

Approved 10-10-2017

Chapter 2017, June 18, 2017, St. Anne Retreat Center, Melbourne, Kentucky

9:00 am Members of Chapter are Luiz Bazilio, Tracey Fiore Carroll, Phillip Geliebter, Jeff Gollither, Tom Johnson(Minister Provincial), Verleah Kosloske (Provincial Secretary), David Lawson-Beck (Bursar), Jotie Noel, Liz Peacock (Formation Director), Millicent Ramcharan, Richard Simpson (Chaplain), Peter Stube (Fellowship Coordinator), Masud Ibn Syedullah, and Joan Verret.

All were present except Tom Johnson and Jeff Gollither who were absent from Chapter for health and family health reasons.

Guests were as follows: Bishop Protector Gordon Scruton; Bishop Protector Elect David Rice who arrived on June 20; Br. Desmond Alban, SSF; and guests from other orders, Louis Canter, OEF; Mike Carsten, OFS; and Br. Christopher Markert, OLF.

On June 18 Ken convened the meeting at 9:01 am with prayer. He invited members of Chapter to help with the agenda because some know about issues in greater depth. The agenda was presented and approved by consensus. April conference call minutes were approved by consensus. The June 5 Standing Committee minutes were approved by consensus. We will have a group call to Tom tomorrow.

Minister General address by Ken Norian: The five provinces are generally healthy. Europe is expanding to Sweden and parts of France. In Africa we have a cluster in S. Africa, but the geography is huge. There have been in the last 6 years, 12 ministers provincial, which is a lot of turnover. Ken has tried to provide continuity. There are Minister Provincial meetings every two years. In last 6 years the meetings have been held in the US, Capetown, and New Zealand. The Minister General has also had challenges at the minister provincial level to deal with. God's spirit has worked in such a way that things are now okay; there is no structural sickness in any of the provinces. Ken is particularly grateful for health of our province and he appreciates Tom's taking us in the direction of consensus. One other thing unique to the Americas is the degree and diversity of culture and languages. There are three languages, Portuguese, Spanish, and English, and also great distances. The American province generally handles it well. Finances are always a challenge. TSSF globally is in good shape financially. The Central Fund pays for travel mostly. UK charity law affects the Central Fund. We will consider amending the Appendix to the Constitution to make the Central Fund stand alone as a unique charity, not be part of European Province. The ethos among the 5 provinces is remarkably similar despite all the different MPs, Formation Directors, and Chaplains. There will be a change with the next election for Minister General. Traditionally the Minister General has been chosen from among 5 Ministers Provincial and then the person elected had to step down as MP in his/her province. No one of 5 current MPs is able or eager to serve. Therefore they are

opening it up to former MPs who were at last MP's meeting. John Heberton of Province of Pacific is willing and he will be elected to succeed Ken. Provinces have to approve this change to the Constitution. IPTOC will approve the change and then elect John. IPTOC is attended by MP, Chaplain, plus one other from each province. Ken will suggest shortening the IPTOC meeting. Two weeks is too long. Peter, Tom, and Liz will go from this province. Liz asked about the possibility of an international convocation. Ken says the numbers are large. Europe has 3000 people, so it is hard and expensive to find a place large enough. Other provinces are thinking of regional convocations such as we have. At IPTOC this year will be focusing on formation and sharing what different provinces are using. Each province has thoughts about youth, people under 40, and using technology to include them.

Election to standing committee: Current standing committee member is Tracey. **ACTION:** approved by Consensus through October 2018 Chapter. After consulting the statutes, in July Chapter voted electronically that after Tracey's single term expires in October 2017, Jotie Noel will serve as standing committee member from October 2017 to October 18. Affirmed by Consensus.

Concerning election of Beth Tjoflat and Patricia Dyer to profession. The paperwork on each was distributed earlier. Rick spoke of joy of novices to be professed. In some provinces they can only be approved at annual Chapter, but they can be pre-approved. Liz recommended both. Beth and Patricia were approved for profession by consensus. **ACTION:** Rick will notify and send a packet to each.

Ratification of Secretary for the Associates: Each order must ratify. Two novice brothers will take over the role, Br. Thomas will handle the pastoral side and Br. Damien Joseph will help with administrative work. **ACTION:** Ratify Thomas to serve as Secretary for the Associates. He will be assisted by Damien Joseph. SSF has ratified, as have we, calling the Associates Companions. We would welcome Thomas promulgating the Companions name.

David made an announcement about expenses. Please give him your expense reports. Tom sent new Franciscan banners. They are available for purchase if there is intense demand. At 10:10 we adjourned for Eucharist and lunch. Committees will meet at 1 pm and then next gathering will be dinner at 5:30.

Chapter 2017, June 19, 2017, St. Anne Retreat Center, Melbourne, Kentucky

10:45 am

Present: all except Tom Johnson and Jeff Gollhofer who were absent from Chapter for health reasons.

Ken convened the meeting at 10:50

Rick led us in song.

