



**SAINT KATHARINE DREXEL REGIONAL FRATERNITY  
SECULAR FRANCISCAN ORDER**

**REGIONAL FRATERNITY GUIDELINES**

Approved November 16, 2013

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Saint Katharine Drexel Regional Fraternity of the Secular Franciscan Order follows the Rule of St. Francis of Assisi as approved by the Roman Catholic Church, The General Constitutions, the International Statutes, ("OFS governing documents"), the Ritual and the Code of Canon Law. We are brothers and sisters of penance, working as a force for the good of the Church and the human community.

These Regional Fraternity Guidelines (the "Guidelines"), which may be amended from time to time by a simple majority vote of all of the members of the Regional Fraternity Council, function in conformity with the OFS governing documents and apply to the Local Fraternities as well as the Regional Fraternity unless otherwise stated. Should these Guidelines become *less restrictive* in whole or in part than the OFS governing documents, for whatever reason, then these Guidelines are subordinated to the OFS governing documents until such time as the Regional Fraternity Council can revise them appropriately.

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **The Regional Fraternity**

1. Saint Katharine Drexel Regional Fraternity ("the Regional Fraternity"), established by the National Fraternity of the Secular Franciscan Order on October 20, 1994, is the representative organ of all the Secular Franciscan Fraternities existing within the following Archdioceses, Dioceses and Eparchys:

Pennsylvania: Allentown, Harrisburg, Archdiocese of Philadelphia, Scranton, Byzantine Catholic Eparchy of Passaic (which includes Catholics of the Byzantine-Ruthenian Rite in Eastern Pennsylvania); and Metropolitan Archdiocese of Philadelphia-Ukrainian;

New Jersey: Camden, Trenton, and Byzantine Catholic Eparchy of Passaic (which includes Catholics of the Byzantine-Ruthenian Rite in New Jersey); and

Delaware: Wilmington and Byzantine Catholic Eparchy of Passaic (which includes Catholics of the Byzantine-Ruthenian Rite in Delaware).

These Fraternities are represented most fully by the Regional Fraternity Council; that is, the Ministers of the Local Fraternities within the Region.

2. The Regional Fraternity is divided into five Districts: NJ East; NJ West; PA Central; PA North; and PA Southeast/Delaware.

3. Each District is represented by a professed Secular Franciscan appointed by the Regional Fraternity Executive Council from a Fraternity within the District. It is the responsibility of each District Councillor to:
  - a. act as the liaison/contact person between the Councillor-At-Large Coordinator and the Fraternities within his/her District;
  - b. coordinate District Gatherings or other regionally sponsored events within his/her District in collaboration with the RFEC;
  - c. preside at Local Fraternity elections, if so delegated; and
  - d. perform other tasks as requested by Regional Minister/Executive Council.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **The Regional Fraternity Council**

4. The Regional Fraternity Council ("RFC") includes the Ministers of the canonically established Local Fraternities of the Region, the Regional Fraternity Executive Council, and the Regional Spiritual Assistants.
5. The RFC represents each Local Fraternity within the Region and has the responsibility of:
  - a. gathering annually to promote the life of the Regional and Local Fraternities;
  - b. suggesting and approving policies to be implemented by the Regional Fraternity Executive Council;
  - c. determining the amount of the annual contribution to be made to the common fund of the Regional Fraternity from the common fund of each Local Fraternity for each of its active professed members and Candidates; and
  - d. voting on matters important to the life of the Regional and Local Fraternities.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **The Regional Executive Council**

6. The Regional Fraternity Executive Council ("RFEC") is composed of a duly elected Minister, Vice-Minister, Formation Director, Secretary, Treasurer, at

least two Councillors-at-Large, and a Regional Spiritual Assistant and/or member of the Conference of Regional Spiritual Assistants.

