



Curia Generalis  
Fratrum Minorum  
Capuccinorum

# THE CONSTITUTIONS

ENGLISH (Europa)

OF THE  
CAPUCHIN FRIARS MINOR

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2013 A.D.

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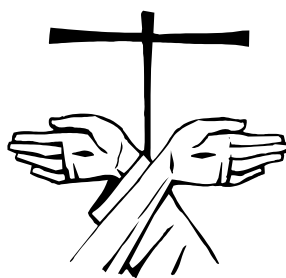
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Roma, A.D. 2017



Fra Mauro JÖHRI  
ORDINE DEI FRATI MINORI CAPPUCINI  
MINISTRO GENERALE

Prot. N° 00935/13

**Decreto di promulgazione**

Visto il decreto della Congregazione per gli Istituti di vita consacrata e le Società di vita Apostolica, prot. n° C 37 – 1/2013 del 4 ottobre 2013, con cui sono stati approvati e confermati i testi redatti in lingua italiana presentati con lettera del 28 settembre 2013,

il Ministro generale  
avuto il mandato dall'84° Capitolo Generale  
con il presente decreto

**PROMULGA**

le Costituzioni dell'Ordine dei Frati Minori Cappuccini  
e le Ordinazioni dei Capitoli Generali  
nella loro edizione tipica in lingua italiana  
con il testo di seguito riportato.

La loro entrata in vigore è stabilita per il giorno  
8 dicembre 2013  
avvenuta la pubblicazione sul sito ufficiale dell'Ordine.

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fra Mauro JÖHRI  
Ministro generale OFMCap.

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fra Clayton Jaison FERNANDES  
Segretario generale OFMCap.

Dato in Roma, dalla nostra Curia generale l'8 dicembre 2013,  
solennità dell'Immacolata Concezione della B.V. Maria, Patrona dell'Ordine.



CONGREGAZIONE  
PER GLI ISTITUTI DI VITA CONSACRATA  
E LE SOCIETÀ DI VITA APOSTOLICA

Prot. n. C. 37 – 1/2013

### DECRETO

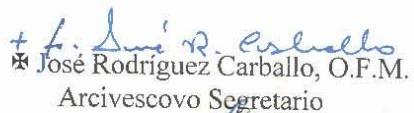
Il Ministro Generale dell'Ordine dei Frati Minori Cappuccini, in nome del Capitolo Generale, chiede a Vostra Santità l'approvazione delle Costituzioni del suo Istituto.

La Congregazione per gli Istituti di vita consacrata e le Società di vita apostolica, esaminato attentamente le Costituzioni presentate, con il presente Decreto le approva e le conferma, secondo il testo redatto in lingua italiana e presentato con la lettera del 28 settembre e del 2 ottobre 2013, di cui è conservata copia nel proprio Archivio.

Nonostante qualsiasi disposizione in contrario.

Città del Vaticano, 4 ottobre 2013.  
Solennità di San Francesco d'Assisi

  
João Braz Card. de Aviz  
Prefetto

  
+ José Rodríguez Carballo, O.F.M.  
Arcivescovo Segretario



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# **The Rule of The Friars Minor or Lesser Brothers and The Testament**



# THE RULE OF THE FRIARS MINOR OR LESSER BROTHERS

## [Chapter I]

### In the Name of the Lord!

#### The Life of the Lesser Brothers Begins

<sup>1</sup>The rule and life of the Lesser Brothers is this: To observe the holy gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, living in obedience, without anything of our own, and in chastity. Brother Francis promises obedience and reverence to the Lord Pope Honorius and his canonically elected successors, and to the Roman Church; and the rest of the brothers are obliged to obey Francis and his successors.

<sup>2</sup>Brother Francis promises obedience and reverence to our Lord Pope Honorius, his successors canonically elected, and to the Roman Church.

<sup>3</sup>Let the other brothers be bound to obey Brother Francis and his successors.

## [Chapter II]

### Those Who Wish to Adopt This Life and How They Should Be Received

<sup>1</sup>If there are any who wish to accept this life and come to our brothers, let them send them to their Provincial Ministers, to whom alone — and not to others — is permission granted to receive the brothers. <sup>2</sup>Let the ministers examine them carefully concerning the Catholic faith and the sacraments of the Church. <sup>3</sup>If they believe all these things, will profess them faithfully, and observe them steadfastly to the end; <sup>4</sup>and if they have no wives, or if they have wives who have already taken a vow of continence and are of such an age that suspicion cannot be raised about them, and who have already entered a monastery or have given their husbands permission by the authority of the bishop of the diocese, <sup>5</sup>let the ministers speak to them the words of the holy Gospel that they go and sell all they have and take care to give it to the poor. <sup>6</sup>If they cannot do this, their good will may suffice.

<sup>7</sup>Let the brothers and the minister be careful not to interfere with their material goods, so that they may dispose of their belongings as the Lord inspires them. <sup>8</sup>If they ask advice, the minister may send them to some God-fearing persons according to whose advice their goods may be distributed to the poor.

<sup>9</sup>Then they may be given the clothes of probation, namely, two tunics without a hood, a cord, short trousers, and a little cape reaching to the cord, <sup>10</sup>unless, at times, it seems good to these same ministers, before God, to act otherwise. <sup>11</sup>When the year of probation has come to an end, they may be received to obedience promising always to observe this rule and life. <sup>12</sup>On no account shall it be lawful for them to leave this Order, according to the decree of our Lord the Pope, <sup>13</sup>for, according to the

Gospel: no one who puts a hand to the plough and looks to what was left behind is fit for the kingdom of God.

<sup>14</sup>Those who have already promised obedience may have one tunic with a hood and another, if they wish, without a hood. <sup>15</sup>And those who are compelled by necessity may wear shoes. <sup>16</sup>Let all the brothers wear poor clothes. They may mend them with pieces of sackcloth or other material with the blessing of God. <sup>17</sup>I admonish and exhort them not to look down upon or judge those whom they see dressed in soft and fine clothes and enjoying the choicest food and drink, but rather let everyone judge and look down upon himself.

### **[Chapter III]**

#### **The Divine Office, Fasting and How the Brothers Should Go About in the World**

<sup>1</sup> The cleric brothers are to recite the Divine Office according to the rite of the holy Roman Church excepting the psalter, <sup>2</sup> for which reason they may have breviaries.

<sup>3</sup>The lay brothers, however, may say twenty-four Our Fathers for Matins, and five for Lauds; seven for each of the Hours of Prime, Terce, Sext, and None, twelve for Vespers, and seven for Compline. <sup>4</sup>Let them also pray for the dead.

<sup>5</sup>They are to fast from the feast of All Saints until the Lord's Nativity. <sup>6</sup>May those be blessed by the Lord who fast voluntarily during that holy Lent that begins at the Epiphany and lasts during the forty days which our Lord consecrated by His own fast; but those who do not wish to keep it will not be obliged. <sup>7</sup>Let them fast, however, during the other [Lent] until the Lord's Resurrection.

<sup>8</sup>At other times they may not be bound to fast except on Fridays. <sup>9</sup>In cases of obvious need, however, the brothers are not bound by bodily fasting.

<sup>10</sup>I counsel, admonish and exhort my brothers in the Lord Jesus Christ not to quarrel or argue or judge others when they go about in the world; <sup>11</sup>but let them be meek, peaceful, modest, gentle, and humble, speaking courteously to everyone, as is becoming. <sup>12</sup>They should not ride on horseback unless compelled by an obvious need or infirmity.

<sup>13</sup>Into whatever house they enter, let them first say: "Peace be to this house!"

<sup>14</sup>According to the holy Gospel, let them eat whatever food is set before them.

### **[Chapter IV]**

#### **Let the Brothers Never Receive Money**

<sup>1</sup>I strictly command all my brothers not to receive coins or money in any form, either personally or through intermediaries. <sup>2</sup>Nevertheless, the ministers and custodians alone may take special care through their spiritual friends to provide for the needs of the sick and the clothing of the others according to places, seasons and cold climates,

as they judge necessary, <sup>3</sup>saving always that, as stated above, they do not receive coins or money.

## **[Chapter V] The Manner of Working**

<sup>1</sup>Those brothers to whom the Lord has given the grace of working may work faithfully and devotedly <sup>2</sup>so that, while avoiding idleness, the enemy of the soul, they do not extinguish the Spirit of holy prayer and devotion to which all temporal things must contribute. <sup>3</sup>In payment for their work they may receive whatever is necessary for the bodily support of themselves and their brothers, excepting coin or money, <sup>4</sup>and let them do this humbly as is becoming for servants of God and followers of most holy poverty.

## **[Chapter VI] Let the Brothers Not Make Anything Their Own; Begging Alms; the Sick Brothers**

<sup>1</sup>Let the brothers not make anything their own, neither house, nor place, nor anything at all. <sup>2</sup>As pilgrims and strangers in this world, serving the Lord in poverty and humility, let them go seeking alms with confidence, <sup>3</sup>and they should not be ashamed because, for our sakes, our Lord made Himself poor in this world. <sup>4</sup>This is the sublime height of most exalted poverty which has made you, my most beloved brothers, heirs and kings of the Kingdom of Heaven, poor in temporal things but exalted in virtue. <sup>5</sup>Let this be your portion which leads into the land of the living. <sup>6</sup>Giving yourselves totally to this, beloved brothers, never seek anything else under heaven for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

<sup>7</sup>Wherever the brothers may be and meet one another, let them show that they are members of the same family. <sup>8</sup>Let each one confidently make known his need to the other, for if a mother loves and cares for her son according to the flesh, how much more diligently must someone love and care for his brother according to the Spirit! <sup>9</sup>When any brother falls sick, the other brothers must serve him as they would wish to be served themselves.

## **[Chapter VII] The Penance To Be Imposed on the Brothers Who Sin**

<sup>1</sup>If any brother, at the instigation of the enemy, sins mortally in regard to those sins concerning which it has been decreed among the brothers to have recourse only to the Provincial Ministers, let him have recourse as quickly as possible and without delay. <sup>2</sup>If these ministers are priests, with a heart full of mercy let them impose on

him a penance; but, if the ministers are not priests, let them have it imposed by others who are priests of the Order, as in the sight of God appears to them more expedient. <sup>3</sup>They must be careful not to be angry or disturbed at the sin of another, for anger and disturbance impede charity in themselves and in others.

### **[Chapter VIII]**

#### **The Election of the General Minister of This Fraternity and the Chapter of Pentecost**

<sup>1</sup>Let all the brothers always be bound to have one of the brothers of this Order as General Minister and servant of the whole fraternity and let them be strictly bound to obey him. <sup>2</sup>When he dies, let the election of his successor be made by the Provincial Ministers and custodians in the Chapter of Pentecost, at which all the Provincial Ministers are bound to assemble in whatever place the General Minister may have designated. <sup>3</sup>They shall do this once in every three years, or at other longer or shorter intervals, as determined by the aforesaid minister.

<sup>4</sup>If, at any time, it appears to the body of the Provincial Ministers and custodians that the aforesaid General Minister is not qualified for the service and general welfare of the brothers, the aforesaid brothers, to whom the election is committed, are bound to elect another as custodian in the name of the Lord. <sup>5</sup>Moreover, after the Chapter of Pentecost, the Provincial Ministers and custodians may each, if they wish and it seems expedient to them, convoke a Chapter of the brothers in their custodies once in the same year.

### **[Chapter IX]**

#### **Preachers**

<sup>1</sup>The brothers may not preach in the diocese of any bishop when he has opposed their doing so. <sup>2</sup>And let none of the brothers dare to preach in any way to the people unless he has been examined and approved by the General Minister of this fraternity and the office of preacher has been conferred upon him.

<sup>3</sup>Moreover, I admonish and exhort those brothers that when they preach their language be well-considered and chaste for the benefit and edification of the people, announcing to them vices and virtues, punishment and glory, with brevity, because our Lord when on earth kept His word brief.

### **[Chapter X]**

#### **The Admonition and Correction of the Brothers**

<sup>1</sup>Let the brothers who are the ministers and servants of the others visit and admonish their brothers and humbly and charitably correct them, not commanding them anything that is against their soul and our rule.

<sup>2</sup>Let the brothers who are subject, however, remember that, for God's sake, they have renounced their own wills. <sup>3</sup>Therefore, I strictly command them to obey their ministers in everything they have promised the Lord to observe and which is not against their soul or our Rule.

<sup>4</sup>And wherever the brothers may be who know and feel they cannot observe the Rule spiritually, they can and should have recourse to their ministers. <sup>5</sup>Let the ministers, moreover, receive them charitably and kindly and have such familiarity with them that these same brothers may speak and deal with them as masters with their servants, <sup>6</sup>for so it must be that the ministers are the servants of all the brothers.

<sup>7</sup>Moreover, I admonish and exhort the brothers in the Lord Jesus Christ to beware of all pride, vainglory, envy and greed, of care and solicitude for the things of this world, of detraction and murmuring. Let those who are illiterate not be anxious to learn, <sup>8</sup>but let them pay attention to what they must desire above all else: to have the Spirit of the Lord and Its holy activity, <sup>9</sup>to pray always to Him with a pure heart, to have humility and patience in persecution and infirmity, <sup>10</sup>and to love those who persecute, rebuke and find fault with us, because the Lord says: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute and calumniate you. <sup>11</sup>Blessed are those who suffer persecution for the sake of justice, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. <sup>12</sup>But whoever perseveres to the end will be saved.

## **[Chapter XI]**

### **The Brothers May Not Enter the Monasteries of Nuns**

<sup>1</sup>I strictly command all the brothers not to have any suspicious dealings or conversations with women, <sup>2</sup>and not to enter the monasteries of nuns, excepting those brothers to whom special permission has been granted by the Apostolic See. <sup>3</sup>Neither shall they be godfathers to men or women, so that scandal may not arise among the brothers or concerning them.

## **[Chapter XII]**

### **Those Going Among the Saracens and Other Non-Believers**

<sup>1</sup>Let those brothers who wish by divine inspiration to go among the Saracens or other non-believers ask permission to go from their Provincial Ministers. <sup>2</sup>The ministers, however, may not grant permission except to those whom they see fit to be sent.

<sup>3</sup>In addition, I command the ministers through obedience to ask our Lord the Pope for one of the Cardinals of the Holy Roman Church, to serve as governor, protector and corrector of this fraternity, <sup>4</sup>so that, being always submissive and subject at the feet of the same Holy Church and steadfast in the Catholic Faith, we may observe poverty, humility, and the Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ as we have firmly promised.

It is forbidden, therefore, for anyone to tamper with this decree which we have confirmed, or rashly dare to oppose it. If anyone presumes to attempt this, let him know that he shall incur the anger of Almighty God and of His blessed Apostles Peter and Paul.

Given at the Lateran, the twenty-ninth day of November,  
in the eighth year of Our pontificate.

## THE TESTAMENT OF SAINT FRANCIS (1226)

<sup>1</sup>In this way did the Lord give me, Brother Francis, the grace to begin doing penance: when I was in sin, it seemed too bitter for me to see lepers. <sup>2</sup>And the Lord Himself led me among them and I showed mercy to them. <sup>3</sup>And when I left them, what had seemed bitter to me was changed into sweetness of soul and body. And afterwards I delayed a little and left the world.

<sup>4</sup>And the Lord gave me such faith in churches that I would pray with simplicity in this way and say: <sup>5</sup>"We adore You, Lord Jesus Christ, in all Your churches throughout the whole world and we bless You, because by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world."

<sup>6</sup>Afterwards the Lord gave me, and gives me still, such faith in priests who live according to the rite of the holy Roman Church because of their orders that, were they to persecute me, I would still want to have recourse to them. <sup>7</sup>And if I had as much wisdom as Solomon and found priests of this world impoverished, I would not preach in their parishes against their will. <sup>8</sup>And I desire to respect, love and honour them and all others as my lords. <sup>9</sup>And I do not want to consider any sin in them because I discern the Son of God in them and they are my lords.

<sup>10</sup>And I act in this way because, in this world, I see nothing materially of the most high Son of God except His most holy Body and Blood which they receive and they alone administer to others. <sup>11</sup>I want to have these most holy mysteries honoured and venerated above all things and I want to reserve them in precious places. <sup>12</sup>Wherever I find our Lord's most holy name and written words in unbecoming places, I want to gather them up. And I beg that they be gathered up and placed in a becoming place. <sup>13</sup>And we must honour all theologians and those who minister the most holy divine words, and respect them as those who minister to us spirit and life.

<sup>14</sup>And after the Lord gave me some brothers, no one showed me what I had to do, but the Most High Himself revealed to me that I should live according to the pattern of the Holy Gospel. <sup>15</sup>And I had this written down simply and in a few words and the Lord Pope confirmed it for me. <sup>16</sup>And those who came to receive life gave whatever they had to the poor and were content with one tunic, patched inside and out, with a cord and short trousers. <sup>17</sup>We desired nothing more. <sup>18</sup>We cleric brothers said the Office as other clerics did; the lay brothers said the Our Fathers. And we quite willingly remained in churches. <sup>19</sup>And we were simple and subject to all.

<sup>20</sup>And I worked with my hands, and I still desire to work; and I earnestly desire all brothers to give themselves to honest work. <sup>21</sup>Let those who do not know how to work learn, not from desire to receive wages, but for example and to avoid idleness. <sup>22</sup>And when we are not paid for our work, let us have recourse to the table of the Lord, begging alms from door to door. <sup>23</sup>The Lord revealed a greeting to me that we would say: "May the Lord give you peace."

<sup>24</sup>Let the brothers be careful not to receive in any way churches or dwellings or anything else built for them unless they are according to the holy poverty we have promised in the Rule. As pilgrims and strangers, let them always be guests there.

<sup>25</sup>I strictly command all the brothers through obedience, wherever they may be, not to dare to ask any letter from the Roman Curia, either personally or through an intermediary, whether for a church or another place or under the pretext of preaching or the persecution of their bodies. <sup>26</sup>But, wherever they are not received, let them flee into another country to do penance with the blessing of God.

<sup>27</sup>And I firmly wish to obey the General Minister of this fraternity and the other guardians whom it pleases him to give me. <sup>28</sup>And I so wish to be a captive in his hands that I cannot go anywhere or do anything beyond obedience and his will, for he is my master.

<sup>29</sup>And although I may be simple and infirm, I nevertheless want to have a cleric always with me who will celebrate the Office for me as it is prescribed in the Rule.

<sup>30</sup>And let all the brothers be bound to obey their guardians and to recite the Office according to the Rule. <sup>31</sup>And if any are found who do not recite the Office according to the Rule and want to change it in some way, or who are not Catholics, let all the brothers, wherever they may have found such a one, be bound through obedience to bring him before the custodian of that place nearest to where they found him. <sup>32</sup>And the custodian is strictly bound by obedience to keep him securely day and night as a prisoner, so that he cannot be taken from his hands until he can personally deliver him into the hands of his minister. <sup>33</sup>And the minister is bound by obedience to send him with such brothers who shall guard him as a prisoner until they deliver him to the Lord of Ostia, who is the Master, the Protector and the Corrector of this fraternity.

<sup>34</sup>And the brothers may not say: "This is another rule." Because this is a remembrance, admonition, exhortation, and my testament, which I, little brother Francis, make for you, my blessed brothers, that we may observe the Rule we have promised in a more Catholic way.

<sup>35</sup> And let the General Minister and all the other ministers and custodians be bound through obedience not to add to or take away from these words. <sup>36</sup>And let them always have this writing with them together with the Rule. <sup>37</sup>And in all the chapters which they hold, when they read the Rule, let them also read these words. <sup>38</sup>And I strictly command all my cleric and lay brothers, through obedience, not to place any gloss upon the Rule or upon these words saying: "Let them be understood in this way." <sup>39</sup>But as the Lord has given me to speak and write the Rule and these words simply and plainly, may you understand them simply and without gloss and observe them with a holy activity until the end.



<sup>40</sup>And whoever observes these things, may he be blessed in heaven with the blessing of the Most High Father, and on earth with the blessing of His Beloved Son with the Most Holy Spirit, the Paraclete, and all the powers of heaven and with all the saints.

<sup>41</sup>And, as far as I can, I, little brother Francis, your servant, confirm for you, both within and without, this most holy blessing.

# **The Constitutions of the Capuchin Friars Minor**

## ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

I PCO	First Plenary Council of the Order, Quito, 1971
II PCO	Second Plenary Council of the Order, Taizé, 1973
III PCO	Third Plenary Council of the Order, Mattli, 1978
IV PCO	Fourth Plenary Council of the Order, Rome, 1981
V PCO	Fifth Plenary Council of the Order, Garibaldi, 1986
VI PCO	Sixth Plenary Council of the Order, Assisi, 1998
VII PCO	Seventh Plenary Council of the Order, Assisi, 2004
1C	Thomas of Celano, <i>The Life of Saint Francis</i>
1Cor	<i>First Letter to the Corinthians</i>
1Jn	<i>First Letter of John</i>
1LtCl	<i>Letter to the Clergy</i> , earlier edition
1LtCus	<i>First Letter to the Custodians</i>
1LtF	<i>First Letter to the Faithful</i>
1Pt	<i>First Letter of Peter</i>
1Thes	<i>First Letter to the Thessalonians</i>
1Tm	<i>First Letter to Timothy</i>
2C	Thomas of Celano, <i>The Remembrance of the Desire of a Soul</i>
2Cor	<i>Second Letter to the Corinthians</i>
2LtCl	<i>Second Letter to the Clergy</i> (later edition)
2LtCus	<i>Second Letter to the Custodians</i>
2LtF	<i>Second Letter to the Faithful</i>
2Thes	<i>Second Letter to the Thessalonians</i>
2Tm	<i>Second Letter to Timothy</i>
3C	Thomas of Celano, <i>The Treatise on the Miracles</i>
3LA <sub>g</sub>	Clare of Assisi, <i>Third Letter to Agnes of Prague</i>
AA	Vatican II, decree <i>Apostolicam actuositatem</i> , 1965
AC	<i>The Assisi Compilation</i>
Adm	<i>Admonitions</i>
AG	Vatican II, decree <i>Ad gentes</i> , 1965
AP	<i>The Anonymous of Perugia</i>
BIL	<i>Blessing of Brother Leo</i>
CCC	<i>Catechism of the Catholic Church</i>

CCFW	John Corriveau, Circular Letter 24: <i>Courageous Choices for a More Fraternal World</i> , 2005
CD	Vatican II, decree <i>Christus Dominus</i> , 1965
CDRL	Sacred Congregation for Religious and for Secular Institutes, <i>The Contemplative Dimension of Religious Life</i> , 1980
CDWDS	Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments
ChL	John Paul II, apostolic exhortation <i>Christifideles laici</i> , December 30, 1988
CIC	<i>Code of Canon Law (Codex Iuris Canonici)</i> , January 25, 1983
CLBE	Thomas of Eccleston, <i>The Coming of the Lesser Brothers to England</i>
COFS	Constitutions of the Secular Franciscan Order
Col	<i>Letter to the Colossians</i>
Const	<i>Constitutions of the Order of Capuchin Lesser Brothers</i>
CSDC	Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, <i>Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church</i> , April 2, 2004
CStg	<i>Consideration of the Stigmata of Saint Francis</i>
CtC	<i>Canticle of Brother Sun</i> , 1225
CV	Benedict XVI, encyclical <i>Caritas in veritate</i> , June 29, 2009
DD	John Paul II, apostolic letter <i>Dies Domini</i> , March 31, 1998
DH	Vatican II, declaration <i>Dignitatis humanae</i> , December 7, 1965
DPPL	Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, <i>Directory on Popular Piety and the Liturgy</i> , December 17, 2001
Dt	<i>Book of Deuteronomy</i>
DV	Vatican II, dogmatic constitution <i>Dei verbum</i> , November 18, 1965
EA	John Paul II, apostolic exhortation <i>Ecclesia in America</i> , January 22, 1999
EBr	John Corriveau, Circular Letter 11: <i>Evangelical Brotherhood</i> , 1997
EE	Sacred Congregation for Religious and for Secular Institutes, <i>Essential Elements in the Church's Teaching on Religious Life</i> , May 21, 1983
Eim	John Paul II, apostolic letter <i>Euntes in mundum</i> , January 25, 1988
EN	Paul VI, apostolic exhortation <i>Evangelii nuntiandi</i> , December 8, 1975
EP	Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the

	Sacraments, <i>Eucharistiae participationem</i> , April 27, 1973
Eph	<i>Letter to the Ephesians</i>
ER	<i>Earlier Rule</i> , 1221
ES	Paul VI, encyclical <i>Ecclesiam suam</i> , August 6, 1964
ESa	Paul VI, motu proprio <i>Ecclesiae sanctae</i> , August 6, 1966
ET	Paul VI, apostolic exhortation <i>Evangelica testificatio</i> , June 19, 1971
EV	John Paul II, encyclical <i>Evangelium vitae</i> , March 25, 1995
ExhP	<i>Exhortation to the Praise of God</i>
FC	John Paul II, apostolic exhortation <i>Familiaris consortio</i> , November 22, 1981
FFCh	Mauro Jöhri, Circular Letter 4: <i>Let us Fan the Flame of our Charism</i> , 2009
FLC	Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, <i>Fraternal Life in Community</i> , 1994
FrCh	John Corriveau, Circular Letter 9: <i>On Our Fraternal Charism</i> , 1996
FV	<i>Form of Life for the Poor Ladies</i>
Gal	<i>Letter to the Galatians</i>
GBCW	John Corriveau, Circular Letter 20: <i>Gospel Brotherhood in a Changing World</i> , 2002
GC07	Benedict XVI, address to the Conventual General Chapter, 2007
GC68	Paul VI, address to the Capuchin General Chapter, October 21, 1968
GC74	Paul VI, address to the Capuchin General Chapter, October 30, 1974
GC88	John Paul II, address to the Capuchin General Chapter, July 12, 1988
GILH	Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, <i>General Instruction for the Liturgy of the Hours</i> , February 2, 1971
GIRM	Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, <i>General Instruction of the Roman Missal</i> , March 26, 2010
GNLYC	Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, <i>General Norms for the Liturgical Year and Calendar</i> , February 14, 1969
GrW	John Corriveau, Circular Letter 17: <i>The Grace of Working</i> , 2000
GS	Vatican II, pastoral constitution <i>Gaudium et spes</i> , December 7,

	1965
GUW	Mauro Jöhri, Circular Letter 8: <i>Get Up and Walk</i> , 2010
Heb	<i>Letter to the Hebrews</i>
Hos	Book of Hosea
HTrb	Angelo of Clareno, <i>The History of the Seven Tribulations</i>
ICF	Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, <i>Inter-Institute Collaboration for Formation</i> , December 8, 1998
IM	Vatican II, decree <i>Inter mirifica</i> , December 4, 1963
Ir	John Paul II, message <i>Il ricordo</i> , November 23, 2003
Is	<i>Book of Isaiah</i>
Jer	<i>Book of Jeremiah</i>
Jn	<i>Gospel of John</i>
L3C	<i>Legend of the Three Companions</i>
LBL	<i>Letter to Brother Leo</i>
LC	Paul VI, apostolic constitution <i>Laudis canticum</i> , November 1, 1970
LE	John Paul II, encyclical <i>Laborem exercens</i> , September 14, 1981
LFl	<i>The Little Flowers of Saint Francis</i>
LG	Vatican II, dogmatic constitution <i>Lumen gentium</i> , November 21, 1964
Lk	<i>Gospel of Luke</i>
LMin	<i>Letter to a Minister</i>
LMj	Saint Bonaventure, <i>Major Legend</i>
LMn	Saint Bonaventure, <i>Minor Legend</i>
LR	<i>The Later Rule</i> (with papal seal), 1223
LtAnt	<i>Letter to Brother Anthony</i>
LtOrd	<i>Letter to the Entire Order</i>
LtRPrp	<i>Letter to the Rulers of the People</i>
LW	<i>Last Will to the Poor Ladies</i>
MCB	John Paul II, Message to the XIV General Assembly of the Conference of Religious of Brazil, July 11, 1986
MCult	Paul VI, apostolic exhortation <i>Marialis cultus</i> , February 2, 1974
MD	John Paul II, apostolic letter <i>Mulieris dignitatem</i> , August 15, 1988
MG	Paul VI, message <i>Magno gaudio</i> , May 23, 1964
MHO	Mauro Jöhri, Circular Letter 5: <i>Mission at the Heart of the Order</i> ,

	2009
MisEp	<i>Roman Missal, Eucharistic Prayers I-IV</i> (third typical edition), 2002
MisPref	<i>Roman Missal, Preface</i> (third typical edition), 2002
Mk	<i>Gospel of Mark</i>
MyP	Paul VI, <i>motu proprio Mysterii paschalis</i> , February 14, 1969
MP	<i>Mirror of Perfection</i> (longer version)
Mr	John Paul II, discourse <i>Mi rivolgo</i> , October 29, 2003
Mt	<i>Gospel of Matthew</i>
NA	Vatican II, declaration <i>Nostra aetate</i> , October 28, 1965
NMI	John Paul II, apostolic letter <i>Novo millennio ineunte</i> , January 26, 2001
OL	John Paul II, apostolic letter <i>Orientale lumen</i> , May 2, 1995
OfP	<i>Office of the Passion</i>
OT	Vatican II, decree <i>Optatam totius</i> , October 28, 1965
PC	Vatican II, decree <i>Perfectae caritatis</i> , October 28, 1965
PGFP	International Convention on Ongoing formation, <i>Piano generale di formazione permanente</i> , 1991
Phil	<i>Letter to the Philippians</i>
PI	Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, <i>Potissimum institutioni</i> , Directives on Formation in Religious Institutes, 1990
PO	Vatican II, decree <i>Presbyterorum ordinis</i> , December 7, 1965
PostNov	Convention on Post-Novitiate, final document, 2004
POT	John Corriveau, Circular Letter 16: <i>The Poor – Our Teachers</i> , 1999
PrCr	<i>The Prayer before the Crucifix</i>
PrG	<i>Praises of God</i> , 1224
PrOF	A Prayer inspired by the Our Father
Ps	<i>Psalm</i>
PVI Nc	Paul VI, address <i>Noi concludiamo</i> , December 7, 1965
PVI Nm	Paul VI, address <i>Nel momento</i> , October 4, 1965
PVI Paen	Paul VI, apostolic constitution <i>Paenitemini</i> , February 17, 1966
PVP	International Convention on Prenovitiate, <i>Pastorale vocazionale e postulato</i> , 1993
Ratio	Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, <i>Basic Plan for Priestly Formation</i> , March 19, 1985

RD	John Paul II, apostolic exhortation <i>Redemptionis donum</i> , March 25, 1984
Rel06	John Corriveau, <i>Relatio Ministri Generalis</i> , 2006
Rel82	Paschal Rywalski, <i>Relatio sexennialis de Ordinis statu (1976-1982)</i> , 1982
Rel88	Flavio Roberto Carraro, <i>Relatio de statu Ordinis in sexennio 1982-1988</i> , 1988
RH	<i>Rule for Hermitages</i>
RM	John Paul II, encyclical <i>Redemptoris missio</i> , December 7, 1990
RMat	John Paul II, encyclical <i>Redemptoris Mater</i> , March 25, 1987
ROFS	<i>Rule of the Secular Franciscan Order</i>
Rom	<i>Letter to the Romans</i>
RomM	<i>Roman Missal</i> , third typical edition, 2002 – USA edition, November 27, 2011
ROrd	International Committee on English in the Liturgy, <i>Rites of Ordination of a Bishop, of Priests, and of Deacons</i> , second typical edition, 2002
RSC	<i>Rule of Saint Clare of Assisi</i>
RSP	Conference of General Ministers of the Franciscan Family, <i>Rito Romano-Serafico della Professione religiosa</i> , 2000
Rv	<i>Book of Revelation</i>
SAFC	Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, <i>Starting Afresh from Christ</i> , May 19, 2002
SalBVM	<i>Salutation of the Blessed Virgin Mary</i>
SalV	<i>Salutation of the Virtues</i>
SAO	Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, <i>The Service of Authority and Obedience</i> , 2008
SC	Vatican II, constitution <i>Sacrosanctum Concilium</i> , December 4, 1963
ScEx	<i>The Sacred Exchange between Saint Francis and Lady Poverty</i>
Sg	<i>Song of Songs</i>
SMD	John Corriveau, Circular Letter 15, Solidarity and Mutual Dependence, 1999
Smo	John Paul II, discourse <i>Sono molto onorato</i> , May 28, 1983
Sp	John Paul II, discourse to the General Chapter of Third Order Regular, <i>Sono pervaso</i> , June 15, 1989
Sqr	John Paul II, discourse <i>Siete qui riuniti</i> , July 11, 1986



SRS	John Paul II, encyclical <i>Sollicitudo rei socialis</i> , December 30, 1987
StatAbr	Flavio Roberto Carraro, <i>Letter to the Provincial Minister of Abruzzo</i> , in <i>Statuto particolare dei Frati Minori Cappuccini d'Abruzzo</i> , 1988
StatAlb	<i>Statutes of Albacina</i>
StatSA	Conference of General Ministers of the Franciscan Family, <i>Statutes for Spiritual and Pastoral Assistance to the Secular Franciscan Order</i> , 2002
Test	<i>Testament</i> , 1226
TestS	<i>Testament of Siena</i> , April-May 1226
TestSC	<i>Testament of Saint Clare of Assisi</i>
Ti	<i>Letter to Titus</i>
TMA	John Paul II, apostolic letter <i>Tertio millennio adveniente</i> , November 10, 1994
TPJ	<i>True and Perfect Joy</i>
UR	Vatican II, decree <i>Unitatis redintegratio</i> , November 21, 1964
VC	John Paul II, apostolic exhortation <i>Vita consecrata</i> , March 25, 1996
VD	Benedict XVI, apostolic exhortation <i>Verbum Domini</i> , September 30, 2010
WG	<i>The Word of God in the Life and Mission of the Church</i> , Synod, 2008

**CONGREGATION FOR INSTITUTES  
OF CONSECRATED LIFE  
AND SOCIETIES OF APOSTOLIC LIFE**

Prot.n. C.37 - 1/ 2013

The General Minister of the Order of Capuchin Friars Minor, in the name of the General Chapter, requests Your Holiness to approve the Constitutions of his Institute.

The Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, having carefully examined the Constitutions presented, approves and confirms them by the present Decree, in accordance with the text drafted in the Italian language and presented with the letters dated 28 September and 2 October, 2013, a copy of which is kept in our own Archives.

Anything to the contrary notwithstanding.

Vatican City, 4 October 2013,  
Solemnity of St Francis of Assisi

Joao Braz Card, de Aviz  
Prefect

Jose Rodriguez Carballo OFM.  
Archbishop Secretary

## FOREWORD

Brother Francis of Assisi, led by divine inspiration and burning with an ardent love for Christ, chose for himself and his brothers the form of gospel brotherhood in poverty and minority, and, in few and simple words, presented it in a *Rule*. Pope Innocent III approved this *Rule* and way of life of the lesser brothers by word of mouth, but Pope Honorius III confirmed it in the Bull *Solet annuere* on November 29, 1223. When the holy Founder was close to death, he left his *remembrance, admonition and exhortation* as a *Testament* for the brothers who were living and those who were to come, so that we may observe in a more Catholic way the Rule we have promised to the Lord.

As the years passed, Francis' disciples had to adapt their life, activity and legislation to the varying needs of the times. This was done in General Chapters by way of *Constitutions*.

Clement VII, in *Religionis zelus*, published on July 3 1528, approved the Order of Capuchin Friars Minor. From its very beginning this Order has desired to preserve the faithful, simple and pure observance of the spiritual heritage of the Founder Saint Francis, according to his *Rule* and *Testament* and under the magisterium of the Church, and to hand it on to subsequent generations of brothers.

To renew this faithful observance, a Chapter of the Order held in 1536 drafted *Constitutions* which were later amended at various times when necessary, and especially adapted to new prescriptions of the Church. This occurred, for example, following the Council of Trent, after changes in some ecclesiastical laws were made in the course of time, and after the promulgation of the new *Code of Canon Law* at the beginning of this century. Nevertheless, our *Constitutions* have always retained their spiritual character and the fundamental intention of Saint Francis.

Another event of the greatest importance for the renewal of the life and legislation of members of religious Orders was the Second Vatican Council, especially its dogmatic Constitution *Lumen gentium* and the Decree *Perfectae caritatis*.

In his Apostolic Letter *Ecclesiae sanctae*, published *motu proprio* on August 6 1966, Pope Paul VI required all religious Institutes to revise their legislation. The criteria for this revision of the *Constitutions* are found in the texts of the Second Vatican Council and in other later documents of the Church. These criteria are chiefly: a continual return to the sources of all Christian life and to the original inspiration of the Institutes, taking into account the signs of the times, and the necessary fusion of the spiritual, juridical and merely exhortatory elements.

Our special Chapter of 1968 revised the *Constitutions*, which were then promulgated for an experimental period, and slightly reworked by the General Chapters of 1970 and 1974.

In the General Chapter of 1982 they were again revised in accordance with *Ecclesiae sanctae* (II, nn.6 and 8), and with the will of the Congregation for Religious and Secular Institutes, made known in the Letter of November 15 1979, so that definitive approval could be sought from the Holy See.

The same General Chapter, anticipating the new *Code of Canon Law* and in obedience to the directives of the Congregation for Religious and Secular Institutes published on August 4 1981, set up a capitular Commission to revise the language of the text, and to adapt it to the prescriptions of the *Code of Canon Law*.

The General Definitory, concluding the mandate it had received from the General Chapter and having obtained the appropriate faculty from the Holy See in the Letter dated November 12 1982, published the definitive text of the revised *Constitutions*. This text came into force on March 25 1983, the Solemnity of the Annunciation of the Lord, until it was duly approved by the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life.