Budget: David Lawson-Beck provided background. The budget has increased this year. Holding accounts are being brought into the QuickBooks accounting system. The Challoner Fund has grown between Kathryn's generous donations and donations from others. Other accounts were smaller, but they were using our tax number, too. David opened a separate account for JCFU. David is bursar for JCFU and has checkbook. Masud has the JCFU credit card. Sister Jean now has opened a separate bank account for the Associates. Later you will consider creating a new TSSF Fund to replace Challoner which will bring it into QuickBooks as a reserve fund. That appears as an increase in our budget. Also pledges are up. There are new younger, working postulants who contribute more than expected and also people coming up for mid-novice review have sent checks. We are going to start putting some money in the Urban Savings Bank in Chicago to replenish some of the \$35,000 that was withdrawn to pay for Centennial Convocation. Also, David will start contributing to a reserve fund which is budgeted at \$10,000. There is a new line item for a new Special Task Force to Study Future of Living the Rule, Formation, etc. The electronic Franciscan Times has provided substantial savings. There is no audit budgeted. It is hard to get a CPA for a religious group because potential liability is high and the amount they are paid is low. David had a review done by firm in Arkansas this past year. Alison Saichek is going to help get the QuickBooks accounting system in line. After we get the books in order, we will spend money on an audit. David plans to ask for an audit committee or third party audit after the next fiscal year. Jotie asked whether there were any opportunities that were lost for lack of funds. David said, "No, there are some line items that are under budget. Jim Hagen doesn't charge for some of his trips." Tom will be going to Cuba and maybe Brazil so we will use that money. **ACTION**: Chapter recommends that the Board of the Corporation adopt the budget. Affirmed by Consensus.

David brought up the need at some point in the future to set up some sort of regional bursar system for the Hispanic ministry. Eight people have requested EFT. David doesn't think it is necessary at this time. People have been encouraged to use bank automatic payments if they wish. David provides the budget to anyone who asks. Our website is too insecure to post these documents online.

We revisited the issue of the role of The Associates Secretary being split into pastoral and administrative functions. We want to list both Br. Thomas and Br. Damien Joseph as Secretaries in the directory.

ACTION: To divide the responsibilities of the Secretary for Associates between administrative and pastoral oversight. Affirmed by Consensus.

The following action by Chapter may replicate action taken at the Chapter 2016 meeting, but it was done in order to be sure that the language of the TSSF Chapter is identical to what was recently passed by the Society of St. Francis Chapter.

ACTION: That the Associates of the First and Third Orders of the Province of the Americas now be called "Companions of the Society of St. Francis." The approved motion is to be forwarded to the CSF Chapter.

Affirmed by Consensus

Corporation Offices. Ken will no longer be coming to Chapter so he suggested a solution.

ACTION: The Corporation shall elect a new Secretary and create the office of Assistant Secretary and that Ken Norian be elected as Assistant Secretary. Affirmed by Consensus. After consulting the Statutes, in July Chapter, voting electronically changed the title of Ken Norian's office to Officer-at-Large. Affirmed by Consensus.

Challoner Medical Mission Fund to become Third Order Medical Mission Fund: David explained the background. Bishop Gordon has been to the African mission.

ACTION: To establish the **Third Order Medical Mission Fund** whose advisory board shall be the Minister Provincial, the Bursar, the Chaplain, and the elected Standing Committee member and transfer to the Fund the current balance in the Challoner Medical Mission Fund. Affirmed by Consensus

Library: John Brockmann has recommended opening up our library to OEF and OLF. We recommend asking the librarian to work out the financial arrangements with the other orders.

ACTION: To authorize the librarian to negotiate a reasonable, informal book borrowing arrangement with the Order of Ecumenical Franciscans and Order of Lutheran Franciscans. Affirmed by Consensus. Tom Johnson informed John Brockmann of the decision.

Budget overrun procedure: David and Tom are asking that we establish a way to approve proposed budget overruns. The CPA who reviewed recommended some policy be set up to protect the Bursar.

ACTION: : In order to ensure accountability of the Provincial Bursar, any new expense item in excess of \$500 that cannot be applied to an existing approved Fiscal Year Budget line must be submitted to the Board of Directors of the Corporation for consideration. Approval shall be recorded in the minutes and a copy of the minutes made available to the Bursar for filing. New items less than \$500 shall be submitted to the Minister Provincial for approval; approval shall be documented in a letter or email to the Bursar, and filed.

Any exceedance of more than \$500 in an approved FY Budget line must be submitted to Board of Directors for consideration. Approval shall be recorded in the minutes and a copy of the minutes made available to the Bursar for filing. Exceedances less than \$500 shall be submitted to the Minister Provincial for approval; approval shall be documented in a letter or email to the Bursar, and filed.

Affirmed by Consensus

Proposed Changes to the TSSF Constitution to be voted on by Provincial Chapters:

ACTION:

1) Proposed change to Section 1.3a

FROM: One of the Ministers Provincial shall be the Minister General of the Third Order

TO: One of the Ministers Provincial, or a former Minister Provincial who has been in attendance at the most recent Ministers Provincial meeting, shall be eligible for election as the Minister General.

