

The Holy Spirit's Role in Fraternity

**St. Elizabeth of Hungary Formation Workshop
November 11, 2023**

Francine Gikow, OFS



OPENING PRAYER

Meditation: Elijah 1 Kings 19: 11-13

**The spirit of the Lord has been given
to us.**

For He has anointed us with His Life.

He has sent us to:

To bring the Good News to the poor,

**To proclaim liberty to the
captives;**

And to the blind, bring new sight;

To set the downtrodden free;

**And to proclaim the Lord's favor in
our lives (LK 4:18)**

AND

Rebuild His Church...





“After the Lord gave me some brothers, no one showed me what I had to do **but the Most High Himself revealed to me that I should live according to the pattern of the gospel.” (Test: 14)**

-Giotto di Bondone - Legend of St. Francis - 22. Verification of the Stigmata (detail) -
_Wikimedia commons. [Public Domain]

Fraternity is a Community of Love



**Modeled after the love between the
Three persons of the Holy Trinity**

Words of Profession

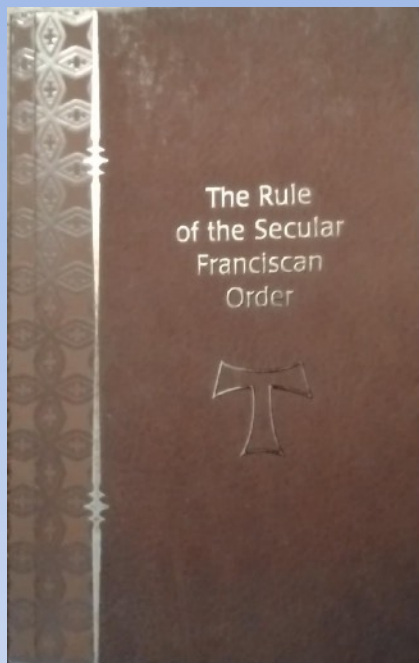


“I promise to live all the days of my life the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ in the Secular Franciscan Order by observing its rule of life.

May the Grace of the Holy Spirit, the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary and our holy father St. Francis, and the fraternal bonds of community always be my help, so that I may reach the goal of perfect Christian love.”



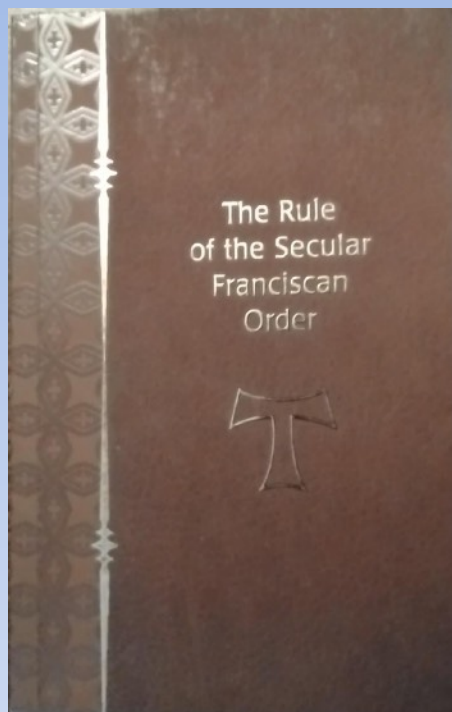
OFS Rule, Article 2:



*In these fraternities of brothers and
sisters,
led by the Spirit,
strive for perfect charity in their own
secular state.*



OFS RULE, ARTICLE 4.



*Christ, the gift of the Father's love, is the way to him, **the truth into which the Holy Spirit leads us**, and the life that he has come to give abundantly.*

