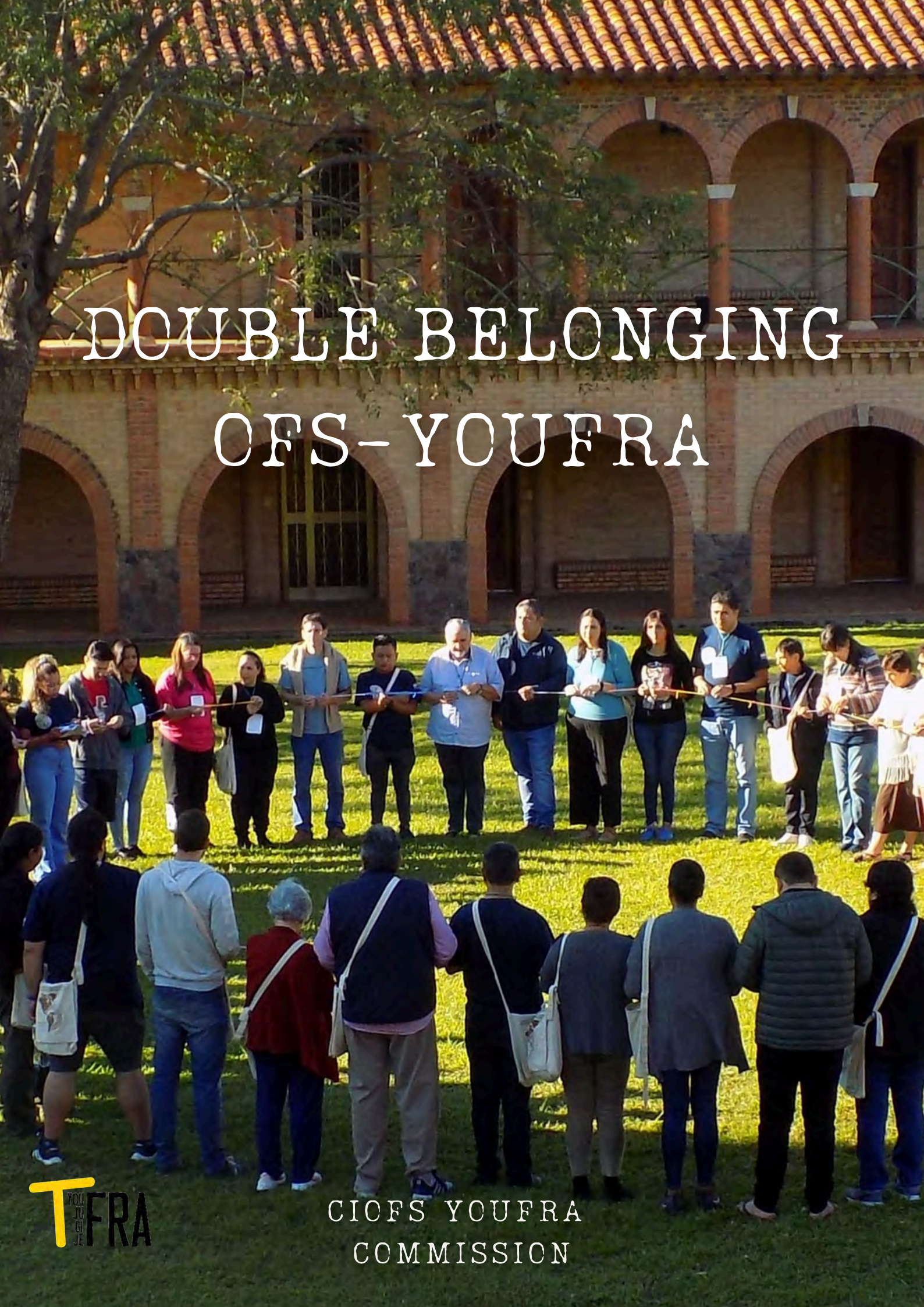


DOUBLE BELONGING OFS-YOUFRA

CIOFS YOUFRA
COMMISSION

Dear brothers and sisters:
OFS – YOUFRA
Peace and all good!

The issue of double belonging – that is, simultaneous membership in the OFS and YOUFRA – undoubtedly deserves attention as we exchange experiences and renew our approach to formation. Various OFS and YOUFRA gatherings have clearly highlighted the importance of this topic.

