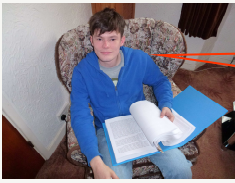




- A RESOURCE FOR ONGOING FORMATION -

Part 6: Life in Fraternity

4. Franciscan Youth



So what's this 'YouFra'?



Youfra teaches young people to find out what fraternity means for them. They have a period of formation for at least a year, perhaps two, before temporary Profession. They have a mission in the Church and society; and have to leave when they reach 30. Meeting with the OFS helps them to integrate, build a relationship and transfer naturally to the OFS [if they feel a vocation]. Youfra offers young people the experience of prayer, the freedom of poverty and joy.



Good heavens! That's quite a commitment. Years ago I heard my mother's friend went to an OFS fraternity meeting and was professed a few weeks later. No body talked much about St Francis—though someone showed her a picture of someone who had danced with a man who had been to Assisi—or was it Pisa? Things have changed...

The OFS,... ought to be ready to share its experience of evangelical life with the youth who feel attracted to St Francis...'Youfra'...is formed by those young people who feel called by the Holy Spirit to share the experience of the Christian life in fraternity, in the light of the message of St Francis...deepening their own vocation within the context of the OFS. (Constitution art 96)

To foster communion among members, the council should organise regular and frequent meetings of the community as well as with other Franciscan groups. It should adopt appropriate means for growth in Franciscan and ecclesial life and encourage everyone to a life in fraternity. This communion continues with the deceased brothers and sisters through prayer for them. Rule 24



What about introducing young people to the Franciscan way of life might increase the likelihood that they will want yet more and respond to the call of the Spirit to join the OFS?

What are some of the qualities one should possess if contemplating working with young people?

Scripture—



Eccles 11. 9f

Rejoice, young man, while you are young, and let your heart cheer you in the days of your youth. Follow the inclination of your heart and the desire of your eyes, but know that for all these things God will bring you into judgment. Banish anxiety from your mind, and put away pain from your body; for youth and the dawn of life are vanity.

Matt 19. 13-15

Then little children were being brought to him in order that he might lay hands on them and pray. The disciples spoke sternly to those who brought them; but Jesus said, ' Let the little children come to me, and do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of heaven belongs. ' And he laid his hands on them and went on his way.