7. Among the responsibilities of the RFEC are the following:
  - a. animating, guiding and forming the Regional Fraternity;
  - b. promoting knowledge of the Franciscan way of life and commitment to it;
  - c. fostering cooperation and communion among the Local Fraternities and with other branches of the Franciscan family within the Region;
  - d. convening regular meetings of the RFEC to discuss matters of importance to the Region and Local Fraternities;
  - e. approving the formation program for the instruction of those in initial formation in the Local Fraternities;
  - f. providing practical and pastoral interpretations and clarifying specific points in OFS governing documents, when necessary;
  - g. assisting in the resolution of difficulties within the Local fraternities in a spirit of reconciliation, when requested to do so or when it becomes clear that intervention is necessary;
  - h. establishing and directing commissions and committees deemed necessary to achieve goals and objectives determined by the Regional Fraternity Council;
  - i. convening an Annual Meeting;
  - j. seeing that the decisions of the RFC are carried out;
  - k. administering the financial affairs of the Region;
  - l. preparation of an annual budget for presentation to the RFC at the Annual Meeting;
  - m. conducting Chapters of Election for Local Fraternities;

- n. scheduling Fraternal/Pastoral visitations<sup>1</sup> of Local Fraternities as prescribed by OFS governing documents; and
  - o. scheduling an audit of the Regional Fraternity's financial status to be conducted by a professed member, selected by the RFEC, who is not currently on the RFEC or a member of the same Fraternity as those on the RFEC, prior to the expiration of the RFEC's term of office.
8. The RFEC meets at least twice each year, at a time and in a place determined by the Regional Minister in consultation with other members of the RFEC. When not in session, the RFEC may conduct business electronically (*i.e.*, via e-mail, telephone, fax, etc.), provided that any decisions and/or determinations made in this way are reviewed and ratified at the next regular meeting of the RFEC. Special meetings of the RFEC may be called at the request of the Regional Minister or at the written request of two or more members of the RFEC.

#### **CHAPTER FOUR**

#### **Voting and Conduct of Regional Business**

9. The RFC shall meet at least once a year at a time and place determined by the RFEC to promote the life of the Regional and Local Fraternities. In preparation for the Annual Meeting:
- a. the Regional Minister should provide written notice of the meeting with an agenda; and
  - b. the Regional Treasurer shall prepare a proposed budget and present it to the RFEC who, after discussion, will approve it. When approved, the proposed budget will be submitted to the RFC with the Notice and Agenda for the Annual Meeting. The proposed budget shall be discussed at the Annual Meeting and then voted on for final ratification.
10. All members of the RFC, as defined at Chapter 2.4, may vote. No Spiritual Assistant may vote on any question involving financial matters or in the Regional Chapter of Elections. This restriction applies to Secular Franciscans as well as religious friars or sisters serving as Spiritual Assistants for a particular Local Fraternity.

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<sup>1</sup> Fraternal/Pastoral visitations are held at the same time; they are not to be scheduled separately.

11. The Minister of each Local Fraternity has the primary responsibility for casting the vote of the Local Fraternity in all elections and on all business which may come before the RFC.
12. The Local Fraternity Minister is required to attend the Annual Meeting and is expected to attend any other gathering scheduled by the RFEC unless a serious matter prevents him/her from doing so.
13. It is the responsibility of the Local Fraternity Minister to advise the Regional Minister in writing of his/her inability to attend an Annual Meeting and to provide the name of the delegate authorized to act in his/her stead. The Local Fraternity Minister should also provide his/her delegate with the documents attendant to the gathering and his/her comments regarding proposed agenda items.
14. The delegate of the Local Fraternity shall be the Vice-Minister. If both the Local Minister and Local Vice-Minister are unable to be present, then a member of the Local Fraternity Council selected by that body shall attend and exercise all of the powers of a delegate for the Local Fraternity.
15. No official business may be transacted at the Annual Meeting unless a quorum is present. A quorum is defined as the presence of more than half of the number of those having the right to vote.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **Regional Chapter of Elections**