GENERAL CONSTITUTIONS: 11

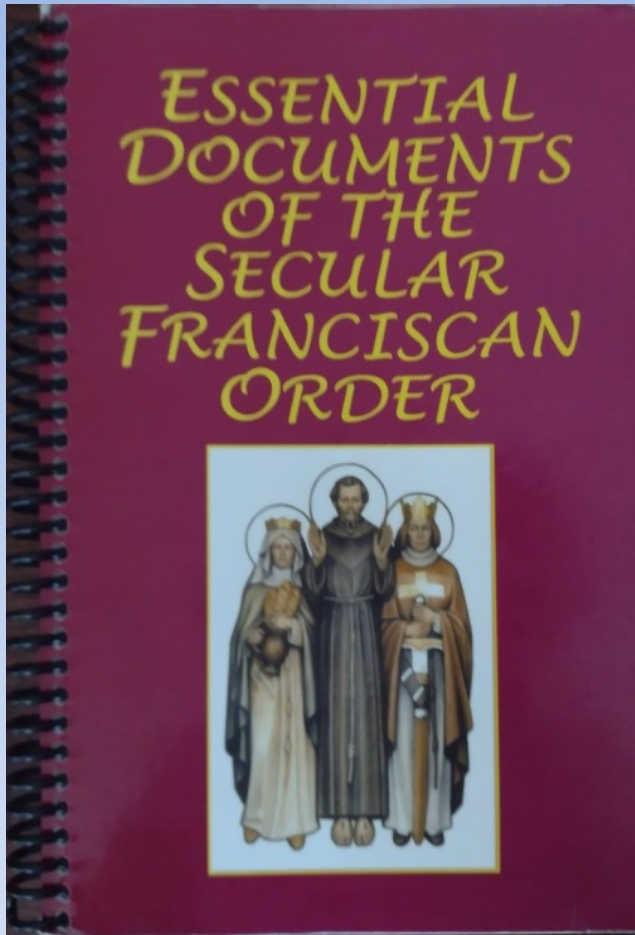
ESSENTIAL DOCUMENTS OF THE SECULAR FRANCISCAN ORDER



*Mindful that the **Holy Spirit** is the source of their vocation and the animator of fraternal life and mission, Secular Franciscans should seek to imitate the faithfulness of Francis to his inspiration. They should listen to the exhortation of the Saint to desire above all thing “the Spirit of God at work within them.”*

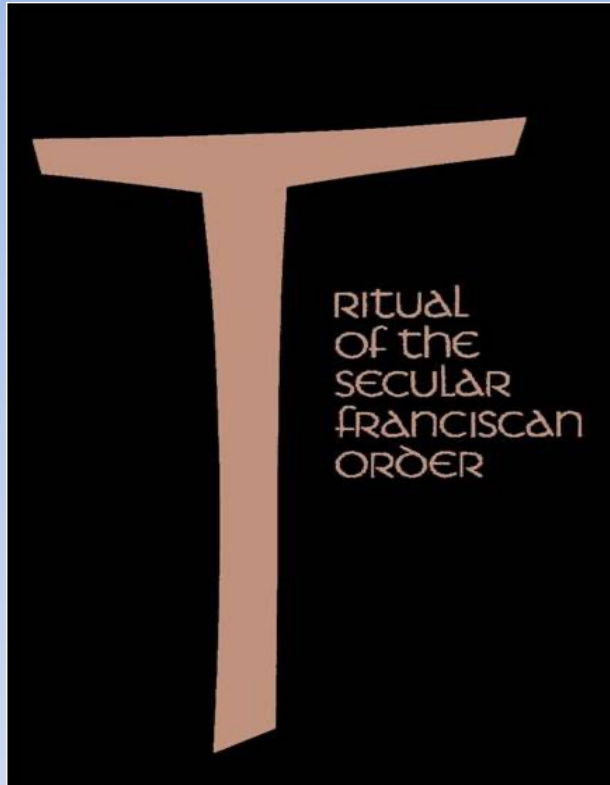
(Rule of 1223: 10)

GENERAL CONSTITUTIONS: 12.1



Gaining inspiration from the example and the writings of Francis and above all, filled with the *grace of the Holy Spirit*, each day the brothers and sisters faithfully live the great gift which Christ has given: the revelation of the Father....

Ritual: Opening Prayers of Fraternity Meeting



Let us pray.

