

# **Conclusive Document of the XV General Chapter 2017 of the Secular Franciscan Order**

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## XV General Chapter Secular Franciscan Order (OFS)

*“As you sent me into the world, so I sent them into the world” (Jn 17,18)*

### CONCLUSIONS

#### 1. Introduction

The XV General Chapter of the Secular Franciscan Order took place in the Collegium Seraphicum in Rome, Italy on November 4-11, 2017. A long road has been travelled since Pope Paul VI approved the renewed Rule of the Secular Franciscan Order in 1978, opening the way to a unified Order and its corresponding international organization that we have today. The General Chapter is a magnificent occasion to meet and share the extraordinary gift of fraternity with brothers and sisters representing national fraternities from all over the world, together with the international representatives of Franciscan Youth. The Chapter opened with a celebration of the Eucharist, presided by the Secretary of the Holy See, Cardinal Pietro Parolin, who encouraged the capitulars to live the Christian mission and to be witnesses and servants of each other (Mt 23,11). During the course of the Chapter, capitulars also marked the Feast of the Dedication of the Basilica of St. John Lateran and were reminded of the respectful attitude that St. Francis had for the Church of his time.

A fundamental review of the way in which an international Order such as the OFS is managed was launched during the General Chapter of 2014 and has been ongoing for the past three years with significant inputs from the national fraternities. The main focus of the present Chapter was on the responses received and the concrete proposals submitted to address the various challenges. One of the most important tasks was to reflect on the co-responsibility of all Secular Franciscans brothers and sisters, especially in assuming the responsibility for guiding and animating the Order at all levels.

Celebrating the Eucharist and praying the Liturgy of the Hours were essential elements of each day of the Chapter, providing an opportunity for all the capitulars to encounter Jesus Christ, the one who is *filled with goodness and who is always open to welcoming others*<sup>1</sup>. It is this spirit that should characterize our journey towards conversion in the light of the teachings of St. Francis.

We were blessed to have Ministers General Michael Perry OFM, Marco Tasca OFM Conv, and Mauro Jöhri OFM Cap to celebrate the Eucharist on various days throughout the week. They shared spiritual messages and reminded us of our need to assume the position of *washers of the feet*<sup>2</sup> as we work in the world. In living out our vocation, we are to be *dynamic, relational*<sup>3</sup> and yes, even *sometimes a little crazy*!<sup>4</sup> We were consoled to know that God doesn't just send us into the world, he walks with us and lives within us in an intimate way on our journey.

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<sup>1</sup> Fr. Mauro Jöhri, OFM Cap, Minister General, Homily, November 10, 2017

<sup>2</sup> Fr. Michael Perry, OFM, Minister General, Homily, November 5, 2017

<sup>3</sup> Fr. Michael Perry, OFM, Minister General, Homily, November 5, 2017

<sup>4</sup> Fr. Marco Tasca, OFM Conv, Minister General, Homily, November 9, 2017

## 2. State of the Order

The Secular Franciscan Order is present in 112 countries around the world with 70 constituted and 18 emerging national fraternities, together with a special kind of Secular Franciscans presence in other 24 countries. The Order has approximately 300,000 members.

The International Presidency of the CIOFS has been supported by several commissions (Communication, JPIC, Family, Juridical and Patrimonial, Formation, Franciscan Youth, Economic).

Many activities have been undertaken on all levels, such as the development of formation materials as well as the holding of formation workshops and international gatherings all over the world. Both Project Africa and Project China were of great value for our brothers and sisters in the areas concerned, and will be continued in the next three years. In the Arab world, OFS is struggling but growing despite difficult circumstances. Through various media (CIOFS website, Facebook, the new digital magazine Vox Franciscana), the Presidency has shared the joy of fraternal events and requested help when natural disasters occurred.

Although finances continue to be an issue for the international fraternity, significant improvement has been experienced during the past three years as more national fraternities are contributing. Related to this challenge is obtaining accurate demographic data from the national fraternities.

On the international level, the relationship with the Conference of the Franciscan Family continues to grow and mature with an excellent spirit of collaboration.

YouFra now has about 50,000 members in 34 constituted, 28 emerging national fraternities and 13 Presence. With respect to fraternal animation, the situation has improved but additional work is required in appointing fraternal animators at all levels of the fraternities (local, regional and national). Promoting double belonging to OFS and YouFra keeps being an important challenge everyone should be committed to.

With a legacy received from Emanuela De Nunzio OFS, the "Beato Raimondo Lullo" Foundation has been initiated. This foundation has been established according to the wishes of Emanuela in support of specific work within the OFS in certain areas of the world.

The chapter approved the Report of the Presidency and the Minister General, Tibor Kauser, as well as the Financial report for the past triennium.

The Conference of General Spiritual Assistants to the OFS (CAS) presented its report to the Chapter which highlighted their collegial service in various fields: meetings of the Conference itself and with others, participation in Chapters, Visits, Congresses, formation courses and various activities. Capitulars noted the special commitment of the General Assistants to the OFS and YouFra with much love and affection.

### 3. Chapter Theme and Presentations

The main theme of the chapter “*As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world*” (John 17:18) was addressed by Michel Versteegh, OFS (Netherlands), whose ten key words challenged us to live out our Franciscan charism in the world by going from Gospel to life and life to Gospel in our secular state.

