

**FRATERNAL VISITATION REPORT**

**Nombre de Dios Fraternity,**

**Palm Coast, Florida**

**March 5, 2022**

Marcia Stamboulian, ofs, Five Franciscan Martyrs Regional Family Councilor conducted the Fraternal Visitation at Nombre de Dios Fraternity, Palm Coast, Florida. Also present at this visitation was Ruth Huddle, ofs, Regional Family Councilor, acting as the Pastoral Visitor.

**Preparatory Information**:

This Fraternity has had problems for a number of years with strife among its members causing new aspirants to have a negative view of the fraternity. The new minister is trying to help the fraternity heal and come together.

**Demographics**:

The fraternity consists of:

* Professed: 12
* Temporarily **inactive** excused paying members: 2
* Candidates: 0
* Inquirers: 2
* Aspirants: 0
* Affiliate: 0
* Transfers in process: 2

**Documentation**:

The Fraternity Register was available, reviewed, and signed. The Fraternity and Council minutes were well organized and contained bank statements for every month. The financial records were in good order. These records were signed by the visitor. Unfortunately, there was no certificate of establishment available. The minister will look for it in her newly acquired records and get back to the visitor. They are up to date on their annual report and their fair share.

**Prayer Life:** The Fraternity goes to mass together before the meeting begins. They use the opening and closing prayers from the Ritual book, and say the Liturgy of the Hours at each fraternity meeting. Their prayer life seems to be very rich and inclusive of all members. They also include the Crown Rosary from time to time.

*The Secular Franciscans commit themselves to their profession to live the Gospel according to Franciscan spirituality in the secular condition Article GC8*

*The fraternity must offer to its members 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” Article 53 GC*

**Apostolic Activity**:

This fraternity has numerous apostolic activities in which they participate. They are involved in donations to charities through the Franciscan Mission Association, the Good Samaritan Home for Domestic Violence, for police and military canines, and do phone visits to the excused ill members. They have also been instrumental in assisting in the wake and burial of one of their members.

**Council Meeting and Monthly Gatherings:**

The Council and Fraternity meetings are held at the St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Church, Palm Coast, on the first Saturday of each month following the 8:30 am mass. The Fraternity meeting is held first, followed by the Council meeting. They do not have a spiritual assistant, so all their spiritual offerings come from the minister or member volunteers.

**Formation**:

The fraternity does not have a formation team, only the formation director.

**Initial:** The fraternity has a very good initial formation program, using the Rule, the FUN Manual, the Omnibus and the Franciscan Journey.

**Ongoing:**

The fraternity also has a good ongoing formation program and uses the Formation Friday's, Relevant Sources, 33 Days to Greater Glory, and articles from the Tau. All fraternity members participate actively in formation discussions.

**Observations and Recommendations:**

The Visitor has noticed that there is a great respect for the new minister who is working hard to reform this community. They have an excellent rapport with the parish and are very active in parish activities. When they have activities, the parish is invited to participate. These include the Transitus, the Blessing of the Animal on St. Francis feast day, and worked on the Diocesan Coronation of new new Our Lady of LaLeche statue at the shrine in St. Augustine. They also had a Christmas Crib service and invited other fraternities to join them. Unfortunately, they have not participated in any retreats or days of recollection since Covid.

They also have begun working on recruitment of new members, putting a blurb in the parish bulletin, they are included in the parish ministry flier which is going out to all parishioners, and are planning a St. Francis movie and pot luck later this month for the fraternity and are inviting the parish. Their last professions were in 2020. They also regularly attend family meetings and have scheduled a nuts and bolts workshop at the fraternity later this year. They tell me that they love the Region!!

This fraternity currently has a liaison for JPIC and would like to have a greater connection with it, but does not have anyone for YouFra. I have recommended that they find someone to contact Janice Novello and be included on information for YouFra. They would like to be more visible and they have a great start on that with all their activities. I have also recommended that they begin ongoing formation for the Council as well as the fraternity. They list their success from the last visitation as growing and healing, but their problems are still difficulties among the members. I will be making an informal visit soon in order to try to assist with this situation. They want to foster good relationships within their fraternity and with other fraternities.

Since this visitation, the minister was able to send me a picture of their certificate of establishment. However, it has no fraternity named listed. It is just called a fraternity in St. Augustine. They subsequently moved to Palm Coast. The Region will have to contact Fr. Cid and have this corrected and a new certificate issued.

*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 and His inspiration. They should listen to the exhortation of the Saint to desire above all things “the Spirit of God at work within them.” Article 11 GC*

**Summation:**

Nombre de Dios is a good fraternity, and a becoming a loving community again. They have a very effective MinisterCouncil and a good formation program. Very few items need to be addressed. We were very happy to have spent time with them.

We sincerely hope we helped fulfill Article 92.1 of the General Constitutions of the Secular Franciscan Order, which states: "*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."*

Respectfully submitted,

**Marcia Stamboulian, ofs**

Regional Councillor, Fraternal Visitor