

CONSTITUTIONS
OF THE ORDER OF
FRIARS MINOR CONVENTUAL

Approved
The General Chapter of Assisi, 1983.

Confirmed
The Congregation for Religious and
Secular Institutes, Rome, October 2, 1984.

Promulgated
The Minister General, Rome, October 4, 1984.

Effective
March 25, 1985.

conformed to the Code of Canon Law
and published by order of
The Most Reverend Lanfranco M. Serrini
the 116th Minister General of the Order
in succession to the Seraphic Patriarch

ROME
Santi Apostoli
1984

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England)

The present text was reviewed and adjudged in conformity with the original Latin text.

FR. LANFRANCO M. SERRINI
Minister General

THE CONGREGATION FOR RELIGIOUS AND SECULAR INSTITUTES

Prot. n. c. 86-1/84

DECREE

The Order of Friars Minor Conventual has prepared a new text of its Constitutions in accordance with the norms of the Second Vatican Council and other directives of the Church. Complying with the mandate given to him by the chapter, the Minister General has presented the text to the Holy See for approval.

The Sacred Congregation for Religious and Secular Institutes, therefore, after submitting the text to the particular study of consultors, held a -congresso on 8 June, 1984. In view of its favorable vote, the Sacred Congregation for Religious and Secular Institutes, having observed what is prescribed by law, approves the text and the changes determined by the congresso with this present decree according to the original Latin text kept in its archives.

May all the Friars of the Order of Friars Minor Conventual be enabled to follow more closely in the footsteps of their Seraphic Father Francis and more fruitfully fulfill the mission committed to them by the Church by their willing acceptance of the renewed Constitutions as their ((Rule of life and way of perfection>> (cf. 2 Cel 208).

Given at Rome by the Sacred Congregation for Religious and Secular Institutes, 2 October, 1984, the feast of the Holy Guardian Angels.

+JEROME HAMMER, O.P.
Pro-Prefect

+ V. FAGIOLO
Secretary

Prot. n. 441/84 1, too, believe that the problem of adapting our Constitutions to the Code and to our times is most important, because if they are ((done well>> they will properly regulate everything else.

(St. Maximilian M. Kolbe, SK 89)

FR. LANFRANCO M. SERRINI
the 116th Minister General
of the Order of Friars Minor Conventual
in succession to the Seraphic Patriarch

The seraphic blessing to all my very beloved brothers in the Lord!

Fifteen years ago our Order began the exacting task of updating its Constitutions on various levels and with unified efforts. Today the definitive text can be promulgated.

At the urging of Vatican Council 11 and in keeping with the changed conditions of our times, every religious family was invited to reflect seriously on its origins, to rediscover the spirit of the founder, and to present norms of life appropriate to witnessing within the context of the Church and today's society.

The Order has completed this journey assisted by the contributions of all the friars. All were asked to express their opinions through a questionnaire embracing the most diverse issues of religious life. Subsequent commissions made a synthesis of the various texts which were then submitted for discussion and approval in the ordinary and extraordinary chapters held in 1969, 1972, 1975, 1978, 1981, and 1983.

During this long span of time - benefiting from the period of experimentation allowed by ecclesiastical authority - it was possible to utilize the many documents issued by the Church and, by experience, to test the value of the more relevant changes, especially those regarding methods of voting and elective participation in the government of the fraternity.

Following the clear prescriptions of the new Code of Canon Law, our legislation is divided into two texts:

- a) the Constitutions, or the fundamental code, approved by the competent authority of the Church, which can be changed only with its consent (can. 587, 1);
- b) the General Statutes, or complementary norms, enacted by the Order, which can be fittingly reviewed and adapted according to the needs of times and places (can. 587, 4).

The text of the Constitutions - in spite of the many changes occurring over the past fifteen years - remains faithful to the criteria adopted in the basic text of 1969. It is divided into the following six chapters:

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|-----------|---|
| Chap. I: | The Gospel Life of the Friars:
arts. 1-29; |
| Chap. II: | The Formation of the Friars: |

Chap. III:	arts. 30-66; The Prayer Life of the Friars: arts. 67-85;
Chap. IV:	The Community Life of the Friars: arts. 86-119;
Chap. V:	The Apostolic Life of the Friars: arts. 120-154;
Chap. VI:	The Government of the Order: arts. 155-206.

The text of the General Statutes - 6 chapters with 159 articles - is arranged to parallel that of the Constitutions and provides the complementary norms.

The total number of articles in the Constitutions is 206, well below the 807 articles of the 1932 Constitutions. The reduction in number is in keeping with can. 587, 3, of the Code of Canon Law: "Spiritual and juridical elements are to be suitably joined together; however, norms are not to be multiplied unless it is necessary." The norms of the general statutes are likewise limited to what is strictly necessary to provide suitable direction for the life and apostolic activity of our religious family.

By maintaining a living and authentic bond with our Franciscan charism - transmitted in the course of history through the various Constitutions, from the "Antiquae" to those of 1932 - we believe we can express our charism today by vigorous and joyous observance of norms which meet the needs of a changing society in a better way.

We assume this obligation so that our Order will be an authentic "sign of the times" for the Church and for the world.

Dear Brothers, the Constitutions are a code of life in the sense that they must become incarnate both in our individual and community life. They are the practical application of the Rule we have professed. In fact, together with the Rule, they form the context in which our free choice "to follow Christ" according to the spirit of St. Francis of Assisi must mature.

It is, therefore, our duty to "know," "reflect," and assimilate" whatever will make us more faithful imitators of our Seraphic Father and thus more capable of transmitting his message of life to the contemporary world.

A generous effort must be made on all levels so that the Constitutions become interiorized by each of the friars. This could be the "theme" on which to concentrate loving attention over the next few years, until the spirit and practice proposed to all the friars ,of our family is assimilated. Every activity (days of recollection, regional encounters, spiritual chapters - provincial and local, retreats, continuing formation programs ...) can help to involve not only young men in formation but all the friars in observing these norms of life presented now as the basic guide for our spiritual journey.

However there is no substitute for what the individual friar has to offer: his personal commitment to study and his ability to meditate on the text and realize that his own Franciscan witness is not founded on something questionable or arbitrary. It will beget life if it faithfully and lovingly reproduces the personal features of St. Francis of Assisi, as these are shown to us in the norms of life approved by the authority of the Church.

We will accomplish this in the traditional spirit of our religious family which perceives adherence in faith as important as ever, "so that always subject and submissive at the feet of the same holy Church, and steadfast in the Catholic faith, we may observe the poverty and the humility and the holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ which we have firmly promised" (Rb 12).

May the Immaculate Virgin Mother of God, Queen of our Seraphic Order, and St. Joseph, her spouse and the Protector of the Order, assist us in this generous effort. May all the saints intercede for us, in particular our founder, St. Francis of Assisi and St. Maximilian Mary Kolbe, so close to contemporary problems and the needs of our life and apostolate. May we be encouraged by mutual example in a vibrant fraternity where each one, in joyous and persevering emulation for holiness, feels himself to be a living and active participant.

With the journey foreseen by the ordinary general chapter of 1983 at an end and having obtained definitive approval of our Constitutions from the Sacred Congregation for Religious and Secular Institutes through the decree of 2 October, 1984, - by virtue of the authority vested in me, I herewith order their publication and promulgate the definitive text of the Constitutions of the Order together with the general statutes. They are to have the force of law as of March 25, the solemnity of the Annunciation of our Lord.

Given at Rome, Santi Apostoli, the 4th of October
1984, feast of our Seraphic Father St. Francis.

Fr. LANFRANCO M. SERRINI
Minister General

Fr. CRISTOFORO M. ZAMBELLI
Secretary General

ABBREVIATIONS

Adm = Admonitions
can. = canon of the Code of Canon Law

Cel	=	Celano, Life of St. Francis
Const.	=	Constitutions of the Order
EpFid	=	Letter to All the Faithful
EpOrct	=	Letter to All the Friars
LM	=	Legenda Maior, Life of St. Francis by St. Bonaventure, in: "Analecta Franciscana sive Chronica Aliaque Varia Documenta ad Historiam Fratrum Minorum Spectantia, Tomus X: Legendae S.Francisci Assisiensis saec. XIII et XIV conscriptae" I, Ad Claras Aquas, Florentiae, 1926-1941.
O.O.	=	Opera Omnia of St. Bonaventure, ed. Quaracchi, 1898.
PC	=	Perfectae Caritatis: Decree of Vatican Council II on the Renewal of Religious Life.
Rb	=	Regula bullata, Later Rule, 1223.
Rnb	=	Regula non bullata, Earlier Rule, 1221.
SAIMV	=	Salutation of the Blessed Virgin Mary.
SC	=	Sacrosanctum Concilium: The Constitution of Vatican Council II on the Sacred Liturgy.
Test	=	The Testament of St. Francis.
UltVol	=	The Last Will of St. Francis written for St. Clare.

NOTE

- The Latin text of the Rule of our holy Father Francis and excerpts from his writings are quoted from the critical edition by Father Cajetan Esser, O.F.M., *Opuscula Sancti Patris Francisci Assisiensis* (Grottaferrata: Collegium S. Bonaventurae, 1978), in *Gli scritti di San Francesco d'Assisi* (Padua: Edizioni Grafiche Messaggero di S. Antonio, 1982).

THE RULE OF OUR SERAPHIC FATHER ST. FRANCIS

THE BULL OF POPE HONORIUS III ON THE RULE OF THE FRIARS MINOR

Honorius, bishop, servant of the servants of God, to his beloved sons, Friar Francis and the other friars of the Order of Friars Minor, health and apostolic blessing.

The Apostolic See is accustomed to grant the pious requests and to accede favorably to the laudable desires of its petitioners. Wherefore, beloved sons in the Lord, attentive to your pious request, by our apostolic authority we ratify the following Rule written here, which was approved our predecessor, Pope Innocent of happy memory; and we confirm it by this document.