The Chapter’s theme was continued with the Round Table during which we heard from Franco Addonizio, OFS (Italy) that it is especially important to carry out our mission in the field of public life where we can promote the common good. Lorena Campos, OFS (Spain) gave us an example of a fraternity who is in the forefront of promoting justice, peace and integrity of creation. Eugenio and Elisabetta Di Giovine, OFS (Italy) shared how they responded to the call to be sent into the world as seculars, “to proclaim salvation that would otherwise remain closed within the walls of the churches into which fewer numbers are entering.”

We further explored the chapter’s theme by delving into some specific issues affecting the Order. Anne Mulqueen, OFS (USA) reminded the friars of their importance to us, even though in some areas it has been required to have well formatted Secular Franciscans serving as Spiritual Assistants. Vice-Minister General Maria Consuelo Nuñez, OFS (Venezuela) underlined the need for accurate information on membership and concluded by giving us insights into how our Order needs to be supported by all of us. This was followed by Presidency Councillor Augustine Yoon, OFS (Korea) who offered an example of how national fraternities can organize themselves to contribute in conformity with OFS Rule, Article 25.

Maria Pia Barontini, OFS (Italy) addressed the Chapter with the procedure that is to be followed in the postulation of the causes of saints, noting in particular Pope Francis’ recent document *Maiorem hac Dilectionem*, released in July 2017. She used the beloved leaders of the OFS international fraternity, Augusto Natali, Manuela Mattioli and Emmanuela De Nunzio as examples. This was followed by Gérard Cécilien Raboanary, OFS (Madagascar) who provided an update on the process that is currently in progress for Secular Franciscan Lucien Botovaso, a martyr from Madagascar who is soon to be beatified. Then, Silvia Giuliani, OFS (Austria) presented the life of Blessed Franz Jägerstätter, a Secular Franciscan from Austria who was a farmer and conscientious objector executed during World War II. Members of the Chapter were moved and enriched by these presentations of virtuous lives of exceptional Secular Franciscans.

### 4. Priorities and Decisions

Following an intensive reflection by national fraternities, eight priority areas were identified for improving the management of the Order at the international level and, for each of these priorities, specific initiatives were approved. The details of the specific initiatives are described in their respective Terms of Reference<sup>5</sup>, which were studied by the working groups (attached for reference).

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<sup>5</sup> A Terms of Reference document describes an initiative in detail and provides a framework for its implementation. It includes the initiative’s objectives, the scope of the work to be undertaken, the methodology that will be used to implement the initiative, the timeframe or schedule during which the work will be done, the budget required, and the composition of the team that will implement the initiative.

### **- Formation**

A permanent International Secretariat of OFS Formation will be established to coordinate the work of both initial and ongoing formation at the international level so as to deepen the Secular Franciscan's identity and sense of belonging to the OFS. (See Terms of Reference No.1)

### **- Life in Fraternity**

A review will be undertaken of the structures of the Secular Franciscan Order as outlined in the General Constitutions, with an openness to modifying the General Constitutions where necessary, examining the option for a more decentralized structure that reflects the secular nature of the Secular Franciscan Order and its members. Along with creating a more decentralized structure, a more flexible governance structure should be adopted for the Order that focuses specifically on animating and guiding the local fraternity. ((See Terms of Reference No.2)

### **- Building a Fraternal and Evangelical World**

An OFS International JPIC Secretariat will be established to coordinate JPIC activities within the OFS and to work closely with other JPIC Organizations within the Franciscan Family. This Secretariat will monitor international issues of particular interest to the OFS, provide responses to these issues and act as a focal point for the OFS during natural disasters and coordinating disaster assistance with appropriate agencies, directed to both Secular Franciscans and others in the affected areas. (See Terms of Reference No.3)

### **- Leadership**

In order to properly manage an organization, it is essential to identify its membership; national fraternities are requested to create a national registry of all permanently professed members, as well as keeping track of their temporarily professed and admitted members. To further support the leadership of the OFS at the international level, materials suitable for the training of leaders will be developed, a pool of Secular Franciscans who have acquired extensive experience in serving the OFS will be created and utilized and the collaboration with the rest of the Franciscan Family will be strengthened. (See Terms of Reference No.4)

### **- Communications**

A permanent International Secretariat of Communication will be established and staffed with professionals possessing the required skills in communications, website/social media management and publishing. In some cases, the office may have to retain professional staff on a contractual basis to ensure quality work. (See Terms of Reference No.5)

### **- Finances**

The International Council will develop a financial strategy and plan for the international fraternity which includes both revenue generation strategies and expenditure management controls; this financial strategy would strive to balance the distributions of financial resources between administrative /management requirements and outreach initiatives to national fraternities in need. (See Terms of Reference No.6)

### **- Spiritual Assistance**

All national fraternities are encouraged to reflect and discuss the role of spiritual and pastoral assistance within their specific realities, including the development of effective relationship with the Major Superiors, conducting appropriate formation of spiritual assistants and ensuring ongoing communications between spiritual assistants at all levels.

## **- Franciscan Youth**

Secular Franciscan fraternities, at all levels, are to seek the most suitable means to foster the vitality and growth of Franciscan Youth within their particular realities, accompanying and animating YouFra with all that is necessary to ensure young people are supported along their human and spiritual journey.

