

2017

OCDS Legislative Documents

**of the California-Arizona Province
of St. Joseph**

Rule of St. Albert

Constitutions

Provincial Statutes



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The Rule of Saint Albert

St. Albert, Patriarch of Jerusalem, sometime between 1206 and 1214 gave at their request, a formula of life to the first Latin hermits of Mt. Carmel. It was approved for the first time by Pope Honorius III on January 30, 1226. It was subsequently confirmed by Gregory IX on April 6, 1229 and again by Innocent IV on June 8, 1245. After the migration of the hermits to Europe, the Rule was adapted to their new conditions of life, and approved as it is today by Innocent IV on October 1, 1247.

As we have it today, there have been various ways of dividing the Rule into chapters and titles, indentations, and numbers. This caused confusion, especially when quoting the Rule in official documents or when placing it with the Constitutions of the respective Orders.

In 1998, a commission was created by the two General Councils of both the O.Carm and the OCD to agree on a common system of numbering for our Rule. The following system of simply numbering the paragraphs was adopted and approved by both General Councils on May 21, 1998. This method of citation is now considered official for both O.Carm. and OCD.

PLEASE NOTE: paragraph numbers are in square brackets to indicate that they are not part of the original Rule. The changes and additions made by Innocent IV are given in italics.

[1] Albert, called by God's favour to be Patriarch of the Church of Jerusalem, bids health in the Lord and the blessing of the Holy Spirit to his beloved sons in Christ, B. and the other hermits under obedience to him, who live near the spring on Mount Carmel.

[2] Many and varied are the ways in which our saintly forefathers laid down how everyone, whatever his station or the kind of religious observance he has chosen, should live a life of allegiance to Jesus Christ — how, pure in heart and steadfast in conscience, he must be unswerving in the service of the Master.

[3] It is to me, however, that you have come for a rule of life in keeping with your avowed purpose, a rule you may hold fast to henceforward; and therefore:

[4] The first thing I require is for you to have a Prior, one of yourselves, who is to be chosen for the office by common consent, or that of the greater and maturer part of you. Each of the others must promise him obedience — of which, once promised, he must try to make his deed the true reflection — *and also chastity and the renunciation of ownership.*

[5] *If the Prior and brothers see fit, you may have foundations in solitary places, or where you are given a site that is suitable and convenient for the observance proper to your Order.*

[6] Next, each one of you is to have a separate cell, situated as the lie of the land you propose to occupy may dictate, and allotted by disposition of the Prior with the agreement of the other brothers, or the more mature among them.

[7] *However, you are to eat whatever may have been given you in a common refectory, listening together meanwhile to a reading from Holy Scripture where that can be done without difficulty.*

[8] None of the brothers is to occupy a cell other than that allotted to him, or to exchange cells with another, without leave of whoever is Prior at the time.

[9] The Prior's cell should stand near the entrance to your property, so that he may be the first to meet those who approach, and whatever has to be done in consequence may all be carried out as he may decide or order.

[10] Each one of you is to stay in his own cell or nearby, pondering the Lord's law day and night and keeping watch at his prayers unless attending to some other duty.

[11] *Those who know how to say the canonical hours with those in orders should do so, in the way those holy forefathers of ours laid down, and according to the Church's approved custom. Those who*

do not know the hours must say twenty-five ‘Our Fathers’ for the night office, except on Sundays and solemnities when that number is to be doubled so that the ‘Our Father’ is said fifty times; the same prayer must be said seven times in the morning in place of Lauds, and seven times too for each of the other hours, except for Vespers when it must be said fifteen times.

[12] *None of the brothers must lay claim to anything as his own, but you are to possess everything in common; and each one is to receive from the Prior — that is from the brother he appoints for the purpose — whatever befits his age and needs.*

[13] *You may have as many asses and mules as you need, however, and may keep a certain amount of livestock or poultry.*

[14] An oratory should be built as conveniently as possible among the cells, where, if it can be done without difficulty, you are to gather each morning to hear Mass.

[15] On Sundays too, or other days if necessary, you should discuss matters of discipline and your spiritual welfare; and on this occasion the indiscretions and failings of the brothers, if any be found at fault, should be lovingly corrected.

[16] You are to fast every day, except Sunday, from the feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross until Easter Day, unless bodily sickness or feebleness, or some other good reason, demand a dispensation from the fast; for necessity overrides every law.

[17] *You are to abstain from meat, except as a remedy for sickness or feebleness. But as, when you are on a journey, you more often than not have to beg your way, outside your own houses, you may eat foodstuffs that have been cooked with meat, so as to avoid giving trouble to your hosts. At sea, however, meat may be eaten.*

[18] Since man’s life on earth is a time of trial, and all who would live devotedly in Christ must undergo persecution, and the devil your foe is on the prowl like a roaring lion looking for prey to devour, you must use every care to clothe yourselves in God’s armor so that you may be ready to withstand the enemy’s ambush.

[19] Your loins are to be girt with chastity, your breast fortified by holy meditations, for as Scripture has it, holy meditation will save you. Put on holiness as your breastplate, and it will enable you to love the Lord your God with all your heart and soul and strength, and your neighbor as yourself. Faith must be your shield on all occasions, and with it you will be able to quench all the flaming missiles of the wicked one: there can be no pleasing God without faith; and the victory lies in this — your faith. On your head set the helmet of salvation, and so be sure of deliverance by our only Saviour, who sets his own free from their sins. The sword of the spirit, the word of God, must abound in your mouths and hearts. Let all you do have the Lord's word for accompaniment.

[20] You must give yourselves to work of some kind, so that the devil may always find you busy; no idleness on your part must give him a chance to pierce the defences of your souls. In this respect you have both the teaching and the example of Saint Paul the Apostle, into whose mouth Christ put his own words. God made him preacher and teacher of faith and truth to the nations: with him as your leader you cannot go astray. We lived among you, he said, labouring and weary, toiling night and day so as not to be a burden to any of you; not because we had no power to do otherwise but so as to give you, in our own selves, as an example you might imitate. For the charge we gave you when we were with you was this: that whoever is not willing to work should not be allowed to eat either. For we have heard that there are certain restless idlers among you. We charge people of this kind, and implore them in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that they earn their own bread by silent toil. This is the way of holiness and goodness: see that you follow it.

[21] The Apostle would have us keep silence, for in silence he tells us to work. As the Prophet also makes known to us: Silence is the way to foster holiness. Elsewhere he says: Your strength will lie in silence and hope.

For this reason I lay down that you are to keep silence from after Compline until after Prime the next day.

At other times, although you need not keep silence so strictly, be careful not to indulge in a great deal of talk, for, as Scripture has it — and experience teaches us no less — Sin will not be wanting where there is much talk, and He who is careless in speech will come to harm; and elsewhere: The use of many words brings harm to the speaker's soul. And our Lord says in the Gospel: Every rash word uttered will have to be accounted for on judgment day. Make a balance then, each of you, to weigh his words in; keep a tight rein on your mouths, lest you should stumble and fall in speech, and your fall be irreparable and prove mortal. Like the Prophet watch your step lest your tongue give offence, and employ every care in keeping silent, which is the way to foster holiness.

[22] Your brother B., and whoever may succeed you as Prior, must always keep in mind and put into practice what our Lord said in the Gospel: Whoever has a mind to become a leader among you must make yourself servant to the rest, and whichever of you would be first must become your bondsman.

[23] You other brothers too, hold your Prior in humble reverence, your minds not on him but on Christ who has placed him over you, and who, to those who rule the Churches, addressed these words: Whoever pays you heed pays heed to me, and whoever treats you with dishonor dishonors me; if you remain so minded you will not be found guilty of contempt, but will merit life eternal as fit reward for your obedience.

[24] Here are the few points I have written down to provide you with a standard of conduct to live up to; but our Lord, at his second coming, will reward anyone who does more than he is obliged to do. See that the bounds of discretion are not exceeded, however, for discretion is the guide of the virtues.



CONGREGATIO
PRO INSTITUTIS VITAE CONSECRATAE
ET SOCIETATIBUS VITAE APOSTOLICAE

Prot. n. C. 228 - 1/2003

DECRETO

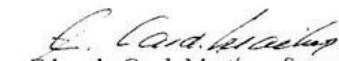
Il Preposito Generale dei Carmelitani Scalzi, previa l'approvazione del Definitorio Generale, avvenuta nella sessione 11^a del 9 giugno 2003, ha presentato alla Sede Apostolica il testo delle Costituzioni dell'Ordine Secolare, chiedendone l'approvazione.

La Congregazione per gli Istituti di vita consacrata e le Società di vita apostolica, considerata attentamente ogni cosa al riguardo, col presente Decreto approva e conferma il predetto testo, secondo l'esemplare redatto in lingua spagnola, conservato nel suo archivio.

Che il nuovo testo delle Costituzioni dell'Ordine Secolare dei Carmelitani Scalzi sia un mezzo veramente efficace, affinché i suoi membri possano rinvigorire sempre più la loro consacrazione battesimale nelle situazioni concrete di vita familiare, sociale, civile ed ecclesiale.

Nonostante qualsiasi cosa in contrario.

Vaticano, 16 giugno 2003.


Eduardo Card. Martinez Somalo
Prefetto


+ Piergiorgio Silvano Nesti, CP
Segretario

The General Superior of the Discalced Carmelites, with the prior approval of the General Definitory, given in the 11th session of June 9, 2003, presented the text of the Constitutions of the Secular order to the Apostolic Center, requesting its approval.

The Congregation for the Institutes of consecrate life and the Societies of apostolic life, having considered attentively everything in its respect, by the present Decree approves and confirms the aforesaid text, according to the example presented in Spanish language, preserved in its file.

May the new text of the Constitutions of the Secular Order of the Discalced Carmelites be a really effective means, so that its members can reinvigorate more and more their baptismal consecration in the concrete situations of family, social, civilian and ecclesial life.

Not withstanding anything to the contrary.

Vatican, June 16, 2003

Eduardo Card. Martínez Somalo, Prefect

Silvano Nesti, CP, Secretary



CASA GENERALIZIA CARMELITANI SCALZI
CORSO DITALIA, 38
00198 ROMA

Very dear Brothers and Sisters of the OCDS,

It is with joy that I send you the text of the new numbers of the Constitutions on *Fraternal Communion* and *Saint Joseph*, approved by the Congregation for the Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of apostolic life on 7 January 2014 (Prot. n. C 228-¹ /2003). The OCD General Definitory, at its September meeting, had revised the text in the light of the suggestions received and sent it to the Congregation for approval.

As with for the Constitutions of 2003, the text approved is in Spanish. The new numbers form an integral part of the Constitutions, and are inserted in their respective places, while however maintaining the same numbering. The Provincial Councils now need to review the provincial Statutes, in accordance with the new guidelines.

My wish is for every Community to grow in fraternal communion after the image of the perfect communion of the Most Holy Trinity. In fact the Trinitarian mystery “reminds us that we have been created in the image of that divine communion, and so we cannot achieve fulfilment or salvation purely by our own efforts” (Francis *Evangelii gaudium* 178).

D E C R E E

The Superior General of the Discalced Carmelites, at the request of the General Secretariat for the Secular Order, after consulting with the Provinces and the Communities of same Order and with the consent of the General Definitory, presented to the Apostolic See, for approval, the text of the new chapter on “Fraternal Communion” and on “Saint Joseph”, to be inserted into the Constitutions of the Secular Order which were approved by Decree, (the same number as above), on 16 June 2003.

This Congregation for the Institutes of consecrated life and Societies of apostolic life, having carefully considered everything, approves by this present Decree the text presented; the approval is given in accordance with the original Spanish text kept on file in the Congregation’s archives.

Under the watchful guidance and with the paternal intercession of Saint Joseph, may the members of the Secular Order, rooted in Christ through their baptismal consecration and united by the bonds of fraternal charity, be enabled to respond generously to their common vocation to holiness in the concrete situations of family, ecclesial, social and civil life.

Notwithstanding any provision to the contrary.

From the Vatican, 7 January, 2014

Joao Braz Card. De Aviz
Prefect

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

OCDS Constitutions

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OCDS Constitutions

PREFACE

All are called to share, in charity, the holiness which belongs to God alone: “You must therefore be perfect, just as your heavenly Father is perfect” (Mt 5:48).

Following Christ is the way to attain perfection, opened to all by baptism. Through Baptism we take part in the triple mission of Jesus: kingly, priestly and prophetic. The first is a commitment to transforming the world according to God’s design. By the priestly mission, the baptized person offers self and the whole of creation to the Father with Christ, guided by the Holy Spirit. And as prophet, the baptized person announces God’s plan for human kind and denounces all that is contrary to it. ¹

The great Teresian Carmelite family is present in the world in many forms. The nucleus of this family is the Order of Discalced Carmelites; the friars, the enclosed nuns, the seculars. It is the one Order with the same charism. The Order is nourished by the long tradition of Carmel, expressed in the Rule of Saint Albert and the doctrine of the Carmelite Doctors of the Church and the Order’s other saints.

The present OCDS Constitutions are the fundamental law for its members, present in different regions of the world. For this reason they are characterized by simplicity of structures and moderation in rules concerning the way of life. In this way, within a fundamental unity established by this legislation, there is preserved openness to pluralism in expression demanded by the various social, cultural and ecclesial contexts. To achieve this,

¹ LG 31-35.

particular Statutes may be drawn up to complete and adapt the general laws where permitted in these Constitutions.

