



GENERAL MINISTER'S REPORT OF THE SECULAR FRANCISCAN AT THE GENERAL CHAPTER 2014

Introduction

We have started our General Chapter XIV with the celebration of the Eucharist in the Lower Basilica of St. Francis. The Eucharist is the source, center and summit of Christian life. (We) celebrate it existentially and get the grace from it to continue living what we celebrate in it. It's what I hope happens to us, that we have started our meeting to (truly) celebrate and live the grace of God's love, that as brothers and sisters responsible for the animation and guidance of all OFS, we can make meaningful decisions so that for the short and medium term each of us may be compelled to live intensely our Christian and Franciscan being, giving new life to our local fraternities, being attentive to the promptings that come to us from the Triune God, attentive to the life of the Church and the society in which we live.

Our brothers and sisters are expecting serious thought for this General Chapter as well as clear and decisive answers that encourage, give hope and reinvigorate our local fraternities.

As many of you have heard me say, it is worthless for our Order to have a proper structure if it can not respond to the specific needs of our fraternities, of our brothers and sisters.

Therefore, let us apply ourselves with great fervor, with an open mind, and with a heart to listen, reflect and focus on what we consider "fundamental" without getting lost in the "little things" in our discussions and decisions.

Three years have now passed since the General Chapter in Brazil and six since the Chapter of Elections in Hungary, and the Presidency complies with the provisions in Article 17.2(d) of the International Statutes of the OFS, to account for its actions and to report on the situation on the life of the Order at this time. In these six years, as in the preceding, we have had successes and disappointments, bright moments and dark moments, (more bright than dark) that we should and want to share with you so that you have sufficient evidence to correct or confirm the direction.

This present report is complemented by the one from the General Chapter of 2011 and I will not repeat the details offered at that time.

During these years the Presidency, through its service, has had the opportunity to "listen to" the heartbeat of the life of the OFS and Franciscan Youth. You can imagine the challenges that our Order, as well as the Church, have given us, and they are a wake-up call.

I must say that they have been three very difficult years, six years, very tough, with many responsibilities and challenges. We often did not know how to move forward because of limited members of the Presidency, even when we requested support from various International Councilors for some specific things. Hence the central theme chosen for this Chapter, which will launch a reflection on the entire Order for the Intermediate General Chapter in 2017.

PART ONE

As a starting point we remind you of the conclusions of Chapters 2008 and 2011, reviewing the priorities identified by both Chapters:

Chapter 2008

1. Formation
2. Communication
3. Franciscan Youth
4. Presence in the World
5. Emerging Fraternities

Chapter 2011

Formation:

1. Advance the Sense of Belonging
2. The Family and the St. John Paul II's Theology of the Body
3. Deepening initial formation.
4. Vocational Promotions

Communication:

1. Deepen the mission of the International Councilor.
2. Enrich and update the Web page.

YouFra:

1. promote communion with YouFra, planning meetings in common, etc.
2. Engage Franciscan Youth in social and policy initiatives.

Presence in the world:

1. Implement initiatives for integral development of individuals and peoples who suffer from poverty, denial of human rights and natural calamities.
2. Prudently acquire the necessary visibility in the public arena.

Emerging Fraternities:

1. Attention to the responsibility we have for established national fraternities regarding support of emerging fraternities.

PART TWO

1. Status of the International Fraternity of the OFS and Franciscan Youth

The Secular Franciscan Order:

a) presence, consistency, initiatives,
As you can see in the attached list (Annex No. 1), the OFS is currently present in 116 countries around the world:

- 70 established national fraternities
- 40 emerging national fraternities, distributed in the following way...

Recognized: 15

Presence: 25

- Special cases under the direct responsibility of the Presidency because of different situations: 6

With this distribution we respond to the commitment of the Presidency in the General Chapter 2011 (at S. Paolo) of reviewing those that were then considered only as emerging fraternities, while among them there was a noticeable difference in the number of local fraternities and their members. There was the possibility of continuing their path of growth and maturation by themselves or accompanied by an established national fraternity.

Franciscan Youth:

Is present in 68 countries worldwide (see Appendix n. 2) with:

- 38 recognized national fraternities
- 30 emerging national fraternities.
- approximately 40,000 members -- the statistics are not yet finalized

As for the numerical consistency of the OFS, although we still can't provide definitive data because of the reluctance of some national Fraternities to provide concrete data on their national fraternity (almost always for socio-political reasons), we can indicate a number of 214,829 sisters and brothers involved actively in the life of the local fraternity, corresponding to 60% of members of the OFS. This leads us to the conclusion that the total number is around 360,000 members in our Order. Most important of all, the statistics received reflect 60% of the national fraternities who claim a greater number of brothers and sisters compared to 2011. It is interesting to know that this time 80 national fraternities have responded out of 116, which means that the sense of belonging and responsibility continue to grow considerably. We hope that the next Presidency can get more statistical information that will provide us with the authentic and definitive information on the OFS in the world.

During Pastoral and Fraternal Visits conducted and the National Chapters where we presided, we observed that in some countries there is a gradual decline in numbers and that the OFS is aging. These cases are of concern to national fraternities in North, Central and Southern Europe. But we see that it's also beginning to happen in some countries of Latin America and North America (United States and Canada). In contrast, in countries of Slavic culture (Eastern Europe) the OFS is developing strongly as is Franciscan Youth.