It reads as follows:

CHAPTER I

IN THE NAME OF THE LORD! THE LIFE OF THE FRIARS MINOR BEGINS

The rule and life of the Friars Minor is this: to observe the holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ by living in obedience, without anything of their own, and in chastity.

Friar Francis promises obedience and reverence to the Lord Pope Honorius and to his canonically elected successors and to the Roman Church. And the other friars must obey Friar Francis and his successors.

CHAPTER II

THOSE WHO WISH TO EMBRACE THIS LIFE AND HOW THEY SHOULD BE RECEIVED

If anyone wishes to embrace this life and comes to our friars they should send him to the ministers provincial, who alone have permission to receive friars. The ministers should diligently examine the candidates regarding the Catholic faith and the sacraments of the Church. And if they believe all these things and are willing to profess and observe them faithfully and steadfastly to the end; and if they are not married - or, married, their wives have already entered a monastery; - or, having given their husbands permission by the authority of the bishop of the diocese, the wives have already taken a vow of continence and are of such an age that no suspicion can arise about them; - then the minister should address the words of the holy Gospel to them: that they should go and sell all that belongs to them and attempt to give it to the poor. If they cannot do this their good will is sufficient. The friars and their ministers should be careful not to become solicitous over their temporal affairs, so that the candidates may freely dispose of their goods as the Lord inspires them. But if they need counsel the ministers have permission to send them to some God-fearing persons to advise them how to give what they have to the poor. Then they may be given the clothing of probation, namely, two tunics without a capuche, a cord, short trousers, and a cape reaching to the cord, unless these same ministers sometimes decide otherwise before God. When the year of probation is ended they may be received into obedience, promising to observe this life and rule always. And, according to the decree of the Lord Pope, in no way shall it be lawful for them to leave this Order because, as the

holy Gospel says: No one having put his hand to the plow and looking back is fit for the kingdom of God.

And those who have already promised obedience may have one tunic with a capuche and, if they wish, another without a capuche. And those who are forced by necessity may wear shoes. And all the friars should wear poor clothes and mend them with sacking and other bits of cloth with the blessing of God. I admonish and exhort them not to look down or pass judgment on those whom they see wearing soft and colorful clothing and enjoying choice food and drink; rather, let each one judge and despise himself.

CHAPTER III

THE DIVINE OFFICE AND FASTING AND THE WAY THE FRIARS SHOULD GO ABOUT THE WORLD

The clerical friars shall celebrate the divine office according to the rite of the Roman Church except for the psalter, for which reason they may have breviaries.

The lay friars, however, shall say twenty-four Our Fathers for Matins, five for Lauds, seven for each of the hours of Prime, Terce, Sext, and None, twelve for Vespers, and seven for Compline. And they shall pray for the dead.

And the friars shall fast from the feast of All Saints until the Nativity of the Lord. May those who fast voluntarily for that holy Lent which the Lord consecrated by His own fast, beginning at Epiphany and continuing for forty days, be blessed by the Lord; and those who do not wish to keep fast are not obliged. But the friars should fast during that other Lent which lasts until the Lord's Resurrection.

They are not bound to fast at other times, however, except on Fridays. But at times of evident necessity the friars are not obliged to corporal fasting.

I counsel, admonish, and exhort my brothers in the Lord Jesus Christ that, when they go about the world, they should not quarrel, argue, or judge others; rather, they should be meek, peaceful and modest, gentle and humble, speaking courteously to everyone, as is becoming. And they should not ride horseback unless they are forced to do so by evident necessity or infirmity.

In whatever house they enter let them first say: Peace to this house. And, according to the holy Gospel, they may eat of whatever food is set before them.

CHAPTER IV

THE FRIARS ARE NOT TO RECEIVE MONEY

I firmly command all the friars that in no way are they to receive coins or money, either themselves or through an intermediary. Nonetheless, the ministers and custodes alone should take special care through spiritual friends to provide for the needs of the sick and the clothing of the other friars according to places and seasons and cold climates, as they see necessity dictate; always provided, as stated above, they do not receive coins or money.

CHAPTER V

THE MANNER OF WORKING

Those friars to whom the Lord has given the grace to work should do it faithfully and devotedly so that, in avoiding idleness, the enemy of the soul, they might not extinguish the spirit of holy prayer and devotion to which all other temporal matters must be subordinate. In payment for their work they may receive whatever is necessary for their own bodily needs and those of their confreres but not coins or any form of money; and they should do this humbly as befits the servants of God and the followers of most holy poverty.

CHAPTER VI

THE FRIARS SHALL NOT APPROPRIATE ANYTHING TO THEMSELVES, BEGGING ALMS, THE SICK FRIARS

The friars shall not appropriate anything to themselves, neither house nor place nor anything. Instead, as pilgrims and strangers in this world who serve the Lord in poverty and humility, they should go begging alms confidently. Nor should they feel ashamed, for the Lord made Himself poor for us in this world. This is that summit of highest poverty which has made you, my most beloved friars, heirs and kings of the kingdom of heaven - poor in earthly things but exalted in virtues. Let this be your portion which leads into the land of the living. Dedicating yourselves entirely to this, my most beloved friars, never wish for anything else under heaven for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ. And wherever the friars may be and shall meet other confreres let them show that they are members of one family. And each one should confidently reveal what he needs to the other for, if a mother loves and nourishes her son in the flesh, should not someone love and care even more deeply for his brother in the spirit? And if any of them becomes sick, the other friars should serve him as they would wish to be served themselves.

CHAPTER VII

THE PENANCE TO BE IMPOSED ON THE FRIARS WHO SIN

If any of the friars at the instigation of the enemy should sin mortally they are bound to have recourse to their ministers provincial as soon as possible, without delay, for those sins for which the friars have decreed recourse only to them. These ministers, if priests, should impose a penance upon them with mercy; but if they are not priests they should have a penance imposed by others of the Order who are priests as it seems best to them before God. They must take care not to become angry or disturbed because of someone else's sin, since anger and disturbance impede charity in them and in others.

CHAPTER VIII

THE ELECTION OF THE MINISTER GENERAL OF THIS FRATERNITY AND THE CHAPTER OF PENTECOST

All the friars are bound always to have one of the friars of this Order as minister general and servant of the entire fraternity and they are bound strictly to obey him. Upon his death the election of a successor should be done by the ministers provincial and the custodes at the Chapter of Pentecost, for which the ministers provincial are always bound to convene wherever the minister general has decided it is to be held; and they shall do this once every three years or more or less frequently as the minister general decides.

And if at any time it becomes evident to the body of the ministers provincial and the custodes that a minister general is not qualified for the service and general welfare of the friars then these same friars to whom the election is entrusted are bound in the name of the Lord to elect another for themselves as custodian. After the Chapter of Pentecost each minister and custos may call his friars to a chapter once in the same year in his own region, if he so wishes and if it seems expedient to him.

CHAPTER IX PREACHERS

The friars shall not preach in the diocese of any bishop when he has opposed their doing so. And none of the friars may dare preach to the people unless he has been examined and approved by the minister general of this fraternity and has received from him the office of preaching.

I further admonish and exhort these friars that, in their preaching, their words be well chosen and chaste for the benefit and edification of the people, speaking to them about vices and virtues, punishment and glory in a brief message, because our Lord spoke but a short time while on earth.

CHAPTER X

THE ADMONITION AND CORRECTION OF THE FRIARS

The friars who are the ministers and servants of the other friars should visit and admonish their confreres and correct them humbly and Charitably, not commanding them anything that might be against their conscience and our Rule. However, the friars who are subject to them should remember that they have renounced their own wills for God. Therefore I strictly command them to obey their ministers in all those things which they have promised the Lord to observe and which are not against their conscience and our Rule. And wherever there are friars who know and realize that they cannot observe the Rule spiritually they may and should have recourse to their ministers. The ministers on their part should receive them kindly and charitably and should be so closely acquainted with them that these friars can speak and behave with the ministers as masters do with their servants; for this is the way it should be: that the ministers are the servants of all the friars.

Indeed, I admonish and exhort the friars in our Lord Jesus Christ to beware of all pride, vainglory, envy, avarice, care and anxiety for this world, detraction and murmuring. And those who are illiterate should not be eager to acquire learning. Instead, let them seek what they must desire above all else: to have the Spirit of the Lord and His holy behavior, to pray always to Him with a pure heart and to have humility, patience in persecution and weakness, and to love those who persecute, reprove and reproach us, because the Lord says: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute and slander you. Blessed are those who suffer persecution for the sake of justice for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. But whoever perseveres to the end, he will be saved.

CHAPTER XI

THE FRIARS ARE NOT TO ENTER THE MONASTERIES OF NUNS

I firmly command all the friars not to have any relationships or conversations with women which could arouse suspicion. No one should enter the monasteries of nuns except those to whom special permission has been granted by the Apostolic See; nor should they be godfathers of men or women lest scandal arise on this account among the friars or concerning them.

CHAPTER XII

THOSE WHO GO AMONG THE SARACENS AND OTHER NONBELIEVERS

Those friars who, by divine inspiration, desire to go among the Saracens and other nonbelievers should ask permission from their ministers provincial. But the ministers should grant no one permission to go except those whom they consider fit to be sent.

In addition, I command the ministers under obedience to petition the Lord Pope for one of the cardinals of the holy Roman Church to be the governor, protector, and corrector of this fraternity so that, always subject and submissive at the feet of this same holy Church and steadfast in the Catholic faith, we may observe the poverty and the humility and the holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ which we have firmly promised.

HERE ENDS THE RULE AND LIFE OF THE FRIARS MINOR

THE CONFIRMATION OF THE RULE

No one, therefore, is permitted to tamper in any way with this decree of our confirmation or to oppose it rashly. Should anyone, however, presume to attempt this, let it be known that he shall incur the indignation of Almighty God and of His blessed apostles Peter and Paul.

