

Community of Franciscan Friars of the Renewal

**CONSTITUTIONS AND DIRECTORY**

Approved by the Holy See  
13 June 2016  
Feast of Saint Anthony of Padua





CONGREGATIO  
PRO INSTITUTIS VITAE CONSECRATAE  
ET SOCIETATIBUS VITAE APOSTOLICAE

Prot. n. N. 107<sup>1</sup> / 2006

DECREE

The Religious Institute of *Franciscan Friars of the Renewal*, whose General House is located in the Archdiocese of New York (USA), was founded on April 28, 1987 by eight Friars Minor Capuchin: Benedict Groeschel, Andrew Apostoli, Glenn Sudano, Pio Mandato, Robert Stanion, Stanley Fortuna, Robert Lombardo and Joseph Nolan, and was erected as a Clerical Religious Institute of Diocesan Right on May 28, 1999 by His Eminence, the Cardinal John O'Connor, the Archbishop of New York (USA).

In imitation of St. Francis of Assisi, the friars seek to follow in the footsteps of Jesus, as a prophetic witness that life is a pilgrimage to the Father, of faith, hope, and love of God and neighbor, made possible by the Holy Spirit. They participate in Christ's renewal of all things through their prayer, fraternal life, service of the poor, and evangelization, as a complement to the work of those whose mission is to serve parochially.


In their testimonial letters, His Eminence, Archbishop Timothy Michael Cardinal Dolan, of the Archdiocese of New York (USA), together with the Ordinaries of the other Dioceses wherein the *Franciscan Friars of the Renewal* are present, submitted their requests for Pontifical Recognition for the Institute.

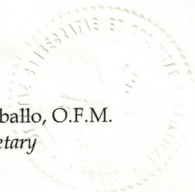
His Holiness, Pope Francis, after having received the favorable opinion of the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, granted the request of the Archbishop of New York on May 10, 2016.


With the present Decree, this same Congregation declares that the Clerical Religious Institute, the *Franciscan Friars of the Renewal*, is a Clerical Religious Institute of Pontifical Right and is to be recognized as such throughout the world.

Moreover, this Dicastery approves and confirms the text of the Constitutions presented in the English language, a copy of which is held in its archives.

All things to the contrary notwithstanding  
Given at the Vatican this 13<sup>th</sup> day of June 2016  
*The Memorial of St. Antony of Padua.*

  
† José Rodríguez Carballo, O.F.M.  
Archbishop Secretary



  
João Braz Cardo, de Aviz  
Prefect



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## INTRODUCTION

The *Community of Franciscan Friars of the Renewal* was founded on 28 April 1987 in the Archdiocese of New York by a group of Capuchin friars to respond to a desire to work more definitively for personal and communal renewal and the ongoing reform of the Church.

By seeking a constant return to the sources of the whole Christian life and to the primitive inspiration of the *Rule* and *Testament* of Saint Francis, the Institute attempts to live sincerely and truthfully a life in conformity with the Gospel and the ideals of its Seraphic Father, Saint Francis, as handed on by the Capuchin tradition.<sup>1</sup>

It was recognized as a public association of the Christian faithful by Cardinal John O'Connor on 2 April 1990. It was established as a religious institute of diocesan right by Cardinal John O'Connor on 28 May 1999. The institute received pontifical approval On 13 June 2016, Feast of Saint Anthony of Padua.

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. *Perfectae caritatis*, 2.1; Franciscan Friars of the Renewal, *Capuchin Identity Study Report* (Presented to the General Chapter, 20 June 1996).



## PREFACE: SOURCES OF FRANCISCAN LIFE

Since the *Rule* of Saint Francis  
contains the marrow of the Gospel,  
we accept this *Rule*,  
as approved by Pope Honorius III,  
to be the foundation of our life.<sup>1</sup>

We further recognize the *Testament* of Saint Francis  
and his spirit and life  
to be the light with which we seek  
the will of God for us  
in following Jesus.<sup>2</sup>

### I. THE *RULE* OF SAINT FRANCIS

**Chapter I. In the Name of the Lord begins the Life of the Friars Minor.** This is the Rule and Life of the Friars Minor, namely, to observe the Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, living in obedience, in poverty, and in chastity. Brother Francis promises obedience and reverence to our Lord Pope Honorius and his successors canonically elected, and to the Roman Church, and the other brothers are bound to obey Brother Francis and his successors.

**Chapter II. Of those who wish to adopt this life, and how they are to be received.** If anyone wishes to adopt this life and come to our friars, let them send him to the minister provincial, to whom alone, and to no other is granted leave to receive the friars. And the minister shall examine him carefully concerning the Catholic Faith and the Sacraments of the Church. And if he believes in all these things and will faithfully profess and steadfastly observe them to the end; and if he has no wife, or if having one, she has already entered a convent or has given him permission by authority of the bishop of the Diocese, — she herself, having previously made a vow of continence and being of such age that no

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. *2 Celano*, 208; Francis of Assisi, *Regula bullata*, 1:1; *Testament* 14–15.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *Capuchin Constitutions of 1536*, I/6.

suspicion can be raised against her — then the minister shall address to him the words of the Holy Gospel — that he go and sell all that he has and take care to give it to the poor; but if he cannot do this, his good will shall suffice. And the friars and the minister shall take heed not to be solicitous about his temporal goods, so that he may dispose of his property freely as the Lord shall inspire him. If, however, counsel be sought, the minister may send him to some God-fearing persons according to whose advice his goods shall be distributed to the poor. Then shall be given him the clothes of probation, namely, two tunics without the hood, and the cord, and drawers, and the caperone reaching to the cord, unless it should seem good to the same minister, before God, to act otherwise. The year of his probation being finished, let him be received to obedience, promising to observe always this Rule and Life; and on no account shall it be lawful for him to leave this Order, as decreed by our Lord the Pope, for, according to the Holy Gospel, no man putting his hand to the plow and looking back is fit for the Kingdom of God. Let those who have already promised obedience have one tunic with a hood, and another (if they wish) without the hood. And those who are compelled by necessity may wear shoes. And all the friars shall wear coarse garments, and they may mend them with sacking and other pieces of cloth, with the blessings of God. And I admonish and exhort them not to despise nor judge those whom they see dressed in soft and fine clothes and who use dainty food and drink, but rather let everyone judge and despise himself.

**Chapter III. Of the Divine Office and of fasting, and how the friars ought to go about the world.** The clerics shall recite the Divine Office according to the use of the Roman Church, excepting the Psalter; for which reason they may have breviaries. But the lay-brothers shall say twenty-four Our Fathers for Matins, and five for Lauds; seven for each of the hours of Prime, Tierce, Sext, and None; twelve for Vespers, and seven for Compline; they shall also pray for the dead. And the friars shall fast from the feast of All Saints until Christmas. But with regard to the Lent which begins at the Epiphany and lasts during the forty days which our Lord consecrated by His own fast, let those who keep it voluntarily be blessed by the Lord; but those who do not wish to keep it shall not be obliged. But they shall fast during the other Lent which lasts until our Lord's Resurrection. At other times, they shall not be bound to fast except on Fridays. In cases, however, of manifest necessity, the friars are not obliged to observe corporal fasts. I counsel, admonish and exhort my brothers in Jesus Christ, that when they go out in the world, they neither quarrel nor dispute, nor judge others; but let them be meek, peaceful, modest, gentle and humble, speaking courteously to everyone, as is becoming. They shall not ride unless compelled by manifest necessity, or by infirmity. Into whatever house they enter, they shall

first say, "Peace be to this house," and, according to the Holy Gospel, they may partake of whatever food is set before them.

**Chapter IV. That the friars may not receive money.** I strictly command all the friars, that they by no means receive coin or money, either by themselves or through the medium of others. Nevertheless, the ministers and custodes, and they only, shall take special care to provide for the needs of the sick and the clothing of the other friars, through their spiritual friends, according to places, seasons and cold climates, as they may deem necessary; saving always that, as said before, they receive neither coin nor money.

**Chapter V. Of the manner of working.** Those friars whom the Lord has given the grace of working, shall work faithfully and devotedly, in such wise that avoiding idleness, the enemy of the soul, they yet do not extinguish the spirit of holy prayer and devotion to which all temporal things ought to be subservient. In payment for their work, let them receive whatever is necessary for the bodily support of themselves and their brothers, excepting coin or money. And this they should do humbly as becomes the servants of God and followers of most holy poverty.

**Chapter VI. That the friars shall appropriate to themselves nothing; and of asking alms; and of the sick friars.** The friars shall appropriate to themselves nothing, neither house nor place, nor anything at all; but as pilgrims and strangers in this world, serving the Lord in poverty and humility, they shall go seeking alms with confidence. Nor ought they to be ashamed, since for our sakes, our Lord made Himself poor in this world. This is that sublime height of most exalted poverty which has made you, my most beloved brothers, heirs and kings of the Kingdom of Heaven, which has made you poor in temporal things, but exalted you in virtue. Let this be your portion which leads into the Land of the Living. Giving yourselves up wholly to this, beloved brothers, never seek anything else under heaven for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ. And wherever any of the friars may be, and shall meet other friars, let them all treat each other as members of one family, and confidently make known to each other their needs; for if a mother loves and cherishes her son according to the flesh, how much more diligently ought everyone to cherish and love him who is his brother according to the spirit. And when any friar falls sick, the other friars shall serve him as they would wish to be served themselves.

**Chapter VII. Of the penance to be imposed on the friars who sin.** If any friar, at the instigation of the enemy, sin mortally in regard to any of those sins concerning which it has been ordained among the brothers to have recourse only

to the minister provincial, let him have recourse as quickly as possible, and without delay. And, if the said ministers are priests, they shall with mercy, impose on him a penance; and if they are not priests, they should see that a penance is imposed by others who are priests of the Order, as in the sight of God shall appear to them more expedient. And they shall take care not to get angry or disturbed by the sins of others, for anger and trouble of spirit are hindrances to charity in themselves and in others.

**Chapter VIII. Of the election of the minister general of this fraternity, and of the chapter of Pentecost.** All the friars are bound to have always, one of the friars of this Order as minister general and servant of the whole fraternity, and they shall be strictly obliged to obey him. When he dies, his successor shall be elected by the ministers provincial and the custodes in the chapter of Pentecost. At this chapter, all the ministers provincial shall assemble in whatever place the minister general shall appoint. This they shall do once in every three years, or at other periods, longer or shorter, as the aforesaid minister shall ordain. And, if at any time it should appear to the body of the ministers provincial and custodes, that the aforesaid minister general is not qualified for the service and general welfare of the friars, the aforesaid friars to whom the election is committed shall be bound to elect another as minister general in the name of the Lord. Moreover, after the chapter of Pentecost, the ministers provincial and custodes may each, if they wish, and deem it expedient, convoke a chapter of the friars in their custodies once in the same year.

**Chapter IX. Of preachers.** The friars shall not preach in the diocese of any bishop, when the latter has opposed their doing so. And no friar shall, by any means, dare to preach to the people, unless he has been examined and approved by the minister general of this fraternity, and the Office of Preacher has been conferred upon him. Moreover, I admonish and exhort these same friars, that when they preach, their language be well-considered and simple, for the benefit and edification of the people, discoursing to them of vices and virtues, punishment and glory, with brevity, because our Lord, when on earth, made “a short word.”

**Chapter X. Of the admonition and correction of the friars.** Those friars who are the ministers and servants of the others, shall visit and admonish their brothers, and humbly and charitably correct them, not commanding them anything that is against their own soul and our Rule. But the brothers, who are subjects, shall remember that, for God’s sake, they have renounced their own wills. Therefore, I strictly command them to obey their ministers in all things they have promised the Lord to observe, and which are not against their soul or our Rule. And

wherever those friars may be who know and feel that they cannot observe the Rule spiritually, they can and should have recourse to their ministers. And the ministers should receive them charitably and kindly, and show such familiarity that these same friars may speak and treat with them as masters with their servants, for so it ought to be that the ministers should be the servants of all the friars. I also admonish and exhort the friars in our Lord Jesus Christ, to beware of all pride, vainglory, envy and avarice, of care and solicitude for the things of this world, of detraction and murmuring. And those who are illiterate shall not be anxious to learn, but let them endeavor to have, what is to be above all things desired, the Spirit of the Lord, and His holy operation. Let them endeavor to pray always with a pure heart, and to have humility and patience in persecution and infirmity, and to love those who persecute, reprove and censure us. Because our Lord says, "Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute and calumniate you. Blessed are they who suffer persecution for the sake of justice, since theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven. He who perseveres to the end, he shall be saved."

**Chapter XI. That the friars shall not enter convents of nuns.** I strictly command all the friars not to have any suspicious dealings or conversation with women; nor shall they enter the convents of nuns, excepting those friars to whom special leave is granted by the Apostolic See. Neither shall they be godfathers to men or women, lest hereby scandal should arise either among the friars or concerning them.

**Chapter XII. Of those friars who go among the Saracens and other infidels.** Should any friars moved by divine inspiration desire to go among the Saracens or other infidels, they shall ask leave to go from their ministers provincial. But the ministers shall not grant leave except to those whom they deem fit to be sent. Finally, I command the ministers by obedience, that they petition our Lord the Pope or one of the Cardinals of the Holy Roman Church, who shall be the governor, protector and corrector of this fraternity, 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 and humility and the Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, as we have firmly promised.

## II. THE *TESTAMENT* OF OUR HOLY FATHER FRANCIS

*In the Name of the Lord begins the Testament of our Seraphic Father Francis.*

[I] The Lord granted to me, Brother Francis, thus to begin to do penance; for

while I was in sin, it seemed to me too bitter a thing to see lepers, but the Lord Himself led me among them, and I showed mercy to them. And, when I left them, what before seemed bitter, was changed into sweetness of soul and body; and after that, I tarried yet a little, and forsook the world.

And the Lord gave me such faith in churches, that I would with simplicity thus adore and say, "We adore You most holy Lord Jesus Christ, here, and in all Your churches throughout the world, and we bless You, because by Your Holy Cross You have redeemed the world." Afterwards, the Lord gave me and gives me still, such faith in priests, who live after the manner of the Holy Roman Church, on account of their Orders, that if they persecute me, I would still have recourse to them. And if I had the wisdom of Solomon, and found priests poor according to the world, I would not preach in their parishes against their will. And these priests, and all others, I am resolved to hold in respect, love and honor, as my lords; and I will not consider any sin in them, because I behold in them the Son of God, and they are my lords. I act thus, because, in this world I see nothing corporally of the Most High Son of God but His most holy Body and Blood, which they receive, and which they alone administer to others. And these most holy Mysteries, I desire to venerate and honor above all things, and to reserve them in precious places. And whenever I find our Lord's most holy Name and written Words in any unseemly place, I will gather them up, and I beg that they be gathered up, and put in a becoming place. And all theologians, and those who minister the most holy divine words, we must honor and revere as those who minister to us Spirit and Life.

[III] And after the Lord gave me some brothers, no man showed me what I ought to do, but the Most High Himself revealed to me that I should live after the manner of the holy Gospel; and this I had written down in few and simple words, and our lord the Pope confirmed it for me. Those who came to adopt this form of life gave all that they might possess to the poor. And we were content with one tunic, patched inside and out, by those who wished, and with a cord and drawers; and we desired nothing more. We clerics said the Divine Office like other clerics; the lay-brothers said the Our Father. And we were satisfied to stay in churches, and we were simple and subject to all.

I worked with my hands, and I still desire to work, and most earnestly do I desire that all my brothers should employ themselves in honest work. Let those who do not know how to work learn, not from desire to receive compensation for the work, but for good example, and to avoid idleness. But should the wages of our work be not given us, then we shall have recourse to the table of the Lord, asking alms from door to door. The Lord revealed to me this salutation that we



should say, "The Lord give you His peace."

And let the friars take heed that they by no means receive churches, poor dwellings, or anything else at all that is built for them, if these buildings be not according to that holy poverty we have promised in the Rule, and let them always dwell there as pilgrims and strangers.

I strictly command all the friars, in virtue of obedience, that wherever they are, they shall not dare, personally, or through others, to ask letters from the Roman Curia, whether with regard to a church or any other place, or under pretext of preaching or on account of bodily persecution; but wherever they are not received, they shall flee into another land, and do penance there with the blessing of God.

[III] I am firmly resolved to obey the minister general of this fraternity, and that guardian whom it shall please him to set over me; and I will so place myself in his hands that I shall be able neither to go anywhere or to do anything against his will, because he is my lord. And although I am simple and infirm, I will nevertheless always have a cleric to say the Office with me as directed in the Rule. And all the friars are strictly bound to obey their guardians, and to say the Office according to the Rule. And if any friar is found who does not say the Office according to the Rule, or who wishes to alter it in any way, or who is not really Catholic, in such case, all the friars, wherever they are, shall be bound by obedience to bring him before the custos of the nearest place where he is found. And the custos is strictly obliged under obedience, to watch him as a prisoner, day and night, so that the friar cannot be taken out of his hands until he can personally put him into the hands of the minister. And the minister is strictly bound by obedience to send the friar with others, who shall guard him as a prisoner, day and night, until they present him before the Lord Cardinal of Ostia, who is the lord and protector and corrector of this fraternity.

