

**SAINT KATHARINE DREXEL REGIONAL FRATERNITY
SECULAR FRANCISCAN ORDER**

REGIONAL FRATERNITY GUIDELINES

APPROVED APRIL 18, 2009

1 **SAINT KATHARINE DREXEL REGIONAL FRATERNITY**
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1 **INTRODUCTION**

2 Saint Katharine Drexel Regional Fraternity of the Secular Franciscan Order
3 follows the Rule of Saint Francis of Assisi as approved by the Church of Rome, The
4 General Constitutions, the International Statutes, the Ritual ("SFO governing
5 documents"), and Code of Canon Law. We are brothers and sisters of penance,
6 working as a force for the good of the Church and the human community.

7 These Regional Fraternity Guidelines (the "Guidelines"), which may be
8 amended from time to time by an absolute majority vote of all of the members of the
9 Regional Fraternity, function in conformity with the SFO governing documents.

10 Should these Guidelines become *less restrictive* in whole or in part than the
11 SFO governing documents, for whatever reason, then these Guidelines are
12 subordinated to the SFO governing documents until such time as the Regional
13 Fraternity can revise them appropriately.

14 These Guidelines apply to the Local Fraternities as well as the Regional
15 Fraternity, unless otherwise stated.

16 **CHAPTER ONE**
17 Organization and Structure

18 **The Regional Fraternity.**

19 ART. 1. Saint Katharine Drexel Regional Fraternity ("the Regional Fraternity"),
20 established by the National Fraternity of the Secular Franciscan Order on
21 October 20, 1994, is the representative organ of all the Secular
22 Franciscan Fraternities existing within the following (arch)dioceses:

23 Pennsylvania: Allentown, Harrisburg, Archdiocese of Philadelphia,
24 Scranton, Byzantine Catholic Eparchy of Passaic
25 (which includes Catholics of the Byzantine-Ruthenian
26 Rite in Eastern Pennsylvania); and Metropolitan
27 Archdiocese of Philadelphia-Ukrainian;

28
29 New Jersey: Camden, Trenton, and Byzantine Catholic Eparchy of Passaic
30 (which includes Catholics of the Byzantine-Ruthenian Rite in
31 New Jersey); and

32 Delaware: Wilmington and Byzantine Catholic Eparchy of Passaic
33 (which includes Catholics of the Byzantine-Ruthenian
34 Rite in Delaware).

35 These Fraternities are represented most fully by the Regional Fraternity.

1 ART. 2. The Regional Fraternity is animated and guided by a Council and Minister
2 who are duly elected, and is organized and functions in conformity with
3 the Code of Canon Law and the SFO governing documents.

4 ART. 3. The Regional Spiritual Assistant or the Conference of Regional Spiritual
5 Assistants ("CRSA"), which consists of representatives of the First and
6 Third Order Regular Provinces with jurisdiction within the Regional
7 Fraternity, exercises pastoral care and spiritual guidance in regard to
8 the Regional Fraternity, including participation in the scheduled meetings
9 of the Regional Fraternity and the Regional Fraternity Executive Council.
10 *See Revised Handbook for Spiritual Assistants, A12.*

11 ART. 4. The Regional Fraternity is composed of the Ministers of the canonically
12 established Local Fraternities of the Region, the Regional Fraternity
13 Executive Council, and the Regional Spiritual Assistant.

14 ART. 5. The Regional Fraternity represents each Local Fraternity within the
15 Region and has the power to create regional guidelines in conformity
16 with the SFO governing documents.

17 **The Regional Fraternity Executive Council.**

18 ART. 6.A. The Regional Fraternity Executive Council ("RFEC") is composed of a duly
19 elected Minister, Vice-Minister, Formation Director, Secretary, Treasurer,
20 at least two Councillors-at-Large, and a Regional Spiritual Assistant
21 and/or member of the CRSA.

22 B. The RFEC will be assisted by five District Councillors appointed by the
23 RFEC.

24 C. The RFEC may appoint other positions as deemed necessary. However,
25 only those persons duly elected to office on the RFEC shall have voting
26 rights within the RFEC.

27 D. Members of the CRSA are part of the RFEC and their responsibilities are
28 outlined in the *Revised Handbook for Spiritual Assistance*.

