

Fraternity Visitation Report

Our Lady of the Angels

September 10, 2022

January 20, 2022

*Introduction*

*Preparatory Information*

The pre-visitation questionnaire was completed by the fraternity. We thank everyone for the timely and thorough job you did in completing all the paperwork. The council was welcoming and glad to see us.

Demographics

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There were 4 members’ active members from the council present

* Bonnie Barlow
* Anne Marie Oliver
* Mary J. Lewis
* Diane McGhee
* Lillian Freehill, was excused
* Three candidates were present
* Deacon Sergio was present.

*Spiritual Assistant*

Deacon Sergio was also present. Since Deacon Sergio has been their Spiritual Assistant for over 26 years and is now dealing with health issues with his wife of 58 years, the visitor suggested that he step down from this position and take the role as an active participant in the fraternity. He clearly understood that the rule of 12 years needed to be applied. The Region can now actively search for a Spiritual Assistant that is able to consistently come to the council meetings and the monthly meetings of the fraternity. All were is agreement to this change.

These are the active members listed on the database:



There were three visiting members two were on the inquiry stage and one candidate. Ryan Hatfield and Martin were promising candidates. This was Martin’s first visit and Ryan is ready to move from the inquiry stage. They have one member, Alex Stankiewicz, that comes sporadically and does not have the family support to give the time needed for candidacy. They also have one member that was not present close to their profession.

*Documentation*

The visitors reviewed and signed, where appropriate, Fraternity Register, and minister’s binder (containing agendas, formation information, the rule, and secretary’s minutes). The minister keeps a binder for each year divided by months. The visitors also reviewed and signed the treasurer’s checking account and the treasurer’s report. Balance on hand was $1611.46.

*On Going Formation*

The fraternity uses *Set Us Free* for On Going as their primary resource. During the visitation they did a lesson on poverty. Each member had an opportunity for input. It focused o Article 11 from the Rule. There was a good interchange of ideas. It is important that the leader keep the group on the topic which sometimes is difficult. There is also a presentation of a Saint for the month given by a member of the fraternity. This month they presented St. Padre Pio. Deacon Sergio is a great resource for this history. Although he may not be their official Spiritual Assistant, the visitor is hoping he will continue as best he can to contribute his knowledge to the fraternity.

*Initial Formation*

Initial formation is shared by the group. They each take a topic each month. The resource is primarily the FUN manual. This is done separately from the meeting, usually at Diane’s house. This makes the formation much more meaningful when it is possible. There should be three or four in formation now.

*Leadership*

Diane will take over the formation and the minister and vice minister positions will be shared by Anna Marie and Mary will function as minister and vice minister. Bonnie will continue as treasurer.

*Prayer life*

The fraternity starts with 8:30 mass and then starts the meeting. There is fellowship before and after the meeting. There is also a prayer to the deceased members of the fraternity. There are well over 40 names that are called out and this followed by prayer intentions. The visitor suggests that they focus on a couple people and talk about what they remember about that person.

The fraternity has many pray and spiritual activities planned throughout the year.

• Blessing of the Animals

• Celebration of Transitus

*Apostolic Work*

At this time their apostolic work is fragmented due to all the illnesses and deaths within their fraternity. The visir suggedted that they start by bringing one needed item to the meeting. The two people that are in formation visit thepoor regularly and have offer to collect items this coming month. They have focused on Bug Spray for this coming month.

Summation

ISSUES

* No Meeting in the summer – The fraternity needs to continue during the summer even though there may be just a couple members. Going to Mass and out to breakfast may be a start. Missing three months leaves for a fragmented fraternity. Recovering from COVID will take time but they are on their way.
* Small cluster of friendships have died and this leaves for a fragmented fraternity. They are strong and want to make this work.
* Delegate Work – The ministers need to delegate the work and it may be to members in formation. They cannot hold an office but can take on responsibilities that they feel are close to their heart.
* Need a new Spiritual Assistant – The fraternity needs the guidance andpresence of a Spiritual Assistant
* Many are poor not rich fraternity – Some of the members are struggling financially. The fraternity needs to find ways to do events that cost little. They are also committed to their families that seem to need their time and support more.
* Not coming to meetings consistently – The fraternity should try to pick up members that cannot come to the meetings. They also meet at their homes if that is an easier way to gather.
* Go out in pairs – If they are doing something individually they should include others if possible in this activity. One member works at the Zoo. Perhaps there is someway to connect this to the fraternity with helping the animals.

PRO

* The most vital part of this fraternity is they all have a strong desire to survive. They have been part of this fraternity for many years and are not willing to let it become deactivated. This desire will take them far. They are willing to step up to the plate and do what needs to be done. They work well together and genuinely care about each other. They have been close brothers and sisters for a long time and it really was apparent in this visitation.
* They have a desire to do apostolic work as a fraternity. The visitor suggests they be specific of what they will gather and have someone not part of the council be responsible for this. It may be a candidate in formation.
* They have a strong prayer life and go to Mass each month. The visitor suggest they do Liturgy of the Hours at the meetings and perhaps go to mass as a group more often during the month.
* They have a strong formation team and all have in the past shared this responsibility. As they get new members they need to build a personal relationship with them and connect much more often then the monthly meetings. They all have a strong desire to do this. Diane will be a good formation person and how that the responsibilities of minister are shared, she will have more time to devote to this.

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 charisma 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.” We are very excited to witness where this fraternity will “travel” in the next three years.

Respectfully submitted

Jeane Swaynos, OFS

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Regional Minister FFMR