I

OUR IDENTITY, VALUES AND COMMITMENT

1. Carmelite Seculars, together with the Friars and Nuns, are sons and daughters of the Order of Our Lady of Mount Carmel and St Teresa of Jesus. As a result, they share the same charism with the religious, each according to their particular state of life. It is the one family with the same spiritual possessions, the same call to holiness (cf. Ep 1:4; 1 P 1:15) and the same apostolic mission. Secular members contribute to the Order the benefits proper to their secular state of life. ²
2. Our membership of the Order goes back to the relationship established between laity and members of religious Orders born in the Middle Ages. Gradually these relationships took on an official character, forming part of the religious Institute and taking part in its charism and spirituality. In light of the Church's new theology of the laity, Seculars live this membership with a clear secular identity.
3. The members of the Secular Order of Discalced Carmelites are faithful members of the Church, ³ called to live "in allegiance to Jesus Christ" ⁴ through "friendship with the One we know loves us" ⁵ and in service to the Church. Under the protection of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, in the biblical tradition of the prophet Elijah and inspired by the teachings of

² LG 31; CL 9

³ CIC 204-205

⁴ Rule 1.

⁵ L 8:5.

St Teresa of Jesus and St John of the Cross, they seek to deepen their Christian commitment received in baptism.

4. The Virgin Mary is present in a special way, most of all as a model of faithfulness in listening to the Lord and in service to Him and to others. Mary is the one who preserved in her heart the life and actions of her Son and meditated on them,⁶ providing for us an example of contemplation. At Cana she counselled to do what the Lord commanded.⁷ Mary is an example of apostolic service. On another occasion, she waited, persevering in prayer with the apostles,⁸ for the coming of the Holy Spirit, thus giving witness to intercessory prayer. She is Mother of the Order. Secular Carmel enjoys her special protection and cultivates a sincere Marian devotion.
5. Elijah represents the prophetic tradition of Carmel and is an inspiration to live in the presence of God, seeking Him in solitude and silence with zeal for God's glory. The Secular Carmelite lives the prophetic dimension of Christian life and Carmelite spirituality by promoting God's law of charity and truth in the world, above all by making themselves the voice for those who cannot, on their own, express this love and this truth.⁹
6. The Rule of Saint Albert is the original expression of the spirituality of Carmel. It was written for the laypeople who gathered on Mount Carmel to live a life dedicated to meditation on the Word of God, under the protection of Our Lady. The following principles of that Rule guide Carmelite life:

⁶ Cf Lk 2:51.

⁷ Cf Jn 2:5.

⁸ Cf Ac 1:14

⁹ Cf 1 K chapters 17-19.

- a) Living in allegiance to Jesus Christ;
- b) Being diligent in meditating on the law of the Lord;
- c) Giving time to spiritual reading;
- d) Participating in the Church's Liturgy, both the Eucharist and the Liturgy of the Hours;
- e) Being concerned for the needs and the good of others in the community;
- f) Arming ourselves with the practice of the virtues, as we live an intense life of faith, hope and charity;
- g) Seeking interior silence and solitude in our life of prayer;
- h) Using prudent discretion in all that we do.

7. The origin of the Discalced Carmel is to be found in St Teresa of Jesus. She lived with profound faith in God's mercy¹⁰ which strengthened her to persevere¹¹ in prayer, humility, love for her brothers and sisters, and love for the Church, leading her to the grace of spiritual matrimony. Her evangelical self-denial, disposition to service and perseverance in the practice of the virtues are a daily guide to living the spiritual life.¹² Her teachings on prayer and the spiritual life are essential to the formation and life of the Secular Order.

8. Saint John of the Cross was the companion of Saint Teresa in the formation of the Discalced Carmelite Order. He inspires the Secular Carmelite to be vigilant in the practice of faith, hope and charity. He guides the Secular Carmelite through the dark night to union with God. In this union with God, the

¹⁰ L 7:18, 38:16.

¹¹ WP 21:2.

¹² IC V: 3:11, VII: 4:6

Secular Carmelite finds the true freedom of the children of God.¹³

9. Taking into account the origins of Carmel and the Teresian charism, the fundamental elements of the vocation of Teresian Secular Carmelites can be summarized as follows:

- a) to live in allegiance to Jesus Christ, supported by the imitation and patronage of the most Blessed Virgin Mary, whose way of life is, for Carmel, a model of being conformed to Christ.
- b) to seek “mysterious union with God” by way of contemplation and apostolic activity, indissolubly joined together, for service to the Church;
- c) to give particular importance to prayer which, nourished by listening to the Word of God and by the liturgy, is conducive to relating with God as a friend, not just in prayer but in daily living. To be committed to this life of prayer demands being nourished by faith, hope and, above all, charity in order to live in the presence and the mystery of the living God;¹⁴
- d) to infuse prayer and life with apostolic zeal in a climate of human and Christian community;
- e) to live evangelical self-denial from a theological perspective;
- f) to give importance to the commitment to evangelization: in the ministry of spirituality as the particular collaboration of the Secular Order, faithful to its Teresian Carmelite identity.

¹³ Cf. Sayings 46; LF 3:78; II A chapter 6, 29:6; Collect of the votive Mass of St John of the Cross.

¹⁴ Maxims and Counsels 40; Letter 12/X/1589: 19.

II

FOLLOWING JESUS IN THE TERESIAN SECULAR CARMEL

10. Christ is the centre of our lives and of Christian experience. Members of the Secular Order are called to live the demands of following Christ in union with Him, by accepting His teachings and devoting themselves to Him. To follow Jesus is to take part in His saving mission of proclaiming the Good News and the establishment of God's Kingdom (Mt 4:18-19). There are various ways of following Jesus: all Christians must follow Him, must make Him the law for their life and be disposed to fulfill three fundamental demands: to place family ties beneath the interests of the Kingdom and Jesus himself (Mt 10:37-39; Lk 14: 25-26); to live in detachment from wealth in order to show that the arrival of the Kingdom does not depend on human means but rather on God's strength and the willingness of the human person before Him (Lk 14:33; to carry the cross of accepting God's will revealed in the mission that He has confided to each person (Lk 14:33; 9:23).

11. Following Jesus as members of the Secular Order is expressed by the promise to strive for evangelical perfection in the spirit of the evangelical counsels of chastity, poverty and obedience and through the beatitudes. By means of this promise the member's baptismal commitment is strengthened for the service of God's plan in the world. This promise is a pledge to pursue personal holiness, which necessarily carries with it a commitment to serving the Church in faithfulness to the Teresian Carmelite charism. The promise is taken before the members of the community, representing the whole Church

and in the presence of the Delegate of the Superior of the Order.

12. By the promise made to the community in the presence of the Superior of the Order or his Delegate, the person becomes a full member of the Secular Order. By this commitment members strive to acquire the necessary training to know the reasons, the content and purpose of the evangelical lifestyle they are undertaking. The promise heightens and enriches the baptismal commitment in Secular Carmelites. This includes those called to married life, both as spouses and as parents. This promise is renewed once a year at Easter time.

The commitment to the promise to live the spirit of the evangelical counsel of chastity

13. The promise of chastity reinforces the commitment to love God above all else, and to love others with the love God has for them.¹⁵ In this promise the Secular Carmelite seeks the freedom to love God and neighbour unselfishly¹⁶ giving witness to the divine intimacy promised by the beatitude “blessed are the pure of heart for they shall see God” (Mt 5:8). The promise of chastity is a commitment to Christian love in its personal and social dimensions in order to create authentic community in the world. By this promise the Secular Carmelite also expresses the conscious desire to respect each person as required by God’s law and one’s state of life, as a single person or married or widowed. This promise does not prevent a change in state of life.

¹⁵ Cf. III A 23:1.

¹⁶ Prec 1 and 6

The commitment to the promise of living the spirit of the evangelical counsel of poverty

14. By the promise of poverty the Secular Carmelite expresses the desire to live in accordance with the Gospel and its values. In evangelical poverty there is a wealth of generosity, self-denial, and interior liberty and a dependence on Him who “Though rich, yet for our sake, became poor” (2 Co 8:9), and who “emptied Himself” (Ph 2:7), to be at the service of His brothers and sisters. The promise of poverty seeks an evangelical use of the goods of this world and of personal talents, as well as the exercise of personal responsibilities in society, in family, and work, confidently placing all in the hands of God. It also implies a commitment to the cause of justice so that the world itself responds to God’s plan. In combination with these, evangelical poverty recognizes personal limitations and surrenders them to God with confidence in His goodness and fidelity.

The commitment to the promise to live the spirit of the evangelical counsel of obedience

15. The promise of obedience is a pledge to live open to the will of God, “in whom we live and move and have our being” (Ac 17:28) imitating Christ who accepted the Father’s will and was “obedient unto death, death on a cross” (Ph 2:8). The promise of obedience is an exercise of faith leading to the search for God’s will in the events and challenges in society and our own personal life. For this reason the Secular Carmelite freely cooperates with those who have responsibility for guiding the community and the Order in discerning and accepting God’s ways: the community’s council, the Provincial and the General.

The commitment to the promise to live the spirit of the beatitudes

16. The beatitudes are a plan of action for life and a way to enter into relationship with the world, neighbours and co-workers, families and friends. By promising to live the beatitudes in daily life, Secular Carmelites seek to give evangelical witness as members of the Church and the Order, and by this witness invite the world to follow Christ: “the Way, the Truth and the Life” (Jn 14:6).

III

WITNESSES TO THE EXPERIENCE OF GOD

17. The vocation to the Teresian Carmel is a commitment to “live a life of allegiance to Jesus Christ”, “pondering the Lord’s law day and night and keeping watch in prayer”.¹⁷ Faithful to this principle of the Rule, St Teresa placed prayer as the foundation and basic exercise of her religious family. For this reason, Secular Carmelites are called to strive to make prayer penetrate their whole existence, in order to walk in the presence of the living God (cf. 1 K 18:14), through the constant exercise of faith, hope and love, in such a way that the whole of their life is a prayer, a search for union with God. The goal will be to achieve the integration of experience of God with the experience of life: to be contemplatives in prayer and the fulfillment of their own mission.
18. Prayer, a dialogue of friendship with God, ought to be nourished by His Word so that this dialogue becomes that, “we speak to him when we pray; we hear him when we read the

¹⁷ Rule 2 and 10

divine saying”.¹⁸ God’s Word will nourish the contemplative experience of Secular Carmelites and their mission in the world. Besides personal contemplation, listening to the Word ought to encourage a contemplation that leads to sharing the experience of God in the Secular Order community. By this means, the Community together seeks to discern God’s ways, maintain a permanent energy of conversion, and live with a renewed hope. The Carmelite Secular will be able to see through events and discover God in everything.

19. Occupying a privileged place in nourishing the prayer life of Secular Carmelites will be the study and spiritual reading of Scripture and the writing of our Saints, particularly those who are Doctors of the Church: St Teresa, St John of the Cross and St Therese of the Child Jesus. The Church’s documents are also food and inspiration for a commitment to follow Jesus.
20. The Carmelite Secular will make sure to have special times set apart for prayer, as times of greater awareness of the Lord’s presence and an interior space for personal and intimate meeting with Him. This will lead to prayer as an attitude of life, that will “always and everywhere recognize God seek his will in every event, see Christ in all people whether they be a relative or a stranger, and make correct judgments about the true meaning and value of temporal things both in themselves and in their relation to mankind's final goal”.¹⁹ Thus they will achieve a union of contemplation and action in history, integrating faith and life, prayer and action, contemplation and Christian commitment.

¹⁸ DV 25; WP 21:4; M 1: 6, 11

¹⁹ AA 4.

21. Carmelite Seculars will commit themselves daily to spending a time in the practice of mental prayer. This is the time to be with God and to strengthen their relationship with Him so that they can be true witnesses to His presence in the world.
22. The way of Christian prayer demands a life of evangelical self-denial (Lk 9:23) in fulfilling one's own vocation and mission, since "prayer and comfortable living are incompatible".²⁰ Carmelite Seculars accept from the viewpoint of faith, hope and love, the work and suffering of each day, family worries, the uncertainty and limitations in human life, sickness, lack of understanding and all that makes up the fabric of our earthly existence. They will strive to make all this, material for their dialogue with God, in order to grow in an attitude of praise and gratitude to the Lord. In order to live truly, simply, freely, humbly and completely confident in the Lord, the Secular Carmelite observes the practices of evangelical self-denial recommended by the Church. Of particular importance are those days and periods in the liturgical calendar that have a penitential character.
23. The personal prayer life of the Carmelite Secular, understood as friendship with God, is also nourished and expressed in the liturgy, an inexhaustible font for the spiritual life. Liturgical prayer enriches personal prayer and this, in its turn, gives a lively expression to liturgical participation. In the Secular Order a special place is given to the liturgy, understood as God's Word celebrated in active hope, after having received it by faith and the commitment to live it in effective love. The Sacraments, especially the Eucharist and Reconciliation, need

²⁰ WP 4:2.

to be lived as signs and instruments of the freeing action of God and as an encounter with the Paschal Christ, present in the ecclesial community. They are grace-giving structures in opposition to the structures for sin in society. Carmelite Seculars strive to discover in liturgical prayer the presence of Christ and the Holy Spirit, living and demanding something of us in everyday life. In the liturgical year, they will experience the mysteries of redemption which inspire collaboration in bringing about God's plan. The Liturgy of the Hours, for its part, brings the Secular Carmelite into communion with the prayer of Jesus and the Church.

