

To Be Served or To Serve

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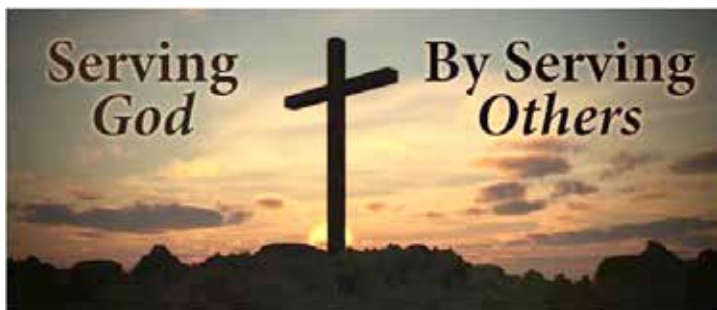
As much as I enjoy being with brothers and sisters from our Franciscan family, serving as the National Minister is quite a bit of work. Sure, I “get to” travel to fulfill my responsibilities. Often that means time building relationships with brothers and sisters, learning the blessings and challenges encountered in each area and praying together as part of daily Mass and morning/evening prayer. Following the fun part comes meetings and then time developing a report to document the findings.

Brian (our co-minister) is not thrilled with my needing to travel for this service – so I try to minimize my time away from home. By virtue of the “blessings of technology,” the National Executive Council (NEC) meets monthly for at least two hours to discuss the work of the Order as some decisions cannot wait until our next face-to-face gathering. I try to fit in my National Minister responsibilities while working 40+ hours per week for my livelihood and continuing my relationship with my husband. Not a surprise, but God provides. I suspect many other servant leaders have similar experiences.

The NEC has heard from all over the country that it is difficult to get people to serve our brothers and sisters on fraternity councils at local and regional levels. As a result, during this last year of our three-year term, the NEC is focusing on developing members for leading the Order at all levels.

Jesus taught us: ***“The Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many.” Mark 10:45***

Following Jesus’ lead, candidates should recognize that this type of leadership means we are serving so others benefit.



“The office of Minister or Councilor is a fraternal service, a commitment to hold oneself available and responsible in relation to each brother and sister and to the Fraternity ...” OFS General Constitutions Article 31.2

Candidates must have a disposition for service. What characteristics of a leader are most important to you? Certainly no one person has them all. Self-awareness allows us to serve with our strengths but also makes us able to allow others to lead with their strengths.

Do you have some leadership gifts and talents? Are you willing to serve?

The Holy Spirit is in charge. You won’t be elected before the Spirit’s timing allows. I’ve had several experiences when I thought I would be elected, and the Holy Spirit had other plans.

Each time I was elected, I noticed several things:

1. Getting to know my brothers and sisters enriched my vocation.
2. Everyone wants to help so the load is lighter than expected.
3. The skills I didn’t have, other council members brought.
4. The three-year term goes by quickly.

Preparation for the National Chapter of Elections in September 2025 is underway. We’ve secured a venue and have notified the OFS Presidency of the date. Now it is time to formally get people praying about who may be good candidates to serve.

The Order continues and through God’s grace and guidance will grow and thrive long after our time-of-service ends. Not everyone will be elected to serve, but one’s openness to serve is the key.

This is God’s Order, so let us be available to serve as God sees fit. If you don’t feel you are called to serve now, perhaps there are others who may be good candidates to serve on the local, regional or national level. Consider nominating them.