## **- Other Matters**

Concluding the discussion begun at the General Chapter 2014 in Assisi regarding the possible addition of the Portuguese language as an official language, the General Chapter has decided not to increase the number of the official languages, but to keep the current four which are: English, French, Italian and Spanish.

## **5. Epilogue**

The celebration of the XV. General Chapter was a historic and a significant milestone in the life of the international fraternity. The identification of priorities for the Order, along with concrete initiatives to implement these priorities, was an indication of the extent to which the Order has matured since the promulgation of the Rule of pp. Blessed Paul VI from 1978. These initiatives will undoubtedly be instrumental in giving life and breath to the structures of the OFS and, together, guide the Order forward with concrete actions to build a more fraternal and evangelical world<sup>6</sup>. It is also worth noting that national fraternities, through their respective International Councillors, offered to share in the responsibility of resourcing these initiatives, both with human and financial resources. A desire to share in the work of leading and managing the Order at the international fraternity was evident, always based on an *authentic spiritual leadership which must be grounded in humility, minority, and service.*<sup>7</sup>

The General Minister, Tibor Kauser also invited the Chapter to join in the celebration of the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the promulgation of the Rule, starting in June 2018, by sharing its ideas with CIOFS on how national fraternities could best mark this occasion. We have been inspired by the lives of those Secular Franciscans who have preceded us, especially Lucien Botovasoa and Franz Jägerstätter, whose virtues have already been recognized by the Catholic Church, as well as Augusto Natali, Manuela Mattioli and Emanuela De Nunzio, whom we have to be grateful for all that they have done for the Order through their acts and through the example of their lives. These Secular Franciscans have certainly responded to the values contained in the Beatitudes and have responded accordingly with their lives, trusting in the one who sent them; we too need to discover how we can live out our vocation within our specific realities as we are sent into the world.

As the Order prepares to celebrate the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our Rule, it is opportune to reflect on the application of this Rule and how it is to be lived by Secular Franciscans. Let us be well prepared to go out into the world following Christ in the footsteps of St. Francis and St. Clare.

Rome, November 11, 2017

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<sup>6</sup> OFS Rule 14.

<sup>7</sup> Fr. Michael Perry, OFM, Minister General, Homily, November 5, 2017

## **Terms of Reference (1): International Formation Office**

### **INTRODUCTION:**

"(Formation) has been the most discussed topic. The importance of formation has stood out as an essential element in order to guarantee an authentic and deep sense of belonging which is founded in a clear sense of identity and knowledge of the true nature of the OFS and its place in the Franciscan Family and in the church. It has been pointed out that there is a need to find new, original and effective ways to offer formation, especially initial formation, with uniformity and cohesion, worthy of an Order extended throughout the world, an Order that is called to develop a fundamental role of a mature apostolate that is accredited by the Church, in collaboration and in concert with the rest of the Franciscan Family." (Conclusions, General Chapter 2002)

The Rule of the OFS and especially the General Constitutions (CCGG) propose a formative process through the various articles, but it is not always possible, nor easy, to establish it in many fraternities around the world. It would be better to be able to implement formation with minimal (basic) content that is similar for the whole Order. It could then be adapted to the social, cultural and religious context according to the needs and realities of each National Fraternity.

It should be noted that this subject of establishing an office or secretariat for formation has been the most repeated proposal of the National Fraternities and International Councilors that responded to the Presidency survey sent with Circular 7/14-20 on May 8, 2015.

### **COMPOSITION:**

If this proposal is approved, the Capitulars should propose some names to advise the Presidency on the composition of this Secretariat or Office of Formation, including its coordinator. It must have a suitable translation team.

The ideal number of people for this OFFICE or SECRETARIAT OF INTERNATIONAL FORMATION would be five brothers/sisters, among them would be a competent Spiritual Assistant (not necessarily a General Assistant because of their many responsibilities). We should have permanent collaborators and temporary ones. Among these members there should also be a qualified YouFra member. There could be one annual meeting and the rest could be through Skype and other means of communication, including e-mail.

### **MISSION:**

Its principle mission will be to try to enlighten, unify themes and determine schedules... In short, to assist in the journey without taking away one iota from those responsible on National Formation teams and National Councils.

Once the projects are approved, the members of the team should have the freedom to seek help from qualified people in the various sectors of the formation topics that ought to be developed. They should always try to work in teams and to have consensus with the Office or Secretariat but always assuring efficiency.

Basic (Initial) formation does not change and in a world Order, Christian-Franciscan formation should be shared fundamentally in all latitudes (everywhere). Experience has shown this to us. This guarantee can be made if a dedicated body exists at the international level. We should not forget that we need a certain coherence between initial and on-going formation. And considering that, based on experience, the contents of formation should not change each time the National Councils change or the Presidency itself changes.

In the contents of formation, above all initial formation, one must ensure reasonable continuity. Formators who are well prepared at all levels of the Order are a fundamental resource. We must invest in formators and have a period without elections, be it in local fraternities as in other levels, except in the case of new fraternities. Formation is not "political," **it is life**, and it is founded upon Sacred Scripture, revelation, theology, spirituality, history, the law and the magisterium of the Church. And almost all these things do not change.

### **FINANCES:**

Responsible parties:

- CIOFS Presidency, including anticipated expenditures in the triennial Budget;
- Raimundo Lullo Fund;
- Involved National Councils that have sufficient resources;
- Resources from organizations that can approve projects of a formative nature.