During the Franciscan Youth presentation at the 2024 OFS General Chapter, we renewed our commitment to develop formation material on this topic for all OFS and YOUFRA fraternities.

At the Third International Assembly of YOUFRA, held in Mexico in 2022, “double belonging” was identified as a priority for International Franciscan Youth.

With this in mind, we would like to offer you a fresh perspective on the relationship between the OFS and YOUFRA and on “double belonging”. We renew our invitation to embrace this experience, which calls us to take more decisive, concrete steps toward living our Franciscan vocation fully as brothers and sisters in this world.

We consider the material prepared by Ailén Lucia Natali (YOUFRA – OFS Argentina), Elías Molina (YOUFRA – OFS Argentina), and Maria Chiara Libreri (YOUFRA – OFS Italy) to be of great value. They served on the YOUFRA international formation team following the Assembly in Mexico. As the CIOFS YOUFRA Commission, we present their material to you. We ask each national Fraternity to promote this formation material and encourage its use among regional and local Fraternities and their spiritual assistants. This material unites us and strengthens us as a Franciscan Family.

Your brothers and sisters

CIOFS YOUFRA COMMISSION

Luis Félix Chocojay Guamuch, YOUFRA OFS
Silvia Noemi Diana, OFS
Noemi Paola Riccardi, OFS
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Introduction

On the way he discussed with his companions how they might sincerely keep the rule they had accepted how they might advance in all holiness and justice before God, how they should improve themselves and be an examble for others (LM IV,1)

The vocational journey within the Franciscan charism involves a search for a personal and free response to follow God as Saint Francis of Assisi once did, living according to the principles of poverty, humility, fraternity, and service to others. It is a lay life in which these principles are a reflection of fraternal life, which allows discernment in communion with one's brother or sister.

The topic of Double Belonging or OFS–YouFra something that deserves space for sharing experiences and renewing formation. This has been evident in different OFS and YouFra meetings. One of these was the III International YouFra Assembly held in Mexico in 2022, where Double Belonging was established as a priority for International Franciscan Youth in the following agreement:

Double membership and the relationship with the OFS

- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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. (Conclusive Document 3rd YouFra International Assembly 2022)

In light of this, we would like to propose a renewed perspective on this OFS–YouFra relationship and Double Belonging, strengthening the invitation to live this experience that encourages us to take more firm and concrete steps in the search for our full Franciscan vocation as brothers and sisters in this world.

OFS–YOUFRA RELATIONSHIP

In the General Constitutions of the OFS, articles 96 and 97 speak to us about Franciscan Youth, highlighting the importance of the YouFra Movement as part of its own youth ministry, for which it makes a specific option and commits itself to accompaniment, showing a sincere willingness to share the experience of life in the Order and to be alongside young people in their search, growth, and reaffirmation of their Franciscan vocation:
The OFS, by virtue of its very vocation, ought to be ready to share its experience of gospel life with youth who feel attracted to Saint Francis of Assisi and to seek the means of adequately presenting it to them. (GGCC 96,1)

The OFS fraternities will promote vocation to Franciscan Youth by means of appropriate and dynamic initiatives. They should ensure the vitality and the expansion of Franciscan Youth fraternities and accompany the youth on their journey of human and spiritual growth with proposals for relevant activities and contents. (GGCC 97,1)

Regarding the relationship between OFS and YouFra, it is important to emphasize the existence of a sense of “co-responsibility,” that is, “taking care of one another,” understanding that we are responsible for each other. The OFS is responsible for YouFra since “the OFS feels particularly responsible for YouFra” (GGCC Art. 96, 2), and likewise, YouFra is in some way responsible for the OFS and this should constitute a special commitment, since “the members of YouFra consider the Rule of the OFS as a document of inspiration” (GGCC Art. 96, 3).

