



Rule 1. The Franciscan Family, as one among many spiritual families raised up by the Holy Spirit in the Church, unites all members of the people of God --- laity, religious, and priests --- who recognize that they are called to follow Christ in the footsteps of Saint Francis of Assisi. In various ways and forms but in life-giving union with each other, they intend to make present the charism of their common Seraphic Father in the life and mission of the Church.

Secular Franciscan

National Bulletin for the Secular Franciscan Order in Canada

www.ofsnational.ca

A letter of thanks: May 2013



Doug Clorey, ofs, made a request to Secular Franciscans in Canada for funds to help Franciscans International with their finances.

Here is Doug's response to the contributions made by fraternities across Canada and internationally.

Dear Franciscans,
May the Lord give you peace!

Following the joint meeting of the Franciscans International Board of Directors (IBD) and the Conference of the Franciscan Family (CFF) on October 2, 2012, the work of “re-dimensioning” the Franciscans International organization began in earnest. This included downsizing the organization to one office in Geneva, with single desks in New York and Bangkok. This also included downsizing the organization from 18 to 5 employees, a reduction of almost 75% of the workforce, and which saw the Executive Director, along with many competent staff, leave the organization. This was a time filled with sadness, disappointment and many other strong emotions. However, this was also a time when there was a recognition that these steps were necessary in order to give birth to an organization that would operate in a more effective and efficient manner. With a deep sense of gratitude, this was also a time when the Franciscan Family demonstrated its commitment to the Family’s ministry at the United Nations through their concrete financial contribution of over CHF 100,000 and through their ongoing moral and prayerful support.

It is important to note that, as a result of the downsizing of the organization and as a result of the generous financial assistance of the Franciscan Family, FI was able to close the 2012 fiscal year “in the black”, except for the two long-term loans which will be paid in due course. While the fall was a traumatic period for all of us, the new year seems to indicate that FI has turned a corner and that it is now prepared to start charting its new future. Early signs are pointing to an organization that will be simpler and less centralized, that will include cells that operate autonomously in service to the Franciscan Family, that will

have less infrastructure and that will operate in a financially sustainable manner. Movement in this direction has already begun.

On behalf of the Franciscans International Board of Directors, I wish to extend my most sincere thanks to all who have made contributions in support of this common ministry of the Franciscan Family at the United Nations. It is clear that, without your support, we would not have been able to continue operating into 2013. That said, your ongoing support will continue to be needed if Franciscans International is to operate into the future. Some Franciscan communities, congregations and individuals have already pledged this kind of ongoing support and, for this, the Franciscans International Board of Directors is very grateful. This kind of ongoing commitment in the weeks and months ahead will be absolutely necessary. As communities, please consider pledging a contribution to this ministry on an ongoing basis. As individuals, please consider contributing using the “Five For Francis” arrangements which can be accessed from the Franciscans International website at www.franciscansinternational.org. Although the fiscal challenges of FI are not yet resolved, new directions are beginning to emerge and the future looks significantly brighter.

With heartfelt gratitude,



Doug Clorey, OFS
President, Franciscans International Board of Directors

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From the Minister, Debbie Tessier, ofs:

Dear Brothers and Sisters in St. Francis and in Christ,

The National Council

The National Fraternity Council for Canada for 2012-2015:
Debbie Tessier, Minister; Gilles Métivier, Francophone Vice
Minister; Tom Wilkinson, Anglophone Vice Minister; Harvey
Levesque, Treasurer; Michèle Turgeon, Secretary; Pierre
Fortin, Formation Director; Marion Clorey, International

Councillor, Fr. André Chicoine, OFM Cap and Brother Gerry Clyne, OFM, Spiritual Assistants; and two commission animators, Andrew Conradi, JPIC; Colleen MacAlister, Youth. Brother Gerry Clyne, OFM, has accepted the role of Regional Spiritual Assistant for Our Lady of the Angels Fraternity (western Canada) and will no longer serve on the National Council from September 2013. Thank you to Br. Gerry! It was a pleasure and spiritual grace working with you!

National Council Meeting

The National OFS Council has just completed its regular meeting at Cacouna, QC, on the Feast of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ. The Council met for four days, from Thursday, May 30th until Sunday, June 2nd. All meetings and materials are bilingual, that is in French and English. All council members have some understanding of the two languages, and there are no translation costs for council meetings. Certain councilors help with the translation of the reports and documents for the meetings and for communications between meetings. Our meetings are held once or twice per year.

