

Fraternal Activities Committee Final Report

Pursuant to Section 15 of the Catholic Order of Foresters' Constitution & Bylaws, High Chief Ranger Rodney W. Oligmueller appointed the following individuals as members of the Fraternal Activities Committee:

- Roger Bentz, Jr., Chair (NE)
- Mary Fox (SD)
- Helen Hildebrand (IA)
- James Miller (OH)
- Katy Vanderwal (SD)

Section 22 of the Catholic Order of Foresters' Constitution & Bylaws states that the Fraternal Activities Committee "will examine all communications and petitions relating to fraternal and youth activities."

The Committee met on June 3, 2024, and discussed various topics related to Catholic Order of Foresters' membership engagement and how to continue providing opportunities to all members. High Chief Ranger Rodney W. Oligmuller, an ex-officio committee member, has reviewed the Fraternal Activities Committee Report.

A quorum of committee members was present at all meetings. The Fraternal Activities Committee reviewed all the delegate responses to the Preliminary Report, which is reflected in our Final Report. Every individual who submitted a comment received the Committee's response, and all comments and the Committee's responses have been posted on the Catholic Order of Foresters' National Convention Website. The Committee encourages all National Convention Delegates and COF members to review the comments and responses.

The Committee discussed the importance of driving new membership activities at the local court level. This Committee recognizes the impact achieved when our membership is effectively engaged and aims to analyze what can be done to continue the success of our members. This report highlights recommendations for the organization's current programs to enhance and promote Catholic Order of Foresters' Fraternal programs.

1. Participation in Feeding God's Children Events

Discussion

We want to encourage our membership to participate in smaller FGC events. We should advertise smaller projects that attract people with families and ensure their participation is valid. This can be expressed in our Catholic Forester magazine, social media, and from court officers. With the consolidation of churches, this could be an excellent opportunity for our COF members to collaborate with different courts, parishes, and Catholic communities.

Recommendation

The Committee encourages the High Court to continue supporting and raising awareness of simpler FGC events and focusing on our members and families. The Committee recognizes the challenge regarding time commitment with this program but recommends that the High Court consider encouraging small and large events moving forward.

2. Participation in Alternative Breaks and Mission Trips

Discussion

The Committee recognizes the challenges of establishing Alternative Break and Mission Trip programs. The Committee supports promoting these programs and would consider widening or changing the guidelines to target a broader age group.

Recommendation

The Committee recommends the Society continue to promote and expand the implementation of Alternative Break and Mission Trip programs to provide our membership with new opportunities. The Committee also recommends implementing a “Buddy” system for our young adult members to want to participate further in this program. The “Buddy” system refers to one of our Catholic Order Foresters’ young adult member bringing a non-member or member “buddy” on the Alternative Break trip.

3. Supporting Education

Discussion

The Committee recognizes the importance of education, specifically the Educational Scholarship. This Committee understands the value placed on education and how it is integral to our adult membership and, ultimately, the organization.

Recommendation

The Committee recommends the Educational one-time award to increase the number of applicants by raising awareness among non-traditional college students and members.

4. Spirituality Tap-In

Discussion

Parishes and COF have similar missions regarding getting our young adult members active in their courts and fraternal programs and bringing more awareness to eligible non-members.

Recommendation

The Committee recommends more communication, led by our Agent Advisors, with our local court officers to spread awareness of these Spirituality Tap-in opportunities and attract different Catholic demographics.

This concludes our report.

Thank you,

/S/

Roger Bentz, Jr.
Chairperson, Fraternal Activities Committee