24. The value of the sacramental and liturgical life in the Secular Order leads its members to take part in the celebration of the Eucharist, in as far as possible. They will try to recite Morning Prayer and Evening Prayer of the Hours in union with the Church spread through the world. When it is possible they will also recite Night Prayer. Their participation in the sacrament of Reconciliation and the other sacraments of the Church will assist the process of their conversion.

III B

FRATERNAL COMMUNION

- 24 a) The Church, the family of God who is Father, Son and Holy Spirit, is a mystery of communion.²¹ In fact, Jesus came among us to reveal to us this Trinitarian love and the vocation to participate in a communion of love with the Most Holy Trinity; this is something to which every human person created

²¹ Cf. Vatican Council II, *Lumen Gentium*, 4; *Gaudium et spes*, 24; cf. John Paul II, *Christifideles Laici*, 19; *Ratio Institutionis OCDS*, 25; Congregation for the Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, *Congregavit in uno Christi amor*, 8-9.

in God's image and likeness (cf. Gen1:26-27) is called . In the light of this mystery, the true identity and dignity of every human being, and specifically of every member of the Church, is revealed. ²² Being spiritual in nature, the human person grows and matures by being in an authentic relationship with God and with others. ²³

Therefore, the local community of the Secular Order of the Teresian Carmel, a visible sign of the Church and of the Order, ²⁴ is a place to live and promote personal and communal fellowship with God in Christ and in the Spirit and with other brothers and sisters (cf. Rom 8:29) in accordance with the Teresian charism . The person of Christ is at the center of the Community. Members meet regularly in his name (cf. Mt 18:20), drawing inspiration from the group formed by Jesus and the twelve Apostles (cf. Mc 3, 14-16.34-35) ²⁵ as well as the early Christian communities (cf. Acts 2:42, 4, 32-35). They seek to live in accordance with the unity requested by Jesus (Jn 17:20-23) and his commandment to love as He loves them (Jn 13:34). They promise to strive for evangelical perfection ²⁶ in the spirit of the evangelical counsels, of the Beatitudes (Mt 5:1-12) and of the Christian virtues (cf. Col 3:12-17, Phil 2:15), and in the awareness that this reality of communion is an integral part of Carmelite spirituality.

²² John Paul II, *Christifideles Laici*, 8.

²³ Vatican Council II, *Gaudium et spes*, 23; Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, 34; Cf. Benedict XVI, *Caritas in veritate*, 54. Cf. n. 34

²⁴ Cf. *OCDS Constitutions*, 40

²⁵ Cf. St. Teresa of Jesus, *Way of Perfection*, 24,5; 26,1; 27,6. *Way* (Escorial), 20,1..

²⁶ Cf. *OCDS Constitutions*, 11

24 b) St. Teresa of Jesus initiated a new model of community life. Her ideal of community life is based on the certainty of faith that the Risen Jesus is in the midst of the community and that it lives under the protection of the Virgin Mary.²⁷ She is aware that she and her nuns are gathered together to help the Church and to collaborate in its mission.

Relations are marked by the virtues of a love that is genuine, gratuitous, free and unselfish, as well as by detachment and humility. These are fundamental virtues for the spiritual life and they bring peace both internally and externally.²⁸

Teresa is aware of the importance of mutual support on the road of prayer and the importance of friendship with others in the common search for God.²⁹ She also considers as fundamental to such friendship, culture, the human virtues, gentleness, empathy, prudence, discretion, simplicity, kindness, joy and availability, as we seek to "walk in truth before God and people".³⁰

The doctrine of St. John of the Cross points to union with God by means of the theological virtues.³¹ Based on this principle, the Saint also sees the purifying and unifying effect of the theological virtues in sisterly and brotherly relations. This is particularly so in the exercise of love for others: "Where there is no love, put love, and you will draw out love", because

²⁷ Cf. St. Teresa of Jesus, *Life*, 32,11; *Way of Perfection*, 17,7; 1,5; 3,1

²⁸ St. Teresa, *Way*, 4,4. 11; 6-7; cf. *Interior Castle*, V, 3,7-12

²⁹ Cf. St. Teresa of Jesus, *Life*, 15,5; 23,4

³⁰ Cf. St. Teresa of Jesus, *Mansions*, VI, 10,6; cf. *Way* 40,3; 41,7

³¹ Cf. St. John of the Cross, *Ascent of Mount Carmel*, II, 6, 1:1; *Precautions*, 5

that is what the Lord does: by loving us, He makes us capable of loving.³²

- 24 c) A person, loyal to their Christian faith, begins to be part of the Secular Order through the promise made to the Community before the Superior of the Order.³³ With the promise a person is committed to live in communion with the Church, with the Order, with the Province and especially with those who are part of the Community, loving them and encouraging them in the practice of the virtues.³⁴ In smaller communities³⁵ it is possible to establish a true and deep relationship of human and spiritual friendship, as well as mutual support in charity and humility.

St. Teresa appreciates the assistance of another in the spiritual life: love grows where there is respectful dialogue, the purpose of which is to know oneself better so as to be pleasing to God.³⁶ Community meetings take place in a congenial atmosphere of dialogue and sharing.³⁷ Prayer, formation and a joyful atmosphere are essential for deepening friendly relationships and ensuring for everyone mutual support in the daily living-out of the Teresian Carmelite lay vocation in the family, at work and in other social situations. This requires regular and active participation in the life and meetings of the Community. Absences are only allowed for serious and just

³² St. John of the Cross, *Letter 26* to M. Maria of the Incarnation, 6 July 1591; cf. *Letter 30*, to a religious of Segovia; *Ascent*, III, 23,1; *Dark Night*, I, 2,1; 5,2; 7,1; 12,7-8. Cf. *Sayings*, 27

³³ Cf. *OCDS Constitutions*, 12

³⁴ Cf. *Mansions*, VII, 4, 14-15

³⁵ Cf. *OCDS Constitutions*, 58g and the Provincial Statutes on the maximum number of members in a Community

³⁶ Cf. St. Teresa, *Life*, 7,22; 16,7

³⁷ Cf. *OCDS Constitutions*, 18

reasons, evaluated and agreed to with those in charge. The Provincial Statutes are to establish a limit on unjustifiable absences, beyond which, an individual will be considered inactive and liable for dismissal from the Community.

- 24 d) The collective and individual responsibility of the Community for formation ³⁸ requires that each individual member commit to fraternal communion, in the belief that a spirituality of communion ³⁹ plays an essential role in the deepening of the spiritual life and formation process of the members. The Eucharistic, life lived in faith, ⁴⁰ and attentiveness to the Word of God ⁴¹ help create and sustain communion.

The local authority of the Community fulfills its service in faith, love and humility (cf. Mt 20:28, Mk 10:43-45, Jn 13:14). It encourage a familial atmosphere as well as the human and spiritual growth of all the members. It promotes dialogue, personal sacrifice, forgiveness and reconciliation. It avoids all attachment to power and favoritism in the exercise of office.

Prayer for one another, mutual concern that includes instances where there is material need, contact with members who are far away, visiting the sick, the suffering, the elderly, and prayer for the deceased members, are also signs of communion.

The Secular Carmelite also realizes and expresses communion through meeting and solidarity with other

³⁸ *OCDS Ratio*, 28

³⁹ John Paul II, *Novo millennio ineunte*, 43

⁴⁰ Francis, *Lumen fidei*, 40

⁴¹ Benedict XVI, *Verbum Domini*, 84-85. Cf. Id., *Sacramentum Caritatis*, 76. 82. 89

communities, especially within the same Province or Circumscription, as well as through communication and collaboration with the entire Order and family of the Teresian Carmel.

So, with this witness to communion in accordance with the Teresian charism, the Community of Secular Carmel cooperates with the evangelizing mission of the Church in the midst of the world.⁴²

- 24 e) A community that devoutly seeks God, will find the balance between individual rights and the good of the community as a whole. Thus the rights and needs of each of the members must be respected and safeguarded according to the laws of the Church,⁴³ but likewise members must faithfully fulfill their duties in relation to the community, as laid down in the Constitutions.

In order to dismiss⁴⁴ a member for the reasons set out in the Code of Canon Law (public rejection of the Catholic faith, abandonment of ecclesiastical communion, or being under imposed or declared excommunication)⁴⁵ or other provisions in the Provincial Statutes, the Community Council should observe the following procedure: 1) verify the certainty of the facts; 2) warn the member in writing, or, before two witnesses; 3) allow a reasonable time for repentance. If after all this there is no change, it is permitted, after consulting the Provincial, to

⁴² Vatican Council II, *Apostolicam actuositatem*, 13. 19. John Paul II, *Christifideles laici*, 31-32; Cf. Benedict XVI, *Deus caritas est*, 20

⁴³ Cf. *Code of Canon Law*, can. 208-223; 224-231

⁴⁴ Cf. *Code of Canon Law*, can. 308; Cf. *OCDS Constitutions*, 47-e

⁴⁵ *Code of Canon Law*, can. 316§1

proceed with the dismissal. In all cases, the member retains the right to appeal to the competent ecclesiastical authority.⁴⁶

In the case where a member, after a serious evaluation and discernment with the Community Council, comes to the decision to voluntarily leave the Community, the request is to be made in writing to the competent authority of the Community, to whom they are committed by reason of their promises.⁴⁷ The Provincial is to be informed of all of this.

IV

SERVING GOD'S PLAN

25. “The lay faithful, precisely because they are members of the Church, have the vocation and mission of proclaiming the Gospel: they are prepared for this work by the sacraments of Christian Initiation and by the gifts of the Holy Spirit”.⁴⁸ The spirituality of Carmel will awaken in Secular Carmelites a desire for greater apostolic commitment, in becoming aware of all that their call to Carmel implies. Aware of the need the world has of witness to God’s presence,⁴⁹ they will respond to the invitation the Church directs to all Associations of the faithful followers of Christ, committing them to human society by means of active participation in the apostolic goal of the Church’s mission, within the framework of their own charism. As a fruit of this participation in evangelization, Carmelite Seculars will share a renewed taste for prayer, contemplation and the liturgical and sacramental life.

⁴⁶ Id., can. 316§2. Cf. can. 312§2

⁴⁷ Cf. *OCDS Constitutions*, 12

⁴⁸ CL 33

⁴⁹ See AA 4 and 10; CL 16-17, 25, 28-29

26. The vocation to the Secular Order is truly ecclesial. Prayer and apostolate, when they are true, are inseparable. The observation of St Teresa that the purpose of prayer is “the birth of good works”⁵⁰ reminds the Secular Order that graces received ought to have an effect on those who receive them.⁵¹ Individually or as a community and, above all as members of the Church, apostolic activity is the fruit of prayer. Where possible, in collaboration with religious superiors and with the necessary permissions of those in charge, the communities of the Secular Order participate in the apostolate of the Order.
27. The Carmelite Secular is called to live and witness the charism of the Teresian Carmel in the local Church, that portion of the People of God in which the Church of Christ is truly present and acts.⁵² All will try to be living witnesses of God’s presence and accept responsibility for the need the Church has of concrete help within the pastoral concerns in its evangelising mission under the direction of the bishop. For this reason, each one will have an apostolate either collaborating with others in the community or individually.
28. To their apostolic commitment they will bring the wealth of their spirituality in the various forms it takes in evangelization: missions, parishes, houses of prayer, Spirituality Institutes, prayer groups, the ministry of spirituality. With their particular contribution as Secular Carmelites they can offer the Teresian Carmel fresh inspiration for “a renewed spiritual and apostolic dynamism”,⁵³ with

⁵⁰ IC V: 3:11; cf. VII: 3

⁵¹ Cf. AA 2-3

⁵² Cf. *Christus Dominus*, 11; *Apostolicam Actuositatem*, 26; *Christifideles Laici*, 25

⁵³ VC 55

creative fidelity to their mission in the Church. The different apostolic activities of the Secular Order will be specified and evaluated in the Particular Statutes for the various geographical environments.⁵⁴

V

WITH MARY, THE MOTHER OF JESUS

29. In the interior dynamism of following Jesus, Carmel contemplates Mary as Mother and Sister, as “the perfect model of the disciple of the Lord”⁵⁵ and, as such, a model for the life of the members of the Order. The Virgin of the Magnificat proclaims the break with the old order and announces the beginning of a new order in which God casts the mighty down from their thrones and exalts the poor. Mary places herself on the side of the poor and proclaims how God acts in history. For Secular Carmelites, Mary is a model of total commitment to God’s Kingdom. She teaches us to listen to God’s Word in Scripture and in life, to believe in it in every circumstance in order to live its demands. All this she did, without understanding many things; pondering all in her heart (Lk 2:19, 50-51) until light dawned through contemplative prayer.
30. Mary is also an ideal and inspiration for the Secular Carmelite. She lived close to people and their needs, being concerned about them (Lk 1:39-45; Jn 2:1-12; Ac 1:14). She, the “most perfect image of freedom and of the liberation of humanity and of the universe”,⁵⁶ helps us understand the meaning of mission. She, Mother and Sister, who goes before

⁵⁴ OCDS Rule of Life (1979) art. 8

⁵⁵ MC 37

⁵⁶ RM 37

us in a pilgrimage of faith and in following the Lord Jesus, keeps us company so that we may imitate her life hidden in Christ and committed to the service of others.

