

Approved June 25, 2019

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

Minutes of the Conference Call of May 28, 2019

(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, Celso Franco De Oliveira, Phil Geliebter Jeff Gollither, Verleah Kosloske, Jotie Noel, Liz Peacock, Millicent Ramcharan, Peter Stube, Masud Syedullah, and Joan Verret. Also Bishop Gordon Scruton, Anton Armbruster, and Will Bliss.

Excused: Alison Saichek, Rick Simpson

Janet Fedders, Minister Provincial, greeted everyone on the call. There being a quorum, she called the meeting to order at 8:03 pm EDT. Peter Stube opened the meeting with prayer.

1. Approval of April Minutes (Verleah). The minutes were approved as corrected by consensus. Janet told us that we received \$10,000 in response to stewardship letter.
2. Release from vows— George Ratliff and Ruth Ratliff (Janet Fedders). They no longer consider themselves members. We released them from their vows by consensus.
3. Report on the changes coming to Chaplaincy (Anton Armbruster)
“Knocking on the door” is the mantra for the new chaplaincy program. If we want an extended discussion on any one item perhaps we should schedule a separate meeting. Anton says this has been a year in coming. The two draft handbooks, one for assistant chaplains and one for area chaplains were distributed along with the agenda. Janet and Rick invited Willy and Anton to gather input from previous area chaplains to revitalize this mission. Emmaus Travels and Saints Wisdom helped to strengthen overall our outreach and community of practice. The vision statement on the front says: Magnifying joyful life in Christ – Love, Connectivity and the ongoing nature of our Order. We appreciate the four Cs. Celso joined the meeting at this point. Janet said that this will tangentially affect Brazil. Anton continued that the 4 Cs are connection, collaboration, caring and conversion. How do we live into these and how does chaplaincy serve these well? St. Clare said that we are to become vessels of Christ’s

compassionate love for others. We envision a new role for assistant chaplains – that is to have a team of assistant chaplains who will at the same time serve as area chaplains to serve in a coaching role for a cluster of area chaplains who are regionally organized. These coaches are to share best practices and cultivate the community of professed. Currently there are 20 geographic clusters, five of which are Hispanic. The assistant chaplains serve as team leaders. The third major idea was to create a rotation, term limits to insure dynamic and sustainable ministry with humility. The term is three years with an opportunity to volunteer for an additional three years, but in another region. Janet said some of chaplains have questioned breaking up the existing areas. None of this is set in stone. There will be vigorous discussion about this. Thirty of the area chaplains have expressed enthusiasm, Will Bliss said. Anton said the model is based on Agile movement in organizations, approaching everything as an experiment. This is aimed at reinvigorating the ministry. Anton is going off vestry after 6 years. Rotating off gives the person leaving a chance to refresh. There will also be discussion on pastoral discipline. We pray as we are. The idea is to give people a chance to discover who they are in the context of this ministry through a self-discovery process. There will be special topic seminars such as staying connected and adapting our rule of life as we age. People have been encouraged by that dialogue. Other subjects will be the art of asking better questions, the art of inquiry. In the fourth quarter conflict management and coaching skills will be the subject of seminars and then we will be setting seminars for 2020. We'll look at reporting. The goal is continuous feedback and continuous learning. It includes a 360 degree feedback component. We will seek feedback from those we work with both those we serve and those we report to. We have quite a few people who have signed up to be new area chaplains and new assistant chaplains. Liz asked about serving as spiritual directors for tertiaries without spiritual directors. Liz says the roles are not same. It takes the impetus off the tertiary to go find a spiritual director. Anton says those within chaplains who have spiritual direction experience might be able to help. Will Bliss says there are people in nursing homes that might need this sort of help. Masud reminded us that people can also receive spiritual direction by phone. Masud says there is an issue of language in section about people being removed. It should read "If a person has left a church of the Anglican communion..." Masud reminded us that our Province is made up of people from a number of countries. Tracy reminds us that we have a few people who are not Anglican – Lutheran and Roman Catholic. Tracey says if someone serves as spiritual director, it should not be for someone in their chaplaincy area. Masud wants to re-emphasize that a few months ago one of the assistant formation directors contacted him because someone needed a spiritual director and asked him to do that by way of Zoom. A chaplain could serve as a

spiritual director by way of Zoom for someone anywhere in the Province. Liz said we could make a list of people who could be Zoom or other video outlet spiritual directors. Will Bliss reminded us that not all seniors have Zoom or other video capacity. Janet said this is to strengthen the role of area chaplains so they will know what is going on – who needs communion, e.g. The old concern that we don't have enough area chaplains is no longer the case. We have new area chaplains. Millicent reminded Anton that Guyana is part of the Caribbean region for all practical purposes. Janet thanked her and said that we will seek more input from the Caribbean as we get closer. Liz said that as to dispensations, the process for readmission is not accurate. The process for leaves of absence and safe church policy are being revised so these are not final versions, only placeholders. Peter says there is overlap. This training could work well for conveners as well if we could have one program. It would be valuable to have the list of those who do spiritual direction updated in the directory. Anton said it would be great to invite others into the quarterly seminars including the formation team. Janet all this overlap is a sign of how the Holy Spirit is working in the Order.