When the Code of Canon Law was promulgated on January 25 1983, the text of the *Constitutions* had to be adapted to it in some parts. For this reason, the Congregation gave to General Superiors and their councils the faculty of promulgating provisional norms for those matters which were required by the new *Code* but had not yet been inserted into the text of the *Constitutions*. These norms were to be presented to the next General Chapter.

In the meantime, the text of the carefully revised *Constitutions* was sent to the Congregation, which approved it on December 25 1986.

The General Chapter of 1988 carefully examined and approved the proposals prepared by the General Definitory, which, in accordance with the *Code of Canon Law*, had to be incorporated into the text of the *Constitutions*. The Congregation approved the proposals in a Letter dated February 7 1990.

Finally, in accordance with a decision of the General Chapter in 2000, further refined and repeated by the General Chapter of 2006, the *Constitutions* were once again revised. This was in response to the need to transfer some norms to the *Ordinances of the General Chapters* and to adapt them to the most recent teachings of the Magisterium of the Church, enriching them at the same time in the light of insights that had been growing in the thinking of our own Order, especially as a result of Plenary Councils VI and VII.

Subsequently, the text of the *Constitutions* was carefully examined and ratified by the General Chapter of 2012. The same text, duly approved by the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life in a Decree dated 4 October 2013 (Prot. N. C. 37 – 1/2013), was promulgated by the General Minister in his Decree dated 8 December 2013 (Prot. N. 00935/13).

Therefore, the present text of the *Constitutions*, rendered in Italian and definitively approved by the Holy See, must be considered authentic, and all vernacular versions must conform to it.

The text is as follows:

Rome, May 18 2014  
Feast of Saint Felix of Cantalice

In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ  
Begin  
the Constitutions  
of the  
Capuchin Lesser Brothers

# CHAPTER I

## THE LIFE OF THE CAPUCHIN LESSER BROTHERS

### Article I

#### Our Life according to the Gospel

#### 1

1C 84; FV 1  
2C 15;

<sup>1</sup>The holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ is in every age the source of the entire life of the Church and the message of salvation for the whole world.

2Thes 3:1-3;  
1Cor 4:15;  
LG 20; DV 7;  
AG;  
CIC 225 §1;  
747 §2

Adm I 6; 1LiF  
2:19; 2LiF 3;  
ER XXII 29-  
31; Test 13

<sup>2</sup>In fact, it is through the Gospel that the Church, led by the Holy Spirit, comes to know Christ, and, with faith, accepts His deeds and words, which are *spirit and life* for those who believe.

Jn 6:63; Lk 24:  
19; Heb 1:1;  
DV 2,4; 17,19;  
CIC 225 §1;  
747 §1

1C 22-25; LMj  
III 1; L3C 25;

LR I 1; XII 14;  
Test 14;

IV PCO 1; 4;  
13; VIPCO 2

<sup>3</sup>Saint Francis, the founder of our Brotherhood, embraced the Gospel from the very beginning of his conversion and made it the guiding principle of his life and activity. For this reason, at the beginning and end of the *Rule*, he expressly commanded its observance and, in the *Testament*, confirmed that it had been revealed to him that he must live *according to the pattern of the holy Gospel*.

CIC 578; 587  
§1; 631 §1

2C 102-104

<sup>4</sup>Since we are his sons, we commit ourselves, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, to make continuous progress in understanding the Gospel.

DV 8

Adm VII 3; XX  
1; XXI 1;  
SalBVM  
1C 84; 90; 110;  
2C 102; 105;  
216; LMj XIV  
5;

<sup>5</sup>We follow the Gospel as the highest law in all the circumstances of life. Let us attentively read and meditate on the words of salvation, and, in imitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, carry them in our hearts. In this way our life will be ever more formed by the Gospel, and we will grow to the full stature of Christ in all things.

Lk 2:19,51;  
Eph 4:15;  
LG 57;  
DV 8; 21; 25;  
PC 2°; 6

#### 2

ER VII 16; IX  
1; LR VI 3; X  
7-9; LiOrd 50-  
52; Adm VII 1-  
2; 2LiF 11-13;  
1C 84; 89; 2C  
61; 90; 148;  
LMj I 9; 42;  
49;

<sup>1</sup>Saint Francis, a true disciple of Christ and an outstanding example of Christian living, taught His brothers to walk joyfully in the footprints of Christ poor, humble, and crucified, so that through Him, in the Holy Spirit, they might be led to the Father.

Mt 11:29; 1Pt  
2:21; Eph 2:28;  
1Cor 12:13

2LrF 4-5; 8-13;  
Adm I 14-18;  
Test 10; LrOrd  
14-16; 27-32;  
1C 84; 2C 199-  
201; LMj I 2;  
VI 1; IX 2; X 7

<sup>2</sup>Burning with the love of Christ, we contemplate Him in the kenosis of the Incarnation and the Cross in order to become more like Him. By celebrating the Eucharist in brotherly joy we participate in the Paschal Mystery as a foretaste of the glory of His Resurrection while awaiting His coming.

Rom 8:24; Phil  
2:7; Heb 2:46;  
1Cor 11:26; SC  
47; CIC 897;  
1246 §1

LR I 1; 2,11;  
VI 4-5; X 3;  
Adm III 6-9;  
XVI 1-2; 2LrF  
36-39; 1C 4;  
103; 129; 2C  
80; 191; 220;  
251; LMj VII 1

<sup>3</sup>We observe the gospel counsels with a generous and faithful heart, especially those we have promised: loving obedience, poverty — which is for us the special way of salvation, and chastity consecrated to God.

LG 42; PC 1; 2  
a-b, 12-14; 25;  
RD 8; VC 93;  
CIC 207 §2;  
573 §2; 574  
§1-2; 575

### 3

LFI 13; LMj  
XIV 4; XIII 5;

<sup>1</sup>The Lord granted Brother Francis the grace to begin to do penance by leading him among lepers. He showed mercy to them and after hearing the voice of the crucified Lord at San Damiano he embarked upon the gospel life in order to follow in the footsteps of Christ, with a burning desire to pattern his life upon Him in everything. In this way, true love of Christ transformed the lover into the image of the Beloved.

Phil 2:5

1C 34; 38; 45;  
2C 149; 221;  
LMj Prol 1;

Const 1536, 6

<sup>2</sup>In order to take on the features of a true disciple of Jesus Christ, so wonderfully evident in Francis, we commit ourselves to imitating him, or, rather, Christ in him. Therefore we diligently cultivate the spiritual inheritance of our Founder in our life and work, and share it with people of every age.

PC 2b; 20;  
CIC 578

### 4

Test 1, 14; LR I  
1; LMj Prol 1;

IV PCO 6; V  
PCO 64; 82ff

<sup>1</sup>After giving him brothers, the Lord revealed to Francis that they were to live according to the form of the holy Gospel. In this way the brotherhood of lesser ones came into being so that, living in communion, they might witness to the kingdom of God preaching penance and peace by example and word.

CIC 577

<sup>2</sup>Brotherhood and minority are original features of the charism given to us by the Spirit. They also shape the contemplative and apostolic dimensions of our vocation.



Docile to the same Spirit, we commit ourselves to live this gospel ideal to the full.

## 5

IV PCO 1; 13

<sup>1</sup>Our specific form of life as Capuchin lesser brothers flows from the sound tradition initiated by our first brothers who were inspired by their intention to be faithful to the gospel insights of Saint Francis.

IV CPO 1; 13

<sup>2</sup> It is necessary, therefore, to know the nature and purpose of our brotherhood in order to remain faithful to the Gospel and to our genuine tradition. We do this by returning through conversion of heart to the original inspiration, that is, to the life and Rule of our Father Saint Francis, so that our Order may be constantly renewed.

PC 2

ER VII 1-2;  
XXII 19-27;  
LR I 1; V 1-2;  
X 8-9; XII 4;  
LtOrd 2,29; 50-52; LtAnt 2;  
Test 19; 2LtF 47; Adm VI 1-3;

<sup>3</sup>For this purpose we make every effort to give priority to a life of prayer, especially contemplative prayer. Living as pilgrims and strangers in this world, we practise, both individually and communally, radical poverty inspired by minority, and we propose a life of austerity and joyful penance out of love for the cross of the Lord.

PC 13

ER IX 2.16; LR VI 7;

IV PCO 46-48;  
V PCO 29-40

<sup>4</sup>Gathered together in Christ as a single distinctive family, we develop among ourselves relationships that are fraternally spontaneous, and gladly live among those who are poor, weak and infirm, sharing in their lives and maintaining our characteristic closeness to people.

GS 1; 27; AG 20;

<sup>5</sup>We promote the apostolic dimension of our life by proclaiming the Gospel and in other various ways that are in harmony with our charism, while always preserving a spirit of minority and service.

## 6

GC 1968;

<sup>1</sup>Creative fidelity to the charism of the Capuchin Lesser Brothers requires us to safeguard and lovingly develop the spiritual heritage of our Brotherhood.

MCB 1, 4  
VC 37; 110

<sup>2</sup>To this end let us frequently read the life and writings of Saint Francis, as well as other books that reveal his spirit. Let us also ensure that we are familiar with the Franciscan sources and with Capuchin tradition, especially everything referring to our brothers renowned for their holiness,

apostolic work, and erudition.

<sup>3</sup>In the light of the signs of the times, we work hard to find suitable ways, approved by the legitimate superiors, of living our form of the gospel life and giving our apostolic witness in the different regions and cultures.

## 7

Test 14; 1C 32;  
2C 208; AP 76

<sup>1</sup>The Rule of Saint Francis, which flows from the Gospel, spurs us on to live the gospel life.

ER II 11; IV 2;  
V 3-4; V 8; VII  
15; XII 3-4;  
XVII 15; XXII  
26; XXII 29;  
XXIII 1; XXIV  
1-3; LR IV 2;  
VI 8; X 4; X 9;  
Test 13; 38-39;  
Adm I 20; 1LtF  
I 10; II 8; 2LtF  
53; 67; LtOrd  
14; 41-42; 2C  
208

<sup>2</sup>With untiring dedication let us apply ourselves to the task of understanding it spiritually. As our holy Founder exhorts us in his Testament, we strive to observe it “simply and purely and with holy activity,” in accordance with the spirit and gospel intentions of the first Capuchins and the Order’s living tradition, following the example of our saints.

2C 185

<sup>3</sup>Let the ministers and guardians, together with the fraternities, make it their heartfelt concern to promote knowledge, love, and observance of the Rule.

ER V 6; IX 16;  
LR II 9-10; IV  
2; 7,2; LBL 3;  
IPCO 1,1; 4;  
2,13; 17,19;  
21ff.; IV PCO  
3ff; 9ff.; 23ff;  
32

<sup>4</sup>In order that the Rule and intentions of our Father and lawgiver may be faithfully observed throughout the world, let the ministers make sure to seek the most suitable ways for the brothers to live their lives and conduct their apostolates. This may be done in a variety of forms, in accordance with different regions and cultures and the needs of times and places.

PC 20

2C 23ff; 2MP  
78;

GC 1968

<sup>5</sup>This variety of forms, when authentic, always safeguards the unity of the same original spirit and is based on fraternal communion and obedience to superiors. In this way, gospel freedom of action is guaranteed, especially in what concerns the renewal of our life, so that the spirit is not extinguished.

1Thes 5:19;  
Eph 4:3

## 8

LMj IV 11;  
ER XXIV 1-3;  
Test 40;

<sup>1</sup>Shortly before his death, after receiving the sacred stigmata, being filled with the Holy Spirit and desiring our salvation more eagerly, our seraphic Father dictated the Testament.

Test 36ff

<sup>2</sup>In it he recalls and re-presents his gospel experience, declares his last will, and entrusts to us the precious inheritance of his spirit.

CIC 587 §1

<sup>3</sup>The *Testament* has been given to us so that, day by day, we

LG 45; PC 2;

Test 34	may observe the <i>Rule</i> we have professed ever more perfectly, according to the mind of the Church.	CIC 587 §1
Const 1536	<sup>4</sup> Therefore, continuing the tradition of our Order, we accept the Testament as the primary spiritual exposition of the Rule and an outstanding source of inspiration for our life.	PC 2; CIC 587 §1
<b>9</b>		
	<sup>1</sup> The purpose of the Constitutions is to show us how best to observe the Rule in the changing circumstances of life in order to safeguard our identity and to give it concrete expression.	CIC 578 §1; 207 §2; 573 §1; 598 §2; 607 §1; 662; 758
ER XVI 10	<sup>2</sup> In them we find a sure means of spiritual renewal in Christ and effective help for each brother to bring to completion the total consecration of his life to God.	PC 4
	<sup>3</sup> We observe these Constitutions, to which we are bound by virtue of our religious profession, not as slaves but as sons yearning to love God above all else, heeding the voice of the Holy Spirit who teaches us, and dedicating ourselves to the glory of God and the salvation of our neighbour.	Jn 14:26; 16:13-15; Gal 4:31-5:1; Rom 8:15; 2Cor 3:17; 1Pt 2:15-16
	<sup>4</sup> Let us lovingly devote ourselves to the personal and communal study of the Rule, the Testament and the Constitutions so that we absorb their spirit.	PC 18
	<sup>5</sup> May we also endeavour to know and observe all the other norms of our particular law.	

## Article II Our Life in the Church

### 10

LR VI 1-2; Test 24; 2C 59	<sup>1</sup> The Church, the universal sacrament of salvation, namely the sign and instrument of intimate union with God and of the unity of the whole human race, appears as the People of God making its pilgrim journey in the world. Established by Christ in a communion of life, charity, and truth, this people is enriched by the Holy Spirit with a multitude of gifts or charisms useful for its renewal and further development, in order to usher in the kingdom of God.	Rom 12:5ff; 1Cor 12:4ff; Eph 4:2; LG 1; 5; 6; 9; 12; 14; 44; 48; 68. CIC 204 §1; RomM, Easter Vigil, Prayer after 7 <sup>th</sup> Reading
	<sup>2</sup> Among such a variety of charisms, the consecrated life is an outstanding gift that the Church has received from the Lord. Profoundly rooted in the example and teaching of Christ, it expresses the innermost nature of the Christian calling and	LG 43; 44; PC 1; AG 18; VC 1; 3  CIC 573; 574 §1

belongs to the life of the Church, to its holiness, and to its mission.

Test 14; 2C 24      <sup>3</sup>The Church has accepted the Franciscan Brotherhood as one of the spiritual families raised up by the Holy Spirit. After approving it with her hierarchical authority, the Church continues to protect with motherly care the form of life presented by Saint Francis. In this way the image of Christ, poor, humble, and devoted to the service of people, especially the poor, may shine more brightly upon her face.      LG 45; PC 1; GS 27; CIC 574 §1; 577; 590; 593

ER II 12; XVII 1; XXIII 7; LR III 1; XII 3-4; TestS 6; Test 5; LtOrd 30; ER XIX 1-2; 2C 25; 148      <sup>4</sup>The Church has also approved the Order of Capuchin Friars Minor in the decree Religionis zelus issued by Pope Clement VII on July 3, 1528.      CIC 576; 577; 590 §1; 593

ER II 12; XVII 1; XXIII 7; LR III 1; XII 3-4; TestS 6; Test 5; LtOrd 30; ER XIX 1-2; 2C 25; 148      <sup>5</sup>Therefore, let us love holy Mother Church wholeheartedly, meditate upon her mystery, apply ourselves to the study of her teachings, while observing them faithfully, and actively share in her life and mission.      LG 44; PC 2c; CD 33; CIC 578; 675 §1; 783

<sup>6</sup>Professing our faith in the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church, which breathes with its two lungs—East and West—and also finds expression in our Order, we commit ourselves with all our strength to build up the Body of Christ and to manifest its unity.      LG 8; Smo 6; RMat 34; DD 17; Eim 12; EA 48; Eph 4:4.11-16; 1Cor 10:16-17; 12:12-27; Col 1:22

## 11

ER Prol. 2; XIX 1-2; XXIII 7; LR I 2; II 2-5; XII 4; 2LtF 32; OfP Vesp. ant. 1; Test 31      <sup>1</sup>After the example of Saint Francis who was a catholic and totally apostolic man, we offer faithful obedience to the Spirit of Christ living and working in the Church.      AG 4; CD 33ff; ESa I,22ff

ER Prol. 2; LR I 2; XII 4; 1C 100      <sup>2</sup>We offer obedience and reverence to the Pope as our highest superior, to whom religious are subject also by virtue of their vow of obedience, and to the college of bishops, which, together with him, is a visible sign of the unity and apostolicity of the Church.      LG 22,45; CD 35; OT 9; CIC 212 §1; 273; 330; 336; 590 §1-2

LR IX 1; Test 25-26; 2C 141; 146; 147; LMj VI 8; 2MP 10; 54; AC 15      <sup>3</sup>Wherever we may be, we contribute to the good of the particular church through our fraternal and prophetic presence, working together for its growth and progress in accordance with our charism and under the guidance of the diocesan bishop, offering our apostolic service to the People of God and to the entire human community.      CD 33; CIC 394 §1; 678 §1; 680; 681 §1; 757; 790 §1; LG 45; CD 34; 35, 1.3

LR IX 1; Test 25-26; 2C 141; 146; 147; LMj VI 8; 2MP 10;      <sup>4</sup>Let us show due honour to priests and to all others who minister spirit and life to us, and actively work with them.      PO 9; CIC 275 §1

## 12

ER Prol. 3-4;  
LR I 3; VIII 1;  
X 1; Test 17-  
28; 2C 184-  
186; 193; 222

<sup>1</sup>With a generous heart let us love and obey the General Minister who is constituted for the service and welfare of the entire brotherhood as the successor of our holy Founder, and as the living bond uniting us with the authority of the Church and among ourselves.

LG 18; PC 14;  
CIC 596 §1-3;  
601; 617; 619;  
622; 678 §2

LR X 2-3; XII  
1-2; 2C 145

<sup>2</sup>We also show love, as well as active and responsible obedience, to the other ministers of the brotherhood whom the Lord has given to us as shepherds and in whom the brothers have placed their trust, so that we may be more closely and more securely bound to the service of the Church in a spirit of faith and love for Christ.

PC 14

## 13

LtOrd 51; 2LtF  
63; CtC; LMj  
VIII 6; IX 1;  
1C 80; 2C 165;  
PCO I 1,9; IV  
15ff, 33; V 28;  
VI 26

<sup>1</sup>Saint Francis, inflamed by the Holy Spirit, drew from his adoration of the Father, Who is the highest Good, that sense of universal brotherhood which enabled him to see in every creature the image of Christ, the firstborn and Saviour.

Col 1:15; Eph  
1:15, 19-20

LtOrd 9; ER  
XVII 17; PrsG  
11; 2LtF 62;  
ExhP 1,1-7;  
PrOF 2;  
2C 172

<sup>2</sup>As children of this Father we regard ourselves as brothers of all without any distinction. When we encounter every creature with a brotherly spirit, we continually offer the praise of creation to God, the source of all good.

Jn 8:39; GS 29;  
AG 12

ER II 1; XI 1-  
13; LR VI 7-8;

<sup>3</sup>Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit to share the same calling, we foster a sense of brotherhood throughout the entire Order through common prayer and action, particularly in our provincial and local communities. We cultivate that same sense toward all our brothers and sisters, whether religious or secular, who with us form one single Franciscan family.

PC 15

1C 38; 39; 46;  
2C 180;

IV PCO 17; V  
PCO 28

<sup>4</sup>Our life as brothers is a fruit and a sign of the transforming power of the Gospel and of the coming of the kingdom. Like the leaven of the Gospel, it calls us to promote genuine relationships among all people and nations so that the world may live as a single family under the gaze of its Creator.

AA 14; GS 42;  
78;  
CCL 02/84 42;  
VC 51

ER IV 6; V  
10ff; Adm I; IV  
1-3;

## 14

IPCO 1,4; IV  
PCO 43ff;  
VI PCO 9-10;

<sup>1</sup>The Son of God, assuming the condition of a servant, came not to be served but to serve and to give His life for the salvation of all. His kenosis is perpetuated in the sacrament of the Eucharist where He daily humbles himself and comes to us under humble appearances.

Mt 20:28; Mk  
10:45; Lk  
22:25; Phil 2:7;  
LG 8; PC 14;  
GS 1,27; PO 6;  
AG 20

ER V 7-12; IX  
1-3; XXII 1-4;  
LR X 9-11;  
Adm XII 1-3;  
1C 38,40; 2C  
61; 71; 145;  
148; PCO: I  
1,4,13; III 9,  
21, 38, 40; IV  
1; V 29-40; VI  
9-10; VII 31

<sup>2</sup>Awestruck and deeply moved by the humility and compassion of God, Saint Francis chose to make himself lesser among the lesser ones. Following his example, and desiring to be conformed to Christ, we too strive to be truly lesser, never presuming to become greater. Inspired by this spirit, we generously dedicate ourselves to the service of all, especially of those who suffer want and hardship and even of those who persecute us.

Mt 5:10,44;  
20:26ff; Mk  
10:43; Lk  
22:26; Rom  
8:29; 1Cor  
12:12ff; Phil  
2:3; GS 69; AG  
20; PC 13; AA  
8

ER IX 1-3;  
IPCO 1,4; V  
PCO 28

<sup>3</sup>Therefore we gladly live our life as brothers among the poor, sharing their distress and lowly state with great love.

<sup>4</sup>While we relieve their material and spiritual needs, may our lives, actions and words be generously spent for the promotion of their human and Christian development.

CIC 222 §2;  
287 §1; 528 §1;  
602; 672; 768  
§2

LR III 10-11;  
Adm XV,1-2;  
1C 41; 2C 108

<sup>5</sup>By doing this we manifest the spirit of our life as lesser brothers and become a leaven of justice, unity, and peace.

## 15

IPCO II,20; II  
PCO 9ff; V  
PCO 1-14

<sup>1</sup>In order that our gospel calling may bear fruit in the Church and in the world, we commit ourselves to live faithfully the apostolic life, which inseparably unites contemplation and action. We do this in imitation of Jesus, who spent His life unceasingly praying and accomplishing the work of salvation.

Mt 4:1; 14:23;  
Mk 1:12ff;  
4,46; Lk 4:1;  
6:12; LG 33;  
PC 8ff; PO 14;  
AA 3; CIC 577;  
675 §1-3; 758

<sup>2</sup>Conforming to their Master's lifestyle and being sent out into the world by the Lord, the apostles were untiring in prayer and in the ministry of the word.

Mt 28:12; Mk  
16:15; Heb 6:2-  
4

ER I 1; XXII 2;  
2LtF 13; LtOrd  
5-11; 51; 1C  
35; LMj VIII 1;  
XII 1-2; XIII 1;  
LFI 16

<sup>3</sup>In order to follow in the footsteps of the Lord and the apostles, Saint Francis chose a form of life that closely united prayer with the proclamation of the message of salvation, wisely alternating times of contemplation and apostolic commitment.

Const 1536;  
RH; VI PCO  
17;

<sup>4</sup>Capuchin tradition, too, from the outset, by proposing the example of both Martha and Mary, teaches us how to unite contemplation and action harmoniously. In this way it prompts us to follow Christ both in His contemplation on the mountain, and in His proclamation of the Kingdom of God.

ER XXIII;  
Adm XX 1-2;  
1C 40

<sup>5</sup>May we therefore persevere in praising God and meditating on His word, desiring ever more ardently that our work too may draw people to the joyful love of God.

ER V 2

<sup>6</sup>In this way our life of prayer will be entirely imbued with an apostolic spirit, and all our apostolic activity will be shaped

PC 8

by the spirit of prayer.

# CHAPTER II

## THE VOCATION TO OUR LIFE

### AND

## THE FORMATION OF THE BROTHERS

### Article I

#### The Vocation to Our Life

#### 16

LG 40; 42; CIC 210

ER XVII 17-18; Adm II 3; VIII 3; XII 1-3; XVII 1; PrG 3; 2C 165; LMj IX 1

<sup>1</sup>In His goodness God calls all the Christian faithful in the Church to the perfection of love through different states of life, so that the salvation of the world may be advanced by means of personal holiness.

IV PCO 58-60

<sup>2</sup>With the greatest freedom each one must respond lovingly to this call, rooted in Baptism, so that the dignity of the human person may be in harmony with the will of God.

GS 17,21; LG 46; CIC 219

ER II 1; Test 14; LtOrd 29

<sup>3</sup>Let all of us gratefully rejoice that God has given us the exceptional grace of a religious vocation. The Father, in fact, has called us to give ourselves to Him, “keeping nothing of our own for ourselves, and to follow in the footprints of His beloved Son,” so that we may be transformed into His image by the power of the Holy Spirit.

LG 43; PC 1, 5; VC 17-19; CIC 574 §2;

ER IX 1-3; LtOrd 9; 1C 89

<sup>4</sup>In responding to our calling as Capuchin lesser brothers, we follow the poor and humble Christ, spread His message to people everywhere, especially to the poor, and offer a public and social witness of the Kingdom of God.

Mt 11:5; 11:29; Lk 4:18; LG 44; CIC 607 §1, §3; 640; 673; 758; MG (?); VC 1; 26

1C 35; 71; LMj VIII 3; L3C 37; 59

<sup>5</sup>In this way, as a pilgrim brotherhood, penitent in heart and deed, we devote ourselves to the Church’s mission of salvation, serving all people in a spirit of minority and joy.

LG 6; 9; 48ff; DV 7; UR 2; PC 2;

#### 17

OT 2ff; 11; PO 11; PC 24; AA 2; CIC 661; 664; LG 46

IV PCO 59

<sup>1</sup>Concern for vocations arises above all from the awareness that we ourselves are living and offering to others a way of life rich in human and gospel values, which, while offering genuine service to God and people, fosters personal growth.

CIC 663; 664;

<sup>2</sup>However, if we wish to give clear testimony to this way of life, we must renew ourselves constantly.

ER II 1-3; LR II 1; AC 19; IV PCO 60

<sup>3</sup>Let us actively work together to foster new vocations, moved by the desire to carry out God's plan according to our charism. Let all of us, therefore, but primarily the ministers

OT 2; PC 24; VC 64



and individual fraternities, take the utmost care to discern and cultivate genuine vocations, above all by the example of our life, our prayer and our words, and also by explicitly proposing a vocation.

<sup>4</sup>Let us actively promote various forms of the pastoral apostolate for vocations, especially among groups closer to the spirit of our Order, keeping in mind that better results are obtained where a few brothers are specifically assigned to promote and coordinate the apostolate of vocations. However, all the brothers shall contribute to the work as a sign of the vitality of Franciscan life.

CIC 233 §1;  
385; 791

<sup>5</sup>In this way we work together with God who calls and chooses those he wishes and we contribute to the good of the Church.

Mk 3:13; Lk  
6:13; Jn 15:16;  
Rom 6:16-18;  
OT 2; AA 2

## Article II Admission to Our Life

### 18

2C 70; 192;  
AC 106

<sup>1</sup>Saint Francis, being concerned about the purity of our life, foresaw that his brotherhood would grow into a large multitude and, at the same time, was afraid of having a number of unsuitable brothers.

LR II 1-3; VI 8

<sup>2</sup>For this reason, since the brotherhood must constantly grow in virtue, in the perfection of love, and in the spirit of the Gospel rather than in number, those who wish to embrace our life must be thoroughly examined and accompanied with care in the discernment of their vocation.

CIC 219; 597  
§1-2

ER II 1-3; II  
12; LR II 1-2;  
IV PCO 22;  
52ff

<sup>3</sup>The Provincial Ministers are to enquire carefully whether those who are asking to be admitted to our life meet the requirements of universal law as well as our own for their valid and lawful admission. In particular, the following must be observed:

OT 6; CIC 220;  
597 §2; 642;  
643 §1; 645 §1;  
684 §1, §5; 690  
§1; 730; 744 §2

a) candidates must be temperamentally suited for the living of our gospel life in brotherly communion;

b) it is to be ascertained that they enjoy the physical and mental health necessary to lead our way of life;

c) candidates are to show by their lives that they firmly believe what holy Mother Church believes and holds to be true and that they possess a Catholic instinct;

- d) it must be evident that they enjoy a good reputation, especially among those who know them well;
- e) they are to be endowed with the required human maturity, particularly affective and relational, and with a generous will. In addition, it must be ascertained that they enter the Order with the sole purpose of sincerely serving God and for the salvation of people, according to the Rule, the form of life of Saint Francis, and our Constitutions;
- f) they are to be educated according to the standards of their own region and show promise of being able to carry out their future duties effectively;
- g) all useful information shall be collected about their previous life, especially in the case of older candidates or those who have already had some experience of religious life;
- h) for the admission of diocesan clergy, or of those coming from another institute of consecrated life, a society of apostolic life or a seminary, or for the re-admission of our own candidates, the prescriptions of universal law are to be observed.

## 19

ER I 2; II 4; LR  
II 4; Const  
1536

<sup>1</sup>Christ, the teacher of all wisdom, responding to the young man who expressed the desire for eternal salvation, said that whoever wanted to be perfect should first sell all he had, give it to the poor, and then follow Him.

Mt 12:21;  
19:21; Mk  
10:21; Lk  
18:22

LR II 4; Adm  
IV 3; IC 24; 2C  
80; LMj III 3;  
L3C 28-29; 39

<sup>2</sup>Francis, the imitator of Christ, not only fulfilled the Teacher's counsel in his own life, but taught it to others whom he received and laid it down in the Rule as a norm to be observed.

ER II 4; LR II  
1-5; 8; 2C 15;  
81

<sup>3</sup>Therefore, the ministers and guardians shall make known and explain these words of the holy Gospel to the candidates who are moved by an interior love of Christ to come to our Order, so that, at the proper time before perpetual profession, they renounce their property, preferably in favour of the poor.

PC 13; CIC  
668 §1-4

IC 24; 2C 15;  
V PCO 95

<sup>4</sup>The candidates shall prepare themselves interiorly for the future renunciation of goods and dispose themselves for the service of their neighbour, especially of the poor.

ER II 5-7;  
LR 2,6-7

<sup>5</sup>However, as the Rule directs, the brothers are to avoid becoming involved in these matters in any way.

<sup>6</sup>Moreover, the candidates shall be ready to make their

strengths of intellect and will and their other gifts of nature and of grace available to the entire brotherhood in fulfilling the duties that they will receive in the service of the People of God.

## 20

ER II 3; LR II 1

<sup>1</sup>In addition to the General Minister, the Provincial Minister in each province enjoys the right to admit candidates to the postulancy, novitiate, and profession. He can delegate this faculty to the provincial vicar and to the Custos.

CIC 641; 656;  
658

<sup>2</sup>These ministers, before admitting candidates to the novitiate, are to consult their council, or three or four brothers appointed by the council. However, before they admit a candidate to first profession and to perpetual profession, they must have the consent of their council.

<sup>3</sup>If the case requires it, they are also to consult those who have special competence in the matter.

CIC 642

## 21

<sup>1</sup>The master of novices is responsible for conducting the Rite of Reception of Novices, unless the Provincial Minister decrees otherwise.

<sup>2</sup>The Provincial Minister, however, in the name of the Church and the Order, receives the vows of those making profession, but he may delegate this faculty to another perpetually professed brother of the Order.

LG 45; SC 80;  
PC 5; CIC 654;  
656; 658

VII PCO 17

<sup>3</sup>The liturgical norms for the beginning of the novitiate and for the profession of our life shall be observed and the celebrations kept moderate and simple.

RSP 30

<sup>4</sup>Religious profession is ordinarily made during Mass, using the following formula approved by the Holy See for the Franciscan First Order and for the Third Order Regular of Saint Francis:

CIC 654

“For the praise and glory of the Most Holy Trinity!

ER II 1;  
LR II 1; XII 1  
ER Prol.

Moved by divine inspiration

to follow more closely the Gospel and the footprints of our Lord Jesus Christ,

in the presence of my brothers,

and into your hands, brother N.,

I, brother N.,

steadfast in faith and will,  
 LR I 1; Test 14 vow to God the Father, holy and all-powerful,  
 to live for (... year/s) (...my entire life)  
 in obedience, without anything of my own, and in chastity.  
 At the same time, I profess the life and Rule of the Friars  
 LR X 8 Minor,  
 confirmed by Pope Honorius,  
 promising to observe it faithfully  
 in accordance with the Constitutions of the Order of the  
 Capuchin Friars Minor.  
 Therefore I entrust myself  
 with all my heart to this brotherhood,  
 so that by the working of the Holy Spirit,  
 after the example of Mary Immaculate,  
 and through the intercession of our Father Francis,  
 and of all the saints,  
 with the help of my brothers,  
 I may constantly strive for the fullness of love  
 in the service of God, of the Church, and of all people."

## 22

LR I 1 <sup>1</sup>The nature and goal of the three gospel counsels, which we  
 promise by vow at profession, is to unite us to Christ, our  
 hearts freed by grace, in a life that is obedient, has nothing of  
 its own, and is chaste for the sake of the Kingdom of heaven,  
 after the example of Saint Francis.

LG 44; 46; CIC  
 573 §1

LR X 3 <sup>2</sup>The gospel counsel of obedience, promised in a spirit of faith  
 and love in order to follow Christ Who was obedient even to  
 death, obliges us to submit our will, for God's sake, to  
 legitimate superiors whenever they command according to  
 our Constitutions "in anything that is not contrary to  
 conscience and the Rule."

Phil 2:8; PC  
 14; CIC 601

<sup>3</sup>The gospel counsel of poverty, in imitation of Christ Who  
 though he was rich became poor, in addition to a life which is  
 poor, in fact and in spirit, entails a dependence upon  
 superiors and a limitation in the use and disposition of  
 goods. It further requires a voluntary renunciation of the  
 capacity of acquiring and possessing, which must be made  
 before perpetual profession in a form which, as far as

2Cor 8:9; PC  
 13; CIC 600;  
 668 §4-5

possible, is also valid in civil law.

<sup>4</sup>The gospel counsel of chastity for the Kingdom of Heaven, a sign of the world to come and a source of greater fruitfulness in an undivided heart, entails the obligation of perfect continence in celibacy.

Mt 19:12; 1Cor  
7:32-35; PC  
12; CIC 277  
§1; 599

### Article III Formation in General

#### 23

<sup>1</sup>Formation for the consecrated life is a journey of discipleship guided by the Holy Spirit leading one progressively to assimilate the sentiments of Christ, the Son of the Father, and to shape one's life according to His obedient, poor, and chaste life.

VC 65; 14; 16;  
19; Mt 10:37

<sup>2</sup>Since formation tends towards the transformation of the whole person in Christ, it must be lifelong, as regards both human values and the evangelical and consecrated life. Therefore, formation must involve both the actions and intentions of the whole person in its various dimensions—human, cultural, spiritual, pastoral, and professional—taking every care to foster the harmonious integration of the various aspects.

VC 109; 65;  
CIC 279 ,1-3;  
661

IV PCO 1,3ff;  
13ff; 23-30;  
31ff; 35; 57,1;  
70ff

<sup>3</sup>The purpose of formation is to make the life of the brothers and fraternities become ever more conformed to Christ, according to the Capuchin Franciscan spirit, taking into account the diversity of places and times.

OT 8ff; PC 18;  
ESa II,33-38

<sup>4</sup>Formation in our Order is implemented in two phases: initial and ongoing. Initial formation includes initiation into consecration according to our form of life, lasting until perpetual profession, and preparation for work and ministry, which may begin during initiation. Ongoing formation follows initial formation and is life-long.

#### 24

LR X 8;  
IV PCO 77-79

<sup>1</sup>All formation is first of all the work of the Holy Spirit, Who inwardly gives life both to those forming and those being formed.

<sup>2</sup>As it was for Francis, the Church, in its universal and local dimensions, is for us the living context and essential point of reference for any formation journey, since in it the Spirit is unceasingly at work.

2C 193;  
VI PCO;

<sup>3</sup>The Father reveals the secrets of the Kingdom of Heaven to

Mt 11:25; Lk  
10:21

VII PCO;  
POT 16

little ones and, as Francis taught us, the Spirit rests equally on the simple and the poor. We therefore recognise closeness to the people and sharing in the life of the poor as particularly favourable conditions for our formation, and remain open to learning from them.

<sup>4</sup>Our brotherhood, called to cultivate its own identity in the Church, has the duty and the right to ensure the formation of the brothers in conformity with our charism. Therefore, formation is a priority among the commitments of the Order and all its circumscriptions.

ICF 7.1  
CIC 652 1-2;  
659 V1-3; 680  
§1-2

<sup>5</sup>Active formation demands the cooperation of those being formed who are the principal authors of their own growth and the ones primarily responsible for it.

CIC 652 §3

<sup>6</sup>Throughout his life, every brother is at the same time in need of formation and imparting formation, because all of us always have something to learn and to teach. This principle shall be laid down as the programme for formation and put into practice in our life.

CIC 662

IV PCO 13-  
22ff; V PCO  
23; VI PCO 3

<sup>7</sup>To live together as lesser brothers is a primary part of our Franciscan vocation. Therefore, living as brothers is always and everywhere a basic requirement of the formation process.

CIC 659 §1-2

IV PCO 80;  
VII PCO 13;  
FFCh 25

<sup>8</sup>In order that each of our fraternities, in particular those specifically designated for formation, may fulfil this primary function, they need the support and stimulus of the primary brotherhood, which is the province through which our belonging to the whole Order is established. Candidates shall develop an awareness that the Order constitutes a single family, and that all of us are bound to contribute responsibly to its well-being.

CIC 651 §1-3;  
CIC 652 §4

IV PCO 77,80ff

<sup>9</sup>While all the brothers have a formative role, it is necessary that some brothers be invested with greater responsibility. It is a particular task of the General Minister and his council to guarantee the authenticity of the formation of all the brothers of the Order. In each circumscription, this responsibility falls to the ministers and the guardians, who are the ordinary leaders and coordinators of the brothers' formation process. There are, moreover, qualified formation personnel who undertake this particular duty in the name of the Order and the brotherhood.