2) Proposed change to Section 1.3f

FROM: When the office of Minister General falls vacant between meetings of the Interprovincial Chapter there shall be a postal vote by the same electorate

TO: normally be an electronic vote

3) Change to section 1.3f ii and add iii and iv

FROM:

1.3f ii) The Minister General may hold office for one further term of three years

TO

Section 1.3f ii) Three months prior to the end of the first three year term, the Minister General will ask the Bishop Protector to email the Ministers Provincial asking if they will affirm the Minister General taking on an additional three year term. (A simple majority is required.)

Section 1.3f iii) In the event the Ministers Provincial do not affirm the reappointment of the Minister General for an additional three year term, then

there shall be an election, normally electronic, for a new Minister General by the IPTOC electorate, the candidates being as referenced in 1.3a

Section 1.3f iv) During this time the Assistant Minister General shall exercise the role of Minister General until the new Minister General is elected.

4) Under THE FUND section of Appendix A change

FROM

2. Grants will be made with the approval of three Provincial Ministers.

TO: Grants will be made if approved by four of the six Minister General/Ministers Provincial.

5) Under OBJECTS

FROM

4. To make grants for other approved works which are in accordance with the general purposes of the Third Order.

TO: To make grants for other approved works which are in accordance with the general purposes of the Third Order through the Ministers Provincial Fund. Provinces may make contributions to this fund above and beyond their proportional share agreed by the Ministers Provincial. All applications for a grant from the Ministers Fund will be made by the Minister Provincial of the province in which the money will be spent. A proposal will be sent by email to the Secretary/Treasurer who will distribute the request to the Ministers Provincial and Minister General. If approved by four of the six Minister General/Ministers provincial the Secretary/Treasurer will facilitate the transfer of funds as agreed.

6) Principles Change

Remove the comma after the word *possible* in the following sentence at the beginning of the Principles. "This offering of prayer is to be said every day, if possible, with Morning or Evening Prayer."

7) Electronic Voting

Add 5.2a under Amendments to Constitution

Procedure for electronic (email) voting: Electronic voting would be reserved for those extraordinary situations when a Provincial Chapter has a motion requiring a vote of IPTOC, where they believe that waiting until the next regularly scheduled meeting of Chapter would have a detrimental effect. The Province should communicate with the Minister General who will present the motion to the other Ministers Provincial for a vote by their respective Chapters. If there is agreement by all of the Chapters, the Minister General shall send an email to voting members of IPTOC for their vote. If there is a majority of affirmative votes, the Constitution will be amended.

Affirmed by Consensus **ACTION:** Tom Johnson notified Robert Dimmick and Ken Norian that TSSF, Province of the Americas had affirmed the proposed changes to the Constitution.

Proposal to Suspend Statutes:

Since Chapter is meeting nearly four months earlier than usual in 2017 and since Chapter has voted to maintain the "normal" schedule for the election of Minister Provincial this year, we propose that:

- 1) the elections be completed no later than October 6, 2017;
- 2) the pertinent sections of the Statutes, as noted below in red, be suspended, and the items in blue be added, until after the elections have been completed.

5. Nominations will close on the 1st of July. The list of all nominees will be electronically forwarded to all members of Chapter who will each vote for three candidates. ~~The~~

~~candidates receiving the top three number of votes will be invited to Chapter, and any candidate not on Chapter will have their expenses covered.~~ Local Fellowships and other Third Order groups shall undertake a full discussion of the nominees, and every effort shall be made to include all brothers and sisters of the Order in the discussions.

6. ~~At the second annual Chapter meeting following the election of Chapter,~~ The Minister Provincial shall be elected by ballot by Chapter ~~at its annual meeting.~~ The candidate receiving the highest number of votes shall be Minister Provincial. In case of a tie, a second ballot, with the names of those tied, shall be circulated. An unresolved tie shall be referred to the Bishop Protector for decision.

7. The Minister Provincial shall take office at the termination of the ~~Chapter meeting at which he or she is elected~~ election.

ACTION: To approve the temporary suspension/change in Statutes II.E..5, 6, and 7 as outlined above.

Affirmed by Consensus

Adjourned at 11:45. We will resume with the other committee recommendations at 1:pm.

Ken convened the meeting at 1:05 with song led by Rick.

Society of Saint Francis: Desmond Alban reported on SSF. Brother Robert Hugh is feeble and is confined to his room. Br. Leo carries on. There's a feeling of optimism. They have adopted Total Ministry which is a method of shared responsibility. Total Ministry requires a balancing act so that novices are both sharing responsibility and being formed. They have new inquirers.

Clark finishes as Minister General and about to go on sabbatical. He is very open to discerning what is next including possibilities around the world.

There is one possible opportunity for SSF in Riverside, CA. Bishop Bruno is behind creating a purpose-built friary there although it may become something else as well. Also in Lakeport, in Northern California, there is the possibility for Jude to create a place for retreats. How to do all this with the numbers? Practical plans and discernment are all part of the shared responsibility. Desmond Alban prayed about whether this is right and the readings and messages that day all encouraged going into the promised land. There are seven brothers at San Damiano and two at Los Angeles.

