

**ST. FRANCIS REGION
LEADERSHIP TRAINING CLASS
SYLLABUS**

Class #5 – Beginning 6/23/2017

Classes will begin on June 23, 2017 at Pro-Sanctity Retreat Center located at 205 So. Pine St., Fullerton, CA 92833. They will be held over week-ends on the following dates:

June 23-25, 2017
Sept. 29 – Oct. 1, 2017
Feb. 23-25, 2018
April 27-29, 2018
July 13-15, 2018
Oct. 26-28, 2018

The principal task of a Secular Franciscan leader is to promote the initiatives necessary for fostering fraternal life, for improving the human, Christian and Franciscan formation of [the fraternity's] members and for sustaining their witness and commitment in the world, and to make concrete and courageous choices appropriate for the situation of the fraternity. . . .

General Constitutions Art. 50.1

The principal task of the [Spiritual] Assistant is to communicate Franciscan Spirituality and to Co-operate in the Initial and Continuing Formation of the Brothers and Sisters

General Constitutions: Art. 90. 1

OBJECTIVES OF COURSE:

TO ENHANCE OUR FRANCISCAN SPIRITUALITY AND FORMATION THROUGH:

- **Servant Leadership:** Communicating Franciscan Spirituality, employing people skills, and serving the fraternity members
- **Respectful Communication:** being respectful and open with our brothers and sisters, nonjudgmental when listening to them, and clear about issues without dominating the conversation
- **International, National and St. Francis Regional Formation Resources:**

learning how to co-operate in initial and ongoing formation

- **Prayer Forms:** prayerful experiences
- **The Franciscan Family:** becoming familiar with the Orders of the Franciscan Family, and the diverse ways we serve society as we seek to rebuild the Church
- **Catholic Social Teaching:** Peace, Justice, and Integrity of Creation
- **Spiritual Reflections:** Opportunities to offer reflections, which will be expected at council meetings and fraternity gatherings
- **The Sacrament of the Present Moment:** As Christians, we are called to seek to live in **daily communion** with the Triune God and make his will our own while “building bridges and animating peace. “

PASTORAL ATTRIBUTES OF A LEADER:

- Peacemaker
- Discernment
- Knowledgeable of Franciscan Spirituality
- Working Knowledge of National and St. Francis Region Formation Resources
- Sound Knowledge of Catholic Social Issues
- Understanding the Signs of the Times
- Animator of Peace, Justice, and Integrity of Creation
- Servant Leader Skills, such as communication skills, team player, people skills, active listening, non-judgmental, non-controlling, dialogue and collaboration skills

DESCRIPTION OF COURSE:

The course involves a personal and communal approach using the Guidelines for Initial Formation in the Secular Franciscan Order in the United States. Throughout the course you will have the opportunity to enhance your understanding through the following practical applications and topics.

PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS:

1. Discernment
2. Respectful Communication
3. Presentations, Dialogue, and Sharing
4. Prayer Forms
5. Meditation and Reflective writing
6. Homework
7. Case Scenarios
8. For potential spiritual assistants: Internship

TOPICS OF COURSE:

- **GENERAL**
 - *The Rule of the Secular Franciscan Order*
 - *Meaning and Application of the documents of Vatican II*
 - *Understanding and using the Constitutions, Statutes and Ritual*
 - *Characteristics of a Secular Franciscan*
 - *History of the OFS and Identity of its members*
 - *Fidelity to the Franciscan Charism – Altius Moderamen*
 - *The Trinity and the OFS*
 - *Understanding Franciscan Theology, Tradition, and Spirituality*
 - *Vocation: God's Call*
 - *Profession and the Secular Franciscan*
 - *Learning to be a servant leader – the pastoral approach*
 - *Working in a fraternity council and with the fraternity members*
 - *Problem-solving scenarios*
 - *Understanding elections and pastoral visits*
 - *Council members and initial/ongoing formation*
- **Orientation and Initial Formation**
 - *"Come and See" Visitor's Initial Interview*
 - *Orientation & Initial Formation Monthly Attendance Record*
 - *Recommended List of Initial Formation Texts and Resources*
- **Handbook for Spiritual Assistance, 2012**
 - *The spiritual assistant – job description*
 - *The spiritual assistant and the local council*
 - *The spiritual assistant and initial formation*
 - *The spiritual assistant and ongoing formation*
 - *Choosing a formation text, page 52*

- Handbook for Secular Franciscan Servant Leadership
 - *Communicating*
 - *Listening*
 - *Responding*
 - *Engaging in Dialogue*

HOMEWORK

- **Session:** Before each week-end class, students will be assigned homework, which will include outside reading and a variety of other tasks relevant to the class for which it is assigned. Those tasks may include, but are not limited to, writing assignments, preparing presentations, meeting with a mentor, meeting with the classmates with whom you are “paired”, attending Visits and Elections to fraternities as assigned.
- **Assignments:** All homework assignments will be carried out between the classes. You will be expected to come to the next class with your homework assignments completed and in some cases, be prepared to present them to the class. Details will be given at the time the assignments are made.
- **ATTENDANCE**
We are unable to offer makeup sessions during the present course. You must attend all sessions.