OT 5; ESa II,36

## 25

IV PCO 57; 77;  
81,83

<sup>1</sup>The Order shall have at its disposal the means of formation that

OT 4ff; ESa  
II,36  
CIC 659 §2

meet the requirements of its own specific charism.

IV PCO 2; 12;  
23; 27; 30; 32;  
40; 42; 54; 75;  
83

<sup>2</sup>Since particular attention must be given to the candidates during the period of initial formation, suitable educational structures shall be provided for each circumscription or groups of circumscriptions.

OT 1; CIC 659  
§1-3

<sup>3</sup>The process of education requires, above all, a team of brothers in charge who follow consistent norms throughout the entire journey of formation.

<sup>4</sup>Let the ministers therefore take every care to provide qualified training for a sufficient number of those responsible for formation who assume and exercise their particular ministry in the name of the Order. For this reason, they are to have the support due to them from the whole brotherhood.

VC 66

<sup>5</sup>Those responsible for formation shall be aware that the task assigned to them is of the greatest importance for the life of the Order and the Church, and devote themselves to it generously, all other duties taking second place.

<sup>6</sup>Formation secretariats are of great importance, both at the general level and in each circumscription, at the level of Conferences, and where areas collaborate. Therefore, care shall be taken that they be well provided for and made effective.

<sup>7</sup>The General Secretariat for Formation is the first structure of direct collaboration with the General Minister and his council in everything concerning the initial and ongoing formation of the brothers and the study centres of the Order. It is available to the different circumscriptions, to various areas that collaborate at an interprovincial level, and to the Conferences, offering them assistance and input for the promotion of all that pertains to formation.

<sup>8</sup>Likewise, each province or group of provinces shall have a Secretariat or Formation Council.

PostNov 6,1;  
FFCh 38

<sup>9</sup>It is appropriate to define in a *Ratio formationis* or Formation Plan those principles that are valid everywhere in order to safeguard in formation the characteristics proper to our Order.

VC 68-69

<sup>10</sup>Individual circumscriptions or groups of circumscriptions, depending on the situation in each region, shall have a formation plan of their own that outlines the goals, plans, and specific courses of the entire formation process.

## Article IV Initiation into Our Life

### 26

IPCO 1,7; IV  
PCO 3ff; 34;  
52ff; 57,71; VI  
PCO 8

<sup>1</sup>Those who are admitted to the Order must be initiated and progressively introduced into the Franciscan gospel life. In order that this journey of initiation may unfold, candidates, guided by the formation personnel, shall be given the necessary experiences and knowledge.

<sup>2</sup>During the time of initiation the formation of the candidates, harmoniously blending the human element with the spiritual, shall be sound, all-embracing, and adapted to the needs of times and places.

<sup>3</sup>Suitable methods of interactive education are to be used. Above all, candidates shall perform tasks and services that gradually lead them to acquire self-control, as well as psychological and emotional maturity.

ER XXII 40;  
Adm I 1

<sup>4</sup>With consideration for individual personalities and gifts of grace, candidates shall be introduced into a spiritual life that is nourished by the reading of the Word of God, active participation in the liturgy, and reflection and private prayer so that they are drawn more and more to Christ, who is the Way, the Truth and the Life.

Jn 14:6  
CIC 652 §2

<sup>5</sup>During the time of initiation the brothers shall acquire a thorough knowledge of the Capuchin Franciscan spirit and its practice by studying the life of Saint Francis, his mind concerning the observance of the Rule, the history and sound traditions of our Order, and, most of all, by assimilating internally and practically the life to which they are called

IV PCO 22

<sup>6</sup> In particular, they are to cultivate living as brothers both in community and with others and be solicitous to meet their needs, so that, each day, the brothers learn to live ever more perfectly in active communion with the Church.

PC 2

FFCh 20

<sup>7</sup>Let them therefore be led to make a generous and total gift of their lives, and to develop in themselves the availability of a missionary.

### 27

<sup>1</sup>Candidates to the Order are to spend all the stages of initiation in fraternities suitable for living our life and for taking care of their formation.



<sup>2</sup>The choice of houses and the designation of formation fraternities are made by the competent ministers with the consent of their councils.

<sup>3</sup>The establishment, transfer, and suppression of a novitiate house pertain to the General Minister with the consent of his council and in a written decree. In particular cases and by way of exception, the same authority may allow a novice to make his novitiate in another house of the Order under the guidance of a capable religious who takes the place of the master of novices.

CIC 647 §1

<sup>4</sup>The major superior may permit the group of novices to live for certain periods of time in another house of the Order specified by him.

CIC 647 §3

## 28

ER II 1; Test  
14; IC 24; 27;  
31; LMj III 3.6;  
L3C 27; 29;  
AC 3;

<sup>1</sup>Every brother given by God to the brotherhood brings it joy, and at the same time is an incentive for us to renew ourselves in the spirit of our vocation.

<sup>2</sup>Responsibility for initiation involves the entire brotherhood, since the candidates are part of it.

CIC 652 §4

IV PCO 80

<sup>3</sup>However the Provincial Minister, with the consent of his council, in the manner and within the limits he determines, shall entrust its direction to brothers who are experienced in the spiritual, fraternal and pastoral life, endowed with learning, prudence, discernment of spirits and familiar with the workings of God in the human heart.

CIC 651 §1-3;

<sup>4</sup>The directors of postulants, novices and professed brothers shall be free from all duties that could interfere with the care and direction of the candidates.

<sup>5</sup>The directors shall be assisted by associates, especially in matters concerning the care of the spiritual life and the internal forum.

OT 8

## 29

IV PCO 61

<sup>1</sup>Initiation into our form of consecrated life unfolds through the stages of postulancy, novitiate, and post-novitiate and is conducted in accordance with universal law and our own particular law.

CIC 651 §2-3;

<sup>2</sup>The time of initiation begins on the day when the candidate is admitted to the postulancy by the Provincial Minister and continues until perpetual profession. From the moment of admission, the candidate, as far as formation, life, and work

are concerned, is gradually incorporated into the brotherhood.

### 30

CIC 597 §2

IV PCO 62

<sup>1</sup>The postulancy is the first period of initiation when one makes the choice to adopt our life.

IV PCO 63;  
PVP 10

<sup>2</sup>During this period, the postulant comes to know our life and makes a further and more careful discernment of his vocation. For its part, the fraternity comes to know the postulant better and ascertains the growth of his human maturity, especially affective maturity, and his ability to discern his life and the signs of the times according to the Gospel.

CIC 597 §2;  
642

<sup>3</sup>The postulant, therefore, must be helped in particular to deepen his life of faith. To this end, the formation of the postulants is chiefly aimed at completing their catechesis in the faith, introducing them to the liturgical life, to the methods and experience of prayer, the study of our Franciscan heritage, to life in brotherhood, and to an initial experience of apostolic work.

CIC 597 §2

### 31

CIC 642; 643  
§1, §4; 645 §1;  
646; 648; 652

IV PCO 61; 64-  
66

<sup>1</sup>The novitiate is a period of more intense initiation and more profound experience of the Capuchin Franciscan gospel life in its fundamental demands. It requires a free and mature decision to try out our form of religious life.

ER II 8;  
LR II 9.11;  
RSP 28-31

<sup>2</sup>On the opening day of the novitiate, a rite shall be celebrated asking for the help of God so that the aims of this period may be achieved. It is fitting that the novices receive “the clothes of probation” on this occasion. This rite shall be carried out in the religious fraternity. A document is to be drawn up as a record of the beginning of the novitiate, which is the beginning of life in the Order.

CIC 669 §1;  
646

<sup>3</sup>The process of initiation during the novitiate is based on the values of our consecrated life as known and lived in the light of the example of Christ, the gospel insights of Saint Francis, and the sound traditions of the Order.

CIC 652 §2

V PCO 95

<sup>4</sup>The rhythm of the novitiate shall be in harmony with the primary aspects of our religious life, particularly through a special experience of faith, contemplative prayer, life in brotherhood, contact with the poor, and hard work.

CIC 652 §5

<sup>5</sup>The direction of the novices, under the authority of the

CIC 650 §2

ministers, is reserved to the novice master alone, who must be a professed brother of the Order in perpetual vows.

<sup>6</sup>In order to be valid, the novitiate must comprise twelve months spent in the novitiate community itself. The minister, with the consent of his council, determines when it begins and how it is conducted.

CIC 647 §3;  
648 §1; 653 §2

<sup>7</sup>An absence from the novitiate house that exceeds three months, either continuous or intermittent, renders the novitiate invalid. An absence that exceeds fifteen days must be made up. All the other requirements of universal law in respect of the novitiate must be diligently observed.

CIC 648 §3;  
649 §1

## 32

IPCO II,11;  
IV PCO 22; 61;  
67-69;

<sup>1</sup>The post-novitiate, which begins with temporary profession and concludes with perpetual profession, is the third stage of initiation. During this period the brothers progress further in maturity and prepare themselves to make a definitive choice of the gospel life in our Order.

CIC 659 §1-3;  
660 §1  
PI 58-60

ER V 9-12; VI  
3-4

<sup>2</sup>Because of its essential reference to religious consecration and to perpetual profession, the journey of formation undertaken in the post-novitiate must be the same for all the brothers. Since the gospel life in brotherhood holds the primary place in our vocation, it must also be given priority during this period.

<sup>3</sup>The brothers are to be led into a living relationship with Christ, to be ever more conformed to Him, and to find their identity in Him. According to each one's gifts of nature and grace, they are introduced to a more profound study of sacred scripture, spiritual theology, liturgy, and the history and spirituality of the Order. Let them be initiated into the exercise of various forms of the apostolate and of work, including domestic work. As this process of initiation unfolds, their life and growth to maturity as persons shall always be taken into account.

MCB 5

## Article V Profession of Our Life

## 33

<sup>1</sup>Let us often consider how great is the grace of religious

LG 43-46; PC  
1,5-6; 12; Eph  
1:6,1,14; VC  
17-22

profession. By it we embrace, under a new and special title, in praise of the glory of the most holy Trinity, a life which impels us towards the perfection of love. Definitively consecrated to the service of God, we adore Him in spirit and in truth.

<sup>2</sup>In religious consecration, the Holy Spirit unites us to Christ by a special covenant, makes us sharers in the reality of the mystery of Christ Who is united by an indissoluble bond to the Church, His Spouse, and places us in a state of life that heralds the future resurrection and the glory of the heavenly Kingdom.

Eph 5:3; Rv 19:7; 21:2,9-11; CIC 573 §1; 574 §2; 598 §2; 607 §1; 662; RD 2; 8; VC 93

<sup>3</sup>In order to gather more abundant fruit from the grace of Baptism, through this consecration we bind ourselves to live out the gospel counsels in accordance with the *Rule* and *Constitutions*.

<sup>4</sup>In this way we aim to free ourselves from the impediments that could draw us away from perfect love, spiritual freedom, and the perfection of divine worship.

LG 46

IV PCO 22

<sup>5</sup>Finally, by means of profession, while we enjoy a special divine gift within the life of the Church, we work together through our witness in its saving mission.

LG 43ff; 46; PC 1; 5ff

<sup>6</sup>We therefore exhort the brothers to prepare themselves for profession with great care by means of an intense sacramental life centred above all on the Eucharist, by fervent prayer, and by a spiritual retreat. This shall be done more intensely and in a special way before perpetual profession.

## 34

CIC 653 §2

LR III1-13

<sup>1</sup>When the novitiate has been completed and the suitability of the novice has been ascertained, temporary profession of vows is made for a period determined by the minister with the novice himself, to be renewed freely until perpetual profession. But if his suitability is still in doubt, the time of probation can be prolonged by the minister, but not beyond six months. If then the novice is judged unsuited, he must be dismissed.

<sup>2</sup>The time of this profession shall not be shorter than three years nor longer than six, though it may be extended if it seems appropriate, but in such a way that the entire period during which the brother is bound by temporary vows does not exceed nine years.

CIC 655; 657 §2

<sup>3</sup>If a brother is judged suitable and freely requests it, perpetual profession is made at a time determined by the minister after consultation with the one making profession, as long as the full three-year period of temporary profession is observed and never before the completion of at least twenty-one years of age. By means of perpetual profession a brother is definitively incorporated into the brotherhood of the Order with all the rights and obligations set out in the *Constitutions*.

CIC 654; 657 §1, §3; 658; 684 §2; 685 §1; 689 §§11-3

<sup>4</sup>When the period for which temporary profession was made is completed, a brother may leave the Order. For a valid reason, the competent minister, after he has consulted his council, may exclude him from renewal of temporary vows or decline to admit him to perpetual profession.

CIC 657 §1

<sup>5</sup>All other prescriptions of universal law pertaining to profession must be observed, especially those concerning the disposal of the brother's goods before temporary and perpetual profession.

CIC 656; 658; 668 §1-5

### 35

PC 17; ESa I,25,2d; CIC 659 §1

<sup>1</sup>Our religious habit is given during the celebration of first profession, even though the novices may have previously received "the clothes of probation."

<sup>2</sup>Our habit, according to the Rule and custom of the Order, consists of a tunic with a hood, chestnut in colour, a cord and sandals, or, for a good reason, shoes. With regard to the custom of wearing a beard, the principle of pluriformity applies.

PC 17; ESa I,25,2d

3C 2

<sup>3</sup>Remembering that Saint Francis wore a penitential garment made in the shape of a cross, we, too, wear the habit as a reminder of conversion, a sign of consecration to God, and of belonging to the Order. In this way we also express our condition as lesser brothers, so that even the clothes we wear witness to poverty.

CIC 669 §1

2C 130-132; LMj I 6

<sup>4</sup>Clothed as we are with the meek and humble Christ, we must not pretend to be lesser ones, but truly be so in heart, word and deed, since our outward signs of humility are of little use for the salvation of others if we ourselves are not inspired by an inner spirit of humility.

Mt 11:29; Gal 3:27; Rom 13:14

ER VI 3.VII 1ff; LR II 14-17; 2C 130; 183

<sup>5</sup>Therefore, after the example of Saint Francis, let us make every effort to become good and not merely to appear so, to be the same in word and deed. Considering ourselves "lowly

Rom 12:10; Phil 2:3

and subject to all,” as the *Rule* admonishes us, let us show esteem and respect to others.

## 36

CIC 653 §1

<sup>1</sup>The Provincial Minister, and by special mandate those mentioned in number 20, have the faculty to dismiss a postulant or novice whom they judge unsuitable for our life.

<sup>2</sup>For a serious reason allowing of no delay, the master of novices or postulants has the same faculty, but with the consent of the local council. The appropriate minister must be notified immediately of this action.

<sup>3</sup>The General Minister, with the consent of his council, can grant an indult of departure to a brother in temporary vows who requests it for a serious reason. As the law itself provides, this indult includes a dispensation from vows and from all obligations arising from profession.

CIC 702 §1;  
688 §2; 692

<sup>4</sup>Regarding transfers to another institute of consecrated life or to a society of apostolic life, departures from the Order, and dismissals of a brother after either temporary or perpetual profession, the prescriptions of the universal law of the Church are to be observed.

CIC 684 §1-3;  
691-699 §1;  
700; 703

## Article VI Formation for Work and Ministry

## 37

<sup>1</sup>Called as we are to the gospel life by one and the same religious vocation, all of us, in imitation of Saint Francis and following Capuchin tradition, are bound to express the apostolic nature of our vocation by the witness of our life in all the assignments we undertake in obedience and brotherly communion.

Test 21;  
AC 62

<sup>2</sup>Therefore, mindful of the admonition of Saint Francis in his *Testament*: “Let those who do not know how to work, learn,” may we strive to acquire the necessary preparation for any service that is required of us.

<sup>3</sup>Indeed, it is difficult to do any work properly without special and suitable formation.

ER VII 3-7;  
LR V 1;  
IV PCO 22;

<sup>4</sup>It is the duty of the Order to help every brother to develop his own “grace of working,” because it is by working that the

CIC 670

brothers support one another in their vocation and strengthen the harmony of their life in brotherhood.

ER II 5;  
Test 20;  
ScEx 22

<sup>5</sup>Formation for work and ministry shall be planned in such a way that the brothers, in accordance with their talents and vocation, are sufficiently prepared for the duties and offices they will have to fulfil. Therefore some may learn skills and technical trades, while others engage in pastoral or technical studies, especially those of a sacred character.

OT 8; PO 14;  
PC 6, 8

LR VIII 8;  
FFCh 35;  
FrCh 3,3; 3,6;

<sup>6</sup>The greatest care shall be taken to ensure that preparation for work and the apostolate is conducted in a true spirit of service, compatible with religious consecration, and in harmony with the journey of initiation, ensuring the primacy of life in brotherhood.

### 38

Rom 12:11;  
CIC 673

LR X 8

<sup>1</sup>Let all the brothers remember that, while serving the Lord in minority, "they must desire above all else to have the Spirit of the Lord and His holy activity."

LR V 1;  
IV PCO 49ff;  
57

<sup>2</sup>Therefore, while acquiring manual skills and a sound education, let them seek to become holy and, at the same time, competent in their particular "grace of working."

OT 9,15

<sup>3</sup>Let them prepare themselves for the apostolic life in keeping with their gifts and aptitudes in a spirit of self-denial and self-discipline. In this way, through personal formation and the development of their education, they contribute to the good of the Order, the Church, and society.

<sup>4</sup>Studies, given light and life by the love of Christ, must be entirely in keeping with our way of life.

2C 102; 194-  
195;  
LMj XI 1

<sup>5</sup>While engaged in studies, therefore, let the brothers develop their hearts and minds in such a way that, in keeping with the intention of Saint Francis, they grow in their vocation. In fact, formation for any type of work is an integral part of our religious life.

### 39

OT 4,8; 16; 19-  
21; PC 2c; 6; 8;  
AG 26; PO 14;  
19; UR 10; CIC  
758; 783

<sup>1</sup>In our apostolic Order, a pastoral concern shall so permeate the entire formation that all the brothers, according to each one's abilities, are able to proclaim by deed and word the Kingdom of God as disciples and prophets of our Lord Jesus Christ. The pastoral needs of the regions, as well as the missionary and ecumenical responsibility of the Church, shall be kept in mind.

<sup>2</sup>The disciplines of philosophy and theology shall be taught side by side with Franciscan teaching so that they converge harmoniously, gradually opening minds and hearts to the mystery of Christ.

OT 14-16

<sup>3</sup>This formation shall take place in the study centres of the Order, either provincial or interprovincial. When this is not possible because of the conditions in a region or a province or because of other particular requirements, the brothers may attend other study centres. When possible, collaboration with Franciscan institutes is preferred, and care shall be taken to ensure suitable Capuchin Franciscan formation.

OT 4; 7; ESa II, 36ff

<sup>4</sup>The brothers who are called to sacred orders must be trained in accordance with the norms laid down by the Church, taking into account the character of our brotherhood. The consent of the Provincial Minister and his council is required for the reception of sacred orders.

OT intr.; 8ff; 13ff; DV 24; ESa II,33; 35; 37; CIC 250; 659 §3; 1027; 1032 §1-3; 1036; Ratio (?)

#### 40

OT 5;11; 15ff; PO 19; CIC 652 §3

<sup>1</sup>Those engaged in the work of formation shall be aware that the brothers in training are the principal authors of their own formation, the responsibility for which rests primarily upon them, in trusting collaboration with the formation personnel.

<sup>2</sup>The brothers charged with teaching shall, before anything else, present the witness of their lives and promote among themselves and with the students a profound communion of thought and action. In their teaching and in conversations with students they shall adopt an interactive method which enables the brothers in formation to acquire a culture that is dynamic and integrated.

OT 15; 17; CIC 252 §1; 254 §1

ER XIX 1-2

<sup>3</sup>Let them prepare and present their lectures carefully, guided by the Church's magisterium, taking care to keep up-to-date in their own disciplines and to adapt their lectures to new requirements.

OT 16

<sup>4</sup>Finally, it is recommended that they engage in scholarly research, writing and publication, especially in Franciscan subjects. For this purpose, Franciscan institutes promoted by the Order can offer assistance to these and other brothers.



## Article VII On-going Formation

### 41

1C 103

<sup>1</sup>Mindful of Saint Francis and of his exhortation: “Brothers, let us begin to serve the Lord God, because until now we have done little or nothing”, let all of us be aware of the need for ongoing formation.

IV PCO 70ff;  
GUW 9-11

<sup>2</sup>Ongoing formation is a process of personal and community renewal and of harmonious adaptation of structures and activities, by which we are enabled to live our gospel vocation in actual everyday situations.

PC 2d-e; 3; 18;  
OT 22; GS 4;  
35; 38; ESa 1,7;  
CIC 661

GUW 14-14

<sup>3</sup>Ongoing formation involves the whole person in a holistic manner. It has, however, a twofold dimension: in the first place, spiritual conversion achieved through a continual return to the sources of Christian life and to the primitive spirit of the Order, carried out in forms adapted to times and cultures; secondly, cultural and professional renewal, achieved through educational and specialized adaptation to the conditions of the times. All of this promotes greater creative fidelity to our vocation.

### 42

IV PCO 72; 74;  
GUW 5-6

<sup>1</sup>Ongoing formation is intended for all the brothers, since it is nothing other than a continuous development of our vocation. Therefore, without a doubt and above all else, it is the duty and the right of each brother to apply himself to his own ongoing formation.

CIC 279 §1-3;  
661

<sup>2</sup>All the ministers and guardians shall regard it as the primary ordinary duty of their pastoral service to promote the ongoing formation of the brothers entrusted to them.

CIC 661

<sup>3</sup>In particular, the same ministers and the others responsible for formation shall take care to develop in those who are admitted to the Order the conviction that they must attend to their own formation for the whole of their lives, because no brother who has finished initial formation can claim to be fully equipped for the rest of his life.

### 43

PGFP  
GUW 19ff

<sup>1</sup>The Order shall have at its disposal formation resources that are compatible with our charism, and shall make them available to all the brothers.

IV PCO 72;  
74ff; VI PCO 8

<sup>2</sup>Each circumscription shall enact norms for ongoing formation adapted to different places, conditions of persons, and times.

<sup>3</sup>Let the programme be systematic, dynamic and integrated, embracing the whole religious life in the light of the Gospel and the spirit of our brotherhood.

CIC 279 §1-3;  
661

<sup>4</sup>Daily living greatly assists ongoing formation. Indeed, the first school of formation is the daily experience of religious life, with its normal rhythm of prayer, reflection, life in brotherhood, and work.

<sup>5</sup>Additionally, special means are also recommended, e.g., new or renewed ventures in ongoing formation, with the cooperation and help of either the local or provincial fraternity, within each province, region or Conference of major superiors.

<sup>6</sup>The ministers shall take care that suitable brothers receive special training at institutes, schools and universities in the sacred sciences, as well as in the other sciences, the arts, and the professions, as seems appropriate for the service of the Church and the Order.

PC 18; CIC  
819

<sup>7</sup>Our International College in Rome is recommended for fostering the spirit of brotherhood in the whole Order, for the further pursuit of formation, and for promoting Franciscan culture.

CIC 819

2C 62; 180;  
2MP 5; L3C 43

<sup>8</sup>It is further recommended that libraries and other cultural assets of the Order be protected and valued, recognizing their formative functions as a testimony to our identity, spirituality, and apostolic activity.

#### 44

1Cor 7:24; LG  
47

<sup>1</sup>Let each brother enthusiastically commit himself to walk worthily in the Capuchin Franciscan vocation to which God has called him.

<sup>2</sup>All of us, therefore, shall strive to maintain and strengthen for ourselves and for others the gift of a religious vocation and perseverance by faithful cooperation with divine grace, prudent watchfulness, and constant prayer.

CIC 285 §1-2;  
598 §2; 664;  
672

<sup>3</sup>Let us also beware, brothers, of apostasy of the heart which occurs when, because of tepidity, someone hides a worldly heart beneath a religious exterior, abandons the spirit and love of his vocation, and yields to a worldly spirit of pride

Rom 12:2

and sensuality. Remembering the apostle's admonition: "Do not be conformed to this world", let us rather avoid whatever savours of sin and weakens religious life.

ER XVII 17-  
19; XXII 9-10;  
LR III 10-13; X  
8; LtOrd 8-10;  
V PCO 64; 82ff

<sup>4</sup>Therefore, "now that we have left the world, let us strive to desire nothing else, to wish for nothing else, to take pleasure in nothing else, than to follow the Spirit of the Lord and His holy activity" and to please Him always, so that we may truly be brothers, poor, meek, thirsting for holiness, merciful and clean of heart: brothers, in fact, through whom the world may know the peace and goodness of God.

Mt 5:3-9; LG  
41

## CHAPTER III

### OUR LIFE OF PRAYER

#### 45

- |   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| III PCO 6ff; IV<br>PCO 36a; 37-<br>40; V PCO 1-<br>14 | <sup>1</sup> Prayer to God is the breathing of love stirred into life by the Holy Spirit through whom the inner man begins to listen to the voice of God speaking to his heart.  | Hos 2:16; Rom<br>7:22; 8:26; Eph<br>3:16; LG 4 |
| II PCO 8; 19  | <sup>2</sup> In fact, God has been the first to love us and speaks to us in many ways: in all creatures, in the signs of the times, in the lives of people, in our hearts and, above all, through His Word in the history of salvation.  | Heb 1:1-2; 1Jn<br>4:10; GS 11,34;<br>45; DV 3  |
| II PCO 6ff  | <sup>3</sup> As we respond in prayer to God Who speaks to us, we become fully ourselves by leaving self-love behind and, in communion with God and with people, we pass over into Christ who is both God and man.  |  |
|   | <sup>4</sup> For Christ Himself is our life, our prayer, and our activity.   |  |
| II PCO 7  | <sup>5</sup> Therefore, we truly carry on a filial conversation with the Father when we live Christ and pray in His Spirit, Who cries out in our hearts: "Abba, Father!"   | Phil 1:21; Rom<br>8:15; Gal 3:16               |
| II PCO 2; 8; III<br>PCO 38; IV<br>PCO 37-40           | <sup>6</sup> We are consecrated more intensely to the service of God through our profession of the gospel counsels. Therefore we strive in the freedom of the Spirit to grow faithfully and steadfastly in this life of prayer.  | LG 44; PC 5; 6;<br>CIC 607 §1                  |
| LR X 9; LtAnt<br>2; LMj IX 1; X<br>2; 2C 95           | <sup>7</sup> This is why, with the strongest commitment, we cultivate "the Spirit of holy prayer and devotion to which all time-bound things must contribute." We do this to become true followers of Saint Francis, who seemed not so much to pray as to have become the embodiment of prayer.  | CIC 663 §1                                     |
| LR X 8-9  | <sup>8</sup> "Desiring above all things the Spirit of the Lord and His holy activity, and praying to God always with a pure heart," we offer people the witness of genuine prayer, so that all may see on our faces and experience in the life of our fraternities the reflection of God's goodness and kindness present in the world. | 2Tm 2:22; Ti<br>3:4                            |

#### 46

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|--|--|---------------------|
| II PCO 14; 19;<br>31ff; IV PCO<br>40; V PCO 7ff,<br>23 | <sup>1</sup> May our prayer, then, be a distinctive manifestation of our calling as lesser brothers.                                 |                     |
| ER XXII 32-34  | <sup>2</sup> We truly pray as brothers when we gather together in the name of Christ in mutual love, so that the Lord is actually in | Mt 18: 20; PC<br>15 |

ER IX 1-3; XVII 17-19; LtOrd 9	our midst.	
	<sup>3</sup> We pray as lesser ones when we live with the poor and humble Christ, so that we offer the cry of the poor to the Father and effectively share their lot.	
II PCO 9; 14; ER XXII 41; LtOrd 50	<sup>4</sup> Let us therefore remain faithful to what we have promised, fulfilling in our lives what the Lord wants and wanting what is pleasing to Him.	
II PCO 9	<sup>5</sup> In this way, prayer and activity, far from being in opposition, complement each other as they are inspired by one and the same Spirit of the Lord.	CIC 675 §2
ER XVII 17-19; XXIII; PrG 3; PrOF 2; PrG 11; LtOrd 9; 2LtF 62; CcC 1-14; AC 100; II PCO 17ff	<sup>6</sup> Franciscan prayer is affective, a prayer of the heart, which leads us to an intimate experience of God. When we contemplate “God, who is the supreme Good and all Good, from Whom all good proceeds,” our hearts should burst forth in adoration, thanksgiving, wonder, and praise.	
II PCO 16; 18; V PCO 28; 64; 82ff	<sup>7</sup> Beholding Christ in all creatures, let us go about in the world proclaiming peace and penance and inviting all to praise God as witnesses of His love.	
II PCO 36ff	<b>47</b>	LG 10; PC 6; 15; SC 2; 7; 10; 12; 19; 22; PO 5; 14; OT 16; CD 35,4; ESa I, 22ff; CIC 204 §1; 573 §1; 654; 834 §1; 849; 897
	<sup>1</sup> Being consecrated to the service of God by means of Baptism and more closely united to Him through religious profession, we hold in the greatest esteem the sacred liturgy, which is the exercise of the priestly office of Christ, the summit of all the Church’s activity and the source of all Christian life. May we nourish our individual and fraternal spiritual life from this same source and open up its treasures to the faithful.	
1C 45; 2C 96	<sup>2</sup> For this reason, we have the greatest veneration for the mystery of the Eucharist and for the Divine Office. This, as Francis wanted, moulds the entire life of the brotherhood.	PC 6
RSP 75; VII PCO 17	<sup>3</sup> Let us take part in the sacred liturgy with devotion and with dignified outward behaviour.	SC 99
II PCO 38	<sup>4</sup> We carefully cultivate fidelity to the liturgical norms, according to their genuine spirit, doing so with creativity, spontaneity, and respect for local cultures.	
II PCO 38; GIRM 23; 201; EP 17	<sup>5</sup> So that the word of God may penetrate our hearts, and renew our lives ever more profoundly through inward participation in the divine mysteries, we give appropriate space to silence in our celebrations as part of the liturgical action.	GILH 23
LtOrd 41	<sup>6</sup> In imitation of Saint Francis, who frequently expressed his	SC 90; 99

feelings in song and music, the liturgy is celebrated with singing as far as possible, particularly on feast days. However, let us pay attention not so much to the vocal melody as to our inward participation, so that our voices may be in harmony with our minds, and our minds with God.

II CPO 38

<sup>7</sup>As far as the rite is concerned, the brothers comply with the prescriptions issued by the competent ecclesiastical authorities of the region where they live.

LtOrd 29; Adm  
I 16-22; II PCO  
37; 39

#### 48

<sup>1</sup>We participate fully, consciously, and actively in the Eucharist, the source of the Church's life: the root, the focal point, and the very heart of our life as brothers. We celebrate the Paschal Mystery of Jesus Christ until He comes, holding back nothing of ourselves, so that "He who offered himself totally to us may receive us totally."

1Cor 11:26; LG  
3; 7; 11; 26; 28;  
SC 6; 11; 14;  
17; 19; 21;  
26ff; 30; 41;  
48; 57; CD 15;  
GS 38; PC 6;  
PO 6; 7; 13;  
VC 95; UT 15;  
CIC 897

LtOrd 30-31;  
2C 201; LMj  
IX 2; II PCO 37

<sup>2</sup>In the breaking of the Eucharistic Bread we are raised to communion with Christ and with one another, manifesting the unity of the sacrifice, the priesthood, and the brotherhood. To make this more evident, we celebrate a Mass daily in all our houses as a fraternity. Should this not be possible, the Eucharist with the participation of all the brothers is to be celebrated frequently.

1Cor 10:26;  
CIC 608; 663  
§2; 897; 899 §1

<sup>3</sup>Let the Eucharist, in which our Lord Jesus Christ Himself is present to us under the consecrated species, be reserved in our oratories and churches in a most fitting place and manner.

CIC 608; 934  
§1; 936; 938 §1

Adm I 16-21;  
LtOrd 26-33;  
2LtCl 3; Test  
10; 2C 201; AC  
80; LMj IX 2

<sup>4</sup>After the example of Saint Francis, let us adore with faith, humble reverence, and devotion Jesus Christ present in the Eucharist. With Him, let us offer ourselves and our actions to God the Father through the Spirit, and frequently spend time in fervent prayer before Him, the spiritual centre of our brotherhood.

SC 7; PO 18;  
CIC 608; 663  
§2; VC 95

II PCO 36; V  
PCO 28

#### 49

<sup>1</sup>The Liturgy of the Hours, which extends the grace of the Eucharist to the different hours of each day, is the prayer of Christ, who unites the Church to Himself in praise and humble intercession which He forever presents to the Father on behalf of all humanity.

SC 7; 8; 83-85;  
89a; 90; 98-  
101; GILH 12;  
PO 5; 13; CIC  
1173

<sup>2</sup>Let us celebrate worthily the Liturgy of the Hours to which

CIC 1174 §1;  
1175; SC 84;

the Church binds us in virtue of our profession in order to share in the eternal hymn of praise brought into the world by the Incarnate Word, and to blend our voices with that of the Church speaking to Christ, her Bridegroom. This is a foretaste of the praise that unceasingly resounds before the throne of God and of the Lamb.

GILH 15-16

ER III 3; LR III 1-4; Test 30; LtOrd 40-44; LMj VIII 9; L3C 41;

<sup>3</sup>The entire fraternity, therefore, gathers together each day in the name of Christ, to give thanks to the Father in the Holy Spirit by recalling the memory of the mysteries of salvation through the Liturgy of the Hours, by which the mystery of Christ permeates and transfigures time. When this cannot be done for all the Hours, at least Morning and Evening Prayer are to be celebrated in common.

GILH 12

<sup>4</sup>We recommend, moreover, that the brothers do the same wherever they may live or may happen to be, and that the Liturgy of the Hours be celebrated with the faithful according to the circumstances of the place.

CIC 1174 §2

RH 3-6; 2C 64; 11

<sup>5</sup>Let the local chapter, with the approval of the minister, arrange the schedule and work of the house in such a way that the course of the day and all our activities are sanctified by the praise of God. The circumstances of individuals, times, and cultures are to be taken into account.

SC 88; ESa II,26; CIC 1175 GILH 11

<sup>6</sup>Whenever we cannot celebrate the Liturgy of the Hours in common, let us remember that, even when praying the office individually, we are united spiritually with the whole Church and especially with the brothers. Let those brothers who say the Office of the Lord's Prayer according to the *Rule* pray it with the same profound intention.

SC 84ff; 98

## 50

<sup>1</sup>Let our prayer be inspired by the teaching of the prophets and psalmists and, above all, by the example of the Son of God who, in taking on the human condition, shares even in His prayer, in all that His brothers and sisters experience, and, offering himself, intercedes for them before His Father.

CCC 2602

V PCO 7; Test 1-3; LMj I 6; 1C 17; 2C 9; L3C 11

<sup>2</sup>Saint Francis, who discovered the divine plan in contemplation, wished to share fully in Christ's love for humanity by embracing lepers and proclaiming to all the good news of hope and peace through conversion.

V PCO 6-7; VII PCO 31

<sup>3</sup>Our first Capuchin brothers, while giving primacy to a life of contemplation and solitude, were also mindful of and concerned for people's needs, and experienced the presence

of God in everyday events and human situations.

<sup>4</sup>Following their example, we strive to discern signs of God's love in the unfolding of history, in the religious sense of the people, and in the distinct cultures of various regions.

ET 44

<sup>5</sup>Therefore, let our prayer be an expression of universal solidarity and compassion. Conforming ourselves closely to the prayer of Christ, we become the voice of every situation, taking on ourselves the joys and hopes, the grief and the anguish of every human person.

CCC 2634;  
MisPref IV; GS  
1

## 51

ER III 4.10; LR  
III 3; 2C 101;  
164; AC 103;  
3LAg 2886

<sup>1</sup>Conscious that in prayer we work with God for the coming of His Kingdom and the building up of the Body of Christ, and recalling the catholic spirit of Saint Francis, we implore the Lord for holy Mother Church, the pope, those who govern us, all peoples, the salvation of the entire world, and, in particular, for the entire Franciscan family, and our benefactors.

1Tm 2:1-2; LG  
44; 49ff; SC  
53; GS 18

LR VI 2

<sup>2</sup>Faith in the risen Christ sustains our hope and keeps alive our communion with brothers and sisters who are resting in the peace of Christ. United with them in an exchange of spiritual gifts, in the celebration of the Eucharist and in our prayers, let us commend all the deceased to the merciful God. With gratitude and charity, let us offer the special suffrages prescribed by the *Ordinances of the General Chapters*.

LG 49-51

## 52

<sup>1</sup>Each Sunday, the Church keeps the memory of Christ's resurrection and, during the liturgical year, with the Paschal Triduum at its very heart, she recalls the mysteries of redemption and dispenses them to all the faithful, so that they may be filled with the grace of salvation.

SC 102; MyP;  
GNLYC

<sup>2</sup>We live Sunday as the weekly Easter, listening to the Word in the unity of the one bread broken to revitalize our life in brotherhood. Let us devote ourselves generously to pastoral service on the Lord's day. By celebrating the gift of creation with joy and thanksgiving, we nourish in ourselves the ardent expectation of the everlasting Sunday which will usher us into God's eternal rest.

SC 106; DD 1-  
2; 19-22.24-  
30ff

<sup>3</sup>We wholeheartedly embrace the wealth of grace that flows to us from the celebration of the liturgical year and from the sacraments. This fountain of spirit and of life, an

MyP 1



inexhaustible source of spiritual nourishment, is the sure guide of our formation.

<sup>4</sup>By celebrating the mysteries of salvation, as children of God we allow the Holy Spirit to lead us in prayer so that we grow more and more in Christ, until we reach the fullness of communion with the Father and with our brothers and sisters.