31. While giving life to Teresian Carmelite spirituality, Mary's presence also shapes its apostolate. As a result, the Secular Carmelite is committed to knowing Mary better, daily, through the Gospel to communicate to others an authentic Marian devotion leading to imitating her virtues. Guided by the outlook of faith, members of the Secular Order will celebrate and promote the liturgical devotion to the Mother of God in light of the mystery of Christ and the Church. They will practice, in faith and love, the devotional exercises in her honour.
- 31 a) In the Teresian Carmel love of Mary, Mother and Queen, is united with love of her spouse Saint Joseph. The Father also gave him, "a just man "(Mt 1:19), guardianship of his Son Jesus Christ in the mystery of the Incarnation.

Following the example of St. Teresa, members can find in St. Joseph a role model for a life of humble adoration and prayerful communion with Jesus, as well as a master of prayer⁵⁷ and silence. Patron of the interior life, he is an example of faith and of being "constantly attentive to God, open to the signs of God's presence and receptive to God's plans".⁵⁸ Being a chaste and faithful spouse, he is the model of a father solicitous in care of the family, and of a responsible laborer who considers his work as an "expression of love".⁵⁹

⁵⁷ Cf. St. Teresa of Jesus, *Life*, 6, 6-8; 33,12. Cf. John Paul II, *Redemptor Custos*, 25, 27.

⁵⁸ Francis, *Homily for the inauguration of his Pontificate*, 19 March 2013

⁵⁹ John Paul II, *Redemptoris Custos*, 22-23

In communion with the Church and the Order, who venerate him as their "provident Protector", ⁶⁰ members of the Secular Order find in Saint Joseph an incomparable protector to whom they can entrust the hopes, the struggles and the work of every day. ⁶¹

VI

FORMATION IN THE SCHOOL OF CARMEL

32. The central object of the process of formation in the Secular Order is to prepare the person to live the charism and spirituality of Carmel in its following of Christ, and in service to mission.
33. With sincere interest in the teachings of the Church and the spirituality of our Carmelite Saints, Carmelite Seculars seek to be men and women who are mature in the practice of faith, hope and love, and in their devotion to the Virgin Mary. They commit themselves to deepening their Christian, ecclesial and Carmelite life. Christian formation is the solid basis of Carmelite and spiritual formation. Through the Catechism of the Catholic Church and Church documents, Secular Carmelites receive the necessary theological foundation.
34. Both initial and ongoing formation in the teachings of Teresa and John of the Cross, help to develop in the Carmelite

⁶⁰ *Constitutions of the OCD Friars*, 52; cf. *Constitutions of the Discalced Carmelites*, 59.

⁶¹ "St. Joseph is the model of those humble ones that Christianity raises up to great destinies;... he is the proof that in order to be a good and genuine follower of Christ, there is no need for great things – it is enough to have the common, simple and human virtues, but they need to be true and authentic." (Paul VI *Insegnamenti* VII, 1969, cited in John Paul II, *Redemptoris Custos*, 24).

Secular a human, Christian and spiritual maturity for service to the Church. Human formation develops the ability for interpersonal dialogue, mutual respect and tolerance, the possibility of being corrected and correcting with serenity, and the capacity to persevere commitments.

35. Carmelite identity is confirmed by formation in the Scriptures and *lectio divina*, in the importance of the liturgy of the Church, especially the Eucharist and the Liturgy of the Hours, and in the spirituality of Carmel, its history, the works of the Order's saints, and formation in prayer and meditation.

Formation for the apostolate is based on the theology of the Church concerning the responsibility of the laity ⁶² and on understanding the role of Seculars in the apostolate of the Order. These help to know the place of the Secular Order in the Church and in Carmel and give a practical way to share the graces received through the vocation to Carmel.

36. The gradual introduction to the life of the Secular Order is structured in the following manner:

- a) A sufficient period of contact with the community for no less than 6 months. The purpose of this stage is that the applicant might become more familiar with the community, the style of life and service to the Church proper to the Secular Order of the Teresian Carmel. This period also give the community the opportunity to make an adequate discernment. The Provincial Statutes will specify this period.
- b) After the initial period of contact, the council of the community may admit the applicant to a more serious

⁶² AA 28-29

period of formation that usually lasts for two years leading up to the first promises. At the beginning of this period of formation, the scapular is given to the applicant. This is an outward symbol of membership in the Order, and the sign that Mary is both Mother and Model on this journey.

- c) At the end of this stage, with the approval of the Council of the community, the applicant may be invited to make the first promises to follow the evangelical counsels and to live in the spirit of the beatitudes for a period of three years.
- d) In the last three years of initial formation there is a deeper study of prayer, the Scriptures, the Documents of the Church, the Saints of the Order and formation in the apostolate of the Order. At the end of these three years the applicant may be invited by the Council to make the Definitive Promises to live the evangelical counsels and the spirit of the Beatitudes for life.

VII

ORGANIZATION AND GOVERNMENT

37. The Secular Order of Our Lady of Mount Carmel and Saint Teresa of Jesus is an association of the faithful and an integral part of the Discalced Carmelite Order. It is essentially lay in character, with the welcome participation of diocesan clergy.

⁶³

38. The friars and nuns of the Teresian Carmel consider the lay community of Secular Carmel an enrichment to their consecrated life. Through mutual interaction the friars and

⁶³ CIC 298, 301

nuns wish to learn from the Secular Carmelites to recognize the signs of the times together with them. For this reason, it will be arranged that representatives of the Secular Order are present when the apostolic service of the Order is planned in a geographical area, at a local or provincial level, or when serious study is made on the situation in the Church or in society.

39. All of Christ's faithful have the right to make vows.⁶⁴ With the consent of the Council of the community and the permission of the Provincial, a member of the Secular Order may make vows of obedience and chastity in the presence of the community. These vows are strictly personal and do not create a separate category of membership. They suppose a greater commitment of fidelity to the evangelical life but do not transform those who make them into juridically recognized consecrated people as in Institutes of consecrated life. Those who make vows in the Secular Order continue to be lay persons in all juridical effects.
40. The Secular Order is basically structured on the local community as a visible sign of the Church. At the Provincial level and in the local communities, the Secular Order enjoys juridical personality.⁶⁵
41. The Secular Order is juridically dependent on the Discalced Carmelite Friars.⁶⁶ The Superior General establishes the local communities and makes pastoral visitations. He may dispense, in particular cases from the Constitutions and local statutes and can grant juridical exceptions. He has the authority to resolve

⁶⁴ Ritual, Instruction: 9; 30-49

⁶⁵ CIC 301, 303-306, 313

⁶⁶ CIC 305, 311-315

cases which are not foreseen by this legislation and which cannot be resolved by local authorities. A general Delegate assists the Superior General. His responsibility is to further relations between the Religious and the Seculars and to maintain contact with the Provincial Delegates and Assistants to each community to insure the purpose and well-being of the Secular Order.

42. The General Definitory of the Order approves the regional⁶⁷ and provincial statutes of the Secular Order.⁶⁸
43. The Provincial Superior, usually aided by the Provincial Delegate, is the Superior of the Secular Order within his territory.⁶⁹ He is responsible for the well-being of the Secular Order within the territory of his jurisdiction. He is to make visitations of the communities in his jurisdiction and, after consultation with the Council, appoint a Spiritual Assistant for communities.⁷⁰ In case of disputes, appeal will be made in the first instance to the Provincial.
44. The Spiritual Assistant to each community is usually a friar of the Order. His duty is to give spiritual aid to the community so that its members may be guided in their vocation and may correspond with it as perfectly as possible. He will also endeavour to promote solidarity between the secular community and the friars and nuns of the Order. At the invitation of the Council he may attend meetings of the Council, without right to vote. At the different stages of

⁶⁷ “Regional” refers to nations or a geographical territory of more than one province of the friars.

⁶⁸ CIC 307 '1; 314

⁶⁹ CIC 328-329. Constitutions of the Discalced Carmelite Friars 103, Norms 56

⁷⁰ CIC 317

formation of the candidates, he will be available to interview them. The Council may consult him about the suitability of the candidate to assume the responsibility of the vocation to the Secular Order. He will support the formation of the community by his availability to the director of formation. However, he may not be the director of formation. The Spiritual Assistant must be well-versed in Carmelite spirituality and well-informed in the Church's teaching concerning the role of lay people in the Church.

45. Only the General of the Order for those territories where there are no friars, or the Provincial within his territory, may appoint as Assistant one who is not a friar of the Order, always with the consent of the candidate's own superior. The General Delegate or the Provincial Delegate will assist in this appointment by interviewing the candidate. They will look for the same qualities as mentioned in number 44 of these norms.
46. The Council, composed of the President and three Councilors and the Director of Formation, constitutes the immediate authority of the community. The primary responsibility of the Council is the formation and Christian and Carmelite maturing of the members of the community.
47. The Council has the authority:
 - a) to admit candidates to formation, the Promises, and the Vows;
 - b) to reduce, for adequate reasons, the period of formation before temporary Promises, with the permission of the Provincial;
 - c) to convene the community for the triennial elections;

- d) to replace, for a serious reason, a member of the Council itself;⁷¹
- e) to dismiss a member of the community, should this be necessary, after consulting the Provincial;⁷²
- f) to receive a member transferring from another community;
- g) if a matter should arise that is outside the competence of the Council, it is the obligation of the President to bring it to the attention of the Provincial.

The Council meets frequently and always when necessary in reference to taking care of formation programs and the growth of their own community.

- 48. The General Superior, the Provincial Superior and the Council of the community are the legitimate superiors of the Secular Order.
- 49. For the establishment of a new community it is necessary to present to the General Secretary of the Secular Order the following documents:
 - a) a list of the current members, at least 10 members are required to form a community, two of whom must have made definitive promises;
 - b) a letter from the Provincial Delegate requesting the establishment of the community;
 - c) the permission of the Ordinary of the Diocese in writing;⁷³
 - d) the title of the community;
 - e) the place of the community meeting.

⁷¹ CIC 318

⁷² CIC 308 and 316

⁷³ CIC 312 '2

50. Every three years, each local community of the Secular Order elects its President and three Councilors.⁷⁴ These four officers, after consulting the Assistant, elect the Director of Formation from among those who have made definitive promises. The Council then names a Secretary and a Treasurer. The procedure for the elections is to be determined by the Provincial Statutes, respecting the complete liberty of the electors, the preferences of the majority of the members. For the President to be re-elected to a third term as President, the permission of the Provincial Superior is required.
51. The President, elected from among those who have made final promises, has the duty to convoke and preside over the meetings of the community. He should show fraternal service to all the members of the community; foster a spirit of Christian and Carmelite affability, being careful to avoid any demonstration of preference for some members over others; coordinate contacts with those members of the community who because of age, illness, distance or other reasons, are not able to attend meetings; aid the Director of Formation and Spiritual Assistant in carrying out their responsibilities; in their absence, but only temporarily, he may take their place or designate another to do so from among those who have made definitive promises.
52. The responsibility of the three Councilors is to form, with the President, the government of the community and to support the director of formation. Generally they are community members with definitive promises. In particular

⁷⁴ CIC 309

circumstances, members with first promises can serve as councilors.

53. The Director of Formation, elected by the Council from among those who have made definitive promises, has the responsibility of preparing the candidates for first and definitive promises. The Director works in collaboration with the Assistant and with the support of the President. In the absence of the President, the Director of Formation is his substitute for any function.
54. The Secretary of the Council has the responsibility of keeping up-to-date the register of the community, recording the elections, admissions, Promises and dismissals. The Secretary is to present the register to the Council when it meets and to the community at the time of the elections. The Secretary attends the Council meetings and records the minutes of the meeting, without the right to vote.
55. The duty of the Treasurer is to take charge of the administration of the funds of the community. The Treasurer is to present a report of the funds to the Council every six months, to the community and the Provincial, or Superior of the Circumscription, once a year.⁷⁵ The local statutes are to determine how the community attends to the needs of the poor.
56. Members of the Secular Order, who for reasons of distance, age, or illness cannot participate in the regular meetings of a community, remain members of the Secular Order and, under the authority of the Provincial Delegate, are to be associated to a particular community. It is the responsibility of the President of the community to establish contact with those members and

⁷⁵ CIC 319

the responsibility of these members to maintain contact with the community.

57. Where there is an organized circumscription of the friars of the Order, the Secular Order is to form a Provincial Council to assist one another better in formation and the apostolate, but not for intervening in the government of the local communities. The President of the Provincial Council ought to be a member of the Secular Order with definitive promises. The Provincial Council must submit its statutes to the General Definitory for approval.

58. The Provincial statutes are to determine the following:

- a) the development of an adequate program of formation;
- b) the acceptance and formation of those new members who do not live near an established community; in every case these new candidates must be identified with and formed by an established community. They are considered members of that community;
- c) the procedure for elections and the responsibilities of the three councilors;
- d) the remembrances for the deceased members of the community;
- e) the circumstances and the conditions for taking vows;
- f) the minimum and maximum age to accept new members;
- g) the maximum number of members of a community before dividing the community to form another;
- h) the coordination of apostolic endeavours within the community or Province;
- i) the form and use of the external signs of membership in the Secular Order;

- j) the practices of mortification and expressions of devotion to the Blessed Mother, St. Joseph and our Carmelite Saints.
59. If a Secular Order community does not belong to any particular Province, the community is to establish its own statutes to determine the above matters. This community submits its statutes to the General Definitory for approval.
60. Other structures may be introduced at national levels where there is more than one Province, or at an international level, should they be thought useful or necessary for formation, coordination of apostolates of the Order, and for organizing Congresses. They do not, however, have any jurisdictional authority. These regional councils are to submit their statutes to the General Definitory for approval.