[IV] And the friars shall not say, "This is another Rule." For this is but a remembrance, admonition, exhortation and my testament, which I, little Brother Francis, make for you, my beloved brothers, to the end that we may in a more Catholic manner, observe the Rule we have vowed to the Lord.

And the minister general and the other ministers and custodes are bound by obedience, neither to add to these words, nor to take away from them; and they shall always have this writing with them, together with the Rule. And in all the chapters which they hold, when they read the Rule, they shall also read these words.

And I strictly forbid under obedience, all my brothers, both clerics and lay-brothers, to put any gloss upon the Rule, or upon these words saying: thus they are to be understood; but as the Lord has granted me to speak and to write the Rule, and these words simply and plainly, so do you understand them simply, plainly, and without gloss, and with the Divine assistance, observe them unto the end.

And whosoever shall keep these words, may he be filled in heaven with the Blessing of the Most High Father, and on earth with the blessing of His Beloved Son, together with that of the most Holy Spirit, the Paraclete, and of all the powers of heaven and of all the Saints. And I, little Brother Francis, your servant, confirm unto you all, both within and without, so far as I can, confirm for you, within and without, this most holy blessing.

*Here ends the Testament of our most blessed Father Francis.*

# 1. NATURE, CHARISM, AND PURPOSE OF THE INSTITUTE

- C1. The Community of Franciscan Friars of the Renewal is a clerical religious institute of pontifical right whose members, both clerical and lay, pronounce public vows and live a fraternal life in common.<sup>1</sup>
- C2. The spiritual foundation of the fraternity is personal and communal commitment to Jesus Christ, Our Savior, which is expressed through liturgical and contemplative prayer, daily Eucharistic adoration, devotion to Our Lady, imitation of Saints Francis and Clare, love for the Church, and loyalty to the Holy Father, the Bishop of Rome.

The members strive to live the vows of authentic Franciscan life in a way that effectively challenges the worldly values prevalent in every age.<sup>2</sup>

Material poverty, manual labor, complete renunciation of ownership of immovable property, mature and faithful chastity, active and responsible obedience, and living with and engaging in hands-on work with the materially poor and destitute, are essential components of this way of life.

To preserve the spirit and life of Saint Francis

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. CIC, 588.1–2; 607.2.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. CIC, 607.3; *Religious and Human Promotion*.

in their apostolate,  
the friars carry out the work of evangelization  
by preaching  
and other forms of non-parochial ministry  
in the manner of the early Capuchin reform.<sup>3</sup>

- C3. Despite their inconsistencies and weaknesses,  
the friars commit themselves to present  
to their Christian brothers and sisters  
and to all others  
a prophetic witness of Christ's teaching  
that life is a pilgrimage  
of committed faith, trusting hope, and effective love  
of God and neighbor  
made possible by the work of the Holy Spirit.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Cf. Franciscan Friars of the Renewal, *Capuchin Identity Study Report*.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. 1 Pet 2:11; Francis of Assisi, *Regula bullata*, 6:2; 10:8; *Testament*, 24.

## 2. RELIGIOUS CONSECRATION

- C4. The friars freely assume consecrated religious life  
in the Church  
in order to serve  
as a sign of the heavenly glory  
that is a participation  
in the life of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.<sup>1</sup>

Rooted in the teaching and example of Christ,  
by public vows  
the members embrace the evangelical counsels  
of poverty, chastity, and obedience  
as a divine and special gift  
in the life of the Church.<sup>2</sup>

### I. THE FRIARS' LIFE OF CONSECRATED POVERTY

#### A. The Vow of Poverty

- C5. The Gospel counsel of poverty,  
in imitation of Christ  
who became poor for our sake,  
entails that the friars live a life that is poor  
in fact and in spirit.<sup>3</sup>

It includes as essential elements  
a life of labor,  
the simple use of necessary things,<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. *Lumen gentium*, 44.3; CIC, 573.1.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *Lumen gentium*, 43.1; *Vita consecrata*, 3; CIC, 574.2; 575.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Phil 2:6–7; 2 Cor 8:9; Francis of Assisi, *Admonitions*, 1; *Regula bullata*, 12:4; *Regula non bullata*, 9:1–5; 2 *Letter to the Faithful*, 5; *Letter to Leo*, 12; *Legend of the Three Companions*, 22:5; 2 *Celano*, 90; *Perfectae caritatis*, 13; CIC, 600.

the careful avoidance of the accumulation  
of costly or superfluous things,  
a humble and patient spirit of dependence on Divine Providence,  
minority,  
and limitation in the use and disposition of material goods.<sup>5</sup>

- C6. By the vow of poverty,  
each friar commits himself to live a life of voluntary poverty.  
He accepts dependence and limitation  
in the use of temporal goods.

Whatever he acquires from personal labor,  
pensions, royalties, insurance, subsidies,  
and any donation of money or goods,  
whose title was acquired after first profession  
belongs to the Institute.<sup>6</sup>

- C7. Before first profession,  
each novice cedes the administration of his goods  
to whomever he chooses,  
making provision for the proper care of his material goods  
and determining how any revenues accruing to them  
are to be used.<sup>7</sup>

- C8. To change the dispositions of this cession  
for a just cause  
or to carry out any act in regard to his temporal goods,  
the permission of the General Servant or his delegate is required.<sup>8</sup>

D8.1. The General Servant is to use due discretion  
in considering altered circumstances,  
such as family needs,  
inability of executors,  
and the nature of any goods or inheritances acquired.

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<sup>4</sup> Cf. Gregory IX, *Quo elongati*, 6; Bonaventure, *Apologia pauperum*, 11:5; Nicholas III, *Exiit qui seminat*, art. 3; 5.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. CIC, 600.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. CIC, 668.3, 5.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. CIC, 668.1.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. CIC, 668.2.

C9. In imitation of Saint Francis,  
 who desired for himself and for his friars  
 to live in this world as pilgrims and strangers,<sup>9</sup>  
 and in keeping with Franciscan observance  
 in the Capuchin tradition,  
 each friar, upon making perpetual profession,  
 freely makes a definitive renunciation  
 of any present and future patrimonial goods  
 he may acquire.<sup>10</sup>

D9.1. The act of renunciation,  
 valid in civil law,  
 is witnessed  
 by two perpetually professed friars.

C10. At some point prior to perpetual profession,  
 each friar draws up a will  
 valid in civil law.<sup>11</sup>

## B. Living the Virtue of Poverty

C11. The friars will appropriate nothing to themselves.<sup>12</sup>

C12. The friars are encouraged to beg  
 for their basic needs  
 and for that which is necessary for their apostolic works.  
 Where necessary, the permission of the local Ordinary is first received.<sup>13</sup>

All goods received by the Institute  
 through the generosity of benefactors  
 are to serve only the basic needs of the friars.

D12.1. In accord with their life of poverty,  
 the friars desire to keep their financial dealings

<sup>9</sup> Cf. Francis of Assisi, *Regula bullata*, 6:2; *Testament*, 24; cf. 1 Pet 2:11.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. CIC, 668.4.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. CIC, 668.1.

<sup>12</sup> Francis of Assisi, *Regula bullata*, 6:1; cf. *Capuchin Constitutions of 1536*, VI/69.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. Francis of Assisi, *Regula bullata*, 9:3; CIC, 1265.1–2.

as simple as possible,  
while at the same time fulfilling moral and legal obligations  
to fiscal responsibility.

- D12.2. The friars should take care not to burden particular or generous benefactors.
- D12.3. The friars ordinarily do not use credit cards. If those in the preaching apostolate or on special assignment find it necessary to use one, they are to ask permission of the General Servant, who may grant it with the consent of the General Council.
- D12.4. All goods and properties are to be responsibly maintained in keeping with the charity and justice due to benefactors.

- C13. Any building or facility used by the friars is received through the hands of benefactors. The Institute is not to assume ownership of a house, institution, church, shrine, or property.<sup>14</sup>

Properties bequeathed to the Institute are to be liquidated in a timely fashion.

- C14. The friars are to reside in areas noted for poverty.<sup>15</sup> If social or economic development changes the nature of the neighborhood, the friars are to find residence in another poor area.

Any property used is then returned to its rightful owner, taking into account the owner's needs and rights.

- C15. Friaries are to be poor, simple, and austere. They are not to have the appearance of luxury, nor contain those conveniences commonly sought after by society.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Cf. *Capuchin Constitutions of 1536*, VI/70–71.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. Francis of Assisi, *Regula non bullata*, 9:2.



- C16. The friars of each fraternity  
 evaluate periodically  
 all personal and communal goods  
 to ensure that they keep  
 only those things necessary  
 for their life and work.

Any superfluous funds and goods  
 are to be given to the poor.<sup>17</sup>

- D16.1. The evaluation of goods  
 takes place in each fraternity  
 four times a year.
- D16.2. Funds or goods are deemed “superfluous”  
 when they are beyond what is necessary  
 to sustain the Institute for one year.
- D16.3. Vehicles for the friars’ daily use and apostolates  
 are not to be purchased by the Institute,  
 but received through the generosity of benefactors.  
 These vehicles are not to have any appearance of luxury.  
 The number of vehicles for each friary or apostolate  
 is to be kept to the minimum necessary.
- D16.4. Ordinary electronic devices  
 are to be few in number,  
 of no great commercial value,  
 and not those manufactured simply for amusement and recreation.  
 Friars should prefer that which has already been used,  
 receiving such goods gratefully  
 from the hands of benefactors.
- D16.5. Acquiring any extraordinary or unusual tools  
 or electronic devices  
 in a friary or apostolate  
 requires the approval of the General Servant

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<sup>16</sup> Cf. Francis of Assisi, *Testament*, 24; *Capuchin Constitutions of 1536*, VI/73.

<sup>17</sup> Cf. *Capuchin Constitutions of 1536*, III/54.

after he has consulted the Council.

- D16.6. Extraordinary or unusual tools  
or electronic equipment  
deemed necessary  
for an apostolate  
should not be used for other purposes  
without first seeking approval  
from the apostolate's director.
- D16.7. The friars may make simple use of computers  
for their basic needs and those of the friary.  
They are to be received only through the generosity of benefactors.  
The number of computers in each friary  
is to be kept to a minimum  
and they are to be located in common areas.  
There is no internet or email access in the friaries,  
especially to preserve the friars' fraternal life  
and spirit of prayer.
- D16.8. Books, other than those frequently used by a friar,  
are kept in a common library.
- D16.9. Where possible, the friars are to cultivate some area near the friary  
that may be used as an oasis for prayer and reflection.  
When feasible, some portion of the land should be set aside  
to grow food or flowers  
for the benefit of the friars  
and the poor among whom they live and serve.<sup>18</sup>
- C17. The clothing of the friars  
is a gray tunic  
with a large pointed hood,  
cord, sandals, and a rosary.<sup>19</sup>
- D17.1. Clothing or footwear worn with the habit  
is to be consistent with the color and the character  
of the friars' religious garb,

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<sup>18</sup> Cf. *Capuchin Constitutions of 1536*, VI/80; *Assisi Compilation*, 88.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. CIC, 669.1.

which is their normal clothing.

- D17.2. Clothing worn for manual work  
or recreation  
is to be simple  
and of a color and style  
consistent with the habit.
- D17.3. If need arises, clerical attire may be worn  
instead of the religious habit.
- D17.4. The friars are encouraged to have a plain beard.<sup>20</sup>

## II. THE FRIARS' LIFE OF CONSECRATED CHASTITY

### A. The Vow of Chastity

- C18. The Gospel counsel of chastity  
for the sake of the Kingdom of Heaven  
is seen as an eschatological sign of the life to come.<sup>21</sup>
- C19. By the vow of chastity  
each friar commits himself freely  
to a life of celibacy  
and chastity without compromise.
- C20. As a unique gift of an undivided heart  
given to God,  
chastity is a proven source  
of more abundant fruitfulness  
for one's own human and spiritual growth  
as well as for the good of others.<sup>22</sup>

This surpassing gift must be safeguarded and nourished  
by a wholehearted response to the Lord's grace.

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<sup>20</sup> Cf. *Capuchin Constitutions of 1536*, II/29.

<sup>21</sup> Cf. Matt 19:11–12; CIC, 599; *Perfectae caritatis*, 12.1.

<sup>22</sup> Cf. 1 Cor 7:35; CIC, 599.

## B. Living the Virtue of Consecrated Chastity

C21. The friars are to respond to the grace of God through a life of continuous conversion and self-emptying in order to live a chaste life.

In all their words and actions,  
they are called to recognize the dignity of all men and women.  
They strive to treat younger men as brothers,  
older women as mothers,  
and younger women as sisters,  
with perfect chastity.<sup>23</sup>

D21.1. Some of the chief means by which the friars foster their life of chastity are:<sup>24</sup>

- a fervent life of personal and communal prayer;
- deep love of the Holy Eucharist;
- personal love for and confidence in the Virgin Mother of God,
- devotion to Saint Joseph, the model of chastity, and all the saints;
- meditation on and study of the Word of God;
- frequent reception of the Sacrament of Penance and regular spiritual direction;
- a joyful austerity;<sup>25</sup>
- genuine participation in fraternal life;
- sacrificial service towards one another and those in need;
- a healthy discipline applied to a balanced way of life made up of prayer, manual labor, study, recreation, and exercise.

C22. In all their relationships,  
the friars are to show respect and use discretion.  
They are called to display  
a selfless and mature human affection  
worthy of authentic disciples of Jesus Christ.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Cf. 1 Tim 5:1–2.

<sup>24</sup> Cf. *Perfectae caritatis*, 12.2.

<sup>25</sup> Cf. Bonaventure, *Apologia pauperum*, 5:9.

<sup>26</sup> Cf. *Perfectae caritatis*, 12.3; *Vita consecrata*, 88.2; *Fraternal Life in Community*, 37.

The friars are to avoid any behavior that would endanger the virtue or vow of chastity, or what might cause scandal to others.<sup>27</sup>

They are to foster healthy and joyful friendships and avoid those that express unhealthy emotional dependence, recognizing that exclusivity and possessiveness are detrimental to human and spiritual development, common life, and consecrated chastity.<sup>28</sup>

- C23. Applicable Institute and diocesan policies regarding the safeguarding of minors and vulnerable adults are to be adhered to carefully by all the friars.

### III. THE FRIARS' LIFE OF CONSECRATED OBEDIENCE

#### A. The Vow of Obedience

- C24. The primary goal of the life of every Christian is to do the will of God.<sup>29</sup>

Following the example of Saint Francis, the friars strive always to unite their wills to God in communion with his Church.<sup>30</sup>

For this reason, they commit themselves to observe the evangelical counsel of obedience in a spirit of faith and love in following Christ, who was obedient even unto death.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Cf. Francis of Assisi, *Regula bullata*, 11; 12:3–4; *Regula non bullata*, pro., 3–4; 12; CIC, 666.

<sup>28</sup> Cf. *Fraternal Life in Community*, 44.9.

<sup>29</sup> Cf. Matt 7:21; John 4:34; Francis of Assisi, *Regula non bullata*, 22:9.

<sup>30</sup> Cf. Francis of Assisi, *Regula bullata*, 2:2; *Regula non bullata*, 19.

<sup>31</sup> Cf. Phil 2:8; CIC, 601.

C25. By their vow of obedience,  
the friars freely commit themselves  
to obey  
the Roman Pontiff  
and competent Institute leaders  
when they command according to the law of the Church  
and the Institute's proper law.<sup>32</sup>

D25.1. A formal order, binding under the vow of obedience,  
is to be given in writing,  
signed by the person issuing the order,  
and signed by a witness.

C26. Friars are subject to local Ordinaries  
in those matters that pertain to their jurisdiction.<sup>33</sup>

## B. Living the Virtue of Consecrated Obedience

C27. As sons of Saint Francis,  
the friars strive to follow the words and example of their Seraphic Father,  
renouncing their own wills  
for the greater glory of God.<sup>34</sup>  
Therefore, a spirit of obedience  
to God's most perfect will  
is an essential part of their Franciscan vocation.

All friars are to seek ardently  
to do what is right and just  
in God's sight  
and to do his will  
promptly, completely, joyfully, and perseveringly.

C28. The privileged forum where the friars communally discern the will of God  
is the gathering of friars in chapter.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Cf. CIC, 590.1–2; 601.

<sup>33</sup> CIC, 675.3; 678–681; *Mutuae relationes*; *Vita consecrata*, 47–50.

<sup>34</sup> Cf. Francis of Assisi, *Regula bullata*, 10:2; *Admonitions*, 2:3; 3:10.

<sup>35</sup> Cf. *Service of Authority and Obedience*, 20e–f.