ER XXIII 3;  
Adm I 16; 2LrF  
4ff; 1C 84; 2C  
199; LMj X 7;  
II PCO 15

<sup>5</sup>In the spirit of the holy Gospel and following the course of the liturgical year, in a special way we reflect upon and preach to the faithful the mysteries of the humanity of Christ, in particular His nativity and His passion, in which Saint Francis marvelled at the Lord's love and humility.

LG 46; 53;  
58ff; 61ff; 66ff;  
OT 8; SC 19;  
104-105ff; PC  
25; PO 18

2LrF 5; ER IX  
5; 1C 21; 2C  
83; 85; 198;  
200; LMj III 1;  
VII 1; IX 1;  
L3C 15

<sup>6</sup>On the feasts of the Virgin Mary also, and on the memorials of the saints, the Church proclaims the Passover of her Lord. With particular devotion therefore, especially through liturgical worship, the Angelus and the Rosary, we venerate "Mary, the Mother of God and the Virgin conceived without sin, daughter and handmaid of the Father, Mother of the Son, and spouse of the Holy Spirit, the virgin made Church" according to the expression of Saint Francis, and we promote devotion to her among the people. She is, indeed, our mother and advocate, the patroness of our Order, the companion of her Son in His poverty and sufferings and, as experience shows, the way to the spirit of Christ poor and crucified.

SC 103-105;  
MCult 41;  
DPPL 195; Lk  
1:38; CIC 246  
§3; 276 §2; 663  
§4

<sup>7</sup>At the same time, in accordance with ancient tradition, we devoutly venerate Saint Joseph, the faithful spouse of the Virgin Mary, guardian of the Redeemer and humble worker.

1C 115; 2C  
221; LMj Pr;  
L3C 73

<sup>8</sup>Let us encourage and promote, according to local custom, devotion to our holy Father Francis, the model of lesser ones, to Saint Clare, and to the saints, especially our own, taking care that such veneration always conforms to the spirit of the sacred liturgy.

LG 45; SC 13;  
104; 108; 111;  
CIC 1186-1187

## 53

LR X 8-9; ER  
XX 27-31ff;  
LMn 4

<sup>1</sup>In the liturgy God Himself comes to meet us and speaks to us in His word. With hearts receptive and filled with trust, let us respond in prayer using His own words taken from Scripture.

SC 7.10-  
12.24.35

<sup>2</sup>It is God's word that gives birth to and builds up our life of consecration. Following the example of Saint Francis, let us cultivate a profound familiarity with it in order to grow in the experience of God and give clear gospel witness to the

PC 6; DV 21;  
26; CIC 276  
§2; 652 §2; 663  
§3; Syn12 (?);  
VD 83

Church and the world.

<sup>3</sup>Let us dedicate sufficient time each day to the prayerful reading of Sacred Scripture and nourish true devotion by reading other spiritual books as well.

Syn12 22; 9;  
32; 55; VD 71;  
82; 86

<sup>4</sup>Moreover, we cultivate our gospel life in brotherhood by assigning times for sharing the word of God and allowing it to challenge us.

DV 25

Const 1536 I p.  
3, 27; II PCO  
12

<sup>5</sup>So that we may always keep before our mind's eye the way and life that we have professed, let each circumscription issue norms both for the public reading of Sacred Scripture, the *Rule*, *Testament*, and *Constitutions*, and for the renewal of profession in common.

CIC 652 §2 663  
§3; 276 §2; PC  
6; DV 21; SC  
51; Sp 76; Dt  
6:6-9

## 54

<sup>1</sup>We preserve and promote the contemplative spirit that shines in the life of Saint Francis and of our first brothers. Therefore, we give greater importance to it by cultivating mental prayer.

Const 1536 III  
p. 9, 10

II PCO 12

<sup>2</sup>Mental prayer is the spiritual teacher of the brothers who, if they are true and spiritual lesser brothers, pray interiorly at all times. To pray, in fact, is nothing other than to speak to God with the heart; in truth, whoever speaks to God with his lips alone does not pray at all. For this reason each brother applies himself to mental prayer or contemplation and, according to the teaching of Christ, the best of teachers, endeavours to adore the eternal Father in spirit and truth, striving earnestly to enlighten the mind and enkindle the heart rather than to formulate words.

Is 29:13; Mt  
15:8; Mk 7:6;  
Jn 4:23ff

ER XXII 26-31

<sup>3</sup>Genuine mental prayer leads us to the spirit of true worship, unites us profoundly with Christ, and continually intensifies the effects of the sacred liturgy in the spiritual life.

SC 12; 90; PO  
5; 18; ESa II,  
16,1; 21

II PCO 11

<sup>4</sup>Moreover, so that the spirit of prayer and prayer itself may never grow lukewarm within us, but may burn more intensely from day to day, we must apply ourselves each day to its practice.

CIC 276 §2;  
663 §3

II PCO 11;  
23ff; 27

<sup>5</sup>Let the ministers, the guardians, and others who are entrusted with the care of the spiritual life, do their best to ensure that all the brothers make progress in the knowledge and practice of mental prayer.

PC 13ff

ER V 2; II PCO  
19

<sup>6</sup>Let the brothers draw from the genuine sources of Christian and Franciscan spirituality the spirit of prayer, and prayer

itself, in order to acquire the surpassing knowledge of Jesus Christ.

## 55

II PCO 10ff;  
23; 26; 29; 31ff

<sup>1</sup>The fraternities and the individual brothers, wherever they may be, must make the primacy of the spirit and life of prayer a reality as required by the words and example of Saint Francis and by genuine Capuchin tradition.

CIC 578; 587  
§1; 663 §1

<sup>2</sup>It is of the greatest importance to form one's conscience about the vital necessity of personal prayer. Each brother, wherever he may be, is to make sufficient time each day for mental prayer, for example, one whole hour.

StatAbr 2

<sup>3</sup>Let provincial and local chapters ensure that all brothers have the necessary time for mental prayer, both in common and in private.

II PCO 6; 20;  
23ff; 29; 34

<sup>4</sup>In local chapters let the fraternity raise the question of the communal and individual prayer of the brothers. The brothers and, first of all, the guardians because of their pastoral role, shall consider themselves mutually responsible for encouraging one another in the life of prayer.

<sup>5</sup>As disciples of Christ, though poor and weak, we persevere in prayer, so that those who are sincerely seeking the Lord may feel drawn to pray with us.

<sup>6</sup>May we also foster among the People of God the spirit and growth of prayer, above all interior prayer. This has been from the beginning the charism of our Capuchin brotherhood and, as history testifies, the seed of genuine renewal. Therefore, let us enthusiastically commit ourselves to become skilled in the art of prayer and to pass it on to others.

<sup>7</sup>Education in prayer and in the experience of God, using a simple method, shall be a feature of our apostolic activity. The effort to make our fraternities genuine schools of prayer will bring great benefits.

NMI 32-34

## 56

II PCO 30

<sup>1</sup>For the continuous renewal of our religious life, all the brothers are to make an annual retreat and have other periods of recollection

<sup>2</sup>To this end, let the ministers and guardians arrange that each brother, even those who live outside a religious house,

has the necessary time and opportunity to do so.

57

I PCO 20

<sup>1</sup>Each fraternity must truly be a praying fraternity. The greatest care should be taken in all circumscriptions to form individual brothers and the fraternities themselves in the spirit and practice of prayer, using suitable means

1Pt 4:10

II PCO 25; V  
PCO 4,11; RH  
1-10

<sup>2</sup>It would be beneficial to establish fraternities of recollection and of contemplation for one or several circumscriptions. The brothers who, in response to the variety of God's grace, make up these fraternities shall, while living in communion with the provincial fraternity, keep in mind what Saint Francis wrote to those wishing to live in a religious way in hermitages.

RH 1

<sup>3</sup>Let these fraternities of recollection be open to all other brothers who periodically wish to spend time there to devote themselves more intensely to the spirit and life of prayer, as God inspires them.

58

RH 3; II PCO  
28; 30

<sup>1</sup>Silence, the faithful guardian of the inner life required by charity in community, shall be highly esteemed in all our fraternities for the preservation of a life of prayer, study, and recollection.

<sup>2</sup>The local chapter is responsible for protecting the atmosphere of prayer and recollection in our fraternities, keeping out whatever might impede it.

59

ER XXII 26

<sup>1</sup>"In the holy love which is God," Saint Francis encourages all the brothers, "after they have overcome every obstacle and put aside all care and anxiety," to resolve "to serve, love, honour, and adore the Lord God with a clean heart and a pure mind."

LtOrd 233;  
PrOF 2-3.5

<sup>2</sup>Welcoming this appeal of our Father and Brother in an open and docile spirit, may we fix our eyes and hearts on God, so that, "inwardly cleansed, interiorly enlightened, and burning with the fire of the Holy Spirit," we may draw all people to the love of things invisible. In this way, a world athirst for God will be enlightened by the knowledge of the Lord and be filled with His heavenly bliss.

PVINc

ER XXII 27

<sup>3</sup>Guided by the Spirit, "let us make a home and an abiding dwelling place for Him who is the Lord God Almighty,

Father, Son and Holy Spirit.”

## CHAPTER IV OUR LIFE IN POVERTY

### Article I Our Commitment to Poverty

60

LtOrd 52

<sup>1</sup>God the Most High, perfect Trinity and simple Unity, is a mystery of humility. The pure relationship of love among the divine Persons, which overflows into creation and into salvation history, is the model of all human relationships and the foundation of our life in poverty and humility.

VC 21; CV 54

IPCO III, 1ff;  
IV PCO 36b;  
42-46; V PCO  
29-40; VIPCO  
1; 4

<sup>2</sup>The greatest manifestation of the humility of God is Jesus Christ the Son, who receives everything from the Father and with the Father shares all things in the Spirit. He was sent to bring the Good News to the poor. Though rich, He made Himself poor for our sakes, being born in human likeness, so that we might be enriched by His poverty.

Is 61:1; Mt  
11:27; Lk 4:18;  
10:22; Phil 2:7;  
2Cor 8:9; LG  
8; 39; 42; 46;  
PC 1; 13; PO 6;  
17; GS 72; 88;  
AG 3; 5; SC 5;  
CD 13; CIC  
600

<sup>3</sup>From His being placed at birth in the manger until His death on the cross He loved the poor and, as an example for His disciples, bore witness to the love of the Father who goes in search of them.

SC 19-21

<sup>4</sup>The Church recognises voluntary poverty, especially in religious, as a sign of the following of Christ, and proposes Saint Francis as a prophetic image of gospel poverty.

PC 1; 13; CIC  
222 §2; 600;  
640; 662

PrG; 1C 22; 94;  
1C 84; L3C 25;  
29; LMj II, 4;  
VII 2; XIV 3, 4;  
L3C 19; AP 8;  
2C 214; 217;  
2C 194; VI  
PCO 11

<sup>5</sup>Awestruck by the beauty of God, who is humility, patience, and meekness, Saint Francis was led to choose poverty, which he experienced in the humility of the Incarnation and the charity of the Passion, so that he could follow naked the naked crucified Lord.

Phil 2:6; Ps  
44,3; Jer 11:19;  
2Cor 10:1; VC  
24

<sup>6</sup>The gospel ideal of poverty led Francis to humility of heart, to radical dispossession of self, to compassion for the poor and the weak, and to sharing their life.

61

VIPCO 5

<sup>1</sup>Holding fast to the gospel insights of Saint Francis and to the tradition of the Order, we undertake as our specific responsibility to follow the poverty of our Lord Jesus Christ in simplicity of life and joyful austerity, in hard work, trust in Providence, and in charity towards all.

ER IX 1-5; LtOrd 5	<sup>2</sup> Poverty, chosen in order to follow Christ, qualifies us to share in His relationship to the Father as a son, as a brother, and as a servant in the midst of people. In doing so, poverty leads us to live in solidarity with the little ones of this world.	Phil 2:7; Mt 19:12; Jn 1:1
ER VII 13; IX 1-3; LR VI 4; VI PCO 1-6	<sup>3</sup> Commitment to the gospel ideal of poverty calls us to be available in love and to conform ourselves with Christ poor and crucified Who came into the world to serve.	Mt 20:28; Mk 10:45; Lk 22:27; LG 44; PC 13; CIC 222 §2; 600; 640; 662
ER VII 13; XVII 17-18; XXIII 1-5; LR VI 1; Adm II 3	<sup>4</sup> We do not claim the gifts of nature and grace as our own as if they were given only for ourselves, but strive to place them entirely at the service of the People of God.	
2C 73; 120; LMj VII 7; L3C 45	<sup>5</sup> We use temporal things gratefully and share them with those in need and, at the same time, give an example of the right use of things to people who are greedy for them.	CIC 222 §2; 600; 640; 662
ER IX 1-3;	<sup>6</sup> We will be genuinely proclaiming to the poor that God is with them to the degree that we are available to them and truly share in their condition.	

## 62

I PCO 3,2ff; 8; VI PCO 12	<sup>1</sup> For our individual and communal poverty to be authentic, it must be the expression of an interior poverty that needs no explanation.	PC 13; PO 17; ESa II,23; CIC 282 §1-2; 578; 586 §1; 587 §1; 600; 631 §1; 635 §2; 640
VII PCO 26	<sup>2</sup> Poverty demands a frugal and simple lifestyle. Let us, therefore, strive to reduce our material needs to a minimum in order to live only on what is necessary, decisively rejecting consumerism in our attitude and practice.	
VII PCO 26; CCFW 24; 6.2; VII PCO 4.	<sup>3</sup> Austerity makes us more amenable to spiritual values, preserves us from anything that weakens our relationship with God and our brothers and sisters, and opens us to solidarity.	
VIPCO 18; ER 5,12-15	<sup>4</sup> Minority demands that we do not seek for ourselves any form of prestige, power or dominion, whether in society, in politics, or in the Church. Rather, let us choose to be servants and subjects of every human creature, accepting the precariousness and vulnerability of our condition as lesser brothers.	Rom 15:27; 12:1; Mt 20:25; Mt 25:31-46; Mk 9:33-37; 10:42-45; Lk 22:24-27; 1Pt 5:3
VIPCO 3	<sup>5</sup> May we, therefore, embrace all the demands of living without anything of our own, conscious that, without minority, poverty is meaningless and becomes pride, just as minority without poverty is a sham.	

## 63

IPCO 1,4; V PCO 28-40; 45; 55; 63-102; VI PCO 21-26	<sup>1</sup> We live in conscious solidarity with the countless poor of the world and, through our apostolic activity encourage people, especially Christians, to undertake works of justice and charity to promote the common good.	CIC 222 §1-2; 528 §1; 672; 747 §2; 768 §2
VIPCO 9-10	<sup>2</sup> Worthy of praise are those brothers who, in particular local situations, live with the poor and share in their conditions and aspirations, thereby encouraging them to work for better social and cultural conditions and to hope for the good things that never end.	
VIPCO 9	<sup>3</sup> Nevertheless, let it be clear that by preferring to choose the poor we are challenged as a brotherhood and required to make joint decisions leading to concrete action.	
<b>64</b>		
VIPCO 4	<sup>1</sup> We practise common life and gladly share with one another whatever is given to individuals.	CIC 602; 607 §2; 619
	<sup>2</sup> In virtue of our religious profession we are bound to hand over to the fraternity all assets that come to us in any way, including salaries, pensions, grants, insurance policies, etc.	CIC 619; 668 §3, §5; 670
VIPCO 44; VII PCO 9	<sup>3</sup> The fraternity provides each brother with food, clothing and whatever is necessary for the exercise of his office. Out of respect for the same dignity enjoyed by all the brothers, we avoid all forms of privilege and seek equity rather than equality. In addition, may we always be mindful that our lifestyle must be a witness of gospel poverty, minority, and brotherhood in the diverse social and cultural contexts.	
2C 185	<sup>4</sup> Let the ministers and guardians give to the brothers an example of minority in safeguarding poverty and promoting its observance.	CIC 619
<b>65</b>		
IPCO 3,2ff; 8; VIPCO 12; LR IV 2	<sup>1</sup> Since commitment to gospel poverty is essential to our form of life, in our general, provincial, and local chapters we make decisions about how to observe it ever more faithfully in ways that are adapted to the changing times and the diversity of places. For this reason, these ways are always in need of reform.	PC 13; PO 17; ESa II,23; CIC 282 §1-2; 578; 586 §1; 587 §1; 600; 631 §1; 635 §2; 640
	<sup>2</sup> With mutual charity and docility to the Spirit of the Lord, may we frequently evaluate our way of observing poverty; our personal and communal style of shall always be simple and austere, the witness of our fraternities prophetic and credible, and our mission to the poor generous and authentic.	



## Article II

### Poverty in Property and Money

#### 66

LR VI 1; 2C56;  
LMj VII 2; AC  
13; IPCO III.9

<sup>1</sup>Let us observe the poverty we have promised, remembering the intentions and words of Saint Francis: “The brothers shall appropriate nothing to themselves, neither house, nor place, nor anything at all.”

1C 76; 2C 83;  
LMj VIII 5

<sup>2</sup>May we use temporal resources for the necessities of life, the apostolate, and works of charity, especially toward the poor.

LG 8; PO 17;  
CIC 1254 §1;  
1285

ER VI 2; Test  
24; LMj VII 9;  
2C 165; 217

<sup>3</sup>Therefore “as pilgrims and strangers in this world, while on our way to the land of the living, let us serve the Lord in poverty and humility.”

1Pt 2:11

#### 67

ER XXII 9;  
XXIII 8-11, 25-  
26; 1C 29; 2C  
16-17; LMj III  
7, 10; L3C 36;  
50-51

<sup>1</sup>As children of the eternal Father, putting aside anxious care, may we rely on divine providence and entrust ourselves to God’s infinite goodness.

Mt 6:25-34; PC  
13

2C 45; LMj VII  
9; AC 32

<sup>2</sup>Therefore, we do not store up material things excessively, even those necessary for sustenance.

CIC 634 §2

ER VII 3-6; LR  
V; Test 20; 2C  
161; LMj V 6;  
VI PCO 14-16

<sup>3</sup>We acquire the means and resources for the necessities of life and the apostolate chiefly through our own work.

ER VII 16; VIII  
3; IX 1-9; Test  
22; 2C 70-71;  
LMj VII 8; VI  
PCO 20

<sup>4</sup>Should these be lacking, “we may have recourse to the table of the Lord” with confidence, according to the laws of the universal and particular Church. While we seek alms from the people, we give them a witness of brotherhood, minority, poverty, and Franciscan joy.

CIC 1265 §1

#### 68

ER VII 7; VIII  
3-12; LR VI;  
VI PCO 3; 6

<sup>1</sup>Saint Francis, true to his own charism of poverty and minority in the Church, commanded his sons not to accept money in any way, since it was a sign of wealth, a temptation to greed, and an instrument of domination in the world.

Mt 10:9; Lk  
9:3; CIC 586-  
587; 631 §1

VI PCO 29;

<sup>2</sup>However, because times have changed and the use of money has become necessary, the brothers, wanting to fulfil the will of our Seraphic Father, use money only as an ordinary means of exchange and social life, necessary even for the poor, and do so according to the prescriptions of our particular law.

#### 69

ER VIII 3,7,10;

CIC 619; 670

VIPCO 29

<sup>1</sup>The ministers and guardians, whose duty it is, in virtue of their office, to care for the needs of the brothers, may use money for the necessities of life and for works of the apostolate and charity.

<sup>2</sup>All the brothers, in accordance with the norms of each circumscription, have an obligation to account for the money entrusted to them for the necessities of life.

CIC 600

<sup>3</sup>But for everyone, be they ministers or guardians or the other brothers, the use of money must always be such that it does not exceed what is truly compatible with being poor.

<sup>4</sup>To remain faithful to poverty, the brothers shall not ask their friends or relatives for money or other things, nor receive gifts for their exclusive use without the permission of the guardian or minister.

## 70

VIPCO 37

<sup>1</sup>The ministers, with the consent of their council, may make use of insurance policies and other forms of social security where these are prescribed by ecclesiastical or civil authority, either for everyone or for members of certain categories, or are commonly used by the poor of the area.

PO 21; CIC  
668 §3; 1284  
§1

<sup>2</sup>But let them diligently avoid all those forms of security which have the appearance of luxury or profit-making in the area in which they live.

CIC 634 §2;  
640

<sup>3</sup>It is appropriate, however, that the ministers and guardians, like people of modest means, deposit whatever money is really necessary in banks or similar institutions, observing the precepts of our proper law.

CIC 1284 §2;  
1294 §2

<sup>4</sup>But they may not accept foundations, perpetual legacies, or inheritances to which perpetual rights and obligations are attached.

CIC 1304,  
1305

## 71

IC 39; LMj IV  
7; L3C 45; I  
PCO III, 6ff; VI  
PCO 7

<sup>1</sup>Let the brothers show people by their life that voluntary poverty liberates them from greed, the root of all evil, and from anxious concern for the future.

Mt 6:19ff; 1Tm  
6:10; PC 13;  
CIC 600

<sup>2</sup>Therefore, the ministers and guardians shall carefully avoid any financial speculation or accumulation, except for a modest margin of financial security.

Mt 6:19ff; CIC  
286; 634 §2;  
672

VIPCO 12-13

<sup>3</sup>For every use of resources, including money, the circumscriptions, fraternities, and brothers shall apply a

precise and practical principle: the minimum necessary, not the maximum allowed. It shall be applied in accordance with the different social conditions in which they live.

I PCO II,2; III, 1ff; 10; V PCO 38; VI PCO 21-24

<sup>4</sup>So that the brothers do not become degenerate sons of Saint Francis by keeping things unjustly, let them hand over resources not needed for the fraternity to the ministers, for the needs of the circumscription and of the Order, or for distribution to the poor, or for social development, according to the norms established by the provincial chapter. Let the brothers frequently reflect on all of this in the local chapter.

PC 13; GS 69ff; ESa II,23; CIC 222 §2; 640

CCFW 6,2; VI PCO 31; VII PCO 26

<sup>5</sup>In the local chapter let the brothers, according to the spirit of the *Constitutions*, talk about the correct use of resources regarding food, clothing, gifts made to individuals and to the community, the use of the media and technology, travel and similar matters.

CIC 600; 634 §2; 635 §2

VIPCO 11-12

<sup>6</sup>Let us also reflect on what means we use to carry out our tasks and ministries, always choosing those that are suited to our state as lesser brothers.

## 72

ER IX 10-11; LR VI 7-8; VIPCO 22; CCFW (2.2

<sup>1</sup>Following the teaching of Saint Francis, in a spirit of minority, let us trustingly make known to one another our every need, recognizing our mutual dependence as an essential component of brotherly communion and a source of mutual support.

VIPCO 21; SRS 38; SMD 3.1

<sup>2</sup>We practise solidarity, a preeminent expression of brotherly love, and resolutely commit ourselves to the good of each and every person, because we are all responsible for one another.

CV 38-39;

I PCO II,2

<sup>3</sup>In case of need, individual fraternities of the same area and even circumscriptions of the Order shall promptly and in a spirit of sacrifice share even their necessary resources.

PC 13

VIPCO 21-28; 36; 27

<sup>4</sup>We express our solidarity with all the brothers and sisters of the Franciscan Family, and, in collaboration with them, share with all people of good will the commitment to promote justice and a fair distribution of resources.

<sup>5</sup>We promote a culture of sharing, raising people's awareness that resources are meant for everyone and must be used with a sense of responsibility for future generations. In this way we endorse genuine economic and social development based on ethical and religious principles, founded on a heightened

sense of God, of the dignity of the human person, and of justice and peace among peoples.

### Article III Poverty in Our Buildings

#### 73

ER VII 13; LR  
VI 2; Test 24;  
2C 56-57; LMj  
VII 2; VI PCO  
38-40

<sup>1</sup>We must live in humble and poor houses, always residing there “as pilgrims and strangers.”

ER VII 13; 2C  
61; AC 32; LMj  
VII 9; V PCO  
28; VI PCO 12-  
13; VII PCO  
27b; 49

<sup>2</sup>When choosing the site of a new house, let us not lose sight of our life of poverty, the living conditions of the poor of the region, the spiritual good of the brothers, and the requirements of the various ministries that are to be exercised. The houses should be constructed in such a way that they are accessible to all, especially to ordinary people.

PO 17; CIC  
610 §1; 640

IPCO II 12

<sup>3</sup>Houses should be suited to the real needs of the fraternity and its ministries, and be conducive to prayer, work, and fraternal life.

CIC 610 §1;  
640

VIPCO 38;  
IPCO 53;  
VIPCO 38; 40

<sup>4</sup>In our chapters, let us frequently assess how far our houses correspond to a life that is truly poor and lowly. Let us also discuss the social use of resources entrusted to the fraternities, whether money, houses, or lands. We shall gladly use these in the service of people, taking care not to accumulate either money or real estate.

FLC 50, 67;  
VC 63

#### 74

Test 4-5; 11;  
1LtCus;  
2LtCus;  
LtOrd 14-17

<sup>1</sup>Churches shall be simple, dignified and clean. Great care is to be taken to see that they foster a life of prayer and brotherhood, are appropriate for liturgical celebrations, and for the active participation of the faithful.

PO 5; SC 124;  
CIC 1216

<sup>2</sup>Sacristies, too, shall be suitable and sufficiently equipped for the liturgical functions. Everything used for divine worship is to be dignified and in conformity with liturgical norms without offending poverty and simplicity.

## Article IV The Administration of Resources

### 75

- VIPCO 7      <sup>1</sup>In order to safeguard the observance of poverty and minority, which is our choice as the family of Saint Francis, let us also administer the resources entrusted to our care in a responsible, correct, and prudent manner.
- VIPCO 30      <sup>2</sup>Transparency distinguishes our individual and fraternal life, and makes trust, sincerity, and communion grow among us. It should also characterise our administration of resources at every level, and commit us to account for everything we receive and use.
- V PCO 29; 45;  
GrW 7.3      <sup>3</sup>Since we share responsibility for the life of the brotherhood, we foster the active participation of all the brothers, so that decision-making, even in the area of administration, may be the fruit of joint reflection and shared as widely as possible, while respecting the roles and competence proper to each.
- VIPCO 29; 37      <sup>4</sup>Let us always remember that the living witness of our life must prevail over efficiency and productivity.
- VIPCO 8;  
VII PCO 6; 40;  
51;  
CCFW 6,1      <sup>5</sup>During formation, beginning with the time of initiation, due care shall be taken to ensure that the brothers acquire a correct understanding of the spirit, the principles and the practices of a fraternal economy as our life in poverty and minority requires.

### 76

- <sup>1</sup>In the general and provincial curias there shall be bursars appointed by the respective minister with the consent of his council for the administration of money and other resources. CIC 636 §1
- <sup>2</sup>Each house shall also have a local bursar, appointed by the minister with the consent of his council.
- VIPCO 41      <sup>3</sup>Bursars shall be well qualified and discharge their office in a manner consistent with our way of life under the direction and supervision of their respective superior, following the norms of universal and proper law.
- VII PCO 51      <sup>4</sup>Because of the importance and risks involved in the duties entrusted to them, administrators and bursars shall not ordinarily remain in the same office for too many years.
- I PCO II 16, 25,  
34, 37      <sup>5</sup>When it is appropriate, we may use the services of competent lay people in the administration of resources and

their work shall be supervised. In the case of social or charitable works, we may entrust the administration to lay people, defining their responsibilities, and ensuring that the nature and aims of the work are respected, while leaving the pastoral management in our hands.

VIPCO 25, 37

<sup>6</sup>We must scrupulously observe the norms of canon and civil law governing the administration of resources, as well as in contracts, and the alienation of property, following strict ethical principles in conformity with the social teaching of the Church.

CIC 635 §1;  
638 §3; 639 §5;  
1292 §3; 1295;  
CV 45

<sup>7</sup>The Order shall periodically review the principles and practical guidelines it follows for sound and just administration and in the management of financial resources. Where appropriate, it may issue relevant directives in the form of special statutes. The same shall be done in each circumscription.

## 77

LBL 3; 1C 15;  
2C 12; 14; 61;  
64; LMj II 3;  
VII 1; L3C 19

<sup>1</sup>Called to the gospel way of poverty, let us accustom ourselves to endure privations, after the example of Christ and mindful of Saint Francis, who wished to be so poor that, stripped of everything and free of sentimental attachments, he could entrust himself to the Father who cares for us.

Mt 6:23; Lk 12:  
30; Phil 4:12;  
LG 42

<sup>2</sup>Neither do we wish to be numbered among those who are not truly poor, those who love to be poor as long as they lack nothing.

<sup>3</sup>Let us remember that gospel poverty and its perfection consist principally in being totally available for God and for people.

ER XVII 17;  
PrG 5

<sup>4</sup>Therefore, we are not to be inordinately attached to earthly goods, but to use this world as though not using it. With praise and thanksgiving let us give back all that is good to the Lord our God, Most High and All-Powerful, Who is “all our wealth and sufficiency.”

1Cor 7:31

## CHAPTER V

### OUR MANNER OF WORKING

78

IV PCO 49-51;  
VI PCO 14

1 God the Father, who has made all things with wisdom and love, calls everyone through work to share in the enterprise of creation. Through work, men and women conform to the original plan of God, grow in personal maturity, help their neighbour, and cooperate in the betterment of society.

MisPref IV; LG 41; 46; GS 9; 32; 34-35; 37ff; 43; 67; Gn 1:28; LE 25

2 Jesus Christ, the Word of God, by assuming the human condition, also experienced the toil involved in work. He endowed work with a new dignity, raising it to be an instrument of salvation for all, both by working with His own hands and alleviating human misery, and by proclaiming the Kingdom of God.

Jn 1:14; Heb 2:17; Phil 2:7; LE 26

3 The Holy Spirit, who is creator and sanctifier, inspires the Church to proclaim the Gospel of work, casting the light of revelation on the efforts of those who strive to affirm the genuine value of work and protect the dignity of the human person.

GS 26; 33; LE 6; 7; 25; 26

ER VII 3-7;  
10ff; LR V;  
Test 20-21; 1C 39; 2C 161;  
LMj V 6

4 Saint Francis, by following Jesus Christ, worked with his own hands. He declared his own wish to work, considering work in a unique way a grace to be welcomed and lived with gratitude. Therefore he strongly encouraged his brothers "to flee idleness, the enemy of the soul, and work faithfully and devotedly."

CIC 578; 586 §1; 587 §1; 631 §1

LR V; LR V 1;  
CtExh 10-12;  
Test 20

5 As his faithful followers and in keeping with Capuchin tradition, we value "the grace of working." Each day we accept its toil responsibly and gladly as a way of praising God and serving His people. We commit ourselves to work diligently, as true lesser ones, sharing the lot of those who must work for their living.

LG 31; 34; GS 30; PC 13; ET 20

6 Let us live a genuine spirituality of work and promote it among the people. Work receives its clearest light from the Paschal Mystery of Christ and is a means to grow in holiness. By enduring the toil of each day, we play our part with the Son of God in the redemption of humanity and the fulfilment of God's Kingdom.

LE 27; GS 39; 67; CSDC 263-266;

7 We give witness to the human meaning of work done in freedom of spirit and restored to its true nature as a means of support and service. By living this essential dimension of

VC 89; 82; 90; ET 20

evangelical poverty, we counter the challenges of individualism and the tendency to reduce work to a tool of mere economic profit.

VII PCO 33

<sup>8</sup>Schooled in the social doctrine of the Church, we work to safeguard the dignity of workers and of work itself, showing particular concern for those unable to find employment.

## 79

ER VII 4-6,10;  
VIII 3; VI PCO  
14

<sup>1</sup>Work is the fundamental means by which we support ourselves and exercise charity.

CIC 600

IV PCO 18-21;  
V PCO 23; VI  
PCO 15

<sup>2</sup>Therefore, let each of us make his God-given talents bear fruit. According to our age and state of health, let us expend our energies fully and joyfully for the good of the brotherhood and in the interest of solidarity with the poor, with whom we willingly share the fruits of our work.

Mt 18:24;  
25:15, 16, 20,  
22, 28

VI PCO 14; 21-  
22,24; 15

<sup>3</sup>May the work of each brother be an expression of the entire brotherhood and manifest communion in pursuit of its goals. Therefore, let the brothers take on and carry out their activities after suitable communal discernment and with the blessing of obedience, so that the work is always done as a mandate from the fraternity.

VI PCO 15

<sup>4</sup>Let the brothers not be possessive of their work. Rather, let them be committed and open to the needs of the local fraternity, the circumscription, and the Order, and always ready to move on.

## 80

LR V 2;  
VI PCO 17;  
LtAnt 2

<sup>1</sup>Let us take care not to make work itself our final goal, nor to become inordinately attached to it, so as “not to extinguish in ourselves the spirit of holy prayer and devotion, to which all time-bound things must contribute.”

CIC 661; 663  
§1; 673; 675 §1

Adm XXVII 4;  
IV PCO 70;  
VI PCO 17

<sup>2</sup>Therefore, we avoid excessive activity, which compromises union with God, leads to loss of our sense of purpose, and is an obstacle to fraternal life.

Ts 21; ER VII  
5; 2C 75; VI  
PCO 17

<sup>3</sup>Similarly, like Saint Francis, we pay careful attention to the apostle’s warning: “Whoever does not work, let him not eat.” Let us, therefore, avoid laziness, which lives off the work of others, leads to mediocrity in the spiritual life, and makes us idle in God’s field.

Const 1536 III,  
pp 7-8;

<sup>4</sup>Let us, therefore, lovingly direct all our intentions and all our energies to God and, in the celebration of the Eucharist, as we unite ourselves to the sacrifice of Christ, offer to the

LG 31; 34



Father the toil and the fruits of our daily work.

## 81

- VIPCO 14-15 1There is a variety of kinds of work which suit people differently, according to each one's capacity and the special gifts of God. CIC 677 §1
- IV PCO 18-21 2We undertake various forms of ministry and service in so far as they are compatible with our fraternal life and as the needs of the Church and society require.
- ER VII 1-2;  
Test 20-21 3Works that more clearly manifest poverty, humility, and brotherhood are especially fitting for us; but in fact, we do not consider any type of work of lesser dignity or value than another.
- LR V 2;  
VIPCO 15 4So that "the grace of working" may be more fruitful for ourselves and others, let us take care to maintain a community character in the various things we do, and be ready to help one another by working together. In this way, we also grow in conversion of heart.
- 5Furthermore, may we always keep in mind our apostolic calling, so that in everything we do, we give witness to Christ before the people. CIC 607 §3; 673; 758

## 82

- VIPCO 15 1Whatever their responsibility or office, let the brothers strive throughout their lives to further their spiritual, doctrinal, and professional education, and to develop their own talents, so that our Order may be continually equipped to respond to its calling in the Church. Therefore, let intellectual endeavour be respected in the same way as any other kind of work. CIC 661
- VIPCO 15-16 2According to the Order's tradition, let the brothers appreciate manual work. With due regard for the tasks entrusted to each, let them willingly apply themselves to it, both for their own growth and for the common good, especially when fraternal charity or obedience requires it. CIC 578
- 3Let the ministers and guardians, discerning the gifts and talents of each brother and the needs of the brotherhood and of the Church, offer them as far as possible the opportunity of acquiring expertise in particular fields, and willingly provide time and assistance for this purpose. CIC 661
- VIPCO 19; LR  
VI 2; Test 24 4In addition, when assigning offices and duties, the ministers and guardians, for the good of the Church, of the Order, and

of the brothers themselves, shall carefully take into account their individual aptitudes and skills and not easily remove them from activities in which they are experts, so long as fraternal life is safeguarded and obedience is respected by all.

### 83

VII PCO 6; 9;  
VI PCO 16

1Our life of poverty and minority calls for everyone to take part, as far as possible, in domestic chores in a spirit of brotherly communion. Such participation fosters mutual dependence and support, distinguishes our brotherhood, and confers credibility upon our life.

2No brother's work dispenses him from caring for the house and the daily services of the brotherhood. We accept them as an integral part of our ordinary life.

3Let the ministers and fraternities pay particular attention to this dimension of domestic simplicity and everyday service.

VIPCO 16

4Only when it is really necessary, do we have recourse to outsider helpers for domestic work. The fraternity, as far as possible, takes part in their selection, guided by prudent principles. Let them be treated with respect, courtesy, fairness, and in accordance with the law.

### 84

I PCO 1,4; VI  
PCO 18

1Depending on the differing situations in the circumscriptions, and in conformity with the norms issued by the minister with the consent of the council, or by the Conference of major superiors, and by the local ordinary, brothers may also work for people outside the order, when apostolic zeal and the urgency to alleviate our own needs or others' call for it.

LG 31; PO 8

ER VII 1-2

2But let the brothers remember the exhortation of Saint Francis to accept only those occupations which better exemplify our vocation to serve and our condition as men "who are simple and subject to all," avoiding the pursuit of prestige and power.

3In addition, let it always be the case that the brothers engaged in outside employment live in communion with the brotherhood.

ER VII 1-2; VI  
PCO 25

4They are to give gospel witness to everyone, make the charity of Christ visible, and give aid to those in need while never involving themselves imprudently in matters unbecoming our state.