However, in several countries in Africa and Southeast Asia, the OFS is developing in strength and vigor, and we can attest that in countries where Christians are a minority, the Christian and Franciscan commitment to live and proclaim witness and maintain consistency in one's life does not exceed 1%. (Proclaiming) the word is truly exciting because of its authenticity and calls our "developed" countries to an effective examination of conscience, so that we may purify our minds and our lives from the primacy of ideologies and of uncontrolled consumption. We can see how current "places of worship" on Sundays and holidays are large commercial areas. And we, Secular Franciscans, are unable to free ourselves from this frightening trend.

So we have a real challenge of personal and communal conversion, which requires perseverance and a strong desire to revitalize our Order, fleeing from certain attitudes that make us cold and apathetic in the face of our responsibility and our commitment to public evangelical life freely undertaken before God, the Church and our brothers and sisters.

2. Development of priorities of the Chapters (Conclusions)

Formation

The Presidency in its first meeting in March 2012 considered it necessary to establish different areas to strengthen formation. They are:

1. Forming the formators (Benedetto Lino and Fr. Ivan / Fr. Jose Antonio) (In continuous development)
2. Manual for the formation of the formators. (Michèle and Fr. Amanuel) (Not completed)
3. Formation for secular spiritual assistants (lay or priests) and religious non-First Order and the TOR. (CSA with first collaboration with M. Aparecida Crepaldi and Marion Clorey) (Done)
4. Formation for Fraternity Animators for YouFra (Ana and Ivan) (Done)
5. Formation for presence in the world (Presence in the World Commission) (Done)

This has been the basis of our work. It has not been possible, after a great effort, to provide a subsidy for initial formation, particularly for emerging fraternities. We have not managed to make something simple and affordable for the brothers and sisters in countries with important needs in the field of formation for new vocations. We hope that the next Presidency can do it, because it is certainly a clear need.

Formation for the Formators

Because of its importance, here is a brief report of this formation course:

In the triennium 2011-2014 the formation project for initial formation for the formators for all the world has continued, according to the plan already set forth in the past 8 years plan. In the past three years there have been courses in Latin America - Caracas, Venezuela and Cordoba, Argentina; Asia - Hong Kong, China; Italy - Rome; Ukraine - Stryi Ostropil; Japan - Kyoto, Tokyo; Bosnia and Herzegovina - Medjugorje; Singapore.

The results have always been excellent. The participants, including among them, the assistants who have participated in the courses, have been deeply surprised by the contents, methodology and interaction created among the participants. The courses have

always been received enthusiastically. There has always been a deep brotherhood among participants and presenters who have lived in communal life the whole time, sharing everything.

These statements are absolutely valid for all continents, for all cultures and for all forms of expression. The reactions of all the participants have been absolutely identical everywhere despite differences in culture, tradition and language.

We do know that in many countries the courses are already used with good results. However, in many countries the participants have not continued the formation project. We noticed sadly that some national councils have not supported the representatives themselves (who have paid out of their own pocket) and that these people were not then used for formation in their own countries. This is a pitiful waste of human resources, that, in this historical moment, are essential for growth. Those who have participated in the courses become a permanent "investment" of the national fraternity, which does not end with the end of the term of the Councils.

The Presidency has invested significant financial resources (given the scarcity of resources available) besides human investment, to help the poorest to participate in the courses.

We must note that a significant number of national fraternities have escaped this duty, not participating in any course nor asking that the courses be held in their countries.

The Presidency has done a great job on this important commitment, but the work has only just begun and will require continued qualified commitment for the next generations.

The Manual continues to grow and now has almost 250 pages in A4 format.

Powerpoint presentations have been prepared for each subject in the four official languages

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They are preparing new lessons. The topics presented are reviewed periodically and, improved and enriched on the basis of concrete field experience and based on the acquisition of new information from the papal magisterium and from theology and Franciscan spirituality.

For these reasons and the fact that formation is the transmission of life and knowledge of a faith that is lived, the manuals have not been published and copies of the lessons, as well as the Powerpoint presentations, are given only to those who participate in the courses. Experience has shown indisputably that seemingly complex issues have become easy and passionate after a presentation adapted to the listener. After the experience in the courses, no one has yet considered the texts as difficult to understand. Therefore, it is necessary to continue in this way until a good general level of initial formation is achieved and the texts have reached a final form.

Communication:

During the General Chapter of the OFS, held in Hungary in 2008, communications were established as a second priority. This was confirmed during the General Chapter in Brazil in 2011. In order to respect this priority a Commission for Communications, responsible for

developing this task, was established. Since 2008, to meet the new demands of the Presidency, some changes have been made in the composition and the mandate of the Commission.

The current Communications Commission was established at the meeting of the Presidency of May 2011, and is responsible for all matters having to do with communication related to the work of the Presidency, including the operation and management of the CIOFS website. The members of the Commission for Communications are Maria Aparecida Crepaldi, coordinator; Doug Clorey, Tibor Kauser, Ewald Kreuzer, Ana Fruk, and Fr. José Antonio Cruz Duarte. During the May 2011 meeting, it was decided by the Presidency that the Communications Commission also cover the responsibility of being the Editorial Board for the Presidency of the CIOFS website. In addition, a Technical Group has been established to manage the CIOFS website. It will report directly to the Communications Commission. The Technical Group has Tibor Kauser as coordinator, Ewald Kreuzer, Ana Fruk, Marton Beke from Hungary, and Elena Arena from Italy.

