

Some SFO regions have developed programs that can be linked to the *Franciscan Family Connections* - revised 2011. Appointees should, *at the very least*, read: *Franciscan Family Connections* - Revised 2011.

The Provincial or PSA of the Province to which the candidate's fraternity is bonded, **mentors** the course. Instructions for this process are spelled out in pages i to iv of *FFC*. They can delegate the role of *mentor* to another competent individual.

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Process for selection & training of a SA

A Provincial or PSA who has a **qualified** friar available makes the appointment after consulting the appropriate fraternity. If a friar is not available, the fraternity council without a SA can initiate a search for a SA. The criteria listed in *FFC* (Page iv) are required for seeking a SA. Page 4 of this brochure points out possible candidates.

The local council needing a SA, recommends one or more competent persons to the Provincial or PSA of the Province to which the fraternity is bonded. The council(s) includes letters of recommendation from several people who know the candidate well.

When a candidate is selected, the PSA or Provincial initiates the training process. He may *mentor* the training program himself or appoint a *mentor* to conduct the program of *FFC*. After about 12 to 15 months in the program (or sooner), the candidate may begin a period of internship with an experienced SA.

When the *FFC* course is successfully completed, the *mentor* may offer a certificate to the candidate (if the *mentor* is someone other than the Provincial or PSA, approval needs to be given by the Provincial or PSA)

The appropriate Provincial or PSA, after a personal interview, makes the official appointment of the SA to the fraternity in need -Or- the individual may be available to serve in another fraternity as needed.

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Role of a Spiritual Assistant

The Statutes for Spiritual and Pastoral Assistance to the SFO (2009) spell out responsibilities of a SA. The SA can learn SA basics by reading articles 12-16 and 21-24 in the SA's *Statutes* mentioned above. Also read articles 85-95 in the SFO Constitutions.

The SA is expected to foster insights into Franciscan spirituality and co-operate in the initial and continuing formation of the fraternity (SA Statutes - Article 13.1, .2). He/she participates actively and votes in the discussions and decisions taken by the council or the chapter. SA's DO NOT vote on financial matters nor in elections.

cf. SFO Constitutions - article 90.2 / cf. Statutes of the National Fraternity of the SFO in the USA - article 6.6.c

The SA is present for council meetings, regular fraternity gatherings and formation sessions and assists in leadership training.

The SA is responsible for the animation of liturgical celebrations and spiritual reflections during council and chapter meetings. (Article 13.3) This is done in collaboration with the Seculars.

Spiritual Assistance SFO



Information

- * altius moderamen;
- * the authority to appoint;
- * who can be appointed;
- * process for selection and training;
- * role of a spiritual assistant

Altius Moderamen

The term *altius moderamen* is used by Canon Law in canon 303. It states that:

... associations whose members live in the world but share in the spirit of some religious institute, under the "higher direction" ('altius moderamen') of the same institute, and who lead an apostolic life and strive for Christian perfection, are known as third orders, or are called by some other suitable title. (E.g. Secular Franciscan Order)

Canon 303

The SFO Constitutions and altius moderamen:

The spiritual and pastoral care of the SFO, entrusted by the Church to the Franciscan First Order and the TOR, is the duty, above all, of their general and provincial ministers. The altius moderamen, of which Canon 303 speaks, belongs to them. The purpose of the altius moderamen is to guarantee the fidelity of the SFO to the Franciscan charism, communion with the Church, and union with the Franciscan family, values which represent a vital commitment for the secular Franciscans.

SFO Constitutions - Article 85.2

The *altius moderamen* assigned by the Church to public associations (e.g. The SFO), is entrusted to the Franciscan major superiors who share the same Franciscan charism. The SFO is in life-