



# 2022 | CONCLUSIVE DOCUMENT

**MADE BY:**

The 3rd YouFra International Assembly

**PRESENTED BY:**

The International Coordination Team of YouFra

*Conclusive document*  
**THIRD INTERNATIONAL ASSEMBLY YOUFRA**  
"Sanctify yourself and you will sanctify society"  
Mexico City  
From August 20 to 26, 2022

The Franciscan Youth held its Third International Assembly during the days of August 20 to 26, 2022, at the House of Spiritual Exercises Jesus Eucharist, in Mexico City, Mexico. Thanks to the participation of 23 countries from America, Europe and Africa, who met with the aim of engaging in fraternity life, dialogue, reflection and establishing the priorities that will determine the path of YouFra around the world over the next six years.

The 23 countries represented at the Third International YouFra Assembly, coming from the three continents mentioned, are:

- **America:** Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, Chile, Bolivia, Peru, Colombia, El Salvador, Guatemala, Mexico, Panama, Costa Rica, Puerto Rico, Canada.
- **Europe:** Italy, Croatia, Bosnia Herzegovina, France, Spain, Poland, Austria, Lithuania.
- **Africa:** Ivory Coast.

Brothers and sisters of YouFra from all over the world gathered in the Franciscan spirit and shared their experiences, reflected upon, and worked in depth on various topics that were presented and explained in detail in the preparatory document.

## **Introduction**

After almost eight years it was a joy for the International Counselors of the Franciscan Youth to meet with brothers and sisters from all over the world, including members of the CIOFS Presidency Council and General Spiritual Assistants. This gathering was convened in accordance with the International Regulations of YouFra.

During this Third International Assembly of Franciscan Youth various topics were discussed; however, emphasis was placed on the themes specified in the Preparatory Document: Service in Fraternity, Leadership and Animation, The Call to Holiness in Today's World, and OFS- YouFra "Double Belonging."

In addition, panels were held where the experiences of different national fraternities were shared in order to publicize how YouFra evangelizes in various social and pastoral environments: All for Africa (All4africa), Ecological Walks, Days for Human Rights, Franciscan Camps, and the experience of interreligious dialogue.

This approach allowed all the participants of the Assembly to learn from each other and to know how other fraternities are working to build a world according to the will of God. With this knowledge, they have a clearer perspective on what is and should be the guidelines and priorities for serving YouFra around the world.

Each day we celebrated liturgy with prayer, songs, adoration and Eucharistic celebrations, through which we worshiped God. These times of prayer and devotion were enhanced by a pilgrimage to the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe.

After long days of work and being together, the priorities that will determine the path of YouFra around the world during the next six years were approved. The official logo of YouFra and the official anthem were translated into the four current official languages and were presented at the Assembly. Our Assembly ended with an atmosphere of unity, remembering and recognizing that we are one fraternity present in many parts of the world.

## **Current status of YouFra and other reports**

YouFra currently has about 45,000 active members in 30 Established National Fraternities, 23 Emerging Fraternities and has a presence of some fraternities in 16 countries. It has 5 international Councilors who attend different areas that are determined according to the corresponding language.

The relationship with the OFS continues to be a challenge, but a lot of work has been done so that the fraternities have fraternal animation by the OFS that allows for communication and a fruitful coexistence. Spiritual assistance is not a reality in all national fraternities. It is important that those responsible for promoting spiritual assistance remember how important this service is for the functioning of our fraternities at different levels.

The International Coordination Team of YouFra has created a logo and an official anthem of the Franciscan Youth at the International level. It was presented at the Third International Assembly of Franciscan Youth in Mexico.

## **Pilgrimage to the Shrine of our Mother of Guadalupe**

On August 25, YouFra made a pilgrimage to the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe. We went up to Tepeyac and then we descended to give thanks to God for the path we traveled. We celebrated the Eucharist and placed at the feet of our Blessed Mother all the work we accomplished during these days together. We asked for her intercession for the entire great Franciscan Family.

## **Formation in the Assembly**

The main theme for the formation of the Assembly was to Encourage and Guide with Servant Leadership, which was taken from the Preparatory Document that was sent to the National Councils well in advance for elaboration.

