

Approved December 11, 2018

**THIRD ORDER, SOCIETY OF SAINT FRANCIS, PROVINCE OF THE
AMERICAS**

Minutes of the Conference Call of November 6, 2018

(9:30 pm Newfoundland, 9 pm Brazil, 8 pm Atlantic, 8 pm Eastern, 7 pm Central, 6 pm Mountain, 5 pm Pacific).

Members on the Call, Tracey Fiore Carroll, Janet Fedders, Jeff Golliher Verleah Kosloske, Josiah (Jotie) Noel, Liz Peacock, Millicent Ramcharan, Alison Saichek, Rick Simpson, Peter Stube, and Joan Verret.

Excused: Celso Franco de Oliveira (regrettably his efforts to join us by Zoom were not successful), Phil Geliebter, and Masud Ibn Syedullah

Janet Fedders, Minister Provincial, greeted everyone on the call while members gathered. There being a quorum, she called the meeting to order at 8:04 pm EST.

Janet opened the meeting with prayer.

Chapter 2018 minutes were approved by CONSENSUS.

Bursar and budget – Alison had previously distributed the Report on the 2017/2018 Budget. There were no questions. The 2017/2018 budget report was accepted by CONSENSUS. The changes to the revised 2018/2019 working budget include the following – the annual commission was tabled and will be referred to fellowships for follow-up so that \$2,500 was moved to Chapter 2019 which will probably be more expensive. The place is more expensive for 2019 and there may be greater transportation expenses. We got the grant from Ministers Provincial Fund to pay for travel for the Brazil/Cuba project to set up fellowships in Cuba. The Minister Provincial Fund will not actually send us a check for \$3,000; they will apply the \$3000 to our Central Fund contribution. They will apply \$2,334 to this year's annual Central Fund contribution and will give us a credit of \$666 for the next year's Central Fund contribution. It's a one-time transaction. This is a bare bones budget. Alison hopes she has been pessimistic enough as far as income goes. We do need to begin saving for 2022 provincial convocation. Alison says it is not necessary to vote to accept the revised budget. Quarterly reports will be adequate,

Janet said. ACTION: Bursar reports to Chapter are needed on a quarterly not monthly basis.

Is it time to say something? We all received a comment from Masud about a letter that was sent before the invasion of Iraq. We will wait to hear from Dom Celso tomorrow. Joan said that letter was very helpful in the past and we were all very much helped by it. Rick said that we need someone to craft something for us after we hear from everyone. Janet said that Victoria Logue is capable of doing something like that. Liz said remember we represent the whole hemisphere. Janet said our awareness of the hemisphere is growing. Joan says she thinks it is time. Peter said we will find out the result of the election tonight. Tracey said that it may be time to make a statement about civility, that we are created in the image and likeness of God. Some of our own members say things on Facebook. Our political agenda is not based on any country, but on the Gospel. There needs to be theological or spiritual reflection on what we are thinking, Peter said. Peter continued that there is the issue of resident aliens, a topic in many countries. Scripture does not recognize anyone as an illegal alien. The concern is for those who are less privileged however they arrive at our shores. We need a foundation of scripture, Francis, and Clare. Tracey said there is so much civil religion that goes on in this country. Rick says we should go forward. Peter said that we want geographical representation and the various Franciscan organizations -- do we include first order? The decision was Third Order only. Jotie says it's not his country and he feels excluded. We need to talk to other provinces to see how they handle talking to individual countries. We need a protocol for how we talk to individual countries and what subjects are appropriate. Jotie feels as a Canadian that he shouldn't be part of this meeting. Liz agrees with Jotie that we speak for the whole hemisphere. Peter says we must address our concerns to all countries or each group addresses their own country. There are international issues that we should address. Peter said the context is different in the different provinces. Canada just had an apology from the prime minister about the historical unjust arrest of ancestors to a community where they don't even have clean drinking water. Drinking water should be addressed before staged apologies. The protocol should have a theological and Franciscan basis. Janet apologized to Jotie. Jotie thinks Masud is onto something good. This protocol can be used as a template for talking to other countries. The time is right, but for what? Janet said we are taking a step in the right direction. She asked Peter, Jotie, Masud, Millicent and Dom Celso to be involved in developing such a protocol. CONSENSUS to proceed with developing a protocol for discussing issues that reflect the entire Province and also to decide what we want to say in this case. It is possible that all of us could offer more than one statement. Jeff asked what the purpose of the protocol is. Jotie said

I think we need to be consistent in the way we address issues and the particular issues that we address. We need a procedure and template for how to talk about these things. Jotie said we should be consistent in how we address issues in individual countries. Peter says we might also be able to address some overriding issues are that we think need your attention.

