



*... they should set themselves free to love God and their brothers and sisters.*

*OFS rule art. 12*

*HANDBOOK  
FOR  
SECULAR  
FRANCISCAN  
SERVANT  
LEADERSHIP*

A revised edition of the 1998  
*Handbook For Secular Franciscan Servant Leadership*  
(2010 Edition)

(Update begun August 2024. Future updates will be on the OFS USA website.)

**[Jesus] said: *Earthly kings lord it over their people. Those who exercise authority over them are called their benefactors. Yet it cannot be that way with you. Let the greater among you be as the junior, the leader as the servant.***

**Luke 22:25-26**

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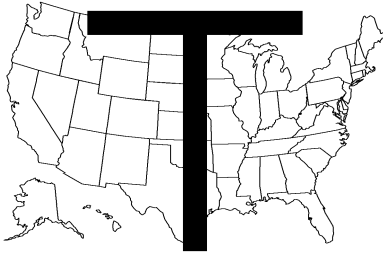
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# The National Fraternity of the Secular Franciscan Order, USA

August 3, 2010  
Feast of the Portiuncula

Dear Franciscan Sister or Brother:

The Lord give you peace!

This revision of the 1998 *Handbook for Secular Franciscan Servant Leadership* is necessary because in the year 2000, the General Constitutions were revised and some of the citations in the 1998 edition had to be changed. Thereafter, the National Fraternity reorganized the apostolic commissions under the title of the Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation Commission and, therefore, references to the apostolic commissions had to be modified. It is important to note that the former apostolic commissions have not “*gone away*,” but have a new name, abbreviated as “JPIC.” The apostolic dimension of the Rule of 1978 is an essential part of our way of life.

The Feast of the Portiuncula is a special day for all Franciscans. This feast commemorates the night St. Francis went to the “little portion” where our Lord and the Blessed Virgin Mary, surrounded by a host of angels, appeared to him. When our Lord urged St. Francis to ask for a special favor, he requested full pardon for all who were contrite, confessed their sins, and visited the little chapel. St. Francis’ desire was granted. Today, this indulgence is extended to include all Franciscan churches where penitents confess, receive Holy Communion and pray for the intention of the Holy Father. This feast reminds us that we are called to follow the example of St. Francis and lead lives of penance and trust in God.

The 1998 edition of this Handbook honored Blessed Raymond Lull, a thirteenth century nobleman who gave up a life of nobility, joined the Order of Penance of St. Francis, and spent the rest of his life serving the Gospel of Jesus Christ, even dying a martyr’s death. Blessed Raymond Lull reminds us of our Secular Franciscan spiritual legacy, to live a life of penance in humble servant leadership.

There are parts of the 1998 letter written by Thérèse A. and David D. Ream, OFS that need to be retained in this edition because they include the history of the servant leadership project. Therefore I am incorporating those portions in this letter.

*(1) When the Handbook For Secular Franciscan Servant Leaders was first published in 1994, we had no idea what type of reception this work would receive among our Franciscan brothers and sisters. Apparently, it has responded to a genuine need felt among those to whom the Secular Franciscan Order has entrusted the servant leadership ministry of animating and guiding our fraternities at the various levels (cf. Rule of the Secular Franciscan Order, Article 21; General Constitutions, Article 31.1). It is with a sense of profound gratitude that we acknowledge the vision and work—indeed, the incarnate servant leadership—of the contributors to the Handbook. This gratitude has been made deeper by the lived experience of the Handbook in the hands of hundreds upon hundreds of our sisters and brothers over the course of these past four<sup>1</sup> years.*

*(2) Those readers who have become accustomed to the style and format of the 1994 edition can rest assured that these aspects of the Handbook have been retained in the current revision<sup>2</sup> as has the essential content of each of the major sections. In producing the work you now hold in your hands, we sought to better ensure the accuracy of all quotations from their original sources, standardized the references to Sacred Scripture, amplified several of the Leader Guides in Part II of the Handbook, and corrected some of the typographical errors which inevitably find their way into any work such as this.*

*(3) Notice the somewhat different title given to this revised and expanded edition of the 1994 Handbook: the Handbook for Secular Franciscan Servant Leadership. Perhaps this will be seen as merely a semantic change. It is intended as a response to those brothers and sisters who have voiced their concern over the years that the Handbook is not really intended for them since they do not currently serve as their fraternity's Minister or on its Council or as one of its Apostolic Commission Chairs.*

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<sup>1</sup> Currently 16 years.

<sup>2</sup> Also retained in the 2010 revision of the Handbook.

(4) *It is our belief that **all** of us have been called through our Baptism as Christians and our Profession as Franciscans to exercise some form of servant leadership after the manner of Jesus and Francis and Clare. Certainly, this truth applies in a most direct way to our elected and appointed servant leadership at all levels of fraternity. But we hope that the somewhat changed focus in emphasis implied by the use of the term "leadership" will create a clearer connection with the **process** of Franciscan servant leadership rather than just with the **person** of the leader. As the General Constitutions of the Secular Franciscan Order remind us. "The brothers and sisters are **co-responsible** for the life of the Fraternity to which they belong and for the OFS as the organic union of all Fraternities throughout the world" (Article: 30.1).*

(5) *We expect that this will not be the final revision of the Handbook for Secular Franciscan Servant Leadership. We invite your collaboration in this ongoing process by sharing with us your needs, your insights, your ideas about what would be helpful, and your experience of what you have actually found to be useful to you in your experience of Franciscan servant leadership.*

In addition to this letter I am adding a prayer that Fr. Kevin Queally, TOR and I adapted from the *Prayer for Leadership* published by *Pax Christi USA*. We believe it describes the attributes we hope for in those who serve us.

Echoing the words of St. Paul (2 Cor.13:14), *may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.*

*In Saints Francis and Clare,*

*Anne H. Mulqueen, OFS on behalf of the  
National Fraternity of the Secular Franciscan Order, USA*

## PRAYER FOR OFS LEADERSHIP

*Give us, O God,  
leaders whose hearts are large  
enough to match the breadth of our  
own souls  
and give us souls strong enough  
to follow leaders of vision and  
wisdom.*

*In seeking a leader, let us seek  
more than our own enhancement --  
though enhancement we hope for --  
more than security for our own  
plans and vision  
-- though security we need --  
more than satisfaction for our own  
selfish wants  
-- though many things we desire.*

*Give us the hearts to choose and  
follow the leader  
who will work with other leaders  
to bring Your will to the agenda  
and help us to fulfill it.*

*Give us leaders  
who lead us to virtue  
without seeking to impose their  
own version of virtue on others.*

*Give us leaders who will  
provide for the advancement  
of our Order  
without dictating to others to  
achieve it.*

*Give us insight enough ourselves  
to choose as leaders those who can  
tell strength from power,  
growth from greed,  
leadership from dominance,  
and real greatness from the  
trappings of grandiosity.*

*We trust you, Great God,  
to open our hearts to learn  
from those to whom you speak in  
different tongues  
and to respect the life and words  
of those to whom you entrusted  
the good of other parts of this  
globe.*

*We beg you, Great God,  
give us the vision as  
Secular Franciscans  
to know where holy leadership truly  
lies,  
to pursue it diligently,  
to ask it to respect the integrity of  
every person  
in the entire Order.*

*We ask these things, Great God,  
with minds open to your word  
and hearts that trust in your eternal  
care.*

Amen

Adapted by: Kevin Queally, TOR  
and Anne Mulqueen, OFS

## PREFACE TO THE 2010 EDITION

This handbook is presented as an aid to Secular Franciscans who wish to improve their service as servant leaders. These may include the minister, members of the council, and any other person who in one way or another animates and guides others in the fraternity. We also hope that other Secular Franciscans may use this handbook as an instrument of opening to the Spirit if they are being called to leadership roles.

The preparation of this guidebook was truly a collaborative effort. Following a charge from the National Formation Commission, a group of Secular Franciscans met. The group planned, conducted, and critiqued a series of leadership workshops. Many people participated in many discussions. Individual brothers and sisters wrote specific assignments, and other members of the group offered feedback. As each piece was refined and incorporated in the whole, each person's contribution, large or small, merged with those of others to create a handbook that none of us owns and all of us share.

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**HANDBOOK  
FOR SECULAR FRANCISCAN  
SERVANT LEADERSHIP**

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

<b>PRAYER FOR OFS LEADERSHIP</b> .....	vi
<b>PREFACE</b> .....	vii
<b>PART I - FOUNDATIONAL IDEAS</b>	1
<b>Jesus, Francis, and Clare as Leaders—Our Models</b>	4
<b>Franciscan Servant Leadership</b>	8
Call, Commitment, Vision	
Willing Instruments—Based in Prayer	
Leader Relationships—Lived in Dialogue	
Shared Leadership	
Different Gifts	
Tasks of Servant Leaders	
<b>Leadership Styles – Some Ideas from the Marketplace</b>	21
<b>We Respond as Secular Franciscan Servant Leaders</b>	25
<b>PART II – LEADER GUIDES</b>	26
<b>Leader Guide 1: Strengthening an initial formation program</b>	27
<b>Leader Guide 2: Increasing fraternities' spiritual significance</b>	31
<b>Leader Guide 3: Revitalizing the zeal for ongoing formation</b>	33
<b>Leader Guide 4: Setting the agenda for local fraternity council meetings</b>	35
<b>Leader Guide 5: Knowing if a candidate is ready for profession</b>	37

<b>Leader Guide 6: Dealing with members who miss meetings</b>	41
<b>Leader Guide 7: Choosing a fraternity apostolate</b>	43
<b>Leader Guide 8: Helping members lead the Franciscan life</b>	46
<b>Leader Guide 9: Encouraging members to assume servant leadership roles</b>	48
<b>Leader Guide 10: Revitalizing the fraternity prayer experience</b>	50
<b>Leader Guide 11: Finding candidates with the talents and gifts for specific offices</b>	53
<b>Leader Guide 12: Animating fraternity meetings/gatherings</b>	55
<b>Leader Guide 13: Increasing members' awareness of the OFS's international scope</b>	57
<b>Leader Guide 14: Determining the appropriate amount of treasury funds</b>	58
<b>Leader Guide 15: Becoming more culturally diverse</b>	59
<b>PART III – FRATERNITY MANAGEMENT</b>	61
<b>Index to the General Constitutions of the Secular Franciscan Order</b>	62
<b>Questions to Consider</b>	64
<b>PART IV - PRACTICAL AIDS</b>	69
<b>Brainstorming</b>	70
Discussion questions	

<b>Communication Overview</b>	72
<b>Communicating</b>	73
Ground rules for communicating	
Communicating in a group	
Skills used when communicating	
Action format	
Communication self evaluation form	
Roadblocks to communicating	
<b>Listening</b>	80
Listen poem	
Great reasons to become a better listener	
Hints on listening	
Listening accurately (Francis and Clare)	
Listening problems	
<b>Responding</b>	86
Responding skills	
Using responding skills	
Guidelines for improving responding skills	
<b>Engaging in Dialogue</b>	89
Definition	
Dialogue starters and checklist	
Guidelines for dialogue	
<b>Decision-making Using Consensus</b>	92
<b>Fraternity Planning</b>	94
Setting fraternity goals	
Fraternity group skills	
Things that block a fraternity	
Agenda for a council meeting	
Council self-evaluation form	
Business meeting review questionnaire	
<b>Preparing Presentations</b>	103
<b>Problem-solving</b>	104
Collaborative problem-solving	
Problem-solving #2	
Problem-solving #3	

<b>Reconciling Differences</b>	108
Conflict management #1	
Conflict management #2	
Conflict management #3	
<b>Enhancing Self-esteem</b>	112
Definition	
Building self-esteem #1	
Building self-esteem #2	
A private talk with myself	
<b>Becoming a Servant Leader</b>	117
Beatitudes of a leader	
Tasks of servant leaders worksheet	
(goes with Part 1: Tasks of servant leaders)	
Talents of servant leaders	
Leadership etiquette	
Servant Leadership Attributes Inventory	
(goes with Part 1: Different Gifts)	
Temperament styles	
<b>FRANCISCAN RESOURCE INFORMATION<sup>1</sup></b>	129

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<sup>1</sup> 2010: The National Formation Commission is in the process of updating the OFS Formation Resource List





## PART I

### FOUNDATIONAL IDEAS

(1209: Valley of Spoleto, Italy)

*Many of the people, both noble and ignoble, cleric and lay, impelled by divine inspiration, began to come to St. Francis, wanting to carry on the battle constantly under his discipline and under his leadership. ... To all he gave a norm of life, and he showed in truth the way of salvation in every walk of life (1 Celano 37).*

The way of life given to us in the Gospel and focused for us by St. Francis those many years ago remains alive and healthy today. Certainly it has changed according to the circumstances of the times, and now, because of the Second Vatican Council, it changes once again.

The Secular Franciscan Order (OFS), in the latter part of the last century and the first half of the 20th century, became more centered on promoting the personal spiritual growth and sanctification of its members. Vatican II, in seeking renewal, brought changes to the Church in the context of the modern world. With this Council came a new attitude toward the role of the laity in the Church. The "sheep" were to be called disciples as well.

The new appreciation of the vision that lay men and women are to be disciples and assume their full baptismal role in the Church of God was incorporated into the OFS Rule of 1978.

The historically recent role of the Third Order Secular Franciscans as "auxiliary" to and led by the friars has given way to the Secular Franciscan Order as one of the "many spiritual families raised up by the Holy Spirit in the Church ... called to follow Christ in the footsteps of Saint Francis of Assisi" (Rule, Art. 1).

#### **Franciscans of the third millennium**

In adapting the OFS to the contemporary world, the Church calls for Secular Franciscans to return to the founding charism of the Order, to a rededication to a **Gospel-driven life of conversion centered around the life of a penitent**. Our personal spiritual growth is balanced with a call to rebuild the Church, God's kingdom on earth.

While in many ways we are rediscovering the Order's original charism, as Secular Franciscans we are facing new challenges. Based on the changing needs of the modern world, and resulting from the context of Vatican II, Secular Franciscans are being challenged to provide a greater share of the leadership in the Order, the Church, and the world.

In the United States, we have completed the process of regionalization, moving to a completely new structure for our Order. Regionalization continues to present us with new opportunities for leadership.

Chapter III of the Rule makes the challenge to provide leadership in the Order quite clear. Each fraternity—local, regional, national, and international—“is animated and guided by a council and minister who are elected by the professed” (*Rule*, Art. 21).

The call for members to animate and guide their brothers and sisters in fraternity is a call to leadership. Those who answer the call to leadership will seek a clear vision of the Secular Franciscan life toward which they will guide others: they will make efforts to love their fellow Franciscans in all their diversity, an attitude that will draw others. They will seek to live a Gospel-centered life of conversion.

For some Secular Franciscans, the call to lead within the Church is new. Many have very little leadership experience in the Church. Those who do have leadership background have most often led in the secular world. All of us are very used to responding to the leadership of religious and clerics.

Yet, our Rule is asking us to learn to share Franciscan leadership roles with the First, Second, and Third Order Regular. The task is great. The need is great. We must support one another and pray for the guidance and courage necessary as we continue our journey toward the Lord.

### **What do we hope to accomplish?**

It is clear that we, as Secular Franciscans, are called to assume positions of leadership within our Order. Why do we need leaders? What do we hope to accomplish through our leadership?

One overwhelming, compelling reason for us to answer the call to leadership in our Order is to play an essential role in passing on our Franciscan legacy. Our Father Francis passed on our heritage to his contemporaries, the lesser brothers, the Poor Ladies, "Brother" Jacoba and other lay people. They, in turn, passed it on to others. We have received our history and our tradition from Franciscans before us. Now it is our turn to transmit it to others. We Secular Franciscans are to be our Rule incarnate. Secular Franciscanism is not the Rule book—it is our lives embodying the Rule. Our lives, our actions, our example are the substance of our tradition.



As Franciscans of the third millennium, we in the OFS do indeed have an important task. We are seeking to continue the work of our Order begun by Francis: **To live a conversion-based, Gospel-centered life, bringing Franciscan values to bear in our contemporary setting.** We **MUST** answer the call in our times to "rebuild my church," as Franciscans before us have done and as Franciscans who follow after us will do.

## JESUS, FRANCIS AND CLARE AS LEADERS—OUR MODELS

In all areas of our lives, Secular Franciscans have three outstanding examples: Jesus Christ, the Son of God; and Francis and Clare of Assisi, Christ's followers and co-founders of the Franciscan movement. When we try to discern our call to leadership as Secular Franciscans, Jesus, Francis, and Clare are our ideals, guiding us by their words and example.

### Christ as leader

Jesus spent his first 30 years living an ordinary life. He began his public life by being baptized and visibly blessed by his Father, and was then led by the Spirit to the wilderness for a 40-day retreat to prepare him for his ministry. During this time he experienced temptations, encouraging him to focus on comfort and power.

One of the first things Jesus did when he left the desert was to begin to gather his apostles, his followers. He chose ordinary people to begin to build the kingdom of God. He made his decision about his disciples after spending a whole night in prayer (Luke 6). Then he set about leading. His servant leadership often took the form of teaching.

Jesus tells us he was sent to "announce the Good News of the reign of God" (*cf.* Luke 4:43). He tells us he is "the light of the world." If we follow him we will never walk in darkness (*cf.* John 8:12). To follow him we must learn about him and his message. He told us that "Anyone among you who aspires to greatness must serve the rest, and whoever wants to rank first among you must serve the needs of all. Such is the case with the Son of Man who has come, not to be served by others, but to serve, to give his own life as a ransom for the many" (Matthew 20:26-28).

Jesus also modeled leadership. He taught and modeled values that were very different from the prevalent ones of the times: the last shall be first. He was poor—"The Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head" (Matthew 8:20) and he tells us the poor are a priority. He warns us that "no pupil outranks his teacher" (Matthew 10:24). So if we want to be followers, we must deny ourselves, take up our cross and follow (Luke 9:23). He was advocating a very different and radical lifestyle. He had a clear vision of love of God and neighbor that he tried to communicate. Through his strong appeal and quiet persuasion, he enlisted others in his mission.

During his three years of ministry, Jesus trained his disciples and passed on to them the commands his Father gave him (*cf.* John 17:8). He was patient and attempted to foster collaboration among the disciples, binding them together through love and the Spirit. He prepared them to carry out his work. He taught them the meaning of servant leadership. After washing their feet, he said, "What I just did was to give you an example: as I have done, so you must do" (John 13:15). He makes it clear that true leadership is grounded in love, which results in service.

Jesus did not have the whole future planned. He gave Peter and the Apostles the keys to the kingdom, allowing the Church to unfold through the leadership of committed people. We have the honor of following his lead today.

### Francis as leader

In his Testament, St. Francis wrote, "After the Lord gave me brothers, no one showed me what I should do; but the **MOST HIGH HIMSELF** revealed to me that I should live according to the form of the Holy Gospel" (cf. Armstrong and Brady, pp. 154-155).<sup>1</sup>

This statement contains the heart of Francis' style of leadership:

- The others with Francis are brothers, not followers. They are on an equal footing.
- All, including Francis, are following God. God/Christ is the true leader.

Among the brothers, Francis encouraged servant leadership. The brothers were "the lesser brothers," the friars minor. Again in his Testament, Francis wrote, "We were simple, and subject to all" (cf. Armstrong and Brady, p. 155).

It would have been counter to this Franciscan vision of minority to encourage authoritarian structures among the brothers. They were lesser, and equal. However, to function, groups, especially as they become larger, need some structure. Francis set up groups of brothers with one brother becoming minister. He was very clear about the role of this minister in the Earlier Rule, chapter IV (cf. Armstrong and Brady, pp. 112-113):

*...all the brothers who have been established as ministers and servants of the other brothers should assign their brothers to the provinces and to the places where they are to be, and they should visit them frequently and spiritually admonish and encourage them... Let the ministers and servants remember what the Lord says: "I have not come to be served, but to serve" (Matt 20:28).*

Note that Francis always refers to them as "ministers and servants." He is talking about one person, not two. The minister is to be servant as well. This theme of servant leadership is seen throughout Francis' writings, as in the Second Version of the Letter to the Faithful (cf. Armstrong and Brady, p. 70):

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<sup>1</sup> Armstrong, Regis J. and Ignatius Brady, *Francis and Clare: The Complete Works*, New York: Paulist Press, 1982.

*The one to whom obedience has been entrusted and who is esteemed as greater should be as the lesser (Luke 22:26) and the servant of the other brothers.*

Francis did not just speak about servant leadership. He himself was a servant leader. Francis led by example. He was model for the brothers. He embodied leadership qualities, and others followed him.

Francis acted on his beliefs. His first follower, Bernard of Quintavalle, was said to have been so impressed by Francis' spending all night on his knees in prayer that he was drawn to leave his comfortable life and follow, in hopes that he too might know such a relationship with God.

Francis was an example of courage. In going outside the walls of Assisi to work with the lepers, he made himself vulnerable and, in so doing, modeled the behavior he wanted others to adopt.

Francis also led by his words. He was aware of his position of influence, and he took responsibility for helping to form the brothers. He told them how to behave when they went out into the world: "And whoever comes to them, friend or foe, thief or robber, should be received with kindness" (The Earlier Rule, chapter VII, in Armstrong and Brady, p. 115).

He developed a rule of life for the brothers to follow. He wrote prayers to help develop them spiritually. He wrote several letters with words of encouragement as well as instruction for them.

One such letter was written "to the Entire Order" toward the end of Francis' life. In the following portion of it, Francis, the human leader, exhorts his brothers and followers to "obey the voice of the Son of God," to follow God, the true leader (*cf.* Armstrong and Brady, p. 56):

*Listen, sons of the Lord and my brothers, pay attention to my words. Incline the ear of your heart and obey the voice of God. Observe his commands with your whole heart and fulfill his counsels with a perfect mind. Give praise to Him since He is good and exalt Him by your deeds. For He has sent you into the entire world for this reason: that in word and deed you may give witness to His voice and bring everyone to know that there is no one who is all-powerful except Him.*

## Clare as leader

One of the first people to experience the magnetism of Francis as leader was the co-founder and spiritual mother of the Franciscan family, St. Clare. Drawn by God, she left a comfortable life and loving family to follow Francis, and, in so doing, she began to lead other women on the Franciscan journey.

Clare had a vision of living the Gospel. Through her passion and determination, shaped by the influence of Francis, she inspired others to follow Christ.

Clare established a Rule that in many ways echoes Francis' own. In her Rule she describes the role of the mother abbess much like the role of the friar minister: "She should strive as well to preside over the others more by her virtues and holy behavior than by her office." The sisters should be "moved by her example" (cf. Armstrong and Brady, p. 215).

In her Testament, Clare speaks of the role that St. Francis had in the history of the Poor Ladies. Note how her words reveal that Clare herself was formed with Francis as model and leader (cf. Armstrong and Brady, pp. 227-228):

*The Son of God became for us the Way which our Blessed Father Francis, His true lover and imitator, has shown and taught us by word and example.... For the Lord Himself not only has set us as an example and mirror for others, but also for our [own] sisters whom the Lord has called to our way of life, so that they in turn will be a mirror and example to those living in the world. Since, therefore, the Lord has called us to such great things, that those who are to be models and mirrors for others may behold themselves in us, we are truly bound to bless and praise the Lord and to be strengthened constantly in Him to do good. Therefore, if we have lived according to the form [of life] given us, we shall, by very little effort leave others a noble example and gain the prize of eternal happiness.*

By their words and actions, St. Francis and St. Clare showed themselves to be effective, significant leaders, powerful in a very countercultural, simple way. They both were example and inspiration in their own time. Our lives as Secular Franciscans, some 800 years later, testify to the enduring value of their example and inspiration.

