

Franciscan Journey
Young & Old
Enriching the
Franciscan Spirit

Chapter 32

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Franciscans Fostering Communion

- Frequent meetings (gatherings) of the community (*Rule 24*)
- Meet with other Franciscan groups, especially with youth groups – adopt appropriate means for growth in Franciscan and ecclesial life, encourage the life of the fraternity
- Give special attention to newly professed and temporarily professed – to help them become fully mature in their vocation and develop a sense of belonging



Fraternity – Ecclesial Community



- Celebrate the Eucharist to strengthen the bond and characterizes the identity of the Franciscan family
- Participation in fraternity life is essential for belonging to the OFS
- Keep brothers and sisters united to the fraternity who, for valid reasons – family, health, work or distance – cannot actively participate



Youth and Young Adults (YOUFRA)

OFS fraternities should promote vocations to the Franciscan youth by means of appropriate and dynamic initiatives

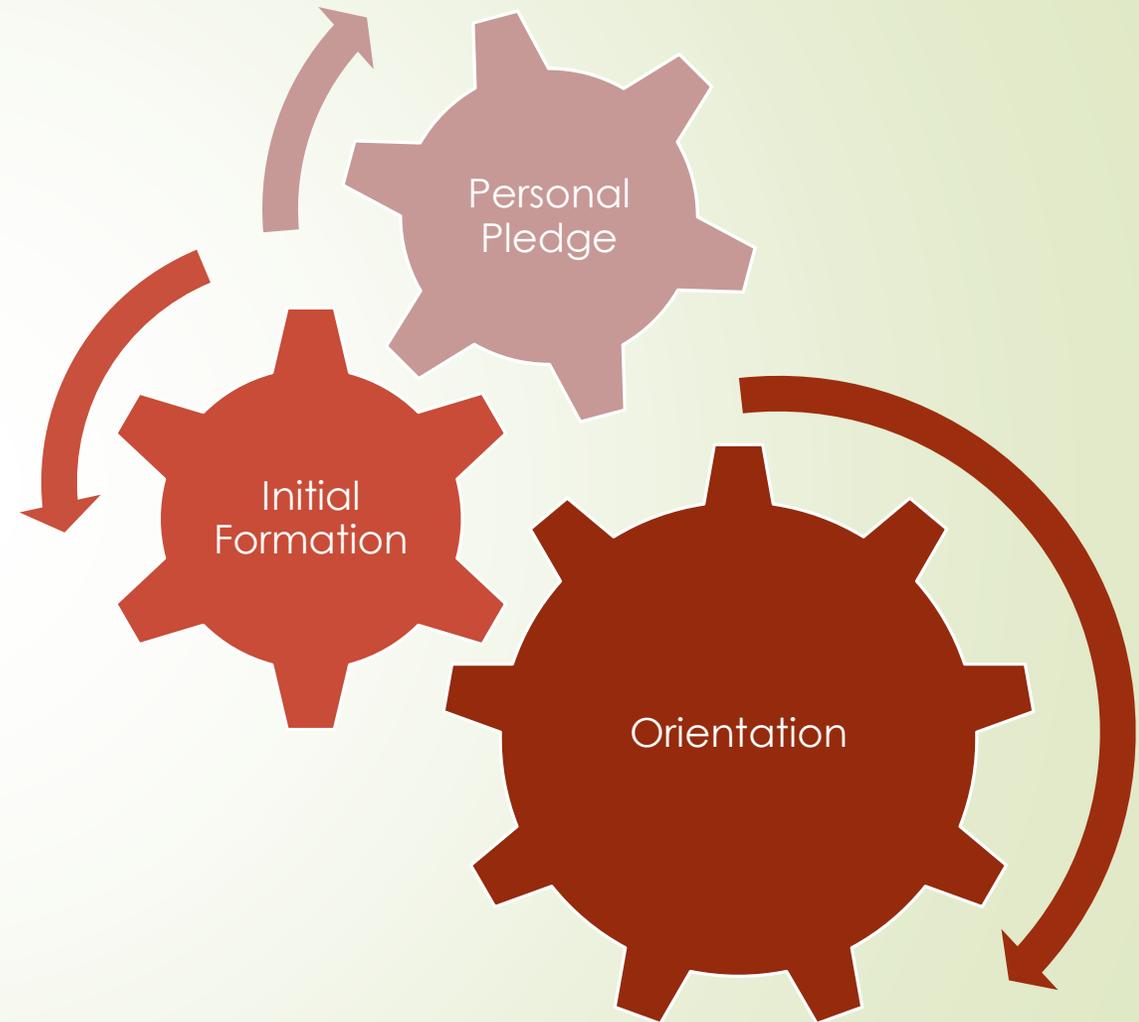
Allow youth to attend gatherings and apostolates as appropriate

Franciscan Youth should consider the Rule of the OFS as an inspirational document for the growth of their own Christian and Franciscan vocation.

