

# REPORT TO THE PADRE PIO FRATERNITY COUNCIL FROM THE 4 PILLARS

COMMITTEE AUGUST 2023

This Committee's purpose has been to investigate the opportunities afforded to the Padre Pio Fraternity due to its large and growing membership.

As of July 2023, the Fraternity membership is approximately 51 Professed (17 Professed in July), 5 Inquirers, and 12 Orientees (68 total). We are transitioning from a mid-size to a large Fraternity. Our recent Visitors have asked, "Can a Fraternity be too large?" and whether, with our size, we can maintain our intimacy and participation.

A review of all 585 Fraternities in the United States has indicated that only 12 have a membership greater than 50. Padre Pio is one of these large Fraternities. Thoughtfully, to be a large Fraternity, there could be a key to their success, and part of the Committee's work was to interview them. Clearly, the Padre Pio Fraternity is successful, it is well-managed, has dedicated members, is prayerful, serves the community, and is attractive to new members. Is there more that we can do to make a good Fraternity even better? The answer is YES! With focused management effort, greater service and community can be provided. Our committee reached

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this view by using the 4 Pillars (Spirituality, Formation, Fraternity, Apostolate) as a structure and guide in our discussion. Overall, we felt the highest priority is to take action to help our members to know each other better. (For example, getting to know each other's name.) Specifically, the following actions lead to this priority and thus maintain intimacy and participation in a larger and growing Padre Pio Fraternity.

*In addition, attached as Appendix A are suggestions provided by our members in a Fraternity Survey held at our May Gathering.*

### **SPIRITUALITY PILLAR.**

Encourage members to attend Mass together at St. Francis or other home parishes (*listed in Appendix B*), and small groups may form for book discussions, bible study, intercessory prayer, etc., either in person or via Zoom.

### **FORMATION PILLAR.**

Share all Formation Programs with all members regardless of where an individual is in the pathway to Profession and beyond (Orientation, Inquiry, Candidacy, Profession Ongoing). Allow all programs to be visible to all – perhaps through Newsletter articles, Gathering presentations, etc. In general, utilize the presentation method instead of just discussions of reading assignments.

### **FRATERNITY PILLAR.**

Take advantage of the opportunity to know each other by insisting on a “mix it up” seating arrangement at Gatherings. Use a method such as colored paper, names on tables, etc., to ensure that at each meeting, new sit with old, Professed with Orientees, etc., and change in the following meeting.

Encourage the forming of small transparent and open groups that may meet outside of Gatherings (even on Zoom), but present their goals/activities to all at Gatherings.

## **APOSTOLIC PILLAR.**

Group projects (Apostolates) are a primary way to get to know each other. Small Committees might be formed to Champion a specific Apostolate (e.g., Oak City Cares). **Form a committee to identify Apostolate opportunities, valuing highly those that contribute to intimacy and participation for the entire Fraternity.** A special opportunity may exist in partnering with other parishes in their projects. Each Apostolate shares activities, progress, joys, etc., with the fraternity. In summary, our large and growing membership provides more opportunities, but we need to focus, recognize, and take advantage of the opportunity...

**The Committee would like to request the creation of a long-term, elected individual or individuals as a small group to assist the council in facilitating active listening among the members of the fraternity through suggestions, proposals for structures, activities, etc. and to initiate ongoing feedback from the fraternity to the council with occasional surveys, informal conversations, etc. from fraternity members and small groups.** Since the fraternity is a living representation of the Mystical Body of Christ, the 4 Pillar Committee will serve like the nervous system, feeding back pain (challenges, suggestions, etc.) and pleasure (positive feedback) to the council.

## *Appendix A:*

### May Gathering Survey Results

#### **Spirituality:**

"Probably go to mass together either before the Gathering 11:45 or after at the 530. Sit together"  
"Rotate groups whose interest in one of the pillars for a time will be their focus & then change to a diff. pillar"  
"Zoom- Crown rosary, chaplet for those who choose. etc."  
"Speaker dealing with what is contemplation?"  
"Bible Study get together to pray (rosary-adoration-Franciscan Rosary)"  
"Special meeting"  
"Adoration Hour as a group"  
"Zoom prayer hour for those that cannot meet in person"  
"Crown rosary in months of Mary May + October"  
"To pray with Catholic mobilizing network online for death penalty"  
"Prayers for Oak City during our 4th Saturday service. Those who pray and those who serve should follow up with each other on agenda of monthly meeting"  
"Share different ways that work for each day retreat"  
"Private home small group book discussions"  
"Rosary"  
"Attend Mass as a group"  
"Prayer ministry for/during specific apostolates"  
"More first order presence"  
"More Friar Hugh talks (How do we support him?)"  
"Guest Friars or use YouTube (Murray Bodo? Casey Cole? Msgr. Clay? Fr. Jim Sabak?)"  
"Explain the Liturgy of the Hours"