## FRANCISCAN SERVANT LEADERSHIP

### CALL, COMMITMENT, VISION

Three essential characteristics when one assumes a Franciscan servant leadership role are:

1. that the call or commission is initiated by God;
2. that the response or commitment is wholehearted; and
3. that the leader has or is open to receiving the vision necessary to serve in a servant leadership capacity.

The vitality and growth of fraternal life is usually related to the absence or presence of these characteristics in its leaders.

Without God's call, the commitment is like a house built on sand, the first strong wind and it crumbles. Without commitment, the call of God is like flower seeds in the desert, full of potential, but unable to bloom for lack of rain. Without vision, an authentic call from God and a genuine response of faith become diluted and ineffective. However, when all three elements are present and in balance, individual, communal, and even societal growth and well-being is possible, perhaps inevitable.

Commitment is the pivotal element in Christian Franciscan leadership. Of the three components, call, commitment, and vision, commitment alone comes from a free will choice. Commitment involves not only a choice but also a promise—a choice in the present concerning a promise for the future.

From the teaching of Jesus we learn that all divine invitations are not accepted, even when the vision is clear. Recall the young man Jesus loved who went away sad because he was very rich and could not give up his possessions (*cf.* Luke 18:18-25). God coerces no one into leadership. It is freely offered to be freely received. Just as ordinary people accepted Christ's call to be apostles, we have been chosen to be Secular Franciscans.

As the commitment to Franciscan servant leadership deepens, the leader grows in the ministry. The act of committing sets us free to love God and one another. Yet there is a price. When we commit to serve others, the fraternity, the Order, the family, the Church, the world, we surrender freedom, individualism, and control. The purer the intention to serve, the clearer the God plan, the vision, becomes.

Finally, faithfulness, the highest form of commitment, becomes a reality, an accepted way of life. God who has chosen us put the Spirit in us to provide the vision of Franciscan servant leadership so that we may become leaven for the world.

## WILLING INSTRUMENTS—BASED IN PRAYER

The prayer inspired by St. Francis and which Secular Franciscans frequently pray, petitions our Lord to help us become instruments of peace. It is impossible to make music without someone to play the instrument. Therefore, we need to be open and responsive to our Musician.

Before our Lord commissioned Peter to be a shepherd, he asked three times: "Do you love me?" (cf. John 21:15-19). In his book *In the Name of Jesus: Reflections on Christian Leadership*, Henri Nouwen writes:

*The question is not: How many people take you seriously? How much are you going to accomplish? Can you show some results? But: Are you in love with Jesus?*

*Perhaps another way of putting the question would be: Do you know the Incarnate God? In our world of loneliness and despair, there is an enormous need for men and women to know the heart of God, a heart that forgives, that cares, that reaches out and wants to heal ... The Christian leader of the future is the one who truly knows the heart of God as it has become flesh, "a heart of flesh" in Jesus (pp. 24-25).*

We can know the heart of God through prayer. In being rooted in deep, regular, meaningful prayer, we can prevent ourselves from being distracted from our purpose—to reflect God's great love. Only then can we, as God's instruments, fill the world with the music of the kingdom.

As Secular Franciscans, we all have the intention to be willing instruments. The leader is being called to share those talents, which the community needs at a given time. Leadership is *one form* of music or service.

Prayer, then, is not so much something we do but an attitude we have, a desire to be connected to the Heart of God, to be rooted in God's love. Out of this will flow our call, our work as leaders. We are told: "He must increase, while I must decrease" (cf. John 3:30). Prayer is the means by which this can happen.

We know our Father Francis was a person of prayer. In the Rule of 1221 (chapter XXIII), he wrote:

*We should wish for nothing else and have no other desire; we should find no pleasure or delight in anything except in*

*our Creator, Redeemer, and Savior; He alone is true God, who is perfect good, all good, every good, the true and supreme good, and he alone is good, loving and gentle, kind and understanding; he alone is holy, just, true and right; he alone is kind, innocent, pure, and from him, through him, and in him is all pardon, all grace and all glory for the penitent, the just, and the blessed who rejoice in heaven.*

*Nothing, then, must keep us back, nothing separate us from him, nothing come between us and him. At all times and seasons, in every country and place, every day and all day, we must have a true and humble faith, and keep him in our hearts, where we must love, honor, adore, serve, praise and bless, glorify and acclaim, magnify and thank, the most high supreme and eternal God, Three and One, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, Creator of all and Savior of those who believe in him, who hope in him, and who love him; without beginning and without end, he is unchangeable, invisible, indescribable and ineffable, incomprehensible, unfathomable, blessed and worthy of all praise, glorious, exalted, sublime, most high, kind, lovable, delightful and utterly desirable beyond all else, for ever and ever.*

This prayer of Francis comes from a deep relationship with God, the source of his being. Through prayer, which keeps us in tune with God and at the same time empties us of our self-will, we can be **willing instruments**—Christians who are willing to lead, if that is what is needed to carry out the work of our God.

As Francis' actions were always preceded by a significant period of prayer, so also we, as instruments, must seek to nourish ourselves in this way so that we might live the Gospel. There will be times when living the Gospel will mean leading, and other times it may mean following. If we are rooted in prayer, it will not matter which we do, but only that we are doing the will of our God.



## LEADER RELATIONSHIPS—LIVED IN DIALOGUE

In the Secular Franciscan Order, service is an essential part of our charism. Service is focusing on the needs of others and responding to those needs in a Christ-like way. When we approach leadership from the point of service, we emphasize the response to the needs of the community, rather than personal power and control. We are called to servant leadership. It is also the most effective form of leadership. The crucial question for us is: Do those served grow as persons? as fraternity members? as Secular Franciscans? as Christians? This type of leadership will encourage integrated growth and movement toward autonomy (Robert K. Greenleaf, *Servant Leadership*, pp. 13-14).

How can we know what those we serve need? We learn to listen and engage in true dialogue.

Listening is a skill. Skills improve with practice. In the New Testament we have many examples of Christ's ability to listen. How intently He focused on those who approached Him. He even noticed a touch (cf. Luke 8:43-48).

Listening requires putting ourselves, our thoughts and feelings aside for a period of time in order to really be present to another. To listen effectively it is necessary to use our whole self. Our body is relaxed. We maintain eye contact, and sit with an expression of interest. Our mind is trying to understand the person's message at the deepest level. Our emotional response is one of care and concern. We allow the person to finish speaking before we respond. When we respond, we share with the person what we heard so we are sure we understand. Our spirituality allows us to imitate Christ in His openness to others, and the Spirit provides guidance and strength for this sacramental experience.

According to Matthew Gaskin, OFM, genuine listening is the basis for dialogue:

*True dialogue happens only when persons listen to each other in a climate of mutual truthfulness and love, as they share their feelings and personal experience.... Dialogue is being actively conscious of and open to the other person. It is willing not only to communicate one's own personal truthfulness, but to lovingly accept and respond to the truthfulness it receives from the other. (In *Secular Franciscans: Evangelizers of the Culture*, p. 7).*

Dialogue is present when people on both sides of the communication experience being listened to and listening to each other. The difficulty in achieving dialogue is not so much in its being a complicated communication technique, as it is in the human tendency to "own" one's point of view, to defend one's ideas, interests, and purity of motivation, or to keep anxiety at a minimum. Yet, it is precisely in those situations where a conflict of interest exists, that dialogue is needed. The very difficulty we face in living

out the principle of dialogue in relationship with others is what Francis called "perfect joy."

To the extent we can each risk vulnerability and enter into dialogue with our sisters and brothers in Francis, to that extent our fraternal relationships will become a privileged place for developing a sense of Church. It is in the dialogical relationship rather than technique that relationships blossom.

Through dialogue, then, the leader becomes aware of the needs of the group he or she is serving. It is essential that the leaders understand the meaning of dialogue and make every effort to practice it. As we are all in the process of conversion, there will be obstacles both within the leader and within the group. There will be conflict situations and people who are sometimes labeled "difficult." Genuine dialogue will provide us the opportunity to deal with these situations. We are exhorted to love our neighbors as ourselves. We are reminded that it is easy to love those who love us. When we are able to put ourselves aside, to "die to ourselves," we are open to the Spirit and to one another in a new way and new possibilities emerge. Dialogue is, then, a means of understanding others' needs and a method of responding to the need to be heard, as well as a willingness to share of ourselves.

As Secular Franciscan servant leaders, service to our fraternities must be a priority. It is in our fraternities that we develop and model relationships. The fraternity is the vital bond described in our Rule. It is our "life-giving union with each other" (Art. 1). We are united by our vocation (Art. 7). "Mindful that [we] are bearers of peace which must be built up unceasingly, [we] should seek out ways of unity and fraternal harmony through dialogue, trusting in the presence of the divine seed in everyone and in the transforming power of love and pardon. Messengers of perfect joy in every circumstance, [we] should strive to bring joy and hope to others" (Art. 19).

From our fraternal experience of this life-giving union, Secular Franciscans are better able to go out and live the Gospel with our families, work, environment and the world. Fraternity leaders should constantly ask themselves: Are our fraternities life-giving unions? How do we communicate with each other? Do we feel listened to and cared about? How do we handle conflict, which is a frailty of human existence? Are our councils in touch with the fraternity and able to know the most appropriate means for growth at this particular time in the life of the fraternity? Is there a ready and willing spirit to undertake whatever service is needed to foster a sense of community?

Franciscan servant leaders, by their humble acceptance of the leadership role, model this spirit of service, guiding all in the fraternity to become willing instruments themselves. It is important that leaders listen to their brothers and sisters and *hear* what they need. This ongoing process, carried out in true dialogue, will enable the council to plan effectively for the fraternity and will ensure that our fraternities are life-giving unions.

## SHARED LEADERSHIP

### Fraternity as family

The life of the Secular Franciscan fraternity is more akin to a family than a typical organization. The Franciscan leader's task is to nurture an environment steeped in Franciscan spirituality so that each member can grow in the freedom to be co-heirs with Christ.

The Franciscan servant leader today does not fit the common world stereotype of the leader as an authority figure, the person several rungs up on the hierarchical ladder. However, as Secular Franciscans we sometimes appear to have a confused or mixed vision, because of differences in the descriptions of leadership roles and positions in the Rule of 1883 compared to the Rule of 1978. Prior to the Rule of 1978, fraternities lived with the hierarchical model. The first authority figure was the spiritual director. He, the friar, was assisted by the prefect. All authority and decisions flowed from this central point.

In the spirit of Vatican II, the Rule of 1978 shifted the emphasis in the fraternity from hierarchical relationships to empowerment of the laity, shared responsibility, and therefore, shared leadership. Leadership shifts from the spiritual assistant to the minister and council. Secular Franciscans are to be more collegial than authoritative—facilitators who direct as needed.

Our Rule describes us as a family in the Church (Chapter I), living a particular lifestyle (Chapter II), and governing ourselves within the context of the Church (Chapter III). In some ways, it may be difficult to visualize leadership in a family setting because it is so subtle. In a family, at any given moment a mother, father, brother, sister, cousin, aunt, uncle, grandmother, or the next-door neighbor may be providing the leadership needed for the task at hand. Each has a role to play, with leadership shifting from person to person depending on the family's needs. Who gives leadership when the family needs to eat, buy a stove, tell a story, or sing a song?

Shared leadership is the common denominator that keeps a family in proper balance and in harmony. The family model of shared leadership is the ideal for our Franciscan family too. The model of shared leadership—everyone responsible for taking a part, including a leadership part—works well for families and fraternities. It requires members to contribute to the good of all rather than merely be served by the family or fraternity. It recognizes that everyone has something to contribute. Everyone feels accountable and an integral part of the whole because everyone is contributing his or her talents for the good of all, sharing the load. No one feels overburdened or overwhelmed and weighed down by too many tasks. A good leader recognizes the talents of others and chooses to delegate rather than try to do everything and become stretched too thin.

## Servant leadership

We need to embrace the concept of shared leadership within the context of servant leadership. When we think of leadership as service we open the door to recognize the many ways that serving—and therefore leading—is possible, and necessary. We all have gifts we can bring in service to the fraternity.

Our style of leadership is not about greatness and lording it over others, but about serving one another (*cf.* Luke 22:24-27). A Franciscan leader is not autonomous, but shares the action of leadership with the fraternity, and most of all is dependent upon the Holy Spirit as the primary guide. Instead of one or a few people trying to take care of all fraternal needs, we, like the twelve apostles, share the leadership role with others (*cf.* Acts 6:1-6), but also in humble service.

Article 21 of our Rule states that the fraternity is guided by (not dominated by) a council and minister who share responsibility. The Rule goes on to say that their service is a "duty of responsibility to each member and the community."

A Franciscan leads effectively by example. Our models to follow are Jesus Christ, St. Francis and St. Clare. We need to evaluate our actions constantly in light of them, how they inspired and led their followers and created fraternity—what they did, what they said, what they didn't do. All three were foremost servant leaders.

Just as Jesus Christ came as priest, prophet, and king, Franciscan servant leadership roles can also be perceived in these terms. The priest preserves the tradition and the foundation. The prophet heralds the changes that arise out of a creative, dynamic, growing spirit. The king governs, providing the practical elements and guidelines that keep the fraternity on its path. Fraternity leaders can reflect these elements in their leadership style—preserving traditions, changing with the times, and governing wisely.

## DIFFERENT GIFTS

*There are different gifts but the same Spirit; there are different ministries but the same Lord; there are different works but the same God who accomplishes all of them in everyone. To each person the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. To one the Spirit gives wisdom in discourse, to another the power to express knowledge. Through the Spirit one receives faith; by the same Spirit another is given the gift of healing and still another miraculous powers. Prophecy is given to one; to another power to distinguish one spirit from another. One receives the gift of tongues, another that of interpreting the tongues. But it is one and the same Spirit who produces all these gifts, distributing them to each as he wills.*

*The body is one and has many members, but all the members, many though they are, are one body; and so it is with Christ.*

*As it is, God has set each member of the body in the place he wanted it to be. If all the members were alike, where would the body be? There are, indeed, many different members, but one body. The eye cannot say to the hand, "I do not need you," any more than the head can say to the feet, "I do not need you." Even those members of the body which seem less important are in fact indispensable.*

(1 Corinthians 12:4-12, 18-22)

This passage from Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians reminds us that there are varieties of gifts and varieties of working, but it is the same God who inspires them. Using our gifts, being the instrument God has created us to be, requires first of all that we know what those gifts are and then that we have the courage or willingness to allow our gifts to be used. It is also necessary for us to keep tuned the instruments that we are, by staying in touch with God in prayer.

We each have our own note to sound in God's universal symphony. The recognition and application of our individual gifts is the foundation for leadership. Collaborative leadership calls forth the gifts of the faithful, but can we do for others what we cannot do for ourselves? Understanding and appreciating ourselves as God has created us is one of the foundations of conversion—it gives us a firm place from which to start and grow. If I have a true sense of self-worth, I know that no one else can fulfill my role in the symphony of life. Then I can better appreciate others and their roles.

*Self-acceptance begins with the basics: the acknowledgment of who we are, personally, spiritually, physically, culturally, socially, educationally, intellectually, historically. But it does not stop there. Genuine self-acceptance is much more than a simple recognition of the obvious, or a static embrace of the present. It pushes us to take who we are on a journey ... It urges us to the desert. It invites us to love ourselves so much that we will not let ourselves be less than we can be. Self-acceptance is the willingness to claim and to love ourselves so much that we will not let ourselves be less than we can be. (Fran Ferder, Words Made Flesh, p. 168)*

The challenge issued by this author reminds us that it is only in accepting ourselves that we will be motivated to want to empty ourselves of anything that stands in the way of our growth. This personal growth is not egotistical satisfaction at the expense of others, but actual development of our God-given self, a deep integration toward wholeness,

### **Recognizing our gifts**

*To each person the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. ... But it is one and the same Spirit who produces all these gifts, distributing them to each as he wills. (1 Corinthians 12:7,11)*

Centering ourselves in the Spirit and asking for guidance is the first step in recognizing our own gifts. Next is developing our own individual realistic assessment of our strengths and weaknesses, so we can see ourselves in truth. This will take some time, since most of us tend to focus on our weaknesses or outdated ways of viewing ourselves, ways we have inherited from outside influences and earlier times.

It is necessary to learn how others see us and, after prayerful reflection, to incorporate aspects that seem valid into our view. Often we avoid this process because we fear negative feedback, and the opposite is often what happens. By fearing negative feedback, we cut ourselves off from hearing the positive and fail to develop an accurate picture of who we are and what we have to offer.

This is an ongoing process and takes time and effort, but it is worth it. How we work with ourselves is the training ground for how we work with others.

An atmosphere of interest and caring in our fraternity can assist people to learn about their gifts. Article 22 of the Rule states that our local fraternity is a privileged place. In fraternity we are to know one another well. It is also helpful if the physical surroundings are conducive to dialogue. If these conditions exist, members can share the gifts they

have identified and other members can respond by affirming and naming additional gifts.

Then it is possible to choose an area of ministry based on gifts and the perceived needs of the particular situation. "Ministers are most effective when the role required of them is compatible with their natural and acquired gifts, talents, and skills" (Sofield and Juliano, *Collaborative Ministry*, p. 76). If we are more effective instruments, we are serving our God more effectively.

As Franciscan servant leaders, we acknowledge the uniqueness of each member. We believe we are all members of Christ's body, and we wish to support each member in fulfilling his or her designated function.

As we search for our individual and fraternal gifts, we need to remember that we have been given gifts to help us as we do this. We have the gifts of the Holy Spirit, as well as the gifts of our Franciscan vocation, and we are encouraged to see each other as gifts.

*So the Secular Franciscans with a gentle and courteous spirit accept all people as a gift of the Lord (Rule, Art. 13).*

## TASKS OF SERVANT LEADERS

Where does a person begin after being chosen for a position of responsibility in a fraternity? Very often a whole series of tasks confront those who become minister, formation director, or any of the other roles in fraternal life. One may become caught up in activity, and not feel there is enough time to carefully consider and plan how to carry out one's assigned role.

In fact, learning to respond to the various demands of assigned duties can be a formidable task. Often those who have carried out the responsibilities in the past are available to teach new leaders. If this process works well, the management of fraternity affairs carries on. If not, various aspects of fraternal life may suffer. But Franciscan servant leadership goes beyond managing fraternity affairs.

Is there a distinction between management and leadership? Yes. Management deals with carrying out the policies and programs of a group. The focus is on implementation of agreed-upon activity. Good leaders are able to manage the affairs of the group relative to whatever formal assignment they have. However, leadership includes far more.

One way of describing the distinction between management and leadership is to say that some people know how to get things done, but don't know where to go with that ability. Others have vision and inspiration and can excite people, but don't know how to get things done. A good leader can do both.

### Leadership tasks

What contribution do leaders make to fraternity beyond managing community affairs? Leaders help in several important ways:

1. Leaders help the fraternity develop a shared **vision**, goals, and objectives. The vision may be as fundamental as what it means to be a Franciscan, or as specific as how we want guests to feel when they visit our fraternities.
2. Leaders awaken and enliven the **desire** in us to live out the vision or to accomplish the specific goals at hand.
3. Leaders provide the **know-how** to accomplish what it is we seek. This might take the form of suggesting to us ways to live more simply and prayerfully on a day-to-day basis, or specific techniques that make guests feel comfortable.



4. Leaders nurture and preserve **unity** in the fraternity. At times we all have different points of view regarding Franciscan life and how to live it. Sometimes we need help in overcoming our separateness, letting go, and accommodating differences.
5. Leaders promote **renewal** in the fraternity. We live in a dynamic world and yet we often cling to habits that fit the past. Just as the Church in general has a need for renewal, so do we.
6. Leaders **develop leaders**, supporting and nurturing others, helping them to develop their leadership abilities. This is especially needed in the Secular Franciscan Order with the advent of the Rule of 1978. “Father says” is no longer sufficient. If we are to be in vital reciprocity with other members of the Franciscan family, we must be vital, and that requires more leadership from the ranks of the Secular Franciscan Order.

At times the fraternity may need to sharpen its vision on some matter. At other times, knowing how to accomplish an aim or an activity is needed. At still other times, the fraternity may need help and support to remain unified. When needs shift, it seems clear that leaders do provide for the needs of the community by fulfilling the six services listed above, namely vision, desire, know-how, unity, renewal, and leader development. There are times when the same person provides all six services for the group. In other circumstances various functions are provided by different fraternity members or in combinations. It's desirable for each fraternity to have a group of persons able to team up to serve these important needs. Refer to page 121 for a handy worksheet.

### **A practical application**

To illustrate the variety of tasks of servant leaders, a hypothetical example might be helpful. What role, what services might fraternity leaders play in a fraternity that is attempting to make the transition from living the fraternity life called for during the last 100 years—under the Rule of 1883—to living the life of Secular Franciscans as it is redefined at the present?

1. Leaders must help members of the fraternity understand our current Rule, what it calls for, and how it is different from the previous Rule. In other words, the task is to help develop a shared vision.
2. The leaders have the task of helping members develop a desire to live the Rule as it is presently defined, drawing Secular Franciscans to living the new vision.

3. Members of the fraternity need practical help making the transition. Moving into new territory will not come about by desire alone.
4. It is important for fraternity leaders to foster the change in such a way as to maintain unity in the fraternity if at all possible. Sharp differences can occur when important values and habits are challenged to change.
5. It is important that the fraternity's leaders recognize the need for renewal in the first place. It is normally easier to stay with things as they are. Presenting the need for change is usually not well received.
6. The process of moving from the "old" Rule to the "new" Rule is in itself an opportunity to encourage and develop new leaders. Instead of directing the process in a way that increases members' dependency, the leader can, through collaboration with others, increase the leadership potential of those in the community.

If those charged with fraternal responsibility simply carry out the activity, they may manage the activity sufficiently well. However, if they respond to the needs for vision, desire, know-how, unity, renewal, and continuing development, they will provide leadership.

## LEADERSHIP STYLES—SOME IDEAS FROM THE MARKETPLACE

### **No one style of leadership is best**

In this *Handbook for Secular Franciscan Servant Leadership*, leadership is described as being exercised when an individual recognizes a need, has an idea or vision of what is needed by a community at the time, and is able to bring others to the living out of that vision.

Leadership is not a solitary phenomenon. It is carried out in relationships with others. First, a leader in a given circumstance must have a notion of what must be accomplished at a specific time and place. Then, the leader assumes responsibility to see that something is done. And finally, the leader draws others into the task of accomplishment of the mission.

Many have studied and theorized about what kind of relationships between leaders and followers bring about the best results. Some say one style of leader works best. Others have different theories or emphasize different aspects of leader-follower relationships.

One of the most practical approaches to the question of which style of leadership works best is contained in a book called *Leadership and the One Minute Manager*, by Blanchard and others (1985). The book, directed toward those in business organizations, describes an approach called "situational leadership."

Situational leaders match their style of leading to the specific person or group and the project at hand. A leader with only one way of relating to those being led is likely to be less effective.

Leader style is the way we relate to others as we are trying to provide leadership in specific situations. Keep in mind that leadership is not a do-it-yourself project. Leadership means inviting others into and involving them in the task.

The "leader" who arranges every detail of the monthly fraternity gathering is providing a much-needed service to the fraternity, but not much leadership. One who asks various people to help plan and conduct the gathering and tells them exactly how to go about it is providing leadership of one style. Another leader who asks others to plan and conduct various parts of the gathering without giving specific instructions is leading with a different style. Which is better? That depends.

## **Various styles**

Theory is always clearer and simpler than real life. However, it can help us sort out real-life behavior—in this case leadership style.

