

Process for Local Fraternity Elections St. Elizabeth of Hungary Region, OFS

At Least 1 Week Prior to the Election

The Presider should obtain a slate of nominees from the Fraternity Minister. The Region has a form that collects all the information needed to determine term limits and voting requirements. (See page 12)

If the slate is incomplete, or is "too thin", (a candidate listed for multiple offices resulting in fewer total candidates than positions on the slate) there is a risk of not being able to elect a Council. The Presider should discuss with the Fraternity Minister what measures are being taken to resolve the issue prior to the election. If the Presider is a delegate, the Regional Minister should be notified of the issue.

Before the Election

The Presider should:

- Print out a copy of the Report of Local Fraternity Election (Regional record of election). (Page 8)
- Print out a copy of the Ballot and Vote Count (Fraternity's record of the election). (Page 9)
- Have a copy of the Nicene Creed for the new Minister to read. (page 10)
- Print out a copy of the announcement of elections found on page 7.
- Bring a bag for disposal of ballots

The Fraternity Minister should:

- Have a roster of active members who are not permanently or temporarily excused for the Roll Call.
- Have a complete slate of nominations.
- Insure an appropriate space for the election, including tables for five individuals (Presider, Ecclesial Witness, Secretary of Elections and two Tellers), an adequate number of blank ballots, a flip chart or board that can be seen by the full Fraternity along with markers.

The Day of the Election – Before we begin

- Insure the presence of the duly delegated Ecclesial Witness and Presider (Ecclesial Witness is delegated by the Regional Spiritual Assistant. The Presider is delegated by the Regional Minister)
- Check room set up
- Name Secretary and explain duties
- Name 2 tellers and explain duties. It works best if one teller counts and reads ballots, and the second teller distributes and collects ballots and records the vote tally on the board.

- Get Fraternity Roster (must include all active members who are not excused from attendance [National Statutes, Article 18.6])
- Get list of pre-nominations (Presider should insure that term limits and office compatibility requirements are observed)
- Get ballots
- Set up flip chart and markers (a white board is not preferred since names and marks can be accidentally erased during the election process)
- Provide a bag for used ballots so that they can be set aside for later destruction.

Introductions

- Introduce yourself
- Review the election process, and stress the need for transparency (note that if anyone leaves during the elections, the roll call must be taken again.)
- Set the stage for the sacredness of the election/work of the Holy Spirit
- Request that those not eligible to vote sit in a separate area of the room to facilitate distribution of ballots.
- Make sure the seating arrangement of the Presider, Tellers, Secretary and Ecclesial witness are workable:
 - Optimal arrangement is two tables facing the Fraternity Members.
 - The Ecclesial Witness needs to sit next to the teller who will be counting and reading out the ballots, since he or she needs to see and confirm the names written.
 - The Presider should sit next to the Secretary
 - The teller who is distributing and collecting ballots, and recording the votes on the flipchart should be seated at the end of a table for ease of movement.

Opening Prayers (Convocation of the Elective Chapter)

- Invocation of the Holy Spirit (Ritual page 38) – Presider
- Reading from St. Francis (Ritual page 68-69, 11-19) Letter to all the Faithful – Presider
- Opening Prayers – (Ritual page 41)
- Ask Spiritual Assistant if he or she wants to say a few words

The Election Process

Roll Call – Establishing a Quorum

- Take Roll Call – Secretary of Elections (should include only active professed members who are not permanently or temporarily excused from attendance).
- Check quorum (more than half of the members included in the roll call above).