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

HERE ENDS THE CONFIRMATION OF THE RULE OF THE FRIARS MINOR

THE WORDS OF EXHORTATION OF OUR HOLY FATHER FRANCIS TO THE FRIARS

O most beloved brothers and sons forever
blessed, hear me, hear the voice of your Father:

Great things we have promised;
greater have been promised us.
Let us observe the former;
let us aspire to the latter.
Pleasure is short;
punishment, everlasting.
Suffering is slight;
glory, infinite.
Many are called;
few are chosen.
Retribution for all.

Brethren, while we have time, let us do good.

CHAPTER I THE GOSPEL LIFE OF THE FRIARS Spiritual Introduction

a) Blessed Francis, whom God raised up in the Church as a perfect imitator of His son Jesus Christ, clearly testifies that he was divinely inspired to found his religious community. He states: "The Lord thus gave me, brother Francis, the grace to begin a life of penance...And after the Lord gave me charge of some brothers, no one showed me what I should do, but the most high Lord revealed to me that I should live according to the form of the holy gospel" (Test).

b) "Seeing how the Lord God was daily increasing their number, blessed Francis wrote for himself and his brothers, both present and future, a simple and brief form of life and rule, using mainly sayings of the holy gospel, the ideal of perfection he ardently desired" (1 Cel 32).

For this reason the entire life of the Friars Minor consists in this: to observe the holy gospel which is the power of God unto salvation for every believer and the font of all perfection from which Friars Minor learn and choose "to live in obedience, in chastity and without anything of their own and follow in the teaching and the footsteps of our Lord Jesus Christ..." (Rnb 1).

c) "We are all brothers [of the same Lord Jesus Christ] when we do the will of His Father in heaven" (Ep fid.) and when we imitate the example of Him who gave His life lest He fail in most holy obedience to the Father" (Ep Ord) For "the Lord says in the Gospel: none of you can be my disciple unless he gives up all his possessions, and anyone who wants to save his life will lose it.

"That man leaves all that he possesses and loses his body and his soul who makes himself totally available for obedience at the hand of his superior..." (Adm) Therefore, let the friars realize that they are truly obedient only when they habitually "persevere in keeping the Lord's commands which they have sworn on the holy gospel and by their own lives to do; and may they be blessed by the Lord" (Rnb 5).

d) From the moment blessed Francis returned all his possession to the Lord God and embraced poverty before the bishop of Assisi in these words: "Now will I be able to say freely: Our Father who art heaven" (2 Cel 12) he became the most faithful imitator and brother of the poor Christ. "I, your little brother Francis, wish to follow the life and poverty of our most high Lord Jesus Christ and of His most Mother and to persevere in it until the end of my life" (UltVol) Hence the Friars Minor embrace most exalted poverty with humility and joy. It has made them "heirs and kings of the kingdom of heaven, poor in earthly things but exalted in virtues" (Rb 6) Dedicating themselves entirely to this portion the friars should not desire anything else on this earth.

e)"Now then, having left the world, we have no-thing to do but to obey the will of the Lord and to please Him" (Rnb 22) in perfect continence chosen for the sake of the kingdom of heaven, and thereby to experience, as did blessed Francis, how holy and beautiful it is and "how delightful, pleasing, humble, peaceful, sweet, lovely and desirable above all things to have such a brother and such a son: our Lord Jesus Christ, who laid down His life..." for us (EpFid)
The friars, therefore, "after removing every hindrance and putting aside every thought and anxiety should, as best they know how, serve, love, honor and adore the Lord God with a clean heart and a pure mind... which is what He himself desires above all else" (Rnb 22)

f) Blessed Francis himself proposes to his brothers for observance the form and rule of life which he wrote and had confirmed by the Lord Pope, and he recommends it as "the book of life, the hope of salvation, the marrow of the Gospel, the way of perfection, the key to paradise, the seal of our eternal covenant. He wanted everyone to have it and to know it well, and everywhere... to speak about it with his own inner self, as a remembrance of the oath professed" (2 Cel 208) Therefore, "just as the Lord helped" blessed Francis "to speak and write down" this same rule and life "purely and simply" (Test), so should we understand it purely and simply and observe it by a holy life to the end. We must do this, under the guidance of the Church, so that "always subject and submissive at the feet of the same holy Church... we may observe the poverty, the humility, and the holy gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ which we have firmly promised" (Rb 12)

TITLE I

THE CONSTITUENT ELEMENTS OF THE ORDER

I - 1. The Order of Friars Minor Conventual is a religious community founded by St. Francis of Assisi under the name of Friars Minor. From its earliest times the word conventual was added to this name. The members of the Order are called Friars Minor Conventual.

2. From its foundation our community, by the will of our Father St. Francis, is a true fraternity. Its members, therefore, as brothers of a single family, share in the life and work of the community, each according to his own circumstances. They have equal rights and obligations, except in those matters

pertaining to holy orders. Our Order, however, is classified by the Church as clerical.

3. St. Francis wanted his brothers to be known as Friars Minor "so that... from the very name itself his disciples might realize that they had come to the school of the humble Christ to learn humility" (LM VI, 5@)

4. Our friars are united in a conventual fraternity, in the proper sense of that term, so as to foster greater dedication, a more regular life, a more fervent divine office, a better formation of candidates (cf. O.O. VIII, 367), the study of theology, and the other works of the apostolate in the service of the Church of God so that, especially under the guidance of Mary Immaculate, the Kingdom of Christ may be extended throughout the world.

2 - 1. In the Order, contemplative life is intimately linked to apostolic activity. The apostolate of sacred orders is exercised through the ministry of clerical friars with the cooperation of the others.

2. For the common good of the Lord's flock the entire Order and each friar is immediately subject to the Supreme Pontiff.

3 - 1. The Order's foundation is religious profession by which the friars commit themselves to the gospel life of perfect charity, not simply in using the ordinary means of sanctification but by the public vows of obedience, poverty, and chastity by which they are consecrated to God through the ministry of the Church; and by the observance of common life and the Rule and Constitutions, according to the spirit of the Seraphic Order. Friars are definitively incorporated into the Order by their profession of solemn vows.

2. The following especially promote the Franciscan spirit:

- a) loving God, the supreme good whose loving plan is to restore all things in Christ, with undivided heart;
- b) conforming oneself to the same Christ the Lord from whom every grace flows as from its source and head, by realizing His mysteries in one's own life, in union with Mary, the Immaculate Mother of God, and with the whole Church;
- c) likewise, loving all people by proclaiming and promoting peace, brotherly love, and the kingdom of Christ among them;
- d) and, finally, while living in the world, serving the Lord in poverty, humility, simplicity, and gladness of heart.

TITLE 11

THE PROFESSION OF VOWS

4 - 1. By their profession of the vows of obedience, poverty, and chastity, the friars:

- a) dedicate themselves directly and entirely to God in a special manner;
- b) are conformed more exactly to the type of life Christ the Lord chose for Himself and are united in a special way to the Church and her saving mission;
- c) stimulate the fervor of their charity through a fuller expression of their baptismal consecration, progress in the life of pilgrims and penitents, and voluntarily deny themselves goods

otherwise highly esteemed.

2. Each friar, therefore, called to the profession of the evangelical counsels, should live according to his vocation and strengthen it by persevering effort and prudent vigilance.

3. By their very nature the three vows bind under pain of serious sin.

5 - By the vow of obedience the friars fully surrender their own wills to God, offering themselves to Him as a holocaust so as to be one with the divine will after the example of Jesus Christ, who came to do the will of His Father. Thus, in the spirit of faith, they subject themselves to their superiors in the Church. This obedience, however, not only does not lessen the dignity of the human person but, rather, in broadening the freedom of the sons of God brings it to greater maturity.

6 - 1. The friars are bound to obey the Supreme Pontiff as their highest superior, both by reason of their vow as well as by the example and command of St. Francis.

2. They must likewise obey the Minister General, the successor of our Father St. Francis, and other superiors of the fraternity when they command in accordance with the Rule and Constitutions (cf. can. 60 1).

7 - 1. The friars, living among the people of God as catholic and apostolic men, faithful to the special promise and example of our Seraphic Father, should particularly show themselves minor by reverently obeying the Church in all things.

2. The friars are subject, according to the norms of law, to the congregations of the Roman Curia and to local ordinaries in whatever pertains to their pastoral authority.

3. In a spirit of faith and of love for the will of God they should obey their superiors in everything I which is not contrary to their conscience and to our Rule.

8 - 1. In the exercise of their office superiors should be docile to God's will in a spirit of love and service. They should listen to their friars and encourage their joint efforts for the good of the fraternity and of the Church.

2. They should lead their subjects along to cooperate with them by applying themselves to their ordinary duties and to new undertakings with an active and responsible obedience, but with the superior's authority remaining intact to decide and prescribe what must be done.

9 1. By the solemn vow of evangelical poverty the friars completely renounce the ownership of earthly goods so that they may solely possess spiritual goods in God, who is all good, and, freed thus from all worldly cares, they may love the Father more easily.

2. In order to observe religious poverty the friars are bound to avoid acts of ownership, to be subject to their superiors in the use of temporal goods, and to be and show themselves to be truly poor in fact and in spirit.

3. Each friar should love and practice most exalted poverty as befits followers of the poor and humble St. Francis. Superiors should excel in this observance because they must guide others by their example. They should beware of weakening the observance of poverty by indiscriminate permissions.

10 1. Before temporary profession a candidate is to cede administration of his goods to whomever he prefers and to dispose freely of their use and revenues.

2. Within sixty days before his solemn profession, however, he must also renounce the ownership of the goods he actually has, in a form which, if possible, is also valid in civil law, and this on condition that profession actually takes place. In order to change these dispositions for a just cause and to place any act whatsoever in matters of temporal goods he needs the permission of his superiors.