29 **The Local Fraternity**

30 ART 7. The Local Fraternity is the heart of the Region. It is animated and
31 guided by a Council composed of a duly elected Minister, Vice-Minister,
32 Formation Director, Secretary and Treasurer, and a Spiritual Assistant,
33 and is organized and functions in conformity with the Code of Canon Law
34 and the SFO governing documents. Local Fraternities have the option of
35 electing at least two Councillors-at-Large.

CHAPTER TWO

Voting and Conduct of Regional Business

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- ART. 8.A. All members of the Regional Fraternity, as defined in Chapter One, ART. 4., may vote. No Spiritual Assistant may vote on any question involving financial matters or in the Regional Chapter of Elections. This restriction applies to Secular Franciscans as well as religious friars or sisters serving as Spiritual Assistants for a particular Local Fraternity.
- B. The Minister of each Local Fraternity has the primary responsibility for casting the vote of the Local Fraternity in all elections and on all business which may come before the Regional Fraternity.
- ART. 9A. The Regional Fraternity shall meet at least once a year at a time and place determined by the RFEC to promote the life of the Regional Fraternity and the Local Fraternities.
- B. The Regional Minister should provide one month’s written notice of meetings with agendas.
- C. A tentative annual budget shall be prepared by the Regional Treasurer and presented to the RFEC who, after discussion, will approve it. When approved, the tentative budget is submitted to the Regional Fraternity at its annual meeting, at which time it is amended or adjusted and then voted on for final ratification.
- ART. 10.A. The Local Fraternity Minister is expected to attend the Annual Meeting unless a serious matter prevents him/her from doing so.
- B. In the event the Local Fraternity Minister is impeded from attending the Regional Fraternity meeting, then the delegate of the Local Fraternity shall be the Vice-Minister. If both the Local Minister and Local Vice-Minister are so impeded, then a member of the Local Fraternity Council selected by that body shall attend and exercise all of the powers of a delegate for the Local Fraternity.
- C. It is the responsibility of the Local Fraternity Minister to advise the Regional Minister in writing of his/her inability to attend a Regional Fraternity meeting and to provide the name of the delegate authorized to act in his/her stead. The Local Fraternity Minister should also provide to his/her delegate his/her comments regarding proposed agenda items.
- ART. 11. Fifty percent plus one of the members constitutes a quorum for conducting official business at any meeting.
- ART. 12. The Regional Fraternity may suggest and approve/disapprove programs and policies to be implemented by the RFEC.

1 ART. 13. The common fund of the Regional Fraternity is financially supported by
2 its canonically established Local Fraternities. The Regional Fraternity
3 shall determine the amount of the annual contribution to be made from
4 the common fund of each Local Fraternity for each of its active professed
5 members.

6 ART. 14. An audit of the Regional Fraternity's financial status shall be conducted
7 by two professed members, from different local Fraternities, selected by
8 the RFEC, who are not currently on the RFEC (or members of the same
9 Fraternities as those on the RFEC), at least once before the RFEC's term
10 of office has expired.

11 ART. 15. The Regional Fraternity may recommend the establishment of new local
12 Fraternities, according to provisions of the SFO governing documents
13 and the Code of Canon Law.

14 **CHAPTER THREE**

15 Regional Chapter of Elections

16
17 ART. 16.A. The Regional Fraternity meets for the purpose of electing its RFEC once
18 every three years. The Chapter will follow the norms presented in the
19 SFO governing documents. The Regional Fraternity shall determine
20 nomination and election procedures in accordance with the provisions of
21 the SFO governing documents and general and particular law. As to
22 Voting Rights, see Chapter Two, Art.8.A.

23 B. At least **six months** prior to the Chapter of Elections, the Regional
24 Minister, with the approval of the Regional Fraternity, shall advise the
25 National Minister and the Secretary of the Conference of National
26 Spiritual Assistants of the date of the proposed Chapter and respectfully
27 request that they provide a presider and an ecclesial witness.

28 C. At least **six months** prior to the Chapter, the RFEC shall appoint a Chair
29 for a Nominating Committee which will present a slate of nominees to
30 the members of the RFC. This presentation shall be made approximately
31 **three** months prior to the date of the Chapter.

32 D. Nominees for Regional Minister and Regional Vice-Minister and Formation
33 Director must be permanently professed for five (5) years.