COURSE SCHEDULE*

June 23-25, 2017 - Introduction to the Course; Expectations; Chapter 1 - Guidelines for Initial Formation
Includes: Vatican II Documents; OFS Rule; Characteristics of a Secular Franciscan; Conversion; Scripture

Sept. 29 - Oct. 3, 2017 - Chapter 2 - Guidelines for Initial Formation
Includes: Holy Spirit in our lives; Operations of a council and fraternity; formation teams; job of a Spiritual Assistant; sponsors; structure of the Secular Franciscan Order; OFS General Constitutions and National Statutes; scenarios

Feb. 23-25, 2018 - Chapter 3 - Guidelines for Initial Formation

Includes: servant leadership; the Franciscan family;; process of initial formation; use of OFS documents; Franciscan spirituality; meaning of profession; ongoing formation; characteristics of a secular Franciscan daily life

April 27-29, 2018 – Chapter 4 – Guidelines for Initial Formation

Includes: OFS Rule; Vatican II documents; Conversion; Scripture; History of the OFS and its Rules; Way of Life; Theology, spirituality and relationship with Jesus; life in fraternity – how to serve while leading; scenarios

July 13-15, 2018 – Chapter 5 – Guidelines for Initial Formation

Includes: Trinity and the OFS; OFS Rule; relationship with Jesus and one another; our life's project; giving formation; communication; scenarios.

October 26-28, 2018 – Being who we are called to be

Includes: Place of the spiritual assistant – a servant leader; problem-solving; fraternal and pastoral visits; elections; working together; conflict resolution; scenarios

* The subjects included in each week-end are possibilities only; as always, the class will operate on God's clock, not man's, and we will take whatever time is needed to thoroughly cover and understand each area of study.

RESPECTFUL COMMUNICATION

Communication as Servant Leader

*It is essential that the fraternity member who is speaking is able to **COMMUNICATE** his or her feelings as well as the content of the material he or she is trying to convey. The next step is to **LISTEN** carefully to others' concerns and feelings and be able to listen with an open heart and mind and not pass judgment. After listening, there is a time to **RESPOND** to what has been said. The response should be expressed clearly and concisely and not be used as a means to sidetrack the issue being discussed. The last and probably most important activity is to **ENGAGE IN DIALOGUE** with other fraternity members.*

[Handbook for Secular Franciscan Servant Leadership]

GLOSSARY TERMS

1. Penance > Metanoia – *Within the Judeo-Christian scriptures, conversion means a two part turning: first, it is turning away from alienation and sin, a movement ordinarily called repentance – metanoia; second, it is a turning toward the living God, a movement often called enlightenment – epistrophe.*
(*Penance and Conversion*, p.4 of 18)

Metanoia is meant to be understood as an intimate conversion of the heart to God, as a vital attitude, a continuous state of being. It is not a question of doing penance but of being penitent. (Identity of an SFO, p. 10 of 24)

2. Peace Maker: a person who seeks not only to live God's peace, but is willing to mediate peace between/ among others
3. Prayer and Contemplation: **The soul of all we are and do [OFS Rule, art. 8]**
 - Spiritual Reflection: During class you will be asked to reflect and write on topics, readings, or experiences and how the Holy Spirit spoke to you. Refer to FUN Manual, *Understanding Franciscan Theology, Tradition, and Spirituality - Lectio Divina and Franciscan Lection* (p. 22, 23)
4. Sacrament of the Present Moment: Walking humbly with God, while we stay awake to the gift of an encounter with the Triune God. It is a point of transformation in our lives. *God speaks to every individual through what happens to them moment by moment.*
[Jean-Pierre de Caussade]
5. Signs of the Times: It was taken to mean that the Church should listen to, and learn from, the world around it. We also can adapt the term when we listen to our members in fraternity as we seek to meet their spirituality, formation, apostolate, and fraternal needs.
6. Discernment: Discernment is the ability to decide between truth and error, right and wrong. Discernment is the process of making careful distinctions in our thinking about truth. "Test everything; retain what is good. Refrain from every kind of evil." 1 Thessalonians 5: 21-22

PRIMARY RESOURCES – Expected to own or have access to:

1. *Guideline for Initial Formation of the Secular Franciscan Order in the United States* [1985]
2. *FOR UP TO NOW, FOUNDATIONAL TOPICS FOR INITIAL FORMATION, [FUN Manual]*
3. *Handbook for Spiritual Assistance to the Secular Franciscan Order, 2012* [\$15.50 + S/H] Smokey Valley Printing, 785-227-2364
4. *Handbook for Secular Franciscan Servant Leadership, 2010* [\$20 +S/H] Smokey Valley Printing, 785-227-2364
5. *Franciscan Family Connections, [Revised ed. 2011]* by Lester Bach, OFM Cap., [\$15 + S/H], Smokey Valley Printing, 785-227-2364
6. *Ritual of the Secular Franciscan Order, St. Anthony Messenger Press*
7. The Bible
8. Essential Documents of the SFO – General Constitutions, National Statutes, The Rule, The Ritual, Statutes of the International Fraternity, Statutes for Spiritual and Pastoral Assistance to the Secular Franciscan Order, as well as the St. Francis Regional Norms (on St. Francis Region website)
9. *The Franciscan Journey* by Fr. Lester Bach, OFM, Cap.
10. Vatican II Documents: we recommend the small 3 volume set called “*Vatican II in Plain English*” by Bill Huebsch, published by Ave Maria Press and available at amazon.com or abebooks.com.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

1. *Elements of Formation: A Reflection on the Formation Process by the Presidency of the International Council of the SFO*

2. *“De illis Qui Faciunt Penitentiam” - The Rule of the Secular Franciscan Order: Origins, Development, Interpretation* by Stewart, Robert M.
3. *The Franciscan Journey* by Lester Bach, OFM Cap.
4. *Francis of Assisi: The Saint, The Founder, The Prophet*, ed. by Armstrong, Hellman & Short, OFM - 3-volume set
5. *The Sacrament of the Present Moment* by Jean-Pierre de Caussade ISBN 0-06-061809-4
6. *National Formation Workshop, Forming the Formators 5 DVD SET*, Can be viewed on the Formation website of NAFRA
7. *2012 and 2016 QUINQUENNIAL DVD SETS* - Available at franciscanvideos.com.

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