Franciscan Journey
Chapter 2

By Lester Bach OFM Cap

Three Orders
Structures
Discernment
## Three Franciscan Orders – 800 Years

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First Order – Friars Minor</th>
<th>Second Order – Community of Women</th>
<th>Third Order –</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Community of men</td>
<td><strong>Poor Clares Collettes, Capuchin</strong></td>
<td>• TOR - Men or Women who live in Community</td>
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<tr>
<td>OFM, OFM Conventual, OFM</td>
<td>Poor Clares and other groups</td>
<td>• OFS - Lay – Live in secular world</td>
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<tr>
<td>Capuchins</td>
<td></td>
<td>– committed to both Church and society</td>
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- Founded by Francis of Assisi
- Founded by Francis & Clare
- Focus has changed throughout the years, devotional to service oriented

- Live in community to serve the poor and marginalized
- Contemplation is important part of their charism, serve poor in some way
- Strive to bring peace, bring Gospels to life, serve the marginalized in some way

- Follow the Rule given by St. Francis of Assisi
- Follow Clare’s Rule of life
- Founded by Francis & follow his Rule

- Each branch has own constitutions for their interpretation of how to implement the Rule.
Third Order – Secular Franciscans

- After initial Rule – Papal Rules Approved 3 different times
- Committed to both the Church & the world
- Follow Francis in helping the marginalized
- At times became more devotional than service-oriented
- In the Middle Ages refused to bear arms
- Latin Ordo Franciscanus Secularis OFS
- Third Order OFS
Structure of the Secular Franciscan Order

**Council**
- Minister – VM
- Secretary – Treas – SA
- FD - Councilors

**Regional Executive Council**
- Minister – VM
- Secretary – Treas
- FD – Councilors
- RSA

**NAFRA Executive Council**
- Minister – VM
- Sec – Treas
- 4 Councilors
- CIOFS councilor
- Pres Conference of Nat. Spiritual Assistants

**Presidency CIOFS**
- Minister – VM
- Linguistic ICs
- Youth councilor
- 4 Spiritual Assistants

**Local Fraternity**
- All professed members
- Regional Fraternity
- Local Ministers & Executive Council

**Local Spiritual Assistants**
- Conference of Regional Spiritual Assistants

**National Fraternity**
- Regional Ministers & Presidency

**International Fraternity**
- National Councilors & Presidency
- Sec – Treas (appointed)

**General Spiritual Assistants**
- OFM, OFM Caps, OFM Conv, TOR
Cfs Constitutions – article 69.1 – The international fraternity is guided and animated by the International Council of the SFO (CIOFS - Concilium Internationale Ordo Franciscanus Secularis) with its seat (location) in Rome (Italy) by its presidency and by the general minister or international president of the International Council of the SFO is constituted within the international council or which it forms an integral part (Constitutions – article 70.2)

Composed of Minister General VM, 7 Presidency councilors, Youfra representative, 4 Spiritual Assistants

Guided by International Council & International Presidency

All Catholic Fraternities

International Level
Regional Ministers & National Executive Council (USA has 30 regions) Elected every 3 years Meets annually

Elect National Executive Council to conduct business of the SFO in the USA NAFRA Chapter has legislative authority of whole country. Major issues need approval of the NEC

Conference of National Spiritual Assistants (CNSA) consists of 4 friars in the USA from 3 branches of the 1st Order and a TOR President of CNSA serves the NEC. All 4 friars attend the annual chapter of NAFRA
Local Level

Fraternity consists of all professed members

- Council – Minister, VM, Secretary, Treasurer, Formation Director, Spiritual Assistant & Councilors (Elected every 3 years)

Local Spiritual Assistant

Appointed by superior of 1st Order/TOR Province to which the fraternity belongs

Lack of friars allows for appointment of Sisters, Clergy or SFO members as local assistants (article 21 of SFO Rule)
Discernment

• Must be knowledgeable Catholic in good standing, active in the Church and living the Catholic faith in everyday life.

Candidate must be willing to attend both formation & regular fraternity gatherings

Must have good moral character indicated by one’s lifestyle

Reference from parish priest

27 months to discern (minimum)

Applicants must have Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist, and the sacrament of Reconciliation.

Documentation should be provided for sacraments

Must be good moral character indicated by one’s lifestyle
## Signs of a Vocation?

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<tr>
<th>Vocation</th>
<th>No Vocation</th>
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<td>Sense of concern &amp; compassion for others – have a spirit of dialogue in conversation/discussion</td>
<td>People who are individualistic and lack sense of community</td>
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<td>Ambition is service oriented</td>
<td>Self absorbed, over-extended &amp; exhausted by too much involvement in all kinds of projects and issues</td>
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<td>Good listening skills, willing to share ideas and opinions.</td>
<td>Seek to control and manipulate others, expect service but never serve anyone else</td>
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<td>Good sense of humor</td>
<td>People who talk-talk-talk and rarely listen – or people who are too quiet, or gossipy</td>
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<td>Willing to embrace a counter culture stance that is frequently part of the SFO life</td>
<td>People with extreme personal devotions and force them on others</td>
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