To perform their duties, the Commission defined the role and responsibilities of the CIOFS Editorial Board; in the meantime, the Technical Group addressed the accessibility of web and publishing of the content, according to what is required. We have also approved technical guidelines to facilitate the work of managing the web. We also note that the website has been transferred from its platform in the United States to a new platform in Hungary, maintained by the Hungarian company Netkorzo. Also during 2014 the design of the web pages of the OFS and YouFra has been updated and changed significantly for a more interesting website and more useful for users.

In every organization, communication is a challenge, and the OFS is no exception. Communication challenges continue to be a priority for the Order, especially with regard to the use of constantly evolving technologies necessary for the support of the international fraternity.

We are grateful to all those who have worked to achieve this major goal of communication set by the Chapter, and we are convinced of the vital importance of this priority to support the growth of the OFS and its members.

Franciscan Youth

The Franciscan Youth Commission is composed of: Ana Fruk (Councilor for the Presidency for YOUFRA), Lucy Almirañez (Presidency Councilor) and Fr. Amanuel Mesgun Temelso, OFM Cap (General Assistant), who replaced Fr. Ivan Matić, OFM, in April 2013. The Commission had several commitments relative to YouFra in the world.

1. Organization and participation in meetings

The Presidency formed the Franciscan Youth Commission, coordinated by Lucy Almirañez with Ana Fruk and Fr. Amanuel Mesgun OFM Cap. who replaced Fr Ivan Matic, OFM.

The YouFra Commission participated in various meetings organized by both the Pontifical Council for the Laity and the CIOFS Presidency. The meetings organized by the Pontifical Council for the Laity involved preparations for World Youth Day, which happened in Brazil from July 22 to 28 in 2013, and the preparation of the next World Youth Day in Poland in

2016. The members of the commission also participated in the Continental Congresses that occurred in the period from 2011-2014 (Latin American Congress, European Congress, Congress of Asia and Oceania, Francophone African Congress) where there was also YouFra presence from the area.

Before WYD in Brazil, the CIOFS Presidency and the Commission organized an International Meeting of YouFra in São João del Rey between July 19 and 22 of 2014. (This happened) with the help of YouFRA and the OFS in Brazil, where about 160 members from 18 national YouFra fraternities were present. During WYD, the Franciscan Family of Brazil organized the Franciscan Space that was open to all for three days. On July 24, 2013 we organized the meeting with all the General Ministers of the Franciscan Family.

From August 17 to 23 in Croatia the YOUFRA Second International Assembly was attended by 58 participants from 24 countries. They elected members of the new YouFra Coordinating Team for the 2014-2017 triennium. In addition to the election of new YouFra International Councilors, the Assembly discussed the document on the celebrations in the YouFra fraternity, the YouFra situation and steps for the future.

2. International YouFra Coordinating Team

2.1. Status / Statistics of YouFra in the World

The Coordinating Team has regular communication with national YouFra fraternities. During 2014 the team conducted a survey on various topics on the YouFra situation in the world. Here is some data:

- membership of YouFra: 40,000 members
- number of recognized national fraternities: 38
- number of emerging national fraternities: 30
- fraternal animation: the situation is improving, but we must continue to work on fraternal animation. At the national level there is a person who is the fraternal animator, but locally it is often not the case.
- spiritual assistance: almost all fraternities have spiritual assistance at the national level, but there are fraternities at the local level who do not have assistants.

2.2. Documents

The other commitment of the Coordinating Team was to disseminate YOUFRA documents, which was one of the priorities of Chapter 2008 and reaffirmed in 2011.

During the period of 2011-2014 the Commission prepared three documents which were approved by the Presidency and circulated to national YouFra and OFS fraternities. The YouFra documents are:

1. Guidelines for fraternal animation
2. Guide for the formation of a new YouFra fraternity
3. Celebrations of the YouFra fraternity

All the documents are available on the CIOFS website.

2.3. YouFra Webpage

After several years of effort, the YouFra Commission has been able to prepare the new YouFra web page with a new design that should be more attractive and accessible to young people. The new address for the moment is: www.ciofs.org/youfra. We are studying the

possibility of having the address: www.youfra.org. The intent of the website is to gather all the data and documents on YouFra, as well as information on events and national YouFra fraternities. The administration and improvements on the page should be developed over time.

2.4. International Coordinating Team of YouFra (2014-2017)

At the Second International Assembly YouFra international delegates elected, for the first time directly and not by mail, five international councilors, and the sixth international councilor, representing African fraternities, was named (for only the first time) by the OFS Presidency. The new international YouFra councilors for the 2014-2017 triennium are:

- 1) Michat Legrand-Raout (Mauritius) - Africa
- 2) Jenifer Christla Josephine (India) - Asia-Oceania
- 3) Arlene Naya (Philippines) - Asia-Oceania substitute
- 4) José Carlos Mancinas Casas (Mexico) - Central America, Mexico and Caribbean
- 5) Judith del Rocío Tinajera Vidales (Mexico) - Central America, Mexico and Caribbean substitute
- 6) Ezequiel Marcos Villagra (Argentina) - South America
- 7) Shirley Liz Ramirez León (Paraguay) - South America substitute
- 8) Sochor Joanna (Poland) - Central and Eastern Europe
- 9) Božica Ivanković (Bosnia and Herzegovina) - Central and Eastern Europe substitute
- 10) Ghislain Knepper (France) - Western Europe (and North America)
- 11) Katia Dâmaso (Portugal) - Western Europe (and North America) substitute

2.5. Challenges for YouFra

YouFra is present in over 68 countries. Many fraternities have existed for many years without having contact with the other fraternities in the world. In recent years, much has been done at the level of organization and unification of YouFra, especially internationally. The result is that the contacts and communication with and between national fraternities have improved. Young people have become more aware that there is a YOUFRA internationally and they want to participate in this. The remaining challenge is to increase awareness of the relationship between the OFS and YouFra. Some documents in this regard have already been prepared, and they are a stimulus for the fraternities of both the OFS and YouFra.