YOUFRA group needs an **animator** and **Spiritual Assistant**

Youfra is a temporary stage – begins with adolescence and ends when a person reaches maturity

Leaders must follow Church requirements for working with youth



Sister Death – *Continuing Communion*

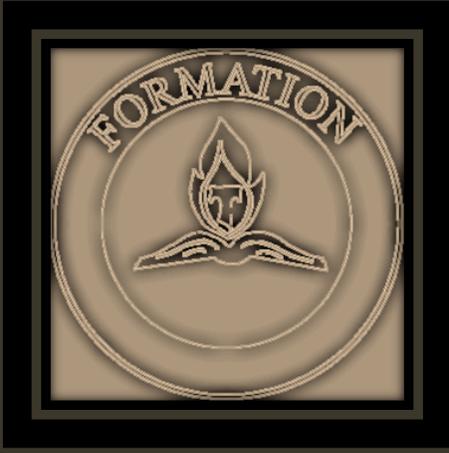
- Fraternities should remember with gratitude, continuing communion with deceased brothers and sisters with prayers and Eucharist





Gatherings are Essential to OFS

- Gatherings should be well-prepared
- Should be held regularly, at least monthly, more often is encouraged (*A 4 hour gathering is only 48 hours a year*)
- Share life experiences – show others care and hospitality
- Find ways to implement the OFS Rule
- Discuss current church and society issues
- Enjoy each others company and have **FUN**
- *Not a time to impose devotions or personal ideas or argue about how things should be done*



On Going Formation

- ▶ Accomplished in several ways –
 - ▶ Courses, sharing of experiences that aim to assist brothers and sisters –
 - ▶ Listen and Reflect on the Word of God “going from Gospel to life”
 - ▶ Reflect on events in Church or society in light of faith with the help of documents of the teaching of the Church
 - ▶ Discerning and deepening of the Franciscan vocation by studying the writing of St Francis and St. Clare and other Franciscan authors. (constitutions – article 44.2, 44.3)

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- Variety is helpful, LOH, Lectio Divina, Crown Rosary, Stations of the Cross, individually created prayers, prayers for deceased, prayers of Francis & Clare

Prayer

On Going Formation
(at least an hour)

- Franciscan Spirituality, Scripture, ecumenical understanding, leadership training, the Rule, constitution, statutes, social issues, Peace, how to deal with conflict, reflect on words of Francis & Clare

- Get to know each other, deepen relationships
- Celebrate & Relax
- Food is important
- Invite members to share entertainment skills

Socializing

Business

- Keeps people informed
- Council shares what is happening within local, and higher-level councils, can offer ministries, ask for volunteers



Collaboration among Fraternities: Enhances Formation, Apostolates

- Sharing resources, expenses and work
- Can build foundation for quality programs for formation with strong speakers
- Encourage collaboration for initial & on-going formation (*constitution 40,1*)
- Select strong people from each fraternity to serve on formation team

Creating Districts or Clusters within a Region

- District, area or cluster gatherings can help to reach more people
- National has created geographical units
- Smaller groupings meet at NAFRA annual meeting to develop plans to enhance the OFS in their area.
- Regions can implement this as well