16. The Regional Fraternity meets for the purpose of electing its RFEC once every three years. The Chapter will follow the norms presented in the OFS governing documents. As to Voting Rights, see Chapter 4.10.
17. At least **six months** prior to the Chapter of Elections, the Regional Minister shall advise the National Minister and the Secretary of the Conference of National Spiritual Assistants of the date of the proposed Chapter and request that a Presider and Ecclesial Witness be provided.
18. At least **six months** prior to the Chapter, the RFEC shall appoint a Chair for a Nominating Committee, whose task it will be to call for nominations from the professed members of the Local Fraternities. Once the nominations are received, the Nominating Committee will confirm that the nominees meet the requirements for the office for which they have been nominated, as outlined in paragraphs 19 and 20 below. The prospective nominee will then be notified and requested to advise the Nominating Committee whether he/she will accept the nomination. Once the slate of nominees is confirmed, the Nominating Committee will provide it to the RFC **one** month prior to the date of the Chapter.

19. Nominees for Regional Minister, Regional Vice-Minister, Formation Director must be permanently professed for at least five (5) years and will have completed these experience requirements:
- |                              |  |
|------------------------------|--|
| Regional Minister:           | completed at least one term as Local Fraternity Minister;                      |
| Regional Vice Minister:      | completed at least one term as Local Fraternity Vice-Minister or Minister; and |
| Regional Formation Director: | completed at least one term as Local Fraternity Formation Director.            |
20. Nominees for the positions of Regional Secretary, Regional Treasurer and Regional Councillors-at-Large must be permanently professed for at least three (3) years.
21. It is the responsibility of the Nominating Committee and the Presider of the Chapter of Elections to assure that the requirements for nomination have been met.
22. Elected Regional Fraternity Executive Councillors may, at the same time, hold another elected office at the Local Fraternity level, except that the following are incompatible:
- a. the office of Minister at two different levels; and
  - b. the offices of Minister, Vice-Minister, Formation Director, Secretary and Treasurer at the same level; that is, unless necessary because of the *temporary* incapacitation of a member of the Council, an elected Council person can hold only one position on the Council.
23. An outgoing Regional Minister cannot succeed him/herself as Regional Vice-Minister.
24. Absentee nominees are permitted *provided* they have submitted in writing their willingness to accept nomination for a specific position (or positions) and their willingness to serve, if elected.
25. Absentee ballots are not permitted.



**CHAPTER SIX**  
**Duties of Regional Office**

26. The Regional Minister, as the primary person responsible for the Regional Fraternity:
  - a. carries out the duties of the Office as determined by provisions of general and particular law and in accordance with the OFS governing documents;
  - b. presides at meetings of the RFEC and the Regional Fraternity;
  - c. is the spokesperson for the Regional Fraternity in all contacts with other Church and civil organizations as well as with the general public; and
  - d. may, as the outgoing Regional Minister be asked to serve the RFEC in an advisory capacity (*ex officio*, unofficial and non-voting), if not elected to serve in another capacity on the RFEC.
27. The Regional Vice-Minister performs such duties as the Regional Minister may designate, in addition to duties assigned by general and particular law and the OFS governing documents.
28. The Regional Formation Director:
  - a. coordinates formation workshops for those involved in Local Fraternity formation;
  - b. acts as a liaison for communication of formation issues and policies between the National and Local Fraternities;
  - c. provides opportunities for retreats and Franciscan spiritual growth in collaboration with District Councilors; and
  - d. coordinates workshops for developing Fraternity Leadership skills, with the assistance of the other members of the RFEC.
29. The Regional Secretary:
  - a. records, distributes and keeps all records of the minutes of both the RFEC and the Regional Fraternity;
  - b. preserves important documents and correspondence of the Regional Fraternity;

- c. assists the Regional Minister in sending out announcements of forthcoming meetings of the RFEC and Regional Fraternity; and
- d. performs such other duties as the RFEC requests.

30. The Regional Treasurer:

- a. keeps a record of all financial transactions of the Regional Fraternity, unless otherwise determined by the RFEC;
- b. deposits all monies of the Regional Fraternity into such bank accounts as the RFEC designates and in the name of the Regional Fraternity;
- c. pays out money, by check only, as the business of the Regional Fraternity may require, on order of the RFEC only;
- d. prepares and is prepared to discuss financial reports submitted for approval at each regular meeting of the RFEC and Regional Fraternity; and
- e. prepares, in collaboration with the RFEC, the proposed Budget and Fair Share Contribution for approval by the Regional Fraternity.