- C29. Both General and Local Servants  
are to be guardians and animators  
of this evangelical way of life.  
They accomplish this primarily  
by their good example,  
but also by their counsel, admonition, and exhortation  
to their brothers.<sup>36</sup>

When the Servant friar must give counsel and correction to another friar,  
it is to be done privately  
and with utmost charity, discretion, and gentleness,  
in accordance with the exhortations of Saint Francis.<sup>37</sup>

This fraternal help should be received  
in a spirit of humility  
and with a willingness to listen to and to understand  
the concerns of the Servant.<sup>38</sup>

- C30. All the friars share in the responsibility  
of loving obedience  
by helping the Servants to carry their burden  
through encouragement and prayer.<sup>39</sup>

The friars owe reverence and obedience  
to the General Servant,  
as a sign of the unity and fellowship  
of their communal life together.<sup>40</sup>

If necessary, a friar can offer a Servant  
respectful and fraternal correction.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> Cf. Clare of Assisi, *Testament*, 61–62; Francis of Assisi, *Regula non bullata*, 4:6.

<sup>37</sup> Cf. Francis of Assisi, *Regula bullata*, 10:1, 5–6; *Letter to a Minister*, 9–11;

<sup>38</sup> Cf. Francis of Assisi, *Admonitions*, 22.

<sup>39</sup> Cf. Francis of Assisi, *Admonitions*, 3:5; 1 Pet 1:22; Gal 6:12.

<sup>40</sup> Cf. 2 *Celano*, 186.

<sup>41</sup> Cf. Francis of Assisi, *Regula non bullata*, 5:3–4.





### 3. THE FRIARS' LIFE OF PRAYER

- C31. In their vocation to be disciples of Jesus Christ and true sons of Saint Francis,<sup>1</sup> the friars strive both individually and communally to become authentic men of prayer.<sup>2</sup>

Prayer is to be the very heart of the friars' way of life, such that nothing should be allowed to extinguish the spirit of prayer and devotion.<sup>3</sup>

#### I. DAILY PRAYER

- C32. The friars, unless excused, pray in common the liturgical hours of Office of Readings, Morning Prayer, Midday Prayer, Evening Prayer, and Night Prayer. The Angelus (*Regina Caeli*) accompanies the friars' prayer at the three traditional times.

D32.1. The Institute follows the Capuchin-Franciscan Ordo. While respecting the directives of liturgical law, the friars may celebrate votive Masses in honor of Blesseds of the Franciscan Order.

- C33. Each day, the friars are to devote two one-hour periods to personal prayer in *lectio divina* (especially with Sacred Scripture),

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<sup>1</sup> Who did not merely pray, but himself "became prayer" (cf. *2 Celano*, 95:5) and exhorted his friars to "desire above all else to have the Spirit of the Lord and his holy operation and to pray always to him with a pure heart" (*Regula bullata*, 10:8–9).

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *Perfectae caritatis*, 6.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Francis of Assisi, *Regula bullata*, 5:2; *Letter to Anthony*, 2.

meditation,  
and contemplation.<sup>4</sup>

One of these hours  
normally takes place during communal exposition  
of the Blessed Sacrament.

D33.1. Benediction of the Most Blessed Sacrament  
follows the period of adoration  
at least once a week.

D33.2. Friars who are absent from the friary  
are urged to observe the prayer life of the community  
as faithfully as possible.

C34. The celebration of the Eucharist  
is the ultimate expression of the friars' faith and unity in Christ.  
It is therefore celebrated daily  
with due reverence and devotion.<sup>5</sup>

D34.1. Each month, every priest friar may celebrate three Masses  
for his own intentions.  
The other friars may request the Local Servant  
to have a Mass offered for their intentions  
on a monthly basis  
or for some special need.

## II. SPECIAL DEVOTIONS

C35. Following the example of their Seraphic Father, Saint Francis,  
who bore the wounds of the Crucified in his flesh,  
the friars cultivate an especial devotion  
to the Passion of our Lord.

D35.1. Such devotion could be expressed,  
for example,  
through praying the Stations of the Cross

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<sup>4</sup> Cf. CIC, 663.3; *Capuchin Constitutions of 1536*, III/41–42.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. *Sacrosanctum concilium*, 10; CIC, 608; 663.2; *Vita consecrata*, 95; *Starting Afresh from Christ*, 26.

or reciting the *Office of the Passion*, especially in Lent.

C36. Our Lady is honored by the friars in a special way through the prayer of the Rosary and the Angelus.<sup>6</sup>

Our Lady of Guadalupe is the patroness of the Institute, and each friar is consecrated to her under this title.<sup>7</sup>

D36.1. Those friars who benefit from a communal recitation pray the rosary after Night Prayer or another agreeable time. All friars are encouraged to pray the rosary in private or when traveling.

D36.2. The friars solemnly celebrate a communal renewal of their Marian consecration each December 12<sup>th</sup>, or on another appropriate day.

D36.3. Votive Masses in honor of Our Lady are encouraged, especially on Saturdays.

C37. Along with the Franciscan saints, Saint Joseph also has a special place in the devotional life of the friars, because he models poverty, humility, obedience, chastity, and the dignity of manual labor.

### III. FOSTERING THE LIFE OF PRAYER

C38. A spirit of prayer should prevail in the friary, especially in the chapel and the sacristy. Respectful silence is to be kept from the end of Night Prayer until breakfast.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Cf. CIC, 663.4. For, “among the women born into the world, there is no one like [her]” (Francis of Assisi, *Office of the Passion*, antiphon).

<sup>7</sup> Cf. *2 Celano*, 198.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. *Capuchin Constitutions of 1536*, III/44–45.

- C39. One day a week,  
each local fraternity devotes itself  
to a more conscious spirit of quiet and recollection.  
This day takes precedence over the ordinary demands  
of the apostolate  
and may be used for more intense prayer,  
instruction,  
or whatever may be spiritually beneficial for the fraternity.
- C40. Each month,  
the friars are to take at least one day of solitude  
for personal prayer,  
unless excused by the Local Servant.
- D40.1. The monthly period of solitude  
includes one or two overnights.
- C41. Twice a year,  
each friar is to take an extended time for retreat  
lasting at least five days.<sup>9</sup>
- D41.1. One of the extended retreats  
is made in a common gathering of friaries.
- D41.2. One of the extended retreats  
is made individually  
and may last up to eight days.
- C42. To assist in their ongoing formation,  
and to foster greater purity of heart,  
the friars are to approach frequently  
the Sacrament of Reconciliation.<sup>10</sup>

#### IV. INTERCESSION AND SUFFRAGES

- C43. In both private and communal prayer,  
the friars commend to God the needs of all people,

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<sup>9</sup> Cf. CIC, 663.5.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. CIC, 664.

especially the Holy Father,  
 the bishops of the Church,  
 those closely associated with the Institute,  
 and the benefactors and family members of the friars.

C44. As it is holy and wholesome to pray for the dead,  
 the friars remember frequently in their prayers  
 the souls of the faithful departed,  
 especially deceased friars,  
 relatives, and benefactors.<sup>11</sup>

D44.1. On the death of a friar  
 each priest is to offer at least one Mass  
 in addition to the concelebration of the funeral.

D44.2. The Office of the Dead is to be recited  
 for the repose of the soul of each friar who dies.

D44.3. On the occasion of the death of a parent of a friar,  
 each priest is to offer a Mass.  
 Friars who are not priests are asked to offer  
 one Mass and Holy Communion for the deceased.

For other members of the immediate family,  
 a Mass is to be offered  
 and a memorial card sent by the Local Servant.

In the case of the death of other relatives,  
 the friars should be sensitive in expressing appropriate condolences.

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<sup>11</sup> Cf. 2 Macc 12:45; Francis of Assisi, *Regula bullata*, 3; *Regula non bullata*, 3.



## 4. FRATERNAL LIFE IN CHRIST

- C45. Living together as brothers of one family,  
united in their love of Christ,  
the friars place their personalities and talents  
at the service of fraternal life.<sup>1</sup>

As lesser brothers  
always seeking the least place,  
the friars serve one another  
and anticipate each other's needs,  
supporting each other through prayer,  
mutual encouragement,  
honest communication,  
and sacrificial service,  
especially when fraternal assistance is needed.<sup>2</sup>

Holding one another in esteem,  
they take care to preserve the reputation of one another.<sup>3</sup>

### I. FRATERNITY IN THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

- C46. Ordinarily, a friary is composed  
of at least four friars in perpetual vows.  
With the exception of formation friaries,  
the local community consists of no more than ten friars.
- C47. Friars reside in the friary to which they have been assigned.

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. CIC, 602; 716.1; *Perfectae caritatis*, 15.1; Francis of Assisi, *Regula bullata*, 6:7–8; *Regula non bullata*, 9:10–11; *2 Celano*, 180; 192.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Luke 14:10; Matt 20:26–27; Mark 10:43–44; Rom 12:9; Gal 6:2; Francis of Assisi, *Admonitions*, 18:1; *Regula bullata*, 6:7–9; *1 Celano*, 38; *Evangelii gaudium*, 100.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Rom 2:10; CIC, 220; Francis of Assisi, *Regula non bullata*, 7:15; 11:1–2, 8; *Admonitions*, 25; *2 Celano*, 182.

The Local Servant grants permission for times of solitude, retreat, vacation, or normal absences from the friary.<sup>4</sup>

He makes sure that each friar has what is necessary for these times away from the friary.

D47.1. Friars may take up to two weeks of vacation per year.

C48. A peaceful, joyful, and prayerful spirit is to characterize the friaries. To preserve this spirit, and to deepen the quality of the fraternal life, the friars choose not to have television in the friary.<sup>5</sup>

D48.1. To foster mutual encouragement and honest communication, local fraternities meet periodically to discuss fraternal life.

A reading from the *Constitutions*, Scripture, or a spiritual reading, may serve as a catalyst for discussion.

D48.2. Once a year, each local fraternity gathers for a more extensive review of the quality of its fraternal life.

C49. A practical enclosure is to be established for the privacy of the friars. The friars' cells should be within the enclosure.<sup>6</sup>

All guests should be received with Franciscan hospitality. Care is to be taken to provide for their needs.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Cf. CIC, 665.1.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. *Fraternal Life in Community*, 34.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. CIC, 667.1.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. *Capuchin Constitutions of 1536*, III/55.



- D49.1. An appropriate and cheerful welcome is to be extended to all, in accord with the friars' limited resources and the demands of prayer and the apostolate.
- D49.2. Friars exercise sensitivity and prudence in preserving the need for privacy, while at the same time extending Christian hospitality and charity to guests.
- D49.3. Whenever possible, some public area(s) should be provided to serve the needs of those who come to the door.
- Guests may be invited into the friary provided they are accompanied by a friar.
- D49.4. When possible, some room or provision is made for overnight visitors.
- C50. In accord with the mind of Saint Francis, friars who hold various offices and areas of responsibility do not have special privileges.<sup>8</sup>

## II. FRATERNITY IN CHAPTERS AND MEETINGS

- C51. In their chapters and meetings, the friars honestly and confidently make known their desires and needs, concerns and difficulties.<sup>9</sup>

An atmosphere of fraternal acceptance, trust, openness, gentleness, and charity should characterize these times together.<sup>10</sup>

All of the friars, especially those to whom responsibility has been entrusted,

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<sup>8</sup> Cf. Francis of Assisi, *Regula non bullata*, 4:6; 6:3–4.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. Francis of Assisi, *Regula bullata*, 6:8; *Regula non bullata*, 9:10.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. *Evangelii gaudium*, 100.

are to seek to discover God's will through prayer, personal reflection, counsel, and fraternal dialogue.<sup>11</sup>

- C52. Servants are to convene the friars and preside over chapters and meetings in such a way that they can personally take the lower place.<sup>12</sup>

They are responsible for leading the friars through prayer so that all meetings are acts of worship.

They draw out the views of the friars, seeking consensus when possible. They gently admonish those who have become conflicted in their goals, encourage those in pain and difficulty, and focus the vision of the fraternity so that it remains an instrument for the activity of the Holy Spirit.<sup>13</sup>

### III. AGED AND INFIRM FRIARS

- C53. As men vowed to God and committed to each other, the friars freely forfeit any right by reason of age or infirmity to excuse themselves from living out the essential elements of the life described in these *Constitutions*.

They view the commonly accepted notion of retirement as incongruous with their religious profession. Service to God, his people, and one another does not cease at the end of a friar's apostolic activity, but at the end of a generous and faithfully lived consecrated life, when they hope to receive a merciful judgment as God's unworthy servants.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Cf. *2 Celano*, 191.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. Luke 14:10; Francis of Assisi, *Admonitions*, 23:1.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. *Service of Authority and Obedience*, 20b.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. Luke 17:10.

- C54. As brothers, the friars show respect, deference, and care toward one another,  
but especially toward those brothers beset by illness, injury, or old age.<sup>15</sup>  
The particular physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of these friars should be the concern of the entire Institute, especially within the fraternities where they reside.
- C55. Even the needs of a severely disabled friar are not to be seen as a burden but willingly embraced and viewed as a blessing. Hence, both the healthy and the sick, the young and the old, gain many opportunities to express a spirit of mutual patience, humility, generosity, and fraternal love.
- D55.1. Those friars affected by illness or subject to the weakness and limitations that frequently accompany old age should be considered a special treasure since they enrich the friars' life by their presence, prayers, and example. They edify and educate all the friars, particularly the young, showing how best to accept one's own cross with patience, charity, and hope.
- D55.2. Aged or infirm brothers should never be made to feel isolated or useless; rather, they are invited into the very heart of the friars' way of life and encouraged to participate, as far as they are able, in the daily tasks and ongoing activities that make up the friars' lives.
- D55.3. The aged or infirm friars

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<sup>15</sup> Cf. Francis of Assisi, *Regula bullata*, 6:9; *Regula non bullata*, 10; *Admonitions*, 24.

are to be offered  
the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick  
to strengthen them spiritually  
in their time of need.

## 5. THE FRIARS' LIFE OF PENANCE

C56. As sons of Saint Francis in need of daily conversion,  
the friars are called as individuals and as a community  
to do penance.<sup>1</sup>  
They thus are to live in a way that authenticates  
their Franciscan vocation.

Their life of penance is meant to foster  
a perfect readiness  
to give themselves generously  
in mind, heart, and body.<sup>2</sup>

This generous gift of self is to enable the friars  
to take initiative  
in embracing the demands of their way of life  
without complaining  
and in a spirit that gives witness  
to the joy of the Lord.

Therefore, let the friars be content with the minimum necessary  
and not the maximum allowed  
in their friaries, their food and drink, and in all material things.

Let them also be content with the noise and poverty  
of their neighborhoods,  
the burdensome demands of the common and apostolic life,  
the lack of sleep,  
and all the other opportunities given by the Lord  
to lead a penitential life.

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. *Ecclesiae sanctae*, 22.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Francis of Assisi, *Salutation of the Virtues*, 14–15; *Regula non bullata*, 17:14–16; Bonaventure, *Apologia pauperum*, 5:9; 6:14–20.

## I. AUSTERITY OF THE FRIARY

- C57. The entire building where the friars live should bespeak austerity and poverty.<sup>3</sup>
- D57.1. To maintain an evident austerity in the friary and to heighten the power of the sacred images used, the friars have only one such object in all common areas. Another simple, devotional image may be displayed for special feasts, octaves, or seasons.
- D57.2. Floor and wall coverings, draperies, superfluous decorations, and unnecessary furniture are not permitted.
- D57.3. The cleaning and maintenance of the friary as well as the cooking of meals are done by the friars themselves. Extraordinary maintenance may require the talents of others, although the assistance of benefactors should be sought before hiring professional help.
- D57.4. The friary chapels have both the image of Our Lady of Guadalupe and the San Damiano cross, which reminds the friars of their responsibility to rebuild the Church.<sup>4</sup>
- D57.5. To preserve the Capuchin character of the friaries and to draw themselves and others to the very heart of the Catholic faith, the friars display prominently an image of the crucified Christ in the refectory or some other appropriate place in the friary.
- D57.6. In keeping with Capuchin tradition, the table on which the friars eat their meals is of a simple design and should be made of wood.

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<sup>3</sup> Cf. *Capuchin Constitutions of 1536*, VI/73.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. *Legend of the Three Companions*, 13.

Table cloths are not used in the friary, even on festive occasions.<sup>5</sup>

- D57.7. The cells of the friars  
should be clean and plain,  
without an excessive amount of art or objects,  
even if they be for devotional purposes.
- D57.8. Unless other provisions are made for reasons of health,  
the friars sleep on a simple mattress placed on the floor.<sup>6</sup>

## II. FASTING AND ABSTINENCE

- C58. The friars fast during those periods  
mentioned in the *Rule* of Saint Francis, namely:<sup>7</sup>

the lent extending from the feast of All Saints  
to the celebration of the Nativity and  
the Lent of the Church preceding the celebration of the Resurrection.

For those friars who so desire,  
a special “lent of benediction”  
may be observed,  
in keeping with Franciscan tradition.