Order of Ecumenical Franciscans: Louis Canter from OEF told us that they are working toward a council system and consensus rather than hierarchical leadership structure. There are 45 professed and 30 in formation. They are spread out all over the world. They are growing overseas. Therefore they have formation questions. They now have to consider whether they can require people to come to Chapter as part of formation. They are reviewing mission and ministries. They are asking, "Who are we collectively as a community?" Their Chapter will meet later this week. They will be able to review new council/consensus program. There are challenges to being ecumenical, accountability issues and others. But Chapter allows them to focus on what makes them Franciscan. Three will profess at Chapter and five will be novicing. One evening at Chapter for fun they have Juniper cup for entertainment, the winner gets Br. Rat and must report on the activities of the rat through the year.

Order of Secular Franciscans: Jan Parker sends love and support. She says OFS would like to have our member information so that our local communities can create fellowship between the orders. Tom Bello's book, For all the Saints: St. Francis's Five Point Plan for Salvation has been published by Tau Publishing. Tau USA, the national magazine of OFS, is available by mail for \$4 a year or free on website. Theme this year is "Oh, Breath of God, unite us in action. Baruch Elohim." There are efforts to implement this on the ecumenical/interfaith side of things. Committee now has committee communions – a rabbi and an imam. OFS wants to create an opportunity of encounter. Mike's electronic newsletter is available through Constant Contact. Just email Mike to be added. Or you can find a link through OFS online newsletter.

Bishop Scruton led prayer.

Ken connected us to phone call with Tom Johnson. All greeted Tom.

The meeting resumed at 1:40.

External Relations Officer: Masud Ibn Syedulla is responsible for being in communication with communities outside of SSF. He represents TSSF on National Association of Episcopal Christian

communities (NAECC) which is composed of mostly dispersed communities except for the Fisher Folk, the Community of Celebration with a music ministry in Aliquippa, Pa.

NAECC meets with Members of the Conference of Anglican Religious Orders in the Americas (CAROA). CAROA is made up of the other conventional orders. The two have separate business meetings, but share program, meals, and worship. The two organizations are getting closer and having better understanding of each other. Antipathy between the two organizations has melted. There has been some reflection on how they can be united in US and Canada. Anton Armbruster went with Masud this time. Theme this year was The New Cosmology. Our understanding of physics has changed. Old ways of scientific thinking have shaped our theological thinking, e.g. hierarchical. God out there. Young people learning about interconnection in school, a part of human thinking effects religious ideas. We need to be aware of paradigm shift in people's consciousness. How does that affect our sense of the presence of God and where are we in relation to God? The Doctrine of Incarnation is not enough for us to understand that God is pervasive, fills the whole space. A presenter from Anglican Church of Canada put on 3-day program on this. It is important to be aware of language and imagery in formation, particularly with younger people. NAECC is making plans for General Convention, having a shared booth to inform larger church about the existence of religious orders. NAECC has a website with info about all recognized Episcopal orders. We are oldest and largest. We are grandfathered in and represented on NAECC despite our noncompliance with some Bishops' orders. There are 11 or 13 orders with new ones coming on. When you count the emerging orders there are nearly 20. NAECC is helping them organize, create constitutions, a rule of life, and apply for recognition.

Later this summer Masud will be visiting other orders' Chapters. Masud will go to OLF Chapter and OFS. Masud has helped OLF with formation and has been with them for five Chapter meetings.

Masud also reported on the Joint Committee for Franciscan Unity which includes OFS, OEF, and TSSF and is intended to build communion among our orders. Joint Committee had an interfaith meeting in Tampa two years ago, for bridge building with rabbi and imam. The project for this coming year is to produce a video, 8 minutes in length, done in NYC. The video is to be a tool for formation processes of all 3 orders. Elements of Franciscan Unity are where we connect and that will be part of formation programs of each. The video will be recorded in August during the meeting.

Peter asked about video, "Is it about Franciscans at work, in ministry?" Franciscan mission has drawn in new, young converts. The places where our charism touches the world are important to us. Masud will mention this to the person writing the script. The videographer will record B Roll that could be edited into the video.

Order of Lutheran Franciscans: After a break we heard from Christopher Markert, Minister General of OLF. OLF was founded in January 2011. It is the first order in the Lutheran church. Nine have been life-professed, but the number is now down to seven. Two more will be

professed in August. There are 17 in novitiate and several more in postulancy. Their roots are in Third Order, but they are undifferentiated. In the first years in America it was an immigrant church and very congregational. ELCA only emerged in 80s. There are Lutheran Franciscan communities in Germany, Norway, and Sweden. ELCA treats them like a new mission congregation. They want to be connected to ELCA. At annual chapter they will be considering joining JCFU. They interact with other Franciscan orders locally. They have one person in Canada. They have been asked to help the Lutheran Franciscan order in Italy in an emerging Lutheran/Methodist Church. They had their first major crisis which is why they are now down to 7 life-professed. They are allowed to wear habits to gatherings or in religious settings.

Scandinavian churches where TSSF, European Province is growing, are in full communion with Church of England.

At 2:10 we broke for 15 minutes.

Ken reconvened the meeting at 2:26. Bishop Scruton led us in a minute of silent prayer.