Inquirer requirements – An inquirer from San Damiano fellowship was rejected and told she must be in the Episcopal Church for two years. Liz says it isn't codified. It falls into the category of long-standing practice. It has been applied consistently. If the vocation is there, it is still there after two years. Liz herself says she needed two years to let go of her old tradition and embrace her new tradition. You need to embrace the Episcopal Church as your own. Some people come because they were dissatisfied with their old church and it takes awhile for them to figure out the Episcopal Church is not everything they want. New Christians who want to do everything they can do to be holy. Sometimes they just need time to settle. Joan says she agrees with everything Liz has said. Joan didn't wait two years. Formation will iron out some of these issues. Joan says we talk about getting new people. There are Franciscans in other denominations. Joan said that others in San Damiano Fellowship hadn't been members of the Episcopal Church for two years either. Janet asked about the idea of using formation to work out these things. Liz says we are an Anglican order. Rick says it has been a long-standing tradition. Traditions are changeable. What does it mean? Liz gave us some good background. St. Benedict let aspirants knock on the door more than once before they came into the monastery. We also live in a time of impatience. Janet says the fellowship said if we keep them out we treat them as a stranger. If we let them in, then we get to know them. Joan says she can think of another example. A woman who was rejected because she hadn't been an Episcopalian long enough went on to be on the vestry, she's a very strong Episcopalian and very Franciscan, but she doesn't want to hear about TSSF because she was turned down because she hadn't been in the Episcopal church long enough when she applied. The San Damiano Fellowship argued that new Episcopalians would learn the church through Franciscan eyes. Tracey asked whether it is fair for a counselor to monitor dual formations – as an Episcopalian and as a Franciscan. What about people from ACNA, and other denominations who are part of TSSF? Joan says there are also OEF and OFS, but they are part of their churches. I don't see why denomination affects whether you can be a Franciscan. Tracey says we already have people in TSSF who are not in communion with Canterbury. Liz said we do call ourselves an Anglican order. Peter asks whether we let them know that there are other Franciscan orders. Yes. The formation process is 3 about years. The early church required preparation for baptism of 3 years and one extra year to

prepare for ministry. Liz said one exception was someone who had just come from Roman Catholic Church and a professed friar. He is doing both processes together. Jotie said we talk about missional work. Diana Butler Bass says we need to let people belong and then they will learn to behave and then they come to believe. We need to be prepared for seekers. Where do we meet people? We cannot turn people away. In Canada we have to welcome people who want to belong. Janet asked whether it would be worth trying for a period of time to open our gates wider and see how it works. Tracey said we've tried that in terms of fellowships. Peter says we tried to open fellowships up to other non-Episcopal orders. Janet says should we try it for one or two years. Millicent said sometimes fellowships don't know whether anyone is Anglican. Janet will craft a policy or statement and send it around for comment. There was a group agreement to try for 2 years. We will know how it is working and can always extend it. Liz has probably turned away 6 or 8 a year. It comes up frequently. It will impact the formation program. We need to keep track of how this experiment works. We agree to a 2-year trial with possible extension to an additional year to open our formation program to anyone attending an Episcopal church. After discussion, Liz asked that it include those attending Anglican/Episcopal churches. Alison said that attending is too broad. Rick said what about baptized members? All agreed to attending. CONSENSUS

Share directory with OEF, OLF, etc. Do they share theirs? Liz says I just want it to be comfortable. Janet says it can happen that people get our email addresses. We will share our directory with the leaders of all members of the Joint Commission on Franciscan Unity. CONSENSUS

Safe Community Policy – Janet thinks this is something we will want to spend time on this year. Also Rick Bellows sent around the Safe Order document. He brought out issues of power and the dominance of power and how reporting is done. Many things in his document need attention. Liz thinks ours is out of date and we don't even know that everyone has done it. Liz will put together a committee and report back in March. ACTION: Liz and Janet will put together a committee.

Alison says Diocese of California is just beginning the Whole and Healthy Church program. She will tell us more about it.

Companions – Rick said that we are really excited. It is taking off. You don't have to be an Episcopalian to be a Companion historically. Companions are Franciscans in a different way. We expect an explosion of growth. There is going to be ongoing communication. The leadership team will be in place within the

next month. The Companions Secretary is listed on TSSF website. Janet says to use Paul Ledwitz's name and Post Office Box for referrals to the Companions. The address is Paul Ledwitz, Secretary for Companions, P.O. Box 706, Mt. Sinai, NY 11766. SSF and CSF have agreed to the transfer to TSSF.

Internet Norm

Every life-professed Member of the Order may use "TSSF" after their name in a signature. This is also true for our digital signatures on social media and email. Its presence can often lead to discussion about our Franciscan life and Rule. As tertiaries, however, we must be alert that our comments and dialogue are our own and not a public expression of the World Wide Third Order Society of St. Francis. Please be careful discussing things online where emotions run high (e.g. politics, and other "isms") and always show respect for others' opinions. (Day 24) Our mission and the Aims of the Order come first. So please do not let negative social media comments affect our greater mission. And, if you mess up, correct it immediately and be clear about what you've done to fix it.

Adopted by CONSENSUS .

Rick and Janet will talk about how to let individuals know in addition to Hot News. Millicent says send an email to everyone.

Mexico Profession -- Miguel Ángel Cristerna Becerra is looking to establish a Franciscan-Anglican youth movement in northern Mexico. Liz asked whether he has made a financial contribution? The recommendation does not say. Can we approve his profession by email after we hear from Barbara about this? Agreed. Janet will get back to us on this.

Ministers Provincial Fund Grant \$3,000 for Brazil to set up fellowships in Cuba.

Janet has appointed an Assistant Minister Provincial for Climate Affairs – Jeff Golliher.

Alison says due to fraud with a check that she had sent, she is now having all checks paid through Bank of America. All reimbursements will come as a bill pay check from the bank.

TSSF has been incorporated as a nonprofit organization in Canada. Thanks to Diane and Frank Jones.

We will meet the second Tuesday of the month in December – the 11th.

Rick closed with prayer
The meeting adjourned at 9:13 pm EST.