Presence in the world

The Commission on Presence in the World, after the intermediate Chapter of Sao Paulo, has continued its activity to implement the guidelines present in the working document developed after the General Chapter of Budapest in 2008.

In this sense it is appropriate to emphasize that much remains to be done to fully develop all that is stated in the document in section 2, which calls on the Commission to become a privileged channel of information among the national fraternities, particularly

- Bringing the concerns and commitments "Presence in the World" calls for in Chapters and in Fraternal Visits
- Supporting and sharing national initiatives in this field through the use of the CIOFS website

To fully respond to these two points we believe on the one hand it entails involving members of the commission more in these aspects and spheres of life of the Order and, on the other hand, requesting the National Councils to structure themselves with a similar national commission to maintain a constant dialogue with the CIOFS commission. We should also improve the website to make it more "user friendly" (easy to use) and to facilitate access to documents.

These are the activities that were completed:

1. Emergency situations

In this period, to the emergency situations already open, new ones have joined them.

We detailed the following at the last General Chapter

- 1) Syria - agreed to the proposal of the Custodian of the Holy Land and gave the bank details and news about the killing of a monk
- 2) Italy: Sardinia - letter of support after floods
- 3) Philippines - Support after typhoon Hiyan.
- 4) Central African Republic - Invitation to fasting and prayer.
- 5) Pakistan - Information on the human chain to allow Christians to attend Mass
- 6) Venezuela: Letter to the National Councils to support the action of the Bishops for peace and democracy.
- 7) Ukraine: publication of the letter from the National Council
- 8) Lenten message on the CIOFS website

2 Formation Sheets and description of national projects published on the CIOFS website

Formation Sheets

Twelve formation sheets have been prepared and published on the CIOFS website to help fraternities and individual members to become aware of what Presence in the World means in the light of the Gospel, the Rule and the Social Doctrine of the Church.

For several reasons, the publication (of the documents) was behind schedule.

Unfortunately, comments on the contents of the sheets and their use have been very few.

3. Project Haiti

After the visit in June 2013, we began and funded the following projects:

- Education of children in primary levels
- Education of Adults
- Orphanage
- Tailor shop in Canaan
- School support for children in Canaan
- Water well and latrines in Abacou
- Financial support for six months to four poor women of the parish

We were able to accomplish these projects thanks to the contributions received from some national fraternities, but we received only enough to sustain the project until the end of 2015.

It would be helpful if a national fraternity would "adopt" these poor women in exchange for small services in the Church of the Holy Cross, where they attend; namely, to welcome homeless people and their children or grandchildren during the day. The amount for each of these women would be \$ 60 a month for them to support themselves and their grandchildren for whom they are responsible because of the death of their parents in the earthquake. It would be a way to help without offending their dignity.

3. Other CIOFS Presidency initiatives in its mission to animate and guide the international fraternity (GC 73.b):

Legal and Patrimonial Commission

General Introduction

The purpose of the Commission is to assist the Presidency and the General Minister. It receives requests from the Presidency, the General Minister, but also from our brothers and sisters around the world. The commission is an independent body, but a work group at the service of and operating under the Presidency, and presents the results of its work to the Presidency, but first to the General Minister. Among the tasks of Legal and Patrimonial Commission is also reviewing national statutes.

The commission has established a certain method of work, which includes three meetings a year in Rome, two days each, besides the activity they conduct by email throughout the year.

Some points on the activity of the commission

Many of the national statutes have been revised, although we know that the pending questions are a great challenge for everyone. Those working in this field do everything possible to reduce the time of the review.

The Commission, at the request of the Presidency, has developed a set of guidelines. Some of them refer to the work of the members of the Presidency, while others have to do with the life of the Order. Important documents have been completed or are being defined with respect to Fraternal and Pastoral Visits, on elective Chapters, on the editing and revision of the national statutes, on the real property of the Order. We hope that these documents will be useful instruments for all the fraternities at the various levels.

One of the main tasks of the commission is to complete a survey and a list of legal documents, decrees, decisions, etc ... that are in effect. It often happens that some decisions made in the past, or some documents, have been forgotten. We need a clear and updated record all the documents in force.

The legal commission has had to deal with appeals which the Presidency brought to it. From one point of view, these appeals have shown a series of cases in which we have experienced the lack of mutual understanding, many different points of view, the lack of adequate formation in the Rule, the General Constitutions and the nature of the order, and sometimes a non-fraternal attitude. Moreover, these cases have highlighted the need for following closer the life of national fraternities and to deepen personal contacts.

The commission is still facing the challenge of reviewing the translation of key documents of the Order (Rule, General Constitutions, Ritual) in the four official languages. Much remains to be done.