31. The Regional Councillors-At-Large:

- a. are liaison/contact persons between the RFEC, District Councillors, and Local Fraternities;
- b. participate in RFEC Meetings and Regional Fraternity gatherings;
- c. preside at Local Fraternity elections, if so delegated;
- d. bring issues, questions, and/or problems of Local Fraternity Ministers to the attention of the Regional Minister and the other members of the RFEC; and
- e. perform other tasks as requested by Regional Minister/Executive Council.

32. If the office of Minister becomes vacant, the Vice-Minister will assume the office. When the office of Vice-Minister becomes vacant, one of the Councillors will be elected by the members of the RFEC to the position of Vice-Minister.

33. If, as a result of the filling of the vacancy of the position of Vice-Minister because of the death, resignation, or incapacitation of the Minister, the number of Councillors is reduced below five, the RFEC may appoint a professed member of the Regional Fraternity to fill that vacancy. Appointed members of the RFEC, while able to express opinions about matters before the Council, do not have voting voice on the Council.

## **CHAPTER SEVEN**

### **Regional Spiritual Assistants**

34. As our General Constitutions provide at Article 90.3c, *the regional spiritual assistants give their service to the regional council and see to the spiritual assistance to the regional fraternity. If they are more than one, they form a conference and give their service collegially.* The Regional Spiritual Assistant or the Conference of Regional Spiritual Assistants ("CRSA"), which consists of representatives of the First and Third Order Regular Provinces with jurisdiction within the Regional Fraternity, exercises pastoral care and spiritual guidance in regard to the Regional Fraternity, including participation in the scheduled meetings of the Regional Fraternity and the Regional Fraternity Executive Council. *See Revised Handbook for Spiritual Assistants, p. 16-18.*
35. The RFEC requests a Spiritual Assistant from the major superior of the obedience under which the Regional Fraternity is subject. *See OFS General Constitutions, Article 91.2.c.*
36. When it is not possible for a Spiritual Assistant to be assigned from the First Order or the TOR, the Superior to whom the request was made may allow the appointment of a Spiritual Assistant from among the following:
- a. religious brothers or sisters of other Franciscan institutes;
  - b. Secular Franciscans, cleric or lay, specially prepared for such service; or
  - c. other diocesan clerics or non-Franciscan religious, specially prepared for such service. *See, OFS General Constitutions, Title V, Article 89.4; Statutes for Spiritual and Pastoral Assistance to the Secular Franciscan Order, Art. 15.4. (Approved March 28, 2002).*
37. When a Regional Spiritual Assistant is appointed, the appointment of the Assistant is made in writing and for a limited time, which accumulated cannot be more than twelve years. *See, Statutes for Spiritual and Pastoral Assistance to the Secular Franciscan Order, Art. 15.3. (Approved March 28, 2002).*

38. Regional Spiritual Assistants shall:
- a. serve as ecclesial witnesses at Local Fraternity Chapters of Election;
  - b. schedule pastoral visitations in coordination with the schedule for fraternal visitations; and
  - c. vote on any question *except* those involving financial matters or in the Regional Chapter of Elections. This restriction applies to Secular Franciscans as well as religious friars or sisters serving as Spiritual Assistants for a particular Local Fraternity.

## **CHAPTER EIGHT**

### **Relations with the National Fraternity**

39. Once every three years, the Regional Minister, with the consent of the RFEC, must request a Fraternal/Pastoral Visitation of the Regional Fraternity from the National Minister and Secretary of the CNSA. A Fraternal Visit by the National Minister may also be requested at other times for important reasons.
40. The Regional Minister is a member of the National Fraternity Council ("NAFRA") and is to attend its meetings. If he/she is unable to attend the NAFRA Annual Meeting, he/she shall be represented by the Regional Vice-Minister or, if necessary, by some other elected Regional Officer, and provide the National Minister, or his/her delegate, with a letter explaining reasons for the Regional Minister's inability to attend and the name of the individual delegated to act in his/her stead.
41. Monies from the common fund of the Regional Fraternity shall be used to pay the normal expenses of the Regional Minister or delegate to attend the annual National Fraternity Council meeting.
42. The Regional Fraternity pledges its financial support of the National Fraternity on a fair share basis as called for by the directives of the National Fraternity Council ("NAFRA"). It also pledges its cooperation in implementing the decisions and programs of NAFRA.