3. Friars who have legitimately left or who have been legitimately dismissed from the Order can request nothing from it for any work done while in it (cf. can. 702, 1).

11 - 1. The friars should never forget that they are poor men and pilgrims in this world and that goods acquired by them or provided for them are not their own but are destined solely for a simple life-style and for the fulfillment of the Order's various apostolates and works of charity.

2. Therefore, they should not possess goods, particularly immovable goods, without evident necessity for the life of the friars or without proportionate benefit to the works of the Order. They should always avoid, however, any semblance of avarice or unwarranted accumulation.

12 - 1. The friars should consider themselves bound by the common law of work. While mainly procuring the necessities of life for themselves in this way, they should banish all worry and entrust themselves to the care of their heavenly Father.

2. They may accept compensation and pensions for their labor and join social security plans in accordance with the statutes, with due regard for Const. n. 15, 3.

13 - 1. The friars should faithfully observe that poverty which should characterize our family, i.e., the Order itself. In all things they should avoid fastidiousness in style and furnishings and anything that smacks of luxury.

2. The friars should willingly bear the poverty of common life and the inconveniences arising from it.

3. Since, moreover, the friars' life of poverty should take into account the social condition of the people in whose midst they dwell, the friars should live gladly among the poor, being a living witness to the gospel for them by sharing their sorrows and struggles and working with them as circumstances permit, by assisting them to better their conditions, and by lifting up their hearts with the hope of future blessings.

14 - 1. The friars should strive to use whatever is intended for apostolic works for the benefit of such works and for the continued expansion of the apostolates of the Order. Their care and diligence in these matters should be motivated solely by zeal for souls.

2. According to the ways and means prescribed by the chapter, provinces and friaries should share their temporal goods with each other so that those who have more assist those who suffer want.

3. Moreover, from their own resources they should gladly help meet the necessities of the Church and of the poor, whom all religious should love with the tenderness of Christ.

15 - I. Since they are related to the conditions of the times, particular forms of Franciscan poverty should be observed faithfully by all in accordance with the declarations of the Supreme Pontiffs and the norms of the Constitutions so that the spirit of seraphic poverty will always remain unchanged.

2. According to the declarations of the Church, the Order itself, the provinces, and the friaries can own temporal goods; individual friars may never do so.

3. Wherefore, all goods which accrue to the friars in any way whatsoever, either as compensation for work or for some other reason or as a gift, even if given to them personally, belong to the friary or, according to the provincial statutes, to some other juridical person in the Order.

16 - 1. While safeguarding the norms and principles of a life of poverty and of common life, a moderate use of money - today the common means of exchange even for the poorest people - is allowed the friars under the authority and control of the superior.

2. If the friars cannot support themselves by their own work they may have recourse to the table of the Lord, i. e., they may beg alms or apply for and receive social welfare, but only where this form of Franciscan poverty can bear witness to the gospel.

17 - Moreover, because our Seraphic Father founded his Order in the Church principally as a witness to evangelical poverty, the friars in and outside chapters should seek to devise new forms of poverty appropriate to the times so that this witness may always be manifest. However, it is the right of chapters to pass judgment on such new forms.

18 - 1. By the vow of perfect chastity, a precious gift of divine grace, the friars are able to dedicate themselves more easily with undivided heart to God alone for the sake of Christ and His kingdom; and they choose the state of perfect continence as a stimulus to the love of God and man and a pledge of heavenly treasure, and as a special source of spiritual fruitfulness in the world.

2. Accordingly, they are obliged by the added bond of religious profession to avoid all internal and external acts contrary to chastity.

19 - 1. The friars should be careful to keep their vow of chastity intact and to make it fruitful through devout reception of the sacraments, constant and fervent prayer, contemplation of the mysteries of Jesus Christ and of the Blessed Virgin Mary, mutual love in sharing common life, and, lastly, through zealous apostolic ministry.

2. Trusting in the words of our Lord and relying on His help the friars should not presume on their own strength. They should persevere in practices of mortification and custody of the senses and

strive to achieve maturity and self-mastery in their affective life.

3. Since the Lord God must be loved in all his creatures with a pure heart, chaste affection, and reverence, the relationship of the friars toward women, and especially those women consecrated to God, should be characterized by respect and courtesy after the example of St. Francis.

TITLE III

THE PROFESSION OF THE RULE

20 - The Rule or form of life of the Friars Minor confirmed by Honorius III and interpreted by successive Popes is the fundamental law of the whole Order from which, therefore, the friars should draw inspiration and to which they should conform their lives.

21 - 1. It is the right of the Apostolic See, either on its own initiative or at the request of the general chapter, to interpret the Rule authentically.

2. It is in fact the right of the general chapter with the consent of two-thirds of the voting members to request of the Apostolic See either that the meaning of the Rule be adapted to the new conditions of the times or that norms of Constitutions be abrogated or new ones approved.

3. The declarative interpretations of the Constitutions belongs to the general chapter; however, outside of chapter for an urgent reason, the Minister General with his definitory, in consultation with the ministers provincial if possible, can give an interpretation which is valid until the next chapter. The authentic interpretation, however, is reserved to the Holy See.

4. Likewise, the general chapter can issue laws and decrees regarding the faithful observance of the Rule and Constitutions.

22 - 1. For the implementation of the general laws, general chapters may enact particular statutes for the whole Order; provincial chapters for their respective provinces.

2. In more urgent cases interpretation or changes in these statutes may be enacted by the respective ministers with their definitories, valid until the next chapter.

3. Before provincial statutes are promulgated they must be sent promptly to the Minister General, who, with his definitory, only verifies their conformity with the Constitutions.

23 - 1. The Rule binds in conscience according to the declarations of the Roman Pontiffs in accordance with the norms of the Constitutions.

2. The Constitutions and statutes bind under sin, proportionately to the importance of the object, in matters of the vows and divine and ecclesiastical laws.

3. The friars should strive to observe the Rule, Constitutions, and statutes as the obligation contracted at religious profession requires, principally out of love for evangelical perfection according to the spirit of the Order.

24 - The following may grant a temporary dispensation from the disciplinary norms of the Constitutions and statutes for a just and reasonable cause:

- a) the Minister General for individual friars and friaries and with the consent of his definitory for individual provinces as well;
- b) the Minister Provincial for his own friars and other friars residing in his province and with the consent of his definitory for individual friaries as well;
- c) the Guardian for his own and for other friars residing in the friary.

25 - 1. The friars should take care to continuously study and deepen their knowledge of the Rule, the Constitutions, the writings of our holy Father Francis, and other documents relevant to the life of the Order, and to make the spirit of these their own.

2. The Rule and Constitutions, however, are to be read in common at a time and in a manner determined by the provincial statutes.

TITLE IV

THE STRUCTURE OF THE ORDER

26 - 1. a) Always faithful to the Catholic Church and bearing witness to Christ by living in the world according to the gospel, all the friars together with their ministers should strive continuously to create and maintain the unity of the fraternity;

b) working in local and missionary churches the friars with their ministers and custodes are organized respectively into provinces and custodies;

c) wherever the friars may be in the world, by showing fellowship to each other they should create a real family, the dynamic center, as it were, of their spiritual and apostolic life.

2. The Sacred Convent in Assisi enjoys a primacy over all other friaries since it has been entrusted with the care of the famous shrine where the mortal remains of our Seraphic Father lie in rest. The friary has been declared head and mother of the whole Order and the church has been elevated to the rank of patriarchal basilica and papal chapel. All the friars should consider the Sacred Convent the center of spirituality for the Order, the provinces, and the friaries and realize that they have a spiritual bond with it. It is fitting, therefore, to station friars chosen from various provinces of the Order at the Sacred Convent so that they may manifest and strengthen the love and fidelity of all the friars of the provinces in reference to Franciscan perfection and its charism, and be able to promote and foster its vitality. The Sacred Convent is governed by its own statutes.

27 - The Order is divided into provinces to which friars are affiliated. Provinces are formed from friaries or communities in which friars are stationed de familiar General and provincial custodies are considered similar to provinces according to the norms of the Constitutions.

28 - 1. The erection, division, union, and suppression of a province or general custody is reserved to the general chapter - of a provincial custody, to the provincial chapter - after hearing those concerned and according to the prescriptions of law.

2. To erect a province or general custody as many friaries and solemnly professed friars shall be required by the general chapter as prudently judged necessary to insure an independent life for the province or custody.

3. For special and serious reasons a provincial chapter can erect a provincial custody upon obtaining an affirmative vote of two thirds of its voting members with the permission of the Minister General and the consent of his definitory.

29 - 1. The general chapter determines the erection and suppression of a friary under the immediate jurisdiction of the Minister General, with due regard for the norms of common law (cann. 609, 1; 610; 1215, 3).

2. The erection of a friary is reserved to the provincial chapter; in urgent cases, however, to the Minister Provincial with the consent of his definitory, after obtaining the permission of the Minister General and the consent of his definitory and with due regard for the norms of common law (cann. 609, 1; 610; 611; 1215, 3).

3. The erection of a friary in the territory of another province requires in addition the consent of the Minister Provincial of that province with the deliberative vote of his definitory.

4. A filial house depending on another friary may be erected or suppressed by the Minister Provincial with the consent of his definitory, after consulting the friary chapter of the friary involved and observing the regulations of common law (cann. 609; 616, 1).

5. The suppression of a friary is reserved to the Minister General with the consent of his definitory, after hearing those concerned and consulting the diocesan bishop (can. 616, 1).