34 E. Nominees for the positions of Regional Minister, Regional Vice-Minister,
35 and Regional Formation Director will have completed these experience
36 requirements:

37 Regional Minister: completed at least one term as Local Fraternity
38 Minister;

1 Regional Vice Minister: completed at least one term as Local
2 Fraternity Vice Minister or Minister; and

3 Regional Formation Director: completed at least one term as Local
4 Fraternity Formation Director.

5 F. Nominees for the positions of Regional Secretary, Regional Treasurer
6 and Regional Councillors-at-Large must be permanently professed for
7 three (3) years.

8 G. It is the responsibility of the Nominating Committee and the presider of
9 the Chapter of Elections to assure that the requirements for nomination
10 have been met.

11 ART. 17A. Elected Regional Fraternity Executive Councillors may, at the same time,
12 hold another elected office at the Local Fraternity level. The Regional
13 Minister may not also hold office as a Local Fraternity Minister or Vice-
14 Minister.

15 B. The following are incompatible:
16 (i) the office of Minister at two different levels; and
17 (ii) the offices of Minister, Vice-Minister, Secretary and Treasurer at
18 the same level.

19 C. An outgoing Regional Minister cannot succeed him/herself as Regional
20 Vice Minister.

21 ART. 18. Absentee nominees are permitted *provided* they have submitted in
22 writing their willingness to accept nomination for a specific position (or
23 positions) and their willingness to serve, if elected.

24 **CHAPTER FOUR**
25 Duties of Regional Office

26 ART. 19. The Regional Minister, as the primary person responsible for the
27 Regional Fraternity:

28 (a) carries out the duties of the Office as determined by provisions of
29 general and particular law and in accordance with the SFO
30 governing documents;

31 (b) presides at meetings of the RFEC and the Regional Fraternity;

32 (c) is the spokesperson for the Regional Fraternity in all contacts with
33 other Church and civil organizations as well as with the general
34 public; and

- 1 (d) may, as the outgoing Regional Minister be asked to serve the RFEC
2 in an advisory capacity (*ex officio*, unofficial and non-voting).
- 3 ART. 20. The Regional Vice-Minister performs such duties as the Regional Minister
4 may designate, in addition to duties assigned by general and particular
5 law and the SFO governing documents.
- 6 ART. 21. The Regional Formation Director:
7 (a) coordinates formation workshops for those involved in Local
8 Fraternity formation;
- 9 (b) acts as a liaison for communication of formation issues and
10 policies between the National and Local Fraternities;
- 11 (c) provides opportunities for retreats and Franciscan spiritual growth
12 in collaboration with District Councilors; and
- 13 (d) coordinates workshops for developing Fraternity Leadership skills,
14 with the assistance of the other members of the RFEC.
- 15 ART. 22. The Regional Secretary:
16 (a) records, distributes and keeps all records of the minutes of both
17 the RFEC and the Regional Fraternity;
- 18 (b) preserves important documents and correspondence of the
19 Regional Fraternity;
- 20 (c) assists the Regional Minister in sending out announcements of
21 forthcoming meetings of the RFEC and Regional Fraternity; and
- 22 (d) performs such other duties as the RFEC requests.
- 23 ART. 23. The Regional Treasurer:
24 (a) keeps a record of all financial transactions of the Regional
25 Fraternity, unless otherwise determined by the RFEC;
- 26 (b) deposits all monies of the Regional Fraternity into such bank
27 accounts as the RFEC designates and in the name of the Regional
28 Fraternity;
- 29 (c) pays out money, by check only, as the business of the Regional
30 Fraternity may require, on order of the RFEC only;
- 31 (d) prepares and is prepared to discuss financial reports submitted for
32 approval at each regular meeting of the RFEC and Regional
33 Fraternity; and