**GENERAL OBJECTIVE:**

To create an INTERNATIONAL FORMATION OFFICE whose actions would be framed by the following guidelines:

- The coordinator should have responsibilities which would be shared collegially with the other members of the Office according to their capabilities and experiences in all areas.
- The permanent members of the Office should consider, write, propose themes, texts, presentations, projects and concrete programs of a general and local nature in order to help the national fraternities in their work in their own countries.
- To establish a team and/or Formation commission.
- To address and help with all formative concerns.
- To share ideas and suggestions from the National Fraternities

**SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES:**

<p><b>TO UNIFY THE JOURNEY (OF INCORPORATION) OF THE OFS (TO ESTABLISH WORLDWIDE CONTINUITY IN THE JOURNEY TO BECOME A SECULAR FRANCISCAN)</b></p> <p><b>TIME PERIOD:</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Times together (the important thing is not the number of meetings or the number of years),</li> <li>• Formative Objectives and life in fraternity (here establish a minimum amount of time.)</li> <li>• Basic and concrete formative lines for each time period. Establishing objectives, contents...</li> <li>• To offer a total program, but leaving open the agenda (Different cultures, social and ecclesial realities ...) based on the General Constitutions and the CIOFS Formation Manual</li> <li>• Preparation of material and offering it always in Word so that it can be adapted to the different realities of each National Fraternity. Example: Workshop on the Rule...</li> </ul> <p><b>A three-year period of time to act and always open.</b></p>
<p><b>TO COLLABORATE WITH ON-GOING FORMATION</b></p> <p><b>TIME PERIOD:</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of formation material (Agendas, Specific booklets, power points and videos...)</li> <li>• To create information on the cloud (a type of library) where we keep all material that is developed and others available and to give access to those responsible for Formation and the National Ministers. (Do not forget the computer deficiencies of some areas of the International Fraternity.)</li> </ul> <p><b>A three-year period of time to get it functioning and always open.</b></p>
<p><b>TO CREATE A FORMATION SCHOOL</b></p> <p><b>TIME PERIOD:</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To help organize COURSES FOR FORMATION FOR FORMATORS AT THE CONTINENTAL LEVEL, having a select group that is well prepared to support the actions of the members of the Office in a decentralized service.</li> <li>• To improve and multiply the National and Zone Formation Courses. To suggest ideas. Recommend (send) material for the workshops</li> <li>• Traveling formation schools</li> <li>• Formation scholarships at the Zone, National and CIOFS levels to form brothers and sisters on very specific themes</li> </ul> <p><b>At least a year for its creation</b></p>

**CONCLUSION:**

**The Life of Formation and Prayer of the Fraternity (the evangelized) has as its principal objective to develop one's vocation during one's whole life, and this Life of Formation and Prayer should take me to the Mission (to evangelize).**

**NOTE:** We ask that our brother/sister capitulars not concentrate on specific topics and/or concepts, rather in the basic fact that the Secular Franciscan Order provide a permanent formation service at the international level that can focus on the fundamental/basic area which is at this time very lacking in our Order. And therefore, is extremely necessary.

## Terms of Reference (2): Fraternal Life Proposal

### BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

The local fraternity is “the basic unit of the whole Order” and “the privileged place for developing a sense of Church and the Franciscan vocation and for enlivening the apostolic life of its members (Rule, Art. 22). All of the other structures of the Order, whether regional, national or international, should aim to support the life of the local fraternity and the fraternal life of the brothers and sisters. National fraternities have repeatedly underlined that the focus of managing the Order must be on the animation and guidance of local fraternities but, regrettably, the life of the local fraternity is often lost in the governance of the Order. The regional, national and international levels of the Order are meant to support the animation and guidance of the life of the local fraternity but, often, become a burden that achieves little. Each level carries with it a significant commitment of time and resources (people and finances) which often translates into few benefits for the members of the local fraternity.

On a global scale, the physical size of some countries, the distances involved in travelling within and between countries, the cultural differences within and between countries, the variety of languages and dialects used, and the political environment in which life is lived by Secular Franciscans are all significant challenges in managing an Order like the OFS. Although all Secular Franciscans belong to the same Order, the way in which their lives are lived varies greatly. A more decentralized structure is necessary that accommodates for these differences and the challenges that they present.

### PROPOSAL – SUMMARY

#### *Creating a Decentralized Structure for the OFS*

It is proposed that a review be undertaken of the structures of the Secular Franciscan Order as outlined in the General Constitutions, with an openness to modifying the General Constitutions, where necessary, to create a more decentralized structure that reflects the secular nature of the Secular Franciscan Order and its members. Along with creating a more decentralized structure, a more flexible governance structure should be adopted for the Order that focuses specifically on animating and guiding the local fraternity.

### SCOPE

The basis of this proposal is to review the structures that are in place within the Secular Franciscan Order and to determine if these structures are the most effective for an Order that is composed of secular men and women living their vocation in local fraternities. Decentralized options will be assessed that allow for more brothers and sisters to be engaged in the animation and management of the Order.