In the International Documents “Incorporation of the YouFra members into the OFS” and “YouFra, a Way of Franciscan Vocation” shared by the CIOFS Presidency for several years, there are different points highlighting the importance of the relationship between OFS and YouFra:

“The Franciscan youth, as described in the OFS General Constitutions, differs from other Franciscan Youth groups by:

The acceptance of the Rule of the OFS as an inspirational document [...];Belonging to the Franciscan Family and being an integral part of the OFS; The accompaniment and animation provided by Secular Franciscans; - Its organisational structure and specific methods of formation for a vocational process which normally, but not necessarily, leads to the OFS [...]. (YouFra, a Way of Franciscan Vocation, 6)



The Youfra walks in the light of the message of St. Francis of Assisi; they discover gradually and assume this project of life and its values. It belongs to the Franciscan family as an integral part of the OFS and considers the Rule of the OFS its inspirational document. (YouFra, a Way of Franciscan Vocation, 10)

The OFS has a particular commitment to the Youfra as part of its own pastoral service to youth and the promotion of vocations. That is why it must accompany the young and support the maturation of their vocation as well as their introduction into the life of the fraternity. (YouFra, a Way of Franciscan Vocation, 14)

Some key points we can highlight from these paragraphs are:

- YouFra constitutes a particular commitment of the OFS as part of its own youth ministry and vocational promotion. Therefore, it must accompany young people, helping them mature in their vocation and introducing them into the life of the Fraternity.
- YouFra accepts the Rule of the OFS as a document of inspiration for the growth of its own Christian and Franciscan vocation, both individually and as a group in fraternal life.
- The relationships between YouFra and OFS must be imbued with a spirit of reciprocal and vital communion. Therefore, the vocational path of YouFra normally leads, though not necessarily, to the OFS.
- YouFra belongs to the Franciscan Family as an integral part of the OFS, and consequently is accompanied and animated by Secular Franciscans.

Thus, we can understand that OFS and YouFra walk in reciprocal and vital communion within the Franciscan Family and the whole Church. Therefore, to continue building a fraternal and relational journey, experiences and tools that foster mutual growth are necessary and important.

WHAT IS OFS–YOUFRA DOUBLE BELONGING OR SIMULTANEOUS BELONGING?

OFS–YouFra Double Belonging or Simultaneous Belonging is an option for YouFra members who wish to begin living the Franciscan vocation more fully, allowing them to progressively become incorporated into a Fraternity of the Secular Franciscan Order.
Thus, “The vocational discernment may occur while a young person belongs to Youfra and, if this discernment leads to a vocation as Secular Franciscan, the Youfra members may start the process of admission, formation and profession into the OFS, while still remaining in Youfra. This is what this document refers to as simultaneous belonging, or "double belonging."
Such incorporation into the OFS is highly recommended because, once an authentic vocational discernment has been made, entry into the state of life that God has prepared for the young person should not be postponed..” (Document Incorporation of the YouFra members into the OFS)

Due to the continuity of the vocational way of the Youfra towards the OFS, the profession in the OFS does not necessarily exclude the young person from [belonging to] his/her Youfra fraternity. The young person who, by profession in the OFS, makes the Rule of the OFS his/her project of life, can continue his/her journey with his brothers and sisters in the YouFra.(YouFra, a Way of Franciscan Vocation, 24)

Double Belonging is a possibility that has not always existed but arises from the changes and transformations that have taken place in youth contexts over time. We have found some references to this option in different documents that help trace the beginnings of the idea of OFS–YouFra simultaneous belonging or double belonging:

1) International Basic Guidelines for Franciscan Youth (1983)

We have found, thanks to texts cited in Argentine YouFra documents, guidelines prepared with the collaboration of ten YouFra leaders representing the five continents, along with observations and suggestions from National YouFra Councils, approved on July 16, 1983. In this document, we find an early reference to simultaneously belonging, stating that “the international, national, and regional (or provincial) leaders of YouFra are professed Secular Franciscans” (International guidelines for Franciscan youth point 6).

2) Constitutions of the Secular Franciscan Order (2000)

In 2000, with the approval of the Constitutions of the Secular Franciscan Order, the possibility is mentioned that YouFra members may belong to the OFS (GGCC Art. 96, 4), and may be young professed Franciscan members of the OFS (GGCC Art. 97, 3).

3) Document “YouFra–OFS Double Belonging” (2007)

What we now call “YouFra–OFS Double Belonging” was in some way “formalized” with the International Documents shared by the CIOFS Presidency in 2007: “Incorporation of the YouFra members into the OFS” and “YouFra, a Way of Franciscan Vocation”:

“The simultaneous belonging, or double belonging, becomes another tool which can help to incorporate naturally Youfra members into the OFS. It is important to take into consideration that Youfra has a double aim: to enable young people to live their call and to provide the support for their vocational discernment.” (Incorporation of the YouFra members into the OFS, 5.2).