CHAPTER 11

THE FORMATION OF THE FRIARS

Spiritual Introduction

a) From the very beginning of the Order blessed Francis clearly stated the premises, stages, and principles of formation: "If anyone is inspired by God to live our life and comes to our brothers, they should welcome him; and if they see that he is determined to profess our Rule they should bring him to their ministers as soon as possible... The minister, for his part, should receive him kindly and encourage him and tell him all about our way of life... The minister should clothe him as a novice for a year... When the year fixed for the novitiate is over, he should be allowed to profess obedience; and once that has been done, he may not... wander about beyond the limits of obedience... No candidate may be received contrary to the norms and the prescriptions of the holy Church' (Rnb 2)

b) Let the friars keep in mind how much gentleness of character attracts others; in other words, that "the example of their own lives is the best commendation" of the Order. To spur the growth of the Order "it is right to publicize themselves in order to foster vocations, and they also have the right

to seek candidates" (PC 24) so as to cultivate the seeds of vocation in them properly.

c) To that candidate, then, who is resolved to embrace our way of life - who is aware that he is called by God and has reached that degree of human and spiritual maturity which will allow him to decide to respond to this call with sufficient and proper responsibility and freedom - the minister shall explain our way of life, namely, the general meaning of the vows and of the Rule, and prepare and encourage him for the time of probation. In most cases, in fact, a gradual spiritual and psychological adjustment appears to be indispensable in order to prepare the way for certain breaks with one's social milieu and even worldly habits. Young people today who are attracted by the religious life are not looking for an easy life; indeed, their thirst for the absolute is consuming.

d) During the entire time of probation those admitted to the Order should strive " ' .. to follow the teaching and footsteps of our Lord Jesus Christ who says: If you wish to be perfect, go and sell all that you own and give the money to the poor and you will have treasure in heaven; ... If anyone wants to be a follower of mine, let him renounce himself and take up his cross and follow me,- and in like manner, If any man comes to me without hating his father, mother, wife, children, brothers, sisters, yes and his own life, too, he cannot be my disciple" (Rnb 1)
At the same time, they should be trained in leading what blessed Francis called the life of the lesser brothers: "so that... his followers might learn from the very name itself that they have come to the school of the humble Christ to learn humility" (LM VI, 5).

e) After the time of probation, those received to obedience promise, through the observance of the evangelical counsels, to follow the footsteps of the Lord who says: "... everyone who has left houses, brothers, sisters, father, mother, children, or land for the sake of my name will be repaid a hundred times over, and also inherit eternal life" (Rnb 1).

Indeed, even though first profession, because it is temporary, is called a period of probation, nevertheless it really makes the candidate share in the consecration proper to the religious state which solemn profession completes, inasmuch as it unites him firmly and permanently to Christ.

f) Meantime, according to the "norms and prescriptions of the holy Church" (Rnb 21), young friars, supported by grace and the help of teachers, should be formed in willing and generous behavior. They should cultivate humility and a strong desire for their own expropriation so as to be able to offer themselves totally despoiled into the arms of the Crucified.
St. Francis wished those entering the Order to have just such a spirit so that strengthened for every eventuality they might be able to uproot worldly affections by the practice of humility and thus be enabled to attain perfection of charity "in the school of perfection" (2 Cel 194)

g) Let the following words of our Seraphic Father be carefully pondered as a synthesis of Franciscan formation: "In the name of the Lord! I beseech all the friars to learn the tenor and meaning of what is written in this life for the salvation of our souls, and to recall it to mind frequently. And I implore God, who is all powerful, triune and one, to bless all who teach, learn, possess, remember, and live it, as often as they repeat and do what is written there for the salvation of our souls" (Rnb 23).

TITLE I

FOSTERING VOCATIONS

30 - 1. With unceasing prayer, apostolic zeal, and the witness of their own lives, all the friars should cooperate in recruiting and fostering vocations - especially missionary vocations - for the whole Church and for our Order.

2. Each province shall establish a vocation program and, as the needs require, should have capable vocation directors engaged in this apostolate in cooperation with diocesan authorities.

31 - 1. With full respect for the freedom of each person, the stirrings of a vocation in young men, whether educated in or outside the Order, should be nurtured diligently.

2. Students in minor seminaries of the Order should, as potential candidates, lead a life consonant with their age, mentality, and stage of development, and the norms of sound psychology. It should not exclude suitable human experiences nor relationships with their own families.

3. In these seminaries the course of studies should be so organized in accordance with local law and custom that the candidates who decide to choose another way of life can pursue their education elsewhere without inconvenience.

4. They should diligently promote initiatives for those whom God has chosen for religious life at different times and in different circumstances of life and who later in life have become aware of their vocation to the Order.

TITLE II

ADMISSION TO THE ORDER

32 - 1. Any sufficiently mature Catholic who, conscious of a religious vocation and aware of its obligations, has freely submitted a request in writing may be admitted to the Order if he is endowed with the qualities required by universal law and by our own and is not prevented by any impediment (cann. 597, 1; 643). The ministers should then discern in the candidate the signs and qualities of a true vocation to our brotherhood.

2. In each candidate the following are required: a right intention, freedom, adequate physical and psychic health - to be discerned also in the context of the candidate's family and his affective family relations - necessary intellectual, moral and spiritual formation, and the ability to lead the fraternal and apostolic life of the Order.

33 - 1. The provincial statutes shall determine what testimonials and documents are to be presented for each candidate and, with due attention to the norms of common law (cann. 643, 1; 645, 1-2) and local requirements, set the minimum age for entry into the novitiate.

2. Moreover, they should determine how the prior period of probation is to be passed; likewise, whether the postulancy is advisable for all or only some candidates and what should be its nature

and duration, which may vary for individual candidates.

34 - 1. Admission to the Order is effected by reception into the novitiate in a province or custody by the respective major superior with the consent of his definitory, obtained by secret vote.

2. Only the Minister General with the consent of his definitory may admit a candidate who has left the Order legitimately after completing the novitiate or after profession; it is up to the same Minister General to determine a suitable probationary period before temporary profession without the obligation of repeating the novitiate and a time in such vows prior to solemn profession, according to Const. nos. 35 and 45, 2.

35 - The formation and the testing of a vocation both by the candidate and by the Order extends over the entire period between reception and solemn profession. It includes, therefore, the novitiate and the years of temporary profession which, without prejudice to Const. n. 45, 2, may not be less than three years and no longer than six.

TITLE III NOVITIATE AND PROFESSION

36 - 1. The beginning of the novitiate should be a public act. It should be conducted according to the ritual of the Order and the provincial statutes and recorded in a book for this purpose.

2. After the candidates have been received into the Order they shall make a twelve-month novitiate in a friary duly designated for this purpose.

3. Only the Minister General with the consent of his definitory may, by written decree, erect, transfer, or suppress the novitiate house.

4. In particular cases and as an exception the Minister General with the consent of his definitory may allow a candidate to make his novitiate in another friary of the Order or province under the guidance of an approved friar.

5. The major superior can permit the group of novices to live for a period of time in another house of the Order designated by himself.

37 - 1. With due regard for the prescriptions of Const. n. 36, 5 and cann. 647-649, absence from the novitiate house which lasts more than three months, either continuous or interrupted, renders the novitiate invalid. An absence of more than fifteen days must be made up.

2. For a just reason the major superior can allow first profession to be anticipated but not by more than fifteen days, and also to be made outside the novitiate.

3. The major superior or the guardian of the novitiate or their delegate may admit a novice in danger of death to profession. Should he recover he will be in the same status as though he had never made profession.

38 - 1. The novitiate constitutes the indispensable foundation of all religious formation and therefore it should be dedicated solely to instructing candidates thoroughly and soundly in the Franciscan way of life.

2. Under the guidance of a director and pursuant to the norms of law (cann. 650, 2; 651), novices are to be trained to engage in the various works of the Order progressively, all the while cultivating that union with Christ which must be the wellspring of their every apostolic activity. Therefore, they are not to live an artificial life but one consonant with the life they will live as professed religious.

3. Excluded from the novitiate year are studies directed toward the obtaining of diplomas or in view of professional training.

4. Although some separation of the novices is required they may, according to the prudent judgment of their director, retain suitable relationships with their families and have contacts with religious and other persons.

39 - 1. Admission to temporary or solemn profession is reserved to the same superiors who, pursuant to Const. n. 34, are competent to receive them into the Order, with due observance of the norms of law (cann. 656; 658).

2. The Minister General, after receiving the decision of the Minister Provincial with the consent of his definitory, may admit friars to profession on his own authority with due observance of the norms of law.

3. At the end of the novitiate, therefore, and again before solemn profession the candidate must submit a written request to his superior for admission to profession.

40 - 1. The director, after consulting with his assistants and studying prior reports, must present his report and opinion concerning each candidate to the proper major superior whose right it is with the consent of his definitory to admit to profession.

2. The major superior, however, either in person or through a delegate should inquire into the intentions of the candidates and also solicit the views of the other friars of the friary.

3. If the candidate is residing outside his province the prescriptions of Const. n. 40, 1, are to be carried out by the major superior of the place and the pertinent documents forwarded to the candidate's major superior to whom with the consent of his definitory the deliberative vote is always reserved.

41 - 1. The major superior or his delegate shall receive the solemn profession according to the ritual of the Order. It may be anticipated for a just cause but not by more than three months. The act of profession is to be recorded in the register of professions.

2. The formula of religious profession is the following:

Since for the glory of God the Lord has given me this grace of living more perfectly and with firm will

the gospel of Jesus Christ, I, Friar N. N., in the presence of the assembled friars, and into your hands, Father N. N., vow for three years (or:... year (s); for the whole time of my life) to live in obedience, without anything of my own, and in chastity, according to the Rule of St. Francis confirmed by Pope Honorius III and the Constitutions of the Friars Minor Conventual. Therefore, with all my heart I give myself

to this brotherhood, that through the work of the Holy Spirit, the intercession of the Immaculate Virgin Mary, our Father Francis, and all the saints, and with the help of my brothers, I may fulfill my consecration to the service of God and of the Church.

