Ongoing Formation Process

When we look at the Secular Franciscan formation process, it is important to see it as a continuum, that is, each stage flowing into the next. Aspects that are essential in the first phase, Orientation, will still be essential in the second, Inquiry, the third, Candidacy, and into the specialized program for Newly Professed as well as Ongoing Formation of Professed members.

The purpose of the Ongoing Formation process is to support the Professed members’ commitment, and to strengthen their Franciscan vocation so that the ongoing conversion process will continue as a way of life. “Begun by the preceding stages, the formation of the brothers and sisters takes place in a permanent and continuous way. It should be understood as an aid in the conversion of each and everyone and in the fulfillment of their proper mission in the Church and in society” (General Constitutions, article #44.1).

Ongoing Formation:
* is a process of renewal for the entire Fraternity by which we are encouraged and challenged to live our vocation in the actual situations and contingencies of daily living.
* is the fruit of proper Initial Formation, realizing that we are in a continual process of conversion and growth all the days of our lives.
* includes additional information and updating in various areas of spirituality, and deepening of our commitment to the Gospel way of life.
* is a lifelong process! None of us ever completes formation.

Monthly Fraternity Gatherings/meetings are the ordinary place for Ongoing Formation. Some other opportunities for Ongoing Formation include:
- retreats (Local and Regional)
- days of renewal
- community celebrations
- interaction among Fraternities
- interaction with the Friars, the Poor Clares, the Third Order Religious
- attendance at Regional and National gatherings/events
- workshops, seminars, and days of reflection
Possible Topics for Ongoing Formation

* Essential Documents
  - *The Rule of the Secular Franciscan Order*
  - *General Constitutions*
  - *National Statutes*
* Scripture (maybe studying the readings for the upcoming Sunday liturgy)
* *Ritual of the Secular Franciscan Order*
* Vocations Promotion
* *TAU-USA* (National Newsletter)
* *The Portiuncula* (Regional Newsletter)
* Franciscan Apostolic Topics
  - Family (families, marriage, parenting, sexuality)
  - Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation (JPIC)
  - Work (including economic justice)
  - Multicultural Responsiveness
* Franciscan Formation Texts
* Franciscan Spirituality
* Franciscan Prayer
* Franciscan Life
* Franciscan History
* Franciscan Servant Leadership
* History of the Penitential Charism
* Franciscan Women and Men (for example)
  - Saint Francis of Assisi
  - Saint Clare of Assisi
  - Saint Angela of Foligno
  - Saint Anthony of Padua
  - Saint Bonaventure
  - Saint Elizabeth of Hungary
  - Blessed John Duns Scotus
  - Saint Louis IX of France
  - Saint Margaret of Cortona
* Regional Formation Kit Materials
* Materials from the Regional Formation Director
* *Regional Guidelines*
* Catholic Teachings
  - Christology
  - Christian Spirituality
  - Papal Letters
  - Vatican II and Post-Counciliar Documents

And the list goes on and on!!!