CIC 285; 287;  
289; 1392

## 85

- |                   |   |                |
|-------------------|---|----------------|
| VIPCO 15          | 1What the brothers receive as payment for their work must always be handed over in full to the fraternity. Let the work of the brothers, however, not be valued merely on the basis of the payment received for it. | CIC 668 §3, §5 |
| Test 21           | 2Let us not engage in activities that arouse a craving for profit or vainglory contrary to the spirit of poverty and humility.  |                |
| ER VII 7; Test 22 | 3Let us guard against transforming work into a means of accumulating goods and money. Indeed, let us always be ready to work without payment whenever charity requires it.  | VC 89-90       |

## 86

- |                      |  |                                   |
|----------------------|--|-----------------------------------|
| 2C 125-129; 178; 211 | <p>1We recognise the importance of rest. It too helps us to live “the grace of work.” Each day let the brothers enjoy appropriate recreation in common to foster life as brothers and renew their energies. Let everyone have a period of time for himself.</p> <p>2According to regional customs and possibilities, time for vacation should be provided and spent in a way consistent with our state as lesser brothers.</p> | LE 25; 61; 67;<br>PO 8; ESa II,26 |
|----------------------|--|-----------------------------------|

## 87

- |  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
|  | <p>1The Apostle Paul warns: “While we have the time, let us do good to all.”</p> <p>2Conscious of the precious gift of time, of the uniqueness of each moment, and of the auspicious opportunities, let us, therefore, live each day of our lives to the full.</p> <p>3To avoid wasting these opportunities, let us frequently ascertain whether our work and occupations meet the needs of the present moment, and be open to the future through wise foresight and planning.</p> <p>4Let us scrutinise the signs of the times in the light of the Gospel, since the Lord comes to meet us in time and makes us grow towards the fullness of salvation. Let us respond to God’s gifts each day with vigilance and patience.</p> | Gal 6:10<br><br><br><br><br><br><br>GS 5; PC 2d;<br>CIC 677 §1;<br>VC 11<br><br><br>Mt 16:2-3; Lk 12:35, 56-57;<br>GS 4; 11; 44,2;<br>CIC 600 |
|--|--|---|

# CHAPTER VI

## OUR LIFE IN BROTHERHOOD

88

V PCO 15-28

<sup>1</sup>Life in brotherhood has its foundation in the mystery of love of the perfect Trinity and the holy unity of Father, Son, and Spirit.

VC 41

<sup>2</sup>In the fullness of time, the Father sent His Son, the firstborn among many brothers, so that through His death and resurrection, and by the gift of the Holy Spirit, He might form humanity into a brotherhood.

Rom 8:29; Col 1:18; LG 9; 28; GS 24; 32; PC 1; 15

<sup>3</sup>The Church, flowing from the side of Christ as the sacrament of unity, is essentially a mystery of communion, whose richness and depth are reflected in our living as brothers, a human space in which the Trinity dwells.

VC 41-42

<sup>4</sup>That same life of brotherhood, the leaven of ecclesial communion, foreshadows the definitive unity of the People of God and provides testimony essential for the Church's apostolic mission.

FLC 10 2b, 3d

<sup>5</sup>For this reason, the Church encourages institutes whose members, rooted in and built on love, live a life as brothers in community, assisting one another to be faithful to their vocation, and in this way promoting the human dignity of the children of God in freedom.

CIC 574-575; 602; 607 §2; ESa II, V, 25; LG 43; 46; PC 15

ER I 1; VI 3;  
LR I 1; II 1,7;  
VI 7-9; XII 1;  
Test 14; I PCO  
II, 11; IV PCO  
14; 31;

<sup>6</sup>Saint Francis, "by divine inspiration," initiated a form of gospel life which he called a brotherhood, and chose to model it on the life of Christ and His disciples.

<sup>7</sup>Therefore, we who profess this form of life truly constitute an Order of brothers.

<sup>8</sup>For this reason, united by faith in God our Father and nourished at the table of the divine word and the Eucharist, we love one another, so that the world may know that we are disciples of Christ.

Jn 3:13-23; 4:11; 13:34-35; Rom 13:8; 2Jn 5; PC 15; PO 8; GS 24

### Article I

#### Our Commitment to Life in Brotherhood

89

Mt 18:20; Jn

<sup>1</sup>As brothers given to each other by the Lord and endowed with different gifts, let us accept one another with a grateful heart.

13:34

Const 1536  
XII; ER XVIII  
1; Test 14; 2LtF  
43; LMin 17;  
1C 24; 27-28;  
IV PCO 15ff;  
22; 33;  
V PCO 23,25ff

<sup>2</sup>For this reason, wherever we are gathered together in the name of Jesus, let us be of one heart and one mind, always striving to advance to greater perfection. To be true disciples of Christ, let us love one another from the heart, bearing one another's burdens and faults, applying ourselves without interruption to the love of God and charity toward our brothers, striving to give an example of virtue to one another and to everyone, and mastering our own passions and evil inclinations.

Rom 12:6,10;  
13:8; Gal 6:2;  
Eph 4:2; Heb  
4:32; 1Pt 1:22;  
1Jn 3:13,23;  
2Jn 5; Mt  
18:20; Act  
4:32; 2Cor  
13:11; PC 15;  
ESa II,25; FLC  
9

SalV 12; ER  
4,4; 6,2; 10,1;  
11,6,9; 14,6;  
Adm XII; XIV;  
LMin 17; 1C  
30; 39; 2C 180  
;

<sup>3</sup>In order to learn how to be brothers, we walk in humility always imbued with a spirit of mutual understanding and sincere esteem. Let us cultivate dialogue among ourselves, trustfully sharing experiences, and manifesting our needs to one another.

PVINm; FLC  
11ff

LMj III 7; ER  
IX 10; RSC 8,  
15; Adm III 5-6

<sup>4</sup>We are to be particularly committed to the local chapter as a primary means of expressing the nature of our fraternal communion and promoting its growth. In it, the loving obedience, a distinctive characteristic of our brotherhood, is well expressed. Through it, the brothers are at the service of one another, the creativity of everyone is fostered, and the personal gifts of each one contribute to the good of all.

## 90

ER VI 3; XXII  
33; Test 14ff; I  
PCO II,1; V  
PCO 20; 99

<sup>1</sup>By reason of the same vocation, the brothers are equal. Therefore, according to the *Rule*, the *Testament* and the earliest custom of the Capuchins, all of us are called brothers without distinction.

CIC 208; 578

ER IV; VI 3-4

<sup>2</sup>The precedence necessary for the service of the brotherhood flows from the responsibilities and offices actually held.

LR VII 2; V  
PCO 99

<sup>3</sup>Moreover, within the Order, the province and the local fraternity, all offices and responsibilities must be open to all brothers, bearing in mind, however, that certain acts require sacred orders.

CIC 129 §1;  
274 §1

IPCO II,2; V  
PCO 23; VI  
PCO 16

<sup>4</sup>Let all the brothers help one another according to the gifts each one has received, even with daily household chores.

1Pt 4:10

## 91

IPCO II,6

<sup>1</sup>Let us take care that age differences in our fraternities

contribute to a spirit of harmony and complementarily.

<sup>2</sup>Let us show loving care and gratitude to the brothers of advanced age.

<sup>3</sup>Let the younger brothers show the respect due to brothers of greater age and willingly profit from their experience. For their part, let the elder brothers welcome new and sound forms of life and activity. May both—young and old—in this way enrich one another through their mutual sharing.

## 92

ER VIII; X; LR  
VI 9; Adm  
XXIV; 2C 175;  
MPer 42; 90;  
VI PCO 29

<sup>1</sup>When a brother falls sick, let the guardian, following the example and teaching of Saint Francis, immediately provide for all his bodily and spiritual needs with fraternal charity. Let him entrust the sick brother to the care of a competent brother, and to a doctor or to other competent persons, if the case requires it.

ER IX 11; LR  
VI 8

<sup>2</sup>Let each brother, reflecting that the person of the suffering Christ is present in the sick, consider what he would wish to be done for him in case of sickness. Let him recall what Saint Francis wrote in the *Rule*: “no mother is as tender and caring toward her son, as each one of us should be toward our spiritual brother.”

Mt 7:12, 25:45;  
Lk 6:31

ER X 1ff; LR  
VI 8-9

<sup>3</sup>Therefore, let each one commit himself to take care of a sick brother, to visit him willingly, and to comfort him as a brother.

<sup>4</sup>Let the minister and guardian frequently and fraternally visit the sick brothers and not neglect to provide for their spiritual care, either personally or through another. If they see that the brother is seriously ill, let them prudently inform him of his condition and prepare him to receive the sacraments.

CIC 619; 1004  
§1

## 93

ER X; 2C 185;  
AC 43. ER  
10,3-4

<sup>1</sup>Let the sick brothers remember our state as lesser brothers.

LG 11; 41; AG  
38; AA 16

ER 10,3-4

<sup>2</sup>They shall leave their care to their doctor and to those who take care of them so that they do not violate holy poverty with injury to their souls but give thanks to the Creator for everything.

Eph 5:20;  
1Thes 5:18

ER 10,3; 23,7;  
Adm V 8; MP  
42; 91; 2C 213

3. Let them remember that, by freely accepting the burdens of sickness and infirmity, they are invited to conform themselves more closely to the suffering Christ, as their

Rom 8:29; Phil  
3:10; Col 1:24

vocation demands. With the heart of a son let them seek to experience in themselves some small part of what He suffered. Let them imitate Francis, who praised the Lord for those who patiently endure trials and infirmity according to His most holy will. Let them also remember that, by completing in their own body what is lacking in the suffering of Christ the Redeemer, they can contribute to the salvation of the People of God, to the evangelisation of the world and to the strengthening of our life as brothers.

#### 94

<sup>1</sup>When forming fraternities, the personalities of the brothers and the needs of life and the apostolate shall be taken into account.

EBr 2,3

<sup>2</sup>Let the ministers and guardians, who are the first to inspire and safeguard our form of life, constantly nurture life together as brothers.

FLC 50; PC 15;  
PO 17; CIC  
607 §2; 619

PGFP IV,  
17.2.2

<sup>3</sup>As members of the same family, let all the brothers take an active part in the shared activities of the fraternity, above all in community prayer. Let them willingly give time to their brothers, arrange duties by common agreement and promote working together.

ET 32-34; FLC  
18-22; PI 27

GBCW 20

<sup>4</sup>In this way, by supporting one another on our common journey toward holiness, we shall turn our fraternities into homes and schools of communion.

FLC 25; VC  
41-42; 45; EA  
43-47; SAFC  
2-29

#### 95

<sup>1</sup>In order to cultivate the silence required for prayer and study and to preserve the privacy of our brotherly life together, the entrance of outsiders shall be regulated with prudence and discretion.

CIC 667 §1

RH 2

<sup>2</sup>To safeguard religious life, an enclosure or area reserved for the brothers alone, shall be maintained in our houses.

<sup>3</sup>Those who come to our houses shall ordinarily be received in visiting rooms prepared in keeping with norms of simplicity, prudence, and hospitality.

<sup>4</sup>In accordance with the norms enacted by the provincial chapter, laymen who wish to share more closely in our life, whether for prayer, fraternal life or the apostolate, may be admitted to the fraternity.

VC 54-56

ER VII 13ff  
IPCO II,15

<sup>5</sup>Let our fraternities not confine their charity within their own four walls, but, with gospel concern, be open to peoples'

CIC 222 §2

needs, depending upon the purpose of the particular house.

## 96

<sup>1</sup>The media contribute to personal growth and to the spread of the Kingdom of God. Let the brothers select and employ them with mature discernment and moderation, avoiding anything that is against faith, morality, and the consecrated life.

IM 9; 14; 16;  
CIC 666

<sup>2</sup>The entire fraternity, under the guidance of the guardian, shall engage in careful discernment about the media, so that poverty, prayer and silence, fraternal communion and work are safeguarded and, at the same time, media's contribution to the well-being and the work of all is ensured.

<sup>3</sup>The brothers, especially the ministers and guardians, shall take care to communicate by appropriate means the more important events in the fraternities, circumscriptions, and the entire Order.

## 97

<sup>1</sup>Before leaving the house, the brothers are to ask permission of the guardian according to the custom of the circumscription.

CIC 665 §1

<sup>2</sup>With regard to travel, let each brother, before asking permission, conscientiously weigh the reasons for his request in light of our state of poverty, of spiritual and fraternal life, and of the witness we are called to give to people.

<sup>3</sup>Ministers and guardians shall be prudent when giving permission to travel.

ER XV 2; LR  
III 10-14

<sup>4</sup>The brothers shall be mindful of our state of poverty and humility in the means of transportation.

## 98

<sup>1</sup>All the brothers who visit us are to be received with brotherly charity and a warm welcome.

<sup>2</sup>Wherever possible, brothers who are travelling shall be willing to stay in houses of the Order, at least to spend the night, and share in the life of the fraternity, complying with local customs.

<sup>3</sup>Brothers who are sent to another province for formation or other reasons shall be received by the ministers and guardians and by the local fraternities as their members. They shall take full part in the life of the fraternity, keeping



in mind the prescriptions of n. 121, 5 of the Constitutions.

99

IPCO II,7ff; II  
PCO 35

<sup>1</sup>Brothers who, with the blessing of obedience, have to live outside the house because of special circumstances, shall enjoy the benefits of that fraternity to which they have been assigned, since they are members of it.

CIC 103; 665  
§1

<sup>2</sup>Let them always feel part of the brotherhood and, in turn, not neglect to contribute to the spiritual growth and economic support of the Order.

<sup>3</sup>As true brothers in Saint Francis, let them visit our houses and love to stay there for a while, especially for reasons of spiritual recollection.

LR VI 7

<sup>4</sup>Let them be received with charity and offered whatever spiritual and material help they need.

ER IV 2;LR X  
1

<sup>5</sup>Let the ministers and guardians care for them with fraternal concern, and visit and encourage them as often as possible.

100

VII PCO 13

<sup>1</sup>As members of an Order of brothers, we nourish in ourselves a sense of belonging to the entire Capuchin family.

IPCO 63

<sup>2</sup>We gladly engage in and develop collaboration among our circumscriptions, supporting the vitality of our charism and the good of the Order over the survival of structures.

VII PCO 13

<sup>3</sup>In a spirit of brotherhood, mutual dependence, and minority, individual circumscriptions shall respond to the needs of the others and serve one another.

<sup>4</sup>Inspired by the mobility and itinerancy which are features of our tradition, let the brothers, in the obedience of love, be ready to go outside their circumscription.

GBCW 4.2, 7.3

<sup>5</sup>Conscious that Baptism and profession establish bonds among us that are stronger than natural ties, we welcome the manifold riches of diverse cultures, even among ourselves, and promote their coming together in dialogue.

<sup>6</sup>When the good of the Order and the Church or the needs of circumscriptions require, forming fraternities of brothers from different circumscriptions, countries, and nations shall be encouraged. Such fraternities provide favourable opportunities for mutual enrichment, the exchange of spiritual wealth, and effective witness to universal communion.

FLC 32

## 101

IV PCO 17; 33

<sup>1</sup>By God's design, a rich diversity of religious institutes has developed for the good of the Church; this same variety also flourishes in one and the same Franciscan spiritual family. In this family so many brothers and sisters, through the interchange of a life-giving communion, make the charism of our common Seraphic Father present in the life and mission of the Church.

LG 43; PC 1

<sup>2</sup>Let us, therefore, live the communion of a shared spirit with all the brothers of the Franciscan First Order, gladly working together to promote studies and joint ventures of Franciscan life and activity.

Eph 4:3; CIC  
580; 614; 677  
§2; 680

FV 1-2; TestSC  
29

<sup>3</sup>Remembering the promise of Saint Francis to Clare and to the Poor Sisters of San Damiano, we must always show loving care and special concern for our sisters of the Second Order. In the contemplative life, they offer each day the sacrifice of praise, seek union with God in solitude and silence, and spread the Church far and wide with a hidden apostolic fruitfulness.

<sup>4</sup>In the same way, we are united in brotherly affection with those religious institutes which are spiritually linked with our Order.

## 102

IV PCO 17; 33;  
V PCO 28; 59

<sup>1</sup>The Secular Franciscan Fraternity or Order occupies a special place within the Franciscan family, whose authentic spirit it both shares in and promotes. It is necessary for the fullness of the Franciscan charism.

CIC 303; 311;  
677 §2

ROFS 2

<sup>2</sup>In this Order, the brothers and sisters, urged on by the Holy Spirit to reach the perfection of love in their secular state, commit themselves by profession to live the Gospel after the manner of Saint Francis and by means of their own *Rule*.

COFS 86,1

<sup>3</sup>In virtue of our shared charism and communion of life in the Franciscan family, the Church commits the Secular Franciscan Order to the spiritual and pastoral care of the Franciscan First Order and of the Third Order Regular of Saint Francis.

COFS 86,1;  
StatSA 5,2;  
ROFS 26

<sup>4</sup>Our ministers have the faculty to establish fraternities of the Secular Franciscan Order in all our houses and also elsewhere. In addition, it is their duty to conduct the pastoral visitation and to ensure that the fraternities of the Secular

CIC 312 §2

Franciscan Order at the different levels receive continual and zealous spiritual and pastoral assistance, especially through the appointment of suitable, trained brothers. They must carry out their office in accordance with the norms of universal law and of proper law, both of our Order and of the Secular Franciscan Order. They shall be vigilant to ensure that a true, life giving interchange is promoted between the fraternities of our Order and those of the Franciscan Secular Order.

COFS 99,1; 98-103; 51-75; 85-91; 92-95; 98-103; ROFS 26

<sup>5</sup>All the brothers shall take to heart the need to show a truly brotherly attitude toward the members of the Secular Order. By their own example let them nourish fidelity to the gospel life and effectively promote the Order itself among the secular clergy and the laity. The brothers shall willingly provide spiritual assistance to this Order. Always mindful of its secular status, let them respect its lawful autonomy and not interfere in its government, except in cases mentioned in the law.

ER I 1; 2LcF 13; LBL 3; LtOrd 51

<sup>6</sup>Likewise, all associations cultivating the spirit of Saint Francis, especially those of young people, shall be promoted and assisted spiritually. Let our houses become fraternal centres for meetings and spiritual renewal open to all clergy and laity who wish to follow the footsteps of Christ under the guidance of Saint Francis.

1Pt 2:21

### 103

2C 91,3; 180,2

<sup>1</sup>Following the example of Saint Francis who called the mother of any brother his mother and the mother of all the brothers, let us fulfil our religious and familial responsibilities towards our parents, relatives, benefactors, those who work with us, and others who belong to our spiritual family. Let us also commend them to God in prayer, including our community prayers.

<sup>2</sup>Any spiritual or material needs of a brother's family of origin shall be discussed with the fraternity, charitably and discreetly.

<sup>3</sup>Let us have fraternal respect also for brothers who leave religious life. Let the ministers treat them with equity and gospel charity.

### 104

ER IX 5

<sup>1</sup>Christ, himself a pilgrim on earth, will say to those on His

Mt 25:35; PO 8

right hand at the Last Judgment: “I was a stranger and you welcomed me.”

<sup>2</sup>Saint Francis desired that anyone coming to our houses be received with kindness. Therefore, let us welcome everyone with the greatest charity, especially the afflicted and those suffering hardship, and help them in their needs.

<sup>3</sup>Let those whom we are able to receive into our own houses according to circumstances, especially priests and religious, be treated by the fraternity with every courtesy.

## Article II The Life of the Brothers in the World

### 105

CtC 1-9; 2C  
265; LMj I; V  
9; V PCO 28;  
48ff; 63; 65; 74;  
81; 85ff; 97ff;  
100; 102; VI  
PCO 3-4

<sup>1</sup>Greatly rejoicing in the created and redeemed world, Saint Francis felt united not only with people, but also with all creatures by a covenant of brotherhood, as he himself proclaims magnificently in the *Canticle of Brother Sun*.

GS 2; 45; 57;  
62; PO 17

ExhP 5; 6; PrG  
5; 7; CtC 1-9;  
VI PCO 26

<sup>2</sup>Contemplating them in this light, we admire the works of creation of which Christ is the beginning and the end. Let us protect them in their integrity and use the resources of Mother Earth with respect and moderation.

Rv 1:8; 22:13;  
Gen 2:15

<sup>3</sup>Thanks to scientific research, we see the works of creation becoming ever more magnificent, amazing and mysterious. They lead us to worship the Father in His wisdom and power. Therefore we should highly esteem everything that human genius has drawn from created things, especially in works of culture and art in which God’s gifts are revealed to us.

ER XXII 1-7;  
2LdF 1-15

<sup>4</sup>Let us also view the human world in the mystery of Christ, the world which God so loved that He gave His only-begotten Son.

Jn 3:16

<sup>5</sup>Though wounded by many sins yet endowed with great potential, the world, in fact, provides the living stones that are built up together to form the dwelling place of God, which is the Church.

Eph 2:22; 1Pt  
2:5

### 106

ER IX 1; XVI  
7-9; LR II 1;  
FV 1; LtOrd 9;  
IC 89; 103;  
LMj Pr 2; IV

<sup>1</sup>By “divine inspiration” Saint Francis recognised that he had been sent to refashion humanity in newness of life.

Rom 6 :4

- ER XXII 41-55; 1LrF 14-19; 2LrF 56-60      <sup>2</sup>Consequently, inaugurating a new form of gospel life, he himself, though no longer of the world, remained in the world and wanted his brotherhood also to live and work among people, to witness in deed and word to the good news of gospel conversion.      Jn 17:14; LG 31; GS 72; AA 4
- Adm XIII-XVI; XVIII      <sup>3</sup>Therefore, we too, since we share in his mission, live in the midst of the world as a gospel leaven so that people, seeing our fraternal life lived in the spirit of the Beatitudes, may realize that the Kingdom of God has already begun in their midst.      Lk 17:21; LG 31; CIC 602; 607 §1
- LR XII 4; 1C 41; V PCO 64; 82ff      <sup>4</sup>In this way we will be present in the world to serve the living God and in Franciscan love, humility, and joy spreading peace and goodness for the benefit of the world and of the Church.      Is 52:7; Rom 8:14; Heb 9:14

## 107

- ER XIV 2; LR III 13; Test 23; LrPrp 1; BIL 2; 1C 26; 29; 36; I PCO I,9; 17; V PCO 28; 45; 55; 63-102      <sup>1</sup>In accordance with the spirit of Saint Francis, we proclaim peace and salvation, not only in words but also by deeds inspired by the love of brothers.      GS 82; PC 2c
- <sup>2</sup>Moved by this spirit, let us strive, in the manner taught by the Gospel, to bring into peaceful and lasting harmony those who are divided by hatred, envy, conflicting ideologies, or differences of class, race, religion, and nationality.      CIC 222 §2; 287 §1; 672; 768 §2
- <sup>3</sup>Let us promote respect for human rights and dignity, above all those of the poor and the marginalized.
- VI PCO 26; V PCO 49      <sup>4</sup>Let us therefore be eager to co-operate with initiatives and institutions, both national and international, that work appropriately for the unity of the human race, for universal justice, and for peace.

## 108

- ER VII 15ff; XIV; XVI 6; LR III 10-14; TPJ; I PCO I,9,17      <sup>1</sup>Trusting above all in the providence of the Father, let us walk in the world with such hope and Franciscan joy that we strengthen the confidence of our contemporaries.      LG 36; GS 1; 27; 32; 93
- ER VII 10-12; XXII 15ff; ER VIII 1-2; LR X 7      <sup>2</sup>Freed from the empty cares of the present age, and cooperating with divine providence, let us regard it as our duty to relieve the needs of the poor by our action and, especially in times of public disaster, to make available the goods and services of the brotherhood to all who are in need.      Mt 13:22; Lk 8:14; CIC 222 §2; 600; 640

V PCO 29;  
VI PCO 9

<sup>3</sup>After the example of Saint Francis, who had great compassion for the poor, and the founders of our Capuchin brotherhood, who helped those suffering from the plague, let us live alongside our brothers and sisters in need, especially the sick, eager to offer them wholehearted service as brothers.

<sup>4</sup>Knowing that divine providence is revealed not only through events and actions, but also through new ideas and life experiences, may we appraise all things in a spirit of openness and confidence, holding on to what is good.

1Thes 5:21; GS  
4; 11

ER XVII 6,11,  
17-18; XXIII 1;  
LtOrd 1,15; FV  
1; PrG 11; PrCr  
1

<sup>5</sup>In this way we will be better able to cooperate with God present and active in the history of the world. Likewise, living the truth in charity, we will be witnesses of hope in the Lord God and help people of good will to recognise the highest Good Who is God the almighty Father.

Eph 4:15

## CHAPTER VII

### OUR LIFE OF PENANCE

109

- |  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| IV PCO 36b;<br>41ff  | <p><sup>1</sup>Jesus Christ, while proclaiming the Good News of the Kingdom, called people to repentance, that is, to a total transformation of themselves, through which they begin to think, judge, and conform their lives to the holiness and love of God manifested in the Son</p>   | Mt 4:17; Mk 1:14-15; VC 10; 15; 16; 17; 18ff; 65b                              |
| ER I 3   | <p><sup>2</sup>This conversion into a new creature, begun with faith and Baptism, calls for a constant effort to deny ourselves daily.</p> <p><sup>3</sup>In this way, living for the Lord alone, through penance we forge new relationships with people, especially with the poor, and are gradually strengthened to build gospel brotherhood.</p>   | Mt 16:24; Mk 8:34; Lk 9:23   |
| Test 1-3; 2C 9;<br>LMj 1 6; L3C 11   | <p><sup>4</sup>Saint Francis, by the Lord's grace, began a life of penance and conversion by showing mercy to lepers, and making his exodus from the world.</p>   | Rom 6:4; Gal 6:15; 2Cor 5:17   |
| ER XII 3-4;<br>XIII 2; XXI 3;<br>XXIII 7; Adm XIII-XXVIII;<br>1LtCus 6; 1C 23-35 | <p><sup>5</sup>With great fervour of spirit and joy of heart, he based his life on the beatitudes, preached penance unceasingly, inspiring everyone by deed and word to carry Christ's cross, and wished that his brothers to be men of penance.</p>  | LG 31; GS 72; AA 4   |
| LMj V;<br>PVI 1968   | <p><sup>6</sup>A spirit of penance in an austere life is a particular characteristic of our Order; for, following the example of Christ and Saint Francis, we have chosen in fact the narrow way of the Gospel.</p>   | Mt 7:14; CIC 578; 586 §1; 631 §1;  |
| LMj Pr 2; XIII 2ff; 1C 103   | <p><sup>7</sup>Moved by the same spirit and recognizing sin in ourselves and in human society, let us work unceasingly at our own conversion and that of others, so that we may be moulded into the likeness of the crucified and risen Christ.</p> <p><sup>8</sup>By working in this way, completing in ourselves what is lacking in the sufferings of Christ, we take part in the work of the Church, which is holy and, at the same time, always in need of purification, and we promote the coming of God's Kingdom by gathering into one the human family in the perfection of love.</p> | Rom 8:29; Gal 2:19; LG 8s.; 35; CD 33; AG 3; UR 6<br><br>Col 1:24; LG 8; Paen; |

110

- |                 |   |  |
|-----------------|---|--|
| 1LtF 1; Adm XVI | <p><sup>1</sup>Penance, being an exodus and a conversion, is a propensity of the heart that demands in everyday life exterior manifestations matched by a true interior transformation.</p> |  |
|-----------------|---|--|

<sup>2</sup>Franciscan penitents should always be noted for their gentle, affectionate love and joy, like our saints: strict with themselves but full of goodness and respect toward others.

<sup>3</sup>So that the Paschal Mystery of Christ may ever more be at work within us, let us devote ourselves to works of penance at all times, moved by the spirit of conversion and renewal, according to the *Rule* and *Constitutions* and as God inspires us.

<sup>4</sup>In the first place, let us remember that our life of consecration to God is in itself an excellent form of penance.

<sup>5</sup>Therefore, we offer for our own salvation and for that of others: our poverty and humility, the hardships of life, the faithful performance of our daily work, our availability to serve God and neighbour and our efforts to cultivate fraternal life, the burden of sickness and old age, and even persecution for the Kingdom of God. In this way, suffering with those who suffer, may we always rejoice in our conformity to Christ.

<sup>6</sup>Let us follow the same path of conversion as Saint Francis, by reaching out especially to those who, in our own times, are abandoned and destitute.

## 111

<sup>1</sup>Christ the Lord, having been sent by His Father and led by the Holy Spirit, fasted in the desert for forty days and forty nights.

<sup>2</sup>His disciple, Saint Francis, burning with the desire to imitate the Lord, also spent His life in fasting and prayer.

<sup>3</sup>We, too, therefore, practise fasting, prayer and works of mercy, which lead us to inner freedom and open us to love for God and neighbour.

<sup>4</sup>The season of Advent and, above all, the Lent before Easter, as well as every Friday, are for us times of more intense private and communal penance.

<sup>5</sup>In addition, the "Lent of Benediction", as it is called, which begins at the Epiphany, and the vigils of the solemnities of Saint Francis and of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary are recommended.

<sup>6</sup>On these days, let us apply ourselves more eagerly to those



works which foster conversion: prayer, recollection, listening to the word of God, bodily mortification and communal fasting. In a brotherly spirit, let us share with other poor people that which comes to us from the table of the Lord because of our greater frugality. Let us also perform works of mercy more fervently in keeping with our traditional custom.

<sup>7</sup>As regards the laws of abstinence and fast, the brothers are to observe the prescriptions of the Church, both universal and local.

CIC 1250-1253

## 112

LMj V 7; 2C  
160; AC 32

<sup>1</sup>Our life conforms to the gospel command to do penance and is, therefore, simple and frugal in all things, as befits poor people.

PC 12; P6 2/74  
Ic; CIC 600;  
607 §3; 634 §2;  
640; 664; 666;  
673; 1249

2C 60-61

<sup>2</sup>Mindful of the passion of Christ, after the example of Saint Francis and of our saints, let us practise mortification, even voluntarily, willingly restricting ourselves in food, drink and entertainments, so that everything testifies to our condition as pilgrims and strangers.

ER X; LR VI 9;  
2C 175

<sup>3</sup>However, the ministers and guardians, since they have to provide what is necessary, especially for the sick, shall keep in mind the commandment of love and the example of Saint Francis.

CIC 619

## 113

<sup>1</sup>With sorrow in our hearts for our own sins and for those of others, and desiring to walk in newness of life, let us practise works of penance, adapted, of course, to the differing sensitivities of time and place.

Rom 6:4; LG 7;  
PO 12ff; SC  
12; ESa II,22;  
CIC 664; 839  
§1

<sup>2</sup>We seek to practise fraternal correction charitably and honestly, as Jesus taught us.

Mt 18:15; Lk  
17:3; ES 85

<sup>3</sup>In the light of the Gospel, let us question ourselves, both individually and as a brotherhood, particularly in the local chapter, about our way of life and our options; let them always be the expression of a communal journey of conversion.

## 114

ER XX 5

<sup>1</sup>By means of the sacrament of penance or reconciliation through the working of the Holy Spirit—who is the remission of sins—we experience the benefits of Christ's death and resurrection, and share more deeply in the

LG 7; 11; PO  
18; PC 14; SC  
5; RomM PoG  
Pent Sat

Eucharist and in the mystery of the Church.

<sup>2</sup>In this sacrament the brothers not only individually but also communally, are purified, healed, restored to union with the Saviour and, at the same time, reconciled with the Church.

<sup>3</sup>Being purified and renewed by the Sacraments of the Church, we are also strengthened in our commitment to be faithful to our form of life.

<sup>4</sup>Therefore, holding the Sacrament of Reconciliation in high esteem, let us frequently take advantage of it. Having been reconciled with God, let us be committed to spreading His love among us through mutual forgiveness and to promoting fraternal reconciliation.

CIC 246 §4;  
276 §2; 630 §1-  
5; 664; 985;  
VC 95; Lk  
6:36; Mt 5:48;  
FLC 26

<sup>5</sup>Let us also highly esteem spiritual direction and daily examination of conscience, so that we may respond generously to the promptings of the Spirit and be resolute in our aim for holiness.

VC 95; PC 14;  
EE 11; PI 63

<sup>6</sup>Conscious of the social dimensions of conversion, let us try to hold communal celebrations of penance, both in our fraternities and with the People of God.

<sup>7</sup>Let the ministers and guardians take every care to ensure that the brothers are faithful to the sacramental life and that they benefit from spiritual direction.

## 115

<sup>1</sup>The faculty to hear the sacramental confessions of the brothers is granted by the proper ordinary as well as by the local ordinary. The guardian may do the same in individual cases and in that particular instance.

CIC 967 §§2-3;  
968-969

<sup>2</sup>Any priest of the order who has received faculties from his own ordinary may hear the confessions of the brothers anywhere in the world.

<sup>3</sup>The brothers are free to confess their sins to any priest who has received faculties from any ordinary.

PC 14; CIC  
991

ER V 7; LR VII  
3; Adm IX 3;  
2Lif 44

<sup>4</sup>Let confessors keep in mind the encouragement of Saint Francis that “they do not become angry or disturbed by the sin of another” but treat the penitent with all kindness in the Lord.

CIC 978 §1

## 116

2C 133-134; I  
PCO II,9ff

<sup>1</sup>Loving one another with the same love with which Christ loved us, let us not avoid a brother who finds himself in

Jn 13:34; CIC  
220

difficulty, but rather be eager to help him. If he falls, let us remember that each one of us would fall into a worse situation if God in His goodness did not preserve us. Therefore, let us not be his judges, but as true brothers, love him even more.

<sup>2</sup>Let the ministers and guardians, with fatherly compassion, be close to brothers who sin or who are in danger, and offer them appropriate and effective help as God Himself would do.

CIC 619; 665  
§2

<sup>3</sup>Let the ministers and guardians act with the same solicitude, as far as it lies within their power and competence, when dealing with persons and communities who may have been harmed by the sins of the brothers.

<sup>4</sup>They shall not impose penalties, particularly canonical ones, unless compelled by manifest necessity, and then with all prudence and charity, maintaining nonetheless the prescriptions of universal law. However, in the same spirit, ministers may also take other necessary initiatives for the good of the community and of society, as well as for the good of the brother.

CIC 1321 §1

LMin 9-11

<sup>5</sup>Let them always remember the words of Saint Francis in his *Letter to a Minister*: “I would like you to prove that you love the Lord and me, His servant and yours, in the following way: there should be no brother in the world who has sinned—however greatly he may have sinned—who, after he has looked into your eyes, would ever depart without your mercy, if he is looking for mercy. If he is not looking for mercy, you should ask him if he wants it. And if he sins a thousand times before your eyes, you should love him more than you love me, so that you may draw him to the Lord.”

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE GOVERNANCE OF THE ORDER

#### 117

2C 191ff

<sup>1</sup>Our Brotherhood, led by the Holy Spirit, is an integral part of the Mystical Body of Christ. It is a communion of consecrated persons who, following the Master, seek to accomplish together the Father's will, and contribute to building up the Church in love through various offices and ministries.

1Cor 12:1-31;  
14:12; Eph  
4:12; LG  
30,44; PC 1;  
CIC 602; 618-  
619; 631 §1;  
662; FLC 1

Rel06

<sup>2</sup>Let us, therefore, see it as our specific duty to foster the good of the Church and the Brotherhood according to the grace we have received and our Capuchin vocation.

1Pt 4:10; LG  
44; PC 2b; CIC  
602; 618-619;  
631 §1; 662

<sup>3</sup>Chapters and superiors, as expressions of the spiritual and visible unity of the Order, nourish the bond of communion among the brothers. In a spirit of service and with pastoral solicitude they exercise authority received from God through the ministry of the Church in accordance with universal law and these Constitutions.

CIC 602; 618-  
619; 631 §1;  
662; PC 14;  
FLC 9, 11

#### Article I

##### The Structure of the Order

#### 118

<sup>1</sup>Our Order or Brotherhood is made up of brothers, each of whom is incorporated into a circumscription and assigned to a local brotherhood. Every circumscription and every local fraternity, taken individually, is a true brotherhood.

CIC 581; 585;  
609 §1; 621;  
634 §1

<sup>2</sup>The circumscriptions are ordinarily provinces and custodies, united together in a life-giving relationship under the authority of the General Minister.

<sup>3</sup>Every circumscriptions is made up of a group of brothers gathered in local fraternities or houses and has its own exclusive territory, which must be determined in the decree of establishment.

CIC 621; 608

<sup>4</sup>In particular circumstances, the General Minister, with the consent of his council and after consultation with the interested parties, may make provision for other forms of circumscriptions or groupings of houses, in accordance with these *Constitutions* and with the *Ordinances of the General*

*Chapters.*

<sup>5</sup>Every circumscription that is canonically established by a formal decree of the General Minister acquires juridical personality.

<sup>6</sup>A province is the primary and immediate unit of the order, governed by the Provincial Minister. It has its own consistent structures, enabling it to express and develop the vitality of our charism, so that it can give effective apostolic witness and benefit the life of the order.

CIC 621

III PCO 45ff

<sup>7</sup>A custody is a part of the order in which the brothers, placed at the service of the churches and of their pastors in the work of evangelisation, gradually develop the presence of the consecrated life through their efforts to implant the order. It is governed by the Custos, who has ordinary vicarious power.

<sup>8</sup>A local fraternity is a group made up of at least three professed brothers who live in a legitimately established house governed by a local superior or guardian.

<sup>9</sup>The General Minister, with the consent of his council, can decide that a particular local brotherhood is directly dependent on himself. If the situation warrants it, it may have its own statutes. Similarly, he may decide that a local brotherhood will depend directly on a Conference of major superiors and have its own statutes.

<sup>10</sup>Whatever is said of a province in these *Constitutions* also applies to custodies, unless the contrary is evident from the nature of the case or from the text or context.

**119**

I PCO IV, 1ff

<sup>1</sup>It is the responsibility of the General Minister with the consent of his council, after consulting the Conference of major superiors and the ministers and respective councils concerned, to decide on the establishment, union, division, alteration, or suppression of circumscriptions, observing the requirements of law.

CD 22ff; CIC 581; 585

<sup>2</sup>Once it has been decided to establish a new circumscription the General Minister, with the consent of his council, after consulting the perpetually-professed brothers concerned, appoints its minister and councillors and determines the composition of the first chapter. This chapter, which is not elective, must be held within one year of the establishment of

the new circumscription.

<sup>3</sup>The General Minister with his council shall be particularly attentive to those circumscriptions that are numerically in steep decline, making use of the means available in our legislation to preserve a fraternal presence in a given territory.