Nominations

- Announce pre-nominations for Minister
- Ask the nominees to stand: “_____, do you accept the nomination for Minister?”
- Ask Teller to write the names on the flip chart
- Ask for nominations from the floor
”Are there any nominations from the floor for Minister”
”Second call for nominations from the floor for Minister”
”Third and final call for nominations from the floor for Minister”.
- Ask each of the nominees to stand: “_____, do you accept the nomination for Minister?”
- Ask Teller to write the name on the flip chart
- Announce close of nominations

Voting

- Will the teller please count out the ballots
- Will the teller please distribute the ballots
- Will the teller please collect the ballots
- Will the teller please count the ballots
- Will the teller please read the ballots (ask the Ecclesial Witness to insure that the names on the ballots are those being read.)
- Other teller marks and tallies the votes, and then reads the names and number of votes.
- If the vote is conclusive, the Presider asks the person elected to stand, and says “_____, do you accept this election?”
- If the vote is not conclusive, proceed to the 2nd and 3rd ballots as described on page 5-6.
- The Secretary announces the election and the Presider confirms the election (page 42 of the Ritual). (See page 7 for an easier format for the announcements, which should be printed out for the Secretary of Elections to use).
- Secretary fills in the form with the number of votes.
- The Ecclesial Witness places votes in bag for later burning/shredding.

Repeat the nominations and voting procedure for Vice Minister, Formation Director, Secretary, Treasurer and Councilor(s).

- At the conclusion of the last election, call for a motion to destroy the ballots.

Concluding Remarks

- Read Constitution, Article 31, Item 2

“The office of minister or councilor is a fraternal service, a commitment to hold oneself available and responsible in relation to each brother and sister and to the fraternity so that each one will realize his or her own vocation and each fraternity will be a true community, ecclesial and Franciscan, actively present in the Church and in society.”

- Encourage the new and outgoing Council to arrange a time and place to transfer the records of the Fraternity and take care of signature authority for any bank accounts (the Minister and Treasurer should both have signing authority).

Concluding Prayers

- The Presider asks the new Council to come to the front of the room, and to bring their Rituals.
- The newly elected Minister reads the Nicene Creed on behalf of the new Council.
- All recite prayers together page 42-43.
- SA, if present, concludes with the blessing on page 39. Otherwise, the Presider reads the blessing.

After the Elections

- After the concluding prayers, the presider asks the Council to remain standing at the front of the room for pictures, and to fill in their section of the Report of Local Fraternity Election before joining the rest of the fraternity members for greetings and celebrations.
- Secretary of Elections makes sure that the Report of Local Fraternity Election form is completed and given to the Presider.
- Secretary of Elections gives the completed Ballot and Vote Count form to the new Fraternity Secretary for the Fraternity’s records.
- Fraternity Minister records the results of the elections in the Record of Elections and Visitations.
- Ballots are destroyed – usually by the Ecclesial Witness to the elections.
- Presider gives the original Report of Local Fraternity Elections to the Regional Secretary as soon as possible. Regional Secretary updates the NAFRA database with the new Council and date of election.
- Presider sends an email with the results to the Regional Council along with a picture of the new Council (if possible) on the day of the election.

Notes on Term Limits and other Restrictions:

- All offices may be elected for two consecutive terms of three years each. For a third and final successive election to office, a majority of two-thirds of the votes of those present, which must be obtained on the first ballot, will be necessary. (General Constitutions Article 79.1 and National Statutes 13.2)
- The outgoing Minister cannot be elected Vice Minister (General Constitutions Article 79.2)
- The spiritual assistant is by right a voting member of the council and of the chapter of the fraternity to which he or she gives assistance and collaborates with it in all activities. Only in economic matters and in elections at any level does he or she not enjoy the right to vote. (Statutes for Spiritual and Pastoral Assistance to the Secular Franciscan Order Article 12.3)

Definition of Quorum, Absolute Majority, and Election Requirements

For all Fraternity Council positions, an Absolute Majority of the votes cast (more than half) is required for election on the 1st and 2nd ballot.

If the second ballot is inconclusive, the 2 candidates with the most votes are put on the third ballot. In case there are more than two (i.e., there is a three-way tie), the two candidates who are oldest by profession are put on the third ballot. If the third ballot is a tie, the oldest by profession is considered elected (See General Constitutions 78.1 and 78.2).