In short, the Commission offers advice on various legal aspects requested by the Presidency and does all the prep work in regards to appeals according to art. 59 G.C. OFS that subsequently the presidency will treat and decide.

Some tasks have not been completed and should be handled by the next Presidency.

PROJECT AFRICA

At its meeting from April 10 to 17 of 2010, the CIOFS Presidency decided to develop a project called Project Africa, which would focus on the animation and guidance of national fraternities in Africa. The main objective of the project was to reflect on the essential elements of the identity of Secular Franciscans living in the African culture and to identify the ways in which that identity could be animated and guided within the African context. To carry out this project, the Presidency established a working group coordinated by Doug Clorey (vice general minister), and that included Michèle Altmeyer (French), Lucy Almirañez (English) and Fr. Amanuel Mesgun-Temelso, OFM (general assistant). Other members of the Presidency also collaborated on this work, including Maria Aparecida Crepaldi (Portuguese), Benedetto Lino (Italian) and Ana Fruk (Franciscan Youth).

The International Fraternity currently has 116 national fraternities, of which 35 are in Africa (30%). Of those 35, 15 national fraternities are established, 7 are emerging and 13 are just starting and represent a presence of Secular Franciscans in their respective nations.

During the course of this work of the Presidency, priority was given to communications and obtaining a good understanding of the situation on how Secular Franciscan life is lived in Africa. Fraternal and pastoral visits and elective national chapters played a key role in this effort. During these visits, the Secular Franciscans in Africa, especially in countries in Francophone Africa, shared their sense of isolation and the need to communicate with the sisters and brothers of other national fraternities. In addition to visits, conferences were organized in Africa to achieve a better understanding of the reality of life in Africa and to assess support for an African project which is underway. The congresses were held in Lusaka (Zambia) between June 1 and 7 of 2011 (English-speaking), in Kigali (Rwanda) between July 6 and 13 of 2013 (central and eastern Francophone Africa), and Lomé (Togo) between February 8 and 15 of 2014 (Francophone west Africa).

The V Congress of English-speaking Africa, held in Lusaka, had representatives from 11 national fraternities, including a representative of the Portuguese-speaking area (Mozambique). Participants at the conference reflected on profession, identity and the sense of belonging to the Secular Franciscans and they committed to studying and living the OFS Rule and General Constitutions. The congress agreed that there was a need for a project that would help Africa create structures for better communication among national fraternities in Africa, to increase support to emerging fraternities and make formation a priority. Participants also proposed a number of people to serve on the Coordinating Team of Project Africa.

The First Congress of French-speaking Africa, held in Rwanda, had representatives from 8 national fraternities. The Second Congress of French-speaking Africa, held in Togo, had representatives from 10 national fraternities, including 3 representatives of Portuguese speaking areas (Angola, Cape Verde and Guinea-Bissau), and a representative of the English-speaking area (Ghana). These two conferences provided an opportunity for participants to share their experiences and to reflect together on the identity and status of the Secular Franciscans, Franciscan Youth and spiritual assistants within the African culture. Participants also highlighted the need to improve communications (local, regional, national and international) to animate and to better guide the OFS and Franciscan Youth. Participants in both conferences endorsed Project Africa and, like the Congress in Zambia, proposed a number of people to serve on the Coordinating Team of Project Africa.

The three congresses in Africa were extremely valuable in gaining a good understanding of the situation of life that exists in Africa for Secular Franciscans and Franciscan Youth. It was an opportunity for Secular Franciscans and Franciscan Youth who speak English, French and Portuguese from across Africa to come together and to get a renewed understanding of the need for formation in relation to profession for Secular Franciscans and commitment to the promise of Franciscan Youth . These conferences were also invaluable in the formation of a Coordinating Team for Project Africa who could take the project forward in the next three years. The members of the Coordinating Team have been elected and have met for the first time on October 23 and 24 October of 2014. They will also participate in the General Chapter as a means of orientation toward the life of the OFS and YouFra internationally. Later in the program, Phase 2 of Project Africa will be proposed to the General Chapter as one of the initiatives to be carried forward for the next Presidency.

Project China

We have devoted intense attention to the development of, let's say, the first phase of Project China, with the precious dedication of the Project Committee consisting of:

- Lucy Almirañez, representing the CIOFS Presidency
- Magdalena Lee (Hong Kong)
- Julia Lai (Hong Kong)
- Lucia Park (Korea)
- Fr. Joseph, OFM, appointed by the General Minister OFM as Project Assistant and National Assistant for the OFS in China

After the fraternal visit made in June by the General Minister, accompanied by the Presidency Councilors, Lucy Almirañez and Michèle Altmeyer, along with members of the Coordinating Team for Project China, we have determined that it was good to start the second phase of the project involving in the brothers and sisters of mainland China, available for a determined mission in two specific regions.

And to ask the Major Superior OFM for canonical establishment of some local fraternities that meet all the conditions for it. Similarly, after the offer of two Conventual Franciscan Friars, we have asked the Minister General, Fr. Marco Tasca, for the appointment of two spiritual assistants for the OFS.

We have proposed to the Presidency for the appointment of a national/regional coordinating team, supported by the working group established from the start, adding the OFS of France, Isabelle Chaumont.

PART III

Activity of the CIOFS Presidency:

1. Meetings during the triennium

- We have had 6 meetings lasting 6-7 days on the following dates:

Year 2012: March 24 to 31 and October 20 to 27

Year 2013: April 6 to 13 and November 2 to 9

Year 2014: March 29 to April 5 and October 25 to 30

- During the triennium the Presidency has made 180 decisions.

