

COMMISSION ON COMMUNITY LIFE AND ONGOING FORMATION

Underlying Principles

On Community Life

Based on the Rule of St. Augustine, communion of life is the main purpose of our coming together, wherein we live harmoniously in a community, intent upon God in oneness of mind and heart, and sharing everything in common (Rule 1, 3-4). Following this mandate, “united harmoniously in brotherhood and spiritual friendship, we seek and worship God and work for the service of his people” (Const. 12). “The foundation of Augustinian life is life in common in which all the brothers by sharing themselves, construct a path directed to God in service to others, and in the communion of all their goods, perfecting themselves through the gift of divine grace. Thus in their life, they reflect the mystery of the Trinity and of the Church, anticipating now on earth the reality they hope for in the future in the Father’s house” (Const. 6). To continue moving towards realizing this goal of communion of life, there is the constant need of renewal in our communities. As expressed in the recent document from the Order: ‘A continual effort for an authentic renewal is always necessary (“*ecclesia semper reformanda*”) and perhaps today more than ever, (faced with the accelerated change of culture, society and the Church itself, and without forgetting the challenges of the multiplicity of cultures and the challenge of inculturation)’ (Ordinary General Chapter 2007: Documents and Decisions, p. 6). As the document further states: ‘Nevertheless, we need to be aware that what is truly important is the renewal of our life together and not merely the updating of some documents. This requires a process of change and conversion: an authentic inner renewal, which goes together with a change in structures, and necessarily involves a renewal in our formation with repercussions in our mission as well’ (Ibid). In this task of renewal, ‘we need religious whose lives are permeated by prayers and personal conviction’ (The Augustinian Community Between the Ideal and the Real, p. 12).

On On-going Formation

“Essentially demanded for the realization of communion of life is the element of on-going formation. This refers to the human component of this process of renewal. Friars, who make up the community, need to continue responding to God’s invitation to an ever-deepening union with Him. As a result, ‘our struggle to live God’s call in union with each other in our Augustinian communities strengthens our fraternal bond’” (1995 General Chapter Document, p. 13).

“An Augustinian on-going formation is understood as a formation that is dynamically carried out in keeping with specific emphasis that Augustine has given to the message of Christ, emphasis that reveals his personal ideal. In no way is Augustine intended to become the center of our lives. That center is no other than Christ and his Gospel” (Ratio Institutionis 12).

“As Augustinians, our vocation entails an on-going commitment to cultivate studies and the search for truth, with love. All friars are encouraged to pursue studies, according to each one’s ability. It pertains to superiors to see that everyone fulfils this obligation...” (Const. 125).

Situational Analysis

1. *Human-Christian Aspects*

- a. Psychological Maturity: While the psychological maturity of many of our friars is commendable, there is still perceived a lack of psychological growth among some friars as evidenced in their

attitudes and behaviors. This situation results to tensions not only in the community but also with the people we serve.

- b. Sexual Maturity: generally, friars have exerted adequate efforts in attaining a healthy human sexuality. However, events in the past years, brought about by allegations of sexual improprieties, have tainted the name and reputation of friars, the Province and the Order as a whole.

2. *Religious-Augustinian Aspects*

- a. Prayer Life: While there is regular prayer schedule in communities, there are some friars who are remiss in their duty to participate in common prayers.
- b. Community Schedule: Participation of some friars in other community acts is not regular. Often, personal commitments compromise communitarian obligations. Moreover, House Chapters and Chapters of Renewal are not very regular in some communities.
- c. Relationships: In general, there is a healthy and fraternal relationship among members of the communities. Conflicts and frictions happen when some members are not able to rise above their personal differences and limitations.
- d. Sense of Corporate Consciousness: There is an increasing sense of corporate consciousness especially in matters relating to helping communities with their financial needs. However, indifference, complacency and utter lack of concern are still perceivable in individual friars and to some extent in some communities.
- e. Vow of Poverty and Care for the Common Good: The inherent demand among religious for simplicity in life is often eclipsed by the equally strong attraction to consumerism. Some friars are perceived to bring in with them their family needs to their communities and, therefore, experience pressure to meet those needs. While there are honest efforts by a significant number of friars to live and promote a simple lifestyle, the lure of a consumerist society and pressure to meet family needs are simply difficult to resist by an equally noticeable number. As a result, the care for the common good is greatly compromised.
- f. “The province has started to initiate the renewal program, aside from the Annual Retreat, with the regular observance of the Chapter of Renewal in the various communities of the Province, the implementation of the OSAAP program, and the Age-Grouping Summer Activities.