4. Report on the Companions (Gordon Scruton, Will Bliss) Janet thanked Gordon for work on the Companions and also Will Bliss for all he has been doing. Gordon began with prayer. About 2015 there was a questionnaire throughout the order. People were hearing about a need to follow Francis but with fewer demands than TSSF. Gordon felt a passion to help the Companions. A small group was assigned to go forward. They worked with Sister Jean on how to re-vision the Associates to help connect people to the Franciscan community. The new name Companions would put our Associates in line with rest of the world. Many of the Associates were in 70s and 80s and it would be hard for them to envision something for younger people. This didn't seem like the time for big changes. Then Sister Jean turned it over to the brothers who did not have enough people to handle it. About a year ago there was a lot of energy to re-envision the Companions and that which Gordon had thought was dead had new life and he was glad to get involved. He thanked Chapter for being the umbrella under which this revisioning of the Companions took place. Bishop Gordon is now a Companion. It is an unfolding experiment. God is up to something and it is being birthed in a new way. The proposal that TSSF help with Companions is building on success of the Rosary and Prayer Bead Society and Emmaus Travelers. Will Bliss said that no one is isolated in TSSF any more unless by choice. There was a need to replenish this intensity in the Companions. Some are meeting with tertiaries in several places, but now they are being invited to be part of the family. They don't go through the disciplined formation of the Order, but they have a calling to Franciscan spiritual life. They are excited about all that they can bring to the group. They had 11

inquirers last month. Five or six are ready to be admitted. The secretary used to do everything. We have 17 people involved in this work. Documents will be available soon. Bishop Gordon is chaplain to the whole team. Nancy Dotson is director to companions. Will Wauters is her assistant. Paul Ledwitz, the secretary, is the liaison person for all. There's an advisory committee with two companions and several TSSF. Several people who were on team with Sr. Jean are on this committee. A number of people were at retreat on Long Island earlier this month. Janet thanked them and said that we are all looking forward to what comes next. Will says we are also envisioning Franciscan youth Companions, age 13 to 17. Will Wauters has seen this in the Spanish community. At age 18 they could become Companions or apply to TSSF. Janet Fedders says we look forward to hearing more in the future. Gordon, Anton and Willy left at 8:53

5. Announcement of an I.T. Guardian. This position is a clerk under the secretaryship. Jeff Bonner has agreed to accept this role. He will soon be able to do mailings and all sorts of things for the Order.
6. Hispanic Ministry three-year set-up coming to an end. June Rollout of new. The first phase is coming to an end. Jim Hagen, Barbara Bennett, and Janet are working on the transition. Barbara Bennett no longer wants to be formation director for Latin America. Someone will be announced in June. We are also going to insert a level of leadership under Jim Hagen that will include Latinos. Celso will be included. He sent us the wonderful Cuban retreat report.
7. October Chapter preview Janet announced that when we meet in Connecticut we will carve out the middle two days to pray. We will spend time in retreat. We want to go deeper to be more of an expression of help to those in our world who are so desperate. We want to go deeper in our Franciscan calling and have Christ with us in those times. We may be busier before and after Chapter getting things done on Zoom.
8. Other business Nancy Chiafulio has died. Kay and Gary Sevick's son died in auto accident last weekend. Phil Geliebter is starting to work on a spirituality center in Kensington working with addicted and homeless people. They are still looking for a building. He's the homeless deacon to the homeless. The name of the mission is St. Clare.
9. Janet talked with Bishop Rice. He is going on sabbatical next year after Lambeth. Janet then led us in prayer for deacons, for Phil, and for the

homeless and those who are involved with them such as Phil and Celso. Tracey led the closing prayer. The meeting adjourned at 9:03.

ACTION ITEMS: Rick will notify Ruth Ratliff and George Ratliff that Chapter has released them from their vows. Janet to coordinate compiling a list of Spiritual Directors within the Order. Chaplaincy cluster programs need further revision and need to consult with Millicent Ramcharan re Guyana.