- 1 (e) prepares, in collaboration with the RFEC, the proposed Budget and
2 Fair Share Contribution for approval by the Regional Fraternity.
- 3 ART. 24. The Regional Councillors-At-Large:
4 (a) are liaison/contact persons between the RFEC, District Councillors,
5 and Local Fraternities;
- 6 (b) participate in RFEC Meetings and Regional Fraternity gatherings;
- 7 (c) preside at Local Fraternity elections, if so delegated;
- 8 (d) bring issues, questions, and/or problems of Local Fraternity
9 Ministers to the attention of the Regional Minister and the
10 Executive Council; and
- 11 (e) perform other tasks as requested by Regional Minister/Executive
12 Council.
- 13 ART. 25: The District Councillors:
14 (a) are liaison/contact persons between the Councillors-At-Large, and
15 Local Fraternities;
- 16 (b) coordinate Days of Recollection, Retreats, Workshops, etc., within
17 their respective Districts in collaboration with the Regional
18 Formation Director;
- 19 (c) preside at Local Fraternity elections, if so delegated; and
- 20 (d) perform other tasks as requested by Regional Minister/Executive
21 Council.
- 22 ART. 26. In addition to the duties of the RFEC clearly set forth in Article 62.2 the
23 SFO General Constitutions, and incorporated herein by reference, it is
24 the responsibility of the RFEC to:
- 25 (a) foster cooperation and communion among the Local Fraternities by
26 suggesting helpful policies to the Regional Fraternity, and by
27 carrying out the decisions and policies of the Regional Fraternity;
- 28 (b) foster contact with other branches of the Franciscan family within
29 the Region;
- 30 (c) make present the charism of our Seraphic Father in the life and
31 mission of the Church wherein our Region is located;
- 32 (d) promote knowledge of the Franciscan way of life and each
33 professed member's commitment to it;

- 1 (e) offer guidance in developing formation programs for Inquirers and
2 Candidates in the Local Fraternities of our Region;
- 3 (f) provide a forum for discussion of common problems and goals;
- 4 (g) provide, in general, for the life of Secular Franciscans at the level
5 of the Regional Fraternity; and
- 6 (h) present the agenda for meetings of the Regional Fraternity.

7 ART. 27.A. The RFEC meets at least twice each year, at a time and in a place
8 determined by its membership.

- 9 B. When not in session, the RFEC may conduct business electronically (*i.e.*,
10 via e-mail, telephone, fax, etc.), provided that any decisions and/or
11 determinations made in this way are reviewed and ratified at the next
12 regular meeting of the RFEC.
- 13 C. Special meetings may be called at the request of the Regional Minister or
14 at the written request of two or more members of the RFEC.

15 **CHAPTER FIVE**

16 Regional Spiritual Assistants

17 ART. 28.A. As provided in the SFO General Constitutions, the RFEC requests a
18 Spiritual Assistant from the major superior of the obedience under which
19 the Regional Fraternity is subject. *See SFO General Constitutions, Title*
20 *V, Article 91.2.c.*

- 21 B. When it is not possible for a Spiritual Assistant to be assigned from the
22 First Order or the TOR, the Superior to whom the request was made may
23 allow the appointment of a Spiritual Assistant from among the following:
 - 24 (i) religious brothers or sisters of other Franciscan institutes;
 - 25 (ii) Secular Franciscans, cleric or lay, specially prepared for such
26 service; or
 - 27 (iii) other diocesan clerics or non-Franciscan religious.

28 *See, SFO General Constitutions, Title V, Article 89.4; Statutes for*
29 *Spiritual and Pastoral Assistance to the Secular Franciscan Order, Art.*
30 *15.4. (Approved March 28, 2002).*

- 31 C. When a Regional Spiritual Assistant is appointed, the appointment of the
32 Assistant is made in writing and for a limited time, which accumulated
33 cannot be more than twelve years. *See, Statutes for Spiritual and*
34 *Pastoral Assistance to the Secular Franciscan Order, Art. 15.3.*
35 *(Approved March 28, 2002).*

- 1 ART 29. Regional Spiritual Assistants shall:
2 (a) serve as ecclesial witnesses at Local Fraternity Chapters of
3 Election;
4 (b) conduct pastoral visitations upon request of a Local Fraternity; and
5 (c) vote on any question *except* those involving financial matters or in
6 the Regional Chapter of Elections. This restriction applies to
7 Secular Franciscans as well as religious friars or sisters serving as
8 Spiritual Assistants for a particular Local Fraternity.

9 **CHAPTER SIX**

10 Relations with the National Fraternity

- 11 ART. 30. Once every three years, the Regional Minister, with the consent of the
12 RFEC, must request a Fraternal Visitation of the Regional Fraternity from
13 the National Minister. A Fraternal Visit by the National Minister may also
14 be requested at other times for important reasons.
- 15 ART. 31. Once every three years the Regional Minister, with the consent of the
16 RFEC, must request a Pastoral Visitation of the Regional Fraternity from
17 the CNSA.
- 18 ART. 32. The Regional Minister is a member of the National Fraternity Council and
19 is to attend its meetings. If he/she is impeded from attending the
20 annual meeting of the National Fraternity Council, he/she shall be
21 represented by the Regional Vice Minister or, if necessary, by some
22 other elected Regional Officer.
- 23 ART. 33. Monies from the common fund of the Regional Fraternity shall be used to
24 pay the normal expenses of the Regional Minister or delegate to attend
25 the annual National Fraternity Council meeting.
- 26 ART. 34. The Regional Fraternity pledges its financial support of the National
27 Fraternity on a fair share basis as called for by the directives of the
28 National Fraternity Council ("NAFRA"). It also pledges its cooperation in
29 implementing the decisions and programs of NAFRA.