- D58.1. In their communal fasts,  
the friars follow the traditional practice:  
the fast consists of one full meal and two smaller meals,  
which together do not equal another full meal,  
and with no eating in between meals.<sup>8</sup>

Those friars who wish to do so, may intensify their fasts  
provided that this does not harm their health.

- D58.2. The lent of benediction may begin at Epiphany  
or the Baptism of the Lord

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<sup>5</sup> Cf. *Capuchin Constitutions of 1536*, III/53.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. *Capuchin Constitutions of 1536*, II/25.

<sup>7</sup> Francis of Assisi, *Regula bullata*, 3:5–9.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. 1917/CIC, 1251.

and lasts for forty consecutive days.

- D58.3. The friars are encouraged to fast and keep vigil on October 31<sup>st</sup> in reparation for sins of sacrilege, occultism, and satanism. They are encouraged to do the same on the anniversary of the legalization of abortion in the country where they reside, or on another appropriate day, in reparation for sins against human life, especially abortion.
- D58.4. The friars fast on the vigils of the Solemnities of the Immaculate Conception and Saint Francis.
- D58.5. The friars observe every Friday as a day of fast and abstinence and every Wednesday as a day of abstinence, unless a festive day occurs. Friday remains a day of abstinence except on Solemnities.<sup>9</sup>
- D58.6. Festive days are observed on the Lord's Day, all Solemnities and Feasts of the applicable liturgical calendars, the liturgical celebrations of Capuchin saints, from Christmas to Epiphany, on major civil holidays, and on a friar's birthday or another appropriate day he designates.
- D58.7. Wine, beer, and sweets are not served in the friary except on festive days.
- D58.8. Hard liquor is not served, purchased, received as a gift, or stored. A small amount of brandy may be kept for cooking and medicinal purposes. Red wine may be taken by friars who need it for medicinal purposes.
- D58.9. Normally, the friars do not drink alcoholic beverages except beer and wine

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<sup>9</sup> Cf. Francis of Assisi, *Regula bullata*, 3:8; *Regula non bullata*, 5:12.



when outside the friary.

D58.10. To maintain good health and well-being,  
the friars do not use tobacco in any form.

C59. Along with these mortifications,  
let the friars strive to accept cheerfully the sacrifices  
of time and energy  
involved in spending themselves for the salvation of souls.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Cf. 2 Cor 12:15; Francis of Assisi, *Regula non bullata*, 7:16; Bonaventure, *Major Legend*, 9:4.



## 6. APOSTOLIC MISSION

C60. The primary mission of the Institute is a wholehearted embracing of Jesus Christ, following the example of Our Holy Father, Saint Francis.

By means of God's grace,  
the friars respond to his call for continuing conversion.

They bear witness to God's love and reign in their lives essentially through the witness of their words and deeds.<sup>1</sup>

Through their commitment to prayer and contemplation,  
the study of Sacred Scripture,  
fidelity to the Church and the Sacraments,  
fraternal life,  
and a generous service to others, especially the poor,  
the friars receive the nourishment necessary  
to live out their lives  
as sons of Saint Francis in the Capuchin tradition.<sup>2</sup>

C61. The apostolate of the Institute is part of the work of the Church and is carried out in agreement with the local Ordinary.<sup>3</sup>

C62. The Institute's apostolic mission is twofold in its expression: service of the materially poor and non-parochial evangelization.

D62.1. A friar who wishes to carry out apostolic work not normally undertaken by the Institute, petitions the General Servant,

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. CIC, 673; 675.1.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. CIC, 675.3.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. CIC, 675.3; 678–681; *Mutuae relationes*, *Vita consecrata*, 47–50.

who may grant permission  
with the consent of his Council.

## I. SERVICE OF THE POOR

C63. Firstly, the friars' mission is to love and serve the materially poor, most especially the destitute and homeless.<sup>4</sup>

Friaries not primarily focused on formation should have one or more facilities to provide for the needs of the poor.

Such service is given free of charge.

Each member of the Institute is to be personally and directly involved in hands-on work with the poor.

D63.1. Some examples of facilities that respond to the needs of the poor are shelters, soup kitchens, food pantries, and clothing rooms.

D63.2. The friars' facilities for the poor should be functional, cheerful, and evidently Catholic, contributing to the dignity, safety, and comfort of those whom they serve.

D63.3. Each facility is directed by a friar to preserve its Catholic and Franciscan character.

D63.4. Employees are not hired on a permanent basis to help in these apostolates. Any exception is reserved to the General Servant after consultation with the General Council.

## II. EVANGELIZATION

C64. Secondly, the friars' mission of evangelization in the Church is exercised through preaching,

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<sup>4</sup> Cf. *Evangelij gaudium*, 48.

teaching the Holy Gospel,  
and sharing the rich treasures of the Catholic faith with all.

This mission can take many forms,  
allowing each friar to contribute in his own way.

D64.1. Some expressions of this apostolate of evangelization are:  
providing missionary centers for the poor,  
street evangelization,  
parish missions, retreats, days of recollection,  
pilgrimages, spiritual direction, pastoral counseling,  
religious education,  
and sacramental ministry.

C65. Faithful to their vow and spirit of poverty  
and trusting in Divine Providence,  
the friars may accept whatever is given as an offering  
and do not require a specified stipend.

### III. APOSTOLATE AND FRATERNAL LIFE

C66. The Institute's ordinary apostolic model  
is based around the local friary.

D66.1. In keeping with the Gospel  
and the practice of Saint Francis and the early friars,  
where appropriate and convenient,  
and taking into account expenses  
and inconvenience to the Institute,  
the friars travel, work, recreate  
and serve in the apostolate together,  
supporting one another through their presence and prayer,  
deepening fraternal bonds,  
and bearing witness to their common religious life.<sup>5</sup>

D66.2. Friars from formation friaries are to participate  
in those apostolates  
designated by the General Servant

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<sup>5</sup> Cf. *1 Celano*, 29; *Anonymous of Perugia*, 15.

in consultation with the General Council.

D66.3. Permissions regarding preaching requests and other individual apostolic endeavors are typically handled by the Local Servant.

C67. The General Servant, in consultation with the General Council, may designate friars as full-time preachers to maintain the preaching apostolate.

D67.1. Full-time preachers are assigned to a friary and, when not absent on preaching assignments, participate fully in the life and work of the friary.

D67.2. Full-time preachers are home at least twelve weeks of the year, especially during those times when friaries gather together for special events.

C68. A friar who for extraordinary reasons is assigned to a ministry that requires him to live outside the friary normally is to be assigned to a particular friary and participates as far as possible in events at that friary.

D68.1. As much as possible, the friar assigned to an outside ministry follows the prayer schedule and other obligations of the Institute.

He wears the religious habit of the Institute unless the General Servant has good reason to authorize the contrary.

Financial arrangements for those assigned to a ministry outside the friary are to be approved by the General Servant.

C69. To preserve faithfully the Institute's charism and spirituality, the friars do not administer parishes or schools.

- D69.1. United in the spirit of Saint Francis,  
the friars may offer generous service  
and humbly assist those  
in these administrative positions,  
in a manner consistent  
with the proper character and mission of the Institute.
- C70. Following the example of Saint Francis,  
who was so concerned about the conversion of unbelievers,  
the friars may, with appropriate permission,  
carry out the proper work of the Institute  
in mission territories.<sup>6</sup>
- C71. To ensure that the demands of apostolic work  
do not extinguish the spirit of holy prayer and devotion,  
the friars periodically evaluate their commitments.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Cf. Francis of Assisi, *Regula bullata*, 12; *Regula non bullata*, 16; *Redemptoris missio*, 60; 65–66; 69–70.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. Francis of Assisi, *Regula non bullata*, 22:25; *Regula bullata*, 5:2; *Letter to Anthony*, 2; *Capuchin Constitutions of 1536*, VI/66.





## 7. LIFE IN THE CHURCH

### I. SERVICE OF THE UNIVERSAL AND PARTICULAR CHURCH

C72. The friars consider it an essential part of their life and reform to be completely loyal to the Catholic Church and its Supreme Shepherd, the Bishop of Rome. This loyalty of mind and heart is modeled after the filial obedience and love of Saint Francis for the Church, the Mystical Body of Christ, and for the office and person of the Pope.<sup>1</sup>

By their loyal dedication to the Church, the friars ensure that their work of outreach is harmoniously linked with the establishment and maintenance of the Christian life.

C73. Friars also obey, in accordance with the norms of law, the directives of the local Ordinaries in those places where they exercise their ministry.<sup>2</sup>

D73.1. Following the admonition of Saint Francis, the friars are to withdraw respectfully from the diocese of any bishop who indicates that he does not desire their service and witness.<sup>3</sup>

C74. Since the Church is a living reality

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Francis of Assisi, *Regula bullata*, 1:2; 2:2–3; 12:3–4; *Regula non bullata*, pro., 3; 19:1–2; *Testament*, 31–33; *1 Celano*, 62; *Anonymous of Perugia*, 31; *Legend of the Three Companions*, 52; *2 Celano*, 24; Bonaventure, *Major Legend*, 4:3; *Lumen gentium*, 25.1; *Vita consecrata*, 46.2.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. CIC, 586; 678–681; *Mutuae relationes*; *Vita consecrata*, 47–50.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Francis of Assisi, *Regula bullata*, 9:1; *Testament*, 26.

of God's grace in human life,  
the friars love and serve the Church  
in all its members.

They earnestly strive not only to follow the teachings of the Church,  
but also to defend and promote them  
as the way that leads to eternal life.

They show respect and deference to all prelates, priests, and deacons,  
and to the religious and laity of the Church.

- C75. The friars seek to exemplify  
the pilgrim aspect of the Christian life<sup>4</sup>  
and work for the up-building of the life of the Church  
in accordance with their charism and mission.

Their evangelization efforts, preaching of personal reform, missionary work,  
and material and spiritual care of the poor and destitute,  
are understood as a complement to the work of those clergy and laity  
whose mission is to administer parishes and schools.

## II. CONCERN FOR ALL PEOPLE

- C76. The friars' public and prayerful witness  
to the sanctity of human life  
from conception to natural death  
is an essential part of their work of evangelization  
and care of the poor.  
They recognize that the human right to life  
is the foundation of a just and peaceful society.<sup>5</sup>

D76.1. The friars recognize that those whose right to life is denied them,  
for whatever reason,  
are truly poor and most in need of Christian service  
and the saving power of the Gospel.

D76.2. Through their prayers, public witness, and solidarity

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<sup>4</sup> Cf. *Lumen gentium*, Chap. 7.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. *Evangelium vitae*, 20; 57; 78; *Evangelii gaudium*, 213.

with the unborn, the elderly,  
and all those whose lives are threatened by death  
as the proposed solution to problems,  
the friars seek to uphold the right to life  
and the dignity of every human being.

D76.3. With appropriate permissions,  
the friars do not hesitate to participate  
in acts of conscientious objection  
to actions that attack the inviolability of human life  
and seek to break the common bond of human solidarity.

C77. The friars are concerned for all people  
as children of God and beloved of Christ.<sup>6</sup>

They pray and work for the salvation of all human persons,  
especially those who choose to be their enemies,  
considering always that Christ the Lord,  
drew everyone to himself  
when he was lifted up on the Cross.<sup>7</sup>

As representatives of the gentle Savior,  
the friars strive to avoid all rudeness,  
lack of consideration and impatience,  
and, as Saint Francis exhorts,  
to behave as servants of all.<sup>8</sup>

D77.1. The friars encourage warm and creative dialogue  
with all of the Church's separated Christian brothers and sisters  
of East and West.<sup>9</sup>

D77.2. The friars show special deference and concern  
for the Jewish people,  
from whom have come Our Lady and her Divine Son,  
as well as much of Sacred Scripture.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Cf. 1 Tim 2:1–4; *Gaudium et spes*, 22.2; *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1934.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. Matt 5:43; Francis of Assisi, *Regula non bullata*, 23:7; 22:1; *Regula bullata*, 10:10; *Admonitions*, 9; *Prayer on the Our Father*, 8; *2 Letter to the Faithful*, 38; John 12:32.

<sup>8</sup> Matt 20:26–27; Mark 10:43–44; Francis of Assisi, *Regula bullata*, 3:10–11; *2 Letter to the Faithful*, 1–2.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. *Vita consecrata*, 100; *Unitatis redintegratio*, 5; *Lumen gentium*, 15.

- D77.3. The friars are attentive to Muslims,  
about whom Saint Francis was concerned  
in his prayer and preaching.<sup>11</sup>
- D77.4. The friars respect the sincere attempts of all world religions  
to find God and do his will,  
striving to show the same respect  
Christ himself showed  
to those coming from East and West  
to take their place at the Heavenly Banquet.<sup>12</sup>

C78. In sum, recognizing the universal primacy of Christ,  
the new Adam and the King of creation,  
the friars seek to remember  
that all people and all things in heaven and earth  
were created in him, through him, and for him.<sup>13</sup>

Hence, the friars follow the example of Saint Francis,  
who asked all people  
and even his creaturely “brothers and sisters”—  
the sun and the moon,  
the wind, fire, and water,  
the flowers, birds, and beasts—  
to help him praise God,  
knowing that all of creation  
by its very existence  
is a vestige of God’s glory and sings him a song of praise.<sup>14</sup>

Therefore, because God designed the created world  
to be brought into a deeper relationship with him  
through the Incarnation,  
the friars not only cherish this beautiful but broken earth,  
which is good,

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<sup>10</sup> Cf. *Vita consecrata*, 102; *Nostra aetate*, 4; *Lumen gentium*, 16.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. *Nostra aetate*, 3; *Lumen gentium*, 16; Francis of Assisi, *Regula bullata*, 12; *Regula non bullata*, 16; Honorius III, *Vineae Domini*; *1 Celano*, 55–57.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. *Nostra aetate*, 1–2; *Lumen gentium*, 16; Matt 8:11.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. Col 1:15–18; 1 Cor 15:22, 45; Pius XI, *Quas primas*, 7, 13; Paul VI, *Alma parens*, 9.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. Francis of Assisi, *Canticle of Creatures*; Psalm 19:2; Dan 3:52–90; Bonaventure, *Major Legend*, 9:1; *Itinerarium mentis in Deum*, 2:11–13.

but show special concern  
for everyone made in God's own image and likeness,  
for they are very good.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Cf. Gen 1:4, 10, 12, 18, 21, 25, 26–27, 31; Rom 8:29; *Evangelii gaudium*, 216.



## 8. FORMATION OF THE FRIARS

- C79. The friars consider formation to be an ongoing process of conversion, directed toward the fuller living of their Christian lives and modeled on the values of Franciscan life in the Capuchin tradition.

Formation requires the active involvement of the individual and of the Institute, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

In this important work, so vital to the growth of the Institute and its effectiveness in the life and mission of the Church, the friars are guided by the principles and values found in the Gospel, the teachings of the Church, and the *Formation Handbook*.

- C80. The overall process of formation is the responsibility of the General Servant, with the support of his Council and the Formation Council.
- C81. The various phases of formation are under the direction of a perpetually professed friar<sup>1</sup> appointed by the General Servant with the consent of the General Council.

The General Servant ensures that formators are adequately prepared and properly trained for their roles, in accordance with the *Formation Handbook*.

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. CIC, 651.1.

## I. FORMATION COUNCIL

- C82. The Institute has a Formation Council to assist the General Servant in directing the programs and evaluating the needs of the friars in formation.

Membership in the Formation Council and its functioning are described in the *Formation Handbook*.

- C83. The Formation Council offers advice to the General Servant on matters of formation; it reviews formation programs periodically, evaluates the progress of those in initial formation, and helps prepare friars for formation ministry.

## II. DISCOVERING AND FOSTERING VOCATIONS

- C84. Jesus never ceases to call people to follow him and to proclaim the Kingdom. Therefore, the friars pray, and ask others to pray, that new laborers may respond to the call to serve in the Lord's vineyard.<sup>2</sup>

Witnessing to their uniquely Franciscan manner of following Christ, the friars encourage men to discern if the Lord is calling them to this particular life of service to the Church and the world.<sup>3</sup>

- C85. Fostering vocations is a concern of all friars individually and communally. In cooperation with pontifical and diocesan initiatives, they should work to foster vocations,

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<sup>2</sup> Cf. Matt 9:37–38.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. *Vita consecrata*, 64.1–2.



whether to their Institute  
or to another form of dedicated life.<sup>4</sup>

D85.1. As the friars carry on their work of evangelization in cooperation with the Holy Spirit who enables people to encounter Jesus and discover the attraction of his person, they seek to help others, especially the young, to discover their vocation and they accompany them in their spiritual journey.<sup>5</sup>

D85.2. The friars welcome into their friaries and apostolates those who wish to “come and see” and thus experience first hand and discern the friars’ way of life.<sup>6</sup>

In a brotherly way, vocation directors help them discern what the Lord is asking and what special grace he offers them in his Church.