## **CHAPTER NINE**

### **The Local Fraternity**

43. The Local Fraternity is the heart of the Region. It is animated and guided by a Council composed of a duly elected Minister, Vice-Minister, Formation Director, Secretary and Treasurer, and a Spiritual Assistant, and is organized and functions in conformity with the Code of Canon Law and the OFS governing documents. Local Fraternities have the option of electing at least two Councillors-at-Large.

## **CHAPTER TEN**

### **Voting and Conduct of Local Fraternity Business**

44. The members of the Local Fraternity Council ("LFC") meet at least monthly at a time and place determined by its members to discuss issues important to the life of the Local Fraternity. This would include, among other things, the movement of those in initial formation from one phase to another. When not in session, the LFC may conduct business electronically (*i.e.*, via e-mail, telephone, fax, etc.), provided that any decisions and/or determinations made in this way are reviewed and ratified at the next monthly meeting of the LFC.
45. All members of the duly elected LFC may vote. No Spiritual Assistant may vote on any question involving financial matters or in the Local Fraternity Chapter of Elections. This restriction applies to Secular Franciscans as well as religious friars or sisters serving as Spiritual Assistants for a particular Local Fraternity.
46. If the office of Minister becomes vacant, the Vice-Minister will assume the office. When the office of Vice-Minister becomes vacant, one of the Councillors will be elected by the members of the LFC to the position of Vice-Minister.
47. If, as a result of the filling of the vacancy of the position of Vice-Minister because of the death, resignation, or incapacitation of the Minister, the number of Councillors is reduced below five, the LFC may appoint a professed member of the Local Fraternity to fill that vacancy. Appointed members of the LFC, while able to express opinions about matters before the Council, do not have voting voice on the Council.
48. A proposed annual budget shall be prepared by the Local Fraternity Treasurer and presented to the LFC who, after discussion, will approve it. When approved, the proposed budget is submitted to the Local Fraternity, at which time it is amended or adjusted and then voted on for final ratification.
49. No official business requiring a vote by the professed members may be transacted at the Local Fraternity meeting unless a quorum is present. A quorum is defined as the presence of more than half of the number of those having the right to vote.
- 0 50. *Regarding expenses necessary for the life of the fraternity and the needs of*  
1 *worship, of the apostolate, and of charity, all the brothers and sisters*  
2 *should offer a contribution according to their means. Local fraternities*  
3 *should contribute toward the expenses of the higher fraternity councils.*  
4 SFO Rule, Article 25. The common fund of the Local Fraternity provides for  
5 the expenses necessary for the life of the Local, Regional, National and  
6 International Fraternity and is supported through contributions of each

1 member. In accordance with the directives of CIOFS, announced and  
2 approved at the NAFRA gathering in 2013, Candidates as well as professed  
3 members of the Local Fraternity are expected to contribute according to  
4 their means to the Local Fraternity's common fund.<sup>2</sup>  
5

- 6 51. An audit of the Local Fraternity's financial status shall be conducted by a  
7 professed member of the Fraternity, selected by the LFC, who is not  
8 currently a member of that Council, at least once before the expiration of  
9 the LFC's term of office.