Double Belonging thus becomes a new tool, a more “natural” invitation, and a fraternal process encouraging YouFra members to embrace their specific vocation in the Secular Franciscan Order.

“There may be a number of reasons why a young person may simultaneously be an active member in both fraternities, his Youfra fraternity and his OFS fraternity. It may well happen that the YouFra fraternity needs the expertise of the young professed for the animation of the other young members, either as the one in charge of the Youfra fraternity or an active member of the same. In any case, it is necessary that the young professed be active in the two fraternities, even if his/her activities, in accordance with the council of the OFS, may be mostly geared toward the Youfra.” (YouFra, a Way of Franciscan Vocation, 24)

THE REALITY OF OFS–YOUFRA DOUBLE BELONGING IN THE WORLD

The reality of Double Belonging at the international level is very diverse and varied, which is understandable since youth realities, social contexts, the dynamics of National Fraternities, and global situations are not the same—especially in the lives of young people, which are marked by constant movement and transformation.

At the International YouFra Assembly held in Mexico in 2022, where Double Belonging was discussed, 23 countries participated, of which 8 had experience living Double Belonging within their National Fraternities.

National Fraternities that live Double Belonging describe it as a very enriching experience both within Franciscan Youth and the Secular Franciscan Order. In these experiences, we find a wide variety of proposals and ways of implementing Double Belonging—from specific formation materials to work proposals based on age and personal experiences, which can serve as great inspiration.



TESTIMONIES OF BROTHERS AND SISTERS

It is truly amazing that he first began to preach where he had learned to read as a little boy and where at first he was revently buried. Thus; a blessed beginning was confirmed by a more blessed end. Where he learned, there he also taught; and where he bagan, there he blessedly ended. (1C 23)

We want to share the voices of some brothers and sisters who are living the double belonging OFS-YOUFRA as a grace that drives them to continue growing in their search for their vocation. These testimonies were collected from interviews and conversations between 2022 and 2023, and updated this year.



Testimonies

FRATERNITY
WAY
LOVE

My name is Mayra Santos, I am from the city of Floriano, Piauí, Brazil. I am currently the National Fraternal Secretary (President) of the Franciscan Youth of Brazil.

I live near two Franciscan parishes, where I came to know and learn about Saint Francis as the patron of ecology, for his love and harmony with God's creation. Through Franciscan Youth, I deepened my understanding of Francis, who was "the example par excellence of care for the vulnerable." [LS10]. Since then, all my actions have been centered on the Franciscan charism, and I have always remained close to the Franciscan Family.

In YouFra, I followed the formation steps, always thinking that I would have this double belonging and about the importance of remaining within the family: following the teachings of Francis and Clare, and at the same time inspiring the path of other brothers and sisters who follow in their footsteps. Thus, in 2018 I was admitted, and in 2025 I made my solemn profession in the Secular Franciscan Order. It was a unique and moving moment that brought together the entire Franciscan family of my city; I gave yes "for life".

I chose this double belonging because of all the love, teachings, and fraternal care I received, and also because I decided to live in the Third Order the principles of Franciscan life that I learned in YOUFRA: to love first, to love until the end, to do few things and do them well, and to keep your secret within you.

In this way, I encourage other young people to continue raising their voices and making the voices of the poor and oppressed heard with our transformative power, just as Francis and Clare did. Following the steps of our formative journey toward double belonging and, as a lifelong commitment, we remain in the Franciscan family—believing, striving, and being agents of change in our environments as the purpose of our lives.



PERMANENCE HOLINESS GRATUITOUS

My name is José Israel Vidales Tinajera, I am from Mexico and I am 29 years old. I made my promise in my YOUFRA fraternity Purísima de San Diego in 2012, in Aguascalientes, and my profession in the OFS in 2014, in the same fraternity.

The witness of my parents in daily life awakened in me to the desire to begin my journey in double belonging, in order to seek my Christian fulfillment in Franciscan spirituality. They met in YOUFRA and continued, after marrying, in the OFS, so this lived experience of fraternity was always present in my life. Likewise, in the simplicity, joy, and charity of the brothers, I always found more than one reason to smile. I was also able to see an active closeness and accompaniment from the OFM brothers in the fraternity, which strengthened my discovery of Franciscan identity and my desire to go deeper into it.