Leaders' styles can be described as 1) Directing, 2) Coaching, 3) Supporting or 4) Delegating. Each of the styles is a mixture of more or less direction and support in the relationship between the leader and the follower(s).

Directive behavior on the part of the leader is the kind that structures and controls the behavior of those being led. Supervision is a key element. Directive behavior exists when the leader decides and the others carry it out. The leader tells what, how, where, when, and then supervises. The focus is on the task.

Supportive behavior from the leader is shown by praising the efforts of others, listening, encouraging, and facilitating involvement of those being led. The focus is on the people and their feelings.

### **Style 1 – Directing**

In some situations the appropriate leader style is Directing. In these circumstances the leader places emphasis on directive behavior. The leader tells and does not focus much on supportive behavior.

### **Style 2 – Coaching**

The Coaching style of leadership is both highly directive and highly supportive. The leader invests much effort on both task and people needs. This style leader is just as directive as the first, but adds a strong dose of emotional support and, to some extent, listens to the ideas of the followers.

### **Style 3 – Supporting**

Supporting style leaders place most of their effort on maintaining and encouraging those led. When operating in this style, the leader may share ideas on the "how to" of the tasks, but does not dominate the decisions as in the Coaching style.

### **Style 4 – Delegating**

In this fourth style of leadership, the leader turns over the responsibility to those being led. There is very little, if any, direction given. Also, the leader does not make continuous efforts to provide emotional support. Guidance comes to those being led in more general ways, not in specifics. Basically, the leader identifies

issues, actions, or problems that need attention and asks others to do what is needed.

The first challenge of situational leadership is for the leader to be able to lead in each of the four styles as the circumstances warrant. The second challenge is to know when to use each of the styles.

### **Selecting leadership styles**

Choosing the appropriate leadership style in a given circumstance is based on the developmental level of the person or group being led in relationship to the specific task. Developmental level is a combination of two factors—competence and commitment.

Competence is the level of knowledge and skill people have in relation to various topics. For example, some Secular Franciscans have high competence levels in leading candidates through the formation process, yet low competence when it comes to leading in liturgical expression. Commitment, the other factor in developmental level, also varies. Commitment is one's confidence and motivation in relation to something specific. For example, a fraternity member may feel confident and quite willing to lead the group in prayer, but feel inadequate and unwilling to lead the fraternity through a difficult discussion. Selection of the proper leadership style flows from the four combinations.

When leading those with low competence and high commitment regarding a particular task, the leader can choose the Directing style to compensate for the lack of knowledge and skill of those in the fraternity.

When leading Secular Franciscans with some competence but low commitment in the specific situation, the fraternity leader would choose the Coaching style. After showing how to accomplish the task, the leader would also gather ideas from those involved and be careful to provide strong emotional support.

In circumstances in which the person being led is high on competence but variable on commitment, the leader can choose the Supporting style, which provides strong emotional support to those who have the knowledge and skills to accomplish the task. Ideas may be shared, but decisions regarding "how to" are left to the person doing the task.

When the leader is working with others who are high on both competence and commitment, the proper choice is for the leader to delegate. This leaves the leader free to put energy into other matters, including developing others as they grow in competence and commitment.

Situational leadership is based on the premise that there is no one single leader style, which is best for all situations. The four styles—Directing, Coaching, Supporting, and Delegating—are selected based on the developmental level of those who are being led in relation to specific tasks.

As situational leaders work to develop the competence and commitment of others, leader style shifts from Directing to Coaching to Supporting and, finally, to Delegating.

## WE RESPOND AS SECULAR FRANCISCAN SERVANT LEADERS

The call to servant leadership in the Secular Franciscan Order is a call to us all. Each and every one of us is called to live a prayerful and active life in the secular world. One without the other is incomplete. Francis preferred the quiet contemplative life, but realized the need to serve the Church in the world in addition to being a prayerful person. As members of the Secular Order he founded, we follow his example.

Franciscan servant leadership is always rooted in conversion. Ongoing conversion—penance—is the fundamental, dominant charism for Secular Franciscans, and is central in our lives. None of us has arrived, and we need to be aware of the need for openness to the grace that will lead us to "right faith, certain hope, and perfect charity" (*cf.* Francis' Prayer Before the Crucifix, in Armstrong and Brady, p. 103). Franciscan values of ongoing conversion, minority, poverty, and prayer are crucial elements, which underpin a leader's behavior, but each leader brings his or her own unique personality, style, and attitudes to the role. Because conversion is an ongoing process, dynamic growth will continue to shape the ideals as well as practical application of leadership.

In this spirit of ongoing conversion, we remember that Christ is the true leader, and we follow. We hear the call, express our commitment, and recognize the vision. Acting as servant leaders, we share our gifts and encourage others to share theirs. We understand that the best leadership is collaborative. We recognize that there is a place for each one of us, and we value our differences.

Henri Nouwen, in his book *In the Name of Jesus: Reflections on Christian Leadership*, seems to be speaking of our call and our tasks as servant leaders when he writes,

*Too often I looked at being relevant, popular, and powerful as ingredients of an effective ministry. The truth, however, is that these are not vocations but temptations. Jesus asks "Do you love me?" Jesus sends us out to be shepherds, and Jesus promises a life in which we increasingly have to stretch out our hands and be led to places where we would rather not go. He asks us to move from a concern for relevance to a life of prayer, from worries about popularity to communal and mutual ministry, and from a leadership built on power to a leadership in which we critically discern where God is leading us and our people. (pp. 71-72)*









## PART II

### LEADER GUIDES

Leadership is exercised when individuals, recognizing a need in the community, are able to develop an idea or vision of what is needed in a specific circumstance and are able to draw others into the accomplishment of that vision.

The challenges facing servant leaders in the OFS are numerous. Each fraternity and region has specific needs, and leaders must respond in ways appropriate to the circumstances. However, experience also shows that many fraternities face the same problems and challenges. This section of the *Handbook for Secular Franciscan Servant Leadership* describes a sample of challenges often faced by fraternity leaders, and some guidelines on how to approach those situations.

The approach begins with the recognition that providing leadership in the OFS starts with the models provided by Jesus Christ and Francis and Clare. We attempt to base our relationship with others in prayer and live those relations in a spirit of dialogue. In addition, as we provide leadership, we seek to be as clear thinking as we are able. The Leader Guides provided in this section of the handbook can be used to help generate clear thinking.

The format for each guide is the same:

**NEED.** A short statement or question that you as a fraternity leader might face.

**SOURCES.** A guide to background reading, study, or prayer. The idea is to read before you begin to take action on the need. Sources described are widely available, such as the Rule, Constitutions, Franciscan literature, Scripture, and well-known books in print.

**GOAL.** Suggests a specific goal or objective for which you can aim if you are to resolve the need. The sources suggest what the goal might be.

**MEANS.** Suggests specific actions you might take to accomplish the goal or objective.

Surely the suggestions provided in these guides will not fit every circumstance. But prayer, dialogue, and clear thinking will contribute to effective leadership.



## LEADER GUIDE 1

**NEED:** Our initial formation program is weak. How can we begin to improve it?

### SOURCES:

1. **Luke 24: 13-35** (The road to Emmaus)
2. **General Constitutions of the Secular Franciscan Order**, esp. Art. 37-41
3. **Francis and Clare: The Complete Works**, Regis Armstrong, O.F.M. Cap. and Ignatius Brady, O.F.M.
4. **The Franciscan Journey—Embracing the Franciscan Vision**, Lester Bach, O.F.M. Cap.
5. **To Set Themselves Free**, Teresa V. Baker, OFS
6. **For Up To Now- Foundational Topics for Initial Formation, National Formation Commission**, <https://www.secularfranciscansusa.org/sources-for-secular-franciscan-books-and-supplies/>
7. **Guidelines for Initial Formation in the Secular Franciscan Order in the United States**, National Formation Commission, National Fraternity of the Secular Franciscan Order-USA
8. **Elements of Formation: A Reflection on the Formation Process**, Presidency of the International Council of the OFS.
9. **Thematic Guide for Formation Programs, OFS Secretariat for Formation – CIOFS**, [https://www.secularfranciscansusa.org/wp-content/uploads/English Thematic Guide Formation Programs CIOFS-2023.pdf](https://www.secularfranciscansusa.org/wp-content/uploads/English%20Thematic%20Guide%20Formation%20Programs%20CIOFS-2023.pdf)

**GOAL:** The goal is to begin to strengthen the fraternity's initial formation program by adding depth and breadth to the formative experience.

Possible approaches may include focusing on several distinct but interrelated aspects of the process of formation: 1) the place of the whole fraternity in the work of formation; 2) the place of the NAFRA Formation Commission's Guidelines in helping to structure the fraternity's program; 3) the selection and training of the fraternity's director of formation and the formation team; 4) the quality of written materials to give direction and substance to the process of initial formation; and 5) the possibility and desirability of clustering a local fraternity's initial formation program with the programs of other neighboring fraternities.

### MEANS:

1. A fraternity whose initial formation program is weak might first begin with a sincere communal and individual examination of conscience since, as the Rule instructs us in Article 23, "Admission into the Order is gradually attained through a time of initiation, a period of formation of at least one year, and profession of the Rule. The entire community is engaged in the process of growth by its own manner of living." Each sister and brother is in some way responsible for the life of the fraternity (*cf.* Constitutions, 30.1), including the formation of new members.

Is there something lacking in our fraternity's manner of actualizing the Franciscan way of Gospel life in the world today? Perhaps the "fruits of conversion," "the works of charity in the interactions with the brothers and sisters" (*cf.* Constitutions, Art. 13.2) are not sufficiently in evidence among us.

A fraternity retreat or at least a day of reflection could help facilitate this process of introspection.

2. The fraternity, or at least the fraternity council, may also wish to review the Guidelines for Initial Formation in the Secular Franciscan Order in the United States prepared by the National Formation Commission of NAFRA and published in 1985.

These Guidelines contain valuable chapters with the following headings:

- "A New Vision of Formation: Its Meaning and Characteristics,"
- "Agents of Formation"
- "The Phases of Formation,"
- "Content of Formation,"
- "A Methodology of Formation," and
- "Aspects of Formation" (including guidelines for formation director/team and effective components of a formation program).

A useful bibliography is included.

3. The role of the fraternity formation director has received increased emphasis commensurate with the increased importance placed on formation by the Order worldwide. The Constitutions specifically name the person responsible for formation in the local fraternity as an elected council member (Art. 49.1) and further specify the responsibilities of the formation director in Article 52.3.

Great care should be taken in the election of the formation director and the selection of the fraternity's formation team who will assist this person in fulfilling her or his responsibilities.

The Guidelines (p.19) recommend that the formation director/team be capable of:

- *Giving testimony to Franciscan values; being a facilitator of spiritual growth; sharing in a dialogical manner; having communicable experiences in the spiritual, psychological, and social senses;*
- *Guiding the inquirers/candidates toward an adequate knowledge and lived experience of Scripture, Franciscanism, secular spirituality and life, and theological reflection.*

- *Cooperating and collaborating with the fraternity Council and the Spiritual Assistant.*

The formation director/team may also wish to study the passage from Luke's Gospel (24:13-35), the famous story about the two disciples encountering the risen Jesus while on the road to Emmaus. Here Jesus teaches them by a specific methodology that begins with the lived experience of the learners and then proceeds to expose them to the story of faith. This teaching method can be fruitfully employed in Franciscan formation settings.

4. The adoption of quality materials to give substance and direction to the process of initial formation deserves the prayerful consideration of those specifically charged with this responsibility in the fraternity.

The Guidelines suggest appropriate content for each of the three phases of initial formation (i.e., orientation; inquiry [following the Ceremony of Introduction and Welcoming, p. 13 of the Ritual of the Secular Franciscan Order] and candidacy [following the Rite of Admission, p. 17 of the Ritual]).

In addition to Scripture, general biographies on the life of Saints Francis and Clare, the writings of and about Francis and Clare, Franciscan history and spirituality, the Rule, General Constitutions, and Ritual of the Secular Franciscan Order, the materials listed in the Sources section of this response are worthy of consideration for use in initial formation efforts.

Carefully choosing and using an appropriate text or combination of texts can give direction and substance to the process of initial formation, thereby greatly strengthening the fraternity's formation efforts.

Unlike the work of the Secular Franciscan Order's Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation ("JPIC") Commission and the Franciscan Youth/Young Adult ("FYA") Commission, which give particular form to the Order's ministry and witness to the world, the work of formation is an internal ministry and service to the sisters and brothers of the Order.

Historically, Secular Franciscans have been called "the brothers and sisters of penance" (*cf.* Art. 7 of the Rule of the Secular Franciscan Order, and Art. 13.1 of the General Constitutions of the Secular Franciscan Order). The concept of penance is used here in the sense of the biblical metanoia, that ongoing conversion of mind, heart, and soul to which the Gospels summon all Christians, but especially those "who recognize that they are called to follow Christ in the footsteps of Saint Francis of Assisi" (*cf.* Art. 1 of the OFS Rule).

Christian conversion and Secular Franciscan formation become interchangeable realities for the sister or brother of penance. Formation needs to be understood more as a process than as a program.

5. Finally, each local fraternity can make use of this period of evaluating its program of initial formation as an opportunity to make meaningful contact with the formation director/team of other OFS fraternities, which are geographically close in location. While the role of the local fraternity's minister and council in admitting sisters and brothers to the Order (*cf.* Constitutions, Art. 39.3) and subsequently admitting them to Profession of the Rule (*cf.* Constitutions, Art. 41.1) can never be usurped, the Constitutions strongly encourage the clustering of initial formation programs and experiences among local fraternities. "This [initial] formation should be carried out with frequent meetings for study and prayer and with concrete experiences of service and of apostolate. These meetings should be held, as far as possible and opportune, in common with the candidates of other fraternities" (Constitutions, Art. 40.1). Whenever and wherever possible, the clustering of initial formation efforts serves many useful purposes, among which could be included the following:
  - 1) more ready availability of both personnel well qualified to guide and direct the process of formation as well as the material resources to which #4 above referred;
  - 2) provision of a richer and more diverse sense of community among those in formation, particularly for those fraternities which may have only one or two inquirers or candidates in formation at any given time;
  - 3) the "cross-pollenization" of each local fraternity's insights about the Franciscan life, its customs and observances, its traditions, etc.; and
  - 4) the creation of a greater flexibility in providing opportunities for study, prayer, service, and the apostolate as called for in Article 40 of the Constitutions.

So important is formation—both initial and ongoing—in the life of the Secular Franciscan community that the ministry of formation deserves the very best a fraternity has to offer in terms of its time, talent, and resources.



## LEADER GUIDE 2

**NEED:** Our fraternities seem to lack spiritual significance. What can we do about it?

### SOURCES:

1. **The Rule of the Secular Franciscan Order:** Prologue and Art. 1, 2,4, 5, 7, 8, 12, 13, 21, 24.
2. **General Constitutions of the Secular Franciscan Order:** Art. 8- 16, 28, 49, 53.
3. **Scripture:** Matthew 5:3-9; Matthew 28:19-20; Romans 1:8-9; Romans 8:28-35; 1 Corinthians 12:3-8; 2 Corinthians 6:1-4.
4. **To Set Themselves Free,** Teresa V. Baker, OFS
5. **Seeking a Gospel Life,** Lester Bach, O.F.M., Cap.

**GOAL:** The ideal goal is that the brothers and sisters will come together for spiritual sustenance so that they can go forth fortified with Francis to follow Christ from Gospel to life. The minister and the council have the responsibility to implement this goal in a plan of action at the general fraternity gatherings.

**MEANS:** There are a variety of means available to the council to implement a plan of action so that meetings take on a spiritual significance for the membership.

1. Prayer is first and foremost. Prayer should be the prime ingredient at both the council and general meetings. Leaders should ask the Holy Spirit for the spiritual growth necessary for each member of the fraternity. With the responsibility of leadership comes the responsibility to be mothers and brothers and sisters.
2. Witnessing by one's presence is the Franciscan way. If council members give the example of the importance of ongoing prayer and formation, it can be contagious.
3. Prepare a mission statement at the beginning of each year that incorporates spiritual focus and growth, and get the support of the membership to commit to it for one year.
4. Begin each fraternity gathering with some form of prayer or liturgy in which members have an opportunity not only to participate but also to plan. (Sharing the responsibility gives them a greater feeling of belonging.)
5. Have a designated time for prayer when members have the opportunity to share personal needs and aspirations.

6. Have a programmed plan for ongoing formation in which all members participate.
7. Between meeting contacts with a secret pal, prayer partner, or phone chain can revitalize the meeting itself because of concern for one another.
8. The bulletin or newsletter can set the tone and generate anticipation for the spiritual significance of the upcoming fraternity gathering.
9. Debrief from time to time, or get feedback from members, so that the council can continually improve designs for the spiritual growth of meetings.

## LEADER GUIDE 3

**NEED:** We have a strong initial formation program, but after profession, members seem to lose some of their zeal for ongoing formation. How can we revitalize them?

### SOURCES:

1. General Constitutions of the Secular Franciscan Order: Art. 8, 24, 44
2. The Rule of the Secular Franciscan Order: Art. 7
3. I Celano: 103

**GOAL:** We are required to live a life of continuing conversion. The fraternity is the place to draw strength for living our vocation as Secular Franciscans. If a vocation is alive, it will grow only if nourished by the regular fraternity gatherings, with ongoing formation as an integral part.

**MEANS:** If the fraternity has a good initial formation program, then it is important to look at the ongoing formation program to find out if it is meeting the needs of the fraternity members. To begin, the council could poll the fraternity members to learn what their expectations are concerning ongoing formation. If someone were to record a fraternity's meeting one month and play it back as the next month's meeting, would anyone know the difference? If the fraternity is doing the same thing month after month, the monotony is probably what is causing the loss of zeal in the membership.

The council, along with the formation director and formation team, could select a theme or topic that will be studied for a definite time of at least a year. The formation team could do some preliminary examination to narrow the choice of topics to two or three. Some suggestions are: *Christifideles Laici*, by Pope John Paul II; *The Way of St. Francis*, by Murray Bodo, O.F.M.; *Francis and Clare*, by Regis Armstrong, O.F.M. Cap.; and *Build with Living Stones*, by the Franciscan Institute, St. Bonaventure University.

The fraternity council would then choose a book to implement as an ongoing formation program. Each member of the formation team and council may choose a chapter or topic to present to the entire fraternity. The formation director would be a resource person for the presenter.

A list with the remaining topics could be passed around at a fraternity gathering after a few months. All members would be encouraged to present a topic. This may require some Franciscan "arm-twisting" initially, but will get good results.

One fraternity a few years ago initiated an ongoing formation program using *The Way of St. Francis*. The task of presenting the initial topics was assigned to two or three professed members. This small group quickly realized that they were learning much more by preparing the presentations than they ever would by just participating in them.

After several months they convinced other fraternity members to present some topics. The enthusiasm grew, and after a few months a sign-up sheet for presenting ongoing formation topics was full for the following year, and people were still asking if they could sign up!

In the years since the beginning of the ongoing formation program, almost every member of the fraternity has presented a topic.

The variety of presentations has been as vast and as varied as the individuals giving them, including lectures, videos, speakers from outside the fraternity; small and large discussion groups, and poster art that expressed thoughts and ideas.

The imagination of the members is the only limit to what a fraternity can do during ongoing formation.

## LEADER GUIDE 4

**NEED:** What should we do at meetings of the local fraternity council?

**SOURCES:**

1. **Ritual of the Secular Franciscan Order:** Chapter 2
2. **General Constitutions of the Secular Franciscan Order:** Art. 49-60, particularly Art. 50
3. See **Practical Aids** section

**GOAL:** The council should set the agenda and specific programs for the smooth running of the fraternity. The Constitutions state that the council consists of the following elected members: minister, vice minister, secretary, treasurer, and formation director. Personnel issues (admittance of new prospective members, professions, dismissals) formation and spiritual development, financial considerations, apostolates, and business matters that are not of general interest to the membership are confined to the council meeting. It is important, however, to seek out views of the general membership as often as possible through surveys, questionnaires, and dialogue at the monthly fraternity gatherings, so that new approaches can be discerned. Communication within the council and between the council and the general membership is always open-ended. A newsletter is a good way to keep fraternity members informed about activities or decisions of the council that do not require general discussion.

**MEANS:** The council meets at a regular time, ideally the same day every month. If at all possible, it does not meet on the same day as the fraternity meeting.

Unlike a business meeting, the council meeting begins as prescribed in the Ritual of the OFS. It may include the Liturgy of the Hours. Spiritual reflection is an important element.

There is an agenda. Each council member may be allotted time to give a report. Council minutes are read, corrected or amended, approved, and filed. A register is maintained of all rites of admission, professions, transfers, and deaths, Adjustments and updates to the register are handled at council meetings.

Plan ahead. It is wise to have a yearly plan that responds to the needs of your fraternity. Ongoing formation programs for the monthly fraternity meeting should be thematic; for example, study of the General Constitutions or *The Franciscan Journey—Embracing the Franciscan Vision*. This alleviates the problem of devoting so much time each month at council meetings on what to do for ongoing formation.

There should be some predictability to events in the fraternity: days of recollection during Lent or Advent or both, an annual retreat or chapter, a Christmas program, an Easter program. This process also aids in smooth planning.

Participants strive for consensus and collegiality in the council proceedings. Sometimes, though, the minister must recognize there is an impasse. One tack, barring a sense of urgency, is to let the matter carry over to the next council meeting. Pray about it.

There is real equality in the council. No one "lords over" anyone else. Ultimately, when votes need to be taken, everyone has one vote. There are no factions and cliques. Such behavior is antithetical to being Franciscan.

At the election cycle, every effort should be made to bring new servant leadership into the council. Term limits are adhered to unless there is a very good reason to make an exception.

Shared refreshments may be offered. It is wise to set aside time to catch up on personal matters at the council meeting to build a sense of family.

## LEADER GUIDE 5

**NEED:** How do we really know if a candidate is ready for profession?

**SOURCES:**

1. **Matthew** 7:24-27
2. **Matthew** 18:15-20
3. **Luke** 9:57-62
4. **Galatians** 6:1-10
5. **Thessalonians** 5:14-24
6. **A Letter to a Minister** (*Francis and Clare*, edited by Regis Armstrong, O.F.M. Cap. and Ignatius Brady, O.F.M., p. 74)
7. **Il Celano** 75
8. **The Rule of the Secular Franciscan Order:** Article 23
9. **General Constitutions of the Secular Franciscan Order:** Articles 37-42
10. **Guidelines for Initial Formation**, pp. 17-18

**GOAL:** The goal is for the local fraternity council to come to a mature discernment of the candidate's suitability for commitment to a Secular Franciscan way of life.

It must be noted that this commitment is a normal Christian commitment, flowing out of the baptismal commitment that all Catholics have already professed. While it is an important step in the spiritual life, it is not one that requires a superhuman effort to which few are called. On the other hand, even "normal" Christian vocation is by its nature radical, and always carries with it a personal commitment to conversion of life and mature holiness. This means that special caution must be taken with candidates who present themselves from two extreme positions:

1. The candidate who says in words or behavior, "I am too sinful to be a Secular Franciscan; I am not worthy."
2. The candidate who expresses readiness (or even eagerness) for a Secular Franciscan commitment, but whose understanding of the commitment, level of human and spiritual maturity, or style of life raises serious reservations as to present suitability.

This goal must be addressed, therefore, first from the standpoint of the typical candidate, who lies within the "normal" range, and then from the standpoint of each of our two extreme positions.