Fellowship/Ongoing Formation Committee/Task Force on Missional Fellowships: The Report from the Fellowship/Ongoing Formation Committee was distributed by Peter Stube. We read it aloud.

The Fellowship/Ongoing Formation Committee Recommendations to Chapter are as follows:

1. Since most of our Fellowships are small we commend the TSSF to consider more interaction and common service with the other Franciscan Orders focusing not on what divides us (the Eucharist, women in ordained ministry, et al) but that which we can do and be together. Our winsomeness is found in our passionate service.
2. Careful teaching of our leaders in Formation and Fellowships who are willing and ready to receive and learn from seekers and journey with them over a longer time. The intention is not necessarily to extend the time but to honor the work of our mission stations, the Fellowship. This, it seems causes us to focus on relationships and not structure. Welcome all and help them grow into the vocation. Significant change in life situations should not be a barrier to seekers coming and being included in our Communities.
3. The Fellowship would become the community that raises up the Aspirant and puts them forward when they are ready, when Franciscan charism is evident and which of the Franciscan Orders that fit them. We commend the emerging Fellowships on multimedia as being an essential tool in this.
4. We affirm the encouragement of the catalytic Franciscans to initiate missional experiments. We must not reject these folk because they appear to be different. We must not reject the next Francis.
5. We affirm those whose great charism is contemplation.
6. We TSSF's must commit ourselves to pray daily for the next generation of Franciscans.

This is the first step in acting on Tom's Chapter 2016 Task Force request. Rick says the vision of the fellowship as being the base community is very exciting. Rick pointed out the difficulty of implementation in dispersed communities. Google Hangout communities may be one answer especially when combined with other Franciscan groups or our ministries in the community. Phil said the gatekeeper needs to step away from the gate. It needs to be very open in the beginning. TSSF should be an atom with the professed as the nucleus. We want to create a larger community that is more inviting to others. Distances are a factor and were taken into account and that's why virtual fellowships serve. Discernment needs to begin in community. Formation needs to move from the community not from the gatekeeper. Many were drawn to the Third Order by encountering direct action by a Franciscan. There is a false humility of hiding our light under a bushel. Rick raised an example of the staff at the St. Anne Retreat Center who are formed in welcoming, warm, hospitality. Jotie says people may need to encounter and mull things over before they apply.

Song break.

Peter says this invites us to give some shape in what takes place in fellowship. Groups like Taize do wonderful work with young people with worship, service, and Bible study. An Indonesian Bible study camp attracts 100,000 young people over the summer. Why are we not spending more time with lectio divina and other Bible study? Rick discovered in the course of reviewing the book Common Prayer: A Liturgy for Ordinary Radicals that it is about the new monasticism which is working in evangelical communities.

David thought Bishop Scruton's sermon was inspired. He loves everything in the Renewing document, but wonders what there is for Chapter to act upon. Phil said, "We also talked about having a baseline for conveners, formation counselors, etc." Jotie said, "We want space to experiment. Some things may fail." Peter says we are not offering any more structure. We are trying to create open space for the Spirit to act. He suggests we spend one month over the coming year contemplating each one of the scriptures in the response so that we are modeling to the rest of the community how essential scripture is. Tracey says we need to end closed fellowship meetings. Tracey feels that people who are in the midst of life need to make the judgment themselves about whether they are too busy.

Bishop Scruton talked about the English Anglican/Methodist experiment called Fresh Expressions where people connect with people where they are – the church as mixed economy, take it where it is and see where it leads.

David said, "No one wants to be a naysayer to this beautiful vision. The keyword is openness. This is a vision statement. One practicality is that while this vision is being allowed to grow and develop, the order has to continue to function. Some of us such as Liz have job descriptions. How do we deal with a vision statement plus ongoing business?" David says nothing needs to be done right now except live the Gospel. We must offer something that says where we are, but we cannot allow our existing structures to be the riches and clothing that Francis cast off. What are we doing that is getting in the way of living the Gospel? Phil says, "Our vision is

opening this up. None of this is restricting anything that is currently in place that is not excluding people.” David says he does not see this changing anything, but he wants the people to understand (get communications committee involved) what the vision is and how it affects us. Ken says the vision statement contains no details and logistics. David says he would like to avoid seeing the vision statement dissolve and disappear. Phil said that these are the first three steps of a 5-year journey.

Masud says it seems it would be helpful that as we share the vision statement there be a sort of cover letter that says this is where we would like to go, to pray, and to study scripture. Different personality types process things differently. Some will read it and say, what am I supposed to do? What we are saying is we perceive the need for a culture change and this represents what we think the culture change may be like. A cover letter would say all we are asking you to do is to consider this vision. Take one of the scriptures and collectively throughout the province do *lectio* on that scripture. We meanwhile become more invitational and hospitable. Ken asked “After recommendation where does it go? “ Peter is willing to do what is asked of him. David says keep this group together. Peter says perhaps more people need to be drawn into the process. Liz says she understands these are not Chapter action statements, but a vision statement and she is fine with that. Tracey has created a virtual fellowship, but she needs help. Peter says regarding the process, that during the next calendar year we on Chapter should spend one month with each of the scriptures. Once we’ve lived with this for awhile, we sit down with those who are doing formation and fellowships and discuss how we are doing things needs to change.