### APPROACH

As an initial step, a review team of 3 Secular Franciscans would be established to review the structures that are currently in place within the OFS with a view towards developing a Discussion Paper on possible alternative structures. This is a significant piece of work that overlaps with many of the other proposals contained in the 2017 Instrumentum Laboris. A number of phases to this project can be envisioned, with the first phase being to conduct the initial review. A period of one year would be given to establish this initial team and to have it complete the first phase of this project. The first phase of this work would be conducted virtually using teleconferencing technology.

At the same time as the work of the Review Team is proceeding, it is proposed that the Presidency proceed with the following practical steps in engaging a broader base in the management of the Order:

1. Engaging International Councillors with the appropriate competencies to collaborate with the Presidency in the animation of National Fraternities other than their own, focusing on national fraternities

that require support and ensuring that there is continuity in providing this support. This would include the delegation of International Councillors to preside at the national elective chapters of neighbouring national fraternities, as currently occurs, and to have these Councillors follow up on a regular basis with these national fraternities, reporting periodically to the Presidency Councillor of the respective area. This more frequent contact could help provide practical support to brothers and sisters, not only spiritually, but also materially for those experiencing difficult circumstances.

2. Grouping national fraternities within the same geographic area, and encouraging the organization of international gatherings that bring these national fraternities together periodically. This proposal expands on what is already in effect in many areas (European Congress, Latin America Congress) by proposing worldwide frequent encounters or gatherings among neighbouring nations.

3. Encouraging the twinning of fraternities at all levels – national, regional and local. This proposal refers to countries where a Franciscan presence exists or where National Fraternities are emerging. Guidelines for accompanying these fraternities have been approved and published by the CIOFS Presidency (Circ 31/14-20 dated 15March2017).

**RESOURCES REQUIRED  
(for Review Team)**

- Resource with an extensive knowledge and understanding of national fraternities around the world and their composition
- Resource with extensive knowledge of Rule, General Constitutions and Statutes
- Resource with experience in organizational development and design
- No financial resources are required for the first phase of this project

**SOURCE OF FUNDING**

- CIOFS
- National Fraternities
- National Fraternities

**RESPONSIBILITIES**

A team of three people is proposed for the first phase of this project in reviewing the structures that are currently in place within the OFS with a view towards developing a Discussion Paper on possible alternative structures.

It would also be the responsibility of this team to propose the work that would need to be done in subsequent phases of this project.

**TIMEFRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION**

A timeframe of one (1) year is proposed to complete the first phase of this project.

**Terms of Reference (3): Building a Fraternal and Evangelical World  
(OFS International JPIC Secretariat)**

**BACKGROUND / CONTEXT**

The Rule of the Secular Franciscan Order calls Secular Franciscans to observe the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ by following the example of St. Francis of Assisi, who made Christ the inspiration and the centre of his life with God and people (Rule, Art. 4). Similar to the life of St. Francis himself, the life of Secular Franciscans tends to oscillate between developing an internal spiritual life while also developing an external life which reaches out to others with concrete actions. Secular Franciscans do not live their lives for themselves, but rather live it in an outwardly direction towards people in need. The OFS Rule is clear on this point. “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” (Rule, Art. 14). Individually and collectively, Secular Franciscans are to be in the forefront in promoting justice by the testimony of their human lives and their courageous initiatives (Rule, Art. 15). In this regard, initiatives that promote justice, peace-making and care of creation are central to living out the Franciscan charism. For this reason, fraternal life should include a specific focus on JPIC (Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation) and its works.

**PROPOSAL - SUMMARY**

***Proposal 3a –OFS International JPIC Secretariat***

Coordinating JPIC activities within the OFS and working closely with other JPIC Organizations within the Franciscan Family. In conformity with the statutes of the International Fraternity of the Secular Franciscan Order a member of the CIOFS Presidency would support the work of this secretariat

Monitoring International issues of particular interest for OFS and providing responses to these international issues

Initiating JPIC Projects in which all members of OFS could participate, thereby linking the work world-wide

Acting as a focal point for OFS during natural disasters and coordinating disaster assistance with appropriate agencies, directed to both Secular Franciscans and others in the affected areas

**SCOPE**

Since the JPIC issues cover a very large spectrum, the OFS International JPIC Secretariat could work as an “International Observatory” of JPIC issues around the world. This work would be done in collaboration with the CIOFS Presidency which would have a member acting as a liaison between the Secretariat and the Presidency.

The following areas of work are envisioned:

A) To sensitize the OFS around JPIC issues by

- Monitoring international themes concerning JPIC that would be of particular interest to the OFS
- Creating a data base of JPIC documents and OFS/YouFra expertise in the different fields related to JPIC
- Creating a worldwide network that would connect National Councils (OFS and YouFra) from around the world
- Connecting with the relevant groups/associations inside and outside the OFS (for example, connecting with the Vatican through the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development)
- Creating awareness of the importance of multicultural and multi-religious dialogue
- Creating a newsletter that could become a tool for sharing information and proposals which support Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation, and proposing support for specific campaigns

B) To promote concrete actions by

- Actualizing the famous quotation “Think Globally – Act Locally” by proposing initiatives to the OFS and to YouFra fraternities at national, regional and local level
- Working closely with the Inter-Franciscan Commission of JPIC (Romans VI) and with Franciscans International at international level
- Working closely with initiatives like the Franciscan Action Network (FAN) in the USA or Damietta Peace