### III. PRE-NOVITIATE FORMATION

C86. Candidates showing signs of a vocation to the friars’ way of life benefit from an appropriate program prior to entering the novitiate.

The goals of such an experience are to help them achieve the personal and Christian maturity necessary for a fruitful novitiate and to assess their suitability for this way of life.<sup>7</sup>

D86.1. In addition to satisfying the canonical requirements for novitiate,<sup>8</sup> candidates should give proof of maturity consistent with their age<sup>9</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Cf. *Vita consecrata*, 64.4.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. *Vita consecrata*, 64.3–4; *Evangelii gaudium*, 169–173.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. John 1:39; *Vita consecrata*, 64.4.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. *Renovationis causam*, 61; *Directives on Formation in Religious Institutes*, 42–43.

<sup>8</sup> See CIC, 643; cf. CIC, 644–645.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. CIC, 642.

and have a satisfactory knowledge of Catholic teaching.  
 They should show signs of genuine conversion,  
 constancy of faith and Christian living,  
 love for the poor,  
 aptitude for community life,  
 and attraction to Franciscan spirituality and values.

- D86.2. Other matters related to the period of discernment and formation before admission to the novitiate are described in the *Formation Handbook*.

#### IV. NOVITIATE

- C87. The novitiate marks the beginning of life in the Institute.

Under the guidance of the Novice Director,  
 the novice comes to grasp the meaning of religious consecration in general  
 and the proper Franciscan charism of this Institute.  
 He can thus discern the Lord's call  
 and, through prayer, become ready to respond.<sup>10</sup>

- C88. The novice, led by the Spirit living within him,  
 develops his personal relationship with Jesus and the Father,  
 entering more deeply into the mystery of Salvation  
 through liturgical and personal prayer  
 in an authentically Franciscan manner.

Aided by instruction and spiritual direction,  
 he becomes accustomed to listening to the Lord in Scripture,  
 encountering him in the Eucharist,  
 recognizing him in the friars,  
 discovering him in the poor,  
 honoring him in the lives of others, especially the baptized,  
 and discerning his activity in the events of daily life.

The novice comes to know more deeply  
 the charism and disciplines of the Institute,  
 the sound traditions of Franciscan spirituality,

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<sup>10</sup> Cf. CIC, 646.

and the place of these in the life of the Church.<sup>11</sup>

Opportunities for pastoral experience  
help him realize the demands of his vocation  
and the fruit to be derived from prayer and fraternal life.<sup>12</sup>

D88.1. Life in community, with its joys, tensions,  
spirit of charity, and mutual support,  
helps novices to embrace their Franciscan family  
and grow in the mature self-denial  
necessary for apostolic mission.<sup>13</sup>

D88.2. Novices adopt a simple style of life  
to aid them in knowing Jesus  
who though rich became poor,  
and make them sensitive to the needy,  
especially those in the friars' neighborhoods.<sup>14</sup>

C89. In order to be valid, the novitiate must comprise twelve months  
spent in the novitiate community.<sup>15</sup>

The General Servant can authorize  
one or more supplementary periods in the active apostolate  
outside of the novitiate community  
in order to complete novitiate formation.<sup>16</sup>

In any case, unless otherwise provided,  
the novitiate does not last longer than two years.<sup>17</sup>

Absences from the novitiate house  
lasting more than fifteen days must be made up.  
An absence of over three months renders the novitiate invalid.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Cf. CIC, 652.2; *Directives on Formation in Religious Institutes*, 46–47.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. *Directives on Formation in Religious Institutes*, 1; *Perfectae caritatis*, 18; *Fraternal Life in Community*, 2d; *Vita consecrata*, 81.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. *Directives on Formation in Religious Institutes*, 47c; CIC, 652.2.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. John 17:3; 1 Cor 2:2; Phil 3:8, 10; 2 Cor 8:9; CIC, 600; Francis of Assisi, *Regula bullata*, 6:1–4; *2 Letter to the Faithful*, 5; *Vita consecrata*, 90.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. CIC, 647.2–3; 648.1.

<sup>16</sup> Cf. CIC, 648.2.

<sup>17</sup> Cf. CIC, 648.3; 653.2.

D89.1. An authentic document,  
dated and signed by the novice  
and the person who presided at his admission,  
attests to the beginning of the novitiate.

C90. The General Servant, with the consent of the Council,  
designates in writing a specific friary to be the novitiate house.<sup>19</sup>

He may permit the novices to live for a period of time  
in another friary of the Institute  
that he designates.<sup>20</sup>

C91. The formation of the novices,  
as well as the discerning and testing of their vocation,  
is entrusted to the Novice Director.<sup>21</sup>

The Novice Director is subject to and cooperative with  
the General Servant  
in regard to the operation and duties of the novitiate.  
He answers directly to the General Servant  
in everything that concerns the novices.<sup>22</sup>

D91.1. The Novice Director is helped by qualified assistants  
who work as a team with him.

Along with the Novice Director,  
they are to be freed from all other ministry  
or Institute obligations  
that could impede them  
from fulfilling their responsibilities.<sup>23</sup>

They are appointed by the General Servant  
with the consent of the General Council.

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<sup>18</sup> Cf. CIC, 649.1; 647.3.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. CIC, 647.1.

<sup>20</sup> Cf. CIC, 647.3

<sup>21</sup> Cf. CIC, 646; 650; 651.1; 652.

<sup>22</sup> Cf. CIC, 650.2.

<sup>23</sup> Cf. CIC, 651.2–3.

D91.2. A religious brother is to form part of the novitiate team to better promote and encourage that vocation among those in initial formation.

C92. A novice who freely chooses to do so requests in writing that the General Servant admit him to the temporary profession of vows.

Towards the end of the novitiate the Formation Council takes a consultative vote on each novice and submits a report to the General Servant.

After considering the report of the Formation Council, and with the consent of the General Council, the General Servant may admit the novice to first profession.

If there is any doubt about the readiness or suitability of a novice for vows, the novitiate may be extended by the General Servant but not by more than six months.<sup>24</sup>

C93. A novice is always free to leave the Institute.

Likewise, the General Servant may dismiss a novice at any time during the novitiate period if he deems it necessary.<sup>25</sup>

## V. TEMPORARY PROFESSION

C94. Novitiate formation ends with a free and faith-filled commitment in the Institute by temporary profession of vows.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Cf. CIC, 653.2.

<sup>25</sup> Cf. CIC, 653.1.

<sup>26</sup> Regarding requirements for validity, see CIC, 656.

The friar now sets out  
to make the Father's love visible in the world,  
"bearing witness in word and deed,  
bringing everyone to know  
that there is no one Almighty except him."<sup>27</sup>

Because God is faithful,<sup>28</sup>  
the friar entrusts to him  
his own fidelity,  
with the firm hope that the good work begun  
will be brought to completion.<sup>29</sup>

D94.1. For a just cause, the General Servant  
may permit the anticipation of first profession,  
but not beyond fifteen days.<sup>30</sup>

D94.2. Preparation for first profession is made by a retreat  
of at least five days in duration.

C95. During the period of temporary profession,  
the friars are under the guidance  
of a Director of the Temporary Professed.

He sees to it that these friars  
receive appropriate studies in Franciscan life  
as well as training in special tasks necessary  
for the common life and the apostolate.

He also is to ensure that the Church's norms  
and those of the Institute  
are carefully observed.

D95.1. Local Servants also have  
a formative responsibility  
for the Temporary Professed  
in their friaries.

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<sup>27</sup> Francis of Assisi, *Letter to the Entire Order*, 9; cf. *Vita consecrata*, 20

<sup>28</sup> Cf. 1 Cor 1:9.

<sup>29</sup> Cf. Phil 1:6; *Rite of Profession*, 64.

<sup>30</sup> CIC, 649.2.

C96. The period of temporary profession allows each friar to commit himself to the Institute and to deepen his understanding of this way of life, especially his experience in living the vows.

D96.1. Whether preparing for priestly ministry or for service as religious brothers, new friars live out their consecration in such a way that it permeates all aspects and activities of their daily life.

Helped by the formation team and their spiritual directors, they gradually become men of God and missionaries rooted in Christ who are ready to give themselves totally through their perpetual profession.

During this period, the Franciscan charism and traditions are more deeply integrated.

C97. Temporary profession is made by annual vows according to the norms prescribed by the *Formation Handbook*.

After a period lasting at least three years, and ordinarily not more than six, a friar may request admission to perpetual vows.<sup>31</sup>

In certain cases, the General Servant can prolong the time of temporary profession but not so that it lasts longer than nine years.<sup>32</sup>

Within these limits, and according to the Church's common law, a friar can ask to make perpetual vows when he believes he is ready.

D97.1. Temporary vows are understood to extend until the date of the subsequent profession,

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<sup>31</sup> Cf. CIC, 655; 657.1.

<sup>32</sup> Cf. CIC, 657.2.

which, at the discretion of the General Servant,  
may be anticipated or deferred  
but not by more than one month.

If, however, the profession is deferred,  
a friar who does not wish to renew his vows  
may lawfully leave at the end of twelve months.<sup>33</sup>

- C98. The General Servant, with the consent of the General Council,  
admits to the renewal of temporary vows  
and to perpetual profession.

Before doing so, he considers the report of the Formation Council,  
that of the local community,  
and the legitimate desires of the friar.

Profession in the Institute is received by the General Servant  
in virtue of his office  
or by his delegate.

- D98.1. The following may receive vows in the name of the Institute  
as delegates of the General Servant:  
Regional Servants, Local Servants  
and, by explicit delegation from one of the above,  
any friar who is perpetually professed,  
or, exceptionally, a priest who is not a member of the Institute.

The vow formula is to be written out  
in the friar's own hand,  
and includes the name of the one  
into whose hands the vows are made.

- C99. The form used to profess vows is the following:

To the glory of the Most High God,  
I, Brother *N.* of *N.*,  
desiring to observe the Holy Gospel of Our Lord Jesus Christ  
and follow more closely in His footsteps,  
into your hands, Br. *N.*,

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<sup>33</sup> Cf. CIC, 688.1.



vow to Our Father in Heaven  
 to live all the days of my life [for one year]  
 in obedience, in poverty, and in chastity,  
 according to the Constitutions  
 of the Community of Franciscan Friars of the Renewal,  
 and the inspiration of the Rule, Testament, life, and words  
 of Saint Francis of Assisi.

To this end, I rely on and beg for the grace and working of the Holy Spirit,  
 the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary and all the angels and saints,  
 and the encouragement and support of my brothers in this fraternity.

D99.1. Friars may use this formula  
 for a devotional renewal of vows, which,  
 in a venerable Capuchin tradition,  
 takes place each Friday.

## VI. PERPETUAL PROFESSION

C100. Perpetual profession,  
 a total consecration  
 of the individual friar to God  
 to accomplish his will and live the Holy Gospel,  
 is a source of inspiration and an example  
 for all the friars in the various stages of initial formation.

It also serves as a support and encouragement  
 for the perpetually professed friars,  
 challenging them to even greater fidelity  
 and continued renewal  
 in their personal and communal living.

C101. Through prayer, life experience,  
 discussion with those responsible for his formation,  
 and spiritual direction,  
 the friar is assisted in discerning if he should request  
 perpetual profession of vows  
 in this way of life  
 after the period of temporary profession.

The final decision rests on

both the individual's discernment of his readiness as well as the Institute's evaluation of him according to the provisions of the *Formation Handbook*.

- D101.1. Perpetual profession is preceded by an intense period of spiritual preparation.
- D101.2. Ordinarily, perpetual profession may be made only after four years of temporary vows, but can, for a just cause, be anticipated or deferred by a period of up to three months.

- C102. At an appropriate time, the friar writes to the General Servant requesting perpetual profession.

After considering the reports of the Formation Council and of the local community where the friar is assigned, the General Servant, with the consent of the General Council, may admit him to perpetual vows.

- D102.1. A perpetually professed religious of another institute who transfers to the Institute undergoes a probation period of at least three years before being admitted to perpetual profession. The manner of such probation is determined by the General Servant.<sup>34</sup>
- D102.2. Profession ceremonies are celebrated as spiritual events in which the Institute joins with the friar's family and the faithful in a celebration of God's mercy and goodness.
- These celebrations should reflect poverty and the simple and humble joy of Saint Francis and the early friars.

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<sup>34</sup> Cf. CIC, 684.1–2; 685.

## VII. PREPARATION FOR SACRED ORDERS

C103. Some friars receive a call to ministerial priesthood.

Once ordained,  
they serve the friars  
and the other baptized  
by the preaching of the Word,  
the administration of the sacraments,  
and the appropriate exercise of sacred power  
in service of ecclesial communion,  
in the context of the specific spirituality of the Institute  
and the apostolic dimension of its proper charism.<sup>35</sup>

D103.1. The General Servant admits friars  
as candidates for Sacred Orders  
with the consent of his Council  
after hearing the report of the Formation Council.

C104. The Director of Priestly Formation,  
is a priest of the Institute  
and oversees the friars' preparation  
for Sacred Orders.

D104.1. The Director ensures that the friars' priestly formation  
duly complies with the  
*Program for Priestly Formation* of the territory.

C105. The years in seminary formation  
provide the required training and education  
for those friars preparing for the priesthood.

The seminarians are to take their studies seriously,  
both for their personal growth  
in the knowledge and practice  
of the Catholic faith,  
and to prepare them to share  
in the Priesthood of Jesus Christ  
and the service of his people  
in priestly ministry.

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<sup>35</sup> *Vita consecrata*, 30; 32; *Christifideles laici*, 21–22.

Their studies are to provide a solid intellectual formation  
 in philosophy and theology  
 and the practical skills needed  
 for administering the sacraments  
 and preaching the Word  
 in the pastoral context of the friars' ministries.<sup>36</sup>

So that their priestly ministry may be more effective  
 by bearing witness to personal spiritual experience,  
 the seminarians are to dispose themselves  
 to growth in prayer,  
 aided by ongoing recourse to and study of  
 the sources of the Institute's spirituality.<sup>37</sup>

- D105.1. Wherever these studies are pursued,  
 it is important that friars live in a friary of the Institute  
 in order to foster a Franciscan pastoral heart.
- D105.2. The General Servant admits friars  
 to the ministries of lector and acolyte.  
 He may personally install them in these same ministries  
 or may delegate another priest to do so.
- D105.3. The General Servant,  
 while respecting the norms of the Church's common law,  
 may permit a seminarian to interrupt his studies  
 for a certain period,  
 in order to confirm his vocation.
- D105.4. If a seminarian discerns  
 he is not called to the priesthood  
 but intends to remain a member of the Institute,  
 he asks the General Servant  
 for an obedience to take up his mission  
 as a religious brother.

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<sup>36</sup> Cf. *Capuchin Constitutions of 1536*, IX/110–125; *Directives on Formation in Religious Institutes*, 105.

<sup>37</sup> Cf. *Directives on Formation in Religious Institutes*, 108; *Optatam totius*, 16.

D105.5. At the appropriate time,  
in freedom and full awareness of his responsibility,  
the student friar presents himself  
for admission to Orders  
with a petition written in his own hand  
and signed by him.<sup>38</sup>

C106. When a student friar is presented  
for Sacred Orders,  
the General Servant reviews  
with his Council  
the report of the Formation Council.  
He then may issue the dimissorial letters  
if he has received the consent of his Council.<sup>39</sup>

## VIII. FORMATION OF RELIGIOUS BROTHERS

C107. The friars recognize and esteem  
the value and essential place  
of the religious brother vocation  
in the charism of the Institute.

The religious brother is a powerful sign  
of the good of consecrated life  
in its essence,  
a state that is complete in itself.<sup>40</sup>

In the context of Franciscan life,  
brothers are a strong reminder  
to ordained friars and to all people  
of the charism of Brother Francis of Assisi,  
around whom the Lord created a fraternity  
as a sign of communion and love for the world.<sup>41</sup>

The numerous beatified and canonized Capuchin brothers  
testify to the fruitfulness

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<sup>38</sup> Cf. CIC, 1036.

<sup>39</sup> Cf. CIC, 1019.1.

<sup>40</sup> Cf. *Perfectae caritatis*, 10.1; *Vita consecrata*, 60.1.

<sup>41</sup> Cf. *Vita consecrata*, 60.4; Francis of Assisi, *Testament*, 14.

of many virtues to which all the friars  
should aspire:  
hiddenness, simplicity, minority, humility,  
availability, prayerful presence, and generous service.

- C108. During initial formation  
and the years of temporary profession,  
those called to live out their consecration as religious brothers  
are formed together  
with those called to priesthood  
in the charism and spirituality of the Institute.<sup>42</sup>
- C109. The friars called to be religious brothers  
are assisted during temporary profession  
in fostering their particular call  
by the Director of Religious Brother Formation,  
who is guided by the norms of the *Formation Handbook*.
- C110. Not only during temporary profession,  
but also throughout a brother's life of consecration,  
any specialized or professional training  
deemed important  
for exercising his gifts  
and fulfilling his duties  
in service of the friars' life and mission  
is provided for by the Institute  
after appropriate discernment has taken place  
and proper permission has been granted.<sup>43</sup>
- D110.1. If a brother in perpetual vows discerns that  
the Lord is calling him to the permanent diaconate  
or to the priesthood,  
the General Servant,  
with the consent of the General Council,  
and after consultation with the Formation Council,  
may admit him as a candidate for Orders.
- C111. In keeping with Franciscan tradition,

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<sup>42</sup> Cf. *Directives on Formation in Religious Institutes*, 102.