## 120

<sup>1</sup>It is the responsibility of the Provincial Minister, with the consent of his council, after obtaining the favourable vote of the chapter, to establish houses canonically, observing the prescriptions of law. However, if the case is urgent and the vote of the chapter is lacking, the consent of the General Minister and his council is required.

CIC 609-612;  
616

<sup>2</sup>However, it pertains to the General Minister, with the consent of his council, to suppress houses, either at the request of the interested party, or for some other cause, observing the norms of law.

## 121

<sup>1</sup>Each brother, incorporated into the order by profession, becomes a member of the circumscription to which the minister admitted him to profession.

CIC 654

<sup>2</sup>The date of temporary profession also determines seniority in the brotherhood.

III PCO 41

<sup>3</sup>It pertains to the General Minister, with the consent of his council and having consulted the respective major superiors and their councils, to assign brothers to another circumscription, taking into account the good of the whole order and the needs of the circumscriptions or individual brothers.

<sup>4</sup>Let the Provincial Ministers, in a spirit of fraternal collaboration, be willing to meet such needs by sending brothers temporarily to another province.

<sup>5</sup>When sending brothers to serve in another circumscription, the prescriptions of the *Ordinances of the General Chapters* are to be observed.

<sup>6</sup> Each brother exercises the right to vote in only one circumscription of the order, unless he is also able to vote elsewhere because of his office or for other reasons. Those who are invited to another circumscription to offer their services have the right to vote in that circumscription

according to the norms in the *Ordinances of the General Chapters*, not in their own. On the other hand, brothers who live in another circumscription for other reasons exercise this right only in their own circumscription.

## Article II Superiors and Offices in General

### 122

ER Pr 3; LR I 2

<sup>1</sup>Under the supreme authority of the Roman Pontiff, these are the superiors of the Order with ordinary power in their own right: the General Minister in the whole Order, the Provincial Minister in his province, and the local superior or guardian in his fraternity.

CIC 131 §1;  
590 §2; 596 §1-  
3

<sup>2</sup> Superiors with ordinary vicarious power are: the General Vicar, the Provincial Vicar, the Custos and the local vicar.

<sup>3</sup>All the above, with the exception of the guardian and his vicar, are major superiors.

CIC 620

<sup>4</sup>Whatever is said in these *Constitutions* and in the *Ordinances of the General Chapters* concerning the Provincial Ministers applies equally to the Custodes, unless the contrary is evident from the delegations received, from the nature of the case or from the text and context.

<sup>5</sup>Ordinary vicarious power does not extend to those matters which proper law recognises as belonging exclusively to the superior who holds that office, unless an explicit delegation has been given for those matters. If the Provincial Minister is prevented from exercising his office, or if it is vacant, a Custos shall have recourse to the provincial vicar.

### 123

<sup>1</sup>Offices in the order are conferred either by election or by appointment.

CIC 119 §1;  
625 §1,3

<sup>2</sup>In conferring offices the brothers are to proceed with a right intention, simply and according to the norms of law.

CIC 626

<sup>3</sup>For the good of the order, consultation may be made beforehand concerning those to be elected, but consultation is obligatory when persons are to be appointed.

<sup>4</sup>If an election requires confirmation, it must be requested within eight days of canonical time.

CIC 177 §1

ER VII 4; Adm  
IV; XIX 3

<sup>5</sup> The brothers, as true lesser ones, are not be ambitious for office; but if they are called to it by the confidence of the brothers, they should not obstinately refuse to serve as a superior or in some other office.

ER I 1; IV; VI  
3ff; LR I 1; VII  
2  
I PCO II, 1,3;  
IV PCO 22; V  
PCO 99

<sup>6</sup>Since we are an Order of brothers, according to the will of Saint Francis and the genuine Capuchin tradition, any brother in perpetual vows may assume any office or position excepting those that flow from sacred orders. But the office of superior may be validly conferred only on brothers who have been perpetually professed for at least three years.

PC 15; ESa  
II,27; CIC 129  
§1; 623

<sup>7</sup>When offices are conferred by election, postulation is admissible in our order. Acceptance of the postulation and dispensation from the impediment are within the competence of the authority having the faculty to confirm the election, namely, the General Minister or the Provincial Minister. Authority to accept the postulation of the General Minister rests with the Holy See.

CIC 180-183

<sup>8</sup>It pertains to the General Minister to accept the act of resignation from the offices of Provincial Minister, provincial vicar, provincial councillor, general Custos and their respective councillors. It pertains to the Provincial Minister to accept the resignation of the Custos and the respective councillors.

CIC 184 §1

<sup>9</sup>For removal from offices which brothers exercise within or outside the order, the law of the Church and the *Ordinances of the General Chapters* are to be observed. Removal from office, even when it has no penal character, does not entail the granting of a new office.

CIC 192-195

### Article III The General Governance of the Order

#### 124

2C 191ff; LFI  
18

<sup>1</sup>The General Chapter, which is an outstanding sign and instrument of the union and solidarity of the entire brotherhood gathered together in its representatives, enjoys supreme authority in the order.

PC 1; CIC 631  
§1

2C 184-186

<sup>2</sup>The ordinary chapter is announced and convoked by the General Minister, and is to be held every six years in the manner indicated in the *Ordinances of the General Chapters*

CIC 631 §1



and the *Procedures for Conducting a General Chapter*.

<sup>3</sup>In addition to the Ordinary chapter, the General Minister, with the consent of his Council, may convoke an extraordinary chapter when particular needs require it.

<sup>4</sup> In a general chapter, whether ordinary or extraordinary, the following have active voice: the General Minister, the General Vicar, the general councillors, the last General Minister immediately following the expiry of his term of office, until the next ordinary General Chapter inclusive, Provincial Ministers, the Custodes, the general secretary, the general procurator, the delegates of the provinces and other perpetually professed brothers in accordance with the norms of the *Ordinances of the General Chapters*.

CIC 631 §2

<sup>5</sup>If the Provincial Minister is prevented by a serious reason known to the General Minister, or if his office is vacant, the Provincial Vicar goes to the chapter. If, however, the Custos is prevented or his office is vacant, the first councillor attends the chapter.

## 125

<sup>1</sup>The General Chapter, whether ordinary or extraordinary, shall deal with all matters relating to fidelity to our sound traditions, to the renewal of our form of life, the development of apostolic activity, and other matters of great importance for the Order, about which the brothers are to be consulted in advance.

ESa II,2; 19;  
CIC 631 §1

<sup>2</sup>As prescribed by the *Procedures for Conducting a General Chapter*, in an ordinary General Chapter the first to be elected is the General Minister, who acquires full authority over the entire Order and all the brothers.

CIC 622; 624-  
625; 631

<sup>3</sup>The outgoing General Minister may be re-elected immediately only once, for the six years immediately following, without prejudice to the provisions of n. 123,7 of the *Constitutions*.

<sup>4</sup>In the election of the general councillors, the outgoing General Minister has only active voice.

<sup>5</sup>Next, as decreed in the *Procedures for Conducting a General Chapter*, the general councillors are elected, according to the number determined in the *Ordinances of the General Chapters*. Of these, no more than half can be from those elected in the previous chapter.

CIC 119 §1;  
627 §1

<sup>6</sup>The General Vicar is elected from among the councillors. In virtue of his election he becomes the first councillor.

<sup>7</sup>As prescribed in the *Constitutions* and according to the *Statutes of the General Curia* approved by the General Chapter, the responsibility of the councillors is to assist the General Minister in the governance of the whole Order. PC 14

<sup>8</sup>The General Minister and his councillors are to reside in Rome. CIC 629

<sup>9</sup>During their term of office, the general councillors do not have passive voice in the election of the ministers of the circumscriptions.

## 126

<sup>1</sup>The General Vicar is the first collaborator of the General Minister, and if the minister is absent, takes his place. However, if the General Minister can be contacted in any way, the General Vicar is to consult him before making any important decisions and is to abide by his instructions.

<sup>2</sup>However, the confirmation of Provincial Ministers, the appointment of general visitators and other matters that he may have reserved to himself are reserved to the General Minister.

<sup>3</sup>Should the General Minister be impeded from exercising his office, the General Vicar takes his place in all matters relating to the governance of the Order. At an appropriate time he should report important matters to the General Minister, and refrain from acting against the intention and will of the General Minister. If the impediment is serious and lasts for more than two months, the general vicar must have recourse to the Holy See for appropriate instructions and to be able to deal with matters reserved to the General Minister.

<sup>4</sup>If the General Vicar is also impeded, the councillor who is senior by profession among those elected at the General Chapter takes the place of the General Minister. By that very fact, that councillor is delegated for all acts of governance, and for the faculties proper to the General Minister. However, within a maximum time limit of two months, he is bound to have recourse to the Apostolic See.

## 127

<sup>1</sup>If the office of the General Minister becomes vacant, the General Vicar succeeds him and notifies the Apostolic See of

the vacancy as soon as possible.

<sup>2</sup>If the office of the General Minister becomes vacant within three years of the normal date of the next general chapter, the general vicar assumes full governance of the order until the end of the sexennium and, at the time appointed, announces the celebration of the General Chapter.

<sup>3</sup>If the office of the General Minister becomes vacant between three and two years before the normal date of the next General Chapter, the General Vicar and the councillors elect a new councillor chosen from the General Vicar's Conference, as established in n. 127,6 of the *Constitutions*.

<sup>4</sup>If the office of the General Minister becomes vacant more than three years before the normal date of the next General Chapter, the General Vicar convokes the electoral assembly within three months to elect a General Minister, who will assume the administration of the order until the natural end of the sexennium. At the same time, the assembly elects a new councillor and the General Vicar. The composition of the electoral assembly is determined by n. 8/14 of the *Ordinances of the General Chapters*.

<sup>5</sup>Should the office of the General Vicar become vacant more than a year before the chapter, the General Minister and his council, collegially, are to elect by secret ballot a new General Vicar from among the councillors. They then elect another councillor. But if the office becomes vacant less than one year before the General Chapter, the new General Vicar is elected in the prescribed manner, but without the election of a new councillor.

<sup>6</sup>Should the office of a general councillor become vacant more than a year before the chapter, the General Minister and his council, acting collegially, elect another, after consulting the Conference of major superiors of the capitular group to which the councillor belonged.

## 128

<sup>1</sup>The General Minister and his council receive particular assistance from the General Curia to enable them to give proper and efficient service to the Order. All the brothers who are part of it, coming from the various circumscriptions, form a local fraternity which is directly dependent on the General Minister and is of fundamental importance to express and promote the unity of the order.

<sup>2</sup>For this purpose suitable brothers are to be selected, who also possess the necessary competence in the service they render. They are appointed by the General Minister with the consent of his council, and fulfil their office in accordance with the *Statute of the General Curia* and any instructions given by the General Minister.

<sup>3</sup>*The Statute of the General Curia*, approved by the General Chapter, outlines the specific nature of this local fraternity and stipulates the job descriptions of the different offices and sections.

## Article IV The Governance of the Provinces

### 129

<sup>1</sup>The first authority in a province is the Provincial Chapter.

PC 14; CIC  
632

<sup>2</sup>The ordinary Provincial Chapter is announced and convoked by the Provincial Minister, having received the consent of the General Minister, who has consulted his council. It is held with the frequency indicated in the *Ordinances of the General Chapter*.

<sup>3</sup>For particular needs, in addition to the ordinary chapter, the Provincial Minister, with the consent of his council and having informed the General Minister, may convoke an extraordinary chapter, which may not conduct elections.

<sup>4</sup>In a Provincial Chapter, whether ordinary or extraordinary, matters relating to the life and activity of the province and of the custody are discussed, concerning which all the brothers are to be consulted beforehand.

### 130

<sup>1</sup>The following have active voice in ordinary and extraordinary chapters: the General Minister, if he presides, the Provincial Minister and the provincial councillors, the Custodes, the perpetually professed brothers of the province and delegates of the custodies, according to the criteria laid down in the *Ordinances of the General Chapters* and in the *Procedures for Conducting a Provincial Chapter*.

CIC 632

<sup>2</sup>A Provincial Chapter may be held with direct suffrage, that is, with all the perpetually professed brothers taking part, or with delegates, in accordance with the *Ordinances of the*

*General Chapters.* In a chapter of delegates the members, gathered in fraternal communion, represent the whole province.

<sup>3</sup>All the brothers in perpetual vows who have the right to vote are bound to attend the chapter. Anyone prevented from attending must report the impediment to the Provincial Minister whose responsibility it is to judge the matter. Only the brothers who are actually present in the chapter have the right to vote.

<sup>4</sup>Should the superior of a custody be unable to attend the chapter for a serious reason known to the Provincial Minister, or if his office is vacant, the first or second councillor participates in the chapter, depending on what is possible.

### 131

<sup>1</sup>After the announcement of a Provincial Chapter with delegates, all the brothers of the province and those of other provinces as indicated in n. 121,6 who have been perpetually professed by that date, except those belonging to the custodies and those deprived of active and passive voice, shall elect delegates and alternates.

CIC 632

<sup>2</sup>The brothers of the custodies shall elect their own delegates and their alternates.

<sup>3</sup>The Provincial Chapter determines which brothers participate by right, the number of delegates of the province and of the custody and the manner of electing them.

### 132

<sup>1</sup>In an ordinary chapter, the Provincial Minister is elected according to the *Procedures for Conducting a Provincial Chapter* approved by the Provincial Chapter itself.

<sup>2</sup>The Provincial Minister may be elected only for only two consecutive terms, save for the prescription of n. 123, 7, and the *Ordinances of the General Chapter*.

CIC 624 §1

<sup>3</sup>According to the *Procedures* mentioned previously, four provincial councillors are elected, unless the General Minister with the consent of his council decides that a larger number is more suitable; half of these may be from those elected in the previous chapter.

CIC 627 §1

<sup>4</sup>Then the Provincial Vicar is elected from among the councillors, and becomes the first councillor by virtue of his

election.

<sup>5</sup>The elected Provincial Minister exercises his office as a delegate of the General Minister until his election is confirmed. If the General Minister does not confirm the election another election is to be held. In this election the one who was not confirmed does not have passive voice. CIC 625 §3

<sup>6</sup>After the election or appointment of the Provincial Minister and councillors the brothers continue to exercise their respective offices until other provisions are made. This norm, with the necessary modifications, also applies to custodies.

### 133

<sup>1</sup>The General Minister, with the consent of the council, may, for serious reasons, appoint a Provincial Minister and councillors after obtaining in writing the consultative vote of all the perpetually professed brothers of the province in perpetual vows, but this cannot be done on two consecutive occasions. CIC 625 §3

<sup>2</sup>After this appointment, a chapter is to be held at an appropriate time to deal with provincial affairs.

### 134

<sup>1</sup>It is the responsibility of the Provincial Vicar to help the Provincial Minister in whatever has been entrusted to him and, when the Provincial Minister is absent or impeded, to manage the affairs of the province, excepting those which the Provincial Minister has reserved to himself. CIC 625 §3

<sup>2</sup>If the office of Provincial Minister becomes vacant, the Provincial Vicar is bound to have immediate recourse to the General Minister and governs the province until he receives further instructions.

<sup>3</sup>Should the vacancy occur more than eighteen months before the natural expiry of the term of office, the General Minister, with the consent of his council, after a consultative vote of all the brothers in perpetual vows, shall appoint a new minister who governs the province until the chapter is held.

<sup>4</sup>If the Provincial Vicar is impeded, the next councillor in order of election exercises his office temporarily as a delegate of the Provincial Minister.

<sup>5</sup>When the office of a provincial councillor becomes vacant more than a year before the provincial chapter, the General Minister, with the consent of his council, after hearing the

Provincial Minister and his council, shall appoint another councillor, who then becomes the last councillor. But if the office of the Provincial Vicar becomes vacant, the number of councillors is first restored, after which the Provincial Minister and his council elect collegially by secret ballot another Provincial Vicar from the members of the council. The General Minister is informed of this matter.

### 135

<sup>1</sup>The Provincial Minister, with the consent of his council, shall appoint a provincial secretary from among the brothers in perpetual vows, as well as other officials needed to transact the business of the provincial curia and, if necessary, to take charge of other special offices.

<sup>2</sup>The provincial secretary is accountable only to the Provincial Minister. It is the responsibility of the provincial chapter, however, to decide whether other officials shall be accountable to the Provincial Minister alone.

<sup>3</sup>It is recommended that commissions be established in each province by the Provincial Minister, with the consent of the council, to deal with special matters.

CIC 633 §1

## Article V The Governance of the Custodies

### 136

III PCO 45ff

<sup>1</sup>A custody, among whose principal purposes is the implantation of the Order in a particular Church, is a circumscription of the Order entrusted to a province or, because of special circumstances, directly dependent upon the General Minister. Custodies that depend upon the General Minister have their own statutes approved by the same minister with the consent of his council. The same norms governing custodies dependent on a province are applied to them by analogy.

<sup>2</sup>Each custody is governed by a Custos with his council. It is for the Provincial Minister, having consulted the members of the custody and with the consent of his council, to determine the number of councillors, which can vary according to need, but cannot be fewer than two. The General Minister must be informed of any change in the number of councillors.

CIC 627 §1

<sup>3</sup>It pertains to the Custos, having first obtained the consent of the Provincial Minister, to announce and convoke the chapter of the custody, in which all the perpetually professed brothers, as well as the Provincial Minister if he presides, have active voice. With regard to brothers who are unable to attend the chapter, the same arrangements apply as for the provincial chapter. CIC 632

<sup>4</sup>The Custos and the councillors are elected by the chapter with universal suffrage, in accordance with the procedures determined by the chapter of the custody, and they may be re-elected. However, the Custos may be immediately re-elected only for a second term, save for what is laid down in art. 123,7. The length of the term is determined in the *Ordinances of the General Chapters*. CIC 624 §1

<sup>5</sup> The elected Custos must be confirmed by the Provincial Minister. Until this confirmation, he exercises his office as the delegate of the Provincial Minister, who is responsible for informing the General Minister of the election. If the Provincial Minister does not confirm the election, another election is to be held. In this election the one who was not confirmed has no passive voice. CIC 131-132; 625 §3

<sup>6</sup>From the moment his election is confirmed, the Custos acquires ordinary vicarious power to exercise his office. The Provincial Minister must grant to the Custos, in writing, the faculties that are delegated to him, and indicate those which he reserves to himself.

<sup>7</sup> With the previous consent of the Provincial Minister, the Custos may convoke an extraordinary chapter. It is appropriate that the Provincial Minister should also preside at this chapter, in which he has active voice.

<sup>8</sup>The chapter of the custody shall prepare its own procedures and the statute of the custody, both of which must be approved by the Provincial Minister with the consent of his council. The subjects to be dealt with in the chapter of the custody are to be agreed by the Provincial Minister and the Custos, after consultation with their respective councils.

<sup>9</sup>Should the Custos be absent or impeded, the first councillor, or after him the next councillor in order of election, takes his place. The Provincial Minister must confer the appropriate delegations on the councillor who temporarily assumes the office of Custos, or, if he can, the Custos does so if he has the CIC 632



faculty to sub-delegate.

<sup>10</sup>If the office of councillor is vacant for whatever reason, the matter is to be referred to the Provincial Minister, who shall proceed by analogy with what is prescribed in n. 134,5.

<sup>11</sup>With permission from the General Minister, the Provincial Minister with the consent of his council may, for serious reasons, appoint a Custos and his councillors, after having obtained a written consultative vote of the brothers of the custody. However, this cannot be done on two consecutive occasions.

### 137

<sup>1</sup>The Custos is to convene his councillors several times a year. He needs their advice or consent in the same cases where, according to the *Constitutions*, the Provincial Minister needs the advice or consent of his council.

<sup>2</sup>He shall present to the Provincial Minister any initiatives that involve considerable burdens for the custody or for the province.

<sup>3</sup>To open new houses, change the use of existing houses or to transfer formation houses, he shall request authorisation from the Provincial Minister with the consent of his council.

### 138

<sup>1</sup>All those brothers belong to the custody who were incorporated into it, or who were sent there for a specified time by the competent authority, and the brothers who made profession in it, even if they live elsewhere for the purpose of formation or some other reason.

CIC 127 §1.3;  
627 §2

<sup>2</sup>In exercising the apostolate the custody should pay careful attention to vocations. For this purpose, together with the testimony of a coherent lifestyle, it should develop pastoral activities that are attentive to the real requirements of the people and the various local needs.

<sup>3</sup>The province, according to its possibilities, should send to a custody assigned to it as many religious as the needs of the custody require. It should also foster expressions of effective mutual collaboration and service among the brothers of different circumscriptions.

<sup>4</sup>In selecting the religious to be sent or recalled, the Provincial Minister, after consulting the Custos and his council, should take into account the specific qualifications of the brothers in

relation to local conditions, the formation of the young and the apostolate to be exercised in the custody. Similarly, the Custos should also act in harmony with the Provincial Minister.

<sup>5</sup>The Custos, taking the needs of the custody into account, having consulted his council and with the consent of the Provincial Minister, may enter into appropriate agreements with other circumscriptions or Conferences of major superiors. These agreements are to be confirmed by the Provincial Minister and, if the case requires it, by the General Minister.

## **Article VI**

### **The Governance of the Local Fraternity**

#### **139**

<sup>1</sup>After the provincial chapter, at an appropriate time, the Provincial Minister with the consent of the council, having consulted the brothers as far as possible, shall form the local fraternities and appoint a guardian and vicar in each. The brothers whom he intends to appoint to these offices are to be consulted in advance.

CIC 608; 617-625 §3; 626

<sup>2</sup>The fraternities and the corresponding guardians and vicars in the custodies are to be established in the same way, keeping in mind their special circumstances.

<sup>3</sup>The guardian is appointed for one term. He may be appointed for a second or, in case of manifest necessity, a third consecutive term, even in the same house if there are good reasons.

<sup>4</sup>A brother who has been guardian for the maximum time allowed shall remain free of that office for at least one year.

<sup>5</sup>In order that they might be true leaders of their fraternities, guardians shall not accept work that entails long or frequent absences from the house.

#### **140**

<sup>1</sup>The vicar has the task of helping the guardian with advice in governing the community, and of governing the fraternity when the guardian is absent or prevented, or if his office becomes vacant.

<sup>2</sup>In every house with at least six brothers, in addition to the

vicar, who is the first councillor by law, the local chapter is to elect a councillor from among the perpetually professed brothers. In houses with more than ten brothers, the chapter itself decides how many councillors to elect. The task of the councillors is to assist the guardian with their advice in spiritual and material matters.

<sup>3</sup> In matters of greater importance, according to the *Constitutions* and the proper statutes of each circumscription, the consent of the council is required.

<sup>4</sup>The provincial chapter determines who is to preside over the brotherhood when the guardian and vicar are absent or impeded.

<sup>5</sup>If the office of guardian becomes vacant more than six months before the normal end of the term of office, the Provincial Minister, with the consent of his council, shall appoint another guardian. Should the office become vacant less than six months before the normal end of the term of office, the vicar governs the fraternity.

CIC 625 §3

## 141

I PCO II,24ff.;  
IV PCO 80; V  
PCO 23

ER IV4.VI; LR  
X 6; Adm III  
5ff.; VI PCO 31

<sup>1</sup>The local chapter consists of all the professed brothers.

PC 14; ESa  
II,2; CIC 632;  
633 §1

<sup>2</sup>It is the task of the local chapter, under the guidance of the guardian, to strengthen the spirit of brotherhood, to promote an awareness of the common good among all the brothers and conduct a dialogue about every aspect of fraternal life, especially with regard to fostering prayer, observing poverty, promoting formation and supporting apostolic activity, in a common search for the will of God.

<sup>3</sup>The local chapter is to be held frequently in the course of the year and the ministers shall effectively promote it, occasionally facilitating it themselves.

<sup>4</sup>Voting in a local chapter is consultative unless universal or particular law determines otherwise.

<sup>5</sup> In accordance with the *Constitutions*, only perpetually professed brothers have the right to participate in elections and to vote on the admittance of brothers to profession.

## 142

<sup>1</sup>In the general curia, in that of each circumscription and in all our houses, there shall be an archive, accessible only with the permission of the competent superior. All documents

produced and received concerning the brothers, our life and our apostolate are to be preserved in it in an orderly fashion and under secrecy.

<sup>2</sup>Access to the archives of the order is regulated by the decisions of the ministers, attentively observing ecclesiastical and civil norms.

<sup>3</sup>Everything that is worth preserving shall be accurately recorded by the brother to whom this responsibility has been entrusted.

**Article VII**  
**Collaboration in the Order,**  
**The Plenary Council,**  
**and the Conferences of Major Superiors**

**143**

<sup>1</sup>The purpose of the Plenary Council of the Order is to express the vital link between the entire brotherhood and its central government, to promote an awareness of the co-responsibility and cooperation of all the brothers, and to foster the order's unity and communion in diversity.

CIC 632-633

<sup>2</sup>The Plenary Council is a forum for reflection and consultation, which examines questions of particular importance and offers its own collaboration in the governance of the order, in the formation of the brothers, and in their apostolic mission for the growth of the Order and its renewal in accordance with the times.

<sup>3</sup>The General Minister with the consent of his council may convoke a Plenary Council, which shall be conducted according to the procedures approved by the General Minister with the consent of his councillors.

<sup>4</sup>The members of the Plenary Council are: the General Minister, the general councillors and delegates of the Conferences of major superiors, with a certain proportional representation established by the General Minister with the consent of his council.

<sup>5</sup>Each Conference determines the manner of choosing the delegates from among its own circumscriptions. Delegates need not necessarily be chosen from among the ministers of the Conference itself.

<sup>6</sup> The General Minister with the consent of his council may confirm the conclusions of the Plenary Council, communicate them to all the brothers at an opportune time, and draw from them practical guidelines for the order.

#### 144

<sup>1</sup>The Conferences of major superiors are established to promote animation and collaboration between the General Minister and the individual ministers of the circumscriptions. They operate in accordance with the *General Statute for Conferences* and the statutes proper to each of them, which are approved by the General Minister with the consent of his council. They meet at least once a year.

<sup>2</sup>Conferences, consisting of the Provincial Ministers and Custodes of a particular territory, are established by the General Minister with the consent of his council.

PC 23; ESa  
II,42ff; CIC  
632-633

<sup>3</sup>The purpose of the Conferences is to foster the responsibility of each minister for the Order, to promote collaboration by the circumscriptions among themselves and with other ecclesiastical bodies, especially those analogous to religious, and to ensure as far as possible unity of action and of apostolate in their territory.

<sup>4</sup>Each Conference, according to the *General Statutes* and its own statutes, elects a president, a vice-president, and a secretary. Conferences may also elect a council if necessary.

<sup>5</sup>In order to carry out the duties entrusted to them by the *Constitutions*, by the statutes and by the General Minister, and to provide for the good of the order, the Conferences may propose special norms for the brothers and circumscriptions in their territory. These norms, in order to be valid, must be unanimously approved by all the ministers of the Conference, after obtaining the consent of their respective councils, and approved by the General Minister with the consent of his council.

<sup>6</sup> Let the ministers and their councils co-operate willingly and actively with the Conference to improve co-ordination in the forms of Franciscan witness and formation, to renew our life of faith, and to promote peace, justice, and respect for creation.

#### 145

<sup>1</sup>Brothers, let us recognise that the Order's structures of

governance and its institutions are also expressions of our life and vocation, and accompany our Brotherhood on its journey through history.

<sup>2</sup>Although subject to the limitations of every time-bound institution, they help us to develop a sense of belonging to our family, and enhance its life and mission.

<sup>3</sup>Therefore, let us welcome them in a spirit of faith and with simplicity, as a concrete opportunity for personal growth and mutual help, seeking in all things to promote the common good, and to serve the Church and the Kingdom of God.

## CHAPTER IX

### OUR APOSTOLIC LIFE

146

V PCO 41-52

<sup>1</sup>The Son of God was sent into the world by the Father so that, assuming our human condition and consecrated by the anointing of the Holy Spirit, He might bring the good news to the poor, heal the contrite of heart, proclaim liberty to captives, restore sight to the blind, and proclaim the Lord's favour.

Is 61:1ff; Lk 4:18; Gal 4:4; Phil 2:7; LG 4ff; CIC 574 §2; 577; 758; 783

<sup>2</sup>Christ established that this mission would continue in the Church by the power of the Holy Spirit. The Church welcomes it as a grace, as its own vocation, and as the profound expression of its identity.

Lk 24:47-49; Jn 20:21; Heb 1:8

LMj II 1, 8; 2C 22

<sup>3</sup>This same Spirit raised up Saint Francis and his apostolic brotherhood so that, following the example of Jesus and His first disciples, they might go about the world preaching penance and peace, thus participating in the Church's mission to proclaim the Gospel.

LR X 8; 1C 29; LMj XII 1; XIII1

<sup>4</sup>Consequently, our brotherhood, obedient to "the Spirit of the Lord and His holy activity," fulfils in the Church its duty to serve all peoples by bringing them the Gospel in deed and word.

147

PC 20; I PCO I,10; III PCO 11ff; 18; V PCO 21ff; 43ff; 88

<sup>1</sup>In our apostolic activity let us express the characteristics of our charism in forms best suited to the conditions of time and place.

GS 92; PO 3; OT 19; CIC 578; 673; 675 §1; 677 §1

ER VII 15ff; XIV; LR III 10-13; LtOrd 9

<sup>2</sup>The first apostolate of a lesser brother is to live the gospel life in the world in truth, simplicity, and joy.

<sup>3</sup>Since the life of brotherhood is a particular sharing in Christ's mission, we strive to improve its apostolic effectiveness by our close and ardent dedication to the Lord Jesus, making our fraternal relationships ever more authentic, and being generously involved in the mission of the Order.

VC 72

<sup>4</sup>We treat everyone with esteem and respect and always show our readiness for dialogue with them.

ER IX1-3; XXIII 7; LtOrd 9; LtAnt; 1C 36; LMj IV 5; AC 67; III PCO

<sup>5</sup>Following the example of Christ and Saint Francis, while we prefer to evangelise the poor, let us not be afraid to proclaim conversion, truth, justice, and peace of the Gospel to those

who hold power or direct the fate of nations.

<sup>6</sup>Let us willingly take on any ministry or apostolic activity as long as it is in keeping with our form of life and meets the needs of the Church.

PC 2b; 20; ESa  
I,36

<sup>7</sup>Moved by the love of the Father who sees in secret, we consciously choose the way of minority and generously undertake even tasks and services that are regarded as lowly or difficult, without taking any pride.

Mt 6:4.6.18

<sup>8</sup>Indeed, as disciples of Christ and sons of Saint Francis, let us keep in mind that the apostolic life calls for a spirit of readiness to suffer the cross and persecution, even to the point of martyrdom, for the faith and the love of God and of our neighbour.

LG 42

## 148

<sup>1</sup>Let us willingly engage in any kind of apostolate, even if it is a personal initiative, as the Lord inspires. The various apostolic activities shall be promoted and coordinated as an expression of the entire brotherhood, and conducted under obedience to the competent authority.

CIC 681-682

<sup>2</sup>Saving the right of the supreme pontiff to use the services of the Order for the good of the universal Church, the exercise of any apostolate is subject to the authority of the diocesan bishop, from whom the brothers receive the necessary faculties once they have been approved by their ministers. Let the ministers, as far as they are able and in accordance with our charism, gladly accept the invitations of bishops inviting us to serve the people of God and to work together for the salvation of all people.

LG 46; PC 2c;  
CD 33-35; ESa  
I,19,1; 25,1ff;  
36,1; CIC 681-  
682

<sup>3</sup>It is the responsibility of the provincial chapter to adapt apostolic work to the needs of the times, while preserving our Capuchin Franciscan identity. But it is for the Provincial Minister, with the consent of the council, to coordinate the apostolic resources of the province.

<sup>4</sup>After consulting the local chapter in matters of greater importance, the guardian shall allocate work, while taking into account the situations of the individual brothers, and keeping in mind the needs of the local Church and the pastoral directives of the Church's hierarchy.

<sup>5</sup>For the good of the Church and according to need, the circumscriptions shall willingly cooperate among themselves

VC 52; CIC  
680; 708



in apostolic works and initiatives, to be carried out on the basis of prudent planning. Sustained by a sense of ecclesial communion, let us fraternally cooperate also with other institutes, especially those that are Franciscan.

## 149

1C 34ff; LMj  
IV 2; III PCO  
16ff; 34; 40; V  
PCO 42-45; 53-  
56; 60-102

<sup>1</sup>To ensure that our apostolic initiatives respond to the demands of evangelisation and to peoples' needs, let us accustom ourselves to reading the signs of the times with the eyes of faith, for through them we discover the divine plan.

PC 20; GS PR;  
4; 21; 27; 79;  
PO 4-6; 13; OT  
19; CD 13; AG  
20; CIC 677  
§1; 783; 801;  
986 §1

VIPCO 5

<sup>2</sup>Let us promote the customary works of the apostolate such as popular missions, retreats, the sacramental confession of the faithful, the spiritual care of religious women, especially Franciscans, care of the sick and of prisoners, works of education and of social development.

<sup>3</sup>When taking on new forms of the apostolate we should show special concern for people who are far from the faith and from religious practice, and for those who are deprived of ordinary pastoral care because of the conditions of their life: the young during moments of crisis in their Christian life, migrants, unskilled workers, those burdened with financial pressures, or those who suffer discrimination and persecution for any reason.

VII PCO 54

<sup>4</sup>We proclaim by example a culture of life and do our best to ensure that human life, from its conception until death, is always defended and promoted. We work in favour of children and commit ourselves to the education and training of young people, even by our presence in schools and other centres of education. With care and concern we support the family founded upon marriage, as the domestic church and the living cell of society, showing our closeness and solidarity especially to families most in need.

VC 96-99; EV  
77; FC 74; LG  
11

<sup>5</sup>Sharing the Church's concern to achieve the unity willed by Christ, let us particularly be committed to ecumenical dialogue in charity, truth, and prayer with all Christians.

UR 1; CIC 383  
§3

ER XVI; LR  
XII 1ff; 1C 57;  
LMj IX 9.

<sup>6</sup>Similarly, let us make the effort to engage in a dialogue of salvation with people of other faiths and with unbelievers, among whom we live or to whom we are sent.

NA; GS 21;  
CIC 383 §4;  
787 §1

VIPCO 9

<sup>7</sup>All ministries undertaken for the people must be founded upon a life shaped by the Gospel. Remembering that the world listens more readily to witnesses than to teachers, let us live close to the people, conducting ourselves as true

CIC 600; 662;  
673; EN 41

lesser brothers in our lifestyle and manner of speaking.

## 150

<sup>1</sup>Jesus devoted His life to proclaiming the Kingdom of God and sent His apostles to preach the Gospel to all nations.

Mt 9:35; Lk 8:1; LG 28; PO 3ff; 13; DV 21; 24ff; SC 2; 9; 35; 52; UR 21; DH 14

LR IX 4; 1C 98; V PCO 47ff

<sup>2</sup>Saint Francis, the herald of Christ, confirmed by the authority of the Church, sowed the seeds of the Gospel everywhere as he went from place to place announcing the mystery of Christ in few and simple words.

<sup>3</sup>Therefore, docile to the command of the Divine Master and following Saint Francis' example and the tradition of our Order, let us preach the word of God in clear language, adhering faithfully to the Sacred Scriptures.

ER XXII 9-18; 2C 163; Const 1536 ff

<sup>4</sup>Let us do all we can to imprint on our hearts the Word of God, who is Christ, and give ourselves totally to Him, so that He may move us to speak out of an abundance of love. In this way we will preach Christ Himself by our life, our actions, and our speech.

AC 71

<sup>5</sup>In order that this may happen, let us strive to grow constantly in the wisdom of Christ, which is acquired above all by living it, notably through persistent reading, meditation, and careful study of the Sacred Scriptures.

CIC 276 §2; 279 §1; 652 §2; 663 §3

<sup>6</sup>Let us ensure that the word of God gives life to all our pastoral ministry paying attention to catechesis of the faith using methods appropriate to the needs of different groups of people thereby strengthening the growth of a culture permeated by gospel values.

VC 98

## 151

<sup>1</sup>In the celebration of the sacraments, Christ becomes present to the faithful with His saving power, sanctifies them, and builds up His Body, while the People of God render worthy worship to the Lord their God.

Eph 4:12; PO 2; 5; 13; SC 7; 33; 59

<sup>2</sup>Therefore, let the brothers be ready to assist the faithful by administering the sacraments either in virtue of their office or when invited to do so by the clergy, so that, through the celebration of the mysteries, the faithful are helped to nourish, strengthen, and express their faith.

CD 30; OT 19; CIC 213; 528 §2

2C 146

<sup>3</sup>We are to prepare ourselves diligently to dispense the mysteries of God, desiring to imitate what we celebrate and

ROrd

to conform our lives to the mystery of the Lord's cross. Let us nourish among the faithful a Christian life centred on the Eucharist. We ourselves draw from this same source the pastoral love that drives us to give ourselves for the good of our neighbour.

## 152

CIC 978

ER XX 1-4;  
XXII 32; Adm  
VI 1; 1LtCus 6;  
2LtF 22

<sup>1</sup>In the spirit of Christ the good Shepherd, the brothers who are priests shall proclaim the mercy of God. Let them be faithful dispensers of the forgiveness of sins that God offers in the sacrament of reconciliation and willingly make themselves available to hear the confessions of the faithful. This ministry is particularly appropriate to us as lesser brothers and frequently brings us close to those who most experience the misery of sin.

<sup>2</sup>May zeal for God's holiness and mercy, respect for the dignity of the human person, charity, patience, and prudence shine brightly in these confessors.

<sup>3</sup>Let confessors be eager to grow continually in pastoral wisdom and in the proper exercise of their ministry.