New logo

A new National logo was commissioned to reflect a simple Tau. You will notice it on official communications and reports. The meaning of the symbol will be elaborated at our next *National Spiritual Conference October 2013*.

Regional Statutes

Regional Fraternities are being asked to review their Regional Statutes and update them at their next Regional Chapter to conform with the amendments to the National Statutes 2012.

Fraternal Visits

The National Council will be working with Regional Fraternities on Fraternal Visits (art. 92 GC). Some francophone regional fraternities are not familiar with this practice. The Fraternal Visit is to assist fraternities in their Franciscan journey, to insure that the Franciscan charism is alive and well, and to communicate the necessary resources for the animation of fraternity life. The National Fraternal Visitor comes to review the records and documents of the fraternity, to observe a regional fraternity meeting, and to answer any questions members may have. When you begin to prepare for your Chapter of Elections, and contact the higher level of Council to preside, you may be required to have a Fraternal Visit at the same time (required every six years). Regional Fraternities should also be conducting Fraternal Visitations to their local fraternities. Be assured that the Fraternal Visit benefits both the local, regional fraternity, and the national fraternity, and creates an understanding between levels that may not be possible otherwise. The strengths of the fraternity may be of help to other fraternities, and if there are areas of weakness, the Visitor can provide resources and assistance where needed.

Fraternal Contributions

A significant decrease in professed members in the Secular Franciscan Order has led to a decrease in fraternal contributions. The National Council continues to educate members of their responsibilities to the work of the higher levels of fraternity. Fraternal contributions, something many of us do not like to discuss much, is necessary for the continued functioning of the Secular Franciscan Order locally, regionally and internationally. A percentage of the contributions to your local fraternity make its way to the Regional Fraternity, the National Fraternity, and also to the International Fraternity. Please remember that council members at all levels are volunteering their time for the function of fraternities at all levels.

Expenses are incurred through travel and sometimes accommodations. The National council meetings take place at a location as close to the members as possible, and yet some members may still have to travel by plane, some for several hours by car or train. Meetings are kept to a minimum, and accommodations kept simple, but today's fuel prices still present a challenge. Local fraternities are encouraged to prepare a yearly budget that is shared with the members, and to have a monthly collection to ensure that there are funds for the yearly contribution to the next higher level once a year.

Fraternity Counselor Responsible for Spiritual Animation

The National Council has discussed the situation in local fraternities that do not have a Spiritual Assistant. A letter is being prepared to be sent to the International Presidency explaining the challenges faced by fraternities meeting at long distances from Friaries and qualified Secular Franciscan Spiritual Assistants. It was also decided to explore other possibilities, such as the election of a counselor responsible for the spiritual animation of a fraternity when a qualified Spiritual Assistant is not available: a professed member of the fraternity with some training in Franciscan Spirituality, who will serve a term of three years, and is responsible to their local fraternity Minister and the council. When a qualified

Spiritual Assistant becomes available, the counselor responsible for spiritual animation will work with the SA. Guidelines are still being developed on this role.

Regional Meetings

Regional Francophone Ministers gather once a year for reflection and discussion on issues that relate to fraternities in French speaking Canada. The gathering is called the meeting of the ***Francophone Consultation Committee***. The Regional Francophone Fraternities also have an annual spiritual conference called ***Fraternité (2013)***, where members of fraternities, youth and guests are invited to share in Franciscan spiritual enrichment and fraternity. Anglophone regional fraternities are at a much greater distance from each other, and do not have mutual annual gatherings, but the Ministers and councilors who attend, meet at National Conferences and Chapters.

National Web-site

There is a National Fraternity web-site: www.ofsnational.ca. Work is in progress to update the web-site. The web-site includes “Living Fraternity” under Publications; an ongoing formation resource prepared once a month by Francoise Malboeuf and her team. Also the National JPIC Action Plan is under Commissions JPIC, which can help bring fraternities to a new level of readiness in social justice issues.

The National Spiritual Conference October 25-27, 2013

Ursuline Spiritual Centre, Loretteville, QC.

Faith in Christ Following the Footsteps of Francis in our World.

The National Chapter of Elections will take place May 14-17, 2015
at the Ursuline Spiritual Centre, Loretteville, QC.