• When an urgent problem arose outside the time of our meetings, we proceeded to discuss the subject matter through email; later each member of the presidency voted in favor or against, resulting in the answer.

2. Arguments and major decisions:

a) Ordinary Administration

➤During this triennium, the Presidency and the General Minister have sent out 35 circulars and 315 letters with their accompanying documents. The recipients were, on some occasions, all the brothers and sisters of the Order, but most of them were sent to the International Councilors and the National Councils of the OFS and YouFra, as well as specific National Councils and many brothers and sisters. We cannot itemize the vast number of email messages received and the responses provided.

➤It has completed all the scheduled national chapters and made Fraternal and Pastoral Visits as requested or by its own initiative when the specific situation of some national fraternities demanded it.

Fraternal and pastoral visits made in the three years: 63, some of them remain open because of different problems requiring special support from the Presidency to solve the problems encountered. Fraternal Visits are typically assumed by the Presidency, but sometimes it was necessary to ask some brothers and sister, international councilors or not. Depending on the case.

National Chapters presided by the Presidency or International Councilor delegates: 103 (Exhibits 3 and 4).

➤Participation in Continental Congresses:

- First European OFS and YouFra Congress held in Lisieux
- XVIII "Quinquennial Congress" in the United States held in Chicago, Illinois
- IV Asia-Oceania Congress held in Korea
- VIII Latin American Congress held in Argentina
- V Anglophone congress held in Lusaka, Zambia
- First and Second francophone Congresses held in Africa:
 - I In Rwanda for francophone countries in Central and East Africa
 - II In Togo for French-speaking and Portuguese speaking countries of West Africa

b) Problems in national fraternities:

It responded to a few requests for intervention that were been taken, either by the national councils and international councilors, whether particular brothers or sisters had a problem, complaint or action to be performed. In these cases our approach, whenever possible, has been mediation in order to facilitate dialogue and issues to be resolved in the field itself. When this was not possible the Presidency has stepped in through the most appropriate councilor for each case or through the Legal Commission or directly through the General Minister.

Too often, it seemed to us that actions or problems could and should be resolved within the scope of the national fraternity itself, respecting the principle of subsidiarity, but this does not satisfy those who want intervention at the highest level of Order.

The vast majority of the problems stem from an attitude of authoritarianism, or are caused by very grave gossip and slanderous accusations toward brothers and sisters, which can destroy the right to their good name and reputation. It bothers me to see a desire to destroy a person at the time of exercising their responsibility.

Ignorance of our legislation itself leads many of our brothers and sisters as well as Councils at different levels to knock at the door of the Presidency to solve a problem that could be managed perfectly within the scope of the national fraternity.

III Blessed "Raimondo Lullo" OFS Foundation

Emanuela De Nunzio has left an inheritance to the Secular Franciscan Order (International Fraternity) and an important bequest to a distant cousin.

In her will, she has established "the Blessed Raimondo Lullo Foundation, which will be used to finance formation activities of the International Council of the Secular Franciscan Order (OFS), especially in the countries of Eastern Europe and Latin America, also for those Secular Franciscans and religious who require a study grant to submit a dissertation / thesis on the nature, history and spirituality of the Secular Franciscan Order. "

In her will, to prevent abuses in the use of its assets, she left very clear conditions. **For example, you can not use the fixed and movable assets, but only the revenues produced for the purposes established by her.**

The Foundation has two bodies, an Administration Board and a "control" committee. The governing body will always be made up of the General Minister of the OFS, the Vice General Minister, the Councilor of the Italian language area, the Councilor of the Presidency in charge of economic affairs and the General Secretary of the OFS. The controlling body is called "Committee of Reviewers and financial consultants". It is composed of a member of the OFS Presidency, the general treasurer of the Friars Minor Conventual and general treasurer of Friars Minor Capuchin or his delegate, and finally an auditor accountant.

Emanuela gave the presidency three years to obtain legal recognition of the Foundation and, if not achieved, its assets should be allocated to the Fund 'Boni Pastor Mater'.

Happily and after fast-paced work, filled with obstacles, we succeeded and the Foundation is already in possession of the inheritance from our dear sister, former General Minister of the OFS between 1990 and 2002. As we should, we must thank God and Emanuela for the gift received, so important for the progress of formation at the international level.

Relationship with the Franciscan Family

• **The Conference of the Franciscan Family (CFF)**

As usual, the General Ministers of the First Order and the TOR, the OFS General Minister and the President of the IFC-TOR (Men and women religious of active life), which form the CFF, met at least twice a year to take joint initiatives for our Family.

At the last meeting on October 3, I have expressed my confidence to the MMGG that the OFS is always welcome and considered as an active member of the Conference, listening to their proposals that are the voice of the lay and secular life of our family. Present in the particular society on the five continents.

Franciscans International

Franciscans International (FI), a common ministry of the Franciscan Family, underwent some major changes over the last two and half years. On October 2012, the Conference of the Franciscan Family (CFF) and the Board of Directors of FI (IBD) agreed unanimously to "resize" the FI organization, which would be better positioned to move forward in a financially sustainable way, and to operate more effectively in building a bridge between the Franciscans who work at the grassroots level and the United Nations (UN). In support of this resizing, the structure of FI service delivery underwent some major changes, including reducing the size of the organization into an office in Geneva, a single office in New York and the closure of the Bangkok office. This resizing of the organization also includes reducing the organization from 18 to 5 employees, a reduction of almost 75% of the workforce, and we watched as the Executive Director, along with much of the competent staff, left the organization.