**MEANS:** In terms of profession, there are two decisions that are being made simultaneously. The first decision belongs to the candidate. "Is the Secular Franciscan way of life for me?" It must be recognized that this is a different question than "Am I called to a Franciscan spirituality?" This latter question is one of personal preference and spiritual

nuance. The former question, however, addresses a specific spiritual context that is not only personal but also communal, and carries with it certain expectations and responsibilities.

The second decision, therefore, is a community decision, undertaken by the fraternity council in the name of the entire fraternity. The question is "Can this candidate live a Secular Franciscan way of life? Can he or she do it in this historical context with these brothers and sisters?" There is really no way for the council members to shirk this task. The fraternity members are responsible for and to one another, and the life, strength, and growth of any Franciscan community is only as strong as the sum of its membership.

The fraternity council never undertakes this discernment of a candidate's suitability lightly. Even absolute pronouncements from council members, such as "Oh, I think anyone who wants to be a Secular Franciscan should be allowed to," do not usually reflect a flippant attitude. They usually arise from the council member's profound sense of his or her own limitations in the face of the gravity of the responsibility this decision requires.

By and large, the very people who seek to become Secular Franciscans make the council's discernment easy. They are usually Christian men and women somewhere in the process of human and spiritual maturation, who take the Gospel call to discipleship seriously and seek to actualize it in their lives in terms of how they presently understand it. They are far from idealized perfection, but they are willing to openly explore what ongoing Christian conversion means to them in practical terms. They have some sense of the demands, the gifts, and the responsibilities of Christian community. And they are committed to developing a strong relationship with God in prayer and action.

Generally speaking it is a sense of perfectionism that makes some candidates assume the position of "I am not worthy." If worthiness were one of the criteria for Secular Franciscanism, there would be very few candidates indeed. However, perfectionism is only half the problem. This is usually coupled in such candidates with a relatively low sense of self-esteem. "Not only do I feel that I am far from the Christian idea, but I feel almost everyone else is much further along."

Often the rest of the fraternity sees such candidates as having tremendous promise, and it is a source of frustration that they seem unable to overcome this obstacle in their progress toward commitment. Sometimes pointing out the realities to the candidate is sufficient, but sometimes the lack of self-esteem is present to the degree that the candidate almost seems unwilling or even hostile toward viewing him or herself more realistically. This could point to a deeper and more pervasive problem, and forcing the issue might be counterproductive. While such candidates might be encouraged to seek some help in counseling or spiritual direction, it might be beneficial for them and for the fraternity if they wait until they feel more prepared to move toward profession.



In terms of the kind of pastoral decisions the fraternity council must make, candidates at the other extreme are more problematic. In the above instance, whatever the final decision, it is likely that all parties will eventually come to an agreement. At the other end of the spectrum, however, it is quite possible that the council's decision will result in anger, hostility, and even divisiveness. Council members often find themselves cast, usually unwittingly, in various kinds of parental roles either by the candidate or by other fraternity members. And they might find themselves divided in regard to the best choice of action.

The reasons a particular candidate might be recognized as unsuitable for profession are too numerous and complex to address here. If such a decision seems warranted by the council, it is recommended that certain factors be considered:

1. Even though the Constitutions require that the decision for admission to profession be done by secret ballot (Art. 41.1), discernment of candidates' requests must take place in an open, trusting, and forthright atmosphere. All the factors involved must be brought to the council's attention. Hoping someone else will bring up a difficult area will only lead to problems down the road.
2. Remember that truth and compassion must always interact with each other, and to leave either out of the council's discernment is done at great risk.
3. In the council members' interactions with one another, with the candidate, and with other fraternity members, all manipulations, even well intended ones, should be avoided. Honesty and openness are essential (Mt. 5:33-37).
4. Do not be afraid to seek outside confidential advice from pastors, spiritual directors, or other appropriate individuals. Without violating norms of confidentiality, important input for the council's discernment can be made available. Also pastoral advice as to the council's procedure for disseminating its decision can be offered.
5. Clearly document the reasons why the candidate's request for profession is being denied. This is a communal Order, and its members must be capable of participating fully in the community, both with their time and ability. Be as specific as possible, even in regard to specific actions and statements on the candidate's part. Directness, while difficult, will be better appreciated by all in the long run, and vagueness is practically always counterproductive.
6. When possible, it is best that the council comes to a clear agreement as to its course of action. A united voice will be better received by the candidate, as well as by the rest of the fraternity. Leaving a "sacrificial lamb" to present or explain the decision is unfair to all the parties involved.

In order for our Order to be vital, people need to be ready to make a full commitment at the time of profession. We are not doing them or the Order a favor by avoiding a decision if one is indicated.

Local fraternity councils are most often gatherings of committed and dedicated, but untrained, community members. They cannot be expected, nor must they expect themselves, to possess unrealistic levels of divine wisdom. The decisions they make in any area of fraternity life, but especially in regard to pastoral concerns, are always done with humility and reverence, and always with regard to their human limitations.

While the decisions they make are often fallible, the alternatives are potentially chaotic and destructive of Christian community. In the long run, a true communal discernment relies upon the Spirit of God to make up for what is lacking in human wisdom.

## LEADER GUIDE 6

**NEED:** What should be done about members who often miss the monthly fraternity gathering?

### SOURCES:

1. **The Rule of the Secular Franciscan Order:** Art. 5, 19, 22, 23, 24
2. **General Constitutions of the Secular Franciscan Order:** Art. 28.2; 30.1-2; 40.3; 42.4; 53.1 and 53.3; 56-58
3. **Ritual of the OFS:** Rite of Admission: Response to "What is your request?" Rite of Profession: Response to three questions asked by Celebrant and personal profession to the fraternity Minister.

**GOAL:** The council, in collaboration with the entire professed membership of the fraternity, should establish guidelines regarding the definition of active, excused, permanently excused, temporarily excused, and lax members. These guidelines may be written into the fraternity's statutes, or handbook, if it has one.

**MEANS:** To be a Secular Franciscan requires that the person be active in the life of the fraternity. We are called to be brothers and sisters, not hermits, and to be a sister or brother means that we have to be a part of the fraternity.

Initially an individual may be experiencing a difficulty that prohibits attendance at a meeting. The minister or other designated person should contact the individual, either in writing or by phone, to determine if a problem exists. Once a problem is identified, it can be corrected; for example, the problem may be that the member needs a ride to the meeting.

In some cases members may be excused for extenuating family obligations, work assignments, or poor health.

If the individual continues to miss fraternity gatherings, the second contact may be a written invitation from the council. Example: "**SEC\_LAR FRANCISCANS—What is missing?**" After this opening, the letter goes on to say that "you (U)" are the missing part of the Secular Franciscans, and to communicate upcoming activities in the fraternity and again extend an invitation to return to the brothers and sisters.

In all of the contacts with absent individuals, focus the attention on them and offer assistance in dealing with any problems that may be preventing them from attending the regular fraternity gatherings. Remind them of their initial interest in the OFS and of all the time and effort they spent in initial formation and how much the community misses them. Keep the fraternity members reminded of the absent sister or brother and ask that the absent member be kept in the prayers of everyone in the fraternity.

If after the first two contacts the individual has not yet kept a promise to attend meetings on a regular basis, the third contact is a follow-up letter in a firm, but Franciscan, manner asking the absent member to attend the regular fraternity gathering. As always, the tone of the letter should be loving and concerned, with the attention focused on the individual. Mention some of the fraternity's activities that have occurred during the person's absence and say that everyone is asking about him or her.

The council should establish a yearly date to review the status of every fraternity member. Following this review, the steps outlined below for addressing lax members may be followed.

### **Lax fraternity members**

Lax members are those who do not attend and who do not communicate each month with the fraternity. If after a personal contact the person is still lax, the following action may be taken.

### **Council action**

1. The council must write a letter inviting the absent member to join in the life of the fraternity.
2. If there is still no change in the situation after some months, the local council may decide by a vote to dismiss the lax member from the fraternity.
3. A letter should be sent to the member announcing the council's action. The letter should inform the person that he or she is dismissed from the fraternity, **not** from the Secular Franciscan Order.
4. The dismissal from the fraternity must be recorded in the council minutes and in the official register.

### **Member action**

If a member experiences a rather consistent conflict between fraternity life and other commitments, he or she may wish to evaluate those commitments to decide if some should be eliminated. If the member is not willing to withdraw from some other commitment to give priority to fraternity life, then it may be necessary to withdraw from the fraternity.

If the member chooses prayerfully and honestly to withdraw, the request should be made in writing, truthfully stating the reasons. This letter should be sent to the fraternity minister.

## LEADER GUIDE 7

**NEED:** We do not have a fraternity apostolate. Should we? If so, how should we go about choosing one?

### SOURCES:

1. **The Rule of the Secular Franciscan Order:** Art. 14, 15, 16, 18, 19
2. **General Constitutions of the Secular Franciscan Order:** Art. 8, 17-24
3. **Scripture:** many passages, including Matt, 25:31-40
4. **NAFRA JPIC Commission Site:** <https://www.secularfranciscansusa.org/jpic/>
5. **Franciscans International:** [www.franciscansinternational.org](http://www.franciscansinternational.org)
6. **Franciscan Action Network:** [www.franciscanaction.org](http://www.franciscanaction.org)

**GOAL:** All fraternity members should participate in an apostolate.

Inspired by the example of St. Francis and by our Rule and Constitutions, Secular Franciscans should strive to serve our sisters and brothers and seek out ways to build a more fraternal and just world. We are called to act as God's instruments to help bring about the New Creation. To this end, the National Fraternity urges all Secular Franciscans to participate in an apostolate, specifically in the five areas of focus from the Rule: ecology, family, peace and justice, work, and youth/young adults.

While it is clear that every Secular Franciscan should have an apostolic/service-oriented dimension to her or his life, it should also be clearly stated that each local fraternity is NOT required to embrace a specific apostolic work as a common apostolate of the entire fraternity. However, the lived experience of the members of a particular local fraternity may—and frequently does—inspire them to develop a common fraternity apostolate to which each and every member contributes in his or her own way. There is value to the corporate witness of a common apostolic endeavor, the image and the reality that this local group of Secular Franciscans *as a community* works together in providing service to the Church and to the world. A unity of purpose and commitment of effort in serving together can help develop and sustain a sense of cohesiveness within the fraternity. Thus, while local OFS fraternities are not required to sponsor a common apostolate, there are significant benefits which generally accrue to those that do.

Choosing an apostolate is one of the most important tasks a fraternity may choose to undertake. It can also be one of the most time-consuming. One fraternity spent the better part of a year trying to find the ideal apostolate, and after they thought they had found it, they still had problems. Their story can help illustrate some problems and point to some answers.

This fraternity was looking for an activity in which they all could participate once a month. With only seven professed members, they felt that finding such an apostolate would be

easy. As enthusiastic Franciscans, they were all eager to begin doing something meaningful for others.

They brainstormed, asking themselves where they saw the greatest need in the world (a couple of meetings for this); then they gathered specific ideas (a couple more meetings). They discussed, made phone calls, found specific programs that could accommodate seven to nine people, and finally, after nearly a year of "discernment and research," settled on one activity: They would cook once a month for a homeless and battered women's shelter.

This seemed perfect. All seven could do it together; it was filling a real need; and it had specific appeal because of its family focus. Also, the fraternity members felt cooking together would strengthen their own fraternity community.

Yet, this "perfect" apostolate was not as successful as everyone had hoped. What happened was that two to six fraternity members would regularly get together to cook. For the small group, it was good, but the others did not really participate in any way. In fact, one member unilaterally decided to do something else because she felt that when they cooked for the shelter, they were too removed from the people for whom they were cooking. She wanted more face-to-face contact with our materially less fortunate brothers and sisters.

But once decided, the apostolate had become "set," and the fraternity did not reflect anymore. So they **all** never heard her concerns, and never reflected on the challenge her new insight might have brought. They did not really meet the goal they set for themselves, of all participating in a fraternity apostolate. Yet, the goal is a good one.

Why was this apostolate not successful? Some possible reasons include:

- It may have been unrealistic to expect everyone to gather a third time each month, since fraternity members live at some distance from one another. This is probably true for most fraternities.
- Once they decided on this apostolate, they stopped talking and reflecting about it. Remember, St. Francis stressed action and contemplation. Action alone is not enough. Secular Franciscans must never neglect prayer and reflection, even when they are acting from Gospel inspiration. They must always seek to balance action and contemplation.

**MEANS:** In the above example, the error was not in the goal itself, but in interpreting the goal of "All fraternity members *should participate* in a fraternity apostolate" to mean that all *should do the same thing*. Learning from this example, perhaps a much better approach would be for a fraternity to:

1. Choose one to three apostolates, depending on the fraternity size, and based on specific interests or enthusiasms of the members (perhaps work at a shelter, work on environmental issues, work with the elderly); and then
2. Determine how many different ways the apostolate can be supported by the fraternity members, both in groups and individually.
3. It then becomes important for the entire fraternity to have an opportunity, during the regular fraternity gathering, to pray about and reflect on the various specific activities in which everyone has participated, in order to support the apostolates.
4. It is also important prayerfully to review and recommit to the same apostolate or others at some regular interval, perhaps every year.

One way the fraternity in the example could change to fit this apostolate model is as follows:

#### **FRATERNITY APOSTOLATE:**

Support the Homeless Women's Shelter.

#### **MEANS:**

1. Cook dinner first Sunday of each month.
2. Pray for the women and their children.
3. Offer to help with special needs (e.g., when there is an urgent need for warm clothing or someone to babysit).
4. Support local efforts to build affordable housing.

#### **AT MONTHLY FRATERNITY GATHERING:**

Pray for the women and children and all who are homeless. Discuss the ways the members have supported the shelter over the past month. Discuss other issues of homelessness illuminated by Scripture study.

A larger fraternity could choose two or three different specific apostolates and develop different means for support for each one. Each fraternity will need to discern for itself where it sees needs and opportunities in its own community. We are not all called to work in homeless women's shelters, but we are all called to some apostolate. Whatever we choose, the most important parts are

1. **DO IT!** and
2. **SHARE IT!** and then
3. if it doesn't work, **CHANGE IT!**





## LEADER GUIDE 8

**NEED:** Certain members of our fraternity do not appear to be leading the Franciscan life. What responsibility does the Council have toward those members? What practical steps can the Council take to help those members?

### SOURCES:

1. **The Rule of the Secular Franciscan Order:** The basic Franciscan values and commitments—Chapter 2, especially Art. 6, 7, 10, 11, 14-19; Council's role—Art. 23, especially paragraph 4; Art. 24
2. **General Constitutions of the Secular Franciscan Order:** Art. 31, 32, and 33; responsibilities of the Council, including the Spiritual Assistant, regarding promoting Franciscan living—Art. 37.2; 44:3 and 44.3; 50.2(b); 53.3; 56.2 (as a last resort).

**GOAL:** A council serves as a model for the Franciscan life. Ideally its members comprehend the Rule of life they have professed; are sincerely attempting to live out Franciscan values; recognize that ongoing conversion, not perfectionism, is the guide on a journey where no one has yet arrived; and accept their fraternal responsibility to promote this way of life among members of the fraternity through prayerful action.

The minister and entire council have the responsibility to bring Franciscan values to light, not just the spiritual assistant.

**MEANS:** Several means are available to servant leaders who are concerned about promoting true Franciscan living and taking measures to correct members who are not living up to their commitment.

1. For members of the council to assume their proper role concerning those who are in the Order but not living according to the Rule, the council must, first, examine its responsibilities, and second, be clear about what it means to live the Secular Franciscan life as described in our Rule.
2. The council, at a time separate from "business" matters and after individual study of the sources listed above, can discuss and pray together about their responsibilities for fraternal life. Each member of the council has not only an assigned responsibility, but also a responsibility and vision beyond that to promote the spiritual welfare and Franciscan lifestyle of the fraternity's members.
3. The council can discuss and pray over the importance of initial and ongoing formation in bringing fraternity members to a shared vision of the Franciscan charism, beyond "devotion" to Franciscan spirituality.

4. Members of council may ask themselves how well aware they are of each member's life circumstance. Conversion is lived in our very specific circumstances. Is at least one member of council on personal terms with each member of the fraternity?
5. The council should recognize that there are many ways of living out the Franciscan ideal and in fact individual brothers and sisters should be encouraged to live their own expression. Council does not impose a style.
6. When individuals are experiencing difficulty living the Secular Franciscan life, the council has the duty "to establish a fraternal dialogue with members in particular difficulties and to adopt consequent measures;" (Constitutions, Art. 50.2(b)). Practically speaking, this is often difficult because those in difficulty are often not interested in dialogue. Yet it is important for the council to make sensitive attempts to discuss the difficulty, despite the possible awkwardness. The point of the dialogue is for the council to help develop measures to correct the situation.
7. The council can prayerfully examine initiatives to keep those brothers and sisters connected to the fraternity when life circumstances work against participation.
8. Finally, it is sometimes necessary for a person to withdraw temporarily from or to be suspended from the fraternity. The minister, especially, has an obligation to engage in fraternal dialogue with the individual about this decision. The Constitutions, in Article 58, describe how more permanent decisions are to be made. Throughout all the consideration, it is important to seek guidance from the spiritual assistant, while recognizing that the minister and council are responsible for these matters.

It is crucial that the council keep clear the servant leader role and exercise its authority prayerfully.

## LEADER GUIDE 9

**NEED:** Some members of the fraternity shun servant leadership roles. What can be done to improve the response of the reluctant members?

### SOURCES:

1. **The Rule of the Secular Franciscan Order:** Rules 21, 22, 23, 24
2. **General Constitutions of the Secular Franciscan Order:** Art. 20; 30.1-2; 31.1-4; 32.1-2; 33.1-2; 34; 76 through 84.
3. **Scripture:** John 15:1-8; Luke 10:1-9
4. **Volume I of: Francis of Assisi: Early Documents—Writings of Francis of Assisi--** Edited by Regis J. Armstrong, O.F.M. Cap., J. A. Wayne Hellmann, O.F.M. Conv., and William J. Short, O.F.M.

**GOAL:** Fraternity servant leaders must ensure that all fraternity members understand what is needed to accomplish fraternity goals. Refusing to assume leadership responsibilities places an unfair burden on active fraternity leaders. There are many roles, large and small, that can be filled for the benefit of the fraternity. Helping members to understand and share their gifts will give them confidence in their ability and at the same time ensure that the fraternity can grow in all its dimensions and run smoothly at the same time.

**MEANS:** At the beginning of the program year, the fraternity council, formation team, and other designated leaders (e.g., the program coordinator) can meet and develop a plan of action that reflects the visions of the fraternity—its programs for evangelizing, its mission, goals, and objectives. The plan for action should be flexible and have room for creativity to encourage all the fraternity members to accept it.

Make a list of tasks to be performed and resources needed to carry out the plan of action. It is desirable for fraternity members to understand and agree with what is necessary for the plan of action to be effective, and to see themselves as part of the picture.

Subsequently, target members who have potential servant leadership abilities (including those who have shunned accepting leadership roles). Reports of apostolic works performed by individual members are a good way of finding out what various fraternity members are interested in and are capable of doing. Affirmation can encourage reluctant members to service.

Immediately after a candidate has been admitted to the fraternity, the council can create a dialogue to determine what commission, committee, apostolate, or service to which he or she feels called in the spirit of Franciscan service. After about six months, the candidate's abilities, interests, and talents will have surfaced, lending direction to the council in offering broader servant leadership possibilities.

The plan of action should contain opportunities for developing new leadership in the fraternity. A training workshop during a day of recollection could be set aside for this purpose. Consider inviting servant leaders of other fraternities to the training.

The training should develop self-understanding; the ability to listen and communicate, an awareness of interpersonal and group dynamics, and the capacity to diagnose and solve interpersonal, group, and organizational problems. The sessions should be designed to help the participants have more confidence in themselves and to see how their actions affect the fraternity's programs.

It is important that fraternity members review the Constitutions to better understand what is asked of Secular Franciscans as willing servant leaders.

It is best not to allow anyone to monopolize a position in the fraternity. This leads to the position's taking on the personality of an individual rather than having that position exposed to the talents and gifts of other members.

Every active fraternity member should have some responsibility in the fraternity and not just as a member of the telephone tree or furnishing refreshments once or twice a year.

## LEADER GUIDE 10

**NEED:** Our fraternity prayer experience is becoming routine and static. What can we do to make our community prayer more vital?

### SOURCES:

1. **Ritual of the Secular Franciscan Order**, p. 57
2. **The Rule of the Secular Franciscan Order**: Art. 5-9
3. **General Constitutions of the Secular Franciscan Order**: Art. 8-14
4. **Volume I of: Francis of Assisi: Early Documents—Writings of Francis of Assisi**-- Edited by Regis J. Armstrong, O.F.M. Cap., J. A. Wayne Hellmann, O.F.M. Conv., and William J. Short, O.F.M.  
**The Rule of 1221:**  
**The Rule of 1223:**  
**Celano, First Life:** #45, 115, and others throughout  
**Celano, Second Life:** #94, and others throughout
5. **The Liturgy of the Hours**
6. **Franciscan Prayer**, Ilia Delio, OSF

**GOAL:** The nourishment of our spiritual life as a fraternity depends on a community experience of prayer motivating, sustaining, and identifying us as Secular Franciscans. Prayer is as varied as each person, and each fraternity member has something to offer to the prayer experience, to keep our presence to God fresh and life-giving. Members could be encouraged to participate in the communal prayer life by leading the prayer, even to the extent of having a different member design the prayer service for each meeting.

**MEANS:** Good beginnings bring about good results that is why the Ritual of the Secular Franciscan Order convenes the gathering of the brothers and sisters “in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.” It is good to focus early in the meeting on why we have gathered together, why we have entered into this vocation, by beginning with prayer.

Usually there is some liturgical celebration to mark special events—the Liturgy of the Eucharist, the Transitus, Benediction—but prayer is just as essential during the regular fraternity gatherings of the year. The Constitutions urge us to give priority to the Liturgy of the Hours, a continuing tradition from the earliest days of the Secular Franciscan Order, embodied in every Rule since 1228 and derived from Francis' own prayer experiences.

However, there are many ways to express our relationship with God in a communal way. It is important to recognize that all of these ways will not automatically appeal to all members of the fraternity, and there might be some resistance to certain prayer methods from some people.

Perhaps the key to overcoming this is not to invest any single method with the quality of being “right” or “better.” Maybe I haven’t prayed the Franciscan Crown rosary for years, yet you find it essential to your daily prayer life. In Franciscan fraternity, I would profit by being open to saying the Crown with you once in a while, and you would be honoring my individuality by not insisting we do it all the time. In the same way, I might like to introduce you to the value of contemplative prayer, which you have previously felt was difficult and unfulfilling. We honor each other by being willing to pray together, and to be open to the surprises God showers on us in unexpected ways.

This does not mean that each fraternity prayer time has to be so unique—that the council or liturgical committee is scrambling to find something new each month, as if it were a type of entertainment. There is something to be said for familiarity and consistency. After all, the Eucharist is the same every day in its essentials. But it keeps its life through its variety as well—the different readings, the cycle of the liturgical year, the petitions, the music.

Here are some suggestions for keeping the prayer experience of the fraternity what it is meant to be—a joyful coming together in God’s presence.

