

SAINT KATERI TEKAKWITHA REGIONAL FRATERNITY GUIDELINES

(Updated Sept 2017)

Introduction

These regional fraternity guidelines are established pursuant to [Article 22.2 of the National Statutes \(“NS”\)](#) (1).

Section 1

The Saint Kateri Tekakwitha Regional Fraternity:

1. is constituted by the National Fraternity Council of NAFRA according to the provisions of [Article 61 of the General Constitutions \(“GC”\)](#) (2) and [Article 21 of the NS](#) (3);
2. is the organic union of all the Local Fraternities which have been integrated within the specifically delineated geographical area of upstate New York and part of Pennsylvania according to the determination of the National Fraternity Council of NAFRA. The regional fraternity is a juridical person under the provisions of [Canon Law, #116 &117](#) (4).

Section 2

The Regional Fraternity Council

1. The Regional Fraternity Council is constituted according to the provisions of [Article 21.2 of the NS](#) (5). It has the duties set forth in [Article 62 of the GC](#) (6); it shall meet at least once a year. Every third year the Council shall meet in elective chapter in accordance with the General Constitutions and the National Statutes.
2. A simple majority of the membership constitutes a quorum necessary for doing business. If the Minister of the local fraternity is unable to attend a meeting of the Regional Fraternity Council, the Vice-Minister is the automatic replacement for the absent minister ([See NS 8.3.a & GC 52.1](#) (7)). If neither can attend, the fraternity council delegates in writing another member of the council ([NS 8.3.b](#) (8)). Each member is entitled to one vote, even if holding more than one office with voting power. The Spiritual Assistants do not exercise the right to vote in financial questions or in elections {[See the Statutes for Spiritual and Pastoral Assistance to the Secular Franciscan Order, \(“SSA”\)12.3](#) (9)}.
3. All local fraternities are required to participate in the region. Areas in which there should be 100% participation are:
 - Attendance at the Annual Chapter of Ministers Meeting
 - Annual Report to Regional Minister and Area Councilor by deadline
 - Treasurer’s Report to Regional Treasurer by deadline
 - Fair Share Contribution
 - Local fraternity visitations and elections
 - Stipends to Spiritual Assistant, Pastoral Visitor and Fraternal Visitor
4. Repeated failure to participate could put the status of the fraternity in jeopardy, which may include the start of the deactivation process, see [Handbook for Spiritual Assistance to the SFO 44:1](#) (10).

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Section 3

Regional Executive Council

1. Between the meetings of the Regional Fraternity Council, the Regional Executive Council shall have all its powers and duties and shall carry on its business in a spirit of ministry and service, [NS 21\(11\)](#). A simple majority of the membership constitutes a quorum necessary for doing business.
2. The Regional Executive Council is composed of the following officers:

Regional Minister

Regional Vice-Minister

Regional Secretary

Regional Treasurer

Regional Formation Director

Four Regional Councilors (area representatives for the East, Central and 2 Western)

At least one Regional Spiritual Assistant

3. The elected members of the Regional Executive Council are elected in accordance with the provisions of the General Constitutions and National Statutes. The Regional Spiritual Assistant(s) is (are) appointed for a term in accordance with [Article 15.3 of the SSA \(12\)](#). Only those elected officers and the Spiritual Assistant(s) have voting rights. A member of the Regional Executive Council may not hold more than one office on the Executive Council. Any telephone or e-mail voting between Regional Executive Council meetings must be confirmed at the next Executive Council Meeting.
 - a) NS Article 8: 6
During those meetings of the National Fraternity Council at which elections occur, the members of the outgoing and of the incoming National Executive Council, upon election and even prior to formal installation, are members with full rights of the National Fraternity Council until the end of said meeting.
4. The Regional Executive Council may appoint other officers, commissions and committees to achieve its goals and objectives. Appointed positions and commissions are assigned for a specific period of time or task, and then re-evaluated for either disbanding or renewal. An appointee may be invited to attend the Regional Fraternity Council or Regional Executive Council when deemed necessary. Appointed positions are to include a JPIC Chair, a Vocations Chair and a YYA Chair, a Regional Infirmarian, a Regional Outreach Program Chair, two Regional Data Base Managers, a Web Master and Newsletter Editor:
 - The Chairpersons for JPIC, Vocations and YYA shall have the following duties:
 - a) To keep the Regional Fraternity Council and Regional Executive Council informed of activities relating to the various apostolates undertaken within the Regional Fraternity.
 - b) To act as a liaison between the Regional Fraternity Council and the National and Local Fraternities and coordinate Regional activities regarding their positions.
 - The Regional Infirmarian shall have the following duties:
 - a) To create and maintain a regional network for prayer and communication which announces the admissions, professions and deaths of our brothers and sisters to all fraternities throughout the region. The Infirmarian may also announce the need for prayer for our immediate family members – spouses, children and parents.