Having double belonging has allowed me to be a bridge between my fraternities, so that YOUFRA may see a youthful face in a continuous journey of mission, prayer, formation, and fraternity. Likewise, it has been a bridge to show in the OFS a greater closeness to youth reality and the face of a little brother who, like them, has a great desire to walk with Francis toward holiness.

As in every journey, there are always difficulties. In my experience, one of them was the lack of knowledge about this possible double belonging, which caused misunderstandings regarding active participation in both fraternities. It was also a challenge to truly feel like brothers, since often the relationship between both fraternities tends to be “like father and son,” instead of recognizing ourselves for what we are: brothers, children of the same Father. Likewise, the lack of presence of YOUFRA in the OFS, and vice versa, sometimes hindered the sense of closeness between fraternities.

A great motivation for living this double belonging is to continue deepening the Franciscan vocation and the experience of fraternity (already present in YOUFRA), in the joy and love of choosing to walk with the brothers, with Francis, and with Christ Himself toward holiness.



VALUES

SIMPLICITY HUMILITY

My name is Mark Christian R. Almazan, and I'm 28 years old. I've been part of the Franciscan Youth for 14 years, and I've been promised for 12 years now. Being in the Franciscan Youth has been a wonderful experience for me. It's like being with a big family of brothers and sisters, each with their own unique personalities. Despite our differences, we all share a strong bond of love and friendship.

In 2020, I joined the Secular Franciscan Order (OFS) during the candidacy stage, and I made my perpetual profession in 2023. My formator in the Franciscan Youth in Naval, my humble local fraternity, encouraged me to continue my journey in the OFS. At first, I was unsure because many OFS members are older, but I decided to give it a try. It turned out to be a great decision because it helped me grow spiritually and understand myself better.

Through my double belonging, I learned that despite our age differences, both the Franciscan Youth and the OFS share important values like simplicity, humility, service, and poverty. In my fraternity, I had many opportunities to pray and serve others.

In the Philippines, we often use the word “forever” in the context of romantic love, hoping for a love that lasts. In the same way, I realized that our time in YouFra is a grace-filled season, but like all seasons, it will eventually pass. Our membership in the Franciscan Youth is not our forever, but it prepares us for something deeper. When I professed in the OFS, I embraced “forever” not just as a sentiment, but as a commitment. It is our lifelong “yes” to live the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ through the footsteps of Saint Francis of Assisi.

I'm always thankful to God for giving me the chance to be part of this big family of both young and old, yet inspiring individuals, as a double belonging.



COMMINTMENT
SERVICE GROW

My name is Félix Chocojay, I am 29 years old; I have belonged to YouFra since 2010 and to OFS since October 8, 2017.
What motivated me to live double belonging was mainly my service in YouFra, since it involved experiencing various encounters with brothers and sisters of OFS who, through their life witness, helped me understand that this was the vocation to which I was called. Little by little, I discovered that entering the Order was a necessary step for my life, my spiritual growth, and my vocational discernment. Thanks to this way of life, I had (and still have) the opportunity to know two different realities, which helps me better understand that we are truly one family: YouFra and OFS. If I had to describe it in three words, I would highlight commitment, service, and growth.

The difficulties I have encountered in this situation of double belonging have included a feeling of a kind of “loneliness.” The YouFra journey is lived in fraternity, and OFS as well, but there is no shared space specifically for those with double belonging. Of course, this has changed over time as I have come to know more brothers and sisters who live this experience. Another difficulty is coordinating participation in two fraternities, as well as living in constant contrast: in YouFra, many members are now younger than me, and it is challenging to stay updated with new trends and new ways of living fraternity; at the same time, it is complex to be heard in OFS, because for them I am very young or someone with limited experience.

To encourage other YouFra members to embrace double belonging, I would say it is necessary to remember that YouFra is the fruit of OFS. Without OFS, YouFra could not have developed into the fraternity it is today, and that alone should be enough. However, I know it is not so simple nowadays, in a world where young people are bombarded with so many aspirations, responsibilities, and expectations to fulfill. Thinking about becoming part of an Order tends to take a back seat. In contemporary societies, individual self-improvement is idealized, leaving little room for lifelong commitment.

I, who continue discovering so much richness in our Order, encourage you to accept the nature of your vocation. If along the YouFra journey you have discovered that your vocation is Franciscan and lay, you should naturally continue this path in OFS, taking advantage of the opportunity for transition by living double belonging.



