

# **OUR LADY OF THE ANGELS REGIONAL FRATERNITY**

## **SECULAR FRANCISCAN ORDER – USA**

**ORDO FRANCISCANUS SAECULARIS**



## **REGIONAL FRATERNITY GOVERNANCE GUIDELINES**

**2018**

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## MISSION STATEMENT

**Our Lady of the Angels Regional Fraternity** is a union of the Secular Franciscan fraternities, reflecting a rich diversity of ethnic heritage, located in Northern and Central New Jersey and Staten Island, Manhattan, and Southern Westchester in the state of New York.

We seek to build a community among fraternity members, along with the entire Franciscan family, in our home and work situations, in our service to the Roman Catholic Church, and in the public arena. We strive to promote a life of prayer and simplicity, peace and justice, and respect for all creation. Members pledge themselves, “through their baptism and profession to proclaim the ‘good news’ by their life and words,” going from “gospel to life and life to gospel.”

**Our Lady of the Angels Regional Fraternity** of the Secular Franciscan Order – USA follows the Rule of St. Francis of Assisi as approved by the Roman Catholic Church, the General Constitutions, the International Statutes (henceforth called “OFS governing documents”), the Ritual and the Code of Canon Law. We are brothers and sisters of penance, working as a force for the good of the Church and the human community.

These Regional Fraternity Guidelines, which may be amended from time to time by a simple majority vote of all the members of the Regional Fraternity Council, function in conformity with the OFS governing documents and apply to the Local Fraternities as well as the Regional Fraternity unless otherwise stated. These Guidelines are subordinate to the OFS governing documents.

With the help of **Our Lady of the Angels**, our titular patroness, we promote our member fraternities by providing direction and resources for their understanding of our Rule, our Constitutions, our National Statutes, and our Regional Guidelines.

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**CHAPTER ONE**  
**THE REGIONAL FRATERNITY**

- 1) The Regional Fraternity of **Our Lady of the Angels** is an organic union of all the local Fraternities officially established by the National Fraternity Council in the geographical area of Northern and Central New Jersey and Staten Island, Manhattan, and Southern Westchester in the state of New York.
  
- 2) The Regional Fraternity shall have a Regional Fraternity Council made up of a Regional Executive Council and ministers or authorized delegates of the canonically established local fraternities of the Region.
  
- 3) The Regional Fraternity shall have a Regional Executive Council made up of its officers and the Regional Spiritual Assistants.
  
- 4) The Regional Fraternity of **Our Lady of the Angels** may recommend the establishment of new local Fraternities (to sponsoring Friar Provinces), according to the provisions of the General Constitutions and the General National Statutes.

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**CHAPTER TWO**  
**THE REGIONAL FRATERNITY COUNCIL**

- 5) The Regional Fraternity is governed by the Regional Fraternity Council. The Regional Fraternity Council has legislative, deliberative, and elective powers.
  - a) The Regional Fraternity Council is composed of the Regional Executive Council and ministers or authorized delegates from each local Fraternity and the Conference of Regional Spiritual Assistants;
  - b) The Regional Fraternity Council shall meet at least once a year to promote the life of the Regional Fraternity and the local Fraternities;
  - c) The Regional Fraternity Council recommends and approves policies to be implemented by the Regional Executive Council.
- 6) Fifty percent plus one of the membership of the Regional Fraternity Council constitutes a quorum for conducting official business at any meeting.
- 7) The common fund of the Regional Fraternity is supported financially by its canonically established local Fraternities. The Regional Fraternity Council shall determine the annual contribution made from the common fund of each local Fraternity for each of those professed members as delineated in Chapter 7, Article 31 of the present guidelines.

## CHAPTER THREE

### THE REGIONAL EXECUTIVE COUNCIL (REC)

- 8) The Regional Fraternity is animated and guided by the Regional Executive Council. The Regional Executive Council (REC) is composed of a duly elected Minister, Vice-Minister, Secretary, Treasurer, Formation Director, and four Cluster Councilors, representing Manhattan, Northern New Jersey, Central New Jersey and Staten Island, and Westchester. The Regional Spiritual Assistant/s, Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation (JPIC) and YouFra animators are non-voting members.
  
