



Our fraternity needs to prepare for our triennial Council elections. Soon the nomination process will be set in motion. If you are thinking of nominating or voting for someone, or accepting a nomination yourself, here are some things to think and pray about.

Discernment before electing or being elected to a Secular Franciscan Council

Take into consideration the following items when thinking about your own or someone else's service:

- **Love** of the Order and **willingness to serve**
- **Faith** in the **guidance of the Holy Spirit**. **Prayer** is an important factor in daily life.
- **Time--** A willingness to make working with the fraternity a priority even if it means leaving other activities, and realizing that we ask nothing in return for our service.
- **Experience:** At the **local level**—participation in fraternity activities; at the **regional level**—prior service on the council at the local level and participation in regional events; at the **national level**—service on the local and regional levels, especially having served on the council.
- **Organizational skills**—demonstrates timeliness in completing projects as promised. Shows a willingness to prepare ahead of time.
- **Communication skills**—ability and desire to keep our members up to date with what is going on at the higher level in a variety of ways including print, verbally, and on social media. On the local level desire and ability to communicate with all members.
- **Fraternal dialogue**—willingness to listen to others, ask for, and act on their input and suggestions.
- **Collaborative spirit**—ability to recognize and appreciate the gifts others have and allow them to use their talents to move the Order and its projects forward.
- Ability to **support others** as they carry out their assigned tasks. If the council works together, the load we carry is much lighter.
- **Trust** in the abilities and integrity of others in the fraternity.
- Understanding that we can only move forward if we are well-formed as Secular Franciscans. **Personal Formation and formation for councils** should never end.
- **Energy and enthusiasm**—councils are called to “animate and guide” the members. Having enthusiasm for living the gift of our **Rule and Constitutions** and encouraging others to understand how important our documents are to every aspect of our lives as Secular Franciscans is important.
- **Desire and willingness to collaborate** with our spiritual assistants, friars, and other members of the Franciscan family, and with the Church in general
- Willingness to ask for **assistance from the higher level**
- **Desire and ability to build on what has been accomplished by the prior Council—local, regional, or national.**

Reflect on the following questions:

- Think of the Franciscan servant leaders you have known. Which characteristics above apply to them?
- What kind of effect do these servant leaders have on the fraternity?
- Think about your qualities as a servant leader. How do you measure up?

(Formation Friday September 9, 2022)