Most high, glorious God

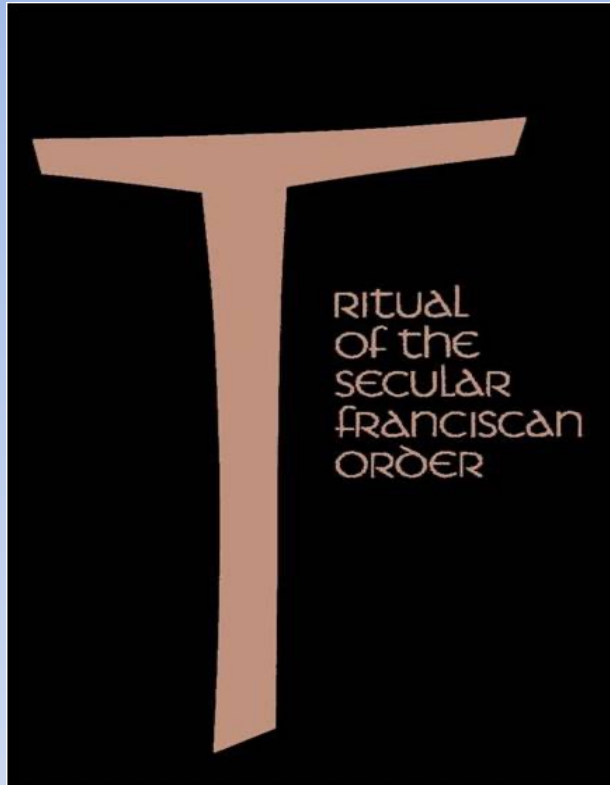
*Enlighten the darkness of our
heart*

*And give us right faith, firm hope
and perfect charity,*

*With wisdom and insight, O Lord,
That we may accomplish your holy
and true will.*



The Ritual: Opening Prayers for the Regular Meeting of the Council



Minister:

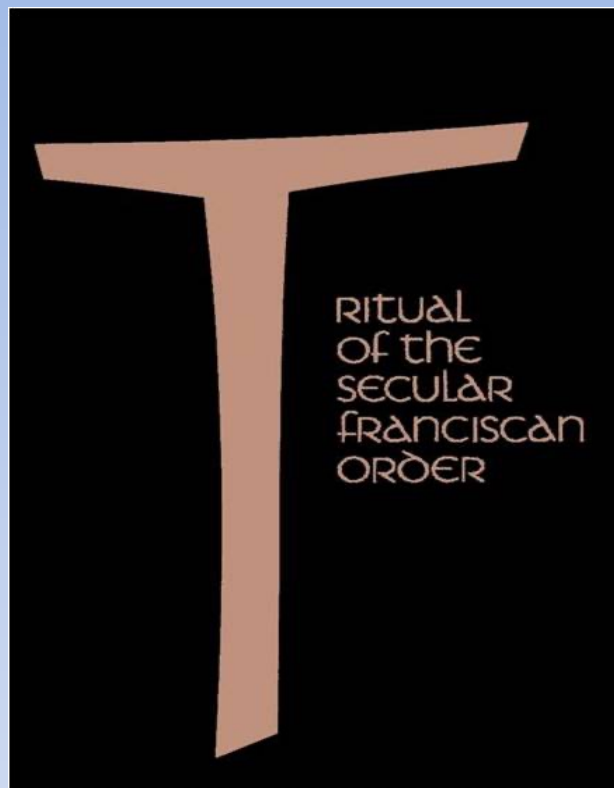
Come, ¹⁰ **Holy Spirit**, fill the hearts of
your faithful people.

All:

Enkindle in us the spirit of dedication
and unity.



Celebration of the Fraternity's Chapter of Elections



*"We trust in you and ask for **your light** so that we may choose those who will properly serve our fraternity through their leadership..."*

**The Holy Spirit is the ultimate
“director” and “animator of the
Fraternity. The Council’s job is to
discern where the Holy Spirit
is leading.**

10

Discernment is...the recognition of God's voice and call spoken here and now in the ordinary, everyday, experience of our humanity...*