- 9) Among the responsibilities of the REC are the following:
  - a) Animate and guide the Regional Fraternity;
  
  - b) Promote knowledge of the Franciscan way of life and commitment to it;
  
  - c) Foster cooperation, proper functioning, and communion among the Local Fraternities and with other branches of the Franciscan family within the Region;
  
  - d) Represent properly and respectfully the multiplicity of interests and aspirations of our culturally diverse local Fraternities in accordance with the Franciscan vocation;
  
  - e) Recommend the formation program for the instruction of Inquirers and Candidates in the Local Fraternities;
  
  - f) Provide a forum for discussion of common problems and goals;

- g) Assist in the resolution of difficulties within the Local Fraternities in a spirit of reconciliation, when requested to do so or when it becomes clear that intervention is necessary;
  - h) Represent the Secular Franciscan Order in the public forum and in contacts with other church or civil organizations, and promoting mutual relationships with such other organizations when appropriate;
  - i) Convene an Annual Meeting and prepare the agenda;
  - j) Implement the decisions of the Regional Fraternity Council;
  - k) Administer the financial affairs of the Region;
  - l) Prepare an annual budget for presentation to the Regional Fraternity Council at the Annual Meeting;
  - m) Conduct the Chapter of Elections for the Local Fraternities;
  - n) Schedule regular Fraternal and Pastoral Visits to Local Fraternities in accordance with the provisions of general and particular laws; and
  - o) Schedule an audit of the Regional Fraternity's financial status to be conducted by two competent professed members, selected by the REC, who are not currently on the REC, prior to the expiration of the REC's term of office and the Chapter of Ministers.
- 10) The REC meets monthly (except in August), at a time and place determined by the Regional Minister, in consultation with other members of the REC. Notice shall be given, in writing,

by the Regional Minister, at least one month prior to the meeting. When not in session, the REC may conduct business electronically or by conference call provided that any decisions and/or determinations made in this way are reviewed and ratified at the next regular meeting of the REC. Special meetings of the REC may be called at the request of the Regional Minister or at the written request of two or more members of the REC.

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## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **THE REGIONAL OFFICERS**

- 11) The Regional Minister is the chief executive officer of the Regional Fraternity.
  - a) The Regional Minister shall carry out the duties of his/her Office as determined by the provisions of the general and particular law.
  - b) In addition to the duties prescribed by the General Constitutions of the Secular Franciscan Order, the Regional Minister shall preside at the meetings of the Regional Executive Council and the Regional Fraternity Council. The Regional Minister is the spokesperson for the Regional Fraternity in all contacts with other church and civil organizations as well as with the general public.
  
- 12) In addition to the duties assigned by general and particular law, the Regional Vice Minister performs such duties as delegated by the Regional Minister.
  
- 13) The Regional Secretary distributes, maintains and preserves the minutes of both the Regional Executive Council and Regional Fraternity Council; preserves the important documents and correspondence of the Regional Fraternity; assists the Regional Minister in sending out announcements of forthcoming meetings of the REC; and performs such other duties as the REC requests.

- 14) The Regional Treasurer keeps accounts of all money and has the oversight of the property of the Regional Fraternity, unless otherwise determined by the Regional Executive Council. The Treasurer deposits all funds of the Regional Fraternity in such bank accounts as the REC designates and in the name of the Regional Fraternity.
- 15) The Regional Treasurer shall prepare financial reports for each regular meeting of the REC and Regional Fraternity Council.
- 16) The Regional Treasurer disburses funds, by check or debit card, as the business of the Regional Fraternity may require or on the order of the REC. All checks over \$500.00 require two signatures. Purchases over \$500 made by debit card require the prior approval of at least two signatories.
- 17) An audit of the Regional Fraternity's financial status shall be conducted by at least two competent professed members, selected by the REC, who are not currently on the REC, prior to the expiration of the REC's term of office and the Chapter of Ministers.
- 18) The Regional Formation Director shall coordinate the formative activities according to the procedures outlined in the General Constitutions and other appropriate directives from the International and National levels.
- 19) The Regional Councilors shall participate in deliberations of the REC and shall carry out such other duties as assigned by the Regional Minister or the Council. Councilors who represent either New York or New Jersey shall also coordinate their area meetings and assist with visitations and elections as requested.

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## CHAPTER FIVE

### RELATIONS WITH THE NATIONAL FRATERNITY COUNCIL

- 20) Once every three years, the Regional Minister and Executive Council shall invite the National Minister to make a Fraternal Visit to the Regional Fraternity and shall request a Pastoral Visit from the National Conference of Spiritual Assistants.
  
- 21) The Regional Minister is a member of the National Fraternity Council and is to attend its meetings. If he/she is impeded from attending the annual meeting of the National Fraternity Council, he/she shall be represented by the Regional Vice Minister or, if the Regional Vice Minister is unavailable, by another elected member of the Regional Executive Council or a duly authorized delegate of the Regional Minister.
  
- 22) The common fund of the Regional Fraternity shall reimburse the travel expenses of the Regional Executive Council when on official business.
  
- 23) The Regional Fraternity contributes annually to the common fund of the National Fraternity as established by the National Fraternity Council.