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- The Regional Outreach Program Chairperson shall have the following duties:
 - a) To annually research the status of members of inactive fraternities, reporting any deaths or changes of address to the Regional Executive Council.
 - b) To maintain contact with those members wishing to do so, by visits and/or periodic mailings which include some form of ongoing formation, especially on the feast days of St. Francis and St. Clare as well as Christmas and Lent/Easter. Mailings may also include birthdays and profession anniversaries.
- A Regional Data Base Manager shall have the following duties:
 - a) Collect all current regional fraternity and member information from fraternity ministers and update the National Data Base using the guidelines put forth in the NAFRA Data Base Manual.
 - b) Annually canvas fraternity ministers for updated information regarding membership in preparation for the Annual and Fair Share Reports.
 - c) Provide the Regional Treasurer with an accurate membership count for each fraternity for the close of each year.
- A Web Master has the following duties:
 - a) Update and maintain with all pertinent information concerning officers, newsletters and current events as requested by the Regional Executive Council.
 - b) Request, if desired, reimbursement from the Regional Treasurer for the cost of maintaining the site.
- A Newsletter Editor will have the following duties:
 - a) Prepare and mail at least two issues of the Mirror each year.
 - b) Adhere to article deadlines set by the Regional Executive Council with the issues being mailed 30 days thereafter.
 - c) A third issue may be requested by the Regional Minister, if necessary.
 - d) Include Inactive and Reactivating Fraternity members as well as all professed members, candidates and Provincial Spiritual Assistants in each mailing.
 - e) Request reimbursement from the Regional Treasurer for the cost of producing each issue.

Section 4

The Regional Fraternity Officers

1. Regional Fraternity Minister: The Regional Fraternity Minister has all the powers and duties as set forth in [GC #63\(13\)](#).
2. The Regional Fraternity Vice-Minister, Regional Fraternity Secretary, Regional Fraternity Treasurer, and Regional Fraternity Formation Director have all the powers and duties as set forth in [GC #52 & NS #21\(14\)](#). In addition, the Regional Fraternity Secretary or an appointed Archivist shall maintain and supervise the archives of the Regional Fraternity in accordance with the instructions of the Regional Executive Council. The Regional Fraternity Treasurer shall abide by the Fraternity Internal Controls and Treasury Guidelines approved by NAFRA.
3. Regional Fraternity Councilors: The Regional Fraternity Councilors have the following duties:
 - a. To participate in deliberations of the Regional Fraternity Council and Regional Executive Council as voting members.

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- b. To keep the Regional Fraternity Council and Regional Executive Council informed of activities in the Local Fraternities in the areas of the region under their responsibility;
 - c. To act as liaisons between the Regional Fraternity Executive Council and the Local Fraternities in the areas of the region under their responsibility;
 - d. To preside over local elections and fraternal visitations as delegates of the Regional Fraternity Minister when requested;
 - e. To file a Visitation Report with each fraternity and the Regional Executive Council within 30 days of a Visitation.
 - f. To attend Admissions, Professions and Canonical Establishments in the areas of the region under their responsibility if possible.
 - g. To perform such other duties as the Regional Fraternity Council or Regional Executive Council may designate.
4. Regional Spiritual Assistant: The Regional Spiritual Assistant has the powers and duties specified in SSA. In addition, the Regional Spiritual Assistant may offer annual training and ongoing formation for Spiritual Assistants serving local fraternities.

Section 5

Local Fraternity Support – Fair Share

1. The fair share contribution refers to an amount of money which each Local Fraternity contributes to the common fund of the Regional Fraternity to meet its operational expenses, including the Regional Fraternity's fair share contribution payable to the National Fraternity.
2. The basis for the fair share contribution is the annual Regional Fraternity budget approved and adopted by the Regional Fraternity Council at its annual meeting. This annual budget is prepared and submitted by the Regional Treasurer, approved by the Regional Executive Council, and submitted for approval at the Annual Chapter of Minister's.
3. The funds required to meet the annual budget are raised by a fair share contribution from all the local fraternities based on the fraternity's membership as reported to the Regional Fraternity. The term membership includes all active and excused professed members and candidates, but not those who are deemed lapsed.