42 - 1. Unless the provincial statutes determine otherwise vows made at the end of the novitiate are taken for a period of three years and then if necessary are renewed as occasion offers until solemn profession.

2. Friars in temporary vows are bound by the same obligation as solemnly professed to observe the Rule and the Constitutions. Likewise, they share in all the graces and privileges of the Order as do the solemnly professed; however, they do not have active and passive voice.

43 - The period of temporary vows is intended to consolidate and perfect the formation begun in the novitiate and to complete the candidates' and Order's experience of each other.

44 - I. The Minister General with the consent of his definitory is competent to grant a friar in temporary vows, who for a grave reason asks to leave the Order, an indult to leave. Unless it has been rejected by him in the act of notification the indult brings with it by the law itself a dispensation from vows and from all obligations arising from profession (cann. 688, 2; 692).

2. Major superiors, however, aware of their duty should not defer to a later date the decision to return a friar to the world which they could and

should have made earlier (cann. 653, I and 696, 2). If just causes are present, including that of illness contracted - in the judgment of specialists - after profession (can. 689), when temporary profession has expired, the above-mentioned superiors, after listening to their definitories, can exclude the friar from subsequent profession.

45 - 1. It is proper that when a friar pronounces his solemn vows he should have reached the degree of spiritual maturity required, so that the religious state to which he is committing himself in a stable and certain fashion may really be for him a means of perfection and greater love rather than a burden too heavy to carry.

2. Since in certain cases the extension of temporary probation can be an aid to this maturity while in others it can involve drawbacks, the competent superior can extend the period of temporary profession, but not beyond nine years.

3. It is desirable that solemn profession, whereby a friar is consecrated to God forever and definitively incorporated into the Order, should be preceded by a sufficiently long immediate preparation, according to the statutes, so that it can be considered a second novitiate.

46 - 1. Only the Minister General with the consent of his definitory can either allow a friar in solemn vows to transfer to another religious institute or admit to the Order a -religious in perpetual vows coming from another institute with the permission of the supreme moderator of that institute and the consent of his council (cf. can. 684, 1).

2. If, however, the transfer to the Order concerns a member of a secular institute or a society of apostolic life permission of the Holy See is required and its decisions are to be observed.

3. In these instances whatever is prescribed regarding testimonials, the time of probation prior to solemn profession, and the requirements for its validity is to be observed.

4. The time of probation is to last at least three years, the first of which, comparable to the novitiate, is to be spent under the guidance of an approved friar. When the period of probation is over the religious either makes solemn profession or, if he refuses to do so or is not admitted to profession by competent authority, he is to return to his own institute.

TITLE IV

THE PRINCIPLES OF FORMATION

47 - 1. The Order should make every effort so that those called to the Lord's service may attain that level of formation which is considered suitable to the needs of times and places.

2. In formation itself all elements and natural and supernatural aids which contribute to the friar's human, Christian, religious, and - as the case may be - clerical maturity should be most closely coordinated.

48 - 1. The friars, therefore, should be trained in seminaries of the Order or in other suitable institutes, always taking into consideration the nature of the Order and of its apostolates.

2. Seminaries and institutes are to be equipped with the necessary facilities and empowered to confer appropriate degrees upon their graduates.

3. A directory of formation is to be published for the entire Order, for each province, and for each seminary or institute; it should be revised as the changing times require.

49 - 1. Provincial seminaries are established by the provincial chapter with the consent of the Minister General and the deliberative vote of his definitory. Inter-provincial seminaries with due observance of the norms of law are to be encouraged by the conferences of ministers provincial.

2. The seminary in Rome called the Seraphicum, under the immediate jurisdiction of the Minister General, shall be considered common to all provinces of the Order.

50 - 1. Superiors and friars should consider seminaries the heart of the Order and of the province and they should gladly offer their help and assistance.

2. Since the progress of the students depends chiefly upon their educators, these should be chosen

from among the best friars, outstanding for their spirit of prayer, charity, and prudence and well-versed in the principles of formation and education.

51 - 1. Among superiors, directors, and other educators, as well as among the students themselves, harmony of mind and objectives should prevail; this is indispensable for the formation of the friars.

2. The effectiveness of formation depends greatly on the firmness and prudence which the directors and other educators contributing to the training of the friars employ.

3. Within the community young friars should find a spirit of generosity, fervor, and harmony so as to be able to learn together the value of mutual fraternal support, in virtue of which they will progress more easily and persevere more firmly in their vocation.

52 - 1. The duty of each educator as well as his competence and the mutual relations among the educators should be defined in the directory of formation. All, however, should so conduct themselves that they always aim at the greater good of the students.

2. The directory of formation should also provide for the students' participation in the life of the seminary with regard to those matters wherein they can contribute to the common good of the entire institution.

53 - 1. Fraternal cooperation and joint projects should be encouraged among the educators of each province and of the whole Order to improve their own culture and to promote the formation of the young friars.

2. For the entire Order, for each province, and for each center of studies, a formation commission headed by a prefect shall be established. Members of these commissions and their competence shall be defined in the directory of formation.

TITLE V SPIRITUAL FORMATION

54 - 1. From their entrance into the Order, Students, sharing deeply in the life of the Church, should be trained progressively and continuously in the spiritual principles of Franciscan and religious life.

2. They should so master the nature and spirit of the Order and its history, Rule, and Constitutions that every day they become more faithful followers of our Seraphic Father.

3. Likewise, they should be instructed accurately in the obligations of religious profession, especially the theological, ecclesial, and canonical aspects of the evangelical counsels.

4. Moreover, the young friars, sharing the company of the other friars and assisting in their work, should learn to appreciate and always give witness to the Franciscan brotherhood.

55 - 1. The first and foremost duty of students should be the contemplation of things divine and assiduous union with God in prayer (can. 663, 1).

2. The celebration of the most Holy Eucharist is to be the center of the entire life of the seminary so that the students may participate daily in the Eucharistic sacrifice, receive the most Sacred Body of Christ, adore the same Lord present in the Sacrament, and especially draw from this richest of all sources the strength of spirit needed for their apostolic work and their spiritual life (cann. 246, 1; 663, 2).

3. They are to be formed to celebrate the Liturgy of the Hours by which the ministers of God pray to God in the name of the Church on behalf of all the people committed to them (can. 246, 2).

4. All candidates, through reading and pondering Sacred Scripture - especially the holy gospel - should conform themselves to the life of Christ and accustom themselves to living in a spirit of prayer and a state of permanent oblation to the Father.

5. Candidates should become accustomed to approach the sacrament of penance frequently; it is also recommended that each one have a director for his spiritual life who has been freely chosen and to whom he can open his conscience with confidence (can. 246, 4).

6. Friars who aspire to sacred orders should intimately and continually join together religious profession with clerical life and learn to strengthen their spiritual life in the exercise of sacred orders and pastoral activity.

56 - With filial devotion, all the friars shall always venerate the most Blessed Virgin, Mary Immaculate,

model of perfect charity and Mother of the Church. They should particularly recall how very helpful it is in strengthening one's religious vocation to establish an intimate communion of life with her, mindful, too, of the total consecration of themselves to her according to the spirit of the Militia of Mary Immaculate.

TITLE VI

DOCTRINAL, TECHNICAL, AND PASTORAL FORMATION

57 - 1. Friars should receive that doctrinal, technical, and pastoral formation which is suitable both to the spiritual maturity of their vocation and to the special grace of working and of exercising an apostolate.

2. From their very first year of probation students should accustom themselves to manual labor after the example of our Lord Jesus Christ in accordance with the instructions of our Seraphic Father.

58 - 1. Friars who are not going onward to holy orders should receive suitable theological training throughout the entire time of their probation in houses set up for this purpose

2. They should also learn sciences and trades to the extent that their religious and apostolic formation or the needs of fraternity require.

59 - 1. Before beginning their ecclesiastical studies friars aspiring to holy orders should have acquired that level of education in the humanities and sciences which is normally expected of young men in their respective nations as a requisite for higher studies.

2. Philosophical and theological courses should be so coordinated as to facilitate the gradual opening of the minds of the students both to the treasures of human wisdom and to the mystery of Christ, and to encourage them to fix and permeate their own lives in faith and to embrace their vocation with per-

60 - The masters and educators should regularly call the students' attention to the apostolate and, in accordance with the directory of formation, introduce them gradually to various ministries by mean

61 - 1. With a view toward the needs of the apostolate, of their province, and of the Order and considering the particular character and ability of each friar as well as the value of acquiring cultural experiences in other nations, superiors should send friars to other countries for specialized studies in order to obtain the respective degrees. The study of sacred theology and advanced research in which the tradition of the Franciscan school are laudably stressed

2. Advanced studies in the sacred sciences should be encouraged particularly at the Pontifical Theological Faculty of St. Bonaventure at the Seraphicum in Rome. This Faculty, founded with the cooperation of all the provinces, is governed by its own statutes.

62 - 1. After the completion of regular studies, formation should always be continued and adapted to the culture and needs of the times. Hence, chapters and superiors should make provision that periodicals, books, and other useful aids are available to the friars.

2. Superiors should encourage the participation of the friars in programs of formation for religious.

3. Moreover, considering community needs, superiors should grant a leave of absence from assignment to friars whose request is reasonable, either to renew themselves through the contemplation of divine mysteries or to prepare themselves by special study and training for a more fruitful apostolate.

TITLE VII

ADVANCEMENT TO SACRED ORDERS

63 - After proper preparation, candidates for the ministries shall make a written request to the major superior who, according to the norms of law, is competent to admit them to the ministries.

64 - 1. A candidate for sacred orders must be solemnly professed and must submit a written petition to his major superior. Before a deacon is promoted to the presbyterate, on completing his course of studies he must participate in pastoral care, exercising his diaconal order for a suitable period of time to be defined by his major superior (cf. can. 1032, 2).