3. *Apostolic-Pastoral Aspects*

Apostolic Concerns: “Generally, friars are responding well to their assigned apostolate, maintaining among themselves team-work and the spirit of communal responsibility. Moreover, there have been new initiatives recognized by the Province in response to the need at hand such as ecological evangelization, Special MA Program in Educational Management, Media Ministry and creation of new communities.

Action Plan

1. Proposals Approved by the Chapter:

- a. To adopt the existing CBCP Protocols in dealing with accusation of sexual improprieties and other abuses against evangelical vows of poverty, chastity and obedience.

2. Proposals Referred to the Provincial Council:

- a. Friars assigned to the Spirituality Center should be prepared to make programs and modules for recollection and be available to facilitate them;
- b. To organize training or re-orientation program and possibly mentoring programs for friars assigned in major apostolate areas of the Province.
- c. To continue providing various training for all friars in order to enhance their knowledge and skills necessary in effectively carrying out their duties and responsibilities.
- d. To organize activities for continuing renewal for Age-Groupings.
- e. To send regularly friars for intensive renewal Program like ASSIST.
- f. To form a core group of retreat and recollection facilitators in the Province

On Accomplishment of the Decisions or Recommendations Approved During the Ordinary Provincial Chapter

The members of the commission met twice (18 August 2012, ANPH, Talisay City, Cebu and 30 November 2012, Santo Niño Pilgrim Center, Cebu City) and discussed ways to accomplish the approved action plan. (See separate table)

Other Initiatives Undertaken

- a. On Sabbatical Leave Program. The commission initiated the review of the program.
- b. On OSAAP Renewal Project. The commission coordinates with Core Animating Team (CAT) in Asia Pacific and Local Animating Team (LAT) of the Province.
- c. On APAC Initiatives. The commission coordinates with APAC Commission on (On-going) Formation and Spirituality.

ACTION PLAN	ACTIVITIES	TIME FRAME 2012-2016	BUDGET	RESPONSIBLE PERSON	EVALUATION
<i>Proposals Approved by the Chapter</i>					
To adopt the existing CBCP Protocols in dealing with accusation of sexual improprieties and other abuses against evangelical vows of poverty, chastity and obedience.	To ask a copy from CBCP and distribute to local communities.	2013		Commission Members	
<i>Proposals Referred to the Provincial Council</i>					
a. Friars assigned to the Spirituality Center should be prepared to make programs and modules for recollection and be available to facilitate them.	<p>To gather existing recollection or retreat modules in our schools and seminary.</p> <p>To let the friars assigned in the center join workshop for facilitating retreat and recollections.</p> <p>To make programs for recollection and retreat with Augustinian themes.</p>	<p>2013</p> <p>2013-2014</p> <p>2014-2015</p>	c/o SNSC	<p>Fr. Ellezar</p> <p>Fray Tan</p> <p>Fr. Batayola</p>	
b. To organize training or re-orientation program and possibly mentoring programs for friars assigned in major apostolate areas of the Province.	<p>To identify possible topic for training in various apostolate.</p> <p>To coordinate with other commissions (parish ministry, formation, educations, etc.)</p>	2013-2014		Commission Members	
c. To continue providing various training for all friars in order to enhance their knowledge and skills necessary in effectively carrying out their	To facilitate various on-going formation or training	Annual Assembly		Coordinate with the Commission on Governance	

duties and responsibilities.					
d. To organize activities for continuing renewal for Age-Groupings.	<p>To organize activities for different age group.</p> <p>Suggested Themes: a.) Sexuality and Spirituality b.) Religious life and different Transitions</p> <p>To have special gathering for lay brothers with the Provincial</p>	<p>2013</p> <p>2015</p> <p>2014</p>	c/o Province (thru Mass Stipend)	<p>Commission Members</p> <p>Fray Tan</p>	
e. To send regularly friars for intensive renewal Program, like ASSIST.	<p>To distribute to all friars the annual schedule of Galilee Programs.</p> <p>To inform the friars and avail other centers for renewal program such as FIAT, Emmaus, etc.</p>	2013-2016			
f. To form a core group of retreat and recollection facilitators in the Province.	<p>To propose names for the core group of retreat and recollection facilitators of the Province which is to be approved by the council:</p> <p>To invite interested friars to join the training</p>	2013	<p>c/o Province</p> <p>c/o Local Community</p>	Commission Members	