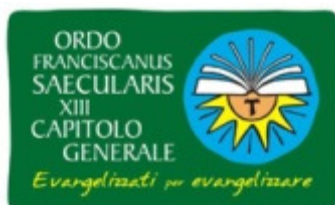


**ORDO FRANCISCANUS SÆCULARIS**  
**XIII GENERAL CHAPTER**  
**Saõ Paulo, Brazil, 2011 October 22-29**

Allegato n. 11



Basile, 22-29 Ottobre 2011

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**DECISION REGARDING THE CELEBRATION OF FRATERNAL AND PASTORAL VISITS SEPARATE FROM ELECTIVE CHAPTERS**

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The General Chapter, meeting in Assisi in 2005, decided that, due to financial reasons, National Elective Chapters and Fraternal and Pastoral Visits should be conducted jointly, unless the National Councils concerned decided differently.

The experience of the last two Presidencies, from 2005 to 2011, has determined that this method is neither useful nor beneficial. In fact, experience has shown that the brothers and sisters are usually more involved in the elective chapters than in the fraternal and pastoral visits. Experience has also shown that sufficient time to conduct visits is often not provided, thereby preventing the visits from unfolding within a sufficient/appropriate timeframe and with enough time to allow the necessary prudence that would offer the possibility of improving the life of the National Fraternity.

For this reason, and considering the greater good of the Order and its mission to animate and guide the National Fraternity, the CIOFS Presidency, following a reflection that was undertaken at each of its meeting, decided to propose an amendment to the decision of the 2005 General Chapter. The CIOFS Presidency proposes to separate the Fraternal and Pastoral Visit from the National Elective Chapter, and recommends that the visit be conducted more or less in the middle of the Council's three year term, except for very specific exceptions.

The International Council of the Secular Franciscan Order, convened in this General Chapter, assumes its proper responsibility to "give orientations for the development of the life of the Secular Franciscan Order" (cf. FIOFS Stat. 10.e.).

Therefore, for these reasons, the General Chapter establishes the following

**DECISION**

***The Fraternal and Pastoral Visits to National Fraternities and the National Elective Chapters shall be celebrated separately, except in rare cases that can be justified. The Fraternal and Pastoral Visits to the Council and National Fraternities shall be***

*conducted at least once every six years, during the intermediate period of the National Council's triennial of life and occurring between the National Elective Chapters.*

1. Both the Fraternal and Pastoral Visits and the Elective Chapters are significant events in the life of a fraternity at any level of the Order.

2. However, these two events are different in nature. The Fraternal and Pastoral Visits are the most important and decisive moments for a National Fraternity because, during these visits, together with the National Councils, a thorough review of the life of the Secular Franciscan Order and the Franciscan Youth is undertaken, and serves as a privileged moment of communion and an expression of mutual service (SEE GGCC. 92 to 95). This difference is well-noted, and the various guidelines offered by the Presidency provide clear explanations around this difference.

3. Since there is a significant difference between these two moments for the life of the SFO (Fraternal and Pastoral Visits - Elective Chapters), the 2011 General Chapter accepts the proposal from the CIOFS Presidency to celebrate the Fraternal and Pastoral Visits and Elective Chapters separately. Only in this way can the life of the national fraternity be sufficiently analyzed, and the quality of the service offered by the Council assessed, so as to strengthen the bonds of communion and reciprocity as well as to verify the fidelity to the charism, to our Rule, and to the relationship with the Franciscan Family and the Church. This service is impossible to realize in a weekend or a maximum of three days which is the usual duration of a Chapter: The Fraternal and Pastoral Visits are not mere instruments, but events that must infuse vitality into the fraternity visited.

4. This decision comes into effect on January 1, 2012.

São Paulo, October 24th, 2011

Encarnación del Pozo, OFS  
General Minister