Perhaps we need to hear from others in the community before we try to come to consensus on this.

Bishop Scruton says this kind of transformation does not happen by Chapter action. Mike Carsten stepped outside all the Franciscan structures to begin a ministry which intentionally took him places he didn’t want to go. Only two other OFS wanted to go with him. He wanted to meet people where they were at and love them and let them love us. Mike Carstsen said “We hoard the Beloved Community and people on the street need to be part of the Beloved Community. That’s where we found Christ and everything else came after.” They feed 37,000 people 2 days a week on a budget of \$3500. We ask people for help. All of that traditionally belongs to the First Order. The poor don’t care about that. Just getting out and praying, letting the Spirit take over, is foreign to Catholics. To let the poor pray, rejoice, and lay hands on us is part of it. Mike doesn’t want to convert anyone. He’s willing to pass out Korans and King James Bibles to the people who want them. Bishop Scruton thinks we should invite certain creative people to create openness.

Louis says, “Remember how Francis started by following his passion and letting others be part of it.” Louis’ passion is peace concert which now is being invited to new places.

Phil asks, “Would Francis want to be part of Third Order now and would we want him to be part of the Third Order?”

Ken sees some specific asks in the Response. What would next step be? Do we affirm Peter as the person to lead this? Perhaps Chapter ought to ask you to think and pray about how to move this vision forward.

Liz says Tom wants a task force to reexamine the rule and also a long-term revisioning of the process for formation. What is the next step?

Peter says, “We have offered you what we hear the Spirit saying. If all TSSF is hearing the same thing, the whole community is going to change. It is going to take a few years. We will focus on Ministry and changing the way we do fellowship. Ultimately we may change the way we do formation.”

Liz says perhaps next step might be for fellowships to discuss the questions? Or Tracey suggested, to meditate on the scriptures cited. Peter thinks the way to start is in the foundational statements and scriptures. “The Rule and life of the Friars Minor is to simply live the Gospel.”

Phil says sending this to the Order as a whole, it has to be a teaching moment.

Ken says Peter as fellowship coordinator is free to communicate to conveners about this vision and the need to study foundational documents and scripture.

Bishop Scruton says “Ask people what is the passion, the spirit of God, calling on you to do? Maybe the passion of some is to pray.”

It is the general mind of Chapter that these recommendations resonate positively and that as a long-term vision this is something we are willing to embrace. Affirmed by Consensus

David asked would it be fair to ask Peter to send a short list re Pray, reflect on foundational documents, scripture, and ask what is your passion?

ACTION: Is there any energy on practicing this on Chapter level? Affirmed by Consensus

Peter will put out a short list of what to do – scripture, prayer, reflection, passion.

ACTION: Peter is to determine how to communicate the vision and the request for scripture, prayer, and reflection on one’s passion to the fellowships. Affirmed by Consensus

The committee will consider other concerns and report back to us.

TSSF U-Tube Channel: Phil reported on setting up U-Tube for TSSF. He will live stream convocation on Facebook so it will be available. Phil will probably set up a Vimeo Channel to set up. Ken says we have a TSSF Google account we can use. **ACTION:** Ken is sending Phil the user name and password.

Prison Fellowship Newsletter: Steve Skinner has been doing prison ministry with a professed TSSF and a TSSF novice. He has provisional permission to start a fellowship. The fellowship structures itself by writing letters. Steve has created a newsletter for them. Liz has concerns about publishing in newsletters contact information for members. The newsletter only publishes contact information for the two incarcerated. Two years ago Chapter said we would not publish any names. There will be further discussion about this in the committee. Masud suggest we go back to look at the policy.

The policy from 2015 was provided to the committee who will meet and make a recommendation to Chapter.

4:45 Adjourned until after dinner.

Ken reconvened Chapter at 7:05.

The prison group consists of Steve Skinner, an incarcerated tertiary, and a novice. If Steve steps down that will end the experimental prison prayer network. Currently they share names. In the future we ask that they use a single initial. Phil will talk to the two tertiaries to be sure they are aware of risks of having names and contacts known by prisoners.

Experimental Prison Prayer Network Recommendations

--We want to be supportive of experimental ministry and we want to be responsible to the guidelines of Chapter and the safety of Tertiaries.

--If Steve steps down from doing this coordination ministry, the network ends and needs to check in with Fellowship Coordinator before being initiated again.

--Currently people on the network share names with each other. In the future, need to use initial or nickname instead of real names

--Have Phil talk by phone with Steve and 2 Tertiaries outside prison involved in the Prayer Network to make sure they are aware of the risks involved in having their names known

ACTION: Peter will mail the Chapter guidelines about prisoners to Steve.

ACTION: Have appropriate persons develop a process so that when there are changes in the persons who hold the roles of Formation Counselor, Formation Director and Provincial Chaplain, each person is informed of the risks of having their names and contacts known by prisoners.