MEMBER STATUS

ACTIVE: An active fraternity member is one who participates both by attending fraternity meetings and by providing financial support to the community, or by whom the fraternity (council) has excused from such obligations. [NS 18.7a \(15\)](#)

EXCUSED: Insertion into a local fraternity and participation in fraternity life is essential for belonging to the SFO. Appropriate initiatives should be adopted according to the directives of the national statutes, to keep those brothers and sisters united to the fraternity who - **for valid reasons of health, family, work, or distance** - cannot actively participate in community life. [GC 53.3 \(16\)](#)

LAPSED: Those brothers and sisters who neither attend meetings, support the community financially, nor have valid reasons due to health, family, work or distance and who, after personal

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invitations to return to fraternity, consciously and deliberately reject or ignore the invitation, will be termed “lapsed” and will not be carried on the fraternity membership roll nor be reported as a member to higher fraternity Councils. [NS 18:7b \(17\)](#)

4. The annual fair share contribution is an obligation of the Local Fraternities and not of the individual members and is payable from each Fraternity’s common fund.

Section 6

Regional Fraternity Archives

1. Regional Fraternity records concerning its juridical and financial status, minutes of the proceedings of the Regional Fraternity Council and the Regional Executive Council, the juridical status of its Local Fraternities and other records deemed to have importance of a permanent nature should be carefully safeguarded. The records of Regional Fraternity officers, when their term of office is completed, should be turned over to their successors in a timely manner. Other records of the Regional Fraternity should be periodically evaluated as to their importance and either kept in the archives or destroyed as determined to be appropriate.
2. The records, the library (if any), and the assets of Local Fraternities which have become inactive should be turned over to the Regional Fraternity for safekeeping.

Section 7

Interpretation of Guidelines

1. Interpretation of these Guidelines shall follow related provisions in the Code of Canon Law, the General Constitutions of the SFO, the National Statutes and Guidelines promulgated by the Conference of National Spiritual Assistants. Where no such related provisions exist, interpretation will follow a prudent solution arrived at after careful consideration of the matter at hand.

ATTESTED AS APPROVED Date _____

Minister
St. Kateri Tekakwitha Regional Fraternity

Secretary
St. Kateri Tekakwitha Regional Fraternity

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Footnotes:

Introduction

1 [Article 22.2 NS](#)

The Regional Fraternity Council is the representative body of all of the Local Fraternities that together compose the Regional Fraternity, and has the power to create regional guidelines in conformity with the Rule, the General Constitutions and the National Statutes.

Section 1

2 [Article 61 GC](#)

The Regional Fraternity

1. The regional fraternity is the organic union of all the local fraternities existing in a territory or which can be integrated into a natural unity, either by geographic proximity, or by common problems and pastoral circumstances. It assures the link between the local fraternities and the national fraternity in respect to the unity of the OFS and in accord with the cooperative efforts of the Franciscan religious orders to provide spiritual assistance within the area.

2. It is for the national council to compose the regional fraternity according to the Constitutions and to the national statutes. The competent religious superiors, from whom spiritual assistance must be sought, should be informed of it.

3. The regional fraternity:

- is animated and guided by council and a minister;
- is ruled by the national statutes and by its own statutes;
- has its own seat.

3 [Article 21 NS](#)

Regional Fraternity

1. The Regional Fraternities are constituted according to the provisions of the General Constitutions, article #61.

2. The governing body of each Regional Fraternity is the Regional Fraternity Council. The Regional Executive Council acts on behalf of the Regional Fraternity Council when the members of the entire Council are not in session [cf. General Constitutions, article #66.1].

3. The Regional Spiritual Assistant or the Conference of Regional Spiritual Assistants exercises pastoral care and spiritual guidance in regard to each Regional Fraternity as an integral component part of NAFRA and of the OFS, by the same means and manner as does the Conference of National Spiritual Assistants in regard to NAFRA [[cf. Statutes for Spiritual Assistance, articles #21 and #22](#)].

[Article 21 SSA](#)

1. The regional Assistants to the SFO and the Franciscan Youth are appointed by the competent major Superior, after consultation with the respective regional council ^{GC91.2} Where more than one major Superior is involved in the appointment, the norms established jointly by the Superiors with jurisdiction in the territory of the regional fraternity shall be followed ^{GC91.2}.

2. They give their service to the regional council and see to the spiritual assistance to the regional fraternity. If they are more than one, they form a conference and render their service collegially ^{GC90.3}.

