RITUAL OF THE SECULAR FRANCISCAN ORDER

International Franciscan Liturgical Commission,
Benet A Fonck, O.F.M.
General Spiritual Assistant, Chairman and Editor
1985
History

- **Early 20th century**: only English version was from The Tertiary’s Companion

- **1955**: demand for more elaborate ritual book – resulted in the Ritual for Public Functions by Mark Hegener, O.F.M.

- **1966**: Revise rites to align with the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy – resulted in the New Ritual for Public Functions by Benet Fonck, O.F.M. and associates

- **1978**: Work began on updating the Ritual to conform to the 1978 revised Rule
1984 – Latin text of new *Ritual* approved by Sacred Congregation for Sacraments and Divine Worship

1985 – Current *Ritual* in English approved by same Congregation

Pressed Vatican Council and 1978 *Rule* injected new spirit and vigor into our Franciscan family

1985 *Ritual* offers background information, liturgical guidelines and prayers to enrich the prayer life of our English-speaking sisters and brothers worldwide
It is within the competence of national councils to supplement and enrich the ceremonies by incorporating appropriate expressions of their cultures and peoples.

We are urged to enrich our local celebrations with signs, symbols, gestures, music and whatever practices are appropriate to enhance the spirit of prayer of our worshiping community.

We can achieve what Francis desired for us, namely, “to have the spirit of God at work within them, while they pray to Him unceasingly with a heart free from self-interest”

(Rule of 1223, 10)
Part I

Rites for Entering the Secular Franciscan Order

Invitation:
Read and study the Preface,
pages 2 – 8
Ceremony of Introduction and Welcoming

Pages 9 - 10

At the beginning of the period of Inquiry

Ceremony should not take place during time for liturgy or prayer

Ceremony is to be kept simple as possible

A short life of Francis is presented
Rite of Admission

- Pages 11 – 17
- At the beginning of the period of Candidacy
- Within celebration of the Word of God, NOT during Mass
- Rite is to be kept simple
Rite of Admission (continued)

- Presentation of the *Rule*
- Presentation of a Tau
Rite of Profession/Permanent Commitment

- It is a public and ecclesial act
- Celebrated during Mass, or if that is not possible, at least within an appropriate celebration of the Liturgy of the Word
- Renewal of one’s consecration and promises at Baptism and Confirmation
- Consecration of self to the service of God’s kingdom
Rite of Profession (continued)

- Promise to live the Gospel
- Observe the Secular Franciscan Order Rule
- Incorporation into the Secular Franciscan Order
- Desire to live in and for the world, building a more fraternal and evangelical world
Rite of Profession (continued)

- Desire to live the Gospel for the whole of one’s life
- Contribute to the rebuilding of the whole Church
- Minister receives the Profession in the name of the Church and of the Fraternity
Rite of Profession (continued)

- Presentation of the Gospels (New Testament)
- Presentation of a San Damiano crucifix [optional]
- Presentation of a lighted candle [optional]
- Presentation of a ring [optional]
Rite of Profession (continued)

Formula for the Rite of Profession cannot be altered or changed
Rite of Temporary Commitment to the Gospel Life

- Pages 27 - 29
- Can be renewed annually, up to three years
- Formula cannot be altered or changed
Ceremony on the Anniversary of Profession

- Pages 30 – 32
- Celebrates fidelity to Gospel and Rule
- 25th / 50th Anniversary of Profession
- Mass of Thanksgiving or Liturgy of the Hours or another appropriate liturgical celebration
Part II
Prayers for Fraternity Meetings

- Preface, page 34
- Opening and Closing Prayers for Fraternity Meetings, pages 35 – 37
- Prayer for the Regular Meeting of the Council, pages 38 – 40 [Suggestion for page 39 – insert name of fraternity: “to serve the Secular Franciscan [name] Fraternity as its leaders ...”]
There is an important part we often overlook: *Ritual* pages 36 and 39.

After the **opening** prayer, a **short reading** from *Sacred Scripture* or the **writings** of St. Francis can be shared.

At the **end** of the meeting, after shared prayer or general intercessions, the **Minister may conclude** the meeting **with a prayer** from the **writings of St. Francis** or another of his/her **own choice**.
Celebration of the Fraternity’s Chapter of Elections

- Pages 41 – 43
- The Minister of the higher level of Fraternity, or his/her delegate, presides at the elections and confirms them
- An Invocation of the Holy Spirit and a short reading from Sacred Scripture or the writings of St. Francis precede the opening prayer
The Establishment of a New Fraternity

- Pages 44 – 49
- The one who has the faculty to establish the Fraternity canonically, or his delegate, presides at the ceremony.
Prayer for the Pastoral
or Fraternal Visit

- Pages 50 – 52
- At the time of the visit, these prayers would ordinarily supplant the prayers for a regular Fraternity meeting
- An Invocation of the Holy Spirit precedes the opening prayer
Appendix I
Lectionary

- Scripture Readings, pages 55 – 66
- Franciscan Readings, pages 67 – 80
- Prayers of St. Francis, pages 81 – 102
Pages 103 – 104

Rule, Article #8, “Let them join in liturgical prayer in one of the forms proposed by the Church, reliving the mysteries of the life of Christ.” Some suggestions are:

- Morning and Evening Prayer from the Liturgy of the Hours (preferred at fraternity meetings)
- Shortened form of the Liturgy of the Hours
Appendix II
Liturgical Prayer for the Members of the Secular Franciscan Order (continued)

- The Little Office of the Blessed Virgin Mary
- The Office of the Passion written by St. Francis
- The Office of the Twelve Our Fathers
- Special Prayer for the liturgical seasons, for example: Stations of the Cross and The Franciscan Crown
- Other forms of liturgical prayer as long as they contain psalms or their equivalent/Scripture readings/prayer
Thanks to Kathleen White, O.F.S., member of Our Lady of Indiana Region for putting the initial PowerPoint together.

It was modified by Queen of the Angels Fraternity.