

To paraphrase one last time:

“You may spread this seed (evangelization); another may water (catechesis); but only God will give the life (‘right faith, firm hope and perfect charity’)” (see 1 Corinthians 3:6-7). Let us pray without ceasing, therefore, that this Formation Manual will help us form true, lifelong Secular Franciscans (including ourselves) AS GOD INTENDS, CALLS AND BRINGS TO FRUITION.

Peace with love and prayers,

Tom Bello, SFO
National Minister
Secular Franciscan Order
United States of America

Dear Sisters and Brothers;

Over the past two and a half years, the National Formation Commission and a host of dedicated Secular Franciscans have diligently labored to to adapt the original CIOFS "Forming the Formators" materials for use here in the United States.

It was also, in the mindset expressed by the The XII General Chapter (2008) and our Minister General to expand the CIOFS materials in order to develop a comprehensive manual which would serve as the foundation of Initial Formation. It was our charter from our own National Executive Council to present specific topics and textual material, based on the Guidelines for Initial Formation, 1985 and the direction set by CIOFS.

These topics would form the fundamental basis of formation for the Order here and would constitute the areas deemed essential in the formation of the Franciscan person.


Our intention is:


- to develop a more uniform formation process across the USA
- to define essential elements of this formation, concretely
- to provide our formators with easy to read and use materials that includes texts suitable for those in formation along with teaching aides, lesson plans, objectives, prayer actions, etc to make facilitating the local and regional formation process easier and more user friendly.
- Lastly to increase our own understanding of who we are called to be as Franciscans, enhance our sense of belonging and ownership of our Order and to pass this Franciscan spirit on to others who respond to this same vocation.

It has been an intense time and I cannot extend adequate thanks to all those who participated in this project, writers, editors and our sisters and brothers from the Presidency formation commission. I can only accept your gracious gift to our Order and offer back my blessing and prayer.

On behalf of the National Formation Commission; peace and all good!


Robert L. Fitzsimmons, SFO
Formation Chair


Richard Trezza, OFM
Formation Spiritual Assistant


Jan Parker, SFO


Kathleen White, SFO


Rena Xuereb, SFO

"We have done what was ours to do, may the Lord show your what is yours!"