CIC 279 §1-3;  
661; 970

## 153

ER VIII 3, 7,  
10; IX 2; X;  
XXIII 7; 1C 17;  
2C 175

<sup>1</sup>After the example of Saint Francis and the enduring tradition of the order, we willingly undertake the spiritual, and even bodily, care of the sick and infirm.

LG 8; GS 1;  
88; AG 12; PO  
6; CIC 578

ER IX 2; XXIII  
7

<sup>2</sup>Following Christ Who went through towns and villages healing every kind of sickness and infirmity as a sign of the arrival of the Kingdom of God, we fulfil the mission of the Church. Through her children, she is at one with people of every condition, especially the poor and afflicted, and willingly spends herself for them.

Mt 9:35; 2Cor  
12:15

<sup>3</sup>Let the ministers and guardians favour this ministry since it is an exemplary work of love and of the apostolate.

## 154

<sup>1</sup>In keeping with the character and tradition of our Order, let the brothers be ready to offer pastoral assistance in parishes to the clergy of the local Church.

CD 31; 34; ESa  
I, 33, 1ff; CIC  
578

<sup>2</sup>Bearing in mind the urgent needs of the faithful, the ministers, with the consent of the council, we may also prudently accept the care of a parish in a spirit of service to the local Church.

CIC 520 §1;  
538 §2; 671;  
678 §2-3; 681  
§1; 682 §1

<sup>3</sup>In order to stay faithful to our vocation when assuming this ministry, we ordinarily prefer parishes where we can more easily give witness to minority and live and work in brotherhood. In this way the People of God can appropriately share in our charism.

IPCO III, 13

<sup>4</sup>Shrines entrusted to our Order should be centres of evangelisation and sound devotion. We work in them in accordance with the Church's guidelines and give witness to the fundamental values of our life. Let suitable forms of collaboration be put in place among the circumscriptions for the service of the larger shrines entrusted to us.

CIC 1230

## 155

<sup>1</sup>Let us recognise and promote the role and mission that belongs to the laity in the Church's life and activity. Let us gladly work with them, especially in evangelisation. Let us likewise support associations of the faithful whose members strive to live and proclaim the Word of God and to change the world from within.

PO 9; AA 18ff;  
CIC 215-216;  
225 §1; 275 §2;  
781; 784; 822  
§3;

V PCO 28,59

<sup>2</sup>Among these associations, the Secular Franciscan Order should be especially dear to us. Let us work with Secular Franciscans so that their fraternities may grow as communities of faith particularly equipped for effective evangelisation. Let us also work with them in the formation of their members, so that they may spread the Kingdom of God not only by the example of their lives but also by various kinds of apostolic activity.

CIC 303; 311;  
329; 677 §2

LMj IX 1  
GC07 24-25

## 156

<sup>1</sup>Saint Francis, who saw in things of beauty Him who is most beautiful, invited all creatures to praise and glorify the Lord. We, too, must learn to recognise all the good and beautiful things the Lord has sown in the human heart and in the harmony of creation. Let us commit ourselves, therefore, to make God's beauty known, through the spoken and written word, and also through Christian art.

<sup>2</sup>Let us spread the message of Christ by every means, including the media, which offer great opportunities for evangelisation. Therefore the ministers shall see to it that suitable brothers receive special training in this field. All the brothers are to be suitably instructed in the responsible use of the media.

IM 3-5; 9ff;  
15ff; PO 19;  
PC 2d; 8; 19;  
ESa I.7; CIC  
747 §1; 779;  
822 §1.3

<sup>3</sup>We gladly share in the apostolate of the printed word, especially in the publication of Franciscan works. CIC 761

<sup>4</sup>In our publications, when using the means of social communication and when we appear in the media, let us express full adherence to gospel values and to the teaching of the Church.

<sup>5</sup>Publications and communications that officially represent the Order, both at the local and universal level, must be duly assessed and authorized by the competent superior. Particular care should be taken to ensure that they express the genuine thinking of the Order.

<sup>6</sup>Regarding instruments of social communication, the prescriptions of universal law are to be observed. When writings about religion or morals are concerned, it should be remembered that permission is also required from the minister. CIC 823-824; 831-832

<sup>7</sup>When it is appropriate, suitable offices may be established at the various levels in the Order so that the apostolate of the communications media may be coordinated, supported, and properly esteemed.

## 157

IPCO I,4; 10;  
II,20; II PCO  
9ff; V PCO 1-  
14

<sup>1</sup>In all our apostolates, let us always make sure that our life and work are in harmony as we practise love for God and for people, for love is the soul of every apostolate.

LG 33; 42; 47;  
PC 2e; 4; 8ff;  
PO 14; AA 3ff

<sup>2</sup>Let us also remember that we cannot pursue our mission unless we are continually renewed in fidelity to our own vocation.

CIC 663 §§1-5

ER IX 1; XVII  
15; LR V 4; VI  
2; XII 4; Adm  
IV; LMj VI 1;  
2C 155; VI  
PCO 15

<sup>3</sup>Let us therefore be poor and humble in performing works of the apostolate, without making any ministry our own, so that all may clearly see that we seek Jesus Christ alone. Let us preserve that unity in brotherhood, which Christ wished to be so perfect that the world would know the Son had been sent by the Father.

Jn 17:21-23

<sup>4</sup>In our life together as brothers, let us cultivate a life of prayer and study, so that we may be closely united with the Saviour and, moved by the power of the Holy Spirit, may offer ourselves with a ready and generous heart to witness to the good news in the world.

## CHAPTER X

### OUR LIFE IN OBEDIENCE

158

ER V 13-15

<sup>1</sup>Jesus Christ, by assuming the condition of a servant, became obedient to the point of death on a cross. In this way, freeing us from slavery to sin, He revealed to us that human freedom is a journey of obedience to the Father's will and that obedience is a journey in which true freedom is gradually attained.

Phil 2:7-8; Gal 5:1; VC 91

<sup>2</sup>Listening devotedly to the Word made flesh, the Church, docile to the action of the Spirit, through the obedience of faith responds to the loving plan of the Father, who has revealed Himself in the Son and made known to us the mystery of His will.

DV 2; 5; Rom 1:5; 16:26; 2Cor 10:5; SAFC 5-7

<sup>3</sup>Consequently, by following Jesus, whose food was to do the Father's will, the Christian is called to grow each day in the freedom of the children of God through trustful obedience. This is the foundation of all human growth and the means by which it is attained. In this way the human person, setting out from self and purified of false gods, opens up to the horizons of the divine life, accepting a plan of salvation which does not humiliate but grounds his dignity and makes it grow.

Jn 4:34; 8:28-29; 1:12; Rom 5:19 Mt 26:39,42; Lk 22:42; Phil 2:8; SAFC 8

LtRPrp 3;  
LtOrd 7-10;  
Adm V 2; III 1-6; SalBVM 14-18; Adm II;  
LtOrd 4,34;  
6,46; 2, 27-28;  
LMj IV; LFI 11; ER V 16-17; LR X 2; CSgt 3

<sup>4</sup>Saint Francis taught us that the life of the lesser brothers is to obey Jesus Christ present in the Gospel and in the sacraments. "He gave himself to Christ totally, keeping nothing of himself for himself." He recognised obedience as the fullest expression of living "with nothing of his own" and saw in it the foundation of communion with God, with the Church, with his brothers, with all men and women, and with every creature.

Mt 7:24; Jn 14:21; Lk 22:27; Jn 14:1; SAFC 8; SC 7

ER V13-15; VI 3; XVI 6; 2LtF 47

<sup>5</sup>Therefore, in virtue of our commitment to live in obedience, we serve one another through the love of the Spirit, and, without distinction of office, seek the lowest place in the community of the Lord's disciples, and are subject to every human creature for the love of God.

Lk 14:10; 1Pt 2:13; PC 14ff; GS 29

<sup>6</sup>In the school of the Holy Spirit by living together as brothers, we search for and fulfil God's will in every event and action.

<sup>7</sup>The result will be that the ministers and guardians, who

Jn 8:29; 1Jn 3:22; PC 14;

give themselves in the service of the brothers entrusted to them, and the other brothers, who in faith are subject to them, will always do what is pleasing to God.

CIC 618

## Article I The Pastoral Service of the Ministers and Guardians

### 159

ER IV 6; VI 4;  
Adm IV 1; I  
PCO II,14

<sup>1</sup>Christ did not come to be served but to serve. To show this He washed the feet of the apostles and recommended that they do the same.

Jn 20:28; Mk  
10:45; Lk  
22:27; Jn 13:2-  
17; PC 14; CIC  
618

ER V 9-11

<sup>2</sup>His servant, Francis, faithful to the words of the Gospel, wanted his brothers to exercise no power or dominion, especially among themselves.

ER V 9-12; VI;  
XI 6; XVII 6;  
LR X 5; Adm  
VII 4; LtOrd 9;  
1LtF 2,21; 2LtF  
3; Test 13;  
LMin 1-5

<sup>3</sup>Therefore, the ministers, who are servants of the brothers entrusted to them and for whom they will have to account to God, shall serve them humbly, remembering that they themselves must obey God and the brothers. Let them welcome the service of the brothers as a grace, living it in true obedience, especially in times of difficulty and misunderstanding.

Mt 20:26; Mk  
10:43; Lk  
22:26; SAO 28

Test 13

<sup>4</sup>Let them not exercise authority as masters, but preside over their fraternities in love and with a generous spirit. Let them gladly become models for the brothers, ministering spirit and life to them by their example and their words.

1Pt 5:2-33; Mk  
10:42-43,45;  
SAO 12

### 160

<sup>1</sup>The ministers and guardians shall exercise the office entrusted to them with diligence, be concerned for the brothers, and take care of all things, especially the spiritual.

<sup>2</sup>Together with the brothers, through intense prayer and prudent discernment, let them persistently seek the will of God and faithfully put it into practice.

<sup>3</sup>In a gospel spirit may they willingly initiate dialogue with the brothers, both communally and individually. Let them remember that final decisions are not reached alone, but rather by ensuring, as far as possible, that all the brothers freely contribute. Therefore, let them listen to them attentively, and consider their advice with an open mind. Let all remember, however, that it is the responsibility of the

PC 14; CIC  
618; SAO 20a,  
c

superiors, in virtue of their office, to make the final decision.

<sup>4</sup>For the good of the entire brotherhood, they will make sure that the brothers are suitably informed, and actively involved in the life and initiatives of the brotherhood. Let them promote the responsible collaboration of all, especially of those who have specific responsibilities.

FLC 50b; SAO  
2b

<sup>5</sup>Since the bond of brotherhood is all the stronger when what is shared is at the heart of our life, let the ministers and guardians promote the sharing of personal gifts and skills, above all of spiritual riches, such as listening to the Word of God and the life of faith.

SAO 20c

## 161

<sup>1</sup>The ministers and guardians shall do their best to ensure that our fraternities are places where God is sought and loved in all things and above all things. Being the first to cultivate the spiritual life themselves, let them sustain the brothers on their journey towards holiness by providing the brothers and fraternities with quality time for prayer and ensuring their daily fidelity to it.

CIC 619;  
RomM, Coll.  
XX Ord.  
Sunday; SAO  
4; 13a-b

<sup>2</sup>Therefore, let them remember that they have a duty to minister the Word of God to the brothers and to take care to provide them with appropriate instruction and religious formation.

PC 2,18; CD  
28; CIC 618;  
661

<sup>3</sup>They shall endeavour to promote knowledge of our charism and encourage the brothers to observe the *Rule* and these *Constitutions* faithfully, and to keep alive their sense of faith and ecclesial communion, and to promote the good of the People of God everywhere.

<sup>4</sup>The most appropriate initiatives shall be undertaken for this purpose, according to the circumstances of time and place, such as the study of the documents of the Church and the Order, the circular letters of the ministers, or participation in Conferences on religious and Franciscan topics. The ministers and guardians shall not neglect spiritual conversations, whether with individuals or in the local chapter, or homilies to the brothers during the celebration of the Eucharist or of the Word of God.

## 162

<sup>1</sup>The ministers and guardians, wishing every single brother to respond to the plan of the Father Who calls him out of

PC 14; CIC  
618



love, shall encourage him to seek and fulfil the divine will actively and responsibly.

<sup>2</sup>Let them guide the brothers entrusted to them as sons of God, respecting their human personality so that they may give their obedience of their own free will.

2C 153

<sup>3</sup>They shall not impose commands in virtue of the vow of obedience unless charity and necessity demand it, and do so with great prudence, in writing, or in the presence of two witnesses.

CIC 49; 1319 §1

## 163

LMin 9-17

<sup>1</sup>The ministers and guardians, remembering the instructions of Saint Francis, shall be signs and instruments of the love of God Who welcomes and forgives. Let them do their best to ensure that their fraternities are moulded by the gospel teaching on mercy.

SAO 25d

LR 10,1-6;  
LMin 1-12

<sup>2</sup>In accordance with the responsibility, which the *Rule* imposes on them, the ministers shall firmly, yet kindly and charitably, admonish, encourage and, when necessary, correct the brothers.

PC 14

2C 177

<sup>3</sup>They shall seek to correct the failings of individual brothers privately through fraternal discussion, taking into account the person and the circumstances. On their part, let the brothers willingly accept correction for their own good.

Adm XXIII 1-3

<sup>4</sup>Ministers and guardians shall talk about the shortcomings or omissions of the fraternity with the brothers themselves, particularly in a local chapter, and together seek and apply effective remedies.

## 164

ER IV 2; LR X  
1

<sup>1</sup>The pastoral visitation prescribed by the *Rule* and universal law contributes much to the inspiration and renewal of our life, and to the unity of the brothers.

CIC 628 §1.3

<sup>2</sup>Therefore, the ministers shall apply themselves to it with particular dedication, either personally or through others, as prescribed by the Church and by our own law.

<sup>3</sup>During the visitation, the ministers or other brothers delegated to conduct it shall have a sincere conversation with the brothers, both individually and communally, about everything, whether spiritual or temporal, that protects and fosters their life. Let them not neglect the visitation of the

CIC 628 §1.3

houses.

<sup>4</sup>Let them act with great understanding and prudence, adapting themselves to the times and conditions of different regions, so that the brothers may express their opinions trustfully, freely and sincerely, and together seek whatever leads to the continuing renewal of our life and the enrichment of all that we do.

CIC 628 §3

## Article II The Loving Obedience of the Brothers

### 165

ER I 1; LR I 1;  
2LrF 10-15;  
LMj VI 4

<sup>1</sup>Following in the footprints of the Lord Jesus, Who throughout His life “placed His will in the will of the Father,” the brothers offer their wills by the profession of obedience as a sacrifice of themselves to God, conform themselves continually to the saving will of God, Whom they love above all else, and bind themselves to the service of the Church.

Jn 4:34; 5:30;  
6:38; Rom  
12:1; Eph 5:2;  
1Pt 2:21; LG  
43ff; PC 14;  
CIC 207 §2;  
574 §2; 590 §1;  
601

LMj VI 5; L3C  
42

<sup>2</sup>Moreover, by living in obedience, together with the brotherhood they discover the will of God with greater confidence, manifest the communion of the three Divine Persons, and strengthen brotherly union itself.

VC 21

LR X 2-4; Adm  
III 4; AC 106

<sup>3</sup>In the same spirit of generosity with which they promised to observe the gospel counsels, let them obey the superiors out of faith and love for God's will, in an active and responsible way.

<sup>4</sup>May they be fully aware that the freely made offering of their own will to God contributes enormously to their personal perfection and becomes for others a witness of the Kingdom of God.

Adm III 3, 5-9;  
SalV 14-15;  
2LrF 40

<sup>5</sup>Clinging to Christ, who although He was Son learned obedience through his sufferings, let them accept the limitations of the human instruments through whom the will of God is mediated. Remembering that the cross is the proof of the greatest love calling for the gift of self, let them persevere in brotherly communion, and in this way live in perfect obedience and share in the work of redemption.

1Pt 2:4; Heb  
10:22; 5:8;  
12:10; 12:8;  
SAO 9-10; ET  
29; SAO 26;  
RD 13

### 166

ER V 3

<sup>1</sup>Let the brothers treat their ministers and guardians with

1Thes 5:13; PC  
14; CIC 618

love and respect. Ready to obey them in a spirit of faith, the brothers shall present their own opinions and initiatives to them for the common good. It is the responsibility of the superiors, after willingly considering everything with the brothers, to decide and direct what must be done.

ER IV; Adm III  
4-6

<sup>2</sup>Whatever good a brother may do with a right intention and on his own initiative is also true obedience when he knows that this is not contrary to the will of the superior or detrimental to brotherly unity.

<sup>3</sup>If, after fraternal dialogue, a brother sees something better and more useful than what the minister commands, let him willingly sacrifice his ideas to God and do his best to carry out what the minister has decided. "This, in fact, is the true and loving obedience, that satisfies God and neighbour."

## 167

ER V; VI 1ff;  
VII 15; VIII;  
XVI 5; LR X 4;  
2C 118

<sup>1</sup>Those who, because of personal reasons or external circumstances, cannot observe the *Rule* spiritually, may and shall have recourse to the minister, confidently asking advice, encouragement, and resolution.

ER IV 4ff; V 7;  
VI 1ff; LR X  
5ff

<sup>2</sup>The minister shall welcome them and assist them with brotherly love and concern.

CIC 619

## 168

ER V 14; XXII  
31, 52; LR VI  
8; X 5; 1C 46;  
SalV 15-18

<sup>1</sup>All of us, ministers and the other brothers alike, walking in truth and sincerity of heart, shall nurture among ourselves a strong sense of belonging to the same family and serve and obey one another willingly through the love of the Spirit.

1Pt 1:22;  
SAO 20g

Adm XXV

<sup>2</sup>Let us foster mutual respect in such a way that, when a brother is absent, we would never say anything that, in love, we would not dare to say in his presence.

CIC 220

<sup>3</sup>By acting in this way, in a world which must be consecrated to God, we will be a sign of that perfect love which shines brilliantly in the Kingdom of Heaven.

LG 31; 44

L3C 40

<sup>4</sup>Should we sometimes suffer want, persecution, and tribulation because of our witness to the gospel life, let us place all our hope in God, Whom we love above all else.

LG 8

LR X 8; 1C 55;  
V PCO 64; 82ff

<sup>5</sup>Moved and sustained by "the Spirit of the Lord and His holy activity," as poor men and men of peace, let us courageously continue the sublime journey on which we have embarked; and, if we persevere until the end, may we enjoy God's

Mt 10:22;  
24:13; Phil 2:8;  
1Cor 9:25;  
2Tm 4:8

reward.

## CHAPTER XI

### OUR LIFE IN CONSECRATED CHASTITY

169

<sup>1</sup>Among the gospel counsels, chastity for the sake of Christ and His Kingdom is an extraordinary gift of God, worthy of the highest esteem.

Mt 19:11-12;  
1Cor 7:7; LG  
42ff.; PC 12;  
PO 16; CIC  
247 §1; 599

<sup>2</sup>It is a reflection of the infinite love binding the three divine Persons: love exemplified by the incarnate Word to the extent of laying down His life; love poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, impelling a response of total love for God and for one's brothers and sisters.

VC 21

<sup>3</sup>Since God Himself is infinite in splendour, a life in chastity consecrated to Him is a reflection of the divine beauty in those who let themselves be transfigured by the power of the Holy Spirit.

VC 19

<sup>4</sup>The same Spirit, by arousing love for the divine Beauty, moulds us into the likeness of the virginal life of Christ and makes us sharers in the mystery of the Church, whose life is fully and exclusively devoted to Christ her Spouse in preparation for the final encounter with Him.

VC 19; 26; 34;  
2Cor 11:2;

<sup>5</sup>The evangelical counsel of chastity, which we have voluntarily chosen and promised by vow, draws its sole motivation from the preferential love of God and, in Him, of every person. In a unique way, it confers a greater freedom of heart, through which we are able to cling to God with an undivided love and to become all things to all people.

1Cor 7:32-39;  
9:22

LMj X 1; IV  
PCO 52

<sup>6</sup>The charism of celibacy, which not everyone is capable of grasping, prophetically foretells the glory of the heavenly kingdom already at work in our midst and transforms the entire human person. It is to be faithfully guarded and assiduously cultivated. With this gift, our brotherhood presents a distinctive announcement of the life to come, in which those who have risen are brothers and sisters in the presence of God, who will be all in all for them.

Mt 19:11-12;  
1Cor 15:28;  
2Cor 11:2; Eph  
5:22ff; LG 44;  
PC 12; VC 26;  
Mt 22:30

170

<sup>1</sup>Since chastity flows from love for Christ, may we bind our hearts inseparably to Him Who chose us first and loved us to the ultimate gift of Himself, making it our concern to belong totally to Him.

1Jn 4:19; Eph  
5:2

<sup>2</sup>Let us cultivate an intense relationship with the Blessed Virgin Mary, she who is all beautiful from the moment of her immaculate conception, the sublime example of complete consecration to God and of love for that divine Beauty which alone can totally satisfy the human heart.

VC 18d; 28 22;  
34; 94a; LG 46;  
56; PC 25; Sg  
4,7

## 171

<sup>1</sup>While we are on the way to the fullness of God's Kingdom, a life of chastity always involves a certain privation, which must be recognised and accepted with a cheerful heart, since one who belongs to Christ Jesus has crucified his flesh with its passions and desires in order to share even now in the possession of the Lord's glory.

PC 12; PO 16;  
OT 10; CIC  
599; Gal 5:24;  
RD 8; 11

<sup>2</sup>Chastity consecrated to God is a gift given to human beings. It is nourished, sustained, and nurtured by participation in a sacramental life, especially the Eucharistic Banquet and the Sacrament of Reconciliation, by perseverance in prayer, and by intimate union with Christ and His Virgin Mother.

CIC 663 §1.4;  
664

<sup>3</sup>Persistent recourse to supernatural and natural means makes it possible to maintain a healthy balance and to stave off the dangers that threaten our celibate lives, such as boredom, loneliness of heart, a love of comforts, inappropriate compensations, unhealthy expressions of affectivity, and immoderate and improper use of the media.

PC 12; PO 16;  
OT 10; CIC  
666

2C 113

<sup>4</sup>Therefore, let us strive to respond generously to this gift, not relying on our own strength but on God's help.

## 172

IV PCO 52-56;  
85

<sup>1</sup>Affective and sexual maturity travels a path of conversion from a self-centred and possessive love to one that is self-sacrificing and capable of giving itself to others.

PC 12; PO 3;  
16; OT 11

<sup>2</sup>On this journey, the commitment to grow in the virtue of temperance takes on particular importance, because our capacity to live chastely depends strictly upon it.

VC 88

<sup>3</sup>We need to appreciate, among other things, the spiritual value of the emotions, a proper esteem for one's own body, calm acceptance of one's sexual identity, and the differences between men and women.

MD 6-8; Mt  
19:11-12

<sup>4</sup>In the face of hedonism, which reduces sexuality to a game and to a commodity, we give witness to a love that is gratuitous and universal, aided by the strength that comes from the mastery and discipline of self that are necessary to

VC 88; 87

avoid becoming enslaved to one's senses and instincts. In this way, consecrated chastity becomes an experience of joy and freedom.

2C 22

<sup>5</sup>All of us, especially the ministers and guardians, shall remember that reciprocal love and brotherly service are particularly valuable supports for chastity.

<sup>6</sup>Genuine brotherhood, serene and open to others, facilitates the natural development of each one's affectivity. Commitment to our brothers demands a continual renunciation of self-love and requires a dedication to others. It fosters authentic and profound friendships, which greatly contribute to emotional fulfillment.

VII PCO 22

<sup>7</sup>Conscious of human frailty, we avoid occasions and conduct that is dangerous or ambiguous to chastity and that may give rise to suspicion. In the areas of affectivity and sexuality, lack of respect for others offends chastity, betrays trust, is an abuse of power, and can seriously harm the dignity of another person. In such cases, ministers and guardians, always after verification, are to intervene with prudence and determination.

1C 42; LMj V 6

<sup>8</sup>In addition to disciplining our senses and hearts, we joyfully devote ourselves to hard work, living in humility and penance, and use other means that foster health of mind and body.

PC 12

### 173

LMj VIII 1; IV  
PCO 52-56; V  
PCO 22

<sup>1</sup>Francis, captivated by love for God and for all people, indeed for all creation, is a universal brother and friend of all. He was noted for the richness of his affections and his capacity to express them.

LMj IX 2; LFI  
34

<sup>2</sup>Thoroughly courteous and refined and amazed at the beauty and goodness of creation, he wished his brothers to sing the praises of God in a hymn of universal, even cosmic brotherhood, repentant, and full of peace and joy.

<sup>3</sup>May we also develop a capacity for universal love drawn from the well-spring of the Triune God. Let us love all people in Christ and seek to lead them to share in the Kingdom of God through brotherhood and friendship.

FV 2; 1C 18;  
2C 204

<sup>4</sup>Following the example of the noble affection Brother Francis had for Sister Clare, may our conduct toward women be conspicuous by its courtesy, respect, and sense of justice as

PO 17

we promote their dignity and mission in society and in the Church.

3C 37; IV PCO  
55

<sup>5</sup>Friendship is a great gift that fosters human and spiritual growth. In virtue of our consecration and out of respect for the calling of those with whom we relate, let us avoid binding others to ourselves; rather let us give ourselves to them. In this way a friendship is established that is liberating and not destructive of brotherhood.

Sir 6: 5-17

VIPCO 23

<sup>6</sup>Maintaining good relationships with one's family of origin fosters harmonious growth. However, let us not forget that preferential love for Christ requires the full acceptance of the fact that discipleship is demanding and the brotherhood is our new family.

<sup>7</sup>In communion with other vocations, we joyfully witness to our consecration in celibacy as a constant reminder of the absolute claims of the Kingdom, where marriage and the family, too, find their meaning and value.

FC 16

#### 174

ERXXII 26;  
XXIII 8;  
LR X 8

<sup>1</sup>Let us frequently meditate on the words of Saint Francis in which he encourages his brothers "to put away all care and anxiety, and to serve, love, and adore the Lord God above all creatures with a clean heart, a chaste body and holy activity."

ER XXIII 9-10

<sup>2</sup>Let nothing hinder us, nothing separate us, and nothing prevent" the Spirit of the Lord from acting and being manifested in us and in our brotherhood.



# CHAPTER XII

## THE PROCLAMATION OF THE GOSPEL AND THE LIFE OF FAITH

### Article I

#### Our Commitment to Evangelisation

175

III PCO 4; 7ff;  
10-15

<sup>1</sup>Christ Jesus, God's Good News, the first and greatest herald of the Gospel, sent His apostles to preach the good news to all nations and established His Church as the universal sacrament of salvation. By its very nature, then, it is missionary.

Mt 28:19; Mk 16:15; LG 8; 17; 34; 48; GS 45; PC 1; AG 1; 2; 5ff; 11; 40; CIC 204 §1; 205; 747 §1; 781; 783; LG 48

<sup>2</sup>In the Church, a community of faith and love drawing life from the Holy Spirit on its pilgrim journey in time, all the baptized and, in particular, religious by virtue of their special consecration, are called to live out the grace of evangelisation and thereby fulfil the Lord's mandate.

MD 34; VC 30; 72-74; 76-79; EN 14

ER XVI; LR XII 1ff

<sup>3</sup>"By divine inspiration," Saint Francis renewed the missionary spirit in his day through the example of his life and the force of his *Rule*.

CIC 786

IC 55; 57

<sup>4</sup>His brotherhood, living in minority and itinerancy, gave a new impetus to the missionary activity of the Church by which it proclaims the Gospel and the coming of the Kingdom, thereby transforming even humanity itself and creating a new world in justice and in peace.

MHO 1.4; 1.7; 2.1-2

<sup>5</sup>Therefore our Order welcomes as its own the commitment to evangelise, which belongs to the whole Church. It values missionary work and undertakes it as one of its principal apostolic tasks, as a contribution to the renewal and building up of the Body of Christ.

CIC 578

176

MHO 2.5; III PCO 5ff

<sup>1</sup>In our apostolic brotherhood, we are all called to bring the joyful message of salvation to those who do not believe in Christ, in whatever continent or region they may find themselves. For this reason, all of us consider ourselves to be missionaries.

CIC 784; 786; 787

<sup>2</sup>In addition to the missionary work undertaken in Christian communities strong enough to shine the light of gospel

RM 34

witness in society, we recognise the special situation of those brothers commonly called missionaries. They leave their own country of origin and are sent to engage in ministry in different societies and cultures in which the Gospel is unknown or where young Churches require assistance.

<sup>3</sup>In the same way we recognise the particular missionary circumstances of brothers sent to environments where the Gospel needs to be proclaimed anew, where the lives of entire groups of people are no longer inspired by the Gospel, and where many baptised people have lost a sense of faith, either partially or totally.

RM 33; TMA  
57

<sup>4</sup>Therefore, aware that every person has the right to hear God's good news and live his vocation to the full, let us be sure not to turn a deaf ear to the Lord's missionary command.

## 177

ER XVI 5ff;  
FV 1; III PCO  
9; 11ff; 16ff;  
20; V PCO 57

<sup>1</sup>According to the teaching of Saint Francis, let missionary brothers sent to various parts of the world "live among people spiritually: being subject to every human creature for the love of God," let them give witness with great confidence to the Gospel life by their love; and, "when they see that it pleases God, let them openly proclaim the word of salvation."

1Pt 2:12-13;  
AG 12; 15; 22;  
24; 26; PC 8;  
UR 10ff

MHO 1.7; L3C  
66

<sup>2</sup>On fire with love for Christ and sustained by the example of our holy missionaries, let the brothers embark on their mission driven by the desire to serve the local Churches in the work of spreading the Gospel.

III PCO 18

<sup>3</sup>May they make this attitude evident by willingly listening to and engaging in dialogue with the other ecclesial bodies, aware that missionary activity culminates in the building up of the local Church, in which clergy, religious, and laity have responsibility, each according to his respective competence.

CIC 786; LG  
26; VC 51; 54;  
74; 85; RM 17-  
20

<sup>4</sup>Let the brothers work together with lay missionaries, especially with catechists, offering help and advice, providing intensive spiritual leadership with them, as well as promoting the social and economic welfare of the people.

CIC 785 §1;  
CV 15; EN 29;  
31; SRS 41

VIPCO 11; ER  
IX 2; XVI 5

<sup>5</sup>In keeping with Capuchin tradition, let them be one in mind and heart with people of every state of life, and their work of evangelisation not tied to the security of economic resources or social prestige. Instead, let their trust be in God and in the

credibility of the gospel life.

III PCO 20ff

<sup>6</sup>In a spirit of love, let them evaluate historical, religious, social, and cultural conditions in the light of the Gospel. Urged on by a prophetic spirit let them act with the freedom of the children of God.

Rom 8:21; Gal 4:31; GS (?); NA (?); UR (?); CIC 769

V PCO 48; VII PCO 47

<sup>7</sup>In dialogue with other Christian churches and with different religions, let the brothers seek respectfully the signs of God's presence and the seeds of the Word in different cultures. Let them discern their authentic values, be open to them for the deeper understanding they bring of the very mystery of God, and, contribute to their refinement through the witness of our charism.

VC 79

<sup>8</sup>Let them also promote those changes that foster the coming of a new world and pay attention to ideas that influence how people think and act.

## 178

LR XII 1-2; III PCO 10ff; 35ff

<sup>1</sup>Brothers who, "by divine inspiration," feel called to missionary work in regions where the first proclamation of the Gospel is needed, where young Churches require support, or where new evangelisation is urgent, are to make known their intentions to their own minister.

AG 23; 25ff; 34; 38; 40

<sup>2</sup>The minister, after suitable discernment, shall provide them with theoretical and practical training in missiology, ecumenism, and interreligious dialogue in keeping with their abilities. He shall give them letters of obedience, observing the provisions of our proper law. The minister may also ask other suitable brothers to undertake mission work.

AC 82

<sup>3</sup>The ministers shall not refuse to send those who are suitable on account of the scarcity of brothers in the province, but cast all their cares and worries on Him Who continually takes care of us.

Ps 54:23; Wis 12:13; Mt 6:25ff; Lk 12:22ff; 1Pt 5:7

<sup>4</sup>The different circumscriptions of the order shall generously assist one another as appropriate and, through the General Minister, offer missionaries and support to those in greater need.

III PCO 7ff; 35ff; 41

<sup>5</sup>Brothers may be invited to share in missionary work, even temporarily, especially to provide particular services.

AG 24; 27; 38; ESa III,6

<sup>6</sup>Let ministers foster among the brothers a love for missionary activity and a spirit of working together in it. Let this be done in such a way that everyone, according to his

CIC 211; 781; 783

own state and ability, may fulfil his missionary duty in fraternal communion with missionaries, by praying for the newly established churches in union with them, and by awakening concern among the Christian people.

## 179

III PCO 38ff;  
42

<sup>1</sup>Since the state of those who profess the gospel counsels belongs to the life and holiness of the Church, let the missionary brothers promote it zealously, fostering our specific spirit and charism in the local churches.

LG 44; AG 18;  
CD 35; ESa III,  
18,2; CIC 207  
§2; 574 §1;

<sup>2</sup>Let us promote the development of all expressions of the Franciscan family. Let us also value the special missionary dimension of the contemplative life of our sisters of the Second Order, helping them as far as possible with the foundation of their monasteries and accompanying them spiritually.

<sup>3</sup>Let the ministers see to it that among the missionaries there are brothers qualified to form candidates for the order.

CIC 651 §3

<sup>4</sup>Let the form of our life and the spiritual heritage of our Order, which is universal and embraces all the rites of the Catholic Church, be handed on and expressed in ways that conform to regional conditions, to the unique culture of each nation, and to the character of the particular church. Customs specific to one region are not to be transplanted to another. It is the responsibility of the General Minister with the consent of the council to decide the rite of individual circumscriptions, while observing the prescriptions of law.

CIC 578

## 180

<sup>1</sup>The General Minister, with the consent of his council, and in union with ecclesiastical authority, has the responsibility of promoting and coordinating the missionary activity of the order in the local churches.

<sup>2</sup>It belongs to the Provincial Minister, with the consent of his council, to accept a missionary commitment proposed by the General Minister and to sign agreements with the respective ecclesiastical superior, after receiving the approval of the General Minister, with the consent of his council.

III PCO 41ff;  
VI PCO 24

<sup>3</sup>The General Minister and the Provincial Ministers, with the consent of their respective councils, shall establish a secretariat for evangelisation, missionary enthusiasm and cooperation, and determine its responsibilities.

AG 32ff; ESa  
III,17; 21

<sup>4</sup>Let the brothers work together steadfastly with religious institutes that devote themselves to evangelisation or engage in missionary work in a local church in the same territory or in missionary promotion at home. CIC 708; 791

## 181

ER XIV; XVI;  
XVII 5-8, 14-  
19; LR III 10-  
14; LtOrd 5-11;  
1C 19

<sup>1</sup>Let us remember Saint Francis, who wished to send his companions into the world after the example of Christ's disciples, in poverty and with full trust in God the Father, to proclaim peace everywhere by their life and word.

Mt 10:9ff; Lk  
10:1-12

1C 38; MHO  
3.2

<sup>2</sup>Therefore, let us journey throughout the world, ready to confront even the most difficult situations; living with simplicity the radical call of the Beatitudes, thirsting for the Absolute, who is God, and offering the silent testimony of brotherhood and minority.

EN 69; VC 87-  
91

<sup>3</sup>We entrust this great undertaking to the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of the Good Shepherd, who gave birth to Christ, the light and salvation of all nations, and who, on the morning of Pentecost, overshadowed by the Holy Spirit, presided in prayer at the dawn of evangelisation.

Lk 2:30-32

## Article II Our Life of Faith

## 182

LR II 2; XII 4;  
ER XIX 2;  
XXIII 7; Test  
4; Adm XVI 1;  
PrG 6; LMj XII  
7

<sup>1</sup>As true disciples of Christ and sons of Saint Francis, with the help of divine grace, let us hold fast to the end of our lives on the faith we have received from God through the Church. With all our strength and good judgement let us delve into its depths ever more profoundly in such a way that the faith may increasingly mould our lives and govern all that we do.

2Tm 4:7; LG  
10ff; DV 5; AG  
14; OT 14; GS  
32; UR 2

ER XXIII 7;  
PrCr 1

<sup>2</sup>Through unceasing prayer let us ask God for an increase of this priceless gift and live in close communion with the entire People of God.

<sup>3</sup>Since a shared faith grows stronger, guided by the Holy Spirit, may we never tire of bearing witness to Christ everywhere; and, to those who ask the reason for our hope in eternal life, let us have a ready answer.

1Pt 3:15

## 183

2C 24

<sup>1</sup>Saint Francis had the heartfelt desire to stand by the teaching authority of the Church with the utmost fidelity, for

LG 25; PC 6;  
DV 10; CD  
35.1; CIC 212  
§1; 590 §2;

it protects the Word of God, passed on in Scripture and Tradition, and safeguards the gospel life.

750; 752-753

LMj XIV 5

<sup>2</sup>In order to preserve this spiritual heritage intact, let us cultivate particular loyalty to holy Mother Church.

ER XIX 1ff;  
2LtF 32; 1C 62

<sup>3</sup>Let us, therefore, be in complete harmony with the Church: in thought, word and action, carefully avoiding false or dangerous doctrines.

ER Pr 3; LR I  
1; IX 1; XII 4;  
1C 34; AP 36

<sup>4</sup>Prompted by a sense of active and conscious responsibility, we offer religious submission of intellect and will to the Roman Pontiff, the primary teacher of the universal Church, and to the bishops who, as witnesses to the faith, teach the People of God in union with the supreme pontiff.

<sup>5</sup>At the beginning of their term of office, the ministers and other brothers as decreed in law shall make a profession of faith.