2. The major superior shall require a report on the suitability of the candidate from the director in

consultation with his assistants and, at least before ordination to the diaconate, have heard the views of each friar of the community; if the candidate is from another province the consent of the Minister Provincial of that province is required after a prior deliberative vote of his definitory. The Minister General, however, will issue dimissorial letters for those resident in houses under his immediate jurisdiction upon receiving the prior agreement of the respective Minister Provincial with the consent of his definitory and due observance of all legal norms.

3. The major superior should submit all information to his definitory and obtain its consent before issuing any dimissorial letters.

65 - A testimonial of any orders received should be sent as soon as possible to the superior of the ordained's province to be recorded in the book of ordinations and kept in the archives together with other documents pertaining to the friar. A testimonial of ordination to the diaconate should also be sent to the parish of baptism.

66 - 1. In those places where, because of local needs and the laws of the Church the establishment of the permanent diaconate seems opportune, such establishment is left to the provincial statutes, provided the Minister General and his definitory have given prior approval in accordance with the norms of canon law (cann. 236; 1031, 2-3; 1032, 3).

2. For the admission of a permanent deacon to the priesthood the prescriptions of the general statutes are to be observed together with other legal norms.

CHAPTER III

THE PRAYER LIFE OF THE FRIARS

Spiritual Introduction

a) By loving God, the highest good, we friars are earnestly moved by the example and words of our Seraphic Father to direct our hearts to the Father, who "created and formed us in the flesh according to the image of His beloved Son and in the spirit according to His likeness" (Adm 5) and to pray to the same Father: "We give You thanks because by Your holy will and through Your only Son in the Holy Spirit You created all things... and placed us in paradise... We give You thanks because just as You created us through Your Son, so in that true and holy love with which You have loved us You caused Him, true God and true man, to be born of the glorious and most blessed Holy Mary ever Virgin, and through His Cross and blood and death You willed to have us captives redeemed" (Rnb 23) Wherefore, "...we should always make a home and dwelling in ourselves for Him who is the almighty Lord God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit..." (Rnb 22)

b) Let us have recourse to our Lord Jesus Christ "as to the shepherd and guardian of our souls. For He says: Know that I am with you always; yes, to the end of time... The words I have spoken to you are spirit and they are life... I am the Way, the Truth and the life" (Rnb 22). "With wonderful love [St. Francis] always carried about and kept in his heart Christ Jesus and Him crucified" (1 Cel 115) and "...offered a sacrifice of all his members, and receiving the Lamb that was slain would immolate his spirit with the fire that always burned upon the altar of his heart" (2 Cel

201) He therefore begs us his friars: "...to show the greatest possible reverence and honor for the most Holy Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ in whom everything in heaven and everything on earth are propitiated and reconciled to almighty God (EpOrd)

c) " [Heavenly Father,] because none of us, wretches and sinners, are worthy to mention your name, we humbly beg You that our Lord Jesus Christ... together with the Holy Spirit, the Paraclete, give you thanks... on behalf of all" (Rnb 23) In the same Christ Jesus, then, we should render the divine praises with the same ardor of soul with which blessed Francis "recited the psalms with such attention of mind and spirit as if he were in God's visible presence" (LM X, 6).

d) Blessed Francis always contemplated and honored Mary, the Mother of God, whom our heavenly Father "consecrated with His most holy beloved Son and the Holy Spirit, the Paraclete; Mary, in whom there was and is all the fullness of grace and every good" (SaIBVM). In union, therefore, with the Immaculate Mother of God, the Mother of the Church, the Queen of the world, and Mediatrix of all graces and, venerating the memory of the saints, we hope to enjoy their company, and "we await the Savior, our Lord Jesus Christ, until He our life shall appear, and we, too, will appear with Him in glory" (SC 8).

e) Enlightened by a new light, blessed Francis undertook his heart's conversion to almighty God with great joy and he proposed "to begin to do penance" (Test) and from that time to give more heed to "the good Shepherd who underwent the suffering of the cross to save his sheep" (Adm 6).

For this reason "we should hate our body with its vices and sins, because the devil wants to deprive us of the love of our Lord Jesus Christ and of eternal life by having us live according to the flesh" (Rnb 22) And let us always take care "in all our offenses... to punish them interiorly through contrition and exteriorly through confession and works of atonement" (Adm 231 remembering that "the sheep of the Lord have followed Him in tribulation and persecution, disgrace and poverty, in weakness and temptation, and other such situations. Because of these they received everlasting life from the Lord" (Adm 6)

f) Living this way the friars manifestly fulfill in their works the exhortation of the Apostle: "never say or do anything except in the name of the Lord Jesus" (Col 3:17) Likewise, they imitate the spirit and works of faith, hope, and charity of blessed Francis, who in accord with his principle, "my God and my all," lived in full communion with the triune God through Jesus Christ.

TITLE I

THE SPIRIT AND LIFE OF PRAYER

67 - 1. By their religious profession the friars are totally subject to God, who is loved above all else, so as to be related to His service and honor by a new and special title. Therefore, contemplation of things divine and assiduous union with God in prayer is to be the first and foremost duty of the friars (can. 663, 1).

2. Heeding the words of St. Francis to desire persevering prayer above all else, the friars should gratefully fulfill the command of the Lord who by word and example taught His disciples to pray always.

3. Throughout their life and work the friars should continually persevere in the spirit of prayer and devotion after the example of our Seraphic Father who rather than one praying seemed to have been transformed into prayer.

68 - 1. The friars should always endeavor to have the spirit of the Lord and His holy behavior and, intimately connecting prayer with work, to foster throughout their entire life a deep communion with their heavenly Father by sharing in the mysteries of Christ.

2. Since the friars must maintain in their life and conduct what they have received by sharing the mysteries of Christ in the spirit, each one, after communing more intensely with God in prayer, should diligently preserve that union with God the Father in his daily life and Perfect it through the practice of virtue.

3. The friars should endeavor to discern all things in the light of faith, to overcome difficulties on the strength of hope while awaiting the future glory, and to become more and more united to God in the love of Christ, so that in all their actions they may glorify the Father.

TITLE 11

LITURGICAL PRAYER

69 - The Eucharistic Mystery is the source and summit of the entire liturgy and life of the Church; its celebration, therefore, should be the center of the spiritual and apostolic life of each friary and community.

70 - 1. Following the example of the Seraphic Patriarch the friars have chosen to live in a special way with Christ Crucified. They should, therefore, participate daily in the Eucharistic Sacrifice, learn to offer themselves in union with the Divine Victim, be nourished at the table of the Lord's Body, and, through Christ the Mediator, be drawn day by day into ever more perfect union with God and each other so that, finally, God may be all in all.

2. The friars should strive to assist daily at the Eucharistic liturgy in common so that the participation of the brotherhood in the unity of the same sacrifice may be more evident. Concelebration by the priests, as circumstances permit, should be encouraged.

71 - 1. The friars should greatly esteem the Liturgy of the Hours because therein the universal Church, united and present in her appointed ministers together with all her members praying with them, continues the praise which Christ the High Priest introduced into the world and which with the sacrifice of His life He offered to His Father.

2. In each friary all the friars not otherwise legitimately impeded shall celebrate the Liturgy of the Hours in common daily.

3. The friars shall celebrate the Liturgy of the Hours according to the prescriptions of the General Instruction. Wherefore, it is praiseworthy that they should strive to celebrate especially lauds and vespers with greater solemnity and song and, circumstances permitting, foster the participation of the faithful.

4. At the request of the friary chapter the Minister Provincial with the consent of his definitory can determine which canonical hours are to be celebrated in common by a community which, for serious reason, is unable to recite the full Liturgy of the Hours.

72 - 1. Solemnly professed clerics are obliged to recite privately those hours which they do not fulfill in common.

2. Solemnly professed friars who are not clerics and who do not celebrate the Liturgy of the Hours in common are obliged to recite the canonical hours privately or the Our Fathers as prescribed in the Rule.

3. Simply professed friars are urged to recite lauds and vespers privately, either from the Liturgy of the Hours or the Our Fathers as prescribed, should they not have prayed these in common.

73 - 1. Since liturgical actions in particular begin and perfect union with God, the friars should endeavor to prepare themselves for these through frequent study of the liturgical texts and to participate in them as fully as required by their state in life and by the nature of the liturgy itself.

2. In sacred liturgical actions the rite of the Church should be carefully followed and the prescriptions of the Order's calendar and ritual observed; for pastoral reasons, however, the diocesan missal, ritual, and calendar may be used.

3. With the consent of the Minister Provincial the friary chapter can determine the circumstances and order to be followed in conducting liturgical celebrations and popular devotions.

4. Diligent care should be taken of the church, the relics of the saints, furnishings, and whatever else is set apart for liturgical worship.

TITLE III

OTHER SACRED ACTIONS

74 - 1. In accordance with the nature of their life and after the example of St. Francis the friars should worship Christ the Lord present in the most Holy Eucharist through both private and public actions approved by legitimate authority.

2. Moreover, intimate conversation with Christ the Lord during personal adoration and the common daily visit to the most Holy Eucharist should be dear to the heart of each friar.

75 - 1. The friars should always cherish and venerate the Sacred Scriptures as they do the Lord's very own Body. Through them our heavenly Father lovingly meets His children and speaks with them to strengthen their faith and spiritual life.

2. In particular, the friars should continuously meditate on the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, source of all Christian perfection and the basis of the Rule of our Seraphic Father.

3. They should, therefore, approach the sacred text willingly, either during the liturgy and other celebrations of the Word of God or through devotional reading, study, or in other ways.

76 - The friars should likewise engage in daily meditation and devote more time to this than to other forms of prayer. The circumstances of this salutary practice, to last at least one-half hour, should be determined in the provincial statutes.