Topics Considered:

- Servant Leadership, Servant Leaders
- Communities and challenges
- Servant Leader Features
- Guidance and animation, decision making
- Nature of servant leadership

The topics emerged from the question, “Who is a servant leader?” The main functions of a servant leader are: to guide and encourage and to have authority, but not power. They

lead with vision and show the way. They correct, organize, provide, and encourage by listening, setting a good example, drawing attention, exhorting, teaching, etc. The servant leader's lifestyle must contain these characteristics: prayerfulness, being willing to listen to the Holy Spirit, having a deep sacramental life, particularly in regard to the sacrament of reconciliation and the Eucharist, being willing to cooperate, etc. Keep in mind that servant leadership is temporary in nature, so we should work to prepare ourselves to let it go. To do this takes a lot of prayer and good and dedicated formation.

The need to speak about servant leadership is because the fraternity (as a human community) is a social reality; a group of people where activities must be coordinated. If this does not happen, it ceases to be a fraternity. But, what distinguishes a leader in the world from a leader in the service to a fraternity are two different priorities:

- to form and protect the community, to make it a place where members grow in holiness and in the Franciscan vocation,
- to help the community to fulfill its purpose, its vocation, so that the Kingdom of God may become a reality.

The brothers and sisters had an opportunity to reflect on various topics, which were presented first at the conferences and then discussed in working groups.

The following topics were discussed:

- **Sanctify yourself and you will sanctify society**, presented by Fray Carlos Campos TOR, Assistant General and Mario Pehar, YouFra, Bosnia Herzegovina, member of the International Coordination Team. On this topic the brothers and sisters discussed how we can awaken the call to holiness in our national fraternities, the difficulties we encounter in today's world, and the values and strength that the Franciscan charism has to offer to the world.
- **Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation (JPIC)** – During this time, different fraternities shared the activities in which they are involved in their countries of origin. They reflected on the commitment that can be made worldwide by being part of this initiative.
  - Latin American Human Rights Days: YouFra Brazil
  - Well Africa: Youfra Lithuania
  - Ecological Walks: YouFra El Salvador
  - Interreligious Dialogue: YouFra Lebanon
  - Franciscan Camps: YouFra France
- **Service in the fraternity** – This topic was presented by the Minister General of the OFS, Tibor Kauser and Ailen Lucia Natali, YouFra Argentina. They gave us a series of guidelines and advice necessary to bear in mind to be a good leader in the service of the brothers and sisters. They shared their experiences of service in fraternity and stressed that this service belongs to everyone. The working groups discussed how to reinforce the animation of leaders in our national fraternities.
- **Double belonging OFS-YouFra** – On this issue, two sisters who are currently in the OFS, Judith Tinajera, OFS Mexico and Marta Radoš, OFS Croatia, who have experience of double belonging shared their testimony. Felix Chocojay,

International Coordinator YouFra presented this interview. Work is in progress on what should be done to encourage YouFra members to belong both to the OFS and YouFra. We also discussed what kind of support we need from the brothers and sisters of the OFS and the spiritual assistants.

## **Group work and animation**

The working groups were a great opportunity to reflect on the challenges we encounter as young Franciscans in this world. Aware that God calls us to sanctify ourselves following the example of St. Francis, we strive to develop the youthful spirit that characterizes us.

Some of the priorities we are committed to and that we encourage and work on have come from working in groups.

## **Spiritual Assistants**

Brothers and a sister of the four obediences participated, listened to the young people, shared presentations, worked in groups, held liturgical celebrations, shared common projects and reflected on the adoption of new initiatives. The theme of spiritual assistance should continue to occupy an important place in formation. Therefore, the attendees recommend including this topic in the program at all levels and for all those who participate in the formation of YouFra, and especially in the programs of national and international congresses.