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11 **CHAPTER ELEVEN**  
12 **Local Fraternity Chapters Of Election**  
13

- 14 52. The Local Fraternity meets for the purpose of electing its Council once  
15 every three years. The Chapter will follow the norms presented in the OFS  
16 governing documents and these Regional Guidelines.  
17
- 18 53. At least **six months** prior to the Chapter of Elections, the Local Fraternity  
19 Minister, shall advise the Regional Minister and the Regional Spiritual  
20 Assistant of the date of the proposed Chapter and respectfully request that  
21 they provide a Presider and an Ecclesial Witness.  
22
- 23 54. At least **six months** prior to the Chapter, the LFC shall appoint a  
24 Nominating Committee, whose task it will be to call for nominations from  
25 the professed members of the Fraternity. Once the nominations are  
26 received, the Nominating Committee will confirm that the nominees meet  
27 the requirements for the office for which they have been nominated, as  
28 outlined in paragraphs 55 and 56 below. The prospective nominee will  
29 then be notified and requested to advise the Nominating Committee  
30 whether he/she will accept the nomination. Once the slate of nominees is  
31 confirmed, the Nominating Committee will provide it to the professed  
32 members of the Fraternity approximately **one** month prior to the date of  
33 the Chapter.  
34
- 35 55. Nominees for Local Fraternity Minister, Vice-Minister and Formation  
36 Director must be permanently professed for at three (3) years. Nominees  
37 for all other positions must be professed for no less than one (1) year.  
38
- 39 56. Individuals who transfer from one Local Fraternity to another are precluded  
40 from being elected to the Council of the Fraternity they have transferred  
41 into until they have been with that Fraternity for at least eighteen (18)  
42 months.  
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<sup>2</sup> When submitting the annual report for the calendar year ending December 31, 2014, Local Fraternities will include Candidates as well as active professed members when calculating the numbers for which fair share contributions will be submitted.

- 1 57. A member who has been absent from Fraternity life for a majority of the  
2 twelve (12) months prior to an election shall not be considered for  
3 nomination to serve on the LFC. See, OFS General Constitutions, Article 30  
4 and Article 53.3.  
5
- 6 58. It is the responsibility of the Nominating Committee and the presider of the  
7 Chapter of Elections to assure that the requirements for nomination have  
8 been met.  
9
- 10 59. Absentee nominees are permitted *provided* they have submitted in writing  
11 their willingness to accept nomination for a specific position (or positions)  
12 and their willingness to serve, if elected.  
13
- 14 60. Absentee ballots are not permitted.  
15
- 16 61. The Regional Spiritual Assistants may delegate the Local Spiritual Assistant  
17 as ecclesial witness at a Chapter of Elections on the Local level.  
18

19 **CHAPTER TWELVE**  
20 **Duties of Local Fraternity Councillors**  
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- 22 62. The duties of the Council of the Local Fraternity are clearly set forth in  
23 Articles 50, 51, and 52 of our General Constitutions, and are incorporated  
24 herein by reference.  
25

26 **CHAPTER THIRTEEN**  
27 **Transfers Into a Fraternity**  
28

- 29 63. One who seeks to transfer into a fraternity should be warmly welcomed.  
30 As our General Constitutions provide at Article 55, the fraternity who  
31 receives the transfer request should first seek the necessary information  
32 from the previous fraternity.  
33
- 34 64. Prior to accepting the transfer of a professed member from another  
35 fraternity, the Local Fraternity will exercise a period of discernment  
36 (recommended 3-6 months) during which time the individual requesting  
37 transfer into the fraternity faithfully attends all fraternity gatherings and  
38 participates in fraternity life. To determine if this professed member is in  
39 harmony with the fraternity, the LFC will meet with this prospective  
40 member after 3 months. The prospective member will meet with the LFC a  
41 second time (3 months later) after which the LFC will vote whether to  
42 accept or decline the transfer.  
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## **CHAPTER FOURTEEN**

### **Return of Those Who Have Temporarily Withdrawn, Voluntarily Withdrawn (become inactive), or Have Been Suspended from Fraternal Life**