- Initiative in South Africa or similar initiatives at the regional level
- Acting as a focal point for OFS/YouFra during natural disasters
- Promoting moments of prayer on the occasion of observances proposed either by the Church and/or by the international organizations

**APPROACH**

As initial step is proposed that would establish a team of 5 members (one member from the CIOFS Presidency, 3 Secular Franciscans from national fraternities and 1 YouFra member, all familiar with the subject matter). This team would be responsible for developing, in detail, the way in which the proposal for an International JPIC Secretariat could be realized. For each of the points listed (above), this team of people would analyze the feasibility of implementing this proposal in terms of people needed, the related costs and the time necessary (a GANTT chart could be of help in this work)

NOTE: It is preferable that the JPIC Secretariat be located in Rome, close to the CIOFS International Secretariat and to most of the important JPIC offices of the Franciscan Family and the Vatican.

For this initial step, a period of one year is proposed for the team to complete this phase of the project. This work would determine the composition of the JPIC Secretariat and the way it could work and act.

**RESOURCES REQUIRED**

- Member of the CIOFS Presidency
- Resources experienced in working at the international level to determine how the Secretariat should work and who have the ability for constructing online contact and work
- During the development phase of this work, the Commission could contact national fraternities for their supports/opinions/suggestions
- Initial meetings would be conducted via Skype and other means; no Financial resources would be required for this phase of the project

**SOURCE OF FUNDING**

- International Presidency
- National Fraternities
  
- National Fraternities

**RESPONSIBILITIES**

A team of five people is proposed for the first phase of this project. The team would be responsible for the work outlined in the Scope portion of this Terms of Reference.

It is important that the YouFra be present as a member of this team from the beginning.

National Fraternities would be asked to forward a resume to the CIOFS Presidency for each person that they would propose to form part of this team so as to select people who could work in a very effective way.

Responsibilities inside the team would be assigned once the team composition is defined.

It would be the responsibility of this team to propose the work to be done in the following steps

**TIMEFRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION**

At the moment a timeframe of one year is proposed for the first phase of the project, with a check point of the process after six months.

## Terms of Reference (4): Leadership

### BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

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 (GC, Art. 69.2). The International Council, convened in General Chapter, is the highest governing body of the OFS with legislative, deliberative and elective powers (GC, Art. 70.3). The Presidency of the International Council of the OFS is constituted within the International Council, of which it forms an integral part (GC, Art. 70.2), and is responsible for coordinating animating and guiding the OFS at the international level (GC, Art. 73 (b)). The leadership of the OFS therefore rests with the International Council and, on a day-to-day basis, with the International Presidency. The following proposals are intended to assist and support the International Council and Presidency in leading the international fraternity.

### PROPOSAL – SUMMARY

#### ***Proposal 4a – Membership***

Collect information on membership in the OFS, including demographic data. Develop an international registry of all permanently professed members of the OFS as well as an online directory of all local fraternities within the International Fraternity.

#### **\*\*\*Note:**

this Proposal 4a was split into two parts for the vote at the General Chapter:

4a(1) Information will be collected on membership in the OFS in order to create an online international registry of all permanently professed members of the OFS. (*defeated*)

Alternative text: to make compulsory for national fraternities to create a national registry of all permanently professed members. (*approved*)

4a(2) Information will be collected on local fraternities in the OFS in order to create an online directory of all local fraternities within the International Fraternity. (*approved*)

#### ***Proposal 4b – Training Leaders***

Develop materials suitable for the training of leaders (Minister, Vice-Minister, Secretary, Treasurer, Formator, JPIC Co-ordinator, Youth Co-ordinator, International Councillor).

#### ***Proposal 4c – Creating Pool of Expertise***

Create and utilize a pool of Secular Franciscans who have acquired extensive experience in serving the OFS and who could work in some of the permanent offices of the Order, preside at national elective chapters, conduct fraternal visits, perform various studies and projects of interest to the OFS, and provide support to national councils in resolving problems.

#### ***Proposal 4d – Collaboration within Franciscan Family***

Engage in regular communications with the Franciscan Family, especially with the Conference of the Franciscan Family (CFF), so as to coordinate actions and activities within the broader Franciscan Family.

#### ***Proposal 4e – Administration and Promotion***

Support the International Council and Presidency in the efficient administration and promotion of the OFS through a variety of practical tasks and actions.

### SCOPE

Since the leadership of the OFS rests with the International Council and, on a day-to-day basis, with the International Presidency, the above proposals are intended to assist and support the International Council and Presidency in leading the international fraternity. National fraternities have expressed the view that the work of managing the OFS at the international level has been too centralized and limited to too few people. These proposals are intended to utilize the expertise of Secular Franciscans from across the world, and especially non-elected members of the OFS, in supporting the operation and management of the Order. The implementation of these proposals is contingent on the engagement of the International Presidency and ultimately their approval.