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## CHAPTER SIX

### LOCAL FRATERNITIES

- 24) An active Professed member has made an act of profession as defined in the Rule and the General Constitutions of the Secular Franciscan Order. An active member is:
- a) One who participates both by attending fraternity meetings and by providing financial support to the fraternity according to his/her means;
  - b) One who has been excused from attending fraternity meetings, either on a temporary or permanent basis, but does provide financial support to the fraternity;
  - c) One who neither attends meetings nor supports the fraternity financially, but whom the fraternity has excused from such obligations.
- 25) An Excused member is excused from the obligation to attend regular fraternity meetings due to age, infirmity or other reasonable cause as determined by the fraternity council. Excused members are still obliged to fulfill the other responsibilities of profession. The fraternity and the excused member are mutually obliged to remain in contact with one another. The fraternity council may additionally excuse a member from the responsibility of financial support to the common fund.
- 26) The fraternal transfer, withdrawal, suspension, or dismissal from a fraternity are done according to the General Constitutions, Articles 55 to 60. Professed members who do not attend meetings, nor support the fraternity financially for a period of a year, and who, after personal invitations to return to the fraternity, reject or ignore the invitation, will be termed 'lapsed' and will not be counted for the financial contribution to the Regional Fraternity.

Normally, after lapsed status for one year, action by the fraternity council should be taken according to the General Constitutions.

- 27) Candidates will be counted as active members for the purposes of inclusion in the financial contribution (Fair Share) calculation of the fraternity.
- 28) When a fraternity is deactivated/suppressed, its records shall be distributed in accordance with the General Constitutions, Article 48, Paragraph 1 and the Conference of the National Spiritual Assistants Guidelines.

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## **CHAPTER SEVEN**

### **FINANCES**

- 29) It is the Treasurer's responsibility, at the local and regional level, to keep records in accordance with general accounting principles. A cash journal check register and expense ledger by individual expense accounts should be maintained.
- 30) A tentative budget will be prepared by the Regional Treasurer and presented to the Regional Executive Council who approves it. When approved it is then submitted to the Regional Fraternity Council at its annual meeting for amendment or adjustment and is then ratified by vote of the Regional Fraternity Council.
- 31) The amount of a fraternity's contribution is determined by its number of professed members and candidates on a per capita basis as of December 31<sup>st</sup> of the prior year. The per capita donation is determined by dividing the regional budget by the number of professed and candidates in the region. The fraternity donation is determined by multiplying the per capita donation by the number of professed and candidates in the individual fraternity. The fraternity's contribution is made from the Fraternity's Common Fund.

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## CHAPTER EIGHT

### REGIONAL ELECTIONS

- 32) The Regional Fraternity Council meets for the purpose of elections once every three years as the Chapter of Elections. The Regional Fraternity Council shall determine nomination procedures in accordance with the provisions of general and particular law.
- 33) All members of the Regional Fraternity Council, with the exception of the Spiritual Assistant(s) have active voice and may vote.
- a) In the event a Local Fraternity Minister is impeded from attending the Chapter of Elections, a duly authorized delegate may participate in the election process. Such delegate must present written authorization to represent the local fraternity.
  - b) No Local Fraternity Minister may cast more than a single vote on any issue or any office.
  - c) An individual voter may cast only one vote. Should an individual hold multiple offices each entitled to a vote, they may cast only one vote.
- 34) Regional elected officers shall consist of a Minister, Vice Minister, Secretary, Treasurer, Formation Director, plus four (4) Councilors. Any candidate for office at the regional or local level must be professed at least three years and have been a member of their fraternity for three years. For the office of Minister, Vice Minister and Formation Director, this is absolute. For the other council officers this can be waived at the discretion of the presider. They shall be installed and take office at the conclusion of the Chapter of Elections.
- 35) Elections shall be governed by the norms of Canon Law, the General Constitutions, the National Statutes and the present guidelines.

- 36) The convocation of the Regional Fraternity Council for the purpose of elections shall be governed by the provisions of Article 76 of the General Constitutions.
- 37) Office vacancy, resignation, and dismissal shall be governed by the General Constitutions, Articles 81 to 84.

**CHAPTER NINE**  
**INTERPRETATION OF THE GUIDELINES**

- 38) Interpretation of these Guidelines shall follow the rules of Canon Law, civil law where applicable, and may have recourse to Robert's Rules of Order regarding procedural matters, with the understanding that in the event of any dispute the most cogent resource is prayerful consideration of our Father and Founder St. Francis, that most courteous and peace-loving man. Collaborative decision making is the preferred method.
- 39) The Regional Guidelines may be amended as the need arises by an absolute majority vote of the full Regional Fraternity Council.

Date: November 10, 2018

Submitted by the Regional Executive Council of Our Lady of the Angels Regional Fraternity

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