From Tom Wilkinson, Vice Minister/Anglophone:

I am pleased to offer this glimpse into the activities and concerns of our three Anglophone regions:

1. We have established good communications with the Anglophone Regional Ministers, primarily through e-mail and are identifying common issues which are of interest to all three Anglophone regions. Initially, these include the challenges of geography, linguistic differences and formation resources as we joyfully welcome new Filipino, Korean and other inquirers from various linguistic communities. There are also the changing needs of our senior SFO members, issues concerning our aging fraternities and consideration of our outreach ministries in a changing demographic. We also share a common concern with respect to the provision of adequate numbers of Spiritual Assistants to minister to our local fraternities and the financial cost associated with this important ministry.
2. The request by the OFS Minister General and International Council “to foster and promote fraternal life among the Franciscan family.....” has allowed for further exchange of ideas among our Canadian regions. Some regions already host spiritual gatherings and conferences. However, geography and cost of travel in Canada is a major obstacle to overcome in hosting such gatherings both at the regional and national levels. Some initial steps are being taken to study and

implement this recommendation, if not at the regional level, then perhaps at the area and more local area.

3. Trillium Region (Ontario) celebrated a Franciscan Family Fest last summer, which was a great gathering for prayer, study and Franciscan joy. It included some 200 SFO members and friars from across this vast region and concluded with the canonical establishment of the new Mount Alverno Fraternity. An additional feature was the presence of several dynamic young adults who met together with Colleen MacAlister, our National YouFra Coordinator and other YouFra representatives. This new event in the Trillium Region took much preparation and we congratulate Les Alberti and all those involved in organizing and coordinating this wonderful Franciscan gathering. It was such a success that the region will host yet another activity at Martyrs Shrine in Midland, Ontario. Progress is being made on several other fronts with an active Regional Council and strong leadership.

4. Our Lady of the Angels Fraternity (Western Canada) conducts more localized retreats and “Chapters of Mats” in the different areas of their region. These are well attended and bring much joy, fraternal experience and education for their members. They will consider the possibility of hosting a larger regional conference but distances and costs are a major obstacle in Western Canada. There are now 24 active fraternities in this region with 2 emerging fraternities. This region continues to experience a shortage of Spiritual Assistants as is the case in all three of the Anglophone regions. OLOTA have 10 Korean candidates ready to make their profession in Calgary. So much reason for hope and encouragement!

Last December 3rd saw the canonical establishment of a new fraternity in Edmonton, Alberta with 15 professed members. Our prayers and congratulations go out to this new fraternity.

OLOTA’s Regional Elective Chapter took place **June 6-9, 2013 in Surrey, B.C.** under the theme: “Franciscan Focus in the Year of Faith”. It was very well organized with an excellent program and they were happy to have Fr. Dennis, ofm, Provincial of Christ the King Province as a special guest. Irene Manning has been re-elected Regional Minister for a second term. It was a great privilege for me to have presided at this EC and to meet so many wonderful OFS members as well as their Spiritual Assistants.

5. Regional Fraternity of Eastern Canada will hold the Regional Spiritual Conference at Le Cenacle in Cacouna, QC, August 2-4. The conference presenter will be Fr. Lester Bach, ofmCap of Wisconsin. He is the author of numerous books on the OFS, particularly on initial and on-going formation, such as *Catch Me A Rainbow Too* and *The Franciscan Journey*. Last year Fr. Pierre Charland, OFM, of Montreal, did a superb job in motivating some 90 members who attended this annual conference. Those present included 22 of 29 members from Our Lady of the Philippines Fraternity, the newest fraternity in Montreal. They brought such joy, hope and spirit to the conference.

The region, together with the First Order, continues to struggle with respect to providing adequately trained Spiritual Assistants for all regions. While this region has lost a number of members due to death and poor health, it is encouraging to see new enquirers coming forward and also the potential for new fraternities in both Arnprior, Ontario and in St. John’s, Newfoundland/Labrador.

6. Our International Fraternity and Presidency in Rome receive many communications from Secular Franciscans suffering in disaster or war-torn countries in the world. From time to time, our International Minister will forward concerns to National fraternities sharing the dreadful situations in which our SFO brothers and sisters find themselves. Often in such situations we can only assist with our honest prayer support.

At other times and in certain cases, some of our fraternities and/or individual members may be able to assist financially. It should be understood that we forward these requests to our regional and local fraternities to inform you of the plight of many SFO members around the world. Please do not feel obliged to respond to each of these requests. However, by bringing these situations to your attention, we invite you to share particularly in prayer support for these our sisters and brothers.