1. If a fraternity has members who are gifted in liturgy and/or communal prayer, a team could be formed to plan the prayer times.
2. If such a team is formed, it is essential that its members seek suggestions from all members of the fraternity, to emphasize that the prayer is not handed down, that it flows from the community.
3. Music can be a simple and immediate way of centering, and of pulling the group together. Someone with a gift for music—either singing or playing an instrument, or with an ear for the beautiful and inspiring—can be a part of the prayer team. If you have no one to play an instrument, there are many tapes, sung and instrumental, that can be used to enhance any prayer service.
4. If a team is not practical or desired, try instituting a schedule whereby each month, a member of the fraternity is responsible for leading the prayer. Give everyone freedom to bring favorite prayer experiences to the group. The best kind of prayer comes from the heart.
5. Sometimes it is difficult to get used to, but silence, practiced regularly, is a powerful form of prayer, particularly in the presence of other people with a common commitment. If you decide to use silence, spend at least 10 minutes, preferably 20, with it on a monthly basis for a good beginning.
6. Remember that prayer does not have to be solemn. It is being with the Lord, who surely is not as formal as we sometimes make God out to be.

7. Prayer also can take the form of movement such as dance, of gathering in a circle, of laying hands on one another. But be sensitive to those who might be shy about physical contact.
8. Moving the prayer space is another way to alter the experience and make it new. Praying outside on a pleasant day, for example, allows the sense of direct contact with the Creator.
9. Remember that Secular Franciscans are committed to living the Gospel. Meditations on Gospel passages are a fundamental way of praying, and expanding our vision and understanding of our Franciscan life.





## LEADER GUIDE 11

**NEED:** How can we educate professed members to nominate and elect those with the gifts and talents that will complement and enrich the various council seats?

### SOURCES:

1. **The Rule of the Secular Franciscan Order:** Art. 11-14, 21
2. **General Constitutions of the Secular Franciscan Order:** Art. 49-52
3. **Ritual of the Secular Franciscan Order:** Part II, Chapter 3
4. **Scripture:** Matt. 18:19-20; Mark 6:7; Eph. 6:5-9

**GOAL:** The membership must be educated to take the election process seriously. Every professed member should nominate to council positions other members who exhibit the talents and gifts for a particular office and have shown that they are team players.

**MEANS:** The fraternity council should encourage all members to become aware of and acknowledge their own gifts as well as those of their brothers and sisters. A few months before nominations for fraternity elections, members should begin prayerful reflection and dialogue about servant leadership and the specific concerns and needs in their fraternity at the time.

Some portion of ongoing formation could be devoted to readings on service and leadership (e.g., this Handbook for Secular Franciscan Servant Leadership). It should be remembered that the best speaker might not necessarily have the gifts to be a minister; the office secretary may not be a capable fraternity secretary; the math teacher may not possess the talents to serve as treasurer. The talents of these three members could be of greater value to the fraternity in other areas.

One fraternity found it helpful to have round-robin discussions of their hopes and vision for their fraternity for the next three years. The members were then asked to pray about how they felt called to participate. At the following meeting each member shared thoughts about his or her own role, as well as recommendations for roles specific others might take, based on strengths and gifts they saw in their brothers and sisters.

In larger fraternities, these discussions could be held in small groups. It is important that the members know each other well to discern where potential servant leadership can be found. Candidates in formation as well as members serving on commissions, committees, etc., will exhibit their varied strengths and weaknesses as they function in the ownership of the fraternity.

Some talents of potential servant leaders include:

1. permitting others to have freedom to explore new horizons and to grow within the fraternity;

2. the ability to recognize and respect the true worth of every individual;
3. placing the needs of the fraternity before his or her personal needs;
4. the ability to develop commitment from others which perpetuates itself into "teamwork";
5. communication skills, which are the binding force to pull the fraternity together;
6. the ability to communicate a sense of ownership coupled with accountability to each member;
7. the ability properly to focus and mobilize the energy and enthusiasm of the members; and
8. the foresight to accept fresh new ideas, which most often are proposed from the lowest level.

Good servant leadership contributes to a healthy fraternity in these ways:

- An ability to take risks is an element of growth. Allowing fraternity ownership is a risk worth taking.
- Commitment, not authority, runs a fraternity.
- Empowerment creates fraternity ownership, which results in genuine involvement in the fraternity.
- No one can lead alone. The leader feeds those led as those led feed the leader.

*Jesus (and Francis) sent them out in pairs ...*

All of the above can be achieved if each fraternity member, individually and collectively, listens to the voice of love in prayer. With a deep personal relationship with God, love, not power, will be the result.

## LEADER GUIDE 12

**NEED:** Our fraternity gatherings remind me of the meetings of other organizations in which I have been involved. How can we change this?

### SOURCES:

1. **Galatians** 6:1-26
2. **Rule of the Secular Franciscan Order:** Art. 24
3. **General Constitutions of the Secular Franciscan Order:** Art. 30-32, 49
4. **The Franciscan Journey—Embracing the Franciscan Vision**, Lester Bach, O.F.M. Cap.

**GOAL:** To make our fraternity gatherings vital, fostering the development of a personal and spiritual bond that enables members to go back to their secular lives more open to God's will for them.

**MEANS:** Article 30 in our Constitutions tells us that we are all co-responsible for the life of the fraternity to which we belong. This requires personal presence, witness, prayer, and active collaboration for the animation of the fraternity.

Prayer must be an essential element of each fraternity gathering:

- The usual opening and closing prayer found in the Ritual of the OFS. It is beneficial to vary the prayer at times; e.g., a song, spontaneous prayer, or a prayer for the season.
- A prayer service using the Liturgy of the Hours, psalms, Scripture, and intercessory prayer. During special occasions we can share the Liturgy of the Eucharist.

Praying together as community, whether it is simple or elaborate, is the heart of all we do.

The second but also important ingredient is an ongoing formation program. This must be planned according to the needs of the fraternity. Some questions that might guide the development of such a program are:

1. Do we need more emphasis on community?
2. Does our fraternity understand that it is part of an Order that is international in scope ... part of the Franciscan Family?
3. Are we trying to live our Rule? Have we studied the Rule and shared its practical implications?
4. Do we provide regular opportunities to emphasize the service aspect of the Rule by sharing our individual and/or fraternity apostolates?

5. How do we as a fraternity assume our responsibility toward peace and justice issues?
6. What does a Gospel lifestyle mean to our members, with an emphasis on the practical.
7. In which of these ways does the fraternity as a community support and participate in initial formation: a) sponsors? b) welcoming spirit? c) willingness to assume responsibility? d) recruitment?
8. Are we able to use the Constitutions as a valuable tool to support our Secular Franciscan way of life? Have we discussed them and shared our experiences of trying to fulfill their recommendations? Are we "convinced of the validity of the Franciscan evangelical way of life" (Constitutions, Art. 31)?
9. Do we need to explore different forms of prayer as a fraternity?
10. Sharing Scripture: how can we make it an integral part of our lives?

A third element is keeping business matters to a minimum. It is necessary to share information regarding fraternity members who might be ill, and news from other levels of fraternity and the Franciscan family. It is beneficial to do this as efficiently as possible. Most business is handled at the council meeting.

Fourth, social time provides an opportunity to experience each other as family in a relaxed atmosphere. How well do we know each member of our fraternity? We also need times to celebrate together. How can we encourage more interaction? Icebreakers, small groups, and other efforts to contact each other may be helpful at times.

These are suggestions of ways we might make our fraternity gatherings opportunities to become more Spirit-filled so that we can be a true community and a source of grace for the world to which we belong. As servant leaders we need to remember the importance of spiritual and technical preparation (Art. 31.4) for both the fraternity gathering and the council meeting. It is essential that servant leaders encourage responsible participation from the members in making these fraternity gatherings vital. The Constitutions call for active collaboration by all.

## LEADER GUIDE 13

**NEED:** Many of our fraternity members want to focus only on our own fraternity. How can we help them to understand that we are part of an Order that is international in scope?

### SOURCES:

1. **Rule of the Secular Franciscan Order:** Articles 2 and 20
2. **General Constitutions of the Secular Franciscan Order:** Articles 3, 5, 28, 29-33, 49, 61, 65, 69, 71
3. **The Franciscan Journey—Embracing the Franciscan Vision,** Lester Bach, O.F.M. Cap.

**GOAL:** To increase fraternity members' awareness of the richness of the entire Franciscan Family through education and experience.

**MEANS:** Devote 6 to 12 months of ongoing formation to understanding Franciscan history, all of the Orders in the Franciscan family, and each level of the Secular Franciscan Order. Attempt to have representatives from each level describe their function and how this benefits the entire Franciscan family.

Procure copies or subscribe to newsletters:

- TAU-USA (newsletter of the National Fraternity of the OFS in the USA)
- Franciscan Federation of the Brothers and Sisters of the Third Order Regular
- Franciscans International
- Visit the International Website <http://www.ciofs.info>
  - Back issues of CIOFS Bulletin through February 2009 (final issue)
  - Koinonia, Newsletter of the Conference of the General Spiritual Assistants to the OFS

Encourage fraternity members to attend regional and national gatherings.

Attend other fraternity gatherings in the area.

Remember that increased awareness is developed gradually through exposure and education, and each step will make a difference.



## LEADER GUIDE 14

**NEED:** How much money is enough in the fraternity's Common Fund?

**SOURCES:**

1. **The Rule of the Secular Franciscan Order:** Article 25
2. **General Constitutions of the Secular Franciscan Order:** Articles 15, 17.4, 18-26
3. **Treasury Guidelines, "How Much Is Enough?"** National Fraternity of the Secular Franciscan Order-USA, [Treasurers Docs of General Interest-Treasury Guidelines How Much Is Enough-2018.pdf \(secularfranciscansusa.org\)](https://www.secularfranciscansusa.org/Treasurers_Docs_of_General_Interest-Treasury_Guidelines_How_Much_Is_Enough-2018.pdf)

**GOAL:** Every fraternity should institute guidelines that prudently decide what the treasury funds should be used for, and how much money should be set aside in the bank and in the fraternity's ready cash.

**MEANS:** The leadership of the fraternity must take ultimate responsibility for making these decisions, but the general principles of NAFRA's Treasury Guidelines should be helpful. The guidelines note that in Article 25 of the Rule, the order of priority assigned to the necessary expenses is 1) life of the fraternity, 2) needs of worship, 3) needs of the apostolate, and 4) needs of charity.

Some of the basic principles of the guidelines are:

1. Current operating expenses should always be paid out of current common fund donations and other current earnings.
2. Extraordinary income, such as from a bequest, should be used for extraordinary purposes, never for day-to-day expenses.
3. It is prudent management to have at least enough to cover close to a full year's known expenditures and a small amount to cover unknown expenses.
4. Expenditures from one year to the next are usually similar, except for inflation and other factors. Each fraternity should have a budget for the coming year, to be used as a guide. For instance, you know that you will have the expenses of meetings for each month; that you must pay a just stipend to the spiritual assistant; and that the fair share is due each year.
5. Almost all fraternities generally make charitable donations, but this is the last of the four priorities listed in the Rule. A good guideline for charitable donations has always been the tithe, i.e., 10 percent of income. But it is wrong to ignore a known financial responsibility in the near future and expend all treasury funds, even for a worthy cause.
6. The members should be apprised of the financial obligations of the fraternity so they can assess their own ability to support them.





## LEADER GUIDE 15

**NEED:** One of the responsibilities of Franciscan servant leadership is to build a Franciscan fraternity that reflects God's creation. How does a Franciscan servant leader guide a fraternity to become more culturally diverse?

**SOURCE:**

Rule of the Secular Franciscan Order, Art. 13.

**GOAL:** We know from our Rule that as Franciscan servant leaders we must accept all races, cultures, ages, and sexes as equal. "Knowing" and "doing" are two different things. The goal, therefore, is to ensure that our fraternities reflect the beautiful diverse family that God has created, by using leadership skills and prayer.

**MEANS:** The extent to which our leadership has successfully promoted cultural diversity in our Franciscan fraternity is best determined by looking at our own local fraternity and asking ourselves if it looks as if we have accepted all people as a gift of the Lord. If we are honest, in many instances we will see in a group of Secular Franciscans a majority in one age group, one race, and even sometimes one gender. In some areas one culture such as Irish or Polish also may be dominant in a fraternity.

To bring a fraternity toward more diversity requires vision. The purpose of developing the vision is to inspire others to reach out gently and courteously to all ages, races, and cultures to bring them into the Franciscan fraternity, if they are called.

In developing a vision for a fraternity that resembles God's creation, the Franciscan servant leader is called to find ways to open the fraternity's arms to other cultures, ages, and races. Before this vision can be articulated, the Franciscan servant leader must look at all of the diverse cultures, races, and ages within a given radius from where the fraternity gathers. A profile of such a community can be the basis of a vision of which cultures, races, and ages could be represented in the local fraternity.

For example, common sense would dictate that if the community surveyed were 15 percent Hispanic, 70 percent Caucasian, 9 percent African-American, and 6 percent Pacific American, then the Franciscan fraternity, depending on its size, might have at least one representative from each group, and should not be 100 percent or even 90 percent Caucasian.

Once a vision is developed, the Franciscan servant leader must begin communicating the vision to the fraternity through open dialogue, so the vision becomes the fraternity's vision. The Franciscan servant leader must find appropriate ways to communicate the need of the fraternity to change and grow in cultural diversity.

The best place for this dialogue to occur is during formation. If the fraternity does not have an ongoing formation group, then the program of the regular gathering can serve as a beginning for dialogue. The Franciscan servant leader can provide the information for study and growth through discussion groups, videos, and readings.

To increase the cultural diversity of a fraternity, the Franciscan leader must especially strive to be a servant leader. Serving the fraternity through change requires hard work, such as analysis of issues, developing programs, and outreach to other groups.

For example, in order to reach young people to bring them into the fraternity, the leader must analyze the fraternity's programs and determine whether the fraternity addresses issues relative to the young. If the average age of the community is over 55, then to bring in younger members with families requires an analysis of programs as well as fraternity gathering times. If the fraternity always meets when the soccer leagues or softball leagues play, how can the fraternity expect to find members if they must choose constantly between parental responsibilities and the fraternity?

In other words, analyzing the needs of the ages, culture, or race you wish to increase in your fraternity takes careful thought. If your activities meet the needs of only one particular group, then the unspoken message to other groups is, "You are not welcome."

Once the fraternity shares the vision, the Franciscan servant leader must be ever vigilant in gently correcting any comments or actions that are racist, sexist, or xenophobic. Everyone has prejudices, which if examined closely, can be seen to arise from fear. Only through constant self-examination, prayer for recognition of prejudices, and courage to eliminate them will members grow. The Franciscan servant leader can help members in this journey by publicly sharing those areas of prejudice that he or she is trying to overcome.

Developing a culturally diverse fraternity is a difficult and time-consuming task, but it is not enough to say that we are not prejudiced and we pray for other cultures and races. As Franciscan servant leaders we must step out in faith and put our beliefs in action. We must welcome into our fraternity all people as a gift of the Lord and an image of Christ.





## **PART III**

### **FRATERNITY MANAGEMENT**

The charism passed down by Francis of Assisi to his followers, religious and secular, is a unique legacy in the life of the Church. It is expressed through an ever-changing, ever-new movement; it is a responsive, living vision.

Today's Franciscan servant leaders seek to guide fraternity members who wish to live Gospel-centered lives inspired by this vision. Franciscan leaders attempt to discover the essence of our identity, our charism and our mission in the Church and in the world. They can then animate the rest of us to share in Franciscan living.

In this task, Franciscan servant leaders need practical guidelines. Francis provided our vision, but the Church established a Rule that would concern itself with the "hows" of living it. Good management concerns itself with these "hows," from how to conduct a Fraternity meeting to understanding the responsibilities of council members. Of course, Francis' vision cannot be codified or reduced to a series of rules and procedures. But we all need workable mechanisms to help us live a life of ongoing formation and conversion.

That is the role of our Rule and the General Constitutions, as well as the National and Regional Statutes. The Constitutions provide us with inspiring and practical guidelines to help us implement Francis' vision today. This section of the Handbook for Secular Franciscan Servant Leadership "unlocks" the Constitutions by raising important questions and by identifying articles of the Constitutions that deal with these questions. It also provides a useful index. To use this section most effectively, read through it to gain a general overview of its contents, and then use it as a reference as questions arise.



# INDEX TO THE GENERAL CONSTITUTIONS OF THE SECULAR FRANCISCAN ORDER

*with emphasis on servant leadership and fraternity management*

- Christ as example and teacher — Art. 9-10
- continuing formation — Art. 44.3
- council, specific duties — Art. 50
- councils of higher vs local levels — Art. 33.2
- council and minister — *see minister and council*
  
- election of officers — Art. 76-80
- establishment of a fraternity — Art. 46
  
- formation — Art. 37-41
  - continuing or ongoing — Art. 44.3
  - newly professed — Art. 44.2
- formation director, specific duties — Art. 52.3
- Francis as example — Art. 1; Art. 10-12
- fraternity life — Art. 28-36; Art. 53
- fraternity organization — Art. 29; Art. 46-52
  
- international council, specific duties — Art. 71
- international presidency, specific duties — Art. 73
  
- leaders' duties in local fraternities — Art. 50-52
  - council — Art. 50
  - formation director — Art. 52.3
  - minister — Art. 50-51
  - secretary — Art. 52.2
  - treasurer — Art. 52.4
  - vice-minister — Art. 52.1
- leaders' qualities — Art. 31.3-4
  - responsibilities at meetings — Art. 32
- leadership expected from minister and council — Art. 31-32
  - positions required — Art. 49.1
  
- minister, specific duties — Art. 51
- minister and council, attitudes toward office — Art. 32.2
  - duty to lead — Art. 32.2
  - responsibilities — Art. 32
  - specific duties — Art. 50
- minister general, specific duties — Art. 74

national council, specific duties — Art. 66  
national minister, specific duties — Art. 67.2  
newly professed — Art. 44.2

officers - *see election of officers; leaders; and specific leader positions*  
ongoing formation — Art. 44.3

pastoral care — Art. 1.4; Art. 47; Art. 85-91

regional council, specific duties — Art. 62  
regional minister, specific duties — Art. 63  
required leadership positions — Art. 49  
responsibilities

of councils of higher vs local levels — Art. 33.2

of leaders — Art. 9.2; Art. 31

of members to fraternities - Art. 30 — of minister and council — Art. 32

of OFSs toward church, Franciscan family and world — Art. 17-27; Art. 98-103

responsibility

for entrance into OFS - Art. 39 — for formation — Art. 37

for profession — Art. 42

for promoting vocations to OFS — Art. 45

secretary, specific duties — Art. 52.2

spiritual assistance — Art. 1.4; Art. 85-91

task of leaders to foster love for word of Gospel — Art. 9.2

treasurer, specific duties — Art. 52.4

vice-minister, specific duties — Art. 52 .1



**QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER**  
(referring to the General Constitutions of the OFS)

**The Secular Franciscan Order**

What official relationship does the OFS have with the Church?  
Art. 1

Who is to provide pastoral care and spiritual assistance?  
Art. 1.4

Who may belong to the OFS?  
Art. 2

How is OFS life different from religious?  
Art. 3

What are the governing rules and guidelines?  
Art. 4, 6, 7

Who has the authority to interpret rules and guidelines for the OFS?  
Art. 5

What "way of life" do Secular Franciscans commit to?  
Art. 8-16

What responsibilities do Secular Franciscans have toward the Church and the world?  
Art. 17-27

**Life in Fraternity**

What is the purpose of fraternity?  
Art. 28

How is the OFS divided into fraternities?  
Art. 29

What responsibilities do members have to their fraternities?  
Art. 30

What kind of leadership is expected of the minister and councilors?  
Art. 31, 32

Is there a particular set of talents and personality style that is best suited to the OFS?  
Art. 33.1

Is there a set standard for the way fraternities should conduct themselves?  
Art. 33.2

When members have varying needs and interests, should fraternities continue to operate as a single unit?  
Art. 34

Can priests be Secular Franciscans?  
Art. 35

Can Secular Franciscans commit themselves to private vows?  
Art. 36

## **Entrance into the Order and Formation**

Who is responsible for formation and entrance into the Order?  
Art. 37

What is the purpose of and the regulations for the time of initiation?  
Art. 38

What are the conditions, process, and responsibilities for entrance into the Order?  
Art. 39

What are the important basics of the time of initial formation?  
Art. 41, see also Art. 43

What are the individual's and fraternity's responsibilities and the nature of profession?  
Art. 42

What is the sign of membership in the Order?  
Art. 43

What are the guidelines for continuing formation?  
Art. 44

What responsibilities do fraternal brothers and sisters have in promoting vocations to the Order?  
Art. 45

## **Organizational Requirements of Fraternity**

What are the conditions for establishing a fraternity?

Art. 46

Which religious obedience provides pastoral care to a fraternity?

Art. 47

What should be done with the goods and records of a fraternity that ceases to exist or is revived?

Art. 48

What are the required leadership positions for a fraternity?

Art. 49

What are the duties of the council?

Art. 50

What are the duties of the minister?

Art. 51

What are the duties of the vice-minister?

Art. 52.1

What are the duties of the secretary?

Art. 52.2

What are the duties of the formation director?

Art. 52.3

What are the duties of the treasurer?

Art. 52.4

## **Participation in the Life of the Fraternity**

What provisions for life in fraternity should be made by the fraternity?

Art. 53

What should a fraternity do if it owns property?

Art. 54

How may an individual transfer from one fraternity to another?  
Art. 55

What are the provisions for temporary or permanent withdrawal or removal from the Order?  
Art. 56-59

Do the Constitutions apply to personal fraternities?  
Art. 60

What are the provisions for regional fraternities?  
Art. 61-64

What are the provisions for the national fraternity?  
Art. 65-68

What are the provisions for the international fraternity?  
Art. 69-75

### **Election and Termination of Officers**

What regulations govern election of fraternity leaders?  
Art. 76-80

What are the guidelines for dealing with vacancies, resignations, or dismissal of officers?  
Art. 81-84

### **Spiritual and Pastoral Assistance of the OFS**

What is the spiritual and pastoral relationship between the First Order, TOR, and the OFS?  
Art. 85-90 (Note Art. 86.2 and Art. 89.2, 89.4, 89.5)

Who is eligible to provide spiritual and pastoral assistance to fraternities?  
Art. 91

## **Fraternal and Pastoral Visits**

What are the purpose and general guidelines for pastoral and fraternal visits?  
Art. 92, 93

What are the specifics of the fraternal visit?  
Art. 94

What are the specifics of the pastoral visit?  
Art. 95

## **Franciscan Youth**

What is the relationship between the OFS and Franciscan youth?  
Art. 96

## **Franciscan Family and Church**

What responsibilities do Secular Franciscans have to the larger Franciscan family and the Church?  
Art. 98-103









## **PART IV**

### **PRACTICAL AIDS**

This section is designed to help the reader locate specific tools with which to explore some of the key relational concepts presented in Sections I and II of the Handbook for Secular Franciscan Servant Leadership. This section includes informational sheets, examples, questionnaires, and numerous other aids.

The tools in this section can be used to help the fraternity develop its own character. The tools should be adapted to each particular circumstance, and should not be used in any way that would be detrimental to the fraternity. Many exercises have been adapted from secular subject matter, such as leadership styles, self-esteem, collaborative decision-making, etc. The reason for including such materials is that Secular Franciscans have a vocation in the world. Therefore, Franciscans need to be aware of the valuable insights about human nature that the secular world offers, but also be familiar with how Secular Franciscanism differs from a strictly secularist, materialistic world view.

One example is that of power. Many people in the world seek control. Secular Franciscans, by contrast, seek to make decisions through collaboration and participation of all members of the fraternity. The most important point to remember is that Franciscan leaders are called to be servant leaders, which means putting the good of the fraternity ahead of any personal gain. This is not to say that all decisions must be made collaboratively. There are times, for example, when the Fraternity council should make decisions for the benefit of the larger family group, and this need must be respected.