EPILOGUE

The Constitutions of the Secular Order were drawn up to strengthen the life purpose of its members, who form part of the Order of the Teresian Carmel. They are called to “to testify how the Christian faith constitutes the only fully valid response.....to the problems and hopes that life poses to every person and society.”⁷⁶ This they fulfill as Carmelite Seculars if, beginning with a commitment to contemplation, they succeed in giving daily witness in their family and social life to “an integrated approach to life that is fully brought about by the inspiration and strength of the Gospel.”⁷⁷ As Secular Carmelites, sons and daughters of Teresa of Jesus and John of the Cross, they are called to “stand before the world as a witness to the resurrection and life of the Lord Jesus and a symbol of the living God,”⁷⁸ by means of a life of prayer, of service to evangelization and by means of the witness of a Christian and Carmelite community. “All the laity as a community and each one according to ability must nourish the world with spiritual fruits (cf. Gal 5:22). They must diffuse in the world that spirit which animates the poor, the meek, the peace makers “whom the Lord in the Gospel proclaimed as blessed (cf. Mt 5:3-9). In a word, Christians (and Carmelites) must be to the world what the soul is to the body.”⁷⁹

⁷⁶ CL 34

⁷⁷ CL 34

⁷⁸ LG 38

⁷⁹ LG 38

Abbreviations Key

AA – Apostolicam actuositatem

Ac – Acts of the Apostles

CIC – Codex Iuris Canonici

CL – Christifideles laici

DV – Dei verbum

IC –Interior Castle

Jn –Gospel of John

K –Book of Kings

L –The Book of her Life

Letter –Letters of St. John of the Cross

LF –Living Flame of Love

Lk –Gospel of Luke

M –Meditations on the Song of Songs

MC – Marialis cultus

Prec. –Precautions

RM – Redemptoris mater

Rule –Albert’s Rule

Sayings –Sayings of Light and Love

VC – Vita consecrata

WP –Way of Perfection



Definitorium Generale O.C.D.
in sessione 41^a, die 10 decembris 2016

APPROBAVIT

*Novum textum Statutorum
Ordinis Sæcularis Carmelitarum Discalceatorum
Provinciae Californiæ-Arizonæ*

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OCDS Provincial Statutes for the California-Arizona Province of St. Joseph

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Sec. I: Our Identity, Values and Commitment **(cf. Const. #1 - #9)**

1. Members of the Secular Order of Our Lady of Mount Carmel and Saint Teresa of Jesus are faithful members of the Church who are called to live “in allegiance to Jesus Christ” [cf. *Const.* #3]. The fundamental elements of the vocation of Teresian Secular Carmelites can be summarized as follows:
 - a) to live in allegiance to Jesus Christ, supported by the imitation and patronage of the most Blessed Virgin Mary, whose way of life is a model of being conformed to Christ.
 - b) to seek union with God through contemplation and apostolic activity, indissolubly joined together, for service to the Church and the world.
 - c) to let prayer penetrate their entire daily existence, nourished by the Word of God, by the Eucharistic Liturgy, and the Liturgy of the Hours, in order to walk continually in God’s presence [cf. *Const.* 17].
 - d) to spend at least one half-hour daily in the practice of mental prayer in an atmosphere of interior silence and solitude [cf. *Const.* #21]. Mental prayer, as practiced in *lectio divina*, with its four aspects of spiritual reading, reflection, conversation with God, and contemplation, is the foundation of Teresian prayer [cf. *Const.* #35; *Formation Guidelines*, pp. 156A-1,2].
 - e) to develop the gifts of the Holy Spirit through the constant exercise of the virtues, especially the theological virtues of faith, hope, and above all charity, continually striving toward union with God [cf. *Const.* #17].
 - f) to live evangelical self-denial in an ecclesial perspective [CCC #873, #900, #929].
 - g) to be committed to evangelization, always faithful to our Teresian Carmelite identity [cf. *Const.* #6 & #9].

2. The value of the sacramental and liturgical life in the Secular Order leads its members to:
 - a) take part in the daily celebration of the Eucharist, insofar as possible. Those who are unable to participate in the celebration of daily Mass are encouraged to pray and reflect on the daily Scripture readings of the Mass.
 - b) have a great esteem for the Sacrament of Reconciliation and to avail of it frequently. [cf. *Const.* #23 & #24].
 - c) “try to recite Morning and Evening Prayer of the [Liturgy of] the Hours in union with the Church throughout the world. When it is possible they will also recite Night Prayer” [cf. *Const.* #24].
 - d) make a daily examination of conscience. Ideally this is done before mental prayer and/or at the beginning of Night Prayer.
3. Secular Carmelites will endeavor daily to nurture their prayer life through study and spiritual reading, particularly the Gospels and the writings of our Carmelite Saints.
4. In order to deepen their spiritual life, members are encouraged to participate in an annual Carmelite Retreat [cf. *Const.* #18 & #21].

Sec. II: The Apostolate (cf. Const. #25 - #28)

1. The primary apostolate of the Teresian Carmel is prayer. Its mission is the sharing of Teresian Carmelite spirituality. Carmelite Seculars participate in this apostolate according to their state in life [cf. *Const.* #28].
2. In John 21:15-19, Jesus bids Peter, ...if he loves Him, ...to feed His lambs and feed His sheep to the point of laying down his life for them. Because we love Christ, we must express that love outwardly in service to others, leading them to Christ. This is the basis for our apostolate.
3. The Carmelite Secular is called to live and witness to the charism of the Teresian Carmel in the local Church. For

this reason, each one will have an apostolate either individually or collaborating with others in the Community/Group [cf. *Const.* #27].

4. Through apostolic endeavors resulting from contemplative prayer, Carmelite Seculars demonstrate how it is possible to seek intimate union with God while living amidst worldly concerns and responsibilities, as Saint Teresa explains, “*let us desire and be occupied in prayer not for the sake of our enjoyment but so as to have this strength to serve.*” [*Interior Castle*, VII, 4,12] This prayer will bear fruit and will flow into their Carmelite Communities, the local Church, family, and workplace whenever and wherever the opportunity presents itself.
5. Apostolic activity keeps in mind a sensitivity to each Community’s interests, abilities, and talents, as well as the physical and financial capabilities of its members working together. “*Each Christian and every community must discern the path that the Lord points out, but all of us are asked to obey His call to go forth from our own comfort zone in order to reach all the ‘peripheries’ in need of the light of the Gospel*” [*Joy of the Gospel*, #20].
6. The apostolate takes Carmelite spirituality into the world. Each O.C.D.S. Community/Group will have an apostolate in order to share Carmelite spirituality with others. Examples are sponsoring a parish day of recollection, sharing O.C.D.S. materials, giving a presentation on prayer and our Saints at parish and diocesan events, and organizing a Carmelite book study.
7. Once a year, in February, a report of the Community’s apostolic activity shall be sent to the Provincial Council.

8. Formation for the apostolate, now a requirement of the formation program, is based upon the theology of the Church concerning the responsibility of the laity and an understanding of the role of Seculars in the apostolate of the Order [cf. *Const.* #35, #36d, *Apostolicam actuositatem* (Decree on the Apostolate of Lay People) and *Christifideles laici* (“The Vocation and the Mission of the Lay Faithful in the Church and in the World”)].

Sec. III: Particular Acts of Devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary, Our Lady of Mount Carmel (cf. *Const.* #4, #29, #30 & #31)

1. The Virgin Mary is present in a special way, most of all as a model of faithfulness in listening to the Lord and in service to Him and to others [cf. *Const.* #4]. For Secular Carmelites, Mary is a model of obedience and total commitment to God’s Kingdom. She teaches us to listen to God’s Word in Scripture and in life, and to believe in it in every circumstance in order to live its demands. All this she did, without understanding many things, guided solely by faith, pondering all in her heart (Lk 2:19, 50-51) until light dawned through contemplative prayer [cf. *Const.* #29]. She is Mother, Sister and Queen, who goes before us in a pilgrimage of faith and in following the Lord Jesus, keeping us company so that we may imitate her life hidden in Christ and committed to the service of others [cf. *Const.* #30]. The purpose of all our devotion to Mary is always to lead us to Christ. The Secular Order recognizes the value of pondering and praying:
 - a) the Rosary;
 - b) the Litany of Loreto;
 - c) the Angelus;
 - d) and other such devotions recommended by the Church [cf. Pope Paul VI, Apostolic Exhortation, *Marialis Cultus*, (“For the Right Ordering and Development of Devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary”), Feb. 2, 1974].

2. The Secular Carmelite is committed to knowing Mary through the daily practice of devotion exercised through faith and love in her honor [cf. *Const.* #31].
3. The Secular Order strives to live the Marian spirit, embodied in the latest documentation on the scapular [cf. *The Scapular of Our Lady of Mount Carmel: Catechesis and Ritual* prepared under the direction of the North American Provincials of the Carmelite Order, October 30, 2000].

Sec. IV: Devotion to St. Joseph (cf. Const. #31a)

1. The same aura of silence that envelops everything about St. Joseph, himself a lay person and model for Carmelite Seculars, also shrouds his work as a carpenter in the house of Nazareth. It is a silence that reveals in a special way the inner portrait of the man. The Gospels speak exclusively of what he “did.” Still, they allow us to discover in his “actions” — shrouded in silence as they are — an aura of deep contemplation. He was in daily contact with the mystery “hidden from ages past,” and which “dwelt” under his roof. This explains, for example, why St. Teresa of Jesus, the great reformer of the Carmelites, promoted the renewal of veneration to St. Joseph in the Western Church [cf. Pope John-Paul II, Apostolic Exhortation, *Redemptoris Custos*, (“On the Person and Mission of Saint Joseph In the Life of Christ and of the Church”), Aug. 15, 1989, #25].
2. As sons and daughters of St. Teresa, we honor St. Joseph as the patron of the Universal Church and the special patron and protector of our Order, as well as the patron of our Province. He is the model of attentive service to Christ, to Mary, and to the Church, and is also the “master of prayer” proposed to us by St. Teresa (Life, 6, 6-8).

Sec. V: The Secular Order Habit **(cf. Const. #31 & #36b)**

1. The large ceremonial brown scapular is given as the habit of the Secular Order at the time of admission to formation. Each candidate is “clothed” by the Spiritual Assistant assisted by the Director of Formation. The large scapular is the “*signum habitus*” or sign of the habit of Our Lady of Mount Carmel.
2. The large scapular shall be made of brown cloth and a maximum of 7x9 inches in size. It shall be plain. (Pins or badges should not be attached). [cf. *The Scapular of Our Lady of Mount Carmel: Catechesis and Ritual*, prepared under the direction of the North American Provincials of the Carmelite Order, October 30, 2000, p. 2].
3. A small brown scapular, or scapular medal, is worn internally for everyday use.
4. The large scapular may be worn at Mass on solemnities or feasts of the Discalced Carmelite Order and at Carmelite meetings and events. With permission of the local Community/Group Council, it may also be worn at diocesan church functions where members attend as a group, giving visible witness to the Secular Order.
5. If a member wishes to be buried wearing the large scapular externally, prior arrangements should be made with the member’s family or closest associates [cf. *Provincial Statutes*, Sec. VIII, para. 7b].

Sec. VI: Days of Fast and Abstinence (cf. Const. #22)

Fast and abstinence:

- a) In addition to the days of fasting and abstinence proper to the Church in the United States and in response to the encouragement of our Bishops "*to prepare for each Church festival by a day of particular self-denial, penitential prayer and fasting*"¹ and to our Carmelite traditions, our members, unless excused by reason of illness or age, will fast on the vigils of the following feast days:
 - 1) Solemnity of St. Joseph (March 19)
 - 2) Our Blessed Lady of Mount Carmel (July 16)
 - 3) The Prophet Elijah (July 20)
 - 4) St. Therese of the Child Jesus and the Holy Face (October 1)
 - 5) Holy Mother St. Teresa of Jesus (October 15)
 - 6) All the Saints of the Order (November 14)
 - 7) Holy Father St. John of the Cross (December 14)
- b) For sufficient reason, the above special fast days may be anticipated. Anticipation should never involve fasting on Sundays or Holy Days [cf. Canon Law 1249-1253].

¹ cf. *National Conference of Catholic Bishops, Pastoral Statement "Penitent-Discipline in the United States."* Washington, D.C., 1966.

Sec. VII: The Sick and Dying

Special attention should be given to members who become ill, who are elderly, and especially those who are dying. The President/Group Leader shall encourage the membership to commend the sick person(s) in their daily prayers and to have someone visit them.

Sec. VIII: Prayers for Deceased Members

1. Anyone learning of the death of a member shall immediately ensure that someone on the Council is informed.
2. The President/Group Leader will inform the entire Community/Group and provide information regarding funeral arrangements.
3. The Community/Group:
 - a) will have a Mass offered for the deceased member(s).
 - b) at its next meeting it should also choose from the following.
 - 1) attend Mass together.
 - 2) pray the Liturgy of the Hours - Morning or Evening Prayer.
 - 3) recite the Rosary or other suitable prayers.
4. Each member of the Community/Group will if possible:
 - a) attend the vigil and/or funeral Mass.
 - b) participate in a Mass and receive Holy Communion for the deceased.
 - c) pray the Liturgy of the Hours Office for the Dead (Morning and Evening Prayer).
5. Carmelite Seculars should remember the deceased members of the entire Order in their daily prayers.

