

**The Third Order
Province of the Americas
Society of St. Francis
THE NORMS (Approved Chapter Decisions)
(Revised December 2018)**

BURSAR/BUDGET

- Reimbursements for the current calendar year have to be submitted by 9/30. (2004)
- Convocations are open to all tertiaries but Chapter doesn't budget funds for this. (1995)
- Contribution statements are sent to members once a year. (1992)
- Memorials and bequests may be accepted by the Order. The funds are to be kept separate and are to be reviewed annually at Chapter. (2007)
- Guidelines for TSSF Scholarship Monies:
 - a) To be eligible for TSSF funds, people must be within the TSSF family (i.e. Postulants, Novices and Professed)
 - b) Companions (formerly called Associates) can contact the Companions Secretary and request assistance when available.
 - c) Funds should not be dispersed except for purposes designated in an approved budget. Budget items are to be submitted and approved by convocations.
 - d) Scholarship funds are restricted and limited to this designated purpose. (2009)
- Pledge funds held outside the USA corporate funds are to be dispersed in accordance with a budget approved by the local convocation. An annual statement is to be submitted to the Provincial Bursar by June 30th each year. (2009)
- As of Chapter 2010, all future print issues of the Franciscan Times will include an offering envelope. (2010) Issues going outside the USA will be exempt from this Norm since their pledges go to their regional bursars. (2011)
- The Minister Provincial can be consulted in regard to members in financial distress. No TSSF funds may be used for loans to individuals. (2010)
- In order to ensure accountability of the Provincial Bursar, any new expense 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 the 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.

CHAPLAIN/PASTORAL

- Area Chaplains should send newly professed members a letter of welcome. The newly professed should give the Area Chaplain some information about themselves. Newly professed should be provided a one-page summary of the responsibilities and privileges of profession by the Chaplain. (1992)
- An Area Chaplain should be appointed to a three-year term but not limited in the number of terms allowed to serve. The Area Chaplain will evaluate his or her position and be evaluated by the Provincial Chaplain and/or Assistant Chaplain (s) every three years. (2002)

- The Chair of the Ecumenical and Interfaith Commission is elected for a term of three years. (2004)
- “Resolved that the Chapter of the Third Order, American Province, Society of St. Francis, affirms that Christ indwells all persons regardless of race, gender, ethnicity, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability or socioeconomic condition; we welcome to our services of worship and to all occasions for fellowship all persons; and we affirm that we welcome and encourage full membership in this Order for persons of all sexual orientations. Further, we encourage those of us who would do so, to educate ourselves and others in the Church about the current pressing issues of lesbians and gay men in a society that is frequently hostile to them; and we commit ourselves to action to end ignorance about, prejudice toward, and discrimination against lesbians and gay men in the Episcopal/Anglican Church and in society at large.” (1990/2015)
- Our Provincial Statutes require that professed members report annually, renew annually, and contribute financially annually. It is therefore a requirement that persons holding any leadership position in the Province must meet these requirements. (2006)
- Chapter agreed unanimously to empower the Bishop Protector to appoint deputy Bishops Protector as needed. (2006) It is the responsibility of the Provincial Bishop Protector to approve persons to serve as Deputy and/or Regional Bishops Protector within the Province. (2014)
- A professed member may apply to the Provincial Chaplain for a one-year leave of absence from keeping his/her personal rule. At the end of that year, s/he may request an additional year of leave. At the end of the leave, the member must decide to either resume the full keeping of the personal rule and active participation in the Order or ask to be released from profession vows. During this leave, the Order will provide pastoral support for the member. (2006)
- Our concern is to minister to the ill and infirmed members of the Order. If a person is a member of a fellowship, the primary responsibility for this will generally reside with the fellowship working with the area chaplain. If a member is isolated, members appointed by the Provincial Chaplain especially for this ministry, will write, call, pray for and in other ways minister to and stay in contact with the ill and infirmed isolated members. All members of the Order have a responsibility of informing the Chaplain of any known members who are infirmed or ill. After consultation with the Provincial Chaplain, the member who for health reasons cannot fulfill his/her rule in its entirety will remain in the Third Order in good standing by assenting to pray and receive communion regularly—if available. (2007) (Revised 2013)
- Procedure for Transferring from Another Province (those who are not professed will be expected to enter the formation program under the guidance of the Formation Director):
 - a) The tertiary who is transferring into the Province will contact the Chaplain of his/her desire to transfer.
 - b) The Chaplain will contact the Chaplain of the Province of origin to verify the status of the tertiary.
 - c) The Chaplain will inform the tertiary that s/he has the choice of keeping his/her original personal rule or of changing to ours.
 - d) The Chaplain will notify the Fellowship Coordinator and the Secretary. The latter will notify the Minister Provincial, Chapter, and the membership.
 - e) Letters of welcome will be written to the tertiary by the Chaplain and Fellowship Coordinator.
 - f) The fellowship which the tertiary joins is encouraged to have a simple service of welcome for him/her. (2006)
- The Safe Community and Conflict Transformation Covenant is approved for permanent use with the Third Order Society of St. Francis. All pastoral leaders within the Order (including Minister Provincial, Chaplain, Assistant Chaplains, Formation Director, Assistant Formation Directors, Formation Counselors, Fellowship Conveners, Area Chaplains, Associates Secretary and all Chapter