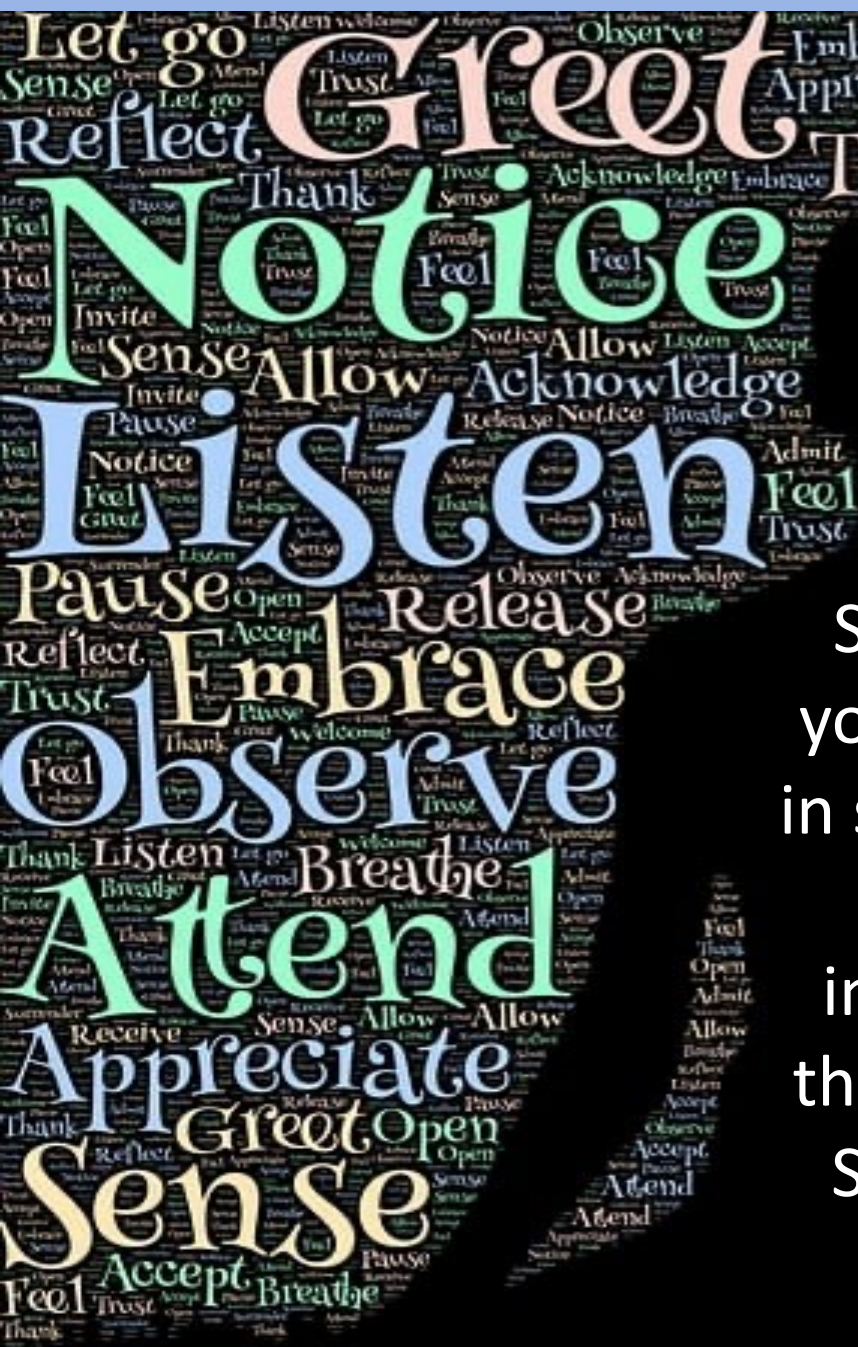
* Rev. Chris Aridas, p. 14

[illegible]

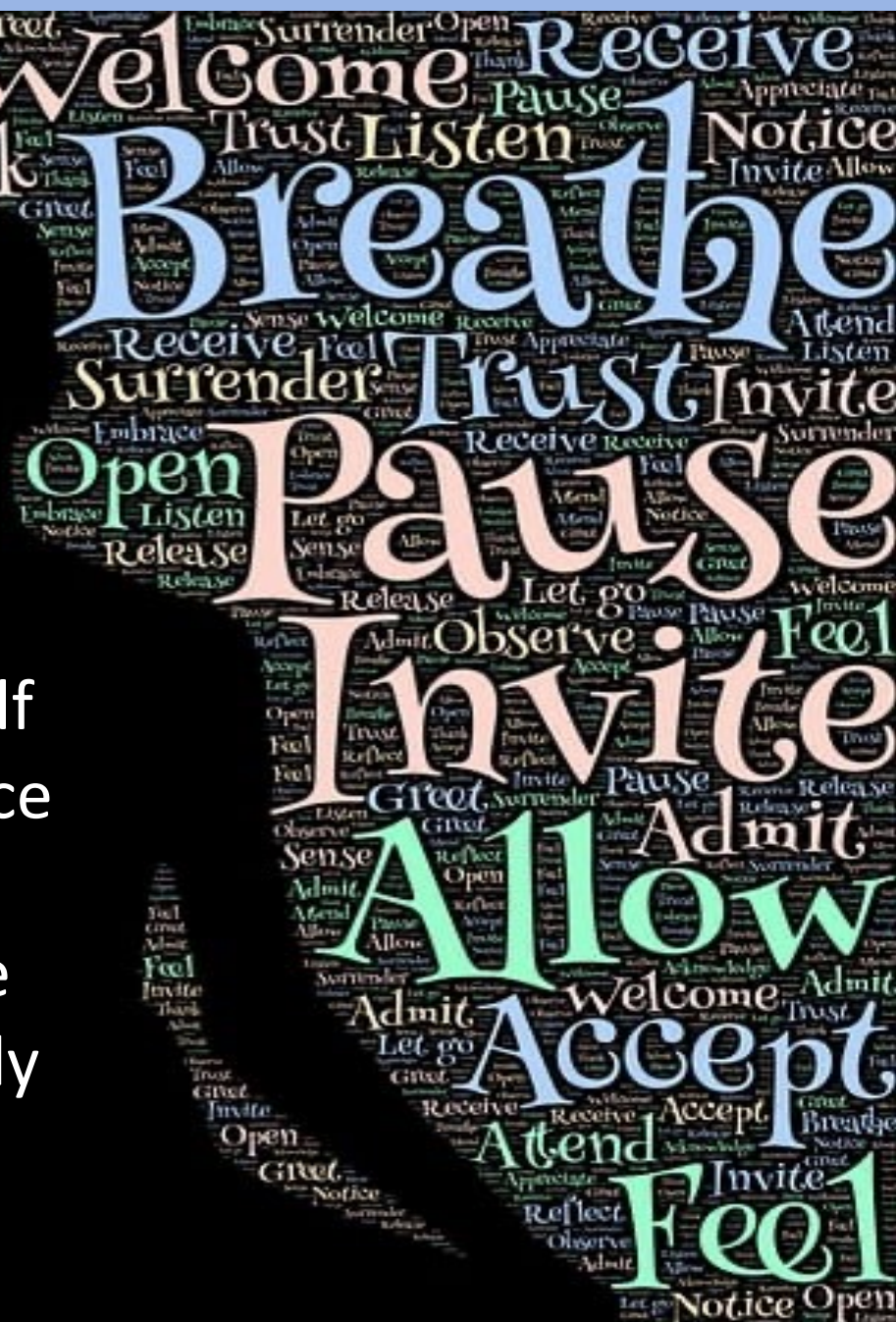
Rev. Chris Aridas, *Discernment: Seeking God in Every Situation*. Catholic Book Publishing Co., New Jersey, 2004. p. 13.