CIC 833

## 184

<sup>1</sup>As we respond to the divine call through which God each day requires us to take part in fulfilling His plan of salvation, let us remember how much, by virtue of our profession, how closely we are bound to Christ in the sight of the People of God.

LG 46; PC 1;  
CIC 607 §3;  
654

<sup>2</sup>Let us strive, therefore, to walk worthily and to excel all the more in the vocation to which we are called, remembering that God never takes back His gifts, still less a vocation once given. His grace will not fail us in overcoming difficulties on this narrow path that leads to life.

Mt 7:14; Rom  
11:29; Eph 4:1;  
1Cor 10:13;  
CIC 607 §1;  
662; 664

<sup>3</sup>Let us persevere with a joyful heart in the commitment of our life intent on our renewal. Conscious of our human frailty, let us move forward on the way of conversion with the entire Church, which is always being renewed by the Holy Spirit.

LG 7; 9

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## 185

<sup>1</sup>Our Order is governed by the universal law of the Church, by the *Rule* of Saint Francis confirmed by Pope Honorius III, and by the *Constitutions* approved by the Holy See.

CIC 576; 598  
§1

ER XIX; LR II

<sup>2</sup>By virtue of our profession, we are bound to observe the

*Rule* with simplicity and with Catholic faith, in accordance with these *Constitutions*, which are the only ones having force of law in the whole order.

<sup>3</sup>The authentic interpretation of the *Rule* is reserved to the Holy See, which has abrogated earlier pontifical declarations on the *Rule* as regards their prescriptive force, excepting those contained in existing universal law and in these *Constitutions*.

<sup>4</sup>The Holy See grants to the General Chapter the right to adapt the *Rule* to new circumstances when appropriate as long as such adaptations obtain force of law through its approval.

## 186

<sup>1</sup>The authentic interpretation of the *Constitutions* is reserved to the Holy See. The general chapter, with the consent of two-thirds of the vocals, may add to, change, or derogate from the *Constitutions*, according to the needs of the times, so that a certain continuity of appropriate renewal may be fostered. However, the approval of the Holy See is always required.

CIC 16 §1;  
576; 583; 587  
§1

<sup>2</sup>Outside the chapter, the General Minister with the consent of his council has the right to settle doubts or to fill in the lacunae that may occur in our own law. These solutions remain in force until the following chapter.

<sup>3</sup>In particular cases ministers and guardians may temporarily dispense their own subjects and guests from disciplinary regulations of the *Constitutions* whenever they judge that it contributes to their spiritual good.

CIC 85

<sup>4</sup>To apply the *Constitutions* adequately to various conditions of life, provincial chapters or Conferences of major superiors may enact particular statutes which must be approved by the General Minister with the consent of his council.

<sup>5</sup>All questions of contentious law, whether between religious, houses or circumscriptions within the order are to be resolved with charity according to law and our manner of juridical procedures.

## 187

<sup>1</sup>Since laws and statutes cannot be made for every particular case, in all our actions let us keep before our eyes the holy Gospel, the *Rule* we have promised to God, sound traditions, and the example of the saints.

PC 2b; 4; CIC  
578; 662

<sup>2</sup>Let ministers and guardians outshine the brothers in the life of our brotherhood and in the observance of the *Rule* and *Constitutions*, and encourage the brothers, with the audacity of love, to put them into practice.

CIC 618-619

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## 188

ER Pr 1; I 1-5;  
LR I 1; XII 4;  
FV 1; 1C 108;  
2C 216; LMj  
XIV 5

<sup>1</sup>Saint Francis, when he was close to death, imparted the blessing of the Most Holy Trinity, together with his own, to those who had kept the *Rule* wholeheartedly. Therefore, setting aside all negligence and burning with love, let us commit ourselves to acquire the gospel perfection placed before us in the *Rule* itself and in our order.

CIC 598 §2;  
662

2C 191

<sup>2</sup>Let us remember, dearest brothers, the text on which our Seraphic Father preached to a chapter of the brothers: "Great things have we promised to God, but greater things has He promised to us." Therefore, let us strive to observe these *Constitutions* and all that we have promised. With the help of Mary, the Mother of God and our mother, let us yearn with ardent desire for the things that have been promised to us.

2Pt 1:4

LMj X 1

<sup>3</sup>While pursuing all these things, let us cast our eyes upon our Redeemer so that, knowing His good pleasure, we may strive to please Him with pure love. Observance of the *Constitutions* will help us not only to observe the *Rule* we have promised but also to fulfil the divine law and follow the gospel counsels. As our labours for Christ Jesus abound, so will our consolation. We will be able to do all things in Him who strengthens us, for He who is the wisdom of God and gives abundantly to all will grant us understanding in everything.

1Cor 1:24;  
2Cor 1:5; Phil  
4:15; Jas 1:5

## 189

LMj X 3

<sup>1</sup>The fact is that  
Christ,  
Who is the Light and Expectation of the nations,  
the End of the Law,  
the Salvation of God,  
the Father of the world to come,  
the Word and the Power that upholds all things  
and, finally,

Is 9:5; Mt  
11:30; Lk 2:32;  
3:6; Rom 10:4;  
Heb 28:28



our hope,  
in Whom all things are possible, delightful and easy,  
and to Whom our frailty is known,  
will not only give us  
strength to follow His commands and counsels,  
but will also pour out His heavenly gifts  
in such abundance that, having overcome all obstacles,  
we may be able to follow and imitate Him,  
with the greatest eagerness in our hearts,  
using visible things as pilgrims  
and yearning for things eternal.

LMj IX 2

<sup>2</sup>In Christ,  
therefore,  
Who is God and Man,  
the True Light, the Splendour of Glory  
and the Brilliance of Eternal Light;  
in Christ,  
the Mirror without blemish,  
the Image of God's Goodness;  
in Christ  
appointed by the Father  
as Judge, Law-giver and Saviour of all peoples;  
in Christ,  
to Whom the Father and the Holy Spirit  
have borne witness  
and in Whom are our merits, our models of life,  
our help, and our reward;  
in Christ  
Whom God had made our Wisdom and Justice,  
may all our thought, meditation, and imitation  
be anchored.

Wis 7:26; Jn  
1:9; 5:37;  
15:26; 1Cor  
1:30; Heb 1:3;  
10:42

<sup>3</sup>Lastly,  
to Christ,  
Who lives and reigns with the Father and the Holy Spirit,  
one God, co-eternal, consubstantial, and co-equal,  
be everlasting praise, honour and glory

Rv 5:13

for ever and ever.

Amen.

ORDINANCES  
OF THE GENERAL CHAPTERS  
OF THE CAPUCHIN FRIARS MINOR

## PREFACE

In 1536, the General Chapter, held at Santa Eufemia in Rome, drew up the first *Constitutions of the Capuchin Friars Minor*. Subsequently, the need for other special laws soon became apparent, to adapt the Order to changing conditions. These laws, issued by the competent legislative authority, namely, the General Chapter, were consistently known as *Ordinances of the General Chapters*. At first the *Ordinances*, and also the *Decrees of the General Definitory*, were inserted into the body of the constitutional text. Later—particularly after 1643, when Pope Urban VIII solemnly confirmed the *Constitutions* of our Order in the Letter *Sacrosanctum Apostolatus officium* (June 19, 1643)—the *Ordinances of the General Chapters* and the *Decrees of the General Definitory* were no longer incorporated into the *Constitutions*, to avoid weakening the *Constitutions* through frequent changes. Instead, a new collection of laws and decrees, complementary to the *Constitutions*, gradually came into being.

Therefore, in accordance with the constant tradition of the order, as well as the *Rule of the Lesser Brothers*, approved by Pope Honorius III on 29 November 1223, and the *Constitutions* approved by the Holy See, the *Ordinances of the General Chapters* are to be considered as proper laws of the Capuchin Order for all intents and purposes. They stand as a true complement applying the *Constitutions*, and are therefore sources of the order's proper law. As such, the *Ordinances of the General Chapters* are an obligatory code for the entire Order everywhere. They contain a set of norms which, while not necessarily "constitutional", are nonetheless valid and useful for the entire brotherhood and therefore universally binding, while being open to a variety of forms and ensuring a healthy balance between unity and pluriformity. They are not approved by the Holy See but by the General Chapter, and for that reason may be adapted, with any additions or subtractions that the changing times and the good of the Order may require.

The Special General Chapter, held in 1968 at the St Lawrence of Brindisi College in Rome, abrogated the *Ordinances of the General Chapters* that were not contained in the new *Constitutions* drafted in conformity with the documents of the Second Vatican Council.

However, the need for a new collection of general chapter resolutions subsequently became apparent. So it was that the General Chapter of 1988 decided that a collection of *Ordinances of the General Chapters* should be resumed, starting from the *Special General Chapter 1968*, which had in fact abrogated all previous *Ordinances* not contained in the new *Constitutions*.

In this way the Capuchin Order came into line with the prescription of the *Code of Canon Law* (can 598,2), according to which norms that are not considered fundamental are to be placed in other additional codes, rather than in the *Constitutions*.

Subsequently, there were increasingly insistent calls from the Order at large to identify more exactly those norms that necessarily had to be kept in the *Constitutions*, and to transfer the others to the *Ordinances of the General Chapters*. These calls were heeded by the General Chapter in 2000 and again by the General Chapter in 2006, which ratified and refined the decision of the previous chapter.

Consequently the Order has proceeded to revise both the *Constitutions* and the *Ordinances*. Its aim in doing so has been two-fold: to respond to the requests described above, and to adapt the *Constitutions* to the most recent teachings of the Magisterium of the Church, at the same time enriching them in the light of the Order's own mature reflections, especially by means of the Sixth and Seventh Plenary Councils.

Then the General Chapter, held in Rome from August 20 to September 22, 2012, carefully examined and ratified the newly revised *Constitutions*.

The same General Chapter, by its own legislative authority, also approved the new collection of *Ordinances of the General Chapters*, and decreed that the same *Ordinances*, after their promulgation by the General Minister, should be made known and duly observed.

Finally, the General Minister, in a decree dated December 8, 2013 (Prot. N. 00935/13), promulgated the *Ordinances of the General Chapters*, the text of which here follows, and determined that they come into force on December 8, 2013. Therefore the present text of the *Ordinances*, drafted in the Italian language, is to be considered authentic, and all translations into modern languages must conform to it.

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## **Chapter II**

### **The vocation to our life and the formation of the brothers**

#### **2/1**

To foster vocations, it is very useful to offer young men an opportunity to participate in some way in our fraternal life. This is best done in suitable houses where help with personal reflection may be offered at the same time.

1. In order that vocations to religious life may be properly cultivated and more suitably prepared, the Provincial Ministers, with the consent of their council, and with the advice of the provincial chapter, if this seems appropriate, may establish special institutes, according to the needs of regions and times.

2. These institutes shall be organised in accordance with sound, personalized educational principles in such a way that, in addition to the sciences and the humanities, the students may lead a Christian life appropriate to their age, spirit and stage of development, while maintaining contact with society and their families. In this way a vocation to the religious life may be discerned and fostered.

3. The studies undertaken by the students shall be so arranged that they can be easily continued elsewhere.

## **2/2**

The Provincial Minister, with the consent of his council, shall determine the manner of probation for a religious who transfers to our Order from another religious institute. Once the three years have passed<sup>1</sup>, the time of such probation shall not be prolonged for more than a year.

## **2/3**

1. For the promotion of research in spirituality and the Franciscan heritage, both from the historical and systematic points of view, and for the training of formators and teachers in spirituality, our Order promotes the Franciscan Institute of Spirituality as a valued resource.

2. Because of its international and inter-Franciscan character, the Institute should serve as a fixed reference point for cross-cultural exchange within the Order, and as a place of study and research into the ever-changing situations that challenge our life and vocation.

3. It is recommended that the Institute, collaborating closely with the General Formation Secretariat, fulfil a coordinating function between similar academic institutions, which the Order promotes at various levels.

## **2/4**

Before educational structures are established for groups of circumscriptions, the General Minister is to be consulted.

## **2/5**

Forms of interprovincial collaboration shall be regulated by special agreements and statutes, approved by the General Minister, with the consent of his council.

## **2/6**

The General Secretariat for Formation carries out its task in accordance with the decisions of the general chapter and the instructions given by the General Minister and his council.

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. CIC can. 684 §2.

## 2/7

1. The Order is to have its own *Ratio Formationis* or *General Formation Plan*, approved by the General Minister and his council, after having consulted the General Secretariat and the General Formation Council.
2. The formation plan of individual circumscriptions or groups of circumscriptions must conform to the *Constitutions* and to the *General Formation Plan* of the Order.

## 2/8

For the formation of candidates from several circumscriptions, the choice of houses and composition of the formation fraternities are jointly agreed upon by the ministers concerned, after consultation with their respective councils. The interested parties are to draw up regulations for the running of these fraternities.

## 2/9

The *Ratio Formationis* will provide the ways and means for the gradual incorporation of the candidate into the fraternity.

## 2/10

A document attesting to admission to postulancy must be drawn up.

## 2/11

**The length of postulancy, ordinarily at least one year, and other possible ways of living this first period may be determined by the respective minister, with the consent of his council.**

## 2/12

Normally, a brother coming into the Order keeps his baptismal name. To determine personal identity, the place of birth is not used, but rather the family name.

## 2/13

The Formation Plan of the Order gives the general outlines of post-novitiate formation. To apply these, individual provinces or groups of circumscriptions shall draw up a structured program for the accompaniment and initiation of the brothers.

## 2/14

Where it is impossible to wear our habit, simple clothing shall be worn. In such cases, the various circumscriptions of the Order shall make appropriate regulations.

## 2/15

1. At the times determined by the minister, after having consulted his council, the local fraternity, following the director's report, shall discuss and reflect together on the suitability of the candidates and its own manner of acting towards them.
2. During the novitiate and before perpetual profession, the perpetually professed brothers who have lived for four months in the formation fraternity concerned shall also express their opinion by a consultative vote in the manner to be determined by the minister.

3. The brothers in temporary vows shall not be excluded from expressing their opinion even though they do not have a vote.

4. A report on every such meeting, and the results of any votes taken, are to be sent to the minister.

#### **2/16**

A document of both temporary and perpetual profession shall be drawn up, indicating the brother's age and other necessary information. This document must be signed by the professed, by the one who receives his profession and by two witnesses. This document, together with the others prescribed by the Church, must be carefully kept in the provincial archives.

The profession should also be recorded by the minister in a book of professions to be kept in the archives. In the case of perpetual profession, the minister must notify the pastor of the place where the professed brother was baptised.

#### **2/17**

When collaborating with other institutes, the primary duty and right of the Order to form its brothers must always be safeguarded. An assessment must be made to see whether the right conditions exist for such collaboration to arise, and whether it shall be continued.

#### **2/18**

Consent to receive sacred orders is to be given to those aspirants who, as well as being endowed with due human and spiritual maturity, have competently completed the study of philosophy and theology as required by the Church.

#### **2/19**

After the completion of specific formation, the religious ordinary may present a perpetually professed brother to the General Minister, so that, with the consent of his council, he may admit him to ordination as a permanent deacon. For a religious, this admission also requires the permission of the Holy See. The permanent deacon, who exercises his ministry with the consent of the local ordinary and of his religious ordinary, remains a professed brother subject to our proper law and cannot insist on being assigned to a fraternity within the territory of the diocese where he was ordained.

#### **2/20**

In addition to a central or regional library, which is highly recommended, there should be a community library in all our houses, adequately supplied to meet the needs of the particular fraternity. Where possible and with due precautions, our libraries shall be accessible to non-members of the Order. As far as possible, we should ensure that our libraries use information systems.



## **2/21**

Decisions regarding the International College pertain to the General Minister with the consent of his council.

### **Chapter III Our life of prayer**

#### **3/1**

In our fraternities, when circumstances suggest, some brothers shall be appointed to prepare the liturgical celebrations.

#### **3/2**

1. Every year, after the solemnity of Saint Francis, each local fraternity shall celebrate a commemoration of all deceased brothers, sisters, relatives, and benefactors.

2. Regarding suffrages, it is decreed that each fraternity shall celebrate a Mass on the death of the Roman Pontiff, of the General Minister, and of a former General Minister. The same shall be done for general councillors and former general councillors in each fraternity of the group to which they belonged.

3. It is the responsibility of the provincial chapter to determine the suffrages to be offered for deceased Provincial Ministers, former Provincial Ministers and for deceased brothers, parents, and benefactors.

#### **3/3**

In the circumscriptions, there shall be directives to ensure that at least one period of meditation is spent in common.

#### **3/4**

It is commendable to occasionally organize times of retreat or recollection, using a variety of styles and taking into account the diversity of duties.

#### **3/5**

It pertains to the provincial chapter or Conference of Major Superiors to judge the advisability of establishing fraternities of recollection and to provide for their governance.

### **Chapter IV Our life of poverty**

#### **4/1**

Each circumscription or group of circumscriptions shall devise and implement particular ways of being present among the poor.

#### **4/2**

1. The ministers and guardians, either personally or through others, within the limits of their own competence and in obedience to universal law, can perform civil acts in connection with temporal goods, if and insofar as this may be necessary for the brothers or for the works entrusted to us.

2. All the temporal goods belonging to the Order are ecclesiastical goods that must be administered according to universal and proper law, while also respecting civil law. We shall ensure that entities recognised in civil law are also ecclesiastically recognised. When this is not possible, ministers shall designate the physical or juridical persons in whose name the Order's goods are to be registered in civil law. In this case, care shall be taken to ensure, through appropriate means, that the goods registered to physical or juridical persons are in any case ecclesiastical goods and are equally governed by canonical norms.

#### **4/3**

In particular cases, the ministers may give permission for individuals to administer money, but only for a limited time. The permission must be given in writing, and must indicate for how long it is given, and the manner of accounting for the administration.

#### **4/4**

1. The minister, with the consent of his council, and having consulted the local chapter, determines the maximum sum that each fraternity can manage and makes appropriate arrangements concerning money that is not necessary for the needs of the local fraternity. It is appropriate that the economic administration in each circumscription be centralized. For this purpose it is useful that there be a system of budgets at each level.

2. In each circumscription, the chapter is to decide how much is necessary for the ordinary management of the circumscription, and the total amount held in reserve for internal extraordinary expenditures (e.g., maintenance of buildings, the sick, employees insurance, formation) and for external solidarity (e.g., missions and charity). Monies exceeding the ordinary and extraordinary needs of a circumscription shall be generously made available to the Order, the Church, and the poor.

3. It is the responsibility of ministers, with the consent of their councils, to set up the funds or financial reserves mentioned in §2. The income from such investments should be used for the same purpose as that of the fund. All investments, whether in the form of fixed assets, cash or other financial instruments, must be managed and evaluated on the basis of ethical principles that are consistent with the social doctrine of the Church.

**4/5**

Having observed the norms for the administration of temporal goods, the General Minister or the Provincial Minister, with the consent of the respective council, is to decide what is to be done with the surplus goods of the provinces or custodies.

**4/6**

It pertains to the provincial chapter to lay down norms for the use of the goods of suppressed fraternities, maintaining the wishes of the founders and donors and their legitimately acquired rights. If the goods of a suppressed circumscription are involved, the competent authority is the General Minister, who must proceed collegially with his council, having consulted the relevant Conference and the ministers concerned and their councils.

**4/7**

Economic solidarity in the Order shall be regulated by an appropriate statute, which defines the relationships between the circumscriptions and the Conferences, among themselves and with our entire fraternity. This statute is to be approved by the general chapter.

**4/8**

Each circumscription shall periodically assess the buildings it has available, and proceed to sell those that are unnecessary or to allow others to use them, observing the norms of common and particular law. Where possible, this shall be done in dialogue with the neighbouring circumscriptions and with the Conference. For this purpose the General Minister with his council shall issue appropriate guidelines.

**4/9**

1. The construction, acquisition and alienation of our houses are the responsibility of the Provincial Minister with the consent of his council, the prescriptions of law being observed.
2. When construction is finished, a guardian may not build or demolish anything or enlarge a building without consulting the local chapter, and obtaining the consent of the councillors and the permission of the minister.
3. The guardian must carefully provide for the maintenance of the house and the care of the property, obtaining the consent of the councillors in matters of greater importance.

**4/10**

In the larger houses, the office of the bursar shall ordinarily be separate from that of the guardian.

**4/11**

In each circumscription, or if appropriate also at other levels, formation and in-service training of brothers in economic administration shall be provided.

#### **4/12**

1. All bursars, administrators and guardians are to give an exact account of their administration to their superiors and to the fraternity at a time and in a manner determined by the ministers.
2. On the occasion of the triennial report, the Provincial Ministers, in a document signed by the council, shall present to the General Minister a true account of the financial situation of the province, so that its needs may be appropriately provided for and the observance of poverty effectively supervised.
3. The Custodes shall also provide a financial statement for their minister, signed by the councillors.
4. The General Minister shall report on the financial situation of the Order at the general chapter in the manner determined by the chapter itself. The other ministers shall do likewise at their respective chapters.

#### **4/13**

To change regulations regarding temporal goods or to take any action involving them that exceeds the limits of one's own competence, the permission of the immediate major superior is required.

#### **4/14**

1. The Order should prepare a statute for the administration of assets, which must be approved by the general chapter.
2. Circumscriptions or groups of circumscriptions, or even Conferences as appropriate, shall have similar statutes, which must be approved by the General Minister, with the consent of his council.

#### **4/15**

1. In the circumscriptions of the Order, a finance committee, as mentioned in the Code of Canon Law, can. 1280 must be established. It is recommended that one or more committees on financial matters, whose function would be to offer advice about the administration of goods, and on the building, maintenance and alienation of houses, be established.
2. These commissions are established by the chapter, which also determines their competence. However, their members, some of whom may be lay people, are appointed by the minister with the consent of the council.

#### **4/16**

1. After consulting the ministers or, if necessary, the Conferences of Major Superiors, the General Minister, with the consent of the council, shall establish limits, according to the differing values of currencies, beyond which ministers are bound to ask either the consent of the council or the permission of a higher authority to validly contract obligations, alienate goods or incur extraordinary expenses. Such permissions must be given in writing.

2. The minister, with the consent of the council, will do the same with appropriate adaptations for the guardians of his circumscription.
3. Expenses are considered extraordinary that are unnecessary either for the minister in the exercise of his office or in the ordinary service of the brothers, or for the guardian in those matters that do not pertain to the ordinary care of the fraternity entrusted to him.

## **Chapter V**

### **The manner of working**

#### **5/1**

It is up to the chapter of each circumscription to adopt suitable norms regarding holidays and free time, based on the principles of fraternal fairness.

## **Chapter VI**

### **Our life in fraternity**

#### **6/1**

In circumscriptions where it seems useful, a shared infirmary may be established.

#### **6/2**

1. Where an enclosure cannot be maintained because of particular circumstances, the minister, with the consent of his council, shall provide norms adapted to the local circumstances.
2. It pertains to the ministers to determine the precise boundaries of the enclosure or to change them for legitimate reasons. They may also suspend the enclosure temporarily.
3. In urgent cases, on a particular occasion, the guardian can dispense from the enclosure.

#### **6/3**

1. The consent of the local chapter shall be obtained for laymen who wish to share temporarily in our life. If, however, the stay is to be protracted, the consent of the minister is also required.
2. The minister, with the consent of the council, may admit laymen as members of the family perpetually dedicated to God, i.e., oblates, after an agreement has been drawn up concerning mutual rights and obligations.

#### **6/4**

1. It pertains to the General Minister, with the consent of his council, to issue travel regulations for the whole Order, and to the Provincial Minister, with the consent of his council, to do likewise for his province, in accordance with the instructions of the General Minister.<sup>2</sup>

2. For a prolonged stay outside a house of the fraternity, the norms of universal law must be observed.

#### **6/5**

It is the Provincial Minister's responsibility, after consulting his council, to judge the appropriateness of having vehicles for a ministry, an office, or the service of a fraternity, and to decide how they are to be used.

#### **6/6**

The brothers, as far as possible, shall inform the guardian in advance of their arrival. They shall spontaneously show their letters of obedience, if these are necessary.

#### **6/7**

If brothers, for reasons of study, need to stay for a long time in a house of another circumscription, the ministers of those involved shall fraternally come to an agreement about payment for living expenses.

#### **6/8**

1. In the case of associating a monastery to the Capuchin Poor Clares, the General Minister, with his council, proceeds collegially in accordance with the provisions of law.

2. The minister exercises his office in relation to the associated monastery in accordance with universal law and the *Constitutions* of the sisters themselves.

#### **6/9**

The General Minister must proceed collegially with his council in every case concerning the aggregation of an Institute of Consecrated Life.

#### **6/10**

As a sign of co-responsibility, the governing board of the respective Secular Franciscan fraternities shall be consulted in the appointment of spiritual assistants or when establishing fraternities.

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<sup>2</sup> Cf. Decree of the General Minister (1 May 2001; Prot. N. 00246/01) in *Analecta OFMCap* 117 (2001) 79-81.

## **Chapter VII**

### **Our life of penance**

#### **7/1**

1. In addition to what is provided in the *Constitutions*, it is the responsibility of the chapter of each circumscription to establish further norms regarding both the days of fasting and abstinence and the manner of fasting.

2. Equally, in each circumscription, chapters shall make appropriate regulations about other forms of communal penance according to the circumstances of time and place.

#### **7/2**

If a brother is guilty of an offence against a person or an ecclesiastical or social institution, by the same law of charity which requires justice and respect for the rights and dignity of all, especially the most vulnerable, we shall help him to assume his responsibilities, make good the harm he has done and accept the canonical and civil consequences of his behaviour. Indeed, responsibility for an offence rests with the one who commits it.

#### **7/3**

In order to prevent sin, ministers and guardians shall encourage the brothers to observe in all things our own law and that of the Church, as well as civil legislation. But if a brother commits an offence, or there is a danger of its being repeated, the ministers should take all possible suitable measures, including cooperation with the civil authorities, to prevent it. In every case, even a brother who sins or is suspected of an offence must always be accorded the rights and protections enjoyed by any accused person. Our collaboration with civil authorities shall not be in conflict with the divine or canon law.

## **Chapter VIII**

### **The governance of our Order**

#### **8/1**

For the establishment, suppression and unification of provinces, local situations shall be taken into account and at least the following aspects should be assessed:

- the presence of a group of brothers and fraternities able to sustain effectively, either by themselves or through the solidarity of the Order, the various aspects of the life and activities of the brothers, both internally and externally, in terms of their openness to the needs of the Order and the Church;
- their capacity to assume the promotion of vocations, formation and apostolic works also in cooperation with other circumscriptions,
- material and economic needs.

In particular, the following should be verified:

- the brothers' sense of belonging to the brothers, at its various levels;
- the possibility of filling the offices of governance and ensuring an effective turnover of officeholders;
- the capacity to assume a missionary commitment; geographic and linguistic unity, as far as possible.

## **8/2**

1. In particular circumstances, the General Minister, observing the conditions for altering the circumscriptions, may establish a federation of several provinces, with its own statute.
2. A federation entails unity of governance: a single Provincial Minister, with his council, who has jurisdiction over all the federated provinces.

## **8/3**

1. When helping a circumscription temporarily, that is, for not more than three years, Provincial Ministers have the faculty of sending their own brothers without having recourse to the General Minister. This time limit does not apply to the service given to a circumscription that depends on one's own province. For other services which are expected to continue for more than three years, or if it is desired to continue the service after the three years have elapsed, letters of obedience must be requested from the General Minister.
2. After one year of service, the right to vote mentioned in n.121,6 of the Constitutions is no longer exercised in one's own circumscription, but in the circumscription in which the service is rendered, except for what is prescribed for delegations. However, voting rights are exercised after the end of the first year of service.

## **8/4**

In exceptional cases, the ministers are not bound to convene their council when it is only a case of consulting them. Outside of a meeting, they may consult the council in a suitable way. The consultation and the decision taken by the minister must be noted in the council minutes. The same may be done in the case of consulting others.

## **8/5**

1. To be able to proceed to a vote by postulation, at least one third of those having the right to vote must request it in writing from the president of the chapter. In all other cases a vote to postulate must be considered null.
2. The postulation is valid only if the candidate, in the first scrutiny, obtains two thirds of the votes of the vocals present. Otherwise, further postulations are excluded, and the voting resumes in the normal way, starting with the first scrutiny.



## **8/6**

1. A minister may be removed by the General Minister, with the consent of his council, for a serious reason, including repeated neglect or violation of his duties even after an admonition, or for maladministration.
2. The guardian, as also the delegate, can be removed by the Provincial Minister, with the consent of his council, for a just cause, that is, if required by the good of the fraternity, whether local or provincial, or of the particular Church.

## **8/7**

The chapter, at all levels, is a temporary collegial body which exercises its own authority in accordance with the competence accorded to it by the *Constitutions*.

## **8/8**

In order to allow the participation of qualified brothers who otherwise could not participate in a general chapter, either as a delegate of their provinces or an *ex-officio* members, each Conference is to elect one perpetually professed lay brother as a delegate. The manner of his election is to be established by the norms of each Conference.

## **8/9**

1. Once the general chapter has been announced, in every province all the perpetually professed brothers shall elect one delegate to the general chapter and a substitute for every hundred brothers.
2. This election is conducted in the manner determined by the provincial chapter, and the results are to be published at least three months before the general chapter.

## **8/10**

1. Preparation for the general chapter and a consultation of the brothers with regard to its agenda shall take place in accordance with the *Procedures for Conducting a General Chapter*.
2. The General Minister, with the consent of his council, prepares a list of possible agenda items, and informs all the capitulars in good time. But the chapter itself decides the questions to be treated.

## **8/11**

Nine councillors are to be elected at the general chapter.

## **8/12**

1. If the General Minister is elected from outside the chapter, the chapter is suspended until the new General Minister arrives at the Chapter.
2. General coucilors elected outside the Chapter become, *ipso facto*, members of the chapter.

### **8/13**

1. A number of offices and structures are established at the general curia for the service of the Order, such as the following:

- the General Secretariat of the Order;
- the office of the General Procurator to handle the Order's business with the Holy See;
- the office of the General Postulator, for transactions with the Congregation for the Causes of Saints;
- the General Formation Secretariat;
- the General Secretariat for Evangelisation, Mission Animation and Collaboration;
- the office of the General Assistant to the Secular Franciscan Order;
- the Office for Assistance to Nuns and Institutes affiliated to the Capuchin Order;
- the Justice, Peace and Ecology Office;
- the General Archives;
- the Central Library;
- the General Bursary;
- the Offices for Communication, Statistics, and the central Registry (Protocol).

2. Without prejudice to the prescriptions of the *Constitutions*, and observing the decisions of the general chapters, the General Minister, with the consent of his council, when it is necessary and appropriate, may establish other offices and structures of the general curia, and may also suppress or modify existing ones.

### **8/14**

The electoral assembly is composed of: the General Vicar, the general councillors, the former General Minister in the period from the expiration of his term of office until the next general chapter inclusive, the Provincial Ministers, the custodes, the general secretary and the general procurator.

The work of the electoral assembly will be determined by appropriate regulations approved by the general chapter.

### **8/15**

The ordinary provincial chapter is announced and convened every three years. The General Minister has the faculty to permit the chapter, for a good reason, to be held six months before or after a three year term has elapsed.

### **8/16**

All the capitulars are to be informed in due time about the list of possible agenda items proposed by the Provincial Minister with the consent of his council. The chapter itself, however, decides the agenda items.

**8/17**

1. In a chapter with delegates, the number of participants by right must be less than the number of delegates.
2. Non-capitulars in a province may attend the chapter as auditors, unless the chapter procedures determine otherwise.
3. Brothers who are capitulars lose active voice if, without lawful dispensation, they are not present at the chapter for the entire time of the chapter itself, whether it is held with direct suffrage or with delegates.

**8/18**

1. Provinces with one hundred brothers or fewer conduct their chapter with direct suffrage. Provinces with more than one hundred brothers conduct a chapter with delegates. However, even provinces with more than one hundred brothers may conduct the chapter with direct suffrage, and, for good reasons, provinces with one hundred or fewer brothers may hold a chapter with delegates.
2. In both cases, this must be decided by a majority of two-thirds of the voters in a general consultation, in which at least seventy-five percent (75%) of all the perpetually professed brothers must participate. The decision is then recorded in the *Procedures for Conducting a Provincial Chapter*.

**8/19**

1. Brothers who have been declared unlawfully absent, and those who have submitted a request for exclaustation or for dispensation from religious vows and from the duties connected to sacred ordination, are deprived of active and passive voice. If the request is submitted after the chapter has been convened, they are excluded from the chapter without being substituted.
2. In the judgment of the Provincial Minister, with the consent of the council, brothers who have submitted a request to be absent from the religious house may be deprived of active and passive voice.

**8/20**

The Provincial Minister and councilors are elected for three years.

**8/21**

No brother may hold the office of Provincial Minister and/or Custos for more than three consecutive terms, in whatever legitimate way it may have been conferred on him. Following a third consecutive term of office election, appointment or postulation is not possible.

**8/22**

In the election of councilors, the outgoing Provincial Minister enjoys only active voice.

**8/23**

The chapter of a custody is held every three years. The Custos and his councilors are elected for the same length of time.

**8/24**

The outgoing Custos does not have passive voice in the election of the councilors.

**8/25**

1. A delegation is a structure of the Order that is transitory in nature. It is made up of a group of brothers gathered in local fraternities, and entrusted to a province. Its purpose is to ensure fraternal life in geographical areas where, although there is more than one house, the prerequisites for establishing or maintaining a circumscription are lacking.

2. The General Minister, with the consent of his council, having consulted the Conferences of Major Superiors concerned, may establish, modify and suppress a delegation.

3. A delegation has its own statute, approved by the Provincial Minister, with the consent of his council.

4. A brother delegated by the Provincial Minister shall be placed in charge of each delegation, and he shall be assisted by two councilors. It is his duty to represent the delegation, in the name of the Provincial Minister, in dealings with the local ecclesiastical and civil authorities, as far as this is possible.

5. The delegate and the two councilors are appointed by the Provincial Minister in accordance with the statute, with the consent of his council, after having first consulted the perpetually professed brothers of the delegation. However, the delegate may not be reappointed for a longer time than in the case of a guardian.

6. The delegate, who is not a major superior, is to receive from the Provincial Minister, in writing, the necessary delegations to facilitate practical, pastoral and administrative governance, and to encourage a certain amount of autonomy of action in the group, especially with a view to service to the local Church and the implantation of the Order.

7. The brothers of the delegation retain all the rights and duties of their respective province.

8. Brothers of another circumscription who are serving in the delegation exercise their voting rights in their own circumscription.

**8/26**

The term of office of a guardian and a vicar lasts for three years.

**8/27**

Let the guardians not only inform but also consult the brothers by suitable means about agenda of a local chapter.

**8/28**

1. In the general and provincial curias and in the residence of the Custos there shall be a private archive, in which are carefully kept all documents that must remain secret.

2. In the management of the archives, the prescriptions of eccleastical law and of our own law are to be observed. The requirements of archival science are to be respected and an inventory of documents preserved in the archives must not be omitted.

3. The care of the archives should be entrusted to qualified brothers who, for that purpose, with the permission of the minister, may be assisted by external helpers.

**8/29**

In all the fraternities, the custom of keeping a chronicle (log book) is to be maintained.

**8/30**

Meetings of the Conferences are attended by the representatives of delegations and of the houses of presence in the territory. General councilors, delegated by the General Minister, also attend the meetings by right. All of the aforementioned do not have the right to vote.

**8/31**

Conferences shall encourage and promote opportunities and structures of collaboration among themselves so as to increase the sense of brotherhood and the greatest possible sharing in the Order.

**8/32**

The presidents of the Conferences, convened by the General Minister, shall meet together with the General Minister and his council at least every two years.

## **Chapter X**

### **Our life in obedience**

**10/1**

1. During his term of office, the General Minister shall visit all the brothers either personally or through others, principally through the general councillors.

2. The other ministers shall make such a visitation to all the fraternities in their own territories at least twice in a three-year term.

3. The custodies, in addition to a visitation by the Custos, shall be visited by the Provincial Minister during each three-year term.

4. Moreover, when the opportunity arises, let the General Minister visit the brothers in the various countries and occasionally be present at meetings of the Conferences of Major Superiors.

5. Let the other ministers as well, in their concern for individuals and their work, willingly take advantage of opportunities of meeting with the brothers.

#### **10/2**

1. Once the visitation is completed, the delegated visitor shall send a complete report to his respective minister.
2. In a spirit of obedience, the brothers shall welcome the recommendations made after the visitation and seek to implement them faithfully. There shall be suitable community evaluations of the recommendations.
3. At an appropriate time, ministers and guardians shall report to their own immediate superior on what has been implemented. Similarly, they shall inform them how they have put into practice those things which the *Constitutions* delegate to provincial chapters or to the superiors.
4. Once during a three-year term, let the ministers send a report concerning the state of their own jurisdiction to their respective superior.

## **Chapter XII**

### **The Proclamation of the Gospel and the Life of Faith**

#### **12/1**

It is for the general chapter, with the consent of two-thirds of the vocals, both to approve the norms of the *Ordinances of the General Chapters* and to add to, change, derogate from or abrogate them, as the needs of the times and of renewal require, while keeping within the thrust of our tradition. The same general chapter is competent to issue an authentic interpretation of the *Ordinances of the General Chapters*.

#### **12/2**

1. A temporary dispensation from the disciplinary norms of the *Constitutions* for an entire province is reserved to the General Minister and for an entire fraternity to its own minister.
2. It belongs to the General Minister, with the consent of his council, to grant a temporary dispensation on a case-by-case basis from observing the *Ordinances of the General Chapters*. Other ministers are bound by what is laid down in these *Ordinances*.

#### **12/3**

It belongs to the Provincial Minister or the Custos, with the consent of his council, to approve particular statutes for individual fraternities or houses.

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