The list of tools in this section is by no means exhaustive. Many good secular tools can be adapted and used by Secular Franciscans. These tools are to be used to gain insight into understanding oneself and should not be used to judge others. The aids included in this section should be adapted creatively to meet individual and fraternity needs. Moreover, the authors of this Handbook want to encourage its users to go beyond it and to seek other tools, which can be of assistance to a particular fraternity.



## **BRAINSTORMING**

**PURPOSE:** Brainstorming is a method used to generate ideas from a group in a short period of time. It is designed to encourage participation by all fraternity members. This method usually produces creative, liberated new ideas that can be useful in solving the problem or issue at hand.

**GOAL:** Produce a quantity of ideas.

**Rule: No idea can be judged, discussed or rejected.**

### **PROCESS:**

1. Choose someone to be a recorder to write the ideas generated on a blackboard, poster board, flip chart, newsprint, etc.
2. Set time limit or maximum number of items before you begin.
3. Present the topic clearly. Write it so all fraternity members can see. Give available background information.
4. Ask the brothers and sisters of the fraternity to offer ideas as rapidly as they can. People may ask for clarification if they do not understand the idea.
5. Make sure that fraternity members realize that ideas will be evaluated after brainstorming is finished. All ideas, no matter how "off the wall" they seem, should be allowed. What seems impossible might be the seed of good ideas.
6. Write down all the ideas, word for word if possible.
7. Move rapidly from one idea to another.
8. To encourage fraternity members' participation, take only one idea from each person. This is especially important if one or two people are dominating the idea sharing. When every fraternity member has had an opportunity to contribute, then the brothers and sisters should be encouraged to share their other ideas.
9. Evaluate ideas, prioritize them, and return to brainstorming if more ideas are needed.
10. When used in a real meeting setting, proceed with the decision-making task.

## **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**

1. Did all fraternity members participate?
2. Were new ideas generated that would not have been proposed or accepted in traditional discussion?
3. Was it difficult for the fraternity to evaluate and prioritize ideas?
4. How can this method be used more frequently with the fraternity?

## **SUMMARY COMMENTS:**

Brainstorming with a fraternity releases many ideas in a way that seems to spark other thoughts. The non-judgmental gathering of ideas breaks down barriers among the members and avoids such blocks as, "We've tried that before, and it didn't work," etc.

Based on *The Field Program Associate in the Partnership for Rural Improvement*, by R.E. Jongeward and J.M. Druin, (NWREL), 1978.

## COMMUNICATION

This section of the practical aids has four subtopics:

1. Communicating
2. Listening
3. Responding
4. Engaging in dialogue

The complete process of communication needs to include all four of these activities. It is essential that the fraternity member who is speaking is able to **communicate** his or her feelings as well as the content of the material he or she is trying to convey. The next step is to listen carefully to others' concerns and feelings and be able to listen with an open heart and mind and not to pass judgment. After listening, there is a time to respond to what has been said. The response should be expressed clearly and concisely and not be used as a means to sidetrack the issue being discussed. The last and probably most important activity is to **engage in dialogue** with other fraternity members.

All four of these steps are vital to the whole process of communication and should be used to promote harmony. However, there are times when conflict may arise. That is why there is a section in the practical aids, which deals with conflict management. The important point to emphasize is that fraternity members can attempt to begin with the four skills used in communication and then branch off from there as necessary.

Remember:

1. Communicating
2. Listening
3. Responding
4. Engaging in dialogue

## GROUND RULES FOR COMMUNICATING

### **1. Try to stay in the "here and now."**

Listen to your feelings (tension, boredom, joy, etc.) and communicate them to the other fraternity member. If past experiences or future events are important (because you have feelings about them now), express them in the present. Make sure that your words reflect your true feelings. When the words and feelings match, that is called congruence. So your objective is to make your feeling congruent with your words.

### **2. Use "I"— present yourself by owning your feelings.**

The owning or expression of feelings or ideas in the first person usually creates little threat and increases the chance for acceptance of those ideas. This can help lead to increased awareness, reciprocal communication, and new insight.

### **3. Try not to judge! You do not have to justify your feelings; do not ask others to.**

The expression of feelings or ideas in a judging or prescriptive manner (e.g., you are, you should, etc.) tends to be accusatory. This tends to increase threat and lead to defensive behavior and rejection of the idea.

### **4. Communicate directly. Talk TO a fraternity member, not ABOUT him or her.**

When talking to a fraternity member, talk to him or her directly, with eye-to-eye contact. The expression of feelings as ideas in an indirect manner can lead to increased reliance on assumption and rumor in forming perceptions. This provides a poor basis for attitudes and behavior.

### **5. Listen! Try to look at the world through the other fraternity members' eyes.**

Sensitivity is the process of becoming aware of your fraternity brothers' and sisters' feelings as well as your own. Such clues as your pace, tone, volume, hesitance, etc., often reflect feelings more accurately than words.

## COMMUNICATING IN A GROUP

- 1. Present yourself.**  
Present your feelings and try to respond by expressing them.
- 2. Ask for feedback.**  
Ask other fraternity members to respond to your impact on them. This information is called feedback.
- 3. Experiment.**  
Use the feedback you receive from the fraternity to help you choose new approaches to communication.

## SKILLS USED WHEN COMMUNICATING

Sometimes fraternity work does not progress well because fraternity brothers and sisters have different understandings of a task. Two fraternity members may not work well together simply because they do not hear each other correctly. Improved skills will clarify communication and contribute to a productive fraternity atmosphere.

Here are four basic examples of communication techniques. Read them and think of ways to adapt the suggestions for your own fraternity use.

### 1. Paraphrasing

Paraphrasing is stating in your own words what a speaker's remarks convey to you. By paraphrasing, you can check whether you understand another person's ideas, suggestions, or information. When you ask, "Is this an accurate restatement of your idea?" you give the speaker a chance to correct or confirm your impressions.

### 2. Behavior Description

Behavior descriptions involve reporting specific, observable actions of others, without attributing attitudes, motives, traits, or personality characteristics. For example: "You have been late for our last three meetings." NOT: "You sure are disorganized—you are always late!"

### 3. Description of Feelings

You can describe your own feelings to give others a clearer understanding of them. For example: "I feel good about the way we are working together," or "I feel hurt when you cut me off."

### 4. Perception Checking

Perception checking involves describing what you perceive to be another fraternity member's feelings in order to be sure that you understand him or her correctly. For example: "You look like you feel shocked at my comment. Are you?"



## **ACTION FORMAT**

### **COMMUNICATION LEADS TO ACTION**

This sheet can be used to help fraternity members put words into action. The key is to first communicate issues, ideas, or problems and then to follow through by taking some kind of action.

**What is the problem, issue, or action needed?**

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**State the background and any other relevant information.**

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**Describe the action needed or the action taken.**

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## COMMUNICATION SELF-EVALUATION FORM

1. Read the list of statements and mark each item to show how you assess your communication skills.
2. Now go back over the list and circle the **three** or **four** skills that would be most valuable for you to improve **at this time**.
3. Break into small groups (three to five people) and discuss those three or four items with others in your group. Do others in the group agree with your choices?
4. On the basis of the feedback from the discussion in the small group, now read the list again and make your final selection of skills that you think would be most valuable to improve. This final selection should be based on your own judgment and the suggestions from others.

	Satisfactory	Needs Improvement
<b>Expressing information, ideas, suggestions</b>		
• Being brief and concise, getting to the point	_____	_____
• Being forceful and definite, not hesitant or apologetic	_____	_____
• Talking in specifics giving examples and details	_____	_____
• Talking in generalizations, principles, explanations	_____	_____
<b>Expressing feelings: LETTING OTHERS KNOW</b>		
• When I do not understand something they have said	_____	_____
• When I like something they have said or done	_____	_____
• When I disagree with them	_____	_____
• When I think they have changed the subject or become irrelevant	_____	_____
• When I am getting irritated	_____	_____
• When I feel hurt, embarrassed or put down by something they have said or done	_____	_____
<b>Understanding information, ideas and suggestions of others</b>		
• Listening to understand instead of preparing an answer	_____	_____
• Helping others participate in the discussion	_____	_____
• Checking to make sure I do understand what others mean before agreeing or disagreeing	_____	_____
• Summarizing points of disagreement and agreement	_____	_____
• Asking questions in ways that elicit more information than "yes" or "no"	_____	_____

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	<b>Needs</b>
<b>Satisfactory</b>	<b>Improvement</b>

**Understanding and responding to others' feelings**

- |   |       |       |
|---|-------|-------|
| • Checking out what I think others are feeling,<br>not assuming I know                                    | _____ | _____ |
| • Responding to someone who is angry with me in<br>such a way that I do not ignore his or her feelings    | _____ | _____ |
| • Responding to someone whose feelings are hurt in<br>such a way that I do not ignore his or her feelings | _____ | _____ |
| • Surveying the fraternity to determine how much<br>agreement exists (in making a fraternity decision)    | _____ | _____ |

**Observing self**

- |   |       |       |
|---|-------|-------|
| • Talking in fraternity discussions   | _____ | _____ |
| • Getting feedback, encouraging others to let me<br>know how my actions affect them | _____ | _____ |
| • Being aware when I am trying to cope with my own<br>feelings of discomfort        | _____ | _____ |
| • Being able to tolerate silence  | _____ | _____ |
| • Being able to handle tension and conflict   | _____ | _____ |
| • Accepting help from others  | _____ | _____ |
| • Offering help to others   | _____ | _____ |
| • Yielding to others, giving in to others   | _____ | _____ |
| • Standing up for myself  | _____ | _____ |
| • Being protective of others  | _____ | _____ |

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## ROADBLOCKS TO COMMUNICATING

### 1. Judging

- **criticizing** (making a judgment about what another fraternity member is saying by criticizing him or her)
- **name calling** (forgetting that you are a Franciscan brother or sister and putting a label on another fraternity member)
- **diagnosing** (making a comment about the mental stability of a fraternity member)
- **praising evaluatively** (praising fraternity members' ideas, but making an evaluation about the content)

### 2. Sending solutions

- **ordering** (forgetting about the servant leader role and dictating a solution)
- **threatening** (telling the fraternity members that they should agree to support your solution or something awful will happen)
- **moralizing** (making a moral judgment about other fraternity members' ideas; using a lot of "you should ..." and "you ought ..." statements)
- **excessive/inappropriate questioning** (asking fraternity members so many questions that they feel as though they are on a firing line)
- **advising** (telling the brothers and sisters of the fraternity how they should see or feel about a particular issue; using many "If I were you, I would ..." statements)

### 3. Avoiding the other fraternity members' concerns

- **diverting** (directing the attention from the issue at hand to some personal concern of yours)
- **logical argument** (using logic to argue with another fraternity member and not taking the time to put yourself in his or her shoes)
- **reassuring** (trying to help a brother or sister in such a way that does not allow him or her the opportunity to wrestle with the issue and come to some sort of personal conclusion; responding with a patronizing, "There, there, now; it will all be alright" statement)

## Listen

*When I ask you to listen to me  
and you start giving advice  
you have not done what I asked.*

*When I ask you to listen to me  
and you begin to tell me why I shouldn't feel that way,  
you are trampling on my feelings.*

*When I ask you to listen to me  
and you feel you have to do something to solve my problem,  
you have failed me, strange as that may seem.*

*Listen! All I asked was that you listen,  
not talk or do—just hear me.  
Advice is cheap. 10 cents will get you both Dear Abby and  
Billy Graham in the same newspaper.  
And I can do for myself; I'm not helpless.  
Maybe discouraged and faltering, but not helpless.*

*When you do something for me that I can and need to do  
for myself, you contribute to my fear and weakness.*

*But when you accept as a simple fact that I do feel what I feel,  
then I can quit trying to convince you and get about the business of  
understanding what's behind the feeling.  
And when that's clear, the answers are obvious and I don't need  
advice.*

*Perhaps that's why prayer works sometimes for some people,  
because God is mute, and He doesn't give advice or  
try to fix things.*

*So please listen and just hear me. And, if you want to talk,  
wait a minute for your turn, and I'll listen to you.*

*Anonymous*



## GREAT REASONS TO BECOME A BETTER LISTENER

It is very important that every fraternity sister and brother try to be a good listener. Listening is vital to the whole process of communication. Active listening takes practice and should not be taken lightly. The items below can be studied in some manner so that fraternity members are able to understand the reasons for good listening and will also want to practice good listening skills. There are many ways to study this list:

- Each fraternity member could take five reasons from the list and explain them to the rest of the fraternity.
- The fraternity could divide up into groups and discuss the reasons listed below.
- Someone could volunteer to do a presentation on the reasons to become a better listener at the next fraternity gathering.

The list could go on and on and your creativity is its only limit.

1. To learn something
2. To be entertained
3. To understand a situation
4. To get information
5. To be courteous
6. To be responsible
7. To prevent accidents
8. To be a fraternity team player
9. To ask intelligent questions
10. To improve confidence
11. To find out the needs of your fraternity brothers and sisters
12. To be valued and trusted
13. To be more efficient
14. To make accurate evaluations
15. To make comparisons
16. To understand and be understood
17. To analyze the speaker's purpose
18. To develop a reputation of being a good listener
19. To enhance relationships
20. To solve problems
21. To show that you care
22. To make intelligent decisions
23. To be a supportive fraternity member
24. To give an appropriate response
25. To create "win-win" situations
26. To increase concentration
27. To build rapport
28. To be prepared for sudden shifts in a speaker's topic or intention
29. To be a better fraternity member
30. To maintain a flexible attitude
31. To use the gift of hearing

Based on *The Business of Listening*, by D. Bone, Crisp Publications, 1994.

## HINTS ON LISTENING

Listening is one of the major steps in communication. It is very important to listen to other fraternity members so that fraternity members can then engage in meaningful dialogue.

1. The first thing to do is to make sure that your posture is inviting. Sit facing the fraternity member who is speaking.
2. Nodding your head will give the speaker a clue about your participation in the listening process. If you agree with the speaker's words, do not hesitate to use your body to express that sentiment.
3. Eye contact is very important. The speaker needs to have eye contact with the other fraternity members so that he or she is aware of how his or her message is being perceived.
4. When a speaker is presenting information, the other fraternity members should listen before attempting to ask questions. The speaker should be given ample time to express his or her ideas before being asked questions.
5. The only way to truly listen is to stop talking yourself. Fraternity members need to be courteous and listen attentively to the speaker. Listening can be done only when one person is speaking at a time.
6. Listen with an open mind; be flexible in your views. Give the speaker a fair chance to express himself or herself. It is imperative that the brothers and sisters of the fraternity listen with open minds and hearts and not jump to conclusions before the speaker has an opportunity to speak and to answer questions.
7. If you are given the topic for discussion in advance, take some time to think about it. This gives you an opportunity to review in your mind considerations regarding the topic.
8. Demonstrate patience when listening because you can listen faster than a speaker can speak.
9. Concentrate on what the speaker is saying. Try not to let your thoughts wander.
10. Compensate for emotion rousing words or ideas. Do not allow certain words or ideas to get you off track and focused on something else. Try to determine objectively the speaker's meaning of words or ideas.



## LISTENING ACCURATELY

Listening is a skill that needs practice so that it can lead to responding and engaging in dialogue. Communicating through dialogue with fraternity members can be a great goal for a fraternity.

The technique used below is to ensure that participants in a conversation are being understood. This is an example of how two people who are using listening skills are able to communicate with each other and also determine the extent to which each perceives the other person accurately.

One fraternity member begins the conversation with a statement consisting of both content and feeling; this person is designated as Francis. The other fraternity member (designated as Clare) is listening carefully to Francis. When Francis finishes speaking, Clare paraphrases. Paraphrasing means that one person offers a statement or series of statements that captures the content and feeling of the person who just finished speaking. After Clare paraphrases, she needs to check with Francis to make sure that she properly understood what Francis was trying to say. If any clarification needs to take place, Francis will either encourage Clare to add information or Francis may need to reword his statement. After this is done, Clare should try paraphrasing again. When Clare has paraphrased to the satisfaction of Francis, then it is Clare's turn to continue the conversation. After Clare is finished speaking, Francis needs to follow the paraphrasing process before he can continue the conversation.

### EXAMPLE:

**Francis:** I feel very badly that you decided not to participate in the fraternity's retreat.

**Clare:** I did not participate in the fraternity retreat.

**Francis:** And what else?

**Clare:** And that made you feel badly.

**Francis:** Okay.

**Clare:** I wanted to go on the retreat but I felt that it may be a waste of time.

**Francis:** Going on the retreat may not have been beneficial.

**Clare:** Right.

**Francis:** There are many reasons to go on a retreat. One may be to have the opportunity to spend some quality time with your brothers and sisters.

**Clare:** Retreats can offer different opportunities.

**Francis:** Yes.

**Clare:** I never really thought about the time being spent with my brothers and sisters.

**Francis:** You had not thought about being with the other fraternity members.

**Clare:** You got it.

**Francis:** I hope that you would consider coming on our next retreat.

**Clare:** Maybe I could go on the next retreat.

**Francis:** Right.

**Clare:** I am glad that we had this talk.

**Francis:** You are happy that we talked.

**Clare:** Yes.

**Francis:** So am I.

**Clare:** You are too.

**Francis:** Correct.

## LISTENING PROBLEMS

This is a list of 10 things that may happen if fraternity members are not listening. Listening requires concentration and openness. Listening is an important step in communication.

1. Not hearing the speaker because you are uninterested in the topic
2. Criticizing a speaker's delivery instead of focusing on the message
3. Getting emotionally involved in the topic and not remaining open
4. Listening only for facts
5. Preparing to address the speaker's points instead of listening  
(When you are preparing to say something, you cannot give your full attention to what someone else is saying.)
6. Trying to construct the speaker's ideas into a neat and concise outline  
(Putting attention on this activity decreases your ability to actively listen.)
7. Allowing distractions to keep you from attending to the speaker
8. Faking attention and daydreaming
9. Listening only to what you can easily understand and not trying to listen to the complete content
10. Allowing certain words to distract and interfere with your listening



## RESPONDING SKILLS

An important component of successful interpersonal communication is responding. Through responding, a person "restates the feeling or content of what [another person] has communicated and does so in a way that demonstrates understanding and acceptance" (Bolton, R., *People Skills*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1979, p. 50). Responding provides a foundation for two-way communication.

Responding entails looking at things from others' perspectives and communicating accurately to them what we see and hear.

### 1. Paraphrasing

A paraphrase is a short, clear response to a speaker that states the spirit of the message, using some of the responder's own words and important key words of the speaker. An effective paraphrase is concise; a good responder strives to condense responses. An effective paraphrase reflects only the essence or central theme of the speaker's message and focuses on the "content" of the speaker's message, emphasizing the facts or ideas expressed, not the sender's emotions. It requires an understanding of the other person's frame of reference. It involves walking around in the speaker's shoes and considering a new perspective.

### 2. Reflecting feelings

A response that reflects feelings is one that transmits back to the speaker, concisely, the emotions (anger, sorrow, frustration, joy, etc.) that person is communicating. Feelings are not always conveyed through words and can be expressed through the body. Body language (facial expression, tone of voice, gesture, and posture) sends important signals about a person's feelings.

### 3. Reflecting meaning

A reflection of meaning is a succinct response that captures both the emotion and content of what the other person is saying.

### 4. Summative reflections

A summative reflection is a succinct restatement of the content and emotion a person has conveyed. It takes place over a longer period of discussion than any of the first three responding skills. It restates several facts or ideas or draws attention to expressed feelings.

## USING RESPONDING SKILLS

### When to use responding skills

- before you act
- before you argue
- when the other person experiences strong feelings or wants to talk over a problem
- when the other person is using jargon that is not understood by all of the persons involved
- when another person wants to sort out his or her feelings and thoughts during a direct mutual conversation
- when you are talking to yourself
- when encountering new ideas in a book, lecture, or at work

### When not to use responding skills

- when you are not able to be accepting
- when you do not trust the other to find his or her own solution
- when you are not "separate" from the other
- when you use listening as a way of hiding yourself
- when you feel very hassled or depleted

## GUIDELINES FOR IMPROVING RESPONDING SKILLS

- 1. Do not fake understanding.** If you do not know what the speaker is saying or feeling, listen and watch more carefully. You can also ask the speaker for some clarification of what he or she is saying and/or feeling.
- 2. Do not tell the speaker that you know how he or she feels.** No two people share the exact circumstances and feelings. To say that you understand exactly how another person feels is to minimize the feelings of that person.
- 3. Vary your response.** Do not always use the same words to express content and feeling.
- 4. Focus on the feelings.** People say a lot with body language and that should not be ignored. Feelings can hold the keys to understanding what a person is trying to communicate.
- 5. Choose the most accurate feeling word.** Try to use words that most closely express the sentiment of the speaker.
- 6. Develop vocal empathy.** Empathy is not sympathy. Sympathy is feeling badly for someone out there. Empathy is when you try to put yourself in a person's shoes and feel as he or she is feeling. Your voice should convey your empathy.
- 7. Strive for concreteness and relevance.** Work with the information that the speaker is conveying. Help the speaker to express himself or herself in specifics and not in generalities. Try to keep the person on target.
- 8. Provide non-dogmatic but firm responses.** Reflect content and feelings of the speaker in a nonjudgmental manner.
- 9. Reflect the speaker's resources.** Use information that the speaker discusses and do not try to steer the conversation into a direction of self-interest. Give the speaker credit for the resources of which he or she is familiar.
- 10. Reflect the feelings that are implicit in questions.** A person asking a question is saying a lot with words and body language. Listen and watch carefully so that you are able to reflect those feelings accurately.
- 11. Reflect during brief interactions.** Reflect content and feelings frequently. Do not allow the conversation to continue for five minutes and then try to reflect everything that has been said. Respond after a few sentences so that you are able to determine if your understanding of the conversation is accurate.





## **ENGAGING IN DIALOGUE**

### **DEFINITION:**

Dialogue is active communication with respect as the foundation. Both listening and responding skills are included in active communication. Listening and responding skills can be found in another area in this practical aids section.

### **ATTITUDE:**

Fraternity brothers and sisters must approach dialogue with openness and trust. Fraternity members who engage in dialogue take the risk of sharing their feelings, ideas, opinions, etc., with other fraternity members. Dialogue also involves listening and that means that all involved fraternity members need to pay attention to the words and actions of the speaker.

### **PARTICIPATION:**

The people involved in dialogue can vary, such as: one fraternity member engaging in dialogue with another; one fraternity member engaging in dialogue with a group of fraternity members; or one group of fraternity members engaging in dialogue with another group of fraternity members.

### **DIALOGUE STARTERS:**

The list below is to help fraternity members start to engage in dialogue. A fraternity member may want to begin with any one of these starters or decide to come up with his or her own.

1. Do you believe you understand the difference between dialogue and discussion?
2. Do you believe that real dialogue is used at your fraternity gatherings?
3. Do you experience too much business at your fraternity meetings and not enough real opportunities for dialogue?
4. Do you feel threatened or "turned off" by the idea of dialogue in your fraternity?
5. Do you think that the idea of dialogue is closely related to that of fraternity?

## **DIALOGUE CHECKLIST:**

The following reflections are for all of us who are called to encourage harmony and strengthen the bonds of love within our Franciscan family through dialogue. Pray, ponder, and reflect on the following questions.

1. Am I totally present to my sisters and brothers or am I easily distracted during conversation, or am I somewhere in the middle? What action can I take to grow in this respect?
2. Do I keep an appropriate distance between myself and another person so as not to smother the other? Am I too removed? What action can I take to become more balanced in this regard?
3. Are my attempts at dialogue fairly free of exploitation or the need to dominate? If not, what action can I take to overcome this tendency?
4. Do I tend to lecture, moralize, or censure others in conversation? If I do, what action can I take to overcome this tendency?
5. Do I need to maintain my role or relate to others in their roles? Do I have difficulty encountering the real person behind the role? If I do, what action can I take to overcome this tendency?