6. Each Community/Group shall maintain a record of its deceased members [cf. *Const.* #54].
7. Members are encouraged to inform their families regarding:
 - a) their wish to have the Secular Carmelites notified of their death.
 - b) burial in the large Brown Ceremonial Scapular.
 - c) having the initials “O.C.D.S.” included on their headstone.

Sec. IX: The Requirements for Admission to the Secular Order (cf. *Const.* #36)

1. Those members of the Church, lay person or cleric, who are called by the Lord, are free from impediments, and conscientiously accept this special vocation and the Constitutions offered by the Secular Order may be admitted to the Secular Order in accordance with the provisions of *Const.* #36 [cf. *Formation Guidelines*, “*Impediments to Joining the Secular Order*” by Doreen Glynn Pawski, O.C.D.S.].
2. The screening process shall include certificates of Baptism, Confirmation, Marriage, and letters clearing impediments [cf. *Provincial Statutes* Sec. XIX, #6b].
3. A Candidate for admission to formation in the Secular Order must be at least eighteen years of age. Experience demonstrates there is no upper age limit to God’s call to the special vocation of being a Secular Carmelite, therefore none is prescribed so long as the potential vocation appears to be valid. God always grants, along with a vocation, the necessary means to live it out without presenting a burden to the Community.

4. Sufficient contact with a Community/Group is understood to entail an Aspirant's attendance at the meetings of the Community/Group for not less than one full year. If it is in the best interest of the Aspirant, this period may be extended for another year; but in no case longer than two years.
5. Visitors are welcome to the meeting. It is always recommended that the President or Director of Formation speak with them beforehand. During this conversation, they will be introduced to the Carmelite Secular way of life and what is required. The portion of the meeting-day they are invited to attend will be outlined along with the expectations for participation. There will be someone assigned to accompany them through the meeting, unless they have already come with a member. Visitors can benefit from continuing attendance at meetings while waiting for an Aspirancy class to begin. During this period, visitors may have the option of attending a formation class as an observer, at the discretion of the Council. They should not attend the business meeting while confidential matters, such as the treasurer's report are discussed. Once the Council has approved the visitor to begin an Aspirant's formation class, they must either join the class or no longer come to meetings.

Sec. X: The Period of Formation (Cf. Const. #36)

1. At the time of admittance into Formation, a simple title of devotion may be added to one's baptismal name. The title must be approved by the Council. It may only be used when reciting the promise or vows at Community/Group ceremonies. "Sister" or "Brother" are never to be used. For a good reason, the title of devotion may be changed with the approval of the Council.
2. A person becomes a member of the Community/Group at the reception of the scapular in the Rite of Admission.

3. There are two periods of initial formation. Each stage of formation concludes with a face-to-face interview of the candidate by the Council to discern the member's progress. For either stage, a one-year extension may be granted by the Council if it is determined to be in the best interest of the candidate.
4. The first period of initial formation is the two years before making the Temporary Promise. With the Temporary Promise, a person is a member of the Discalced Carmelite Order. Then "O.C.D.S." may be added to one's name.
5. The second period of initial formation is the three years of living the Temporary Promise before making the Definitive Promise. An extension granted by the Council at this stage requires renewing the Temporary Promise for one year. The ceremony may take place privately in the presence of a representative of the Council and the priest with delegated faculties.
6. Ongoing Formation is the responsibility of the Council together with the definitively professed members in accordance with the *Formation Guidelines* [cf. *Const.* #34]. The Council retains the responsibility for formation of all its members, including those who have made vows. [cf. *Const.* #34, 39 and 46, *Formation Guidelines* p. 22].
7. Leave of absence
 - a) The term "leave of absence" means that an active member, who has made at least the Temporary Promise, but is temporarily unable to attend meetings regularly, may receive permission from the Council to be released from meeting attendance for up to one year. However, the member must keep in touch by personal contact, phone, email, letter, etc. with the member of the local Community/Group designated by the Council for this purpose.

- b) If the Temporary Promise would expire during the leave of absence, a date must be scheduled for its renewal.
- c) Professed members returning from a leave of absence are required to perform a “year of discernment” for full reintegration into the Community. This begins with an interview with the Council where the discernment and formation requirements will be identified. Another interview at the end of that year will be required for the Council’s evaluation and decision regarding reintegration into the Community.
- d) A member in the Temporary Promise resumes formation at the stage when the leave of absence began. If the leave began in the middle of a formation year, the person would begin that formation year again.

Sec. XI: Formation Guidelines

1. The *O.C.D.S. Formation Guidelines for the California-Arizona Province of St. Joseph* is the official formation program for our Province.
2. All professed members shall be provided with a copy of the *Formation Guidelines*. At the discretion of the Community/Group Council, the *Formation Guidelines* may also be distributed to candidates preparing for the Temporary Promise.
3. The O.C.D.S. Provincial Council is authorized to revise the *Formation Guidelines* as deemed necessary under *Const. #57* and *#58a* with the approval of the General Definitory.

Sec. XII: Serious Reasons for Shortening Initial Formation Periods (cf. Const. #47b and Provincial Statutes, Sec. VII)

There may be occasions when it becomes necessary to consider shortening one or both periods of initial formation. An example would be a terminally ill person desiring to make the Definitive Promise. In every case the local Council must approve this exception, and permission must be given by the Provincial Delegate. Similarly, a person who has already been approved to begin the year of discernment for vows, but who in the meantime has become terminally ill, may make vows early.

Sec. XIII: Organization and Life

1. O.C.D.S. Communities, Groups, and Study Groups are a local manifestation of the entire Teresian Carmelite Family.
2. The local Community/Group shall meet once a month exercising fraternal charity for one another. The monthly meeting should include formation, a conference by the Spiritual Assistant, quiet prayer, the Liturgy of the Hours, devotion to Mary, time for socializing, and business as necessary. Ideally, the meeting should be about four hours in length, and never be less than three hours.
3. Because communal life is central to the Teresian Carmelite charism, attendance at the monthly meetings is required [cf. Const. #24c]. Every Community/Group will keep its own written attendance record. Sometimes there are unavoidable demands on the secular state of life that prevent a member from being present. For Communities and Groups, a minimum of nine out of twelve meetings, or at least 75% attendance every year, is required to progress to the next level of formation. [cf. *Const. #24c; Provincial Statutes* Sec. X, para. 2 & 4]. Similarly, a minimum of nine out of twelve meetings, or at least 75% attendance prior to the election, is required for voting within a Community/Group or serving on the Council.

The Council may allow reasonable exceptions. Lack of regular attendance without excuse or notification is a negative indication of a vocation.

4. Extended members:

- a) Are members of a particular Community/Group who, for reasons of distance, age, illness, or other approved circumstances, cannot participate in the regular meetings. They remain active members of the Secular Order under the authority of the local Council.
- b) It is the responsibility of the Community/Group to maintain contact with the Extended members (i.e., meeting minutes, newsletters, prayer requests, etc) and it is the responsibility of the Extended members to maintain contact with the Community/Group [cf. *Const. #56*].
- c) Extended members are invited to return to regular attendance if the reason for becoming extended is resolved. Extended members who move close to another Community/Group are encouraged to seek a transfer to that Community/Group.

5. Inactive members:

- a) Are members of the Secular Order who have no further obligation to their Community, Group or Study Group, and their Community, Group or Study Group has no further obligation to them.
- b) A Council may determine that a member should become inactive as a result of lack of attendance or for a disciplinary measure. The Provincial Delegate should always be consulted. When it is due to lack of attendance, the following steps are required:
 - 1) The local Council sends a “first letter” to a member who has been absent for a year with no communication to the Council. The “first letter” is sent to encourage the member to return to regular contact with the Community/Group.

- 2) If there is no response after two months, a “second letter” is sent informing the member that, if there is no response within two months, the Council will understand that the person no longer wants to be a part of the Community/Group. The Provincial Delegate must be consulted. [cf. *Const.* #47e].
 - 3) If there is no response after two months from the “second letter”, then the Council will send a formal letter stating that the member will be removed from the active roster and placed on the Inactive list.
 - c) If an Inactive member petitions the Council for possible re-admission as an active member of the Community/Group, and the Council agrees, the Council will send the petition to the Provincial Delegate for approval. If he is favorable to the request, a “year of discernment” will be required for reintegration into the Community/Group. This begins with an interview with the Council, during which the member’s discernment and formation requirements will be identified. Another interview at the end of that year will be required for the Council’s evaluation and decision regarding full reintegration into the Community/Group.
 - d) If an Inactive member petitions for membership in another Community/Group as an Active member, the petitioned Community/Group must consult the prior Community/Group and send the prior Community/Group’s recommendation with the petition to the Provincial Delegate for approval. With the Provincial Delegate’s approval, the normal transfer procedure is followed (cf. *Provincial Statutes*, Sec. XXIII).
6. For serious reasons, if a member desires to be released from his/her promise, he/she must petition the local Council with a written letter stating the reasons. The local Council will contact the Provincial Delegate to make the formal request. The Provincial Delegate will review the petition and if approved will have a formal letter sent to the member from the Central Office releasing him/her of their Promise. A

copy will also be sent to the local Council for the permanent record.

7. The size of a Community has an impact on Community life and should not become too large. When a Community does become too large, it may begin communication with the Provincial Delegate to divide and form a new foundation. [cf. *Provincial Statutes*, Sec. XXII].

Sec. XIV: Conflict Resolution **(cf. Const. Preface, #6, #24, #51)**

All O.C.D.S. members by their vocation must demonstrate fraternal charity in the spirit of the Gospel (Mt 18:15-20), both in care and service to all the members of the Community/Group. They are to foster a spirit of Christian and Carmelite affability, being careful to avoid any undue preference for some members over others. They are to provide support and guidance with great kindness and patience (II Tim 4:2), especially to any member suffering personal difficulties.

- a) Although it is normal that disagreements and conflicts may arise, it is encouraged that they be expressed with the fruits of the Spirit, “*love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control*” (Gal 5:22-23). Disagreements unrelated to the Community/Group or our Constitutions and Statutes should not be addressed at Community/Group meetings.
- b) Community/Group life and interaction is under the authority of the local Council. It is the duty of the Council to swiftly identify and resolve any issues that may potentially disrupt or negatively affect the Community/Group. Any member who recognizes such an issue is encouraged to discretely bring it to the Council’s attention that they may facilitate a resolution.
- c) In the Gospel, Our Lord outlines the appropriate course to resolve conflict. It begins with a request for the

conflicting parties to facilitate a dialogue in private to resolve the issue on their own, “*go and tell him his fault between you and him alone*” (Mt 18:15).

- d) If this has already been tried and failed, or if either side of the conflict is reluctant to do so, then it progresses to a discussion of the matter with, “*one or two others...that every fact may be established*” (Mt 18:16). In other words, it comes under the jurisdiction of the local Council to mediate a resolution. The conflicting parties will each submit their understanding of the exact issue in writing, summarizing to no more than two or three main points.
- e) The local Council should meet as soon as possible to explore the issue as appropriate to ascertain the whole truth, and to resolve the issue judiciously. The process should consist of conversations with all involved allowing each to express their viewpoint and their desired outcome. It may also require seeking the help and advice of the Spiritual Assistant or O.C.D.S. Provincial Council as appropriate, providing them with the written complaints and notes that have been prepared. Great care must be exercised to avoid rash judgment or breaking confidentiality which may result in damage to the good name and reputation of persons.
- f) In the case that a conflict involves the President or a Council member, the same process shall be applied: The Council shall make a decision, but not in the presence of the conflicting parties and the Council member involved will not be allowed a vote on the conflicted issue.
- g) In case the complaint is against the local Council itself, or is an appeal regarding the Council’s decision, the knowledgeable members of the Community/Group regarding the issue should seek a dialogue with the Council members to clarify matters in dispute. If such a dialogue fails, the same knowledgeable members should submit a written report including all previous documentation to the O.C.D.S. Provincial Council. It will discreetly review the case, and report its findings to the Provincial Delegate for a decision.

- h) In some cases, the Provincial Superior may need to intervene (cf. Const. 48, CCL 305§1).
- i) No one who has been legitimately enrolled may be dismissed from an association except for a just cause in accord with the norm of law and the statutes (CCL 308; cf. *Const. #47e*).

Sec. XV: Registers (cf. Const. #54)

1. It is essential to keep records for various reasons, but most importantly to maintain a history of the Community/Group and member data.
 - a) A Community/Group register is required for elections, Council meetings and fraternal visits.
 - b) At a minimum, the register must contain a membership roster including active, extended, and inactive members; also a record of elections, admissions, promises, vows, dismissals, deaths and transfers.
 - c) This information must be kept as a common document that the local Council can easily review.
 - d) An updated copy of the membership roster, to include contact information, titles of devotion, and the date of the most recent ceremony, must be submitted to the Central Office annually or immediately after the ceremony.
2. Other records to be maintained are: minutes, treasurer reports, agendas, copies of ceremonial forms, attendance records of Community/Group meetings, and formation classes, newsletters/flyers, apostolates, special events, etc.
3. The secretary of the local O.C.D.S. Council shall keep the Community/Group register and other records at all times. He/she will make the register available for Council meetings and at the time of elections.
4. Each Group and Study Group shall send concise monthly minutes to the Provincial Delegate.