3. It is the responsibility of the Conference of regional Assistants, or to the regional Assistant if there is only one:

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- to collaborate with the regional Council in the task of spiritual and apostolic animation of the secular Franciscans in the life of the Church and of society in the region, and in a special way in the formation of the leaders;
- to provide for the pastoral visits of the local Councils of the SFO ^{GC93.1-2} and to ensure a presence at the local elective Chapters ^{GC76.2} ;
- to coordinate, at the regional level, the service of spiritual assistance, the formation of the Assistants and the fraternal union among them;
- to foster the interest of the friars in the SFO and in the Franciscan Youth.

Article 22 SSA

1. The regional Assistant must keep the major Superiors and his Order informed on the life and activities of the SFO and of the Franciscan Youth in the region.
2. He shall also deal with matters regarding the service of assistance given by his Order to the SFO and the Franciscan Youth, meet the local fraternities assisted by his own Order in the region and keep constant fraternal contacts with the local assistants of his own Order.].

4 Canon Law, #116 &117

Can. 116 §1. Public juridic persons are aggregates of persons (*universitates personarum*) or of things (*universitates rerum*) which are constituted by competent ecclesiastical authority so that, within the purposes set out for them, they fulfill in the name of the Church, according to the norm of the prescripts of the law, the proper function entrusted to them in view of the public good; other juridic persons are private. §2. Public juridic persons are given this personality either by the law itself or by a special decree of competent authority expressly granting it. Private juridic persons are given this personality only through a special decree of competent authority expressly granting it.

Can. 117 No aggregate of persons (*universitas personarum*) or of things (*universitas rerum*), intending to obtain juridic personality, is able to acquire it unless competent authority has approved its statutes.

Section 2

5 Article 21.2 NS

The governing body of each Regional Fraternity is the Regional Fraternity Council. The Regional Executive Council acts on behalf of the Regional Fraternity Council when the members of the entire Council are not in session [cf. General Constitutions, article #66.1 (GC 66.1. The national council is constituted according to the provisions of the national statutes. At the heart of the national council there can be set up an executive council (or board) whose duties are determined by those same statutes.)].

6 Article 62 GC

1. The regional council is constituted according to the provisions of the national statutes and of its own regional statutes. At the heart of the regional council there can be set up an executive council (or board) whose duties are determined by those same statutes.
2. The regional council has the following duties:
 - a. to prepare the celebration of the elective chapter;
 - b. to promote, animate, and co-ordinate the life and activities of the OFS and its insertion into the local Church within the regional area;
 - c. to detail the action plan of the OFS within the region according to the directives of the national council and in collaboration with it and to publicize that program to the local fraternities;
 - d. to communicate the directives of the national council and of the local Church to the local fraternities;
 - e. to provide for the formation of those responsible for animation;

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- f. to offer to local fraternities' activities which support their formative and operative needs;
- g. to discuss and approve the annual report to the national council;
- h. to schedule, when circumstances recommend so, the fraternal visit to the local fraternities, even if it is not requested;
- i. to make decisions regarding the use of available funds and, in general, to deliberate on matters regarding the financial management and the economic affairs of the regional fraternity;
- j. to have, before its term of office is finished, the regional fraternity's financial and real estate situation audited either by an expert who is not a member of the council or by the fraternity's board of examiners;
- k. to perform such other duties as are indicated by the Constitutions or necessary to achieve its own aims.

7 [Article 8.3.a NS](#)

Substitutes/Delegates a. In the event a Regional Minister is impeded from attending the National Fraternity Council meeting, then the delegate of the Regional Fraternity shall automatically be the Regional Vice Minister pursuant to the provisions of [article #52.1.c of the General Constitutions](#).

[Article 52.1 GC](#)

1. The vice-minister has the following duties:
 - a. to collaborate in a fraternal spirit and to support the minister in carrying out his or her specific duties;
 - b. to exercise the functions entrusted by the council and/or by the assembly or chapter;
 - c. to take the place of the minister in both duties and responsibilities in case of absence or temporary impediment;
 - d. to assume the functions of the minister when the office remains vacant.

8 [Article 8.3.b NS](#)

Substitutes/Delegates b. If both the Regional Minister and the Regional Vice Minister are so impeded, then a member of the Regional Executive Council selected by that body shall attend and exercise all of the powers of a delegate for the Regional Fraternity.

9 [Article 12.3 SSA](#)

The spiritual assistant is by right a voting member of the council and of the chapter of the fraternity to which he or she gives assistance and collaborates with it in all activities. Only in economic matters and in elections at any level does he or she not enjoy the right to vote.

10 [Page 44:1 SSA](#)

1. When a canonically established fraternity is no longer viable, for whatever reason, it can be declared deactivated by the Provincial Spiritual Assistant of the Province to which the fraternity is bonded. This is done in collaboration with the Regional Executive Council and Conference of Regional Spiritual Assistants or an individual RSA.