FORMATION
VOCATION LIFE

I am Ante Čičak, I am 26 years old, I have been in YouFra for more than 10 years and in OFS for three years. During my final years in YouFra, I felt the desire to experience what OFS is, what its vocation is, and whether it is right for me.
At first, I did not consider the possibility of double belonging, nor was it my goal. I only began to learn about this opportunity toward the end of my time in YouFra, but I wanted to experience during my YouFra life what it feels like to live in the fraternity of OFS.

During my years in YouFra, I had the opportunity to collaborate many times with OFS at different levels of Council. At first, I felt a strong intergenerational gap of misunderstanding that discouraged me, but later, when I came to serve at the national level, I realized for myself that OFS is a community with its flaws, just like YouFra, and that what matters are its virtues. Above all, I understood how much love the members of OFS have for their neighbor.

What I would say to young YouFra members who are beginning their formation, those who have already made their promises and are discerning their life path, is first of all: do not be afraid to remain longer in YouFra. YouFra has done so much for me; through it, God guided me toward the vocation of being a religion teacher, and I would not have discovered that vocation after only two or three years in YouFra, but over a longer period. OFS is not a logical step after YouFra; rather, it should be the discovery of one's own life vocation. OFS and its members should, as older brothers and sisters, help young YouFra members in this calling. With this awareness, in my opinion, OFS can benefit mutually both from members with double belonging and from those who have already chosen to offer their talents and time to God in the life of the Secular Franciscan Order.



CURRENT DIFFICULTIES:

From what has been shared among different brothers and sisters from various National Fraternities, we can identify several difficulties regarding double belonging as a possibility or tool for the transition of YouFra members to OFS:

1. Lack of awareness of double belonging

In some countries, the experience of double belonging is not seen as an option or is simply unknown, despite the existence of various documents available to the international fraternity

2. Weak or problematic YouFra–OFS relationship

In some countries, although it may seem hard to imagine, the YouFra–OFS relationship is almost nonexistent, which creates many difficulties. There are also national realities where personal differences and issues have caused increasing distance between YouFra members and OFS members.

3. Obligation

In some countries, double belonging is seen as a “requirement” to carry out projects and national fraternity activities. For example, due to a lack of professed YouFra members, difficulties arise in maintaining national animation or representation within OFS spaces. Double belonging is important and requires accompaniment—not imposition that creates distance or limits that hinder fraternal life.

4. Lack of initiatives and proposals leading to OFS

In some national contexts, there are no concrete spaces for accompaniment and follow-up of youth realities that could lead to OFS. It is noticeable that when YouFra members complete their stage in the movement, they do not see OFS as a place to continue their Franciscan spiritual journey. This lack of initiative exists both in OFS and in YouFra.



5. Lack of awareness of double belonging in Spiritual Assistance

Some national realities report that Spiritual Assistants of OFS–YouFra are unaware of this possibility, not allowing this simultaneous belonging in fraternities and instead requiring young members to choose one or the other. However, “Due to the continuity of the vocational way of the Youfra towards the OFS, the profession in the OFS does not necessarily exclude the young person from [belonging to] his/her Youfra fraternity. The young person who, by profession in the OFS, makes the Rule of the OFS his/her project of life, can continue his/her journey with his brothers and sisters in the Youfra.” (YouFra, a Way of Franciscan Vocation, 24)

6. Responsibility of councils and OFS–YouFra animation, especially the role of the fraternal animator

Linked to the lack of initiatives leading to OFS, in many realities there is a lack of presence of fraternal animation in accompanying this experience of double belonging, showing a gap or lack of knowledge on how to support this process through service, or failing to create connections so that YouFra may come to know OFS and vice versa.

PROPOSALS AND SUGGESTIONS

1) Propose double belonging from an open and flexible perspective

The experience of youth today is in constant movement and transformation. This does not mean that young people are not committed, but rather that they live in times of constant change that lead them to move forward in different ways and at different paces.
For this reason, it is necessary to view double belonging from a flexible and open standpoint, one that takes into account the possibilities of young people within a given context. There is no single way of being young or of seeking one’s vocation. Therefore, we must be willing to recognize the wide range of possibilities for accompanying this process of vocational development within the Franciscan charism, considering proposals “(...) methods of formation, and methods of instruction adequate for the needs of the world of youth, according to the existing realities in the various countries” (GGCC 96,5).