members) will be required to have taken an abuse prevention/boundary awareness class sufficient for the diocese in which they are canonically resident. This requirement shall be met within one year after having assumed office. If the particular diocese of a pastoral leader does not require or offer such a training, then a suitable equivalent will need to be approved by the Chaplain of the Order. (2008)

- The requirements of annual reporting, annual renewing, and annual contributing will be supplemented by the additional requirement of signed assent to the Safe Community covenant for any individuals in a position of leadership as defined in the covenant. (2009)
- Sabbatical pilgrimages are greatly encouraged for all the professed. (2012)
- The Chaplain, the Formation Director, and the Fellowship Coordinator are directed to include in their annual reports, the completeness or movement towards completeness of those under their care towards signing and filing with the Assistant Chaplain, the Safe Community and Conflict Transformation Covenant along with a copy of each individual's training certification. (2013)
- Chapter affirms the action of the 2013 Ministers Provincial of the Third Order, meeting in Simons Town, SA that re-emphasizes the importance of praying daily the Community Obedience and affirms that it is one of the marks of profession together with reporting, renewal and a financial offering. Particular reflection on the Principle of Day and praying for the order including Provincial and worldwide intercessions is of primary importance. (2013)

CHAPTER

- Chapter doesn't fund the same outreach projects for 2 consecutive years. (1996)
Chapter is held at Mt. Sinai, NY: due to added expense of moving Chapter elsewhere, additional work involved, and that the corporation legally needs to meet in New York. (1991)
Chapter voted to meet at various venues throughout the country since there is no legal requirement to meet in New York State thus providing the opportunity to be closer to local Fellowships and tertiaries. (2013)
* Chapter will be sensitive to geographic location. (2018)
- Procedure for electronic (email) voting. Electronic voting would be reserved for those extraordinary situations when a member of Chapter has a motion requiring a vote of Chapter, where s/he believes that waiting until the next regularly scheduled meeting of Chapter would have a detrimental effect. S/he should communicate with another member of Chapter to solicit a "second," and present the motion and second to the Minister Provincial for electronic posting for a vote by the voting members of Chapter. Chapter members are asked to contact the Provincial Secretary indicating their receipt of the ballot. If, after three days, the Provincial Secretary has not received an indication of receipt, a telephone call will be placed to individuals who have not responded. For a period of ten days after the distribution of the ballot, discussion will be solicited. At the end of this discussion period, the Minister Provincial shall send out an email to Chapter restating the motion, indicating that it was seconded, and calling the question. Votes will be sent to the Provincial Secretary. The Secretary will tally the votes, considering individuals who have responded by means other than email. Chapter will be notified of the result. (2005)
- The outgoing Minister Provincial is to be invited to sit on the next Chapter in an advisory role with voice. This is a one year agreement. (2010)
- The electronic records of the Bursar, Secretary, Minister Provincial, and Formation Director be backed up by an offsite provider for security. The Fellowship Coordinator and the Chaplain will send a copy of their records to the Secretary for inclusion. All officers will provide current access information to all records to the minister provincial. (2011)
- The Regional **Chaplain** of Brazil **or the elected representative to Provincial Chapter** shall be part of all phone conferences of the Provincial Chapter related to matters of Brazil. (2014)(2016)
- Chapter members will, when possible, attend their local Regional Convocations--like other

tertiaries—at their own expense. The Minister Provincial, in consultation with the Standing Committee may, for good reason, authorize a particular officer to attend a particular Regional Convocation. (2014)