Section 3

11 [Article 21 NS](#)

Reference Footnote (3)

12 [Article 15.3 SSA](#)

The appointment of the Assistant is made in writing and for a limited time, which accumulated cannot be more than twelve (12) years.

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Section 4

13 Article 63 GC

- 1 While firmly preserving the co-responsibility of the council for the animation and guidance of the regional fraternity, it is the duty of the minister, who has the primary responsibility, to see that the directions and decisions of the council are put into practice. He or she will keep the council informed concerning his or her activities.
- 2 In addition, the regional minister has the duty:
 - a. to convoke and preside at the meetings of the regional council; to convoke every three years the elective chapter of the fraternity after having listened to the council on the formalities of the convocation;
 - b. to preside at and to confirm the elections of the local fraternities either in person or through a delegated member of the regional council, with the exception of the spiritual assistant;
 - c. to make fraternal visits to the local fraternities, personally or through a delegate who is a member of the council;
 - d. to participate in the meetings called by the national council;
 - e. to represent the fraternity whenever it has acquired a juridical personality in the civil order;
 - f. to prepare the annual report to the national council;
 - g. to request the pastoral and fraternal visits with the consent of the council, at least once every three years.

14 Article 52 GC & Article 21 NS

Article 52 GC

1. The vice-minister has the following duties:
 - a. to collaborate in a fraternal spirit and to support the minister in carrying out his or her specific duties;
 - b. to exercise the functions entrusted by the council and/or by the assembly or chapter;
 - c. to take the place of the minister in both duties and responsibilities in case of absence or temporary impediment;
 - d. to assume the functions of the minister when the office remains vacant. (See GC Article 81.1: When the office of minister remains vacant as a result of death, resignation or other impediment of a definitive character, the vice-minister assumes the office until the end of the term for which the minister was originally elected.)
2. The secretary has the following duties:
 - a. to compile the official acts of the fraternity and of the council and to assure that they are sent to their respective proper recipients;
 - b. to see to the updating and preservation of the records and the registers, noting admissions, professions, deaths, withdrawals, and transfers from the fraternity;(each local fraternity is to have at least a register of enrollments (admissions, professions, transfers, deaths, and every other important annotation relation to the individual members), the register of minutes of the council and the register of administration.)
 - c. to provide for the communication of the more important facts to the various levels and, if appropriate, to provide for their dissemination through the mass media.
3. The master of formation has the following duties:
 - a. to co-ordinate, with the help of the other members of the council, the formative activities of the fraternity;
 - b. to instruct and enliven the inquirers during the time of initiation, the candidates during the period of initiation formation, and the newly professed;

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- c. to inform the council of the fraternity prior to profession, concerning the suitability of the candidate for a commitment to live according to the Rule.
- 4. The treasurer, or bursar, has the following duties:
 - a. to guard diligently the contributions received, recording each receipt in the appropriate register, with the date on which it was given, the name of the contributor, or the one from whom it was collected;
 - b. to record in the same register the items of expense, specifying the date and the purpose, in conformity with the directions of the fraternity council;
 - c. to render an account of his or her administration to the assembly and to the council of the fraternity according to the norms of the national statutes.
- 5. The provisions regarding the rights and duties of the vice-minister, the secretary and the treasurer apply, with the appropriate adaptations, to all levels.

Article 21 NS

Reference Footnote (3)

15 Article 18.7a NS

The Local Fraternity is responsible for contributing to the Regional Fraternity on a fair share basis from its common fund to underwrite the costs of that fraternity [cf. General Constitutions, article #30.3]. A fair share contribution is made based on the number of active and excused brothers and sisters, but not for those who are deemed lapsed.

- a. An active fraternity member is one who participates both by attending fraternity meetings and by providing financial support to the community, or whom the fraternity has excused from such obligations.

16 Article 53.3 GC

Insertion into a local fraternity and participation in fraternity life is essential for belonging to the OFS. Appropriate initiatives should be adopted according to the directives of the national statutes, to keep those brothers and sisters united to the fraternity who — for valid reasons of health, family, work, or distance — cannot actively participate in community life.

17 Article 18:7b NS

- b. Those brothers and sisters who neither attend meetings, support the community financially, nor have valid reasons due to health, family, work or distance, and who, after personal invitations to return to fraternity, consciously and deliberately reject or ignore the invitation, will be termed “lapsed” and will not be carried on the fraternity membership roll nor be reported as a member to higher fraternity Councils [cf. General Constitutions, article #53.3].