<sup>43</sup> Cf. *Vita consecrata*, 60.2.

the Institute encourages the participation of religious brothers in the life and governance of the Institute to the fullest extent possible.<sup>44</sup>

## IX. ONGOING FORMATION

C112. Each friar recognizes that formation is not limited to the initial phase, but is an intrinsic and ongoing requirement of religious consecration, since every circumstance and stage of life brings new challenges and opportunities for following Christ in more mature and complete ways.<sup>45</sup>

Therefore, the friars always seek to be renewed in their commitment to Christ and in faithful perseverance, selflessness, and enthusiasm, ever open to the Holy Spirit's guidance in discerning responses to new needs and questions while ever safeguarding the founding charism.<sup>46</sup>

Although the Institute provides the proper encouragement and means for ongoing renewal, it is ultimately each friar's individual responsibility to cooperate with God, who never ceases to offer this grace.

D112.1. During the years of initial formation, formators are to teach friars how to learn from life experience, use their time wisely, and develop a positive attitude toward continuing their formation once they are engaged in ministry.

D112.2. All aspects of human, Christian, and consecrated living

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<sup>44</sup> Cf. *Perfectae caritatis*, 15.3.

<sup>45</sup> Cf. *Vita consecrata*, 69–70.

<sup>46</sup> Cf. *Vita consecrata*, 71; 73; 81; *Directives on Formation in Religious Institutes*, 67.

are the proper object of ongoing formation,  
 which is to favor the growth of the affective sphere,  
 renew and deepen the spiritual life,  
 increase pastoral capacity,  
 and generally assist the integration  
 of the Institute's life and mission  
 into every stage of personal development.

- D112.3. Ongoing formation takes on numerous forms.  
 Besides fidelity to community quiet times  
 in spiritual reading, personal prayer,  
 and spiritual activities that foster growth and maturation,  
 it includes methodical study,  
 periodic communal exchanges and discussions,  
 special renewal or study sessions for the development of skills,  
 and the study of subjects necessary for communal living  
 and the apostolate.  
 It may also entail specialized studies  
 or academic work toward a degree.
- D112.4. Specialized studies undertaken  
 with the General Servant's permission  
 are to be well-discerned  
 and take into account the Institute's priorities.  
 The friar's progress in these studies  
 is to be objectively evaluated.
- D112.5. The Institute is to ensure  
 that a friar receive adequate formation  
 when he is given an assignment  
 for which he has yet to be properly trained.

This includes those ministries  
 in which a sensitivity to another culture  
 and a knowledge of the language,  
 history, and pastoral situation of a people  
 is necessary.<sup>47</sup>

Ministry with those who are poor or minority groups

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<sup>47</sup> Cf. *Vita consecrata*, 71.4.



requires an understanding of their socio-economic conditions and the social teachings of the Church.

- C113. Servants at all levels are to promote a spirit that fosters ongoing formation and to help the friars discern how they can take personal responsibility for individual and communal updating and development.

Conferences, colloquies, and workshops, especially those pertaining to Franciscan topics, should be promoted and periodically organized for all the friars.

- C114. A Director of Ongoing Formation, whose task is to develop and implement suitable programs, is appointed by the General Servant, with the consent of the General Council.

- D114.1. The Director of Ongoing Formation, after appropriate consultation, may organize special study or renewal sessions at the Institute level.

Such initiatives serve to strengthen unity and permit the friars to benefit from the variety of talent and experience in the Institute.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> Cf. *2 Celano*, 191–192.



## 9. STRUCTURE AND GOVERNANCE

- C115. The friars seek to imitate Jesus Christ,  
who came to serve and not to be served.<sup>1</sup>

In the words of Saint Francis,  
“Our Lord Jesus Christ gave his life  
rather than fail in obedience to his most holy Father.”<sup>2</sup>

Absolute and unquestioning obedience to the Triune God  
is the goal of the friars,  
since in his will is found peace.<sup>3</sup>

- C116. The Divine is manifested to the children of God in many ways,  
all of which must be acknowledged  
by the government of any Christian community.  
Therefore, the friars collectively seek  
to recognize and respond to God’s will  
humbly and enthusiastically.

They read and meditate on Sacred Scripture  
as God’s voice speaking to them in the present moment.

Christ has given his Church the mandate to teach and direct,  
and, consequently, the friars,  
both by vow and by conviction,  
are to be loyal and docile to the Church and its teachings,  
to its Supreme Shepherd, its bishops, and its Sacred Tradition.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Mark 10:45.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Francis of Assisi, *Letter to the Entire Order*, 46; cf. Phil 2:8.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Dante, *Paradiso*, 3:85.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. *Vita consecrata*, 46.3.

## I. AUTHORITY IN THE INSTITUTE

- C117. All friars who exercise authority  
are to do so in a spirit of humble service,  
according to the example and admonitions of Saint Francis.<sup>5</sup>

Accordingly, the friars responsible for government  
are called “servants.”<sup>6</sup>

The General, Regional, and Local Servants  
are to be docile to the will of God  
and show reverence for the human person.  
They are to listen willingly and attentively  
to each friar entrusted to their care.  
They are to promote voluntary obedience  
and always act to enhance  
the fraternal life  
and apostolic mission of the friars  
in accord with the law of the Church  
and the particular law of the Institute.<sup>7</sup>

They should serve as models of Franciscan life,  
acting always for the love of God,  
with a deep sense of prayer and devotion,  
patience and charity,  
encouragement for all,  
solicitude for the sick,  
and consolation for those who are struggling.<sup>8</sup>

## II. GENERAL CHAPTER

- C118. The General Chapter, while in session,  
exercises supreme authority  
within the Institute.

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<sup>5</sup> Cf. Francis of Assisi, *Admonitions*, 4; 19; *Perfectae caritatis*, 14.3; CIC, 618.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. Luke 22:26; Francis of Assisi, *Regula bullata*, 10:6; *Regula non bullata*, 4:6; 5:9–12; *2 Letter to the Faithful*, 42, 47.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. *Perfectae caritatis*, 14.4; CIC, 618; *Evangelii gaudium*, 169–173; *2 Celano*, 187.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. CIC, 619; *2 Celano*, 184–188.

It is the duty of the General Chapter  
to reflect upon the Franciscan tradition and life,  
to safeguard and enhance them,  
and to discern new ways  
to promote growth and ongoing renewal.<sup>9</sup>

It belongs to the General Chapter  
to enact norms  
and to treat other matters of major importance.

The General Chapter also elects the General Servant,  
the General Vicar,  
and the members of the General Council.

- C119. The ordinary General Chapter is held every six years,  
around the time of Pentecost,  
in a place designated by the General Servant  
after consultation with the General Council.

The date of a General Chapter may be anticipated or postponed,  
but not beyond six months.

- C120. If the office of General Servant becomes vacant,  
the General Vicar convokes the General Chapter  
as soon as possible,  
usually not more than three months from the time of the vacancy.

If, however, there remains less than one year  
in the current term of office,  
the General Vicar, in consultation with the other members of the Council,  
may decide to complete the term.

- C121. With the consent of the General Council  
and, if appropriate, after consultation with the perpetually professed,  
the General Servant may convoke  
an extraordinary General Chapter  
to consider some important matter.  
No elections are held at an extraordinary General Chapter.

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<sup>9</sup> Cf. CIC, 631.1.

D121.1. The perpetually professed may for serious reasons request the General Servant to convoke an extraordinary General Chapter.

C122. All friars in perpetual profession are eligible to be members of the General Chapter.

The *ex officio* members are the General Servant, the members of the General Council, the General Secretary, General Steward, and Regional Servants.

They remain members of the Chapter for its entire duration, even if replaced in office during the course of the Chapter.

Elected delegates are elected in accordance with a procedure approved by the General Chapter.

Invited members can be up to three friars appointed by the General Servant acting collegially with the General Council, to provide for areas or sectors that might be under-represented.

D122.1. The General Chapter may delegate to the General Servant, acting collegially with the General Council, the responsibility of determining an appropriate plan for the election of delegates for the next Chapter.

D122.2. The number of elected delegates is to exceed the number of *ex officio* and invited members.

D122.3. Chapter members normally may not relinquish their right and duty to attend the Chapter. For serious reasons and with the consent of the General Servant, an elected delegate may yield his place to the alternate who then replaces him for the duration of the Chapter.

D122.4. For just reasons, a friar may request from the General Servant

a dispensation  
 so that he not stand  
 for election to the General Chapter,  
 nor vote for the elected delegates.

D122.5. Subject to the rules of the Chapter  
 and at the discretion of the General Servant,  
 friars who are not elected delegates  
 may nevertheless attend the Chapter as observers,  
 but without active voice in elections and decision-making.

C123. The General Servant convenes the General Chapter  
 and, having consulted the members of the Institute beforehand,  
 determines its preliminary agenda.  
 Unless otherwise provided,  
 he presides over the general sessions  
 but may designate another person as moderator to guide the discussions.

Any friar may submit agenda items to the General Chapter  
 in accordance with the norms governing the Chapter.<sup>10</sup>

D123.1. The General Servant prepares a detailed report  
 on the status of the Institute,  
 its mission,  
 and its financial situation.  
 Having obtained the approval of the General Council,  
 he presents the report to the General Chapter  
 at an appropriate moment.

C124. While in session,  
 the General Chapter determines its agenda and the rules of procedure.

C125. Unless determined elsewhere in these *Constitutions*,  
 all elections in the General Chapter  
 are carried out in accordance with the provisions of canon 119  
 of the *Code of Canon Law*.

In all other matters,  
 unless a higher majority is required in accordance with the *Constitutions*,

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<sup>10</sup> Cf. CIC, 631.3.

the provisions of canon 119.2 are observed.

D125.1. All votes for elections are by secret ballot. Any other votes are open, unless a member of the General Chapter specifically requests a written vote.

C126. When the study of the matters brought to the attention of the General Chapter is completed and the appropriate votes taken, the General Servant declares the Chapter closed.

D126.1. The General Servant takes the necessary measures to bring to the attention of all the friars, as soon as possible, the acts and decisions of the General Chapter.

### III. GENERAL CONSULTATIONS

C127. As a general practice, and to foster unity in the Institute, the perpetually professed friars are to be consulted by the General Servant on a regular basis.<sup>11</sup>

If he judges it appropriate to do so, the General Servant may also consult the friars in temporary profession.

This consultation does not entail the exercise of the power of governance. Rather, as a consultative process, it encourages among the friars a sense of personal responsibility, direct participation, and discernment in the guidance and direction of the Institute.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Cf. CIC, 633.



It provides an important means to foster the spirit of Franciscan life in the Church.

D127.1. The form of consultation varies according to circumstances.

At times, it might be focused on a particular geographic area or a given ministry.

The General Servant, in consultation with the General Council, determines the most appropriate ways to carry out these various consultations.

D127.2. As a general rule, such consultations are to occur four times a year.

The General Servant may also call for additional consultations according to circumstances.

A local community may, for appropriate reasons, request the General Servant to initiate a general consultation.

C128. To the extent possible, major decisions that pertain to the life of the Institute are to be considered by the perpetually professed friars.

D128.1. Among the major decisions, the following are appropriate matters for consultation: the constitution or suppression of a region, the establishment or closing of a friary, significant additions or changes in ministries, and important decisions relating to financial matters.

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<sup>12</sup> Cf. CIC, 633.1–2; *Perfectae caritatis*, 14.5.

#### IV. THE GENERAL SERVANT

- C129. The General Servant is elected by the General Chapter for a six-year term, renewable once.

The General Chapter determines who is to preside over the election of the General Servant.

Immediately following his acceptance of the election, he makes the Profession of Faith and take the Oath of Fidelity in the presence of the General Chapter.

- C130. To be elected to the office of General Servant, a friar must be a priest who has completed five years of perpetual profession in the Institute.

- C131. Responsible for building up the whole Institute, animating its religious life, and leading it in its mission, the General Servant is to seek constantly from God the wisdom, sound judgment, strength of will, and firmness of character that the office demands.<sup>13</sup>

He should be open, understanding, patient, and sensitive. He should welcome with unfailing kindness all who have recourse to him and be able to correct with gentleness. In a word, he is to consider himself at once the common father and brother of all the friars.<sup>14</sup>

- C132. The General Servant has authority over all the members, friaries, regions, and works of the Institute. He exercises this responsibility showing concern for the well-being of the entire Institute.

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<sup>13</sup> Cf. *2 Celano*, 185.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. Francis of Assisi, *Letter to a Minister*, 9–11.

As a major superior,  
 he governs the Institute and exercises his office  
 in accordance with the law of the Church  
 and the provisions of the *Constitutions* and *Directory*.

He is assisted in this task by the General Councilors.

With the consent of the General Council,  
 he may promulgate decrees that enjoy the force of law  
 until the next General Chapter.

He assigns friars to local communities  
 and may assign them to certain ministries.

- C133. Visitation is an integral part of the General Servant's mission.<sup>15</sup>  
 Either personally or through a delegate,  
 he is to visit each friary  
 and meet with each friar  
 at least once every three years.

This ministry can be carried out in a variety of ways:  
 fraternal visits, ordinary visitations, and special visitations.

D133.1. During his term of office,  
 the General Servant endeavors to pay fraternal visits  
 to each of the friaries.  
 The purpose of these visits is to support and  
 encourage the members.

D133.2. Personally or through a friar designated by him,  
 he is to provide for an ordinary visitation  
 of the friaries at least once in his term,  
 evaluating the situation, identifying challenges,  
 and correcting irregularities when necessary.

Such a visitation is a special time of renewal  
 for the friars.

For this reason, the visitation is to be carefully prepared.

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<sup>15</sup> Cf. CIC, 628.1; Francis of Assisi, *Regula bullata*, 10:1; *Regula non bullata*, 4:2.

D133.3. When necessary or useful,  
the General Servant also provides for special visitations.  
These can be carried out personally  
or through one or more delegates.

A special visitation can pertain to works of the Institute,  
particular groups of friars,  
or to particular situations that may have arisen.

C134. As official representative of the Institute  
before ecclesiastical and civil authorities,  
the General Servant  
is responsible for public communications  
made on behalf of the Institute.

He may designate a friar to speak on behalf of the Institute.

Works published by the friars  
are to be authorized by the General Servant.<sup>16</sup>

D134.1. The friars are to seek permission  
from their Local Servants  
before accepting any interviews with the media,  
when possible.  
More significant media projects or interviews,  
such as those concerning the Institute,  
require permission from the General Servant.

## V. GENERAL VICAR

C135. The General Vicar is elected by the General Chapter.

His term of office coincides with that of the General Servant.

To be eligible for election,  
he must be a priest  
who has completed five years of perpetual profession  
in the Institute.

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<sup>16</sup> CIC, 832.

He may be elected for a second consecutive term.

D135.1. The election of the General Vicar immediately follows the election of the General Servant.

C136. The General Vicar assists the General Servant in his duties and responsibilities.

When the General Servant is absent or impeded, the General Vicar replaces him.

He is a major superior, but is not to use his authority against the mind and will of the General Servant.

C137. If the office of General Vicar becomes vacant, the General Servant, after consulting the General Council, selects a General Vicar from among them to complete the term.

## VI. GENERAL COUNCIL AND GENERAL OFFICERS

C138. The General Council consists of at least four General Councilors, one of whom is the General Vicar.

D138.1. There are to be five General Councilors including the General Vicar.

C139. The General Councilors are elected by the General Chapter.

The term of office coincides with that of the General Servant.

D139.1. The election of the General Councilors immediately follows the election of the General Vicar.

C140. To be eligible for election as a General Councilor,

a friar must have completed at least three years of perpetual profession in the Institute.

He is eligible for re-election.

- C141. The General Servant presides over meetings of the Council, convokes and adjourns meetings and determines the agenda.

The Council is of service to the General Servant, giving its advice or consent in accordance with the law of the Church and the provisions of the *Constitutions* and *Directory*.

- C142. If the office of General Councilor becomes vacant, the General Servant and the remaining members of the Council elect a replacement to complete the term of office.

- C143. The General Servant, with the consent of the Council, appoints a perpetually professed friar to the office of General Secretary.

He may be chosen from among the elected councilors.

If the Secretary is not elected to the Council, he attends the Council meetings without the right to vote.

He acts as Notary of the Institute, and records all the minutes and official acts of the General leadership.

- D143.1. The General Secretary prepares communications as needed following Council meetings, and assures the transmission of important general information.

