

**Terms of Reference (3): Building a Fraternal and Evangelical World
(OFS International JPIC Secretariat)**

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT

The Rule of the Secular Franciscan Order calls Secular Franciscans to observe the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ by following the example of St. Francis of Assisi, who made Christ the inspiration and the centre of his life with God and people (Rule, Art. 4). Similar to the life of St. Francis himself, the life of Secular Franciscans tends to oscillate between developing an internal spiritual life while also developing an external life which reaches out to others with concrete actions. Secular Franciscans do not live their lives for themselves, but rather live it in an outwardly direction towards people in need. The OFS Rule is clear on this point. “Secular Franciscans, together with all people of good will, are called to build a more fraternal and evangelical world so that the kingdom of God may be brought about more effectively” (Rule, Art. 14). Individually and collectively, Secular Franciscans are to be in the forefront in promoting justice by the testimony of their human lives and their courageous initiatives (Rule, Art. 15). In this regard, initiatives that promote justice, peace-making and care of creation are central to living out the Franciscan charism. For this reason, fraternal life should include a specific focus on JPIC (Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation) and its works.

PROPOSAL - SUMMARY

Proposal 3a –OFS International JPIC Secretariat

Coordinating JPIC activities within the OFS and working closely with other JPIC Organizations within the Franciscan Family. In conformity with the statutes of the International Fraternity of the Secular Franciscan Order a member of the CIOFS Presidency would support the work of this secretariat

Monitoring International issues of particular interest for OFS and providing responses to these international issues

Initiating JPIC Projects in which all members of OFS could participate, thereby linking the work world-wide

Acting as a focal point for OFS during natural disasters and coordinating disaster assistance with appropriate agencies, directed to both Secular Franciscans and others in the affected areas

SCOPE

Since the JPIC issues cover a very large spectrum, the OFS International JPIC Secretariat could work as an “International Observatory” of JPIC issues around the world. This work would be done in collaboration with the CIOFS Presidency which would have a member acting as a liaison between the Secretariat and the Presidency.

The following areas of work are envisioned:

A) To sensitize the OFS around JPIC issues by

- Monitoring international themes concerning JPIC that would be of particular interest to the OFS
- Creating a data base of JPIC documents and OFS/YouFra expertise in the different fields related to JPIC
- Creating a worldwide network that would connect National Councils (OFS and YouFra) from around the world
- Connecting with the relevant groups/associations inside and outside the OFS (for example, connecting with the Vatican through the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development)
- Creating awareness of the importance of multicultural and multi-religious dialogue
- Creating a newsletter that could become a tool for sharing information and proposals which support Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation, and proposing support for specific campaigns

B) To promote concrete actions by

- Actualizing the famous quotation “Think Globally – Act Locally” by proposing initiatives to the OFS and to YouFra fraternities at national, regional and local level
- Working closely with the Inter-Franciscan Commission of JPIC (Romans VI) and with Franciscans International at international level
- Working closely with initiatives like the Franciscan Action Network (FAN) in the USA or Damietta Peace

- Initiative in South Africa or similar initiatives at the regional level
- Acting as a focal point for OFS/YouFra during natural disasters
- Promoting moments of prayer on the occasion of observances proposed either by the Church and/or by the international organizations

APPROACH

As initial step is proposed that would establish a team of 5 members (one member from the CIOFS Presidency, 3 Secular Franciscans from national fraternities and 1 YouFra member, all familiar with the subject matter). This team would be responsible for developing, in detail, the way in which the proposal for an International JPIC Secretariat could be realized. For each of the points listed (above), this team of people would analyze the feasibility of implementing this proposal in terms of people needed, the related costs and the time necessary (a GANTT chart could be of help in this work)

NOTE: It is preferable that the JPIC Secretariat be located in Rome, close to the CIOFS International Secretariat and to most of the important JPIC offices of the Franciscan Family and the Vatican.

For this initial step, a period of one year is proposed for the team to complete this phase of the project. This work would determine the composition of the JPIC Secretariat and the way it could work and act.

RESOURCES REQUIRED

- Member of the CIOFS Presidency
- Resources experienced in working at the international level to determine how the Secretariat should work and who have the ability for constructing online contact and work
- During the development phase of this work, the Commission could contact national fraternities for their supports/opinions/suggestions
- Initial meetings would be conducted via Skype and other means; no Financial resources would be required for this phase of the project

SOURCE OF FUNDING

- International Presidency
- National Fraternities

- National Fraternities

RESPONSIBILITIES

A team of five people is proposed for the first phase of this project. The team would be responsible for the work outlined in the Scope portion of this Terms of Reference.

It is important that the YouFra be present as a member of this team from the beginning.

National Fraternities would be asked to forward a resume to the CIOFS Presidency for each person that they would propose to form part of this team so as to select people who could work in a very effective way.

Responsibilities inside the team would be assigned once the team composition is defined.

It would be the responsibility of this team to propose the work to be done in the following steps

TIMEFRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION

At the moment a timeframe of one year is proposed for the first phase of the project, with a check point of the process after six months.