Those above was affirmed by Consensus

Chaplain/Pastoral Issues Committee: Recommendations of the Chaplain/Pastoral Issues Committee are as follows:

- 1) **Charter of Compassion:** (A Request that TSSF endorse and sign onto the Charter of Compassion)
Recommendation: That TSSF Province of the Americas affirms the Charter for Compassion and The Earth Charter commends them to our membership as being compatible with Franciscan principles. URL: chapterforcompassionforms.org/node/5655
Affirmed by Consensus
ACTION: ?
- 2) **Re. Fr. Joseph's *Credenda*:** Recommend that rather than including the *Credenda* in Walking in the Footsteps of Francis, we retain the document as a historical resource of this Province. We further recommend that John Brockmann write a forward to explain its origins and importance. Affirmed by Consensus **ACTION:** Masud will respond to John Brockmann.
- 3) **Cuba:** Recommendation – That Chapter ratify the profession of Alicia Fagardo and Jorge Felipe Merida. Affirmed by Consensus
- 4) **Paper used in Formation:** Recommendation – Formation Direction will respond to Diana Turner-Forte's concern. Affirmed by Consensus **ACTION:** Response to Diana Turner-Forte by Formation Director.
- 5) **Common Annual Theme:** Recommend our members with active concerns submit resources and links to the Provincial Chaplain for review and inclusion on the website.
NO ACTION: Affirmed by Consensus. Rick will respond to Diana Turner-Forte

There was a break for prayer time, a slow walk with the spirit.

Task Force: Recommend Chapter authorize the Minister Provincial to appoint a Task Force to review the TSSF Rule for the 21st Century; and 2) establish work groups to review aspects of the

Formation program that are not directly related to the Rule that be updated to reflect the current times. Affirmed by Consensus. **ACTION:** Minister Provincial to create parallel streams of Task Force and work groups.

- 6) **That the Formation Director involve Fellowships more in the Decision Making Process:** Recommendation – Since the last Chapter, when a Counselee has had difficulty in formation, the Formation Director has consulted with the Fellowship, with the permission of the Counselee. This been implemented by Liz and Rick. Liz has concerns about confidentiality because persons in formation have been promised confidentiality so she asks for permission before sharing and has had people who asked that she not share with everyone. Going forward, this practice will continue. Affirmed by Consensus **ACTION:** Continuing action by Formation Director and Chaplain

- 7) **The Use of *Common Prayer: A Liturgy for Ordinary Radicals*** – We recognize this as a valuable resource which can be used as a supplement to, but not a replacement for the authorized versions of the office. Rick who had been asked by Chapter 2016 to review the book recommends it as a resource. The thrust is orthopraxy, serving the poor. We should recognize it as a valuable resource, but not a replacement for authorized prayer books. Affirmed by Consensus **NO ACTION NEEDED**

- 8) **Statutes regarding Letter from Spiritual Director:** Recommendation – That the Statute not be changed, but that the Formation Director will clarify the request to the Spiritual Director, asking for simple assessment of the candidate’s readiness, without disclosure of confidential information. Some members of Chapter dissented from this committee recommendation. David and Verleah told the others about their personal experience of this requirement and having spiritual directors who objected to this intrusion in the director/directee relationship. Verleah consulted the person who was then Formation Director about her spiritual director’s refusal to report to TSSF. Verleah was required to give up her old spiritual director and to find a new spiritual director who did not object to being contacted by TSSF. Bishop Scruton spoke out against any violation of spiritual director/directee relationship. Masud believes in CPE example, where there is a chance for yes/no, similar to yes or no from Fellowship. Bishop Scruton says SD and directee are in a relationship with God. Novice counselor relationship is similar, says Masud. David says this is not clear cut. We should do nothing at this time, but this should go before the Working Group. Liz does not want to continue with the practice of seeking input from the spiritual director. **ACTION:** Delete from Statute III.C.1 the words “spiritual director.” Affirmed by consensus minus one.

There was discussion about how the consensus system work. Robert's Rules by Gen. Roberts is designed to follow laws of war. It's all about building power. Quakers and Jesuits have done most work on discernment. OEF uses prayerful discernment, uses a listener. Desmond says First Order in Europe has intention of reaching agreement.

It was suggested that we recommend to Tom that Anton Armbruster that do a tune-up on consensus at Chapter 2018. **ACTION:** Tom Johnson to be asked to consider having Anton attend the next Chapter to do this.

We told Bishop Scruton how very much we appreciated his 14 years as our Bishop Protector.

The next meeting will be at 8:30 on June 20 to meet Bishop David and having the Corporation meeting. Ken was thanked for his service. He has been at 21 consecutive Chapter meetings.

Adjourned at 8:30 pm.

Ken reconvened Chapter at 8:37 am on June 20, 2017. All were present and we were joined by Bishop David Rice.

Rick led us in prayer. We introduced ourselves to Bishop David. David told us he was born in North Carolina and went to a Lutheran college after which he toured world on bicycle. He grew up in the Methodist Church, attended seminary at Duke, was ordained a Methodist, moved to England, then to New Zealand where he became an Anglican. He was a Bishop in NZ and is now bishop of Diocese of San Joaquin. He is involved in rebuilding for the rest of the church. He loves St. Francis: in NZ he had relationships with Franciscans and was aware of the importance of prayer life and work in community. Church is emerging, reimagining, He warns about being careful about changes in ethos of TSSF, that we must remain true to who we are.