	First Ballot	Second Ballot	Third Ballot
Minister	Absolute Majority	Absolute Majority	Majority of the 2 candidates with the most votes (or the two oldest by profession if there is a three-way tie). If the 3 rd ballot is inconclusive, the oldest by profession is considered elected.
Vice Minister	Absolute Majority	Absolute Majority	Same as for Minister.
<i>Councilors</i>			
Formation Director	Absolute Majority	Absolute Majority	Same as for Minister. (See National Statute Article 14.4)
Secretary	Absolute Majority	Absolute Majority	Same as for Minister. (See National Statute Article 14.4)
Treasurer	Absolute Majority	Absolute Majority	Same as for Minister. (See National Statute Article 14.4)
Councilor(s) at Large	Absolute Majority	Absolute Majority	Same as for Minister. (See National Statute Article 14.4)

Definition of Quorum

General Constitutions Article 77.4 “The presence of more than half of the number of those having the right to vote is required for the valid celebration of an elective chapter.”

NAFRA Statutes 18.6 “The Quorum consists of a majority of active members who are not excused from attendance.”

Definition of Absolute Majority

NAFRA Statutes Article 9.2 “A majority, sometimes designated an absolute majority, is more than half of the total number of votes cast. [cf. Code of Canon Law, canon #119]

Election Requirements

General Constitutions Article 78.1 “An absolute majority of the votes of those present, cast in secret, is required for the election of the minister. After two inconclusive ballots, the voting continues between the two candidates who have obtained the largest number of votes, or in case there are more than two, between the two candidates who are oldest by profession. If there is still a tie after the third ballot, the older by profession will be considered elected.”

General Constitutions Article 78.2 “The election of the vice-minister proceeds in the same manner.”

General Constitutions Article 78.3 is superseded by National Statutes Article 14.4, which imposes the same voting requirements for councilor positions as for minister and vice-minister.

Announcement of Elections (Secretary of Elections)

In the name of Christ. Amen. I announce that the new elected Minister of the _____ Fraternity is _____.

In the name of Christ. Amen. I announce that the new elected Vice Minister of the _____ Fraternity is

In the name of Christ. Amen. I announce that the new elected Formation Director of the _____ Fraternity is

In the name of Christ. Amen. I announce that the new elected Secretary of the _____ Fraternity is

In the name of Christ. Amen. I announce that the new elected Treasurer of the _____ Fraternity is

In the name of Christ. Amen. I announce that the new elected Councilor of the _____ Fraternity is

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REPORT OF LOCAL FRATERNITY ELECTION

Fraternity Name _____ **National #** _____
City, State _____ **Province Affiliation** _____

Secretary of Election _____
Tellers: (1) _____ **(2)** _____

RESULTS OF ELECTION: **Date of Election:** _____ **# VOTING** _____

Minister _____
Address _____
Phone _____ **E-MAIL** _____

Vice Minister _____
Address _____
Phone _____ **E-MAIL** _____

Formation Director _____
Address _____
Phone _____ **E-MAIL** _____

Secretary _____
Address _____
Phone _____ **E-MAIL** _____

Treasurer _____
Address _____
Phone _____ **E-MAIL** _____

Councilor (1) _____
Address _____
Phone _____ **E-MAIL** _____

Councilor (2) _____
Address _____
Phone _____ **E-MAIL** _____

Councilor (3) _____
Address _____
Phone _____ **E-MAIL** _____

(All names should be followed by OFS to indicate they are professed)

Presider: _____ **Office:** _____

Friar Witness: _____
(or designated representative of the Church)

Nicene Creed (new Roman Missal)

I believe in one God,
the Father almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all things visible and invisible.
I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ,
the Only Begotten Son of God,
born of the Father before all ages.
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
consubstantial with the Father;
through him all things were made.
For us men and for our salvation
he came down from heaven,
and by the Holy Spirit
was incarnate of the Virgin Mary,
and became man.
For our sake he was crucified under
Pontius Pilate,
he suffered death and was buried,
and rose again on the third day
in accordance with the Scriptures.
He ascended into heaven and is seated
at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge
the living and the dead
and his kingdom will have no end.
I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord,
the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son is
adored and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.
I believe in one, holy, catholic and
apostolic Church.
I confess one Baptism for the
forgiveness of sins
and I look forward to the
resurrection of the dead
and the life of the world to come.
Amen.