- When financially possible, the Minister Provincial, Provincial Chaplain, Formation Director and Fellowship Coordinator shall attend a convocation other than their own annually with the transportation and convocation cost to be paid by the Order. (2015)

FORMATION

- A Spiritual Director should not be a member of the Novice or Postulant's local fellowship. (1994) It is inappropriate for postulants, novices, or professed members to be members of and to follow the requirements of other religious orders that include profession vows. (1994, 2000)
- “Policy that the formation of the terminally ill may be shortened at the discretion of the formation director but a minimum of one year in the novitiate will be required.” (1991)
It is expected that a novice who has been elected to profession will become professed within 90 days of the profession mandate being sent by the Chaplain. (2000)
While it is not possible to admit a person to formation in the Third Order who is currently incarcerated, any such person who makes inquiry to us will be directed to the Perugian Community in order to foster their connection with Francis. (2018)
Incarcerated individuals in formation will only receive name and contact information for the Formation Director (FD). For incarcerated persons in formation, the formation team will consist of the Formation Counselor, Formation Director and the Provincial Chaplain. (2015)
Incarcerated tertiaryaries are not eligible to vote for Chapter. (2015)
That we provide an intercession list for incarcerated persons that does not include names. (2015)
That after profession, the incarcerated person will have contact with the Provincial Chaplain or his/her designate. (2015)
Monthly reports will be required during the first six months of formation. Thereafter, the reporting may, at the discretion of the Novice Counselor in consultation with the Assistant Formation Director, become quarterly. The Novice Counselor, however, shall continue to ensure the faithful engagement of the Novice with the Formation materials. (2013)
Elections to profession are to be held quarterly. Ballots are to be sent to members of Chapter by email prior to a conference call during which a discussion of the nominees may take place prior to a vote. The fourth quarterly meeting would be at Chapter. (2013)
In anticipation of professions in Brazil, the **Regional Chaplain of Brazil or the elected Representative to Provincial Chapter** shall provide biographical information about potential candidates and inform the Provincial Minister/Chapter of the dates and time of its meeting at least one month ahead of the event so that the Provincial Chapter can set up a phone conference during that time. Chapter shall review the oral request for profession to consider its ratification by the phone conference. The **Regional Chaplain of Brazil or the elected Representative to Provincial Chapter** shall be part of that phone conference. Furthermore, the mandate for profession shall be written in Portuguese and signed by both the Provincial Chaplain and the Regional Minister or Chaplain of Brazil. (2014) **(2016)**

FELLOWSHIPS

- There may be extenuating circumstances in which the Fellowship Coordinator, in consultation with the Minister Provincial, shall appoint an interim convener to serve for a period of no longer than six months. (2005)

RULE AND INTERPRETATION

- The Chaplain and Formation Team may be consulted for consideration in adjusting the means of fulfilling the Personal Rule for individuals constrained by disabilities or literacy. (2000)
- A professed person who has transferred into the American Province from another Province may request permission from the Provincial Chaplain to keep the Personal Rule of the Province from which s/he transferred. (2000)
- Normally tertiaries will avail themselves of The Reconciliation of a Penitent at least once a year. (1996, 2000)
 - Prayer obligations – all members are to read the Principles and Rule and pray the Community Obedience daily. (1996)
- Chapter affirmed the I.P.T.O.C. making decisions on the common wording of the Rule of the Third Order, and that we should endeavor to make a commitment to decisions taken by I.P.T.O.C. concerning it. (1993)
- The current duly authorized editions of the books of common prayer as set forth in the several Anglican provinces that comprise the Third Order, American Province, Society of St. Francis, are the standard rites of the Daily Office used by members of the Third Order. Authorized editions of the books of common prayer from provinces of the Anglican Communion beyond those within the American Province of the Third Order may be used as alternative rites. In addition, office books published by Orders within the Society of St. Francis also may be used as alternative rites. (1999). The *Lutheran Book of Worship* is approved for use as a book of common prayer. (2001)
- The requirement for an annual retreat means a quiet day or silent retreat which optimally should be for a whole day of quiet with a night on either end of it. A retreat may be done at home; materials are available from the sisters of the Community of St. Francis for home use. (1999)

