

National Formation Commission Report to the National Fraternity Council August 15, 2019

Formation Commission members: Justin Carisio, OFS, Francine Gikow, OFS, Layna Maher, OFS, Patrick Martin, OFS, Mary Stronach, OFS, Spiritual Assistant-Anne Mulqueen, OFS, Chair-Diane Menditto, OFS

COMMUNICATION AND RELATIONSHIPS

- **Ongoing formation for the National Fraternity Council:** The NFC will be providing ongoing formation at the 2019 Chapter. We will also participate in certain geo-group gatherings during the Chapter.
- Co-hosted **Zoom call in Spanish** with our International Councilor, Willie Guadalupe. Purpose was to meet with local formation directors of Spanish-speaking fraternities. We will be doing this quarterly.
- Each commission member has been in touch with an assigned group of Regional Formation Directors.
Relationships are being established.
 - *(Examples of discussions: Accomplishments by the regions; concerns and areas of need—especially ongoing formation; how to collaborate better with the REC; guidelines for associates; distance and budget challenges for workshops and meeting; desire for a program on discernment; how to translate prayer life into service and transformation; speakers bureau; FUN-adjust format to facilitate use)*
 - First round of contacts has been made. Second round to come in the near future.
- **Personal Contact:** NFC member Justin Carisio met with Trish Naughton, RFD, and **10 others, including formators from four local fraternities, in the** Troubadours of Peace Region while on a family trip to Spokane, WA.
- **Formation questions that are sent to the national website are forwarded to the NFC.** We contact the person and provide requested information. (This is ongoing.)
- **We also respond to questions posted on the NAFRA-FORM** listserv.
- **Posts on FORM**—the Commission members have been sharing. There have been a number of lively discussions. In addition, our Spiritual Assistant, Anne Mulqueen has posted twice. We hope Regional Ministers will encourage their RFDs to take an active part in the listserv to share the good formation practices being carried out in the regions.
- **Facebook**—
 - **Formation Friday:** (Excerpts from the FUN Manual and various formation resources are shared each Friday on Facebook. On many occasions these posts provoke discussion and questions. Visitors to our site have said that they are grateful for the material. We also share these posts on the NAFRA-FORM listserv for RFDs who do not participate on Facebook and on NAFRA-RSA. Would the Regional Ministers like to be included?)
 - **We also have provided a regular series on the Rule and on the Admonitions.** We plan to continue sharing portions of the Franciscan sources.
- **TAU PERIODICAL-**
 - The Commission members have volunteered to rotate as authors of the formation article for the TAU each quarter. So far, Justin Carisio, Anne Mulqueen and Mary Stronach have submitted articles.

COMMISSION WORK ON OTHER PROJECTS

- **Regional Formation Director Handbook:** One of the first projects undertaken by the NFC this year was to revise and distribute the Regional Formation Director Handbook.

- Based on questions received either by email or on the FORM, we are finding that certain **guidelines are needed:**
 - Prayer (Liturgy of the Hours etc.)—**Patrick Martin** has been helpful in developing this area.
 - Affiliate program (in process)
 - Formation at a distance. (draft in process)
 - Formation for priests and deacons (in process)
 - Withdrawals from the Order
 - Changes in status of those who have been professed.. especially those in irregular marriages
- **National website:** Working with Lee Potts, we have transferred all materials from the previous National Formation website to the new website. Materials have been organized, added and removed according to their usefulness and timeliness. We are grateful to Lee for all his help on this.

VISIONING

- **Visioning II** was held in April 2019 as a follow-up to the first Visioning workshop we reported on at the 2018 Chapter.
 - The NFC continues to collaborate with the NEC on Visioning. Jan Parker and Mary Bittner have been an integral part of the visioning team.
 - Numerous teleconferences and Zoom calls were held during the workshop planning stages.

The Commission has been very busy since April organizing and evaluating the results of the **second visioning workshop**.

- Numerous Visioning **Zoom calls** have already taken place to discuss the results of the workshop
- The conclusions drawn from the two workshops have led us to begin reworking the formation program to address the needs of our members in initial and ongoing formation
- More information will be shared with the National Fraternity Council at Chapter.

COMMISSION MEETINGS

- The Commission has met **in person** twice since our last Chapter
 - January 2019 NFC only in Aston, PA
 - June 2019 NFC + NEC Visioning team in Latham, NY
 - Future-December 2019 NFC + NEC Visioning team in Latham, NY
- Numerous **teleconference calls and Zoom calls—both NFC and Visioning team**—sometimes more than one in a month.

Goals for 2020

- **Regional Formation Director workshop to be held August 20-23, 2020**
- **Visioning project continues**
- **Continue and increase communication with RFDs**
- **NFC availability to regions to assist with formation programs**
- **Continue to develop formation guidelines as needed**