minutes.

f) Confidentiality - Many discussions and decisions made by the council are confidential and should be religious kept confidential. Therefore, be discreet in speech and keep the council minutes separate from other information.

**Welcome to the Office of Formation Director**

***CONGRATULATIONS on your election!***

Time of formation: While the Rule says one year, that is modified by Article 40 of the SFO Constitution and the NAFRA Statutes, Article 19, which specifies Candidacy, which begins after the Rite of Admission, shall consist of a period of not less than 18 or more than 36 months.

1. Orientees - not less than 3 months

1st time visitor - get name, address, etc.

2nd month - Complete the Visitor Information Sheet & Interview Sheet

(Exhibit 1) & start attendance sheet (Exhibit 5)

3rd month - Give visitor the Application for Secular Franciscan Order (Exhibit 2)

4th month - Council reads & approves the application & prepares for ...

2. Inquirer - not less than 6 months

5th month (1) - Welcome Ceremony in Ritual. Sponsor assigned.

6th month (2) - Give request for Baptismal, Marriage, etc. certificates,

2 references, a letter stating why you wish to become an SFO

10th month (6) - Inquirer has provided all documents requested above.

Council approves request for ....

3. Candidate - not less than 18 months (Send Data Form to Region)

11th month (1) - Rite of Admission in Ritual

26th month (16) - Verify all of Exhibit 3 which includes:

Baptismal, Communion, Confirmation, Marriage Certificates

Copies of Ordination or Nullity if necessary

Two letters of Reference

Candidate Admission Request

27th month (17) - Spiritual Assistant or Council interviews the Candidate

28th month (18) - Council approves the request by secret ballot

4. Professed - not less than for LIFE (Notify Regional Database Manager to send TAU)

The discernment process for profession is built on a Rite of Permanent Profession should be in during Mass number of steps in which the visitor goes through the initial formation process. The council’s role is to ensure the person is progressing spiritually, has the necessary paper work completed and advances from visitor to Inquirer to Candidate with their approval. The role of the Formation Director is to ensure that those steps are completed by presenting the documentation and progress to the council on a regular basis. Profession should not take place in anything less than 18 months. On page 17 of the Minister Manual section of the Formation Minister Manual is a list that needs to be in place at the time of profession and should be presented to council. For more information call the Regional Formation Director.

5. Books for Formation – FUN Manual. The Franciscan Journey should be the primary book.

**Welcome to the Office of Vice-Minister**

***CONGRATULATIONS on your election!***

In addition to the councilor duties, the vice-minister has the following duties:

1. To collaborate in a fraternal spirit and to support the minister in carrying out his/her duties’
2. To exercise the functions entrusted by the council and/or by the assembly;
3. To take the place of the minister in both duties and responsibilities in case of absence or temporary impediment;
4. To assume the functions of the minister when the office remains vacant.

**Welcome to the Office of Treasurer**

***CONGRATULATIONS on your election!***

In addition to the other council duties, the treasurer has the following responsibilities:

1. 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;
2. 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;
3. To render an account of his or her administration to the general assembly and to the council of the fraternity, according to the norms of the national statutes.
4. To ensure the deposit of all funds of the fraternity into such bank accounts in the name of the fraternity as the Fraternity Council shall designate;
5. To provide for the payment of monies as the business of the fraternity may required in the annual budget or by order of the fraternity council. All payments are to be made by check.
6. Upon the written request of any member of the fraternity to the treasurer, these financial records shall be open for inspection.
7. G. to provide the fraternity council with financial reports of receipts, expenditures and balances in the treasury throughout the year, and at the beginning of each year, to provide a written statement of receipts expenditures and balances in the fraternity treasury for the preceding year.

**Other Helpful Advice for ALL Councilors:**

Remember: The Fraternity Council makes ALL the decisions at Council Meetings and supports each other at Fraternity Gatherings. The Minister ***inspires and animates*** both the Council & Fraternity gatherings.

Read the loose leaf book, “Servant-Leader” thoughtfully and often. It contains a good deal of useful information. Give everyone a copy and assign a few pages each month then discuss what impressed you.

Know every member of your fraternity by name and by their strengths & weaknesses.

Give each member a responsibility accordingly so they feel they are vital to the fraternity.

There are many societies in the Church which both pray and do good works. Both the Knights of Columbus and the Council of Catholic Women do that. Franciscans do MORE! ***We inspire each other*** to live better lives! Emphasize this during the On-Going Formation Section of your meetings. Everyone has made this promise to God during their profession. We must forgive each other, encourage each other, love each other, help each other, etc. This is not a social club or a society and we do not form “clicks.” It is an order... just like the TOR’s, OFM’s, OSF’s, etc. They are priests, brothers or sisters; while we are seculars but we all make these promises for LIFE. The Minister and Council must be especially careful to treat all members with respect and love - Christ lives in all!- and the members will be aware of it.

As leaders, you must *keep the monthly gatherings positive and inspiring*. Apologize rather than offend... “I may have misunderstood or made a mistake” are good phrases, then go to next item on agenda. Never argue or complain, even if you are correct. Keep the gathering in a positive tone.

You will not always make popular decisions. Thus, don’t expect everyone to love you all the time. You must do what the Council believes is right and then convey this to the members... with love and concern. Give a reason for the decision.

Communicate often with the individual members. Asking for volunteers at a gathering might gleans one or two, if any at all but, if you phone them and personally ask them to do something - usually they will

respond in a positivemanner. Circumstances permitting, attend all the functions that the Council decides to put forth. That shows you think they are important and they will follow your lead.

Once you are a leader, others can read through you and know if you are doing your best and if your Franciscan promises are important to you. If something else is more important in your life - it will show. On the other hand, you will not *always* succeed. Try not to focus on the disappointments; look ahead to the possibilities of attaining the goals: both the current and the long-term ones. Remain open to the “promptings” of the Holy Spirit. You can do nothing - God will do it through you if you allow Him!

Lastly, it is important that you replenish your own spiritual and fraternal life. Take advantage of any retreats so you can spend quality time with God. Also take advantage of the minister gatherings to replenish your fraternal life by sharing your problems, tasks, questions, etc. with the others who may have experienced the same things. If nothing else, we can listen to each other and empathize! We need God. We need each other because God is in us.