

## Secular Franciscan Misconceptions

**Q. Is it true that Secular Franciscans cannot get married?**

**A.** No! A lay person who is professed into the Secular Franciscan Order can get married and have children. Married couples can even be professed together. Secular Franciscans only promise to embrace chastity, not celibacy. It is important to mention that diocesan priests who become Secular Franciscans, do continue to embrace celibacy.

**Q. Is it true that Secular Franciscans cannot have a career?**

**A.** No! Lay people who are professed into the Order can continue to have a career. Lay Secular Franciscans are still part of the secular world and have responsibilities that require them to continue to work and make money. The only thing Secular Franciscans are called to do, is to not have money as their sole desire.

**Q. I heard that the Secular Franciscan Order and the Franciscan Third Order are completely two different orders. Is this true?**

**A.** No! The Catholic Church decided to change the name *Franciscan Third Order* to *Secular Franciscan Order*. The reasoning for the name change, is to emphasize that the Franciscan Third Order members who are mostly lay people, are still part of the secular world, and are living secular lives.

**Q. Is joining the Secular Franciscan Order similar to joining a club? Is it true that there are no responsibilities?**

**A.** Joining the Secular Franciscan Order is in no way joining a club. A Secular Franciscan fraternity is not like a college fraternity which has secret rituals and perpetual parties. A Secular Franciscan fraternity can be pictured as a large family socializing and worshipping together. Also, when a person becomes a Secular Franciscan, that person cannot arbitrarily decide to leave the Order, like a person can in a club. Only through the Pope can a Secular Franciscan leave the Order.

Lastly, when a person becomes a Secular Franciscan, he/she promises to live the Franciscan spirituality. If a person becomes a Secular Franciscan, there are responsibilities one must do.

Responsibilities include:

- ✓ Praying daily either the Divine Office, the Office of the Passion, the 12 Our Fathers, or the Little Office of the Blessed Virgin Mary
- ✓ Financially supporting your local fraternity and giving volunteer support to fraternity ministries

- ✓ Attending fraternity meetings
- ✓ Going on a yearly retreat

**Q. Is it true Secular Franciscans have to wear a robe? What do Secular Franciscans use to identify the Order?**

**A.** Secular Franciscans do not wear robes. As a universal privilege, Secular Franciscans at death may be buried in a Franciscan burial tunic. During the Rite of Profession, fraternities in this region, give their members the burial tunic as a reminder of their mystical death at Profession and as a reminder of inevitable earthly death. The universal habit of a Secular Franciscan is the Tau Cross.