During this transition period, issues of management and administration were at the top of the agenda, including clarification of roles and interactions between the CFF, the Board of Directors of FI (IBD) and FI staff.

The monthly and quarterly financial reports improved so those crisp, clear financial statements of income and expenditure could be controlled by the IBD and CFF regularly and continuously. Two audits were completed during this time of restructuring, without material problems identified by auditors. Strict internal controls were also put in place to ensure proper use of funds.

During these difficult times, the IBD exercised its function with due diligence and support backed by the CFF and the full cooperation of the staff of the FI. The result has been that FI ended Fiscal Year (FY) 2013 in the black, with all debts paid and with sufficient resources of funds to start the year in a sustainable manner. More importantly, despite the smaller staff, advocacy work has continued and in some cases has grown, ensuring that the ministry of the Franciscan Family for the poor, the environment and the promotion of peace is able to continue at the United Nations. This successful organizational change is particularly significant in 2014, when the Franciscan Family celebrates the 25th anniversary of FI's recognition by the United Nations as a Non-Governmental Organization (NGO).

Healing and spiritual assistance to CIOFS

Pastoral Visit to the Presidency by the Conference of General Ministers of the First Order and TOR:

The Presidency, like all the national, regional and local councils, receives a visit, but in this case, it's only a Pastoral Visit by the Conference of General Ministers. This time it was completed by Fr. Michael Higgins, General Minister of the TOR during two visits:

- Visit to the OFS Secretariat, date: 23 March 2013
- Visit to the Presidency during the whole time during its meeting from 20th to 27th October 2013

We received some strong recommendations in regard to the structure of the Secretariate, relative to the people working in the Ministry, with the purpose of serving the International Fraternity better by having a fixed schedule of availability and of attention.

Fr. Michael Higgins also left us with some points and recommendations for the work and responsibility of animating and guiding which the Presidency has. He said that in the service of our order, we should not forget such things as:

"In his presentation, Benedetto Lino has suggested that it would be useful to provide some kind of formation for newly elected national ministers. This suggestion is important and should not be lost. In my own order we have made a 'Manual for Provincials' containing a detailed list of responsibilities for the provincial, with a session on how to manage the official correspondence between the different Provinces and Vice Provinces and General level of the Order, with some examples about how to write reports or requests. I have to especially recognize our Conventual brothers who have shared their work. Perhaps something similar can be done for the OFS, i.e., the creation of educational materials or a manual for ministers, to be used at the local, regional and national levels.

During the week we discussed the use of the Internet by members of the Order and the presence of published material on the web that can be attributed to the Order. It is clear that in this age of rapid communication over the Internet, some measures should be put in place to ensure and protect the name of the Order and the Franciscan Family. As I said during our discussion this week, the Conference of the General Ministers of the First Order and the Third Order Regular is currently working on a document that provides guidance to our brethren in regard to Internet use. We hope that a draft document is ready in the not too distant future. I will make a recommendation to the Conference, that this information be shared with the Conference of the Franciscan Family, so that the whole family can adopt a common approach to this problem. Meanwhile, with regard to the publication of articles and documents on the web itself, the OFS Presidency should try to follow the Can. 823.1 of the Code of Canon Law which states:

To preserve the integrity of the truths of faith and morals, the pastors of the Church have the duty and the right to ensure that neither the writings nor the use of social media damage the faith and morals of the faithful; also demand that the faithful subject to their judgment the writings to be published that have to do with faith or morals; and also to condemn writings which do harm to the righteousness of faith or morals.

This falls under the competence of the General Spiritual Assistants, as delegates of the General Ministers of the First Order and TOR, should "ensure the fidelity of the OFS to the Franciscan charism, communion with the Church and union with the Franciscan Family. "

And later he makes us a strong call to responsibility in the discernment of vocation:

"During recent years there have been many discussions and they have paid much attention to the need on the part of members of the Order, of seeing their own calling as a vocation in the fullest sense of the word. An important aspect is the sense of 'belonging' to the Order, to see it as a major life commitment. Another aspect of the vocational call is that it provides a structure to life. In this respect, 'belonging' can be understood as closely linked to the vocation. In a sense, you could say that our vocation choice is like a lens through which we see the world and make our decisions accordingly. If this is not instilled in the lives and attitudes of the brothers and sisters of the Order, we run the risk that members will see their Order only as a social center or a place to meet with people who think similarly. The reason I say this is because many times, when you go into the OFS, it is because friends are already a part and not necessarily because they feel a strong desire to embrace the choice as a vocation. When this occurs, the tissue of the Order as a whole is weakened. For this reason I would therefore suggest that there be greater attention given during the initial stages of the formation of the new members, informing them more about what it truly means to have a vocation to the Order. "

There are other points directed to the Presidency itself which have a deep interest for the life of the OFS. We thanked God for this moment of grace and also for some of the suffering that has purified work of the Presidency. So we thanked Michael Higgins for his effort, love and sensitivity to our Order.