## DIALOGUE GUIDELINES:

The following list gives some practical ways to be involved in the process of dialogue. These guidelines may be discussed at a fraternity gathering or members may want to break into groups and discuss them. Use the guidelines in any manner, which will promote dialogue in your fraternity.

1. All fraternity members must be present to the dialoguing process and not allow themselves to be distracted.
2. When in the process of dialoguing, use "I" messages. Fill in the blanks with appropriate responses: *When you \_\_\_\_\_, I feel \_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_*
3. Do not be afraid to disclose information concerning yourself. Tell how you are involved.
4. Be willing to describe your feelings. The brothers and sisters of the fraternity cannot understand your feelings if you are not willing to express them. Try to find alternate words to describe your feelings and do not keep using the same words. Example: "It really bothers me."
5. Clearly express what your expectations are.
6. Each fraternity member should monitor the impact that his or her words have on the rest of the brothers and sisters.
7. Do not use words that have the potential of provoking an argument.
8. Try avoiding generalizations and speak in specifics. Always include yourself in your statements.
9. Use feeling words that accurately describe your feelings. It is inappropriate to use stronger feeling words in the hope of building a stronger case.
10. Do not present yourself as a victim in the situation. Dialogue involves all fraternity members presenting themselves as equals.
11. Describe your position as concretely as possible.
12. You do not have to state a reason for everything that you say.



## **DECISION—MAKING USING CONSENSUS**

The General Constitutions of the Secular Franciscan Order (Art. 31.3) suggest that Franciscan decision-making should be viewed as a collaborative process. Ideally, everyone likely to be affected by a decision should be consulted and given the opportunity to contribute the wisdom of her or his unique perspective. Collaborative decision-making more likely leads to a sense of shared ownership of decisions as compared to one person deciding in isolation. A Franciscan servant leader solicits the opinions of others.

The more dependent the servant leader is upon the members of the fraternity for critical information and support of decisions, the greater should be the fraternity members' involvement in the decision-making process.

Consensus occurs when all gathered members of the fraternity can in some way agree upon a decision. Consensus is not always easy to reach. Every fraternity member present is given the opportunity to prioritize or rank the items that are being discussed and require decisions. The rankings are then shared with the other fraternity members. It is expected that not everyone will agree upon the others' rankings. The important point to remember is that everyone should be given the opportunity to voice his or her rankings and to explain the reasons for the rankings. But it is necessary that everyone be as satisfied as possible. When the point is reached at which all gathered fraternity members feel that they can accept the rankings, even though the rankings do not match their own precisely, then it may be assumed that the fraternity has reached consensus. The judgment then may be entered as a fraternity decision. This means, in effect, that a single member can block the group if he or she thinks it necessary; at the same time, it is assumed that this blocking option will be employed only if it is for the common good of the fraternity.

### **GUIDELINES FOR ACHIEVING CONSENSUS:**

1. Avoid arguing for your own rankings. Present your position as clearly, concisely, and coherently as possible, but consider seriously the reactions of the fraternity in any subsequent presentations of the same point.
2. Avoid "win-lose" stalemates in the discussion of rankings. Discard the notion that someone must win and someone must lose in the discussion; when impasses occur, look for the next most acceptable alternative for both parties.
3. Avoid changing your mind only to avoid conflict and to reach agreement and harmony. Withstand pressures to yield that have no objective or logically sound foundation. Strive for enlightened flexibility; avoid outright capitulation.

4. Avoid conflict-reducing techniques, such as the majority vote, averaging, bargaining, coin flipping, and the like. Treat differences of opinion as indicative of an incomplete sharing of relevant information on someone's part and press for additional sharing about either the task or emotional data, where it seems in order.
5. View differences of opinion as both natural and helpful rather than as a hindrance in decision-making. Generally, the more ideas expressed, the greater the likelihood of conflict. However, despite the possibility of conflict, differences of opinions can generate fresh ideas and resources.
6. View initial agreement as suspect. Explore the reasons underlying apparent agreements; make sure that fraternity members have arrived at similar solutions for either the same basic reasons or for complementary reasons before incorporating such solutions in the fraternity decision.
7. Avoid subtle forms of influence and decision modification; e.g., when a dissenting member finally agrees, do not feel that he or she must be "rewarded" by having his or her own way on some later point.
8. Be willing to entertain the possibility that your fraternity can excel at its decision-making task; avoid doom-saying and negative thinking.

## SETTING FRATERNITY GOALS

One measure of a fraternity's effectiveness is how well it sets goals and accomplishes them. Initially, all fraternities were established to satisfy the members' common need or to pursue common goals. But, as time passes, fraternity members frequently lose sight of their goals.

For example, one of the most important goals for a fraternity to set is that of ongoing formation. Fraternities should have a one-year plan for ongoing formation drawn up with input from all the fraternity members. This fraternity goal should have a focus, but also be flexible and responsive to changing circumstances.

If the fraternity fails to set new goals regularly, it will dwindle away and end. Remember: one fraternity goal is that of ongoing formation.

Some signals that a fraternity may be stagnating are:

1. The fraternity has the same leadership – no one else wants to be minister or serve on the council.
2. There is no effort to solicit new vocations.
3. The same members do the same things.
4. The fraternity has the same events and activities with decreasing interest shown by the members.

Fraternity discussions can be used to set goals and decide which activities the fraternity members will pursue. Using methods that include all members and generate ideas will help the fraternity be more creative. The fraternity can then select a few ideas toward which to work. This will help the fraternity stay goal-oriented.

## **FRATERNITY GROUP SKILLS**

A fraternity is a vital component in the life of a Secular Franciscan. The members of the fraternity need to be united as a family and be involved in the life of the fraternity. It is important that all members of the fraternity work together to ensure that the fraternity is as vibrant as possible. The strength of the fraternity comes from the strength of each fraternity member sharing his or her talents and gifts with the whole fraternity.

The items listed below can be used to determine how well a particular fraternity is striving to make the fraternity a vital part of each and every member's life. These items can be discussed at a fraternity gathering—they could be presented by a volunteer at a fraternity gathering or the fraternity may choose to work on a certain number of them each month. There are many other ways to use this list. The significant point to remember is that the fraternity always needs to be open to change and improvement.

### **WAYS TO IMPROVE THE FRATERNITY**

1. Help establish a positive fraternity climate.
2. Respond actively when contacted by another fraternity member.
3. Listen to what is happening in the fraternity.
4. Initiate conversation with other fraternity members.
5. Ask other fraternity members for feedback.
6. Enter into ongoing conversations with fraternity brothers and sisters.
7. Promote dialogues instead of monologues in the fraternity.
8. Focus on the present instead of analyzing the past.
9. Identify and challenge silent decisions that make the fraternity less than it could be.
10. Encourage mutual rather than dependent relationships (relationships should involve give and take rather than one person always doing the giving while others are always receiving).
11. Learn to say it to the fraternity members—confide to the fraternity what you would confide to someone close to you outside of the fraternity.
12. Discuss with fraternity members the difficulties you have involving yourself with the fraternity.



## THINGS THAT BLOCK A FRATERNITY

This checklist can be used as a way for sisters and brothers to identify common interpersonal problems encountered in the fraternity. The goal is then to work on improving troublesome areas.

1. Not listening
2. Unclear issues
3. Disorganization
4. No effective servant leadership
5. No defined goals and objectives
6. Not buying into goals and objectives
7. Not being involved in decision-making
8. Impatience with the group decision-making process
9. Being afraid to speak up at a gathering because of what others might say
10. Using words and jargon that some members might not understand
11. Lack of information
12. Not listening to what others have to say
13. Suppressing conflict
14. Rejecting others' ideas without hearing them out
15. Animosity and dislike among members
16. Time pressures
17. Outside pressures
18. Ego
19. Pushy people
20. Hidden agendas
21. Lack of well-defined roles
22. False humor or too much humor
23. Inflexible group structure
24. Self-interest
25. Lack of planning
26. No prepared agenda
27. Age group differences

## AGENDA FOR A COUNCIL MEETING

This is just one example of how a Council meeting may be conducted.

### Agenda for \_\_\_\_\_ Council meeting

1. Call to order by the Minister
2. Prayers from OFS Ritual (p. 63) led by the Minister
3. Scripture reading:
4. Reading of the last Council meeting minutes or review of the minutes if they were already sent to the Council members  
Motion by \_\_\_\_\_ to approve the minutes  
Seconded by \_\_\_\_\_
5. Treasurer's report
6. Formation Director's report
  - a) inquirers
  - b) candidates
  - c) ongoing formation
7. Reports from other Council members (i.e., Minister, Vice-Minister, Secretary, Spiritual Assistant)
8. Items which may be reported to the Council
  - a) newsletter or bulletin
  - b) archives
  - c) miscellaneous information
9. Old business
10. New business
11. Close the meeting with the OFS Ritual (pages 64-65) led by the Minister with the blessing by the Spiritual Assistant.

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## FRATERNITY COUNCIL SELF-EVALUATION FORM

Council members can fill out this form to evaluate the effectiveness of the council. This is not necessary after every meeting, but should be done periodically. Members should discuss one another's answers openly and without judgment. Every council member should feel free to share his or her perceptions and not be afraid of hurting others' feelings. The good of the fraternity rests with the openness and willingness of council members to make changes that will benefit the whole fraternity.

1. Does each council member attend faithfully and fulfill his or her duties responsibly? \_\_\_\_\_ Does the minister see that each council member fulfills his or her responsibilities? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Are records kept adequately and faithfully? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Is financial planning done according to Franciscan principles? \_\_\_\_\_
4. Are the council's homework and housekeeping: excellent \_\_\_ good \_\_\_ fair \_\_\_ poor \_\_\_ ?
5. Is the Ritual used regularly at gatherings, especially at elections, professions, receptions, etc.? \_\_\_\_\_
6. Are long and short-range planning given to monthly fraternity gatherings? \_\_\_\_\_
7. Is the monthly gathering: excellent \_\_\_ good \_\_\_ fair \_\_\_ poor \_\_\_?
8. Does the council give priority to the spiritual well-being and growth of the fraternity? \_\_\_\_\_
9. Does the council seek to give creative servant leadership or just "manage the shop"? \_\_\_\_\_
10. What means is the council using to build community in the fraternity?
11. What form of the Liturgy of the Hours is prayed
  - a) at the monthly gathering? \_\_\_\_\_
  - b) individually? \_\_\_\_\_

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12. How are the following articles of the Rule being lived in your fraternity?

Article 15—Justice

Article 16—Work

Article 17—Family

Article 18—Ecology

Article 19—Peace

Article 23—Formation

Article 24—Youth and Young Adults

13. Does the fraternity submit annual reports, financial support, and other items asked for by the regional leadership in a timely fashion? \_\_\_\_\_

14. What future do you see for the fraternity both on a short— and a long-range basis?

15. Should new, young members be brought into your fraternity? Or should they be formed into a separate group? \_\_\_\_\_

16. Does the fraternity participate in district or area meetings and cooperate with district or area projects? \_\_\_\_\_

17. Does the fraternity minister participate in or send a representative to the annual directive council meeting of the region? \_\_\_\_\_

18. Does the fraternity feel an accountability and responsibility with regard to the Regional, National, and International fraternities? \_\_\_\_\_

19. What goals should the council set for itself in the future?

20. Does the minister share all official correspondence with you? \_\_\_\_\_

21. Is the fraternity able to publish a monthly newsletter or bulletin and share it with other fraternities?

22. Does the fraternity understand and celebrate its identity as Franciscan penitents and encourage a growth in ongoing conversion in its brothers and sisters?

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## BUSINESS MEETING REVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE

This questionnaire can be used to evaluate a business meeting of the fraternity. Ask the fraternity members who are present to please fill out this questionnaire at the completion of the meeting. Members can then be asked to share their ratings, and the grid on the following page can reveal some important information.

### QUESTIONNAIRE

**Everyone attending this business meeting should complete this sheet. Please answer each question using this particular business meeting as the basis for your answers.**

Circle the number that best expresses your own personal opinion.

#### 1. Importance

This meeting was of little or no real importance.

1                      2                      3                      4

This meeting was very important.

5                      6                      7

#### 2. Focus

This focus of the meeting was unclear.

1                      2                      3                      4

The focus of the meeting was clear.

5                      6                      7

#### 3. Climate

The atmosphere in the meeting obstructed progress.

1                      2                      3                      4

The meeting had a positive, productive atmosphere.

5                      6                      7

#### 4. Openness

I felt inhibited or guarded.

1                      2                      3                      4

I was prepared to speak my mind.

5                      6                      7

#### 5. Format

The format was ineffective.

1                      2                      3                      4

The format was effective.

5                      6                      7

#### 6. Energy

I did not invest much energy in the meeting.

1                      2                      3                      4

The meeting energized and stimulated me.

5                      6                      7

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After everyone has had a chance to answer the six questions, then the responses can be tallied.

Example:

	Dave	Therese	Susan	Jerry	Marilyn	Sarah	Dan	Anne	
Importance	7	6	6	6	7	6	7	6	= 51
Focus	5	6	5	6	5	6	5	6	= 44
Climate	3	2	1	2	1	3	2	1	= 15
Openness	4	5	4	3	4	5	4	3	= 32
Format	3	2	3	1	2	3	3	2	= 19
Energy	6	5	7	6	5	4	6	7	=46

The grid below can be used to facilitate the process. The items with the lowest numerical value are those that need some attention.

Areas for Improvement	Examples of Past Difficulties	Ideas for Improvement	How This Can Be Done	Person(s) Responsible
1. Climate (15 tallies)				
2. Format (19 tallies)				
3.				
4.				
5.				

The example shows clearly that climate and format are two areas needing improvement.

Based on *The Unblocked Boss: Activities for Self-Development*, by Mike Woodcock and Dave Francis, San Diego, CA: University Associates, 1981.

This sheet can be used to put the tallies that you scored from each fraternity member into the proper boxes. Look at the preceding sheet for an example.

Complete each column below and use the ideas in the final columns as an action plan.

Areas for Improvement	Examples of Past Difficulties	Ideas for Improvement	How This Can Be Done	Person(s) Responsible
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				
5.				

Based on *The Unblocked Boss: Activities for Self-Development*, by Mike Woodcock and Dave Francis, San Diego, CA: University Associates, 1981.

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## SUGGESTIONS FOR PREPARING PRESENTATIONS

Secular Franciscan servant leaders are often asked to make presentations to their fraternities or other groups. The suggestions that follow can be used for preparing long or short presentations. They follow a sequence from one to seven, but you will most likely go back and forth between steps as you modify your ideas.

### 1. **Select and narrow the subject**

- Is your subject appropriate to the time and place?

### 2. **Determine your purpose**

- Do you want to inform or persuade?
- What goal do you wish to accomplish in the presentation?
- State the guiding thought you wish to communicate.

### 3. **Analyze the audience and the occasion**

- What is the size, age, education, cultural and ethnic background, etc., of the audience?
- What is their probable knowledge of the subject?
- What might they believe and value regarding the topic?
- What is their attitude toward you?
- What is their attitude toward the subject?
- What is the nature and purpose of the occasion?
- What will precede and follow your presentation?
- What will be the physical arrangements? (time of day, etc.)?

### 4. **Gather material**

- Make notes about what you already know.
- Read or talk to others to gather information and to gain insight.

### 5. **Arrange and outline the points**

- Arrange ideas in a clear and systematic order.
- Be sure that main ideas and sub-ideas relate directly to the purpose you established in number 2 above.

### 6. **Plan your beginning and ending**

- *Beginning*: establish a common ground of interest and understanding and point the audience toward the conclusion you ultimately hope to achieve.
- *Ending*: focus the thought of the audience on your central theme and purpose.

### 7. **Practice the presentation**

- Put your ideas into words and practice the presentation aloud.



## **COLLABORATIVE PROBLEM-SOLVING —NUMBER 1**

This section of the practical aids includes three different ways to solve problems. The first is collaborative problem-solving. This stresses the desirability of fraternity members working together to solve problems. The second method outlines six steps that can be taken to solve a problem. The third alternative suggests that problem-solving can be accomplished through answering five questions. It is suggested that a fraternity read all three alternatives and then decide which one or ones are suitable for its particular situation. The three methods can also be combined in a variety of ways to best meet the needs of the fraternity.

### **THE COLLABORATIVE PROBLEM SOLVING METHOD**

Collaborative problem-solving involves the brothers and sisters of the fraternity gathering to brainstorm some ideas and then decide on a plan of action. When decisions are made in collaboration with other fraternity members, that means members work together, and there is no one person who makes all of the decisions for the fraternity.

#### **1. Define the problem in terms of needs, not solutions.**

It is important to arrive at a clear, concrete, succinct statement of the problem. This is accomplished when the brothers and sisters of the fraternity state their needs, listen reflectively until they understand one another's needs, and then all fraternity members work together to state the need in a one-sentence summary of the problem.

#### **2. Brainstorm possible solutions.**

Brainstorming occurs when the fraternity members involved offer possible solutions without any type of evaluation being done on their suggestions. It is important to write down all of the possibilities without clarification because that will only slow down the process. It is also a good idea to remember that sometimes the solutions, which seem "off the wall" are the ones that are later altered and used.

#### **3. Select the solution or solutions that will best meet the fraternity's needs.**

First, any of the solutions given during brainstorming should be clarified if necessary. Next, the fraternity selects proposed solutions or combinations of solutions. These should meet the needs of the problem and the brothers and sisters of the fraternity should jointly agree upon all alternatives. The spirit of consensus should pervade the collaborative process. This means that through discussion each fraternity member's concerns must be heard and understood. The fraternity must then reach an agreement to accept a solution that does not violate any fraternity member's concerns.

#### **4. Plan who will do what, where, and by when.**

This involves the implementation of the solution. It must be decided who will do what, where, and when. Sometimes it is also a good idea to write down these details as a reminder of the agreed-upon implementation of the solution.

#### **5. Implement the plan.**

Up to this point, there has been discussion but no action. This is the time to move away from the thinking and talking phase and move into the action phase. Now it is time to put into action what was agreed upon in step 4.

#### **6. Evaluate the problem-solving process and, at a later date, how well the solution turned out.**

First, the complete process of collaboration should be evaluated. All fraternity members should be given the opportunity to express their opinion about how each step was handled. The advantages and disadvantages of the process should be discussed so that improvements can occur the next time the process is utilized.

The second element to be evaluated is the solution. There should be a designated time for the brothers and sisters of the fraternity to come together and evaluate the results of the implemented solution.

## PROBLEM SOLVING — NUMBER 2

There are six basic steps to successful problem-solving:

### **1. Set a goal or objective.**

There can be no problem-solving until first there is a goal. The goal must be specific and easily understood, otherwise there will be difficulty in identifying the problems or barriers that will keep the fraternity from reaching the goal.

### **2. Identify the problem(s).**

The next step is to identify any problem(s) or barrier(s) that will keep the fraternity from achieving the goal.

### **3. Evaluate the problem(s).**

After all of the problems have been identified, the significance of each should be evaluated to determine whether the problems are of significant magnitude to spend time discussing or if they can be dismissed.

### **4. Identify possible problem solving alternatives.**

Alternatives that may be possible solutions to the problem(s) should be identified. Judgments should not be placed upon the alternatives during the time of gathering information or during the brainstorming period.

### **5. Evaluate the alternatives.**

All alternatives should be evaluated by individually analyzing their positive and negative effects.

### **6. Choose the appropriate alternative.**

When an alternative is chosen, it should be one that has the highest probability of solving the problem in a positive manner.

## **PROBLEM SOLVING — NUMBER 3**

The problem-solving process is a name given to the various stages of thinking we use to provide solutions and bring about change. In this outline, the stages are translated into questions. The questions are numbered and seem to follow a logical order. Do not be fooled. You actually think in a zigzag pattern, jumping back and forth between questions.

Often you will not bother with all the stages except in a general way. Still, knowing the various stages can help when you are confronted with difficult problems.

### **1. What is the problem?**

A problem exists when things are not the way you want them to be. The first step in problem-solving consists of describing as accurately as possible the nature of the problem.

### **2. What do I know?**

Step 2 is to identify just exactly what you know about the problem and its surrounding situation. Gather information about the problem and its context. Connect this information into patterns.

### **3. What do I want?**

Next, you must make a decision about what things would look like if the problem were solved. Select objectives toward which you are willing to work. Relate the objectives to the problem you described.

### **4. What might I do?**

This is the time to decide on practical action. One test of practical action is to ask yourself, "How will I know if I completed the action?" Take action one step at a time. Plan and carry out a strategy to accomplish your objectives. Note your progress carefully.

### **5. What now?**

It is important to measure the success of the action. Evaluate the situation. Did you carry out the strategy? Did carrying out the strategy accomplish your objectives? Did accomplishing the objectives solve the problem to your satisfaction? How might you revise the process?

If the action was not successful, repeat the problem-solving process, then decide on another action. Remember, there is nothing quite like action. Even if the attempt is not successful it can provide information and generate energy.

## RECONCILING DIFFERENCES

Conflict is part of the reality of human existence, human relationships, and certainly life in a Franciscan fraternity. Conflict in and of itself is not bad; not learning how to cope with it is. This section of the practical aids outlines three different styles of managing conflict. The methods can be used individually or a fraternity may believe that combining several of the elements from different styles will best meet their needs.

The important point to remember is that conflict is a part of daily living and should not be ignored, but resolved. The existence of conflict does not necessarily mean the absence of charity and love. On the contrary, our willingness to acknowledge and work through our disagreements with one another is more likely than not to be a sign of just how much we really do care for one another. Recall that St. Francis often faced conflict within his Order; he was able to talk with his brothers and come to some sort of resolution.

An example of a potential conflict within a fraternity is the issue of how to spend money from the common fund. Another example of conflict management is found in the section of the Leader's Guide 7 dealing with the selection of a fraternity apostolate.

## CONFLICT MANAGEMENT — NUMBER 1

Conflict management should involve the fraternity members who are directly or indirectly involved in the issue or issues. The servant leadership style suggests that decisions should be determined collaboratively, involving the brothers and sisters of the fraternity.

### 1. Diagnose

- Clarify critical issues. (Determine what issues are pertinent to the present problem.)
- Identify persons involved. (Decide which fraternity members are directly or indirectly affected by the issue.)
- Assess likely sources of disagreement. (Identify the possible areas that could lead fraternity members to disagree.)

### 2. Plan

- Recognize patterns. (Determine if the issues are linked by a common pattern.)
- Minimize pitfalls. (Carefully discuss the issues to determine the positive and negative consequences.)
- Plan a strategy. (Make a determination as to which plan seems most likely to succeed.)

### 3. Prepare

- Problem solve. (There are suggestions on problem solving in the immediately preceding pages of this practical aids section.)
- Practice. (Decide how the issue will be addressed and then go through all of the steps, which will be necessary for a successful solution.)

### 4. Implement

- Carry out the plan. (Implement the plan that has been agreed upon by the members.)
- Evaluate outcomes. (After implementation, the fraternity brothers and sisters need to step back and evaluate the success of the plan. If the plan is successful, GREAT; if not, look for alternatives, such as formulating a new plan.)
- Follow up. (All plans should be looked at periodically. Even if something is successful, it should be evaluated at some future time to determine if any changes should be made. Everything is always in process; there is never a product that is perfect.)



## **CONFLICT MANAGEMENT — NUMBER 2**

### **1. Find out the reasons why fraternity members need what they want.**

- Assess the needs of the brothers and sisters involved.