Sec. XVI: Vows (cf. Const. #39, #47a, and #58f)

Any member who feels called by God to make vows of chastity and obedience for life must be fully informed of both the seriousness of the obligation and the rich graces that accompany it. [cf. Formation Guidelines p. 25] “While the promise was made before God to the superiors and members of the Order, the vows are made directly to God, for vows are acts of religious worship. Thus, the vows add the merit of the virtue of religion to the observance of chastity and obedience. They constitute a more complete self-offering and therefore entail a greater moral responsibility. The binding force of these vows, freely made, renders more visible the bond of love and commitment that exists between Christ and His Bride the Church.” [*O.C.D.S. Documents and Ritual for Promises and Vows, Instruction of the Superior General of the Discalced Carmelites, n. 7, p. 90*] Vows are strictly voluntary. The promise makes one a full member of the Order and the vows do not enhance that status. [Formation Guidelines p. 25]

- a) No less than three years after making their definitive promise, the member may petition the Council in writing to make vows.
- b) Initial discernment and formation for this call will include the assistance of one’s own confessor or spiritual director, the Council and the Spiritual Assistant for the Community/Group.
- c) The Council will interview the member:
 - 1) The member will provide the Council with the name of their spiritual director; priest, deacon, religious, or lay spiritual director certified by the diocese, who will be directing him/her during the year of discernment. This person cannot be a member of their own Community/Group.
 - 2) When making its decision, the Council should consider the following criteria: the member must be faithful in living the promise. The member’s life must be suitably ordered, with any major irregularities resolved so that there is no hindrance

- to grace. The member must have a healthy, balanced integration of the experience of God with that of daily life; and there should be evidence of greater charity, detachment and humility.
- d) If the request is approved, the member will commence one year of prayerful discernment, including an in-depth study of the *Legislative Documents* and other articles in the *Formation Guidelines*. (i.e., *The Sanctifier, Where the Spirit Breathes*, “Vows in the Secular Order of Discalced Carmelites”). [*Formation Guidelines* p. 26]
 - e) A guided retreat and a general confession are highly recommended. [*Formation Guidelines* p. 25]
 - f) After the year’s discernment, the member will send a formal letter to the Council expressing his/her preparedness to make vows. A letter of recommendation from the member’s spiritual director should be sent directly to the Council.
 - g) At the final interview, the Council, together with the Spiritual Assistant, will meet with the petitioner. When the Council has reached a decision, it will inform the Provincial Delegate in writing of the request, and if the decision is in the affirmative, seek his approval. If the Council’s decision is not unanimous, it will inform the Provincial Delegate of the concerns that were raised. After the Council is informed of the Provincial Delegate’s decision, it will notify the member of its decision.

Sec. XVII: Juridical Personality **(cf. Const. #40, #41 and #48)**

1. The O.C.D.S. is juridically dependent upon the O.C.D. Friars [cf. *Const.* #41]. The General Superior, the Provincial Superior aided by the Provincial Delegate, and the Council of the Community/Group are the legitimate superiors of the Secular Order.

2. Juridical personality [cf. *Const.* #40] is only applicable to canonically established Communities. It is not applicable to Groups and Study Groups, who are directly supervised by the Provincial Delegate. Even when Groups have been granted permission by the Provincial Delegate to operate with an appointed Council, this still does not constitute a grant of juridical personality. The legitimate superiors for Groups are the General Superior, the Provincial Superior and the Provincial Delegate.

Sec. XVIII: Appointment of the Spiritual Assistant (cf. Const. #43 and #44)

1. It is the prerogative of the Provincial Superior, or his Delegate, after consultation with the local O.C.D.S. Council, to appoint a Spiritual Assistant. If the Spiritual Assistant is not a member of the Order, he must have the consent of his own Superior [cf. *Provincial Statutes* Sec. XIX, 6d].
2. We welcome the presence of the Spiritual Assistant in an advisory role at Council meetings, especially when evaluating candidates for acceptance into Formation, the Promise, the Vows, as well as release from them. [cf. *Const.* #44].

Sec. XIX: The Provisions for Council Actions (cf. Const. #46, #47 & #48)

1. The Council is made up of five members. The President and three Councilors are elected by the Community/Group [cf. *Const.* #50]. The Director of Formation is appointed by the new Council members after consulting with the Spiritual Assistant. These five members constitute the government of the Community. One of the three Councilors shall be designated as Secretary of the Council.

2. The primary responsibility of the Council is the formation and Christian Carmelite maturing of the members [cf. Const. #46]. The Council shall meet at least quarterly and always when necessary in reference to taking care of formation programs and the growth of their own Community/Group [cf. Const. #47]. The General Superior, the Provincial Superior, aided by the Provincial Delegate, and the Council of the Community/Group are the legitimate superiors of the Secular Order [cf. Const. #48]. Individual phone calls, emails, or text exchanges do not constitute a valid meeting of the Council. Teleconferencing or Skype is allowed when distance or weather makes travel difficult.
3. Confidentiality is required of all Council members regarding all Council business.
4. It is recommended that the Spiritual Assistant be present for the approval of admitting candidates to Formation, promise, vows, and other serious matters where his presence will be beneficial.
5. Recognized parliamentary procedure shall be observed by the Council in its actions to the extent that they comply with the following provisions:
 - a) a quorum for the purposes of a valid action requiring the vote of the Council shall be at least three of the five Council members.
 - b) a majority of voting members present shall be required to carry a motion.
 - c) the President shall cast an additional vote if necessary to break a tie.
 - d) voting by phone, letter, e-mail, or proxy shall be invalid.
6. The President, the three Councilors and the Director of Formation shall actively work together in the following:
 - a) the place to hold the monthly meeting and its general plan.
 - b) when Aspirants will be accepted and the screening process, to include certificates of Baptism,

Confirmation, Marriage and letters clearing impediments.

- c) the frequency and times for ceremonies.
- d) assisting in obtaining a Spiritual Assistant as needed in consultation with the Provincial Delegate.
- e) receiving or denying members transferring from other Communities/Groups.
- f) all Councilors need to know every member of the Community, particularly Aspirants, and those in formation.
- g) making every effort to maintain peace and fraternal charity, the Council will handle all disciplinary problems consulting with the Provincial Delegate as needed.
- h) assisting the Director of Formation in determining the various levels to be taught, in approving and supervising the instructors, and being aware of any special formation needs.
- i) maintaining contact with extended members.
- j) determining the areas of service needed in the Community/Group and asking members to assist with these.
- k) Councils are free to establish additional duties and responsibilities for individual Councilors as they may deem appropriate within the context of the *O.C.D.S. Constitutions* and these *Provincial Statutes*.

Sec. XX: Finances (cf. Const. #55)

1. The Provincial Delegate has the help of a Central Office in carrying out his duties. This office is funded and supported by annual dues from the membership of the Province. The Central Office, in turn, contributes a portion of its funding for the General Delegate's office in Rome. The Central Office will prepare an annual financial report for the Provincial.

2. The O.C.D.S. Provincial Council will determine the amount of the annual dues. All professed members of a Community/Group will submit their donation through their Treasurer during the month of February, along with the financial report. Aspirants and Study Groups are not required to pay the annual dues.
3. The duties of the Treasurer are specified in *Const. #55*. The annual financial report to the Provincial Delegate shall be submitted no later than February 28th of each year.
4. The members of each Community/Group are invited to contribute a small donation according to their means, at every meeting for operational expenses as well as any apostolic works undertaken by one's Community/Group apostolate.
5. All members are encouraged to plan ahead for their annual Carmelite retreat and the Regional Congress. In keeping with our spirit of poverty, the Community's Council will be sensitive to those who may need assistance to participate in Carmelite events.
6. Members are also encouraged to support the larger Order; e.g., such as support of our Carmelite seminarians and our Carmelite Missions.

**Sec. XXI: Procedure for Progression to Study
Groups, Groups, and Canonically Established
Communities (cf. Const. #49; see also #44 & #58)**

1. **Study Group:** A group of five or more practicing Catholics who have been meeting for a year and who are committed to discerning a vocation as Carmelite Seculars, with the consent and supervision of the Provincial Council. [cf. *Const. #43 - #45 & #58b*].

- a) A Spiritual Assistant is to be appointed (*Const. #44 - #45*).
 - b) The Provincial Delegate in consultation with the Provincial Council will appoint:
 - 1) a Group Leader, a Director of Formation, and one Councilor.
 - 2) a Provincial Councilor to be this Study Group's mentor.
 - c) Monthly minutes and an annual financial report will be sent to the Provincial Delegate.
 - d) The Provincial Council will approve:
 - 1) a developed meeting schedule.
 - 2) a formation plan taken from the *Formation Guidelines*.
 - e) A Study Group does not pay annual dues.
2. **Group:** A Study Group that demonstrates stability and leadership with at least eight members, four of whom have made their Definitive Promise, may form a Group, with the consent and supervision of the Provincial Council.
- a) The Provincial Delegate, in consultation with the Provincial Council and the Group's Provincial Councilor mentor, will approve:
 - 1) a developed meeting schedule.
 - 2) a formation plan taken from the *Formation Guidelines*.
 - 3) a mission plan for sharing Carmelite spirituality.
 - 4) reporting requirements, which include monthly minutes, an annual financial report, and annual Group apostolate report.
 - b) Mentoring by another Community approved by the Provincial Council is highly recommended.
 - c) A Group pays annual dues.
3. **Canonically Established Community:** After five years or more, a group of twelve members, six of whom have made the Definitive Promise, may contact the Provincial Delegate to explore the possibility of becoming a canonically established Community. [cf.*Const. #49*]

- a) The Provincial Delegate will make a formal Fraternal Visit to see if the Group meets the standards for Canonical Establishment.
- b) If his report is favorable, consent in writing must also be obtained from the Local Ordinary (Bishop) of the diocese, unless the Community is erected in association with a foundation of our Friars [cf. *Const.* #49].
- c) Then a charter for Canonical Establishment will be obtained in writing from the Father General of the Order through the Provincial or his Delegate [cf. *Const.* #49].

4. **Diminishing Community/Group:**

- a) The Constitutions of the Secular Order defines the “primary responsibility” of the existence of an O.C.D.S. Community/Group as the formation and Christian Carmelite maturing of the Community/Group and all its members [cf. *Const.* 46].
- b) If a Community/Group is declining in membership and unable to select a viable Council, the Provincial Council may find it necessary to decrease the size of the Council to three, (President, Formation Director and one Councilor).
- c) A Fraternal Visit will be scheduled to discuss a growth plan with the Community.
- d) The Community/Group classification (i.e., Community, Group) once attained, is never reversed regardless of diminishing members.
- e) Closing a Group or Community:
 - 1) If actions to revive the Community/Group have not been successful, the Provincial Delegate will make a visit and consult with the local Council.
 - 2) If it is necessary to close the Community/Group, the reception of new candidates may be suspended.
 - 3) If a Community/Group closes, a member who is definitively professed may request a transfer to another Community/Group as an Active or an Extended Member.

- 4) A member who is not definitively professed must transfer to another Community/Group as an Active member to finish their formation. Otherwise, if a Temporary Promise was made, it will expire.

Sec. XXII: Making a New O.C.D.S. Foundation (cf. Const. #58g)

1. The size of a Community has an impact on Community life. When a Community becomes too large, it may begin communication with the Provincial Delegate to form a new Group. For both the founding Community and the new Group, stability, good leadership, formation, a Spiritual Assistant, and growth potential are required.
2. The new Group is under the supervision of the Provincial Delegate.
3. To identify those who wish to stay in the founding Community and those who wish to go to the new Group, an anonymous questionnaire is taken of all the members and aspirants.
4. At the first meeting of the new Group, the Provincial Delegate presides at a consultative vote for a new Council. However, he is not bound by the results of the consultative vote.
5. Members going to the new Group should be allowed to change their mind and return to the founding Community, but only for a good reason and with the permission of each Council.
6. The founding Community will make a generous donation to the new Group to help with beginning expenses.
7. No transfers or aspirants are allowed to join the new Group for a period of time to be determined by the Group Council.

8. After a year, the Group takes another consultative vote for its Council. Thereafter, if one of the Council members needs to resign for any reason, the Provincial Delegate appoints a replacement, after consulting with the other Councilors (*Provincial Statutes* Sec. XXI, #2). Otherwise, no further consultative voting takes place.
9. In five years the Group can request Canonical Establishment, if it meets the requirements [*Provincial Statutes* Sec. XXI.3]. After Canonical Establishment, elections are held every three years (cf. *Provincial Statutes*, Sec. XXVI.1).

Sec. XXIII: Transfer of Members within the Province (cf. Const. #11, #12, and #56)

1. A member normally belongs to the Community/Group in which they were admitted or made their promise. For a compelling reason a member may request to transfer to another Community/Group by completing an official transfer.
2. The transfer process is initiated by a member obtaining the official transfer application form from the original Community/Group, Central Office, or our O.C.D.S. website, www.ocds.info. The member fills out section 1 of the transfer form and submits it for verification and signature to the Council/Group Leader for the original Community/Group.
3. The Council/Group Leader with permission of the Provincial Delegate, will provide the member with the signed transfer form, and copy of their records verifying their status, level of formation, and other information useful to the receiving Community/Group.