General Spiritual Assistance

During the triennium 2011/2014, we had to change two General Assistants. Father Ivan Matic, OFM, completed his General Assistance service in October 2012, after more than 12 years of fruitful assistance, either to the OFS or Franciscan Youth, for which he had a special charisma. Also in July of this year 2014, the General Assistant, Fr. Amanuel Mesgún-Temelso OFM Cap. was elected Minister Provincial of the Capuchins in Eritrea, so he had to leave his service to the International Fraternity. Both have served with great conviction and a great love for the OFS and YouFra.

So now the General Assistants are:

Fr. Jose Antonio Cruz Duarte, OFM (Brazil)

Fr. Martín Pablo Bitzer, OFM Conv. (Argentina)

Fr. Francis Bongajum Dor, OFM Cap. (Cameroon)

Fr. Amando Trujillo Cano, TOR (Mexico - Vicar General TOR)

As you all know, General Assistants are part of the OFS Presidency, in accordance with art. 72.1 of our General Constitutions, as delegates of their respective General Ministers. They share all the rights and duties as other members of the Presidency. With the only limitation in the expression of votes on economic issues and elective sessions.

I want to draw attention to economic issues -- General Assistants, like assistants at other levels, have a duty and responsibility to provide spiritual and moral enlightenment in the deliberations and decisions of a financial nature. We live in close communion with our General Assistants, either performing Fraternal and Pastoral Visits, making this service a true grace of God, and at meetings of the Presidency; although here we have had some differences of opinion, they have been adequately resolved in a timely manner.

You will receive an account of the General Spiritual Assistance where you will find the details of their service.

On behalf of the Presidency I wish to express our fraternal gratitude and affection to the six of them.

“Altius Moderamen”

The Conference of Ministers General of the First Order and TOR, together with the Minister General of the OFS, and upon the recommendation of the Pastoral Visitor to the OFS, decided in 2013 to begin a study of the significance of the « altius moderamen ».

PART V

1. The General Secretariat

This triennium has been a little hectic, because of the pastoral visit and after the concern manifested to the visitor by the Minister and Vice Minister General, there have been changes that have affected people who for 10 years have been collaborating with us in a work situation that was not compliant. So based on the recommendations from Michael Higgins, TOR, we made the decision to put a person under the regulation of the standard labor legislation of the Italian state with a fixed schedule weekdays from Monday to Friday.

This person is Isa Rimmaudo. She has been working in the Secretariat since September 2012, and has integrated into the system in an excellent way. She is a serious and meticulous person in managing correspondence that she keeps up to date. An important part of her work is the translation of documents, letters, circulars and minutes of meetings of the Presidency.

Subsequently, given the need to scan the files from OFS, we tried Laura Busaglia in April 2014; now after the excellent work that she has done, she is developing and has also been hired legally. As compared to the sense of responsibility and social justice, we are in good standing with the Italian labor regulations.

In December 2012 we began work on recording the history file since 2008, with ForePapyro program.

This provided for the inclusion of documents of every incorporated or emerging national fraternity, which had hitherto only been available on paper in two files and in the file called Shared Documents.

Laura Busaglia: does the job to log/protocol ForePapyro and when necessary also does translations.

The work with the program ForePapyro of historical archives from 2008 to the date of commencement of this Chapter has been completed.

The objective of the Secretariat is to convert all historical files since the beginning of the International Fraternity, continuing in daily scanning inserting current records.

The General Secretariat is in contact every day with Isa and Laura in order to organize the ordinary and extraordinary work of the secretariat

The Presidency wishes to thank Irene Coccozza and Alda Badanai for ten years of close collaboration undertaken with great availability and great identification with the work they have done and their genial attitude towards all the members of the Presidency.

2 Economic Commission and General Treasury

- Incorporation of Roberto Falzago, OFS: It is appropriate to train a brother (minister of the fraternity of Latina S. Francesco), a professional accountant, financial consultant, is 50 years old, single and works in his proper profession. He is helping the General Treasurer who introduced him to the treasury management of CIOFS. We are proposing to appoint him Assistant Accountant to be more responsible and accountable for the work of the Presidency pending future developments.

- Development and organization of the work: The first task of the Treasury is the financial and economic management of the OFS, through the collection, recording and monitoring of accounting transactions. Accounting is done on a "cash basis" and not on an "accrual basis" (????); this is because the very nature of the Order involves performing "Presidential Decisions," that address activities to be developed according to the financial availability at the time. Therefore, the criterion of "Cash" responds well to this peculiarity and allows constant monitoring of financial resources and of their possible use. The control over accounting entries is updated periodically through reconciliation of accounting records for each bank account, securities and invested cash with extracts of accounts of banks and stock verification. In addition, at each meeting of the Presidency balance reports relating to previous periods and, often, to the end of the previous month, are presented to show the members of the Council of the Presidency of CIOFS the actual situation of the accounts management.

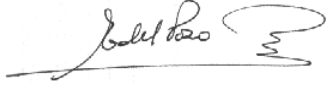
To conclude,

This is a brief report of the service offered, but it is almost impossible to outline everything that we have accomplished and the hours that each member of the Presidency has devoloted, with love, to the service that you confided in us.

We can only thank God; in his Divine Providence, even in the midst of difficulties and limitations, he has allowed us to work with love and for the love of our brothers and sisters in the OFS around the world.

The Presidency thanks all of the national fraternities for their confidence and for the the love received. Suffering and setbacks have also helped us to experience our littleness and "Perfetta Letizia", perfect joy.

Assisi, November 2, 2014



Encarnación del Pozo
Minister General, OFS