

# Sharing The Vision

## News from the 2019 National Fraternity Chapter

### **Journey Together in Love and Compassion**

The National Fraternity, gathered in Corpus Christi, Texas, for the 2019 Chapter, chose a theme for 2020 that reflects our national priority on fraternity: *Journey Together in Love and Compassion*. This theme echoes Christ's call to "love one another as I have loved you." Franciscans are called to be instruments of unity, to *be the bridge*, and in the words of St. Francis, "to heal wounds, to unite what has fallen apart, and to bring home those who have lost their way." This is especially important in today's politically and socially divided world. May God's grace, and the bonds of fraternity, be our help when we are faced with situations that challenge our commitment to unity. Who is God calling us to reach out to with love and compassion?

### **New Documents Approved**

The National Fraternity approved two new documents at the 2019 Chapter. The first is a much needed OFS-USA ***Transfer Form*** that will standardize the process for transferring between fraternities, whether those occur within a Region or between Regions.

The second document, ***Duns Scotus Formation Fund (DSFF) Principles and Procedures***, addresses the management and use of the Duns Scotus Formation Fund. Regional Ministers commented that the new principles and procedures were sound, well organized, and transparent. Of special interest was the expanded list of projects that can be funded by DSFF grants. Any Secular Franciscan or group of Secular Franciscans needing financial assistance to improve formation may apply to the DSFF. For a list of projects that can be funded or information on the grant application, process please contact the DSFF Administrative Board at [dunscotustrustfund@gmail.com](mailto:dunscotustrustfund@gmail.com)

These new documents can be found on our website. (See: <https://secularfranciscansusa.org/guidelines-forms-other-resources/>.)

### **Revision of OFS-USA Statutes**

During the 2019 Chapter, the National Fraternity

reviewed a process to revise the OFS-USA National Statutes. The plan is to have a final draft ready for discussion and approval during the Oct. 20-25, 2020 Chapter in Detroit, Michigan. A subcommittee has been formed to help draft the revision. The subcommittee is currently compiling a list of the articles or sections of the Statutes that need revision or clarification. A new section of the statutes will include articles related to the canonical establishment of fraternities. If you have suggestions for this project, please send an email to both Dennis Ross ([dennisross212@gmail.com](mailto:dennisross212@gmail.com)) and Jane DeRose-Bamman ([ofsusasecretary@gmail.com](mailto:ofsusasecretary@gmail.com)). Please copy your Regional Minister on the email, and include your reason for the requested change or addition to the statutes.

### **Multicultural Awareness**

A valuable experience at our Chapter was provided by International Councilor Willie (Awilda) Guadalupe. Willie gave her report in Spanish to a mostly English-speaking audience to help us experience what it is like to participate in a meeting where the language spoken is not your own. Those not knowing Spanish quickly realized what it is like to be "the other." A discussion on inclusivity followed. Willie also reported on the success of conference calls with Spanish-speaking formators from across the country. She is working on how to make this service available to those who speak Korean. Please contact Willie for assistance in working with bilingual fraternities, and reaching out to non-English speakers. Her email is [awilda.guadalupe@gmail.com](mailto:awilda.guadalupe@gmail.com)

### **Updating the National Database**

Keeping the National Database up to date is extremely important. Many OFS members and candidates are missing out and not receiving the *TAU-USA* national newsletter because their correct information is not in the database. Beginning in December 2020, the number of fraternity members listed in the database will be the number used to establish the Fair Share amount for your region. While we are working to revamp our database, the current database remains functional and has some nice features

that are not generally known. The Database Committee is happy to provide training on these features and assist in updating the member information for your local fraternity. Contact Cyl Maljan-Herbelin at [cylmaljan@earthlink.net](mailto:cylmaljan@earthlink.net) for assistance.

### **Database Programmers Needed**

The Database Committee continues their work on improving the database, most recently refining the log-in page. The Committee is still in need of experienced programmers (web-based or database). For information on this volunteer opportunity please contact Bill Mussatto at [mussatto@acm.org](mailto:mussatto@acm.org).

### **Donations “For the Good of the Order”**

The tremendous work of our Order is accomplished by those who give untold hours of service on a volunteer basis. But as former National Treasurer and current National Councilor Dennis Ross once said, “Money is the oil that keeps this machine going.” Jerry Rousseau, also a former National Treasurer, often quoted our Rule, Article 25: *“Regarding expenses necessary for the life of the fraternity and the needs of worship, of the apostolate, and of charity, all the brothers and sisters should offer a contribution according to their means.”* Jerry would point out that “the life of the fraternity and the needs of worship” were mentioned *before* apostolates and charity. The National Fraternity is able to function due to the generosity of our members. General donations are earmarked as “Undesignated Funds for the Good of the Order.” (In past years this fund was known as the “Donor Fund.”) Money from this fund in a variety of ways, including donations to charities as determined at our annual NAFRA Chapter. It is currently depleted, and we are asking for donations according to your means. Checks should be made out to “NAFRA” and marked “for the good of the Order.” Please mail your donations to National Treasurer, Claudia Kauzlarich, 2007 Maverick Trail, Harrisonville, MO 64701-1545. Donations to NAFRA are tax deductible. Thank you to all who give so generously of their time and treasure.

### **Help for Immigrants and Refugees: Update on Project Oak Tree**

Donna Hollis, National Councilor and member of the New Mexico Hospitality Coalition for Refugees, shares the following update on Project Oak Tree: “Thank you my Franciscan Brothers

and Sisters for your generous hearts giving donations to Holy Cross Retreat Center for our Refugees. Since the “Stay in Mexico” government policy has been enforced, refugees are stranded in Juarez, Mexico, after their long journey to get to the borderland. The Juarez hospitality sites are filled to capacity with families, while other families make do living in tents in parks or on the streets. The families appreciate the winter clothing you have sent; it helps to keep them warm. I am working in conjunction with several Las Cruces churches, collecting donations and distributing them to the refugees across the border living in tents. We have set up visitation days so that each Church community takes food and clothing on different days of the week. The families have formed camaraderie with each other and continue to have hopes and dreams of freedom in a life without violence, threats, and poverty. Again, thank you for your continued support and donations, which at this time go straight to the refugees in Juarez. May our Lord bless every one of you! You have blessed so many families in need; thanks for being Jesus to those in need.”

*“The presence of migrants and refugees and of vulnerable people in general is an invitation to recover some of those essential dimensions of our Christian existence and our humanity that risk being overlooked in a prosperous society.”*

Pope Francis message for the 2019  
World Day of Migrants/Refugees

### **Season of Visioning Begins to Bear Fruit**

Led by the Holy Spirit, our journey through a season of transformative visioning is bearing great fruit. Work has begun in earnest on new initial formation texts – one for Orientation and Inquiry, and one for Candidacy, along with accompanying facilitator guides. What we have learned in our visioning sessions on the topics of Formation, Youth, and Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation will be incorporated in these new texts. We ask for your prayers for our writers and for the work of the Visioning Team during this coming year.

*O God, you have created us and you long to bring us to the fulfillment of your great vision. Your loving grace works in our lives beyond our knowing and understanding. Keep us ever open to this transforming grace and faithful to the promises we have made. We ask this in Jesus’ name. Amen.*