Promote Vocations to the Order – Duty of All

► **Fraternities are Responsible to Promote the Order & Invite People to Join**

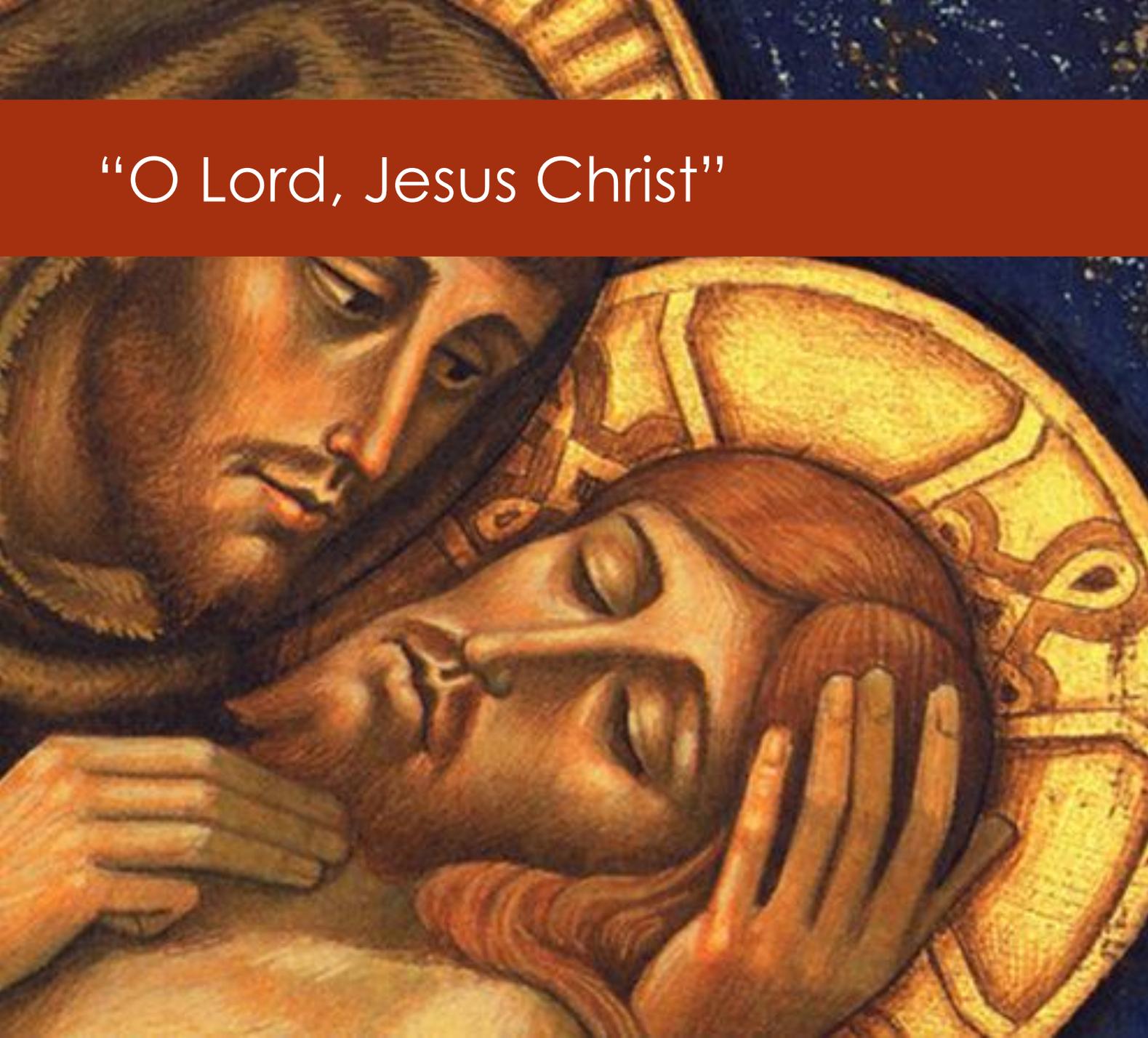
► New members keeps fraternities alive. Otherwise it may disappear and find itself in a situation that calls for deactivation for lack of members and inability to elect a council

► Secular Franciscans give witness to their way of life - in a position to attract new members

► Each member must take their role seriously and prayerfully

► The council must also adopt measures to promote vocations





“O Lord, Jesus Christ”

- For Francis, it was the on going discovery of Jesus that he wanted to communicate to all
- Early Years – discovered Jesus in the lepers, what was once bitter, became sweet.
- Discovered Jesus the preacher of conversion, announcing the reign of God
- Began to see Jesus as the Incarate Son of God at Bethlehem, then the Suffering Servant on Calvary
- Finally – the Glorified Lord of all, raised up to glory after death.
- Francis understood the Trinitarian God