Any other business for Chapter. Tracey says yesterday was a productive day, it's an exciting time to be us.

- 1) Adjourn Chapter 8:51
- 2) Open Corporation 8:51
 - Election of Board of Directors
 - President Tom
 - Vice-President Rick
 - Secretary Verleah

Assistant Secretary Ken [Note from VBK, see above. This position should be Officer-at-Large.

Treasurer David

Second – Masud

Elected

3) Suspend Corporation

4) Call to Order the Board of Directors

Approve the Budget Ken moved, Rick seconded. All approve

Announce date of next meeting 8-12 October, 2018, Aston, Pa

All other business

Adjourn Board of Directors meeting David/Rick

5) Reconvene Corporation

Adopt Budget

6) Adjourn Corporation Rick/David

7) Call back to order the meeting of Chapter 8:54

We can now report a budget for the next fiscal year.

Bishop Scruton asked what has the spirit done with Chapter.

Rick says Tom's request last year for a time of renewal really set the tone for this year. The task force on formation is new.

David said we are looking outward, rebuilding God's church. We are uniquely positioned to be the leaven in the dough. We are not tied to buildings, we can put our sandals on and begin moving quickly and prayerfully where we need to go.

Bishop David is in a diocese where they are about to conclude an 8-year litigation about 28 properties. They are going to sell off all of them. Most of those properties were built in hopes people will come. But they are not rebuilding, but re-emerging.

Gordon's sermon asked to embrace the Gospel model, not the institution model.

Masud recalled that Tom's statement was based on the Archbishop of Canterbury calling on religious communities to reconnect with their spiritual roots to become a resource for the church. In the Middle Ages monasteries were repositories that helped bring new life to the world. The focus back on what is essential in our charism. We must fan those embers and bring that forth. Each community was founded because of work of the Spirit. Our communities were invited to explore that and that led to Tom's

saying, "This is where we should go." We are being invited to be leaven in the lump – yeasty beasties.

Phil is moved by idea of getting back to basics. Gordon's sermon says what we need to concentrate on, other things will drop away.

David says "We are also reaching out to our brothers and sisters who are not Christian."

Bishop David reminded us that our better relationships are ecumenical and interfaith.

Ken said "We had a discussion yesterday about tension between structure and where we are going. He talked to Susan Pitchford about two books, Pilgrim Church by E.H. Broadbent and Torch of the Testimony by John W. Kennedy , about being dragged down to the level one intended to reform. There's tension between institutionalizing things. We need structure, but Francis was a person of freedom. By end of his life regretted that his order had become institutionalized. "

Desmond said that Francis managed to walk the tight rope and stay within the church unlike other people at the same time. Desmond saw synchronicity with things he's thinking about in the First Order.

Phil reminded us that we must keep in mind where the Empire is. Neither Francis nor Jesus was part of the Empire.

Tracey said we have been blessed as a church to have Presiding Bishop Curry and the Jesus Movement revival of the church and to remember who we are.

Joan suggests Bishop David hear about Joint Committee.

Masud said it began in 2004. We were invited by Roman Catholic Secular Franciscans to be involved in their work. Now OFS, TSSF, OEF affirm and fund the Joint Committee. There is mutual respect and cooperation. We are all equal Christians and Franciscans. We work toward helping our communities to understand this and work together on missions. Elements of Franciscan unity have been identified, various levels of leadership of the three orders have gone through this program. It's an ongoing work because a culture change has to happen. OFS has about 14,000 members in US so it takes awhile to get the word out.

Prayer break.

Bishop Gordon explained to Bishop David that we sing at top of hour and pray at half an hour so the meeting is marinated in prayer.

Masud continued. Most recently because of spirit of Jesus and Francis we have used Laudato Si as context for conference on elements of Franciscan unity – environment and people. There is also an interfaith emphasis. A conference led by Masud, a rabbi, and an imam was about the Source being the same with different expressions. We need to express and affirm that understanding towards peace-making and nonviolence. OLF is likely to join the Joint Committee. They will be applying to be part of Joint Committee. OFS has changed dynamic of ecumenical interfaith commission to add an imam and a rabbi as part of commission. An example of interfaith understanding is the relationship between FAN and Muslim production company that will screen The Sultan and the Saint on Thursday evening. A Muslim representative from Cincinnati will be here. There will be discussion on that video afterward. Patrick Carolan of FAN will be here for screening. All that is because of work of the Joint Committee.

Bishop David said “This is the opposite of wall construction. This makes us dangerous people following Francis’ freedom of hearts and minds.”

Fred Ball is now minister of Franciscans of Reconciliation which was birthed out of OEF – the Ecumenical Catholic Church. FOR sends greetings and congratulations on 100th anniversary.

Ken thanks TSSF for 21 years on Chapter. He says he gets to meet the coolest people at Chapter. David thanks Ken for filling in for Tom.

If there be no other business, we close Chapter.

Chapter closed before 10 am on June 20.