Some commitments of the spiritual assistants:

- The general assistants of the four obediences will strongly encourage the ministers general to dialogue with the provincial ministers and/or delegates or custodians in order to help them give better assistance to the Franciscan family (OFS- YouFra) during their fraternal visits.
- At the national level, hold a conference of spiritual assistants of the four obediences or delegates, where the friars and sisters assisting YouFra and the OFS can meet to determine a common criteria.
- The national attendees will visit the novitiate and/or post-novitiate formation houses to have the novice get to know them and to encourage fraternal love for the OFS and YouFra, and to remind them that in addition to their perpetual vows and other pastoral duties, love and service to the Franciscan family is a priority for them.

## **Priorities**

We adopted as Priorities and commitments for the years 2022-2027:

### **1. Formation**

- 1.1 The YouFra International Councilor must work on the connection and communication between the national councils that are in the same geographical region. If possible, work should be done to promote leadership training meetings. Leadership training meetings should be held at least once every 3 years.

- 1.2 National councils should work on promoting and using the document "Animate and Guide with Servant Leadership" published on the CIOFS website and other related documents for training at all levels of YouFra in their country.
- 1.3 To respond to the call to holiness, YouFra fraternities must use the documents and guidelines of the Pope to achieve adequate formation as Franciscans and Christians. In this way YouFra will remain on the Synodal Path of the Church as a visible sign of ecclesial communion.

## **2. Justice, Peace, and Integrity of Creation**

- 2.1 To improve training in the dimensions of justice, peace and the integrity of creation, the national councils should work on the analysis of the JPIC issue.
- 2.2 The national councils should seek concrete common actions with other national councils and with the Franciscan family or other institutions.
- 2.3 That the YouFra International Coordination Team create a specific commission or service that responds to the animation of the scope of JPIC.

## **3. Double membership and the relationship with the OFS**

- 3.1 The new fraternities of YouFra should work to promote communication between the OFS and YouFra at the regional and local levels, to achieve a better connection and to have an opportunity to witness to the fullness of the Franciscan vocation in the OFS.
- 3.2 That the YouFra fraternities initiate communication or respond with an open heart to invitations to cooperate with the OFS and that they work to have common meetings with the OFS, if there is a possibility of doing so.
- 3.3 YouFra fraternities should work to understand more clearly the OFS-YouFra dual membership as an option (not an obligation) that facilitates the discovery of their vocation in the Franciscan family.
- 3.4 That the International YouFra Coordination Team works with national councils to encourage and promote at the different levels, the participation of the fraternal animator in the Council of YouFra and the participation of the president or his delegate of YouFra in the council of the OFS.

## **4. Relationship with Spiritual Assistants**

- 4.1 Work on improving the active participation of Franciscan spiritual assistants in YouFra councils.
- 4.2 Disseminate from the YouFra International Coordination Team the different possibilities of spiritual assistance promoted in article 15.4 of the Statutes for Spiritual and Pastoral Assistance to the OFS-YouFra. All national councils have to ensure that fraternities at different levels are spiritually assisted.

## **5. Financial contributions**

To strengthen the sense of belonging and to collaborate in the economic support of the YouFra movement, it is proposed:

- 5.1 Each International Counselor must consult his or her constituted fraternity to determine what economic contribution the fraternity can send before the month of

October of each year. Taking into account these contributions, a budget will be prepared to carry out different projects of interest to YouFra.

5.2 The National YouFra fraternities must make their annual financial contribution before the month of July of each year.

## **6. Other recommendations**

6.1 Each international councilor must meet at least once a year with international delegates from his or her area.

6.2 National councils should respond to the annual questionnaires sent by the International Coordination Team so that we have up-to-date information on YouFra in the world.

## **7. YouFra International Extraordinary Assembly 2023**

7.1 During the International Meeting of YouFra, in Lisbon, Portugal, from July 27 to August 1, 2023, an extraordinary assembly will be held to elect the new councilors by areas to the International Coordination Team.

7.2 The International Coordination Team will consult with the YouFra National Councils on the possible distributions of the geographical or linguistic areas, prior to the election of the International Councilors.

We have concluded our Assembly, and we entrust our work to the Lord and ask Him for the strength necessary to carry out our commitments. We thank the YouFra of Mexico for all its work and service in this Assembly.

May Francis and Clare of Assisi continue to be the footprints that we follow on our journey.

Peace and all good.