

Sharing The Vision

News from the 2015 National Fraternity Chapter

Summary of the National Minister's State of the Order Address

The State of the Order address given by Tom Bello, OFS is posted on the NAFRA website in its entirety.

"Rejoice in the Lord always. I shall say it again: rejoice! Your kindness should be known to all. The Lord is near. Have no anxiety at all, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, make your requests known to God. Then the peace of God that surpasses all understanding will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus."

Philippians 4:4-7

The organizing principle for this Annual Report will be the six priorities set by the National Fraternity to build Fraternity: Spiritual Assistance, Formation, Youth, Outreach/JPIC, Communication and Vocations. These priorities on building fraternity should also keep the joy of Christ front and center. In other words, it is not only WHAT we are doing, for example, Formation or JPIC, but also HOW we are doing it, prayerfully, with the joy of Christ.

Fraternity is essential to our Secular Franciscan call. Fraternity is where we Secular Franciscans work out our salvation and the salvation of our sisters and brothers. *"Perhaps no aspect of the Secular Franciscan life should be of more concern to those called to leadership than the vitality of the fraternity, be it local, regional, national or international."*

Two great concerns

We continue to show both a lack of knowledge of the Essential Documents and of the Franciscan Charism and the lack of a sincere lifelong commitment to living intensely the Gospel life of Christ in the footsteps of Saints Francis and Clare.

Recommendations

- (1) More individual and fraternal prayer from our hearts at every Secular Franciscan gathering.
- (2) Better Formation, from Initial to Ongoing, in every Fraternity, Local, Regional and National, at every opportunity.

- (3) More social sharing and JOY at every Secular Franciscan gathering.

Action Items

- (1) Every single fraternity in every Region needs Spiritual Assistance.
- (2) Every professed Secular Franciscan asks the Holy Spirit for guidance on how to bring more and better prayer into one's life and the life of the fraternity, and then follow the Spirit's lead!
- (3) Every year, with the single exception of those years when we try to gather the whole Franciscan family at a Quinquennial, the National Formation Team will gather all the Regional Formation Directors, and every year on a different date, the Regional Formation Teams will gather all the Local Fraternity Formation Directors to discuss formation.
- (4) Every Candidate in every local fraternity (1) has a mentor from that fraternity, in addition to the formation director, to journey with the Candidate, (2) at the beginning of Candidacy receives or purchases the Essential Documents, and does homework in the documents between each Candidacy session, (3) reads Friar Felice Cangelosi's article on profession, (4) watches Friar Richard Trezza's two YouTube presentations on Profession, (5) discusses both articles and both presentations with the mentor and/or formation director and/or other candidates, (6) chooses and completes a service apostolate to the satisfaction of the mentor or formation director prior to Profession.
- (1) Every Secular Franciscan gathering will have time for social interaction between and among sisters and brothers. "I give you a new commandment: love one another" John 13:34-35. This love should be seen in our joy and our

caring, regardless of disagreements or contentious discussions. Without others seeing our love and our joy, how can we ever keep the people we now have or receive from the Lord new membership and life?

- (2) Continue our National Communications Committee.
- (3) Every Fraternity at every level, local, regional and national, will adopt and report progress on at

least one apostolate to the margins, as each fraternity so defines those margins. Examples: ministry to the homebound in our own Franciscan family, to the hungry and homeless, the imprisoned and hospitalized in our local areas, or international outreach to migrants and refugees, the sick and suffering throughout the world.

Other Chapter Highlights

Presentations by Minister General and General Spiritual Assistant

Minister General Tibor Kauser, OFS and General Spiritual Assistant Fr. Amando Trujillo Cano, TOR gave presentations at Chapter on the following topics. Summaries of these talks are posted on the NAFRA website. Of particular impact was Tibor Kauser's Specifics of the Secular Franciscan Vocation, which addresses the heart of our call as Secular Franciscans. A study and discussion of any of these presentations would be valuable for individual or fraternity formation.

- Management of the Secular Franciscan Order
- Specifics of St. Francis' Call
- Specifics of the Secular Franciscan Vocation

Spiritual Assistant Training Guidelines

The Task Force on Spiritual Assistant Development in conjunction with the CNSA has developed Spiritual Assistant Training Program Guidelines for Regions. Copies of these very important guidelines were distributed to all Regional Ministers attending the 2015 NAFRA Chapter.

CIOFS Project for "Management of the Order"

The Management of the Order Committee facilitated a focus group activity. A national survey of all OFS members will follow. Recommendations on "how the Order can live up to the vision of St. Francis" will be part of the Committee's report to CIOFS.

Bequest and Donations

In July 2015 the National Fraternity received a \$54,861.39 bequest from the estate of Bernice A. Wrablik, of St. Louis, Missouri. Bernice was aware of the Order through friendships with Secular Franciscans in St. Clare Region. We are blessed and grateful!

During the Chapter the National Fraternity approved the following donations: \$9000 to Terra Sancta Ministries (Franciscan Outreach to those living in the Holy Land); \$6000 to CIOFS designated for aid to the OFS Fraternities in the Holy Land; and \$1000 each to the following five charities: South Carolina Flood Relief, Franciscans International, Franciscan Mission Service, Amazon Relief, and Franciscan Family Apostolate.



* TRANSLATORS STILL NEEDED *

As many of you may know, the TAU USA is also published in Spanish and Korean. We started publishing and mailing hard copies in Spanish about 1½ years ago. Last year we began putting Korean translations of three articles for each edition on the NAFRA website. Recently we acquired eight more Korean translators! Thanks to those who are volunteering to do this wonderful work!

BUT... we are still in need of two or three more bilingual Spanish speakers to help with translations. We also need four or five more bilingual Korean Secular Franciscans so we can translate the entire TAU USA edition each time.

Please contact Cindy Wesley, cw93444@gmail.com if you can help.