<p><b>RESOURCES REQUIRED</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Minister General, Vice-Minister General <u>or</u> Presidency Councillor</li> <li>- Resource experienced in constructing online membership/fraternity registry</li> <li>- Resource with extensive experience in serving in different offices on fraternity councils and at multiple levels of the organization (local, regional, national, international)</li> <li>- Resource with education/training experience in developing adult education materials</li> <li>- Resource with extensive experience in conducting fraternal visits and presiding at elective chapters at multiple levels of the organization</li> <li>- No financial resources are required for the first phase of this project</li> </ul>	<p><b>SOURCE OF FUNDING</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- International Presidency</li> <li>- National Fraternities</li> <li>- National Fraternities</li> <li>- National Fraternities</li> <li>- National Fraternities</li> </ul>
<p><b>RESPONSIBILITIES</b></p> <p>A team of five people is proposed for the first phase of this project. Based on the composition of the team, responsibilities would be assigned to develop each of the five leadership proposals.</p> <p>It would also be the responsibility of this team to propose the work that would need to be done in subsequent phases of this project.</p>	
<p><b>TIMEFRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION</b></p> <p>A timeframe of one (1) year is proposed to complete the first phase of this project.</p>	

## Terms of Reference (5): Communications

### BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

CIOFS already has a communications team in place which has done yeoman's work in managing the international website and social media, getting the news out at significant events (such as the General Chapter) and, most recently, in launching the international newspaper (VOX Franciscana). The intent of this proposal is to take communications to higher levels.

Communications plays a critical role in all facets of an organization, both internal and external. Effective communications are essential to building and maintaining relationships within the organization, establishing effective teams, facilitating innovation, contributing to the growth of the organization, and ensuring transparency and sense of trust in the organization.

### PROPOSAL – SUMMARY

#### Proposal 5 – OFS International Office of Communications

It is proposed that a permanent International Office of Communication be established and staffed with professionals possessing the requisite skills in communications, website/social media management and publishing. In some cases, the office may have to retain professional staff on a contractual basis to ensure quality work. This Office or Secretariat would be responsible for:

- developing an international communication strategy for the OFS;
- performing media relations and issuing News Releases on specific events providing the OFS with a common voice that reflects its Franciscan vocation and mission (e.g. refugee crisis, natural disasters, etc.);
- managing the CIOFS website and social media;
- developing promotional material for the OFS (eg. posters, flyers, videos, etc.);
- publishing an international newspaper (electronic and hardcopy); and
- creating and maintaining a database of international and national contacts.

### SCOPE

An essential part of the work of this office would be to determine the best tools for communicating with the OFS, given the diversity of its membership and availability of technology.

These proposals are intended to utilize the expertise of Secular Franciscans from across the world, and especially non-elected members of the OFS, in supporting the responsibility associated with communication internally and externally. The implementation of this proposal is contingent on continuous and effective communication between the members of the Presidency and the Communications Office.

### APPROACH

As an initial step, Phase 1, a team of 5 Secular Franciscans who have experience in the field of public relations, communications, writing, design, social media, publications and publishing would be established to develop a coordinated international communication strategy for the OFS. This is a significant piece of work that overlaps with most of the other proposals contained in the 2017 Instrumentum Laboris. An understanding of the Order, its priorities, its needs as far as communication is critical in ensuring that the strategy address and encompass the priority areas. Within this strategy ...

1. The team would have to determine the situations when **press releases** would be sent out and to whom. A cadre of OFS reporters should be identified to assist the team.
2. The team will also need to review the **website** and plan a strategy about updating and expanding it as appropriate. A website manager should be named. It should be determined whether this will be a paid position or a volunteer position. Preferably, it should be someone who understands website management and who also understands the OFS as an international organization. Funding may be also required to update the website
3. **Social Media** will also need to be addressed – how and when to use it, what should be promoted, who should be invited as friends, who will maintain it, how often it should be updated. The Order already has a Facebook page and Twitter account. Should it also have a presence in other social media like Instagram. The team that maintains these venues should be well versed in the opportunities available.

4. **Promotional materials** should be itemized in the strategy. The team should determine the needs of the Order, whether to offer the material in digital, hard copy or both. Materials might include: brochures, booklets, manuals, prayer cards, flyers, leaflets, videos. Whatever materials are prepared, should be branded with the OFS logo, and, somehow identified as an OFS product. A team of editors and designers should be named to ensure that any material prepared by CIOFS is branded appropriately.
5. Publishing an **international newspaper**. Should it be only electronic format or should the order print copies in all four languages? Who would receive it? How would the Order pay for printing and mailing? Would we allow advertising to help pay for the printed version? Who could advertise in the publication? What are the types of things that would be promoted? What types of features could be included? Who could submit articles? Could we let the members of the Order submit stories for consideration? (Background: The Presidency has taken the first steps in providing an international newspaper in electronic format, but there a numerous possibilities for expanding it.) An editorial board should be named, including members of the Presidency. A staff of reporters from around the world should be identified. And, if the plan is to offer advertising, an advertising staff should be named. There are various ways that advertising could be managed. It would be the responsibility of the strategic team to recommend a process.
6. A team should be organized to develop a worldwide database of OFS members (at least international and national officers), organizations and offices with whom the Order should build a relationship, media outlets. If the goal is to provide a venue for dispersal of the publication, a separate database with a list of subscribers should be developed.
7. A translation team should also be organized. This team should include: Italian, English, Spanish and French. Two translators should be identified for each language, one going in one direction (e.g. English to Italian) and the other going in the other direction, (Italian to English). The level of expertise in each language will determine the direction in which they translate.
8. A number of phases to this project can be envisioned. A period of one year would be given to establish this initial team and to have it complete the first phase of this project, the strategic plan. Within this plan, a timeline for each of the areas will be arranged and a budget (if needed) will be developed. The strategic plan will also identify or recommend sources for funding. The first phase of this work would be conducted virtually using teleconferencing technology.