2) Think of double belonging as a process and a construction

Double belonging does not happen overnight. Rather, the young person, according to their own timing and reality, begins to seek a full vocation in order to live the charism. Close accompaniment is necessary—one that respects personal timing and offers possibilities so that the Franciscan vocation may become a lifelong option, understanding what “for life” means for a young person.

3) Value the human, Christian, and Franciscan formation of the young franciscan

The formation shared and received within the YouFra Movement must be embraced and valued when deciding to begin the journey in the OFS. Young Franciscans should be willing to open their hearts to the formative proposals and dynamics of the OFS, and likewise, the OFS must be open to what the young franciscan brings from their own journey.

4) Work in shared OFS–YouFra spaces: meetings, participation in gatherings, “young adult” spaces, etc.

In some countries, young “adult” Franciscans are accompanied within the Movement—that is, young people who have reached a certain age or life situation in which they can begin to reflect on their Franciscan vocation in the OFS.
In some contexts, the importance and value of the presence of young Franciscans at OFS chapters, retreats, and meetings has been highlighted, as well as the presence of secular members in gatherings organized by YouFra.
It is recommended that the OFS and YouFra share spaces and joint initiatives in order to understand each other’s dynamics and begin taking steps together along this same path of following Jesus in the manner of Francis and Clare of Assisi.

5) Create spaces for dialogue and formation

“One of the most important ones will always be close contact with the OFS. For this reason, the local fraternities should make room for the young, either by allowing them to participate in their meetings, or by entrusting to them specific tasks in the fraternity. It is equally important that the OFS fraternities be flexible in their organization, and that they seek creative ways of forming special groups in the fraternity, under the guidance of the council of the fraternity”. (CIOFS Document “YouFra, a Way of Franciscan Vocation”, 26).

6) Commit to formation and to promoting the service of Fraternal Animation

“Fraternal animation is the best means that the OFS and Youfra Fraternities can use to more naturally incorporate members of Youfra into the OFS. Fraternal animation is synonymous with accompaniment. Its primary goal is to be present with youth on their journey of Franciscan, as well as human and Christian, growth. For this reason, the Fraternal Animator becomes a fundamental presence to support young people in their discernment, especially discernment regarding a secular Franciscan vocation.” (“Incorporation of the YouFra members into the OFS”)

Together with the Formator (or formation team) of the local OFS fraternity, the Fraternal Animator should accompany the young franciscan toward Profession. This stage of formation is the specific responsibility of the Secular Franciscan Order and should be carried out under the guidance of the Fraternal Animator, who knows the members of YouFra.
It is important that the Fraternal Animator transmit all the formative content planned for this stage using methods and pedagogies appropriate to youth. The Rule and the General Constitutions of the OFS should be worked on simultaneously.

It is also important to highlight that, with admission into the OFS, the young franciscan also becomes a member of the OFS fraternity. Therefore, during this formative stage, they should participate both in YouFra meetings and in the meetings of their Secular Franciscan fraternity. The Fraternal Animator is especially responsible for this significant phase of transition and vocational maturation.

Special attention must be given during this stage to the continuity of the YouFra fraternity, which must seek renewal of its members, since the professed Franciscan young come to also belong to the OFS.

The service of Fraternal Animation is a gift and a privilege that must be carried out with dedication and perseverance, allowing for mutual enrichment of YouFra, the OFS, and the Franciscan Family in the development of a shared mission in the Church and society. (The time of YouFra–OFS double belonging.4.4 Guide for OFS Fraternal Animators – CIOFS 2024)





FINAL REFLECTION: GROWING AND SHARING THE JOURNEY

“I have entrusted this to you, a simple man, so that the things that I work in you for others to imitate may be followed by those who want to follow.I have called; I will preserve, and I will pasture; and I will raise up others to make up for the fall of some, so that, even if they have not been born, I will have them born! (2C 158).

Just as Francis of Assisi, in his time and through many experiences that marked his life, had a period of discernment and, always on the journey, reached a moment when he allowed himself to be led by the Lord to commit to a vocation in a total and definitive way, a vocation that remains current and prophetic today.
Double belonging can be, like that time lived by Francis, a period in which young Franciscans can walk in search of choosing this way of life definitively in the OFS, attentive to the signs of God and also to their own reality, the signs of the times, and their context through the YouFra Movement.

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