Silence and being open to the “whisperings” of the Holy Spirit are the first steps in discernment.





Settle
yourself
in silence
and
invoke
the Holy
Spirit.





**The Purpose of Group Discernment:
is
to LISTEN to the Holy Spirit's inspiration and
instruction (as revealed to each other in the
group) for the path forward.**

**Listen to the Holy Spirit
speaking in your heart,**



**Listen for the Holy Spirit
speaking through
the group.**

How group discernment differs from individual discernment

- Besides **listening** to the Holy Spirit talking to yourself, you must listen to the Holy Spirit talking through others.
- **Trust** the Holy Spirit's work in others



Times of Discernment in Fraternity Life:



20



- Admission into the Order
- Profession into the Order
- Choosing fraternity apostolates
- Council discernment about issues and problems among the brother & sisters.



Resources: (to be covered on Sunday Morning)

- OFS General Constitutions-
articles 56-57 (temporary provisions)
articles 58-59 (definitive provisions)
- Handbook for OFS Servant Leadership
- St. Elizabeth of Hungary Formation
Director's Manual



1.

Take note of what promptings of the Holy Spirit is brought forth during your time of silence.

2.

Keep Open! Refrain from preconceived ideas limiting your discernment.

Guidelines for Group Discernment:

Incorporate plenty of *silence and prayer* in the process!

Allow ample *time* for the process.

Encourage *deep listening of others* – don't interrupt!

Make sure each person is heard and provides their input-

Use **Mutual Invitation** to invite each person to share.

(see next slide)

Leave preconceived ideas or judgment at home-*be open to the inspiration of the Holy Spirit*

If heated feelings erupt, *stop and return to prayer!*

Listen for the whisper of the Spirit. Sometimes the Holy Spirit is not with a person who speaks a lot or has strong opinions.



Mutual Invitation



1. One person briefly shares and invites another person to share after sharing.
2. A person can share, pass or “pass for now.”
3. There should be no interruption when a person is sharing.
4. No one shares a second time until all people have shared who want to share.



Process of Deep Listening/ Group Discernment

Need:

- **Facilitator and**
- **Person to keep track of time**

(See Handout. Workshop practice session is shortened for the allowable time.)

Unpacking the Experience



What were the decisions made in the groups?

A fraternity's response might be different depending on the “personality” of each fraternity.

What did you learn?



Credits.

All images (except when otherwise noted) are “free for commercial use” under **Pixabay license**.
Downloaded September 2020 and November 2023.

“Detail of the Creation of Adam” by Michelangelo, Sistine Chapel (c. 1512) was downloaded November 4, 2023 from **WikimediaCommons.org** and is in the Public Domain.