

How to Celebrate 40 Years of Our OFS Rule

Suggestions of Members of St. Francis of Assisi Fraternity, July 2018

Discussing the Rule at Fraternity Meetings

- Collect stories from fraternity members about how the Rule has influenced/changed their lives.
- Have a “5 minute flurry” each meeting to focus on a section of the Rule in a creative way.
- Have a 5-10 minute reflection/presentation/discussion at each meeting on particular articles of the Rule.
- Review the articles of the Rule. Maybe take 4 meetings 1 for chapter 1- 2 for chapter 2 and 1 for chapter 3.
- Use 3 or 4 articles of the Rule that “go” with each other as the basis of formation each monthly meeting.
- Review each article of the Rule (maybe two at each meeting) as part of on-going formation.
- Every month there could be a reflection on one of the Articles of the Rule
- Each month take one or two of the articles of the Rule...each member share how they live out the articles...follow it up with an action all our fraternity can live out for the month.
- Share at the meeting: how did I live the Rule this month?
- Encourage all through formation to understand and be faith-filled followers of our Rule.
- Discuss an article at the monthly meeting.
- Write a hymn together.
- At each meeting one or two may share how the Fraternity effects and improves his/her life.
- Fraternity members choose an article of the Rule (favourite article)... how it relates to he or she. Similar to testimony.
- Music selected for each monthly session using a number of articles (or one particular article).

History of the OFS Rule

- Find out who the Secular Franciscans were who played a role in crafting the Rule...if possible share/highlight their experiences during this process with the fraternity.
- Organize a talk on the history of the Rule, beginning with the First Rule given to Luchesio and Buonadonna.
- Compare changes between the 1st Rule and our present Rule.
- Recognize Secular Franciscans who have done an exemplary job of living their Secular Franciscan life (i.e the Rule or Way of Life).
- Hold a conference or retreat on the history of the Rule.

Celebratory Events

- Develop a celebratory para-liturgy to give thanks for the Rule...it is such a gift...it needs to be celebrated!
- Hold a mini-service of celebration in June 2019 to recognize the Rule.
- Have a public (Diocesan) event to celebrate [the Rule] which might include all of us renewing our commitment, perhaps with the bishop present.
- Organize a prayer night in thanksgiving to celebrate the Rule.
- Celebrate families!
- Recognize families in some way in our parishes.
- Feast with Franciscans.
- Have a Eucharistic celebration in Thanksgiving for the Rule.
- Share Eucharist with our group, with joyous music and appropriate Scripture [in celebration of the Rule].
- Organize a festive meal and celebrate the anniversary.
- Have a big picnic for the environment, especially for peoples' pets (St. Francis patron of animals)
- Plan a special Mass.

Celebrate the Rule at Secular Franciscan Events

- Meet with other fraternities to celebrate.
- Have Rule central to our next annual retreat in PEI.
- Celebrate the Rule at the Atlantic area gathering in 2019.
- Plan a special meal here for our 2 fraternities.

Individual Actions

- Create a prayer that we all can pray daily in thanksgiving for the Rule.
- Have a special daily prayer.
- Write a song about the Rule (if we do not have one already).
- Encourage members to read and contemplate the Rule.
- Become more aware of the Gift that is the Rule through reading and study.
- Think of forty ways to be grateful for the Rule, the Gift of God to us.
- In our day to day lives reflect each day on an article of the Rule...let the light it shows us be an example for family and community.
- Personally take time to read and reflect on our Rule.
- Take notice of people more, where possible...still more important listen to them
- Take notice of Nature, in all its forms...and say "Thanks to God" out loud...thus seeing how His works reflect and prove His constant and powerful love.
- Personally take an article a week to focus on. Follow with action item.
- Visit nursing homes.
- Read one article of the Rule each day.
- Volunteer at animal shelter.
- Volunteer at prison.
- Visit homebound persons.

Reaching Out to the Wider Community

- As a community it would be nice to organize a parish census...to greet parishioners and maybe welcome back those who have drifted or fallen away. Also as a contact for new Catholics who have not been welcomed.
- Be more vocal about issues such as abortion, government hiring practices and in general about the performance of our local representatives
- Put copies of the prayer of St. Francis in places in the city where everyone can digest the message which is universal.
- Collect special donations at meetings throughout the year for a specific charity.
- Hold a day-long seminar on Francis and Franciscan spirituality (with reference to Rule)
- Plant 40 trees, and teach children how to plant trees.
- Public picnics: meals/potlucks in parks... invite anyone around. Take music, games. Have a merry time celebrating life, each other, and the day.
- Have articles of the Rule published in church bulletin