### **2. Find out where there is a common thread.**

- Determine if the members of the fraternity have any differences, which dovetail.
- Do the members want the same thing, but for different reasons?

### **3. Find out how many options are available.**

- Do some brainstorming with the fraternity members so that possibilities are surfaced.

### **4. Find a point at which consensus can be met.**

- Fraternity members should cooperate and treat one another as equals, not as opponents.

## CONFLICT MANAGEMENT — NUMBER 3

### 1. What is the problem?

- Define the issue in broad, general terms.

### 2. Who is involved?

- Identify the people who are involved.

### 3. What do the people involved really want?

- List the needs of the fraternity brothers and sisters.

### 4. What options are available?

- Use brainstorming to surface possibilities.

### 5. Which option should be chosen?

- The brothers and sisters of the fraternity should decide on a viable option.

### 6. Act on the option.

- The fraternity should decide the tasks to be performed, by whom, and by when. Also when should the fraternity review the decision.

## **SELF-ESTEEM**

### **DEFINITION:**

Self-esteem is your self-image, or how you feel about yourself. Many people are uncomfortable with the idea of loving oneself, but that is exactly what the Bible commands us to do: "The second [most important commandment] is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself'" (Matthew: 22:39). Jesus wants everyone to realize that he or she is a true gift from God and has immense worth.

### **Self-esteem affects the way you live**

Self-esteem affects the way you think, act, and feel about yourself and others; how successful you are in achieving your goals in life; and the way you live. High self-esteem can make you feel effective, productive, capable, and lovable. Low self-esteem can make you feel ineffective, worthless, incompetent, and unloved. Self-esteem can be improved.

### **Importance of high self-esteem**

Feeling good about yourself enables you to accept challenges. When you have high self-esteem, you are not afraid to develop your abilities. You are willing to risk trying new things. If you do not try, you cannot grow. High self-esteem also enriches your life. Happy people are a joy to be around. By being happier with yourself, you will be eager to meet new brothers and sisters in the fraternity. By being more comfortable and open about yourself, you will develop closer relationships.

## **BUILDING SELF-ESTEEM — NUMBER 1**

Here is a list of seven ways in which you can build your own self-esteem. Fraternity members should see Jesus in one another. All of us were made in the image and likeness of God; we need to take that seriously and understand how precious each and every one of us really is.

**1. Acceptance.** Identify and accept your strengths and weaknesses; everyone has them! Make it a point to value your own God-given uniqueness. If you think that you are worth knowing, then you will want to share yourself with others. It is not much of a gift if you give someone a present, which you yourself do not like. The greatest gift that you can give anyone is the gift of yourself.

**2. Encouragement.** Take a "can do" attitude. Set a reasonable timetable for personal goals and offer yourself encouragement along the way. Your goals should be realistic, whether they are spiritual or relational or career-oriented.

**3. Praise.** Take pride in your achievements, both great and small. Remember your experiences are yours alone. Enjoy them! Celebrate your successes as a true gift from God. You freely chose to work with God's grace.

**4. Time.** Take time out regularly to be alone with your thoughts and feelings and with our God. All Secular Franciscans are called to be a part of this world, but they also need to take time out and be contemplative. Brothers and sisters need to pause from the hectic routine of daily living and turn to God for guidance and strength.

**5. Trust.** Pay attention to your thoughts and feelings. Decisions should be made after a period of prayer, meditation, and real soul searching. Like Jesus and Mary, Francis and Clare, we need to pray that God's will may be done through us. When we pray, we must trust that God's answer is for the best and that we are called to be willing instruments.

**6. Respect.** Do not try to be someone else. Be proud of who you are. Explore and appreciate your own special talents. Respect the talents and gifts that God has given you, and be willing to share those talents and gifts with your fraternity brothers and sisters.

**7. Love.** Learn to love the unique person you are. Accept and learn from your mistakes. Do not overreact to errors. Accept your successes and failures—those who love you do.

*"There are in the end three things that last: faith, hope, and love, and the greatest of these is love" (1 Cor.13: 13).*

## **BUILDING SELF-ESTEEM—NUMBER 2**

1. Try something new! Every success, however small, builds confidence. Do not forget, failure is part of the learning process.
2. Set yourself up for success by setting goals that are realistic and obtainable.
3. Admit to yourself your good qualities and achievements.
4. Do not focus all of your attention on the "negatives" you see in yourself. Be fair with yourself and give equal attention to your "positives."
5. Be aware of your self talk or inner dialogues. Use them to build yourself up rather than tear yourself down.
6. We all make mistakes. Learn from them, keep them in proper perspective, and move on.
7. Pat yourself on the back!
8. Learn to enjoy your own company. Be aware of the activities that give you pleasure or make you feel good about yourself. Learn to treat yourself as well as you would your best friend.
9. Learn to say "no" without feeling guilty and "yes" when you want to.
10. Visualize yourself as successful, content, satisfied and with high self-esteem.
11. Practice using "I" messages as a way of taking responsibility for your thoughts and feelings.
12. Remember that we are all unique persons. Learn to appreciate the differences in others and stop comparing yourself to see how you measure up.
13. It is YOUR self-esteem, (that is why it is called self-esteem, not their esteem), and, therefore, it is your responsibility to build and enhance it. Make sure that you are in the construction business rather than the demolition business!
14. Changing old habits is not easy or painless. Remember when you first learned to ride a bike? You fell and scraped your knee a few times. Stay with it; feeling good about yourself is worth every effort you make.

15. God's plan for us includes **JOY!**
16. Remember, it is possible to feel temporarily helpless, defeated or overwhelmed without these becoming permanent feelings. Learn to face your fears and insecurities in order to overcome them.
17. Practice living in accordance with your Franciscan values, beliefs and ideals.
18. **CELEBRATE YOURSELF!!!**

Based on *Building Your Self-Esteem*, by J. McDonald, St. Elizabeth Wellness Center.

## A PRIVATE TALK WITH MYSELF

This private talk can be used to surface some of your inner feelings and give you an opportunity to reflect upon your own thoughts and actions. Take a few minutes to answer each question and just jot down a few words that will remind you of the thoughts and feelings that went through your head when you were responding to each question.

1. How often does my approach to another brother or sister in the fraternity result in reactions different from those I intend? Does my brother or sister seem to be put off by my approach or does he or she seem to back away from me and the situation? Why do I think this is so?
2. When I have a problem with a brother or sister in the fraternity, how often do I stop to think about my own actions and words? I may be contributing to the problem instead of to the solution. Do I need to change in this respect? How?
3. Do I tend to use labels and stereotypes as a substitute for seeking to understand? Do I look at every fraternity brother and sister as an individual with unique talents and gifts, or do I become angry because my brothers and sisters do not respond the way I think they should?
4. How do I try to solve fraternity problems? Do I always want to fix everything myself and prevent my brothers and sisters from becoming actively involved in the process of collaborative decision making?
5. Do I have a need to be in control and when things do not go according to my plans, do I have a tendency to blame my brothers and sisters in the fraternity?
6. Am I willing to talk with fraternity members about the impact their behavior has on other brothers and sisters in the fraternity? Can I share this information with constructive intent, in ways that minimize feelings of criticism and threat, and show concern for their feelings and needs? What do I need to work on here?
7. How open am I to receiving information about how my approaches affect my brothers and sisters in the fraternity? How can I increase my opportunities for this kind of learning?
8. What will I try to do differently next week and in the future in the way I relate to the brothers and sisters in my fraternity? What changes will increase my effectiveness with other fraternity members?
9. How can I use my leadership skills to become a servant leader for my fraternity?
10. What specific steps am I going to take to help my fraternity solve its problems?

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## *Beatitudes of a Leader*

*BLESSED is the leader who has not sought the high places, but who has been drafted into service, because of his or her ability and willingness to serve.*

*BLESSED is the leader who knows where he or she is going, why he or she is going, and how to get there.*

*BLESSED is the leader who knows no discouragement, who presents no alibi.*

*BLESSED is the leader who knows how to lead without being dictatorial; true leaders are humble.*

*BLESSED is the leader who seeks for the best of those he or she serves.*

*BLESSED is the leader who leads for the good of the most concerned, and not for the personal gratification of his or her own ideas.*

*BLESSED is the leader who develops leaders while leading.*

*BLESSED is the leader who marches with the group, interprets correctly the signs on the pathway that leads to ground.*

*BLESSED is the leader who considers leadership an opportunity for service.*

*Author Unknown*

## TASKS OF SERVANT LEADERS WORKSHEET

This sheet is designed to be used in conjunction with Part I: Tasks of Servant Leaders. The six questions on this sheet correspond to the six leadership tasks found in Part I, pages 18-19, of this *Handbook for Secular Franciscan Servant Leadership*.

Select one area:

Ecology \_\_\_\_\_ Family \_\_\_\_\_ Formation \_\_\_\_\_ Peace and Justice \_\_\_\_\_

Work \_\_\_\_\_ Youth/Young Adult \_\_\_\_\_

Your fraternity may wish to narrow the area down to a specific issue or topic:

1. What is the Franciscan vision of?
2. What can I (we) do to promote the desire among others to work toward bringing about that vision?
3. What know-how do I (we) have that can be shared related to accomplishing the vision? Where can I (we) find or develop the know-how?
4. Since people all have different points of view on almost everything, what can I (we) do to preserve unity among those attempting to bring about the vision?
5. As the world around us changes, we often cling to old ideas and attitudes about things. How can I (we) foster the renewal needed to bring us out of a rut relative to my (our) vision regarding?
6. What specific steps can I (we) take to support and develop new leaders?

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## **SOME TALENTS OF POTENTIAL SERVANT LEADERS**

1. The ability to acknowledge and encourage fraternity members to explore new horizons, and grow within the fraternity
2. The ability to recognize and respect the true worth of every fraternity brother and sister
3. The ability to place the needs of the fraternity before his or her personal needs
4. Communication skills that are the binding force that pulls the fraternity together
5. The foresight to accept fresh new ideas, which most often are proposed from the members of the fraternity
6. The ability to communicate a sense of ownership coupled with accountability to each fraternity member
7. The ability to properly focus and mobilize the energy and enthusiasm of the fraternity members
8. The ability to develop commitment from other fraternity members, which perpetuates itself into "collaborative teamwork"

## LEADERSHIP ETIQUETTE

1. Successful servant leaders will make decisions that enhance the entire fraternity rather than just themselves.
2. Successful servant leaders realize that they also have a superior. Every servant leader is accountable to someone else.
3. Successful servant leaders are examples of fair play, integrity, and dependability.
4. Successful servant leaders will genuinely listen to the needs, feedback, and suggestions from all the fraternity members, not just a select few.
5. Successful servant leaders understand that a leadership position is not one of glory and popularity, but a position of responsibility.
6. Successful servant leaders are willing to roll up their sleeves and help other fraternity members when the going gets tough.
7. Successful servant leaders know that they cannot be successful without the work, support, and dedication of all fraternity members.
8. Successful servant leaders will sacrifice personal glory and recognition so that these may be shared equally with all fraternity members.
9. Successful servant leaders work for the success of the entire fraternity, and not for personal gain.
10. Successful servant leaders know that whatever power they may possess was given to them by the members of the fraternity. If improperly used, this power can be swept away and given to someone else.

## SERVANT LEADERSHIP ATTRIBUTES INVENTORY

This Inventory is a practical aid in determining each fraternity member's gifts. The section in Part I dealing with Different Gifts (pages 15-17) should be read before attempting to do this Inventory. This particular practical aid is not to be used to set up false expectations of oneself. It must be acknowledged that every fraternity member has many strengths as well as areas in which he or she wants to improve. This tool can be used to discern a fraternity member's particular gifts and to recognize that it is unrealistic to expect anyone person to possess all of these qualities. The secret of successful servant leadership is putting people together who can use the strengths of others to complement one's own talents and gifts. This aid is to be a way of recognizing how each member can serve the fraternity, and it should not be used to discourage people or to make them feel inadequate.

This Inventory is designed to assist you in recognizing your strengths and determining specific areas in which you want to grow. Circle the number, which most closely reflects your honest self-appraisal. How do you see yourself in relationship to your Franciscan fraternity?

1. **Energetic with stamina:** I approach my fraternity with great energy and have the stamina to work long hours when necessary.

1                      2                      3                      4                      5  
(never)              (rarely)              (occasionally)              (frequently)              (always)

2. **Insightful:** I reflect on the relationships among events and grasp the meaning of complex issues quickly.

1                      2                      3                      4                      5  
(never)              (rarely)              (occasionally)              (frequently)              (always)

3. **Adaptable, open to change:** I encourage and accept suggestions and constructive criticism from other fraternity members, and am willing to consider modifying my plans.

1                      2                      3                      4                      5  
(never)              (rarely)              (occasionally)              (frequently)              (always)

4. **Visionary:** I look to the future and create new ways in which the fraternity can prosper.

1                      2                      3                      4                      5  
(never)              (rarely)              (occasionally)              (frequently)              (always)

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5. **Tolerant of ambiguity and complexity:** I am comfortable handling vague and difficult situations where there is no simple answer or no prescribed method for proceeding.

1                      2                      3                      4                      5  
(never)              (rarely)              (occasionally)              (frequently)              (always)

6. **Achievement-oriented:** I am committed to achieving the fraternity's goals and strive to keep improving performance.

1                      2                      3                      4                      5  
(never)              (rarely)              (occasionally)              (frequently)              (always)

7. **Accountable:** I hold myself answerable for my work and am willing to admit my mistakes.

1                      2                      3                      4                      5  
(never)              (rarely)              (occasionally)              (frequently)              (always)

8. **Assertive, initiating:** I readily express my opinion and introduce new ideas.

1                      2                      3                      4                      5  
(never)              (rarely)              (occasionally)              (frequently)              (always)

9. **Confident, accepting of self:** I feel secure about my abilities and recognize my shortcomings.

1                      2                      3                      4                      5  
(never)              (rarely)              (occasionally)              (frequently)              (always)

10. **Willing to accept responsibility:** I am willing to assume higher level duties and functions within the fraternity.

1                      2                      3                      4                      5  
(never)              (rarely)              (occasionally)              (frequently)              (always)

11. **Persistent:** I continue to act on my beliefs despite unexpected difficulties and opposition.

1                      2                      3                      4                      5  
(never)              (rarely)              (occasionally)              (frequently)              (always)

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12. **Enthusiastic, optimistic:** I think positively, approach new tasks with excitement, and view challenges as opportunities.

1 (never)      2 (rarely)      3 (occasionally)      4 (frequently)      5 (always)

13. **Tolerant of frustration:** I am patient and remain calm even when things do not go as planned.

1 (never)      2 (rarely)      3 (occasionally)      4 (frequently)      5 (always)

14. **Dependable, reliable:** I can be counted on to follow through and to get the job done.

1 (never)      2 (rarely)      3 (occasionally)      4 (frequently)      5 (always)

15. **Courageous risk-taker:** I am willing to try out new ideas in spite of possible loss or failure.

1 (never)      2 (rarely)      3 (occasionally)      4 (frequently)      5 (always)

16. **Emotionally balanced:** I have a sense of humor and an even temperament even in stressful situations.

1 (never)      2 (rarely)      3 (occasionally)      4 (frequently)      5 (always)

17. **Committed to the common good:** I work to benefit the entire fraternity, not just myself.

1 (never)      2 (rarely)      3 (occasionally)      4 (frequently)      5 (always)

18. **Personal integrity:** I am honest and practice the values I espouse.

1 (never)      2 (rarely)      3 (occasionally)      4 (frequently)      5 (always)

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19. **Intelligent with practical judgment:** I learn quickly, and know how and when to apply my knowledge.

1 (never)      2 (rarely)      3 (occasionally)      4 (frequently)      5 (always)

20. **Ethical:** I act consistent with principles of fairness and right or good conduct that can stand the test of close public scrutiny.

1 (never)      2 (rarely)      3 (occasionally)      4 (frequently)      5 (always)

21. **Communication (listening, oral, written):** I listen closely to people in the fraternity and am able to organize and clearly present information both orally and in writing.

1 (never)      2 (rarely)      3 (occasionally)      4 (frequently)      5 (always)

22. **Sensitivity, respect:** I genuinely care about others' feelings and show concern for people as individuals.

1 (never)      2 (rarely)      3 (occasionally)      4 (frequently)      5 (always)

23. **Motivating** others: I create an environment where people want to do their best.

1 (never)      2 (rarely)      3 (occasionally)      4 (frequently)      5 (always)

24. **Networking:** I develop cooperative relationships within and outside of the fraternity.

1 (never)      2 (rarely)      3 (occasionally)      4 (frequently)      5 (always)

25. **Planning:** In collaboration with others, I develop tactics and strategies for achieving fraternity objectives.

1 (never)      2 (rarely)      3 (occasionally)      4 (frequently)      5 (always)

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26. **Delegating:** I am comfortable assigning responsibility and authority.

1                      2                      3                      4                      5  
(never)              (rarely)              (occasionally)              (frequently)              (always)

27. **Organizing:** I establish effective and efficient procedures for getting work done in an orderly manner.

1                      2                      3                      4                      5  
(never)              (rarely)              (occasionally)              (frequently)              (always)

28. **Team building:** I facilitate the development of cohesiveness and cooperation among the people in the fraternity with whom I work.

1                      2                      3                      4                      5  
(never)              (rarely)              (occasionally)              (frequently)              (always)

29. **Coaching:** I help people within the fraternity with whom I work to develop knowledge and skills for their work assignments.

1                      2                      3                      4                      5  
(never)              (rarely)              (occasionally)              (frequently)              (always)

30. **Conflict management:** I bring conflict into the open and use it to arrive at constructive solutions.

1                      2                      3                      4                      5  
(never)              (rarely)              (occasionally)              (frequently)              (always)

31. **Time management:** I schedule my fraternity work activities so that deadlines are met and goals are accomplished in a timely manner.

1                      2                      3                      4                      5  
(never)              (rarely)              (occasionally)              (frequently)              (always)

32. **Stress management:** I am able to deal with the tension of high pressure fraternity situations.

1                      2                      3                      4                      5  
(never)              (rarely)              (occasionally)              (frequently)              (always)

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**33. Appropriate use of leadership styles:** I use a variety of approaches to influence and lead others.

1 (never)      2 (rarely)      3 (occasionally)      4 (frequently)      5 (always)

**34. Ideological beliefs that are appropriate to the fraternity:** I believe in and model the basic values of the Secular Franciscan Order.

1 (never)      2 (rarely)      3 (occasionally)      4 (frequently)      5 (always)

**35. Decision making:** I make timely collaborative decisions that are in the best interest of the fraternity by analyzing all available information obtained from a variety of relevant sources, distilling key points, and drawing relevant conclusions.

1 (never)      2 (rarely)      3 (occasionally)      4 (frequently)      5 (always)

**36. Problem solving:** I effectively identify, analyze and resolve difficulties and uncertainties at the fraternity meetings and/or gatherings.

1 (never)      2 (rarely)      3 (occasionally)      4 (frequently)      5 (always)

**37. Information gathering and managing:** I am able to identify, collect, organize, and analyze the essential information needed by the fraternity.

1 (never)      2 (rarely)      3 (occasionally)      4 (frequently)      5 (always)

This Inventory is not designed to judge your behavior, but to assist you in recognizing your gifts and at the same time give you an opportunity to explore areas in which you want to grow. After completion of this Inventory, you should take the time to look over each item and determine which categories need your attention. If your score was low in particular areas, then you may decide to start with those issues and determine a plan to make adjustments. You may also want to review your responses with someone else in the fraternity and get feedback from his or her perspective. Build on your strengths and allow yourself time to explore new areas and to grow in them.

Adapted from *Leadership Attributes Inventory*, by J. Moss, H. Preskill, & B. Johansen.

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## TEMPERAMENT STYLES

### **If you are:**

1. Forceful  
Adventurous  
Demanding  
Daring  
Decisive  
Self-assured  
Competitive

### **You are probably good at:**

Initiating new ideas, getting results  
Making decisions, solving problems  
Taking authority

### **If you are:**

2. Enthusiastic  
Outgoing  
Emotional  
Sociable  
Generous  
Convincing  
Trusting

### **You are probably good at:**

Motivating  
Entertaining  
Generating enthusiasm  
Interacting with others  
Offering assistance

### **If you are:**

3. Systematic  
Diplomatic  
Conscientious  
Conventional  
Analytical  
Sensitive  
Accurate

### **You are probably good at:**

Following directions  
Working with specific assignments  
Being diplomatic  
Doing critical thinking

**If you are:**

- 4. Patient
- Loyal
- Stable
- Team-oriented
- Calm
- Deliberate
- Passive

**You are probably good at:**

- Patience and understanding
- Loyalty
- Listening
- Working with few new challenges
- Concentrating

Based on adaptation by Jean Ford Co., of Emily Kittle Kimball, "Getting the Most from Volunteering," *Citizen Action*, Spring 1982.





## **FRANCISCAN RESOURCE INFORMATION**

### **WEBSITES**

#### **CIOFS INTERNATIONAL FRATERNITY**

Home page [www.ciofs.info](http://www.ciofs.info)  
Formation <https://ciofs.info/offices/formation-2/>  
JPIC <https://ciofs.info/offices/jpic/>  
YOUFRA <https://ciofs.info/offices/youfra/>  
Spiritual Assistants <https://ciofs.info/offices/cas-spiritual-assistants/>  
  
Vox Franciscana <https://ciofs.info/news/vox-franciscana/>

#### **NATIONAL FRATERNITY OF THE SECULAR FRANCISCAN ORDER-USA**

Home Page <https://www.secularfranciscansusa.org>  
Formation <https://www.secularfranciscansusa.org/formation-spirituality/>  
JPIC <https://www.secularfranciscansusa.org/jpic/>  
TAU-USA <https://www.secularfranciscansusa.org/tau-usa-newsletter/>  
Franciscan Youth <https://www.secularfranciscansusa.org/franciscan-youth/>

### **FRANCISCAN PUBLICATIONS**

#### **Smoky Valley Printing:**

120 W Lincoln St  
Lindsborg, KS 67456  
Telephone: (785) 227-2364  
Email: [svprinting2364@gmail.com](mailto:svprinting2364@gmail.com)  
Order form: [TAU-USA Book Ad \(secularfranciscansusa.org\)](http://secularfranciscansusa.org)

#### **Gospel to Life Bookstore**

Website: <https://gospel-to-life-bookstore.square.site/>

## **FRANCISCAN OUTREACH WEBSITES**

Franciscans International: [www.FranciscansInternational.org](http://www.FranciscansInternational.org)  
Franciscan Action Network (FAN): <http://www.franciscanaction.org>

## **CATHOLIC WEBSITES:**

USCCB: <https://usccb.org/>  
Vatican: <https://www.vatican.va/content/vatican/en.html>  
Canon Law: <http://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG1104/INDEX.HTM>  
Zenit (International News Agency, Rome): <http://www.zenit.org>

### **Books referred to in the *Handbook for Secular Franciscan Servant Leadership*:**

In most instances, the books referred to in this text can be obtained from the Franciscan Publishers listed in this section. In some instances you may need to order them from a local or web bookstore.

### **Editors Note:**<sup>τ</sup>

The 1998 edition of the Handbook for Secular Franciscan Servant Leadership offered an 86 page Resource List. Many of the books on that list are out of print. Also, since 1998, many outstanding new books have been published.

If you wish to purchase that list, it is still available from Smoky Valley Printing. As mentioned on page xi, the National Formation Commission is in the process of updating the OFS Formation Resource List. When it is completed, it will be available through Smoky Valley Printing.

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<sup>τ</sup> Peace and all good, Anne Mulqueen, OFS