MISCELLANEOUS

- The profession cross is the only and sufficient “habit” of the Third Order.
- As an acknowledgement of our profession in the Third Order, American Province, Society of St. Francis, the use of the letters TSSF after our name is permissible. Likewise, novices may use n/TSSF. This is not to be used as an accreditation for counseling or spiritual direction or the like, but as a visible sign of our life in communion with the Order.
- There is no official logo for the Third Order. The Dancing Francis is MaryAnn Jackman’s creation and she is to be asked for permission to use it. The guidelines she has established include the following: (1999)
 1. Any tertiary may use it to generate fellowship retreat or convocation scholarships, or for use on fellowship newsletters.
 2. It also may be used for T-shirts, mugs, cards, etc. to be sold at convocations, diocesan conventions and so forth, as long as ALL proceeds go directly for TSSF use of some kind, such as to raise money for direct fellowship or TSSF use.
 3. The Dancing Francis logo is not to be used for personal profit.
- First Order Visitors to Convocations – Reimbursement for travel will be supplied by the Third Order for one First Order visitor to visit each regional convocation. (2004) Visitors are to sign up for our regional convocations so that either a brother or sister will visit each convocation; a visitor may be asked to present a program. Advance requests for particular visitors or experts on certain themes/topics are considered when the schedule is being made. Communication between the convocation coordinator and the Visitors is encouraged. If the SSF/CSF Visitor presents a program, an honorarium is appreciated. (1999)
- In a year when there is a Provincial Convocation, if the Regional Convocation chooses to meet, the travel expenses of the First Order visitors will not normally be reimbursed by Chapter. (2001)

- Companions – Companions belong to the First and Third Order – not just to the First Order.
 - Mailing List – The Third Order mailing list should not be given out to other organizations.
- Active Subsidiarity: 1) Public witness, in speech and action, for peace and justice, the integrity of creation, and the Church's preferential option for the poor, is a Franciscan charism. Members of the Third Order, Province of the Americas, Society of St. Francis, are encouraged to make such witness, as Christians and Franciscans, 2) Individuals and groups within the Third Order, should take care that their witness is consistent with *The Principles* of the Third Order; 3) In making such witness, the principle of subsidiarity applies for authorizing use of the name of the Third Order, Society of St. Francis: e.g., a statement of an individual is on her or his authority and conscience; a statement by a Fellowship must be authorized by the Fellowship; and a statement by a Convocation or Region must be authorized by the Convocation or Region. A statement on behalf of the entire Third Order, Province of the Americas, must be authorized by Chapter. Interprovincial statements should be authorized by IPTOC. (2005)
 - Prenominal and postnominal titles are to be removed from the Directory and Intercession List. (2007)
 - The elected representative at large to IPTOC (Inter-Provincial Third Order Chapter) is eligible to be elected only once. (2010)
 - Every effort is to be made by all levels of the Province to hold all meetings and gatherings in facilities that are accessible. (2011)
 - It was resolved that we want to continue the 18+ year understanding that the Companions are Companions to the whole Order and not just to 1st Order Brothers. We also want to emphasize that when 1st Order brothers and sisters discuss alternatives to the 1st Order that the Companions and Third Order are both discussed. (2012)
 - The responsibilities of the Secretary for Companions are to be divided between administrative and pastoral oversight. (2017)
 - Recognizing the importance of issues of justice, peace and the integrity of creation in Franciscan spirituality, Chapter shall ensure that an individual is designated as the JPIC Animator. This person will be responsible for identifying those in the order involved in JPIC activities and initiatives: raising awareness of the importance of these issues to the wider community; and serve as a contact person to external JPIC related groups and organizations. (2013)
 - Before any TSSF printed or electronic material is published, reprinted or put on the website, it must be submitted to an editorial task force for editing. (2013) Requests for such editing are to be submitted through the Minister Provincial. (2014)
 - The Norms are to be sent each year to all Formation directors, counselors and chaplains with instructions that they are to familiarize themselves with the Norms. (2014)
 - Chapter authorizes the librarian to negotiate a reasonable, informal book-borrowing arrangement with the Order of Ecumenical Franciscans and the Order of Lutheran Franciscans. (2017)
 - The TSSF Province of the Americas affirms the Charter for Compassion and The Earth Charter and commends them to our membership as being compatible with Franciscan principles. URL:chapterforcompassionforms.org/node/5655. (2017)

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 on-line where emotions run high (e.g. politics, and other "isms") and always show respect for others' opinions (Days 7 and 24) Our mission and the Aims of the Order come first. So please don't 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. (2018)