



ORDO FRANCISCANUS SAECULARIS

Consilium Internationale

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To the National Councils of YouFra
To the National Councils of the OFS
To the International Councillors of the OFS and YouFra

Dear brothers and sisters,

May the Lord give you peace!

After some time now, we are finally sending you the last document that was prepared for YouFra: *Celebrations in the fraternity of the Franciscan Youth*. With it, we have now a whole set of documents that should help to unify YouFra fraternities around the world in nature and organization, while respecting their diverse way of fulfilling their mission in the world.

The first document that explicitly dealt with YouFra, after the *OFS General Constitutions* (art. 96 and 97), was *Franciscan Youth: a Way of Franciscan Vocation* prepared in 2004. This document explained the identity and nature of YouFra as well as some organizational aspects that were further elaborated in a document called *YouFra: Sample Draft of National Statutes* (2004). The formation program which should be common for all YouFra fraternities was proposed in the document *YouFra Formation Program* (2004). After these basic documents prepared by YouFra members and CIOFS Presidency, we focused on defining the organization of YouFra at the international level with documents such as *YouFra International Regulation* (2007) and the conclusions of YouFra International Assemblies (Spain 2007, Croatia 2014).

After establishing these important foundations, we saw the need for a deeper look at YouFra's relationship with the OFS, which *considers itself to be particularly responsible* for YouFra (cf. GG.CC. art. 96.2). Thus, we prepared some reflections and guidelines on *Incorporation of the YouFra members into the Secular Franciscan Order* (2009) as well as the *Guidelines for Fraternal Animation* (2012). Since YouFra is becoming present in more and more places, we also prepared a *Guide for the establishment of a new YouFra fraternity* (2012) with some forms that should make easier the creation of a new fraternity. And finally, after the approval of the CIOFS Presidency at their meeting in November 2015, today we are sending you the document *Celebrations in the fraternity of the Franciscan Youth*. This resource should help us to identify ourselves as members of the Franciscan Youth by the promise made in front of God and our brothers and sisters to follow the example of St. Francis of Assisi – inspired by the *OFS Rule* – and to live the Gospel of Our Lord Jesus Christ in fraternity, wherever in the world we are.

Up to now, fraternities have used different forms and different texts for their celebrations. Now, some fraternities will have to make changes in the procedures described in this document (procedures for admission, promise and election). We know it may be difficult to change the way these celebrations have been done up to now, but this new model was proposed and accepted at the 2nd YouFra International Assembly, held in 2014, where representatives of YouFra fraternities around the world, after some prayer and discussion, agreed upon it. We hope that every YouFra fraternity will embrace this document that was prepared with love, diligence and care, having in mind the basics that should be common for all, and open to adaptations to different cultures. We are convinced that it provides the necessary elements for each YouFra member and fraternity to pray together as they celebrate important moments in their journey of faith. We invite you to make use of them with a true spirit of faith and devotion, as well as with Franciscan joy and openness to the Spirit of God who has inspired our vocation and nurtures it along the way.

All the above-mentioned documents are intended especially for YouFra members, but also for the OFS members and spiritual assistants that work closely with YouFra fraternities. We hope that in all these documents you will recognize the One who inspired and guided those who worked on them throughout these years. We pray that they will help the growth of YouFra according to His will, as we ask the intercession of Mary, the Holy Mother of God, St. Francis, St. Clare, St. Elizabeth of Hungary and St. Louis the King.

Fraternal greetings,



Tibor Kauser
OFS General Minister



Andrea Odak
Councillor of the CIOFS Presidency
YouFra International coordinator