- C144. The General Servant, with the consent of the Council,

appoints as General Steward  
a friar who has completed three years of perpetual profession in the Institute.  
The General Steward functions in accord with the norms of law.<sup>17</sup>

He may be chosen from among the elected councilors.

If he is not a General Councilor,  
he attends relevant portions of Council meetings  
without the right to vote.

C145. A General Almoner is appointed by the General Servant,  
with the consent of the Council,  
to assist the General Steward in collecting and distributing alms  
for the apostolate to the poor  
and the needs of the Institute.

C146. The General Procurator  
is appointed by the General Servant  
with the consent of his Council.  
Under the General Servant's direction  
he represents the Institute  
in its official relations with the Holy See.

## VII. REGIONAL GOVERNMENT

C147. When appropriate,  
a number of friaries  
may be grouped together to constitute a region.

C148. A region is established or suppressed by the General Servant  
with the consent of the General Council  
and after a general consultation.

C149. The Regional Servant is not a major superior.  
Rather, he functions through delegated authority  
granted by the General Servant.

D149.1. The Regional Servant officially represents the Institute

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<sup>17</sup> Cf. CIC, 636.1.

with regard to ecclesiastical and civil authorities in his region. He loyally upholds the General Servant's authority and follows his direction faithfully, striving by his example and his words to be a source of unity throughout the region.

- D149.2. The Regional Servant diligently promotes the spiritual and apostolic life of the friars of the region.
- D149.3. He gives all possible assistance to the Local Servants.
- D149.4. He keeps the General Servant informed of situations and advises him regarding the appointment of Local Servants.
- D149.5. The Regional Servant makes an annual visitation of all the friaries in the region.
- C150. The General Servant, with the consent of the General Council, determines the plan of governance for the region, after consulting the friars concerned.
- D150.1. The plan of governance determines, among other things:
- the convocation, composition, competence, and frequency of a Regional Assembly;
  - how the Regional Servant is designated and eligibility for the office;
  - the duration of his term of office;
  - the number of Regional Councilors, their eligibility, and their designation;
  - designation of the Regional Secretary and Steward;
  - matters that require the consent or advice of the Regional Councilors before decisions can be made by the Regional Servant.
- D150.2. The faculties delegated to the Regional Servant and Council may vary, depending on circumstances, from region to region.



## VIII. LOCAL GOVERNMENT

C151. Friaries are the living cells of the Institute.  
They are the primary units of the Institute's presence  
where its life and mission find their support and expression.<sup>18</sup>

They help all the friars become more prayerful and reflective  
and live the Gospel fully,  
thereby freeing them for ever-greater fidelity to their calling  
within a common project and in the  
framework of the priorities of the Institute.<sup>19</sup>

Every friar has the right and duty  
to belong to a friary  
and to participate in its life and mission.

C152. Members of the Institute live community either  
in a canonically established friary<sup>20</sup>  
or in a duly constituted friary<sup>21</sup>  
with a Local Servant.

Those who, because of their mission, live alone  
normally are to be assigned to a friary.

C153. In constituting a new friary,  
the General Servant takes account of  
circumstances and availability of friars.

Friaries are canonically established  
by written decree of the General Servant  
with the consent of the General Council  
and the prior written consent of the diocesan bishop  
in whose diocese the new house is located.<sup>22</sup>

In canonically establishing a new house,

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<sup>18</sup> Cf. *Fraternal Life in Community*, 59b.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. *Evangelica testificatio*, 39.

<sup>20</sup> Cf. CIC, 609.

<sup>21</sup> Cf. CIC, 608.

<sup>22</sup> Cf. CIC, 609.1.

the welfare of the Church and of the Institute  
 is to be kept in mind.  
 Care is to be taken that the conditions are fulfilled  
 for the friars to lead their religious life  
 in accord with the spirit and purpose of the Institute.<sup>23</sup>

After consultation with the diocesan bishop of the place,  
 the General Servant, with the consent of the Council,  
 may suppress a friary.<sup>24</sup>

- C154. The Local Servant provides leadership in the friary.  
 Like all the friars,  
 he is to strive with God's grace  
 to give good example  
 and to be faithful  
 to the essential elements of this way of life.

He is appointed by the General Servant  
 with the consultation of the General Council.

- D154.1. The Local Servant's term of office is three years.  
 He may be reappointed for a second  
 and exceptionally for a third consecutive term.<sup>25</sup>

To be eligible for this office,  
 a friar must have completed at least two years  
 of perpetual profession  
 in the Institute.<sup>26</sup>

- C155. The Local Servant works with the friars  
 and bears the burden of authority  
 in a spirit of service.<sup>27</sup>

He convenes Local Chapter, Local Council, and friary meetings  
 for the good of the friars  
 and coordinates the prayer life,

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<sup>23</sup> CIC, 610.1.

<sup>24</sup> Cf. CIC, 616.1.

<sup>25</sup> Cf. CIC, 624.

<sup>26</sup> Cf. CIC, 623.

<sup>27</sup> CIC, 618–619.

apostolic mission,  
and daily activities  
of the friary.

- C156. The Local Chapter consists of all perpetually professed friars assigned to the friary. Local decisions of major importance are made by the Local Chapter.
- D156.1. The matters of major importance to be decided collegially are:  
permanent or long-term changes to the friary building;  
permanent or long-term changes to the schedule;  
permanent or long-term changes to the friary's apostolate;  
acquiring or alienating vehicles;  
extraordinary expenditures, according to the norms of the  
*Financial Handbook*.
- C157. These friars also constitute the Local Council. The Local Servant consults his Council regularly on matters that affect the life of the friary, seeking as much as possible to reach consensus before acting.
- D157.1. In formation friaries and in certain exceptional circumstances the Local Council may consist of two or more councilors appointed by the General Servant.
- D157.2. The Local Council is convened by the Local Servant at least once a month, or more frequently at the request of a friar.
- C158. All friars of the local fraternity appropriately bring any concerns about local affairs to the attention of the Local Servant at their meetings.
- D158.1. All the friars of the local fraternity

may present agenda items for discussion and evaluation at meetings of the friary, Local Council, and Local Chapter.

In certain circumstances,  
the temporary professed friars,  
and even the novices,  
may be invited by the Local Servant,  
after consulting his Council,  
to attend the meetings of the Council and Chapter.

C159. A Local Vicar  
is appointed by the General Servant,  
after consultation with the General Council.  
His term of office coincides with that of the Local Servant.

D159.1. The Local Vicar replaces the Local Servant  
when the latter is absent or impeded.  
He implements friary policies  
and makes necessary immediate decisions,  
to implement friary goals.

D159.2. To be eligible for this office,  
a friar must be perpetually professed.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Cf. CIC, 623.

## 10. ADMINISTRATION OF TEMPORAL GOODS

### I. ACQUIRING GOODS FOR THE SERVICE OF THE MISSION

C160. The temporal goods of the Institute are, above all,  
at the service of the mission.

D160.1. While meeting the members' needs,  
through the income received,  
the friars look for ways to share what they have  
with others, especially with those who are poor.<sup>1</sup>

D160.2. Particular care should be taken  
that financial resources do not support enterprises  
that exploit those who are poor,  
foster a "culture of death,"  
damage God's creation,  
or oppose the teachings of the Church.<sup>2</sup>

C161. The Institute, regions, and canonically established friaries,  
as juridic persons,  
have the right to acquire, retain, administer and alienate  
temporal goods  
in accordance with the Church's common law.<sup>3</sup>

In the case of regions and canonically established friaries, however,  
this right is limited;  
the limits are fixed by the General Servant  
with the consent of the General Council.

Nevertheless, throughout the Institute, regions, and friaries,

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. CIC, 640.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *Evangelium vitae*, 87ff; *Starting Afresh from Christ*, 13; *Vita consecrata*, 89–90; 102;  
*Directives on Formation in Religious Institutes*, 14;

<sup>3</sup> CIC, 634.

the friars are to avoid all appearance of luxury, excessive gain, and the accumulation of goods.<sup>4</sup>

D161.1. Without prejudice to the canonical norms concerning property and the provisions of the *Constitutions* and *Directory*, titles to property and other assets are to be vested in civilly recognized Institute corporations or in some other manner that, according to the laws of the country, assures their safety for the Institute.

## II. ADMINISTRATION OF TEMPORAL GOODS

C162. Servants and Stewards at all levels of government are to manage goods in a spirit of stewardship and in conformity with the Church's common law and the *Constitutions* and *Directory*.

D162.1. In fulfillment of their office, Servants and Stewards are guided by the norms of the *Financial Handbook*.

C163. The Steward, under the direction of the competent Servant, carries out the acts of ordinary administration.<sup>5</sup>

D163.1. The Steward prepares the annual budget and periodic reports and presents them to the competent authority for approval. These are available for the review of the perpetually professed.<sup>6</sup>

C164. For acts of extraordinary administration that exceed the purpose and the manner of ordinary administration, as well as to incur debts or obligations or to alienate Institute property, the consent of the competent Servant, with the consent of his Council, is required.

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<sup>4</sup> Cf. CIC, 634.2.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. CIC, 638.2.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. CIC, 636.2.

D164.1. The *Financial Handbook* lists those acts considered to be acts of extraordinary administration in the Institute.

C165. All friars, at whatever level, require the explicit consent of the General Servant to accept the administration of non-Institute ecclesiastical works or property. If such administration is accepted, contracts are drawn up in due and proper form. The *nihil obstat* of the General Servant is required for acts of extraordinary administration relating to this work or property.

The administration of non-ecclesiastical goods, except for the patrimonies of the friars, are not to be accepted unless there are serious reasons and then with the consent of the General Servant.

Administration is always to be conducted in accordance with the laws of the country.

### III. FINANCE COMMITTEE

C166. A General Finance Committee is to be established for the Institute and kept duly informed.<sup>7</sup>

D166.1. The General Finance Committee helps the General Servant and Council determine the financial policy of the Institute and presents whatever recommendations it judges opportune.

The committee is composed of the General Steward and qualified friars appointed by the General Servant.

Persons other than friars may be invited by the General Steward as advisers on specific issues considered by the General Finance Committee.

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<sup>7</sup> Cf. CIC, 1280.

#### IV. FINANCIAL COMPETENCY

C167. The General Servant, with the consent of the General Council, sets the financial competency of Local Servants and their Councils, and determines which assets can be managed by individual friars and by Local Servants.<sup>8</sup>

D167.1. While respecting the rights of established friaries and the intentions of benefactors and donors, the General Servant is to provide for fraternal sharing of financial resources among the friaries.

D167.2. Likewise, while respecting the rights of established friaries and the intentions of benefactors and donors, the temporal goods of each friary are held in common according to directives fixed by the General Servant with the consent of the Council.

D167.3. The Local Steward, under the direction of the Local Servant, administers the friary's goods. In bookkeeping as well as in bank accounts, there is to be a clear distinction between the funds and property belonging to a parish, diocese, or other organization and those belonging to the Institute.

The same principles apply to those members of the Institute who are entrusted with the collection and disbursement of funds.

#### V. FINANCIAL POLICIES

C168. The General Servant, with the consent of the General Council, determines the financial policy of the Institute in accordance with the indications given by the General Chapter.

In administering the funds of the Institute whose management pertains to the General Administration,

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<sup>8</sup> Cf. CIC, 638.1.



the General Servant personally may incur or authorize extraordinary expenses up to the maximum amount determined by the General Servant with the consent of the Council.

To spend more than that amount,  
to incur debts or obligations,  
to perform acts of extraordinary administration,  
the General Servant is to have the consent of the Council.  
The other applicable norms of the Church's common law must also be observed.



## 11. SEPARATION FROM THE INSTITUTE

- C169. In all matters regarding exclaustation, dispensation from vows, and dismissal, the provisions of the law of the Church are to be observed.<sup>1</sup>

### I. LENGTHY ABSENCES AND EXCLAUSTRATION

- C170. For grave reasons, a friar in perpetual vows may request a lengthy absence from the Institute, which the General Servant may authorize with the consent of his Council. This absence may not exceed one year.<sup>2</sup>
- C171. According to proper canonical and Institute procedures, the General Servant, with the consent of the Council, may grant an indult of exclaustation to a perpetually professed friar for a period of not more than three years.<sup>3</sup>

During this period of exclaustation, the friar remains a member of the Institute but has neither active nor passive voice. He is bound by his vows and the other obligations of his religious profession, the observance of which is adapted to his living apart from the Institute. He remains subject to the General Servant and to the local Ordinary.<sup>4</sup>

D171.1. When a friar is granted an indult of exclaustation,

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<sup>1</sup> CIC, 686–704.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. CIC, 665.1.

<sup>3</sup> CIC, 686.1.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. CIC, 687.

an agreement is signed between him and the General Servant,  
 outlining conditions to be observed  
 during this period of temporary separation.

## II. DEPARTURE OF TEMPORARY PROFESSED

- C172. A friar in temporary vows is free to leave the Institute at the expiration of his vows.<sup>5</sup>
- C173. For a just cause,  
 the General Servant, after consulting the Council,  
 may exclude a friar from renewal of temporary vows.<sup>6</sup>
- C174. A friar in temporary vows can,  
 for a grave reason,  
 be granted an indult to leave the Institute  
 by the General Servant with the consent of the Council.<sup>7</sup>

## III. DEPARTURE OF PERPETUALLY PROFESSED

- C175. A friar in perpetual vows may,  
 for the gravest of reasons,  
 request a permanent separation from the Institute  
 by applying to the Apostolic See, through the General Servant,  
 for an indult of departure.<sup>8</sup>
- C176. For the grave reasons outlined in the law of the Church,  
 a friar may be dismissed from the Institute  
 by the General Servant acting collegially with the Council.<sup>9</sup>

The dismissal must be confirmed by the Apostolic See  
 before it becomes effective.

A friar so dismissed is by that fact  
 dispensed from his religious vows

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<sup>5</sup> CIC, 688.1.

<sup>6</sup> CIC, 689.

<sup>7</sup> CIC, 688.2.

<sup>8</sup> CIC, 691.1–2.

<sup>9</sup> CIC, 694–696; 699.1.

as well as from the rights and obligations of his profession.<sup>10</sup>

#### IV. RIGHTS OF THOSE WHO DEPART

- C177. If a friar leaves the Institute,  
or is lawfully dismissed from it,  
all arrangements relating to the administration  
of his patrimony cease.  
All personal patrimony administered for him by the Institute  
is returned to him.  
If the administration of his property  
had been ceded to others,  
the Institute has no obligation regarding it.
- C178. A friar who leaves the Institute,  
or who is lawfully dismissed from it,  
cannot claim anything from the Institute  
for any work done in it or for future considerations.  
However, in a spirit of charity and equity,  
the Institute assists him  
in making a transition to a new state in life.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> CIC, 700; 692.

<sup>11</sup> CIC, 702.



## 12. FIDELITY TO THE CONSTITUTIONS

C179. The *Constitutions* and *Directory* set out a privileged means for each friar to follow in the footsteps of Jesus Christ. They are inspired by the Franciscan charism in the Capuchin tradition and have received the approval of the Church. Thus, they allow each friar to evaluate the quality of his response to his vocation and to become a saint.

### I. MODIFICATIONS OF THE PROPER LAW

C180. A two-thirds majority of the General Chapter is required for the modification or authentic interpretation of an article of the *Constitutions*, to be submitted to the Holy See for approval.<sup>1</sup>

D180.1. A two-thirds majority of the General Chapter is required for the approval or modifications of the *Directory*.

D180.2. Any change in the *Directory* approved by the General Chapter is immediately effective.

### II. DISPENSATIONS

C181. The General Chapter and the General Servant may dispense individuals and friaries from disciplinary prescriptions of the *Constitutions* and *Directory* for an indefinite period.

Local Servants may occasionally dispense individuals or the friary itself.

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. CIC, 587.2.

Nevertheless, neither the General Chapter nor Servants can dispense from constitutive laws, especially those pertaining to vows or to the Institute's structures of government, unless an exception is expressly stated.<sup>2</sup>

### III. SPECIALIZED DIRECTORIES

C182. The General Servant, with the consent of the Council, promulgates specialized directories or handbooks applicable to all or to certain parts of the Institute. These directories concern formation, financial administration, general administration, and similar matters.

D182.1. The *Formation Handbook* is promulgated by the General Servant in cooperation with the Formation Council and after consulting the General Council.

The *Financial Handbook* is promulgated by the General Servant in cooperation with the General Finance Committee and after consulting the General Council.

### IV. INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITY

C183. Each friar through his religious consecration assumes responsibility for the common heritage of the Institute as expressed in the *Constitutions* and *Directory*.

He is exhorted to let himself be guided by these norms in creative fidelity to the legacy bequeathed by the founding friars.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Cf. CIC, 86.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. *Capuchin Constitutions of 1536*, XII/141.