30 **CHAPTER SEVEN**

31 Voting and Conduct of Local Fraternity Business

- 32 ART. 35. With regard to issues important to the life of the Local Fraternity that
33 come before the Local Fraternity Council, *e.g.* the movement of those in
34 initial formation from one phase to another, all members of the Local
35 Fraternity Council, as defined in Chapter One, ART. 7., may vote. No
36 Spiritual Assistant may vote on any question involving financial matters
37 or in the Local Fraternity Chapter of Elections. This restriction applies to
38 Secular Franciscans as well as religious friars or sisters serving as

1 Spiritual Assistants for a particular Local Fraternity.
2 ART. 36.A. The Local Fraternity Council shall meet at least once a month at a time
3 and place determined its members to promote the life of the Local
4 Fraternity.

5 B. A tentative annual budget shall be prepared by the Local Fraternity
6 Treasurer and presented to the Local Fraternity Council who, after
7 discussion, will approve it. When approved, the tentative budget is
8 submitted to the Local Fraternity, at which time it is amended or
9 adjusted and then voted on for final ratification.

10 ART. 37. Fifty percent plus one of the active professed members present at the
11 Fraternity gathering constitutes a quorum for conducting official business
12 at any meeting.

13 ART. 38. The common fund of the Local Fraternity is financially supported by its
14 active professed members.

15 ART. 39. An audit of the Local Fraternity's financial status shall be conducted by
16 two professed members of the Fraternity, selected by the Local
17 Fraternity Council, who are not currently members of that Council, at
18 least once before the Local Fraternity Council's term of office has
19 expired.

20 **CHAPTER EIGHT**

21 Local Fraternity Chapters Of Election

22 ART. 40.A. The Local Fraternity meets for the purpose of electing its Council once
23 every three years. The Chapter will follow the norms presented in the
24 SFO governing documents and these Regional Guidelines.

25 B. At least **six months** prior to the Chapter of Elections, the Local
26 Fraternity Minister, with the approval of the Local Fraternity Council,
27 shall advise the Regional Minister and the Regional Spiritual Assistant of
28 the date of the proposed Chapter and respectfully request that they
29 provide a presider and an ecclesial witness.

30 C. At least **six months** prior to the Chapter, the Local Fraternity Council
31 shall appoint a Chair for a Nominating Committee which will present a
32 slate of nominees to the members of the Local Fraternity. This
33 presentation shall be made approximately **three** months prior to the
34 date of the Chapter.

35 D. Nominees for Local Fraternity Minister, Vice-Minister and Formation
36 Director must be permanently professed for three (3) years.

- 1 E. Nominees for all other positions must be professed for no less than one
2 (1) year.
- 3 F. Individuals who transfer from one Local Fraternity to another are
4 precluded from being elected to the Council of the Fraternity they have
5 transferred into until they have been with that Fraternity for at least
6 eighteen (18) months.
- 7 G. A member who has been absent from Fraternity life for a majority of the
8 twelve (12) months prior to an election shall not be considered for
9 nomination to serve as Minister, Vice-Minister or Formation Director.
10 *See, SFO General Constitutions, Article 30 and Article 53.3.*
- 11 H. It is the responsibility of the Nominating Committee and the presider of
12 the Chapter of Elections to assure that the requirements for nomination
13 have been met.
- 14 ART. 41. Absentee nominees are permitted *provided* they have submitted in
15 writing their willingness to accept nomination for a specific position (or
16 positions) and their willingness to serve, if elected.
- 17 ART. 42. The Regional Spiritual Assistants may delegate the Local Spiritual
18 Assistant as ecclesial witness at a Chapter of Elections on the Local level.

19 **CHAPTER NINE**

20 Duties of Local Fraternity Councillors

- 21 ART. 43. The duties of the Council of the Local Fraternity are clearly set forth in
22 Articles 50, 51, and 52 of our General Constitutions, and are
23 incorporated herein by reference.