The Franciscan Journey
Chapter 7

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The History of the OFS & Development of the Rule
History of the SFO and Development of the Rule – 800 years +

- Time of Francis & Clare
- Social Upheaval
- Power more important than GOSPEL
- Social Divisions
1st Order Developed Quickly

3 Independent Branches

- **OFM**: Order of Friars Minor
- **OFM Conv**: Order of Friars Minor Conventual
- **OFM Cap**: Order of Friars Minor Capuchin

Growth of 1st Order

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<th>Year</th>
<th>Series 1</th>
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<td>1221</td>
<td>3000</td>
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<td>1260</td>
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Earlier Exhortation to the Brothers and Sisters of Penance
(1st Letter version of Letter to the Faithful)

Later Admonition & Exhortation to the Brothers & Sisters of Penance
(Later Letter to All the Faithful) - incorporates teachings of the
Lateran Council IV

Earlier Rule of the 1st Order – Revised at Pentecost Chapter of 1221
(did not receive papal approval)

Memoriale propositi – co-authored by Cardinal Hugolino, protector
of the friars November 19, 1223 Pope Honorius III approved 1st
Order Rule of 1223
Rule of 1223 – called Regular Bullata

Francis made people understand that God loved them
The Holy Spirit leads the process
The process is open ended
Love is never “finished” or complete

Met Organizational & Vision needs for friars
Required “Novitiate” for religious groups needs of vocations and large groups
Handled organizational elements at Chapters
2nd Order – Poor Clares

OFS – Order of St. Francis
Experienced Reforms and Divisions
Sought fresh ways to follow the spirit of Clare – bloomed in many ways
3rd Order Secular – OFS

Began with laity who wished to embrace Penitential spirit of Francis

- Penitential practices focused upon Conversion
- Moving from Self-Centered – to Doing God’s Will
- Takes time, effort & prayer

**Heretical Groups - Caused Confusion**

- Waldensians (claimed ordination not necessary to bless, consecrate)
- Humiliati – forbidden to preach – disobeyed

- **But Francis was Guided through this by Bishop Guido of Assisi** and approached Pope Innocent III for approval of Order.
- Pope Innocent III gave verbal approval for the 3rd Order’s simple RULE.
- Lay men and women could follow Francis’ vision of the Gospel Spirit in secular life.
First Franciscan Pope - Nicolas IV

Approved the Rule for Franciscan Penitents on August 181289

Papal document, Supra Montem.

Document Unigenitus Dei Filus –

- Friars will be the visitors to the Secular Franciscan Order (3rd Order).
- 1st Order is the “Care Takers” of the 3rd Order

3rd Order - Penitential Charism

Witnesses to
- poverty,
- joy,
- love,
- peace,
- marital fidelity,
- obedience to the Church,
- apostolic Christocentrism,
- and sincere devotion to the Virgin Mary
Secular Franciscans – 3rd Order

Dedicated to the Third Order of St. Francis
Promulgated a new **Rule in 1883**
Exhorted followers to simple & “not too burdensome” praxis of Catholicism.
The Penitents of Francis continue to grow between 1289-1883.
Development of many Franciscan Religious Orders.

Some groups developed into religious orders –
- Men & women living in community
- Taking vows in religious order

Development of the Third Order Regular - TOR
RULE of 1978
Replaces all previous Rules

1. SFO and its characteristics in the world today
2. Essential elements of a Franciscan spirituality for laity
3. Fundamental laws of government of the Order

Pope Paul VI
Approved SFO Rule in 1978