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6 65. Articles 56 and 57 of our General Constitutions explain the process for  
7 temporary withdrawal, voluntary withdrawal and suspension from fraternal  
8 life. Anyone who finds themselves in this situation must make a written  
9 request to the LFC to be readmitted.  
10  
11 66. If a professed member has voluntarily withdrawn, temporarily withdrawn or  
12 been suspended for more than 12 months, the LFC will, upon consideration  
13 of the professed member's written request to return, direct the member to  
14 undergo an appropriate formative process using the current formation  
15 materials recommended by NAFRA and the Region. During this time, the  
16 individual will faithfully attend all fraternity gatherings and participate in  
17 fraternity life. The LFC will meet with the brother or sister periodically to  
18 discern whether his/her request to return to fraternity is in the best interest  
19 of the fraternity and the individual. At the conclusion of the prescribed  
20 period of formation, the LFC will, after fraternal dialogue with the individual  
21 and discussion among themselves, vote to determine whether the  
22 professed person's request should be accepted or declined. The Local  
23 Fraternity Minister will then advise the individual of the LFC's decision.  
24  
25 67. It may become necessary for a professed member to absent him/herself  
26 from fraternity life because of work-related or family responsibilities. In  
27 this instance, frequent communication with the Local Fraternity Minister will  
28 assist the LFC in determining whether an appropriate formative process will  
29 be necessary for this individual once he/she is able to return to active  
30 fraternity life.

## **CHAPTER FIFTEEN**

### **Return of Those Who Have Definitively Withdrawn or Who Have Been Dismissed from the Order**

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36 68. Article 58.1 of our General Constitutions explains the process for definitive  
37 withdrawal from the Order. A professed person who has chosen to  
38 definitively withdraw is no longer considered a professed member of the  
39 Secular Franciscan Order. Should this person seek to return to the Order,  
40 the LFC will, upon consideration of the individual's written request and in  
41 consultation with the RFEC, direct him/her to undergo an appropriate  
42 formative process using the current formation materials recommended by  
43 NAFRA and the Region. During this time, the individual will faithfully  
44 attend all fraternity gatherings and participate in fraternity life. The LFC will  
45 meet with him/her periodically to discern whether the individual's request  
46 to return to fraternity is in the best interest of the fraternity and the  
47 individual. At the conclusion of the prescribed period of formation, the LFC  
48 will, after fraternal dialogue with the individual and discussion among  
49 themselves, vote to determine whether the professed person's request



1 should be accepted or declined. The Local Fraternity Minister will then  
2 advise the individual of the LFC's decision.  
3

4 69. Article 58.2 and 3 of our General Constitutions explains the process for  
5 dismissal from the Order. A professed person who has been dismissed is  
6 no longer considered a professed member of the Secular Franciscan Order.  
7 Should this person seek to return to the Order, a petition for his/her return  
8 may be considered provided sufficient evidence that the reasons for the  
9 dismissal have been rectified can be provided in writing to the LFC. This  
10 would include a letter from the individual's Pastor or the Ordinary or his/her  
11 diocese, if appropriate.  
12

13 70. Once a request for reconsideration of dismissal has been submitted to the  
14 LFC, the RFEC will be advised. An appropriate process of formation will be  
15 designed by the RFEC, in consultation with the LFC, using the current  
16 formation materials recommended by NAFRA and the Region. Once the  
17 formation program has been determined, it will be communicated to the  
18 LFC who will oversee its implementation. The individual seeking to return  
19 to fraternal life will faithfully attend all fraternity gatherings, participate in  
20 the recommended period of formation, and participate in fraternity life.  
21

22 The LFC will meet with the brother or sister periodically during this period  
23 to discern whether his/her request to return to the Order is in the best  
24 interest of the fraternity and the individual. At the conclusion of the  
25 prescribed period of formation, the LFC will, after fraternal discussion and  
26 dialogue with the individual, vote to determine whether his/her request  
27 should accepted or declined. The Local Fraternity Minister will then submit  
28 to the RFEC a written recommendation. The RFEC will, after fraternal  
29 discussion, communicate its decision to the Local Fraternity Minister who  
30 will then advise the individual of the RFEC's decision. If a decree of  
31 dismissal had been issued and confirmed by the National Council, the RFEC  
32 will advise the National Council of its decision to either accept or decline the  
33 request for readmission.  
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