It is an honour and joy to be working with all three Regional Ministers and their Councils and to represent you on the National Council. If I can be of assistance to any of our Anglophone sisters and brothers, please do not hesitate to contact me at: tcarrw@eastlink.ca

Peace and All Good in Francis and Clare!

**From the desk of the National Secretary,
Michèle Turgeon, ofs**

I would like to share with you what I have found that makes my mandate easier to manage!

National Statutes OFS:

6.1.3 Secretary

The secretary has the following duties:

- a) to compile the official acts of the fraternity and of the council and to assure that they are sent to their respective proper recipients;
- b) to see to the updating and preservation of the records and the registers, noting admissions, professions, deaths, withdrawals, and transfers from the fraternity;
- c) to provide for the communication of the more important facts to the various levels and, if appropriate, to provide for their dissemination through the mass media.

*National Bulletin of the Secular
Franciscan Order
In Canada*

June 2013

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The National Spiritual Conference
October 25-27, 2013

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**Faith in Christ, Following the
Footsteps of Francis, in our World.**

National archives (reprint from last bulletin)

The archives of the National Fraternity of the OFS includes meeting minutes, correspondence from the International, regional fraternities and correspondence sent to diverse groups and individuals.

The reports of the members of the National council are also archived. The most recent archives are currently being kept by the National Secretary. Archives no longer current are sent to Françoise Malboeuf who files them at St. Francis of Assisi Church in Ottawa.

Many francophone regional fraternities send their archives for safe keeping at the hermitage of St-François-du-Lac.

Michèle Turgeon, ofs, National Secretary

Local and Regional Fraternities are encouraged to ensure a safe location for their archives. Archives and fraternity records kept in members` homes are can be lost, damaged or if the member dies, the family may discard them. Churches, convents and friaries are highly recommended as safe locations for fraternity records. A National committee is formed to study the archive situation in Canada and to make recommendations in the near future.

The National Fraternity publishes a bulletin once a year and it is sent to regional ministers via internet for sharing with the local fraternities. Please share this bulletin with all members in your regional fraternity.

Fête des Tentés

If you know a young person who has some facility with the French language, pass this on!

The Franciscan family invites young adults ages 18 to 30 to the 11th annual of the Fête des Tentés (Tent Fest), which will take place from August 30 to September 1, 2013 on Ile d'Orléans near Québec City.

The Fête des Tentés is a gathering of young adults who meet to share their faith in Jesus Christ and also to learn more about Franciscan spirituality.

During the weekend, there are lectures, workshops that allow participants to deepen topics such as prayer, the meaning of life, married life, universal brotherhood, safeguarding the environment.

It is also time for prayer, music, skits, campfires, and Sunday Eucharist outdoors.

And all this in an atmosphere of camping!

So if you want to live a time of fellowship, faith and experience an introduction to Franciscan spirituality this is an experience not to be missed!

The weekend includes

two breakfasts, two lunches, one dinner.

Friday, August 30:

Registration and welcome from 18: 30

Animation from 20: 30

Sunday September 1st:

End of FDT around 14: 00

Registration

**required: <http://fetedestentes.org/blogs/inscription>
or info@fetedestentes.org**

Montreal: 514-767-2009

Quebec: 418-523-1073

National Treasurer

Harvey Levesque

As Treasurer of the national fraternity I see the financial needs that must be met for the fraternal meetings and chapters in all regions of our vast country. Our elective chapter and the spiritual conference that are held as per our statutes are also occasions where our budget is put to the test. The national Council meetings also require travel either by airplane or long journeys by car. At all times, the cheapest means of transportation is used. These are only a part of the budgetary requirements that we must meet. To enable us to meet them we will shortly submit a request for contribution to the regional fraternities and I want to take this moment to thank you for your response to this request.

For the current year, the national Council asked the regional fraternities a contribution of \$ 7 per Member in their area. We will be forwarding our contribution to the International Council of the Secular Franciscan Order (CIOFS) in July.

It should be considered that expenditures that the Regional Fraternities encounter are somewhat similar to those of the National Council.

As a member of the Secular Franciscan Order we are one large family that is local, regional, national and international. Our contributions to our local fraternity are distributed to other fraternal levels. It is the contributions from the local fraternities that allow your regional, national and international fraternities to meet their budget. As you can see, your contribution supports the functioning not only of your local fraternity, but all the Secular Franciscan Order.