#### **Formation:**

"Appreciate having the speaker (Gladys) \*make sure there is a take away"  
"Appreciate the effort planning the Gathering"  
"Everyone gives ideas to Formation team (suggest books)"  
"Give out a topic, members present in their own way"  
"Bible Study-small groups, rotate groups"  
"Book Club- i.e. on the Saints"  
  
"Individual sharing to group on how they handled a specific situation & used Franciscan Charism in life situations"  
"Franciscan group counseling"  
"Practice the Presence by Br. Lawrence by Henry Simms Powerpoint"  
"Including modes other than reading"

"Church issues in the world"

"[Laudati Si] study"

"Study 'The Ordinary Mystic' by Albert Hass"

"Sharing experiences/ activities that are fulfilling and help others at a meeting"

"Engagement, Shadow/Sub ex: Minister, Vice Minister, Secretary, Tres"

"Classes have the formator do an intro on the subject & reading materials (give a professed point of

view) THEN group discussion & questions"

"Orientees need to understand the significance of the Tau cross. When will they get a Tau cross?"

"There was a question about how we live poverty & we have \$ in the bank"

### **Fraternity:**

"Learning how to incorporate Franciscan Spirituality into our life outside of here-on the road"

"Small groups that meet on a weekly basis ~45minutes to share"

"Charism & interest of members, find like people"

"When appropriate make sure family members are invited and encouraged to come"

"Table cards at each table so people will sit w/a different group at each meeting. Names on cards"

"These are your topics. Plan how to carry them out"

"Have brief discussion before talking about the topic to introduce ourselves"

"Bible study"

"Movie night-video series"

"Walking/hiking in our local greenways/parks"

"Visit Civil Rights museum in Greensboro as a group"

"Durham Bulls game"

"Go to Mass together"

"September Picnic"

"December retreat"

"Pairing people together at the tables"

"Connecting our parishes' outreach activities"

"Parish outreach (learn about what other parishes are doing how we can help)"

"John suggested assigning a group of people to each pillar to work on improving participation"

"Share group recreational opportunities with the Fraternity"

"Develop local road trips etc."

"Visit homebound members of Fraternity"

"Need more opportunities to engage with each other in a formal way"

"Make sure we have professed at every table"

### **Apostolate:**

"Make sure the orientees are aware of what they are invited to"

"Music apostolate go to the homebound"

"Share about apostolates we're involved in separate from Fraternity apostolate"

"Prison ministry"

"Support half way house"

"Visit a nursing home (pray, rosary, visit)"

"Music ministry go visit"  
 "Visit High Schools/Elementary Schools to promote SFO-inspire the next generation of Franciscans"  
 "In Southern Wake County expand JPIC"  
 "If one cannot go to Oak City on 4th Saturday ok to volunteer on a different day"  
 "Donate to other organizations ex: World Central Kitchen"  
 "Franciscan Action Network"  
 "Giving more opportunities to be at OCC"  
 "Faith sharing with experiences talking with people"  
 "Prison ministry"  
 "Cookies"  
 "Meals for sick and Homebound in Fraternity"  
 "Immigrant and refugee volunteer with USCIR"  
 "Brown bag"  
 "Invite people to join an apostolate by sharing your joyful experiences"  
 "Growing and embracing our fraternal support to our Homebound members"

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### *Appendix B:*

1. Holy Name of Jesus Cathedral, Raleigh
2. Sacred Heart Church, Raleigh (tied to the Cathedral)
3. St. Raphael the Archangel, Raleigh
4. St. Francis of Assisi, Raleigh
5. Immaculate Conception, Durham
6. St. Luke the Evangelist, Raleigh
7. Our Lady of Lourdes, Raleigh
8. Catholic Campus Ministry, NC State University
9. St. Catherine of Siena, Wake Forest
10. St. Michael the Archangel, Cary
11. Holy Cross, Durham
12. St. Mary Magdalene, Apex
13. St. Andrew The Apostle, Apex
14. Saint Stephen the First Martyr, Sanford
15. Saint Bernadette Catholic Church, Fuquay-Varina