Slate of Nominees for the Fraternity Council

Fraternity Name: _____ Location: _____

For the Term _____ to _____ Date of Election: _____

Office	Nominee Name	Term	Profession Date
Minister			
Vice Minister			
Formation Director			
Secretary			
Treasurer			
Councilor at Large	(number of Councilor to be elected _____)		

Current Council – years _____ to _____	
Minister	
Vice Minister	
Formation Director	
Secretary	
Treasurer	
Councilor at Large	
Councilor at Large	
Councilor at Large	

Previous Term Council – years _____ to _____	
Minister	
Vice Minister	
Formation Director	
Secretary	
Treasurer	
Councilor at Large	
Councilor at Large	
Councilor at Large	

Past Previous Council – years _____ to _____	
Minister	
Vice Minister	
Formation Director	
Secretary	
Treasurer	
Councilor at Large	
Councilor at Large	
Councilor at Large	

Notes on Eligibility, Term Limits and Voting Requirements:

Definitions:

The term “**Councilors**” in the General Constitutions refers to any of the offices other than Minister and Vice Minister. The offices of Secretary, Treasurer, Councilor at Large and Formation Director are all considered “Councilors”.

“**Absolute Majority**” means 1 more than half of the voting members present for the election.

“**Quorum**” means 1 more than half of the active professed members (whether present at the election or not). Members excused from attending Fraternity gatherings are not counted as “active professed members” for purposes of establishing a quorum.

Those Eligible for Nomination/Election for Fraternity Council

- Permanently professed active members of the Fraternity are eligible to be nominated and elected to the Fraternity Council. (General Constitutions).
- An outgoing Minister cannot be nominated/elected Vice Minister. (General Constitutions Article 79.2)
- Members of the Fraternity who have been professed for less than one year should not be considered for election to the Fraternity Council. (St. Elizabeth of Hungary Regional Guidelines)
- Members of the Regional Executive Council are eligible for nomination/election to local Fraternity office. (See National Statute Article 28).
- Although the National Statutes (Article 28) allow for an outgoing Minister to serve in a councilor position (i.e., Formation Director, Secretary, Treasurer or Councilor at Large), it is recommended that the outgoing Minister not be a member of the new Council, unless there is a critical need for candidates for those positions.

Term Limits

- The minister, vice-minister and council members may be elected for two consecutive terms of three years each. A third (and final) term is allowed, but voting requirements for a third term are stricter than those for a first or second term (See General Constitutions Article 79.1 and National Statutes Article 13.2)
- In the spirit of General Constitutions Article 32, current Fraternity Council members should only be considered for a third term in exceptional circumstances.
- Term limits for Minister, Vice Minister, and Councilor positions are considered independently. For example, if a 2nd term Vice Minister is elected Minister or Treasurer, they would be considered as 1st term in those offices.
- The intent of National Statutes Article 13.2 is to apply term limits to Councilor positions as a group (Secretary, Treasurer, Formation Director and Councilors at large). In other words, a member having served three terms in any combination of these positions would not be eligible to be elected for another term. (In the case of smaller fraternities, the presider may apply term limits to specific offices only with permission of the Regional Minister.)

Voting Requirements

- An “Absolute Majority” is required for the election of any of the Fraternity Council positions.
- For a third term for any office, a two-thirds vote is required on the first ballot for election.
- If the first ballot is inconclusive, a second ballot is taken.
- If the second ballot is inconclusive, the two candidates with the most votes are carried over to the third ballot. If there is a three-way tie on the second ballot, the two oldest by profession are carried over to the third ballot.
- If the third ballot is inconclusive (i.e., there is a tie), the oldest by profession is considered elected.