## AFTERWORD

We pray that these *Constitutions* will be an authentic guide for us as we seek to observe the Holy Gospel after the manner of Saint Francis and his *Rule*. We ask the Lord to bless us in our hope that by persevering in this effort we will achieve the goals of this renewal: becoming true disciples of Our Lord Jesus Christ and contributing effectively to the ongoing renewal of the whole Church he founded.

Recalling the powerful spirit of the early Capuchin reform, we echo the *Constitutions of 1536*, desiring to rediscover in our own time the fervor and dedication of the early friars who lived them:

*Great indeed are the things we have promised,  
yet they are nothing in comparison  
with the eternal reward God will bestow upon us  
if we remain faithful.  
Let us, therefore, act manfully  
and not distrust our strength,  
because that best of Fathers,  
who has created us and called us  
to a life of evangelical perfection,  
knowing our condition,  
will give us not only strength by his aid,  
but also heavenly gifts in such abundance,  
that, surmounting all obstacles,  
we shall be able  
not merely to obey his most Beloved Son,  
but even to follow and imitate him  
with the greatest cheerfulness and simplicity of heart,  
utterly despising visible and temporal things,  
and ever yearning after those that are heavenly and eternal.*

*In Christ, therefore!*

*In Christ,  
who is God and man,  
true light,  
splendor and glory,  
brightness of the eternal light,  
mirror without stain,  
and image of God!*

*In Christ,  
who was established by the Eternal Father  
as judge and lawgiver  
and salvation of peoples!*

*In Christ,  
of whom the Holy Spirit  
has given witness!*

*In Christ,  
in whom likewise are  
our merits,  
patterns for living,  
helps, favors, and rewards,  
our meditation and imitation!*

*In Christ,  
in whom all things are  
sweet, easy, light, learned, holy, and perfect!*

*In Christ,  
who is the light and expectation of the Gentiles,  
the fulfillment of the law,  
the salvation of God,  
the Father of the future age,  
and our final hope!*

*In Christ,  
whom God has made  
our hope and justice,  
sanctification and redemption!*

*In Christ,  
who with the Father and the Holy Spirit,  
is coeternal, consubstantial, coequal,  
and one God who lives and reigns!*

*In Christ  
be everlasting  
praise, honor, majesty, and glory,  
forever and ever!  
Amen!*



# CUSTOMARY OF THE INSTITUTE

## RELIGIOUS CONSECRATION

### A. Consecrated poverty

1. Each friary may have a “petty cash” account to provide for the ordinary expenses of each friar. Its manner of use is defined in the *Financial Handbook*.
2. The friars are not to initiate fundraising events such as bingo, bazaars, or raffles.
3. Friars should be aware of the local and Institute-wide needs, and, when asked if they can receive a gift or assistance, should direct this help to the appropriate place.
4. The friars should receive all financial and material donations with a heart grateful for God’s provision. Those who receive such gifts are to ensure that the benefactors are thanked and their assistance properly acknowledged in accordance with civil law.
5. The number of cars for each friary is to be limited. There should be no more than two cars for every three friars, or at most three cars for every four friars. All vehicles are held and used in common. Only by exception would an individual friar have a vehicle reserved for his own personal use. Cars are to be kept in a clean and safe condition and responsibly maintained. Friars are encouraged to use public transportation whenever feasible. No vehicles less than two-years old are to be accepted. Acquisition or alienation of a vehicle is reserved to the Local Chapter (cf. D128.1).
6. Electric equipment for health and hygiene are permitted for evident necessity.
7. The friaries are not to have video equipment, microwave ovens, air conditioners, or cellular phones. Any exception to this policy is reserved to

the General Servant after consulting the General Council.

8. The use of computers in the friaries for purposes other than word processing and accounting is decided by the Local Servant with the consent of his Council and subsequent permission of the General Servant. Computers are not to be used for entertainment.
9. On reception of a computer, the hard drive is to be completely erased using appropriate software. The operating system is to have a single, shared user. Updating and maintenance of computers is to be carried out under the supervision of a friar designated as the computer administrator.
10. The friary library should be small, functional, and free of any superfluous books not in keeping with the life and work of the friars.
11. The friars are not to wear clothes considered specifically proper to the laity, such as dress shoes, dress pants, dress coats, neckties, etc. All forms of jewelry are inconsistent with the friars' witness to simplicity and austerity. Watches and religious chains with a medal are to be inexpensive, not being made of any precious metal.
12. At their quarterly evaluation of goods, the friars are to make use of the "Poverty Check" examen appended to this Customary.

## **B. Consecrated chastity**

1. Friars ordinarily avoid driving unaccompanied in a car with a woman.
2. Judgments about the propriety of behavior are referred to the Local Servant, and, in matters of disagreement, to the Local Council.
3. Friars who feel obliged to refer matters to the Local Servant and Council should attempt fraternal correction before bringing the matter to their attention.
4. The friars are to take care to relate to all women respectfully, as sisters in Christ, following the example of Saint Francis and the early Capuchin reformers. They are to be especially careful with regard to women religious, avoiding any behavior that is overly familiar or suggests a particular or exclusive friendship.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. *2 Celano*, 114.

## THE FRIARS' LIFE OF PRAYER

1. Friars legitimately prevented from praying the Liturgy of the Hours, may, in keeping with Franciscan tradition, substitute in whole or in part, the recitation of the *Our Fathers* according to the *Rule* of Saint Francis, Chapter 3.
2. Priest-friars present at the Eucharistic Sacrifice are encouraged to concelebrate.
3. Friars should be generous in responding to requests for Masses by the Franciscan Sisters of the Renewal.
4. On Wednesdays, each friar, unless prevented by a previous Mass intention, is to offer his Mass and prayers, his good works, and possibly even fasting, for vocations. The friars recite the *Memorare* each day after the rosary for the intention of increased numbers of vocations to the Institute. Likewise, the month of March, especially the novena in preparation for the Solemnity of Saint Joseph, is to be dedicated to prayer and penance for vocations.
5. Friaries within relative proximity to one another are to gather together for the annual extended retreat in common. Friars are to be present unless excused by the General Servant. Silence is to be observed during the retreat, except for the dinner hour, sports, and outside activities.
6. Each local fraternity is to celebrate the Commemoration of All the Deceased of the Seraphic Order in the month of October for all deceased friars, sisters, relatives, associates, and benefactors.
7. The General Servant or his delegate is to arrange for a Gregorian series of thirty Masses on thirty consecutive days to be offered for the repose of the soul of each friar or Franciscan Sister of the Renewal who dies.
8. Upon the death of a member of the Community of Franciscan Sisters of the Renewal, each priest is to offer at least one Mass in addition to the concelebration of the funeral. The Office of the Dead is to be recited for the repose of the soul of each sister who dies. Upon the occasion of the death of a parent of a sister, each priest is to offer a Mass.

## FRATERNAL LIFE IN CHRIST

1. The friars should encourage members of the laity to refer to them with the proper form of address.

2. Women and children are not permitted to enter the enclosure, and men may enter it only when they are special guests.
3. Friars both eat and sleep in a friary, unless particular circumstances make this impractical or impossible.
4. Friaries in relative proximity to one another are to establish a schedule of annual liturgical celebrations in common.
5. In order to foster both the individual good of each friar and the common good of the fraternity: (a) a friar who believes that he has been treated unfairly by a friar (or friars) in authority is encouraged to share his grievance directly with the friar(s) in authority, bringing along another person if he so chooses; (b) to protect the reputation of those in authority, if a friar shares his grievance with other friars, it is understood that those in authority may need to share confidential information with them, in the presence of the friar with the grievance, to come to a common understanding of the truth in love; (c) if necessary, further procedures involving a panel of mutually acceptable persons may be developed.

## THE FRIARS' LIFE OF PENANCE

1. The friars are to make appropriate use of the "Examination of Conscience for Fasting" appended to this Customary, for example, in preparation for the two regular seasons of fasting.

## APOSTOLIC MISSION

1. Transportation for apostolic work is normally to be provided by those who have invited the friar(s). If these persons are financially unable to meet the expenses, the permission of the Local or General Servant is required (depending on which account is to be used for paying the expense).
2. Particularly whenever a friar receives a preaching request that entails staying overnight outside the friary, he is first to prayerfully reflect on whether the request merits acceptance before bringing it for the further discernment of the Local Servant and personally decline the request if it does not.
3. Requests for outside ministry are considered by the Local Servant in view of the importance of the request, the time involved, the effects on the friar's personal participation in prayer and fraternal life, and the impact on the friary.



4. Friars who have theological training and more preaching experience should be given priority in preaching assignments.
5. A friar who senses a call to be out preaching more than half the time should ask the General Servant to consider designating him a full-time preacher.
6. Those designated as full-time preachers are to present a schedule of major future engagements to their Local Servants, indicating times when they will be available for assistance and participation in community life. They are to be willing to take on temporary duties when available.
7. When the friars periodically evaluate their apostolic commitments, they make use of the following questions to aid their examen: (1) How am I personally fulfilling our Institute's mission of serving the poor? Is there good balance? (2) How are we as a friary fulfilling our mission of preaching the Gospel? Is there good balance? (3) Is our apostolic work "extinguishing the spirit of prayer and devotion"? (4) What suggestions or questions might I have for the directors of the apostolate(s)? The directors of each apostolate are to prepare a report based on the communal discussion to be shared at the appropriate level (e.g., regional assembly).

## LIFE IN THE CHURCH

1. Permission for acts of conscientious objection is given by the General Servant after he has consulted the General Council and considered pertinent diocesan policies and applicable civil laws.

## APPENDIX: POVERTY CHECK

### *For Friary Discussion*

What has inspired my understanding of Franciscan poverty lately (e.g., readings, experiences, insights, etc.)?

Do we gratefully beg for our basic needs, with a humble and patient spirit of dependence on Divine Providence (C5 and C12)?

Do we show gratitude to the Lord our benefactors by thanking them, praying for them, and responsibly maintaining the things they have entrusted to us (D12.4)?

Do we have anything in the friary that is superfluous or unnecessary for our life and work (C 16)?

Do our cars, electronics devices, computers, books or other common items conform to our directives and customs and the general desire to avoid luxury and unnecessary conveniences (C15, D16.3–9, *Customary*)?

(*For the Local Steward*) Do we have superfluous funds? Is money being spent only on necessary items and properly recorded (D16.2, *Financial Handbook*)?

Are we fulfilling Christ's invitation to give to the poor in an ongoing way?

Does the poverty of our neighbors challenge us to be more genuine in imitating the poverty of Christ? Do we still live in an area noted for poverty (C14)?

***For Individual Reflection*** (may be used as an examination at Night Prayer)

Do we have an attitude of appropriation or attachment? What do I cling to and why?

How can I grow in a spirit of minority and poverty of spirit and imitate the Heart of Christ?

Do I complain about privations or am I content with the "minimum necessary?"

Am I growing in trust of our Heavenly Father and His Divine efficiency through our life of poverty?

Am I encouraging of my brothers in living a life of poverty, without being harshly critical or judgmental?

Is there anything in my room that I ought to give away?

## APPENDIX: EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE FOR FASTING

***For personal reflection*** (may be used as an examination at Night Prayer)

Am I praying for the Lord's grace and guidance in this area of my life?

Am I observing our *Constitutions* and *Directives* (C58ff), not eating sweets outside of festive days, not eating between meals on fast days or seasons, being moderate in amount at meals, etc.

Do I seek conformity to Christ who suffered in the flesh and died for us?

For whom am I offering my fasting? Is there anyone I should add to the list? Do I seek a sense of solidarity with my brothers and sisters who go hungry?

Is there anything I am very attached to that I should seek to detach from?

Do I have a healthy spirit of detachment with regards to my consumption of alcohol?

Would I welcome fraternal correction in this area if a friar thought it necessary?

Do I feel called to abstain from a particular item for a particular intention?

Do I accept and support a brother who wishes to intensify his fast (D58.1)?

Does fasting foster in me a longing for the Kingdom of God, a sense of my powerlessness, a clarity about what is essential, an appreciation of the Lord's generosity to us?

***For friary discussion*** (to be held within two weeks of the Franciscan and Lenten fast seasons)

Do we prepare smaller amounts for meals during fast seasons and fast days?

Do we stockpile or hoard sweets for feast days?

Would any of the following ideas be agreeable to observe communally during this fast season?

1. Abstaining from meat except Saturday evenings, Sundays, and Solemnities.
2. Abstaining from sweets or alcohol even on Sundays though not Solemnities.
3. Abstaining from peanut butter, coffee, eggs, cheese, or some other item of our choice.
4. Serving only a healthy soup and bread for lunch or dinner throughout the week.
5. Having some sort of night vigil (e.g., all night Holy Hours or Office of Readings one night a week).
6. Having a continuous reading during part of the meal time (to avoid preventing some fraternal time).
7. Standing during the Liturgy of the Hours or one particular hour.

Is there anything else that might help us enter more whole-heartedly into the season?

## APPENDIX: APOSTOLIC REVIEW

Sometime in September each friary meets to review its apostolic involvement and apostolates, primarily “to ensure that the demands of apostolic work do not extinguish the spirit of holy prayer and devotion” (C71). Each friar prepares prayerfully. At the meeting, the following examen is read aloud for everyone, both for personal gain and to aid the discussion that follows.

### *Concerning my apostolic life personally*

1. How am I personally fulfilling our “first mission of serving the poor, especially the destitute and homeless” (C63)? Do I encounter joy and fulfillment there? Am I striving to live out the beatitude, “Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God” (Lk 6:20) in my own work with the poor?
2. How am I personally fulfilling our CFR mission of preaching the Gospel? Do I ask God to grant me zeal for his kingdom?
3. Is there proper balance between my service of the poor and my evangelization?
4. Do I perceive that my apostolic work is extinguishing “the spirit of holy prayer and devotion”? Am I faithful to praying all the offices of the Liturgy of the Hours to which I am obliged (cf. C32)? Do I “devote two one-hour periods to personal prayer in *lectio divina* (especially with Sacred Scripture), meditation, and contemplation” (cf. C33)? Am I being faithful to observe the day when our fraternity “devotes itself to a more conscious spirit of quiet and recollection,” which “takes precedence over the ordinary demands of the apostolate” (cf. C39)? Am I faithful to taking “each month at least one day of solitude for personal prayer” (C40)?
5. Regarding my love for the poor:
  - a. Do I treat those whom we serve with charity, patience, prudence, gentleness, discretion, and even firmness when necessary? Do I approach the poor in a spirit of solidarity and equal dignity?
  - b. Is a majority of my time spent with those with whom I feel most comfortable or am I remaining open to serve Jesus even in his many disguises? As a religious, do I maintain proper boundaries within these relationships?

- c. Do I enter our apostolate with a spirit of peace and openness to the Holy Spirit so to be fully present to those whom we serve?
  - d. Am I allowing the example of St. Francis and the Capuchin saints to inspire me in my love of the poor and deep prayer in the midst of a busy apostolate? Do I pray for the poor in our apostolate?
  - e. Do I receive joy from serving the poor? Do I continually strive to offer my apostolic work to God as a prayer in action?
  - f. How do I keep the spirit of sacrifice alive in our apostolate? Do I expect to be inconvenienced by the needs of the poor? Am I prepared to share in their difficulties and distress?
  - g. Do I keep a good balance in the amount of time with the poor? Do I spend an excessive amount of time with the well-to-do, on the phone or otherwise?
6. Do I properly discern my involvement with activities outside the immediate work of our friary's apostolate?
  7. Can I say before God that my apostolic opportunities are assisting me in growing in "a wholehearted embracing of Jesus Christ" (C60)?

***Concerning our friary's apostolic life***

1. Is our fraternity's service of the poor and spreading the Gospel a joyful experience?
2. Do our friary's apostolic commitments extinguish "the spirit of holy prayer and devotion"? Does our manner of involvement in our apostolates prevent a spirit of prayer from prevailing in the friary (cf. C38)?
3. Is our apostolate in proper relationship with the other aspects of our way of life (fraternity, penance, [ongoing] formation, governance)?
4. How are we as a friary fulfilling our CFR mission of serving the poor? How are we as a friary fulfilling our CFR mission of preaching the gospel? Is there a good balance?
5. Regarding our fraternity's love for the poor:
  - a. Does our apostolate possess the Franciscan qualities of humility, warmth, minority, joy, simplicity, and peace? (See also D63.2.)
  - b. Are we open to the involvement of lay volunteers in our apostolate? Does our work with lay volunteers interfere with or distract us from our own direct involvement with the poor? What are some

ways in which we can incorporate laity more creatively in our direct involvement with the poor?

6. Regarding our CFR apostolic mission in both aspects of service of the poor and evangelization:
  - a. Do we approach our apostolate with creativity and initiative, giving of our time generously? What are some ways we can bring freshness to the apostolate?
  - b. Do we communicate the Gospel in our ministry in an intelligible and effective manner with varying groups of people? How can we bring the new evangelization to our apostolate again?
  - c. Do we incorporate Pro-Life work within our friary's apostolate (cf. C76)?
7. Do we need to make any specific changes in the manner of operating an apostolate?

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