#### RESOURCES REQUIRED

- Minister General, Vice-Minister General or Presidency Councillor
- People Resources experienced in the different areas identified above
- Budget for print materials and videos
- Budget for development and maintenance of website
- Mailing Budget
- No financial resources are required for the first phase of this project

#### SOURCE OF FUNDING

- International Presidency
- National Fraternities
- Advertising (if strategic plan calls for it) for the newspaper
- Donors/Grants

#### RESPONSIBILITIES

A team of five people is proposed for the first phase of this project. Based on the composition of the team, responsibilities would be assigned to develop each of the areas of the proposals.

It would also be the responsibility of this team to propose the work that would need to be done in subsequent phases of this project.

#### TIMEFRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION

A timeframe of one (1) year is proposed to complete the first phase of this project.

## Terms of Reference (6): Finance

### BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

In conformity with the Statutes of the International Fraternity of the Secular Franciscan Order, the Presidency of the International Council appoints a Treasurer and establishes a Finance Commission responsible for the financial and patrimonial management of the International Fraternity. The presence of a Treasurer and Finance Commission is essential to the effective and efficient financial management of the Secular Franciscan Order at the international level, and is endorsed by the General Chapter representing the national fraternities. However, to ensure a greater transparency and efficient management of finances, the following proposal is also recommended.

### PROPOSAL – SUMMARY

#### *Proposal 6 – Financial Strategy and Plan*

It is proposed that the International Council develop a financial strategy and plan for the international fraternity which includes both revenue generation strategies and expenditure management controls; the financial strategy would strive to balance the distributions of financial resources between administrative/management requirements and outreach initiatives to national fraternities in need. It is further proposed that this financial strategy and plan be presented and approved by the Order's General Chapter.

### SCOPE

- Managing the finances of a fraternity is basically the same for all levels of fraternities in that financial management is to support the life of the fraternity and the needs of worship, of the apostolate, and of charity of the fraternity (OFS Rule, Art 25). The only difference among the fraternities is the size of the budget and the complexity of activities, keeping in mind that CIOFS is not one of the biggest among the fraternities in the world. Developing a standard procedure for the management of finances which would cover financial strategies and plans, budgeting, budget approval, closing approval, payment procedures, transparency, book keeping, and prevention of account fraud, etc. would be a step forward in providing sound financial management for the entire Order.
- An important priority in the finance area of the Order today is creating an improved awareness by both the members and the fraternities on their responsibilities regarding contributions. An insufficient awareness in this area results in difficulties in carrying out the required activities of the fraternities including those of CIOFS. Many fraternities in the world cannot carry out the activities required by the Rule and the General Constitutions, not to mention their achievement of financial autonomy.
- The efforts to improve the financial management of the international fraternity would benefit the entire Order since the result of these efforts could be applied not only to CIOFS but also to all the other fraternities in the world.

### APPROACH

*Organize a team to review and propose an overall work plan to improve all aspects of managing the finances of fraternities at all levels.* The focus should be on the development of a standard procedure for managing finances and an increased awareness of the responsibility of members and of their fraternities to contribute to their fraternities as stipulated in art. 25 of the Rule and art 30.3 of the General Constitutions.

The following practical tasks would form part of the work of the team:

- developing standard procedures for the management of finances including the development of a strategy and plan, budgeting (based on the annual work/ activity plan of the fraternity), budget approval, closing approval, payment procedures, transparency and reporting, book keeping, and the prevention of account fraud etc. which could be used by all levels of fraternity. Also to be included in the procedure are general principles and guidelines to handle surplus cash and fixed assets, respectively;
- creating, in collaboration with the Office of Formation, a training module that explains article 25 of the OFS Rule and article 30.3 of the General Constitutions, the responsibilities of each member of the Order, as well as the co-responsibilities of each level of fraternity;
- developing an approach to revenue generation in addition to the contributions from the members, including the bench marking of exemplary national fraternities in this area, and using external foundations for specific projects, etc.; and
- developing guidelines to promote and manage specific funds of each fraternity to assist their own eventual needs and the urgent necessities of the other fraternities.

<p><b>RESOURCES REQUIRED</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Minister General, Vice-Minister General <u>or</u> Presidency Councillor</li> <li>- General Treasurer</li> <li>- Resource experienced in Financial Management of national fraternities that have a healthy financial standing</li> <li>- Resource with extensive knowledge and experience in financing and accounting</li> <li>- Resource with extensive knowledge and experience on formation/ education</li>   <li>- No financial resources are required for the first phase of this project</li> </ul>	<p><b>SOURCE OF FUNDING</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- International Presidency</li> <li>- International Presidency</li> <li>- National Fraternities</li>   <li>- National Fraternities</li>   <li>- National Fraternities</li> </ul>
<p><b>RESPONSIBILITIES</b></p> <p>A team of five people is proposed for the first phase of this project. Based on the composition of the team, appropriate responsibilities would be assigned to each member.</p> <p>It would also be the responsibility of this team to propose the work that would need to be done in subsequent phases of this project.</p>	
<p><b>TIMEFRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION</b></p> <p>A timeframe of one (1) year is proposed to complete the first phase of this project.</p>	