4. When ready to attend, the member contacts the receiving Community/Group and requests to begin the “year of discernment”. This will begin with an interview with the receiving Community/Group Council where the discernment and formation requirements will be identified.
5. Another interview at the end of that year will be required, where the member and the receiving Council offer their evaluation and decision regarding finalizing the transfer process.
6. Councils are not obligated to accept members applying for transfer, but either way the completed transfer form is sent to the original Community. When a transfer is accepted, the completed transfer form, releasing the member from the original Community, is sent by the original Council to the receiving Community/Group and the Central Office.

Sec. XXIV: Transfers between Provinces

1. Carmelite Seculars are under the juridical authority of the Province in which they are members [cf. *Const.* #40]. When a member from another Province takes up permanent residence in the California-Arizona Province, the same transfer procedures of Section XXIII above shall apply.
2. When a member of the California-Arizona Province moves permanently into another Province, he/she should contact the O.C.D.S. Provincial Office of their new Province for information and procedures for transferring into that Province. A transferring member can obtain information for U.S. Provinces from the Central Office in San Jose, California.

Sec. XXV: Transfers between the T.O.C. and O.C.D.S.

The procedure for a Lay or Third Order Carmelite (T.O.C.) to transfer to the Secular Order of Discalced Carmelites (O.C.D.S.) is as follows:

- a) a Lay Carmelite, who desires to become a Secular Carmelite, by way of exception, may transfer if he/she has already made final profession as a T.O.C. The receiving Community/Group determines conditions of acceptance.
- b) a letter of recommendation, from the T.O.C. Council to the O.C.D.S. Council to which the T.O.C. member wishes to transfer, will be required.
- c) the Lay Carmelite, who desires to become a Secular Carmelite, will retain his/her Profession during a discernment period of directed O.C.D.S. formation agreed upon by the receiving Council.
- d) formation time frames and curriculum will be established by the Formation Director and the other members of the receiving Council.
- e) upon completion of formation, and after a period of at least one year of discernment, a letter of release from the Provincial Delegate of the T.O.C. must be obtained. A Definitive Promise will confer membership in the O.C.D.S.

Sec. XXVI: Procedure for Electing the Council in Canonically Established Communities

1. The elections shall be held every three years in the spring prior to the Provincial Chapter of the Friars in May. The Provincial Delegate must be consulted for any modification of the election procedure.
2. Elections of the President and three Councilors shall be conducted in accordance with recognized parliamentary

procedures (for example, Robert's Rules of Order) with the following particular provisions:

- a) **Two months prior** to the election a Nominating Committee of at least three professed (Temporary or Definitive Promise) members, of which only one may be on the Council, shall be chosen and notified by the Council. The Nominating Committee will be announced to the members at a meeting one month in advance of the meeting when the election is to take place. [*cf.* Statutes Sec. XXVII: Guidelines for the Nominating Committee]
- b) Also at the meeting two months prior, the Council will distribute to the Community a list of members eligible to serve in office and eligible to vote. To be eligible to vote a member must be professed, on the Community roster, and in compliance with the Community attendance policy regarding voter eligibility [*cf.* *Provincial Statutes*, Sec. XIII: Organization and Life, No. 3]. Diocesan priests, deacons and seminarians are ineligible to hold office as President or Formation Director.
- c) Only professed members of the Community may serve as members of the Council. The President and Formation Director must be Definitively Professed.
- d) In order that leadership qualities be developed in our Communities:
 - 1) No Council member (President, Councilors, or Formation Director) shall serve more than two consecutive terms on the Council. To be elected or appointed to a third consecutive term requires the postulation of the Provincial Delegate. This must be made clear before the straw ballot begins.
 - 2) The only exception is a member who is currently in his/her second consecutive term on the Council, but only first term as President. He/she is eligible to serve for a second term as President (*cf.* Const. 50). If not elected as President, his/her name is not added to the ballots for Councilors or considered for Formation Director.

- 3) In addition, any member who has served two consecutive terms as a Council member is not eligible to hold the office of Treasurer or Secretary within the community for the next triennium unless with the approval of the Provincial Delegate.
- 4) Although not mandatory, it is recommended that the office of Treasurer, Secretary, and Formator are also limited to two consecutive terms when possible, to develop talent and to give others an opportunity to serve.
- e) **One month prior** to the election, there will be a straw vote by secret ballot at which the nominating committee will preside. The ballots will be provided by the Nominating Committee. Each member will submit a first, second and third preference for President, as well as first, second and third preferences for each office of Councilor.
- f) If a Community has become too small to have a five-member Council, the Council may petition the Provincial Delegate to decrease the size of the Council to three members. The Provincial Delegate has the authority to decrease a five-member Council to three members if he thinks it is in the best interest of the Community.
- g) Only eligible voting members shall be present. All ineligible members present and all visitors are asked to go to another suitable location to pray for the election.
- h) After all professed members are gathered for the straw vote, the Spiritual Assistant or, in his absence, the President, shall invoke the Holy Spirit.
- i) The President will take a roll call of all eligible voting professed members. The number of voting members will be counted. This will serve to ensure that only one straw vote ballot has been submitted by each member, and that each member has submitted a ballot. A submitted blank ballot is counted as an abstention.
- j) After the straw vote is complete, the Nominating Committee, without opening any ballot, shall count the number of all the ballots submitted and ensure that the count is exactly that of the total number of eligible

voting members present. If the count does not tally, all of these ballots must be destroyed without opening any of them, and the voting process repeated. When the count tallies correctly, the Nominating Committee will retain the correctly tallied ballots.

- k) After that meeting, but prior to the election, the Nominating Committee shall tabulate the straw vote ballots. From these results, they will contact the nominees, starting with those who have received the highest number of straw votes, to ensure they are aware of the responsibilities of office and to ask if they are willing and able to serve. From these results, they will prepare a slate of nominees which will include one list with two or three qualified nominees for the office of President and one list with four to six nominees for all three offices of Councilor, all of whom have consented to serve if elected. This will represent the desire of the Community as expressed in the straw vote. These results shall be known only to the Nominating Committee until Election Day.
- l) **On Election Day**, the process specified in g), h), and i) is repeated. The slate of nominees shall be presented by the Nominating Committee to the members of the Community. A spokesperson for the Nominating Committee shall announce the names of those who have agreed to serve for the office of President if elected. The President will write the names on a board or chart paper so that they are clearly visible to all voting members.
- m) The three Councilors will distribute voting papers and collect the votes for counting. Nominations will not be accepted from the floor. Neither will voting by proxy, email, letter or write-in ballots be acceptable. A member desiring to abstain from voting on a particular ballot must hand in a blank ballot.
- n) Voting is by secret ballot. For the purposes of an election, a quorum shall be the eligible voting members being present. A majority is one vote greater than half the legal votes cast.

- o) The ballots will be counted audibly in the presence of the Community by the incumbent Councilors and recorded by the Secretary. First the Councilors, without opening any ballot, shall count the number of all the ballots and ensure that the count is exactly that of the total number of voting members present. If the count does not tally, all of these ballots must be destroyed without opening them, and the process repeated. When the ballot count is the same as the number of voters, the ballots shall be opened and tallied.
- p) If one person receives at least one more than half the votes on the first ballot, that person is the newly elected President. If not, a second ballot will be held between the two members who have received the largest number of votes. Again, one person must receive at least one more than half the possible votes to be elected President. If necessary, a third and final ballot will take place. If this ballot fails to elect a President, the person who is senior in profession will be elected. If the two nominees have the same profession date, seniority in age will decide the election.
- q) The incumbent President shall preside over the entire election proceedings.
- r) After the President is elected, the Nominating Committee spokesperson will announce the slate of nominees for Councilors. The incumbent President will write those names on a board or chart paper, along with the names of those nominees for President who were not elected.
- s) The incumbent President proceeds with the election beginning with the members' first choice for Councilor. The three incumbent Councilors collect the ballots and repeat the process as noted above for the election of the President. [cf. *Provincial Statutes* Sec. XXVI, para. 2o & p]. Once a Councilor has been elected, the process will be repeated for the remaining Councilors in succession. The slate of nominees in each case contains the names of all those not previously elected.

- t) Upon completion of the voting for each Councilor, the incumbent President officially announces the results to the entire membership.
3. At a convenient time following the election and after careful consideration, the new Council will meet to appoint the Director of Formation from among those in the Community who are definitively professed. When possible they should consult with the Spiritual Assistant. The Director of Formation may be chosen from among the newly elected definitively professed Councilors [cf. *Const.* #47d and *Provincial Statutes* Sec. XXVI, para. 2d]. If the Director of Formation is appointed from the elected Councilors, the current Council will appoint a new Council member. Their choice does not need to be the person who received the next highest number of votes in the election.
 4. The Secretaries and the Treasurer shall be named at the discretion of the newly elected Council. [cf. *Const.* #50]. The Secretary for the Council must be one of the three Councilors. A Secretary for the Community may be named to take minutes of the monthly meetings of the Community and additional duties as needed.
 5. It is recommended that the Installation Ceremony of the new officers take place at the next meeting. The Spiritual Assistant, or, in his absence, the President, presides. The installation ceremony can be found on the O.C.D.S. website, www.ocds.info, under *Forms*.

**Sec. XXVII: Guidelines for the Nominating
Committee (cf. Sec. XXVI, para. 2)**

1. Once appointed, the Nominating Committee has the responsibility to conduct the straw vote.
2. This Nominating Committee has the responsibility to present the slate of nominees on Election Day.
3. Members of the Nominating Committee must never influence or direct a prearranged outcome for Community elections. They must come to an agreement in their compilation of the slate of nominees.
4. In the event of a tie in straw votes, the Nominating Committee will add those names to the slate, even if it exceeds the recommended number of nominees.
5. Nominating Committee members may be on the slate of nominees if they receive straw votes.

Sec. XXVIII: O.C.D.S. Provincial Council
(cf. Const. #57)

1. There shall be a Provincial Council for the Secular Carmelites. It shall be composed of five or more members of the O.C.D.S. California-Arizona Province of St. Joseph and the Provincial Delegate.
2. A Provincial Councilor must:
 - a) be definitively professed;
 - b) have served on a local Council (President, Formation Director, or Councilor);
 - c) takes an active interest in the Order and in all things Carmelite.
3. The Provincial Council will be elected in accordance with the following norms:
 - a) Each Community/Group will submit to the Provincial Council one name from the Province by May 31st of an election year. The Provincial Delegate retains the right to add nominees for consideration by the Provincial Council.
 - b) The current Provincial Council will meet as soon as possible after the Friars' Provincial Chapter and the appointment or re-appointment of the Provincial Delegate to choose the new members of the Provincial Council.
 - c) The term of office will be three years. An individual Councilor may be re-appointed for another three years or less. Appointment for a third consecutive term would require postulation.
 - d) In the event of a resignation or death of a Councilor, the Provincial Council will appoint a replacement to serve the remainder of that term, unless this occurs in the last year of the triennium, in which case no replacement needs to be made.
 - e) The new Provincial Council shall appoint from the O.C.D.S. Provincial Councilors a President and a Secretary who shall serve in these offices for a three-year term. The meeting to appoint these officers shall

be held within three months subsequent to the date of the Provincial Chapter of the Friars, or as soon as possible.

- f) The President shall normally coordinate all activities and preside at the meetings of the Provincial Council. In the event of the absence of the President, the senior professed O.C.D.S. Councilor will preside.
4. In order that the membership of the Province have contact with their Provincial Councilors, the names and contact information of the Provincial Council will be regularly published in the O.C.D.S. Provincial Newsletter.
 5. The Provincial Council shall meet at least twice a year.
 6. The primary responsibility of the Provincial Council is to:
 - a) assist in formation and the apostolate, [cf. *Const.* #57].
 - b) serve as an advisory body to the Provincial Superior, via the Provincial Delegate,
 - c) advise and assist the Provincial Delegate on the Central Office administration and finances.
 7. Members of the Provincial Council shall make Fraternal Visits to Communities, Groups and Study Groups. A Provincial Councilor, while making a visit, comes as a representative of the Provincial Council with the same rights and privileges of that office. He/she respects the autonomy of the local Council's authority.
 8. Provincial Councilors are excused from attending the monthly meetings of their Community/Group when prevented from doing so by Provincial Council duties.
 9. A quorum for a valid vote consists of two-thirds of the members, one of whom must be the President or Provincial Delegate. Votes in absentia are not permitted.
 10. In the case of a tie vote, the President shall cast an additional vote to break the tie.

11. Normally the Provincial Council organizes and hosts a Leadership Training Conference in the middle year of the triennium.
12. Each U.S. Province shall normally hold a Regional Congress every three years. A National Congress shall be held every ten years. The Provincial Council should lend its support to the Congresses.
13. All members of the Provincial Council are encouraged to attend the Inter-Provincial Council (IPC) meetings with the Oklahoma and Washington Provinces.
14. The Provincial Council may bring together members of the Province to utilize their specific skills in order to assist with the mission and goals of the Provincial Council.

Abbreviations:

Const = O.C.D.S. Constitutions

CCC = Catechism of the Catholic Church

CCL = Code of Canon Law

Sec = O.C.D.S. Provincial Statutes for the California-Arizona Province of St. Joseph

Name: _____

Community Name: _____

Admission Date: _____

Temporary Promise Date: _____

Definitive Promise Date: _____