77 - 1. Each year a retreat should be held in common for a period of five days. Friars who do not make a retreat in common should make one privately.

2. Likewise, days of recollection should be held in a form to be determined by the provincial statutes. During them the friars are to engage in appropriate meditation and in instructions and study regarding the Rule and Constitutions, as well as in exercises conducive to the renewal of their life.

3. A house of prayer or hermitage may be established appropriately in each province or for several provinces. Friars who reasonably request it may, for a given period, devote themselves there more intensely to prayer.

4. It is the right of the Guardian to grant permission to preach in our churches and oratories to those whom he is certain have been approved as qualified by their ordinaries (cf. can. 765).

78 - 1. The friars should earnestly strive to honor the Blessed Virgin Mary with filial affection and with the spirit of their consecration in liturgical actions, in popular devotions, and in personal prayer after the example of our Seraphic Father. They should also endeavor to pray the rosary of our Lady or the Franciscan crown according to the traditions of the Order.

2. All the friars should fervently venerate the Blessed Virgin Mary in the mystery of the Immaculate Conception as the special Protectress of the Order and its Queen. They should celebrate this feast of hers everywhere and with the greatest solemnity possible by also renewing the consecration of the Order to her. Likewise, according to their ability they should encourage and spread devotion to the mystery of the Immaculate Conception.

3. They should honor and imitate St. Joseph, Protector of the Order, an outstanding example of religious life.

79 - 1. The feast of our Holy Father Francis, too, should be celebrated with solemnity. His life and works should always be recalled so that his genuine seraphic spirit may continually remain with his sons.

2. The friars should also venerate the other saints of the Order with special honor and imitation, especially St. Anthony, the Evangelical Doctor, as well as St. Bonaventure, the Seraphic Doctor.

80 - 1. The friars should also attend to the nourishing of their life of union with God by means of those suitable pious exercises through which our Seraphic Father and our forefathers used to express and celebrate their devotion to the life of Christ and to the mysteries of our salvation.

2. In all that pertains to the performance of sacred actions and popular devotions the prescriptions of the Church are to be duly observed; popular devotions and private prayers, however, should be imbued with the spirit of the liturgy.

TITLE IV

PENANCE

81 - The friars should also foster the spirit of the Lord and His holy behavior by means of evangelical and Franciscan penance. Through this they suffer with Christ, become more and more conformed to the mystery of the cross, and thoroughly imbued with his love for God the Father and for all, thereby achieving a deeper mastery of self and a fuller purification of their consciences.

82 - The friars should approach the sacrament of penance frequently so that they may grow in purity of heart and draw closer to the Father.

83 - 1. The friars should endeavor to unite both inner conversion of the heart to God and interior penance with various works of mortification.

2. Hence, they should continually offer to God the hardship, infirmities, persecutions, and deprivations of this life which accompany either the profession of vows or common life. Finally, at the hour of death, following the example of St. Francis, they should commend their life itself into God's hands as their final offering.

84 - The friars shall faithfully observe the penitential season and days prescribed for the entire Church according to the norms for the local churches.

85 - The following are to be observed as penitential seasons proper to the Order:

a) by precept of the Rule: from the feast of All Saints to Christmas and each Friday of the year. During these times the friars must fast or, in accordance with the needs of time and place, perform other forms of penance which the Minister Provincial with his definitory will have determined.

b) by virtue of these Constitutions: the vigils of the immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary and of our Holy Father St. Francis. The prescriptions of the provincial statutes are to be observed for doing penance on these days.

CHAPTER IV

THE COMMUNITY LIFE OF THE FRIARS

Spiritual introduction

a) "Our Order... is a very large company, a kind of general assembly which has come together from every part of the world under a common form of life" (2 Cel 192) This is what blessed Francis openly says of his seraphic Order which he properly calls a fraternity, all of whose members are united among themselves by fraternal bonds and relationships. Although he assigned them different ministries or positions, nonetheless he considered them "all brothers, both the ministers and the others" (Rnb 221 and "all brothers... both clerical and lay, whether given to preaching, praying, or manual labor" (Rnb 17)

Therefore, "it was his abiding desire and diligent concern to protect the bond of unity among his sons, so that those whom the same spirit drew together and the father brought forth might be nurtured in the bosom of the same mother" (2 Cel 191) "This... is what makes the beauty of this family shine forth, whose many different virtues greatly pleases the head of the family" (2 Cel 192)

b) Our Seraphic Father clearly perceived his fraternity patterned - and wanted it ever to be formed after the image of both the community of the apostles called by the Lord "to be his companions and to be sent out to preach" (Mk 3: 14),,and also of the entire Church wherein believers are made members of Christ in the communion of faith and charity as in the

early Church, where the multitude of the faithful was of one heart and one mind. Hence, he insistently begged all the friars, both the ministers and the others, namely, the whole community:

"Stay awake praying at all times for the strength to... stand with confidence before the Son of Man'.

And let us have recourse to Him as to the shepherd and guardian of our souls, who says: 'I am the good Shepherd... You are all brothers... since you have only one Father, and He is in heaven... You have only one Teacher, the Christ... For where two or three meet in my name, I shall be there with them'. Therefore, let us adhere to the words, examples, and teaching of Him who deigned to pray for us: 'Holy Father, keep those you have given me true Your name so that they may be one like us'" (Rnb 22)

c) From the very first statement of his Rule St. Francis indicates the intimate bond and reciprocal influence between the gospel life, expressed by the vows and apostolate, and the common life, when he prescribes them jointly as necessary for the forming of the integral way of life of the Friars Minor. The friars, therefore, are bound to profess this life "by living in obedience, without anything of their own, and in chastity", persevering in fraternal and obedient communion with St. Francis and his successors. For this reason blessed Francis exhorts them saying: "Persevere in the instruction received and in holy obedience, and what you have promised Him fulfill with good and firm resolve. The Lord God presents Himself to us as to sons" (EpOrd) namely, as the reward for the Profession of vows and common discipline.

d) Our Seraphic Father was accustomed to assemble his brothers to speak with them of the kingdom of

God. The friars themselves yearned to gather together with St. Francis for a mutual exchange of sentiments and to inspire each other to a renewal of life (cf. I Cel 30) "And, indeed, since they despised all earthly things and never loved one another selfishly, but rather directed all their affection toward the common good, they sought to offer their very selves to meet any fraternal need. They assembled willingly, they remained together even more willingly; living alone was hard for all, separation sad, and departure bitter" (I Cel 39)

The friars manifest these same reasons for being united when they assemble in any kind of chapter. Blessed Francis frequently commanded the friars and ministers to gather together with their Minister General in chapters in which he always greeted "his very beloved brothers... in Him who has redeemed and washed us in His blood" (EpOrd) with all his heart and gave them salutary exhortations. He also exhorts the Ministers Provincial that, as often as they can, each endeavor "to meet with his friars... to treat of those matters which pertain to God" (Rnb 18)

In the friary chapter, however, and "wherever the friars may be... let them show that they are members of one family" (Rb 6)

e) "Instructed by a revelation from on high," St. Francis "understood that he had been sent by the Lord to win souls for Christ... And so the man of God with his companions repaired to an abandoned hut..." and then "having become a herald of the gospel, went about the cities and towns proclaiming the kingdom of God" (LM IV, 2,3,5)

The following general apostolic exhortation of St. Francis confirms and expresses well this common apostolic effort of the whole Order recommended by Francis to all his friars: "...All of us Friars Minor, useless servants, humbly beg and entreat all on earth, who are and who will be, that we all persevere in the true faith and in repentance, because otherwise none of us can be saved" (Rnb 23)

f) Once blessed Francis had founded the brotherhood of the Friars Minor, "...very many, inspired by the ardor of his preaching, bound themselves to observe the new obligations to do penance according to the way adopted by the man of God, which he decided to call the Order of 'The Brothers of Penance'...Virgins, too, were converted to perpetual celibacy, among whom was Clare, most beloved of God, of these virgins the 'first little plant'... She was a daughter in Christ of our holy Father Francis, the little poor man, and mother of the Poor Ladies" (LM IV, 6)
Thereafter, the first Order itself, like a luxuriant tree, brought forth the various families of Friars Minor. Hence it is most fitting that all who consider Francis their Seraphic Father constantly cultivate fraternal communion so that always and everywhere the fulness of the Franciscan charism may flourish.

TITLE I

FRANCISCAN FRATERNAL LIFE

86 - 1. The friars profess a common way of life and are united in a true community, rooted and founded on love, structured by the same spiritual and legal bonds, and fashioned after the form of an ecclesial community in order to promote and express better the common profession of vows.

2. Since the friars should strive continuously to build up this community, just as they have received a gift each should employ it for the good of the other and all should do so for the common good. In each friary, in each province, and in the whole Order they should strive to achieve and maintain this manner of life which perfects and exemplifies the nature of true brotherhood, namely, a family of brothers.

87 - 1. Within the framework of the Order, the province, and of each friary mutually beneficial relations should be encouraged among the friars to promote unity in life, government, education, and the apostolate.

2. In order to stimulate and maintain a sense of cooperation and responsibility on the part of each friar dialogue among the friars for the exchange of information and for consultation should be encouraged at opportune times and in suitable ways, both in chapters and definitories as well as in informal personal and familial discussions.

3. It is the responsibility of all the friars, however, to cooperate in discerning the will of God

better. The friars should always willingly carry out the decisions of the superiors whose responsibility it is to guide the community according to the Rule and Constitutions.

88 - 1. The communion of fraternal charity should be fostered in a special way through general and provincial chapters in which respectively the fraternity of the whole Order and that of the whole province assembled in the name of the Lord must be expressed, confirmed, and perfected.

2. Fraternal charity, however, should be promoted particularly by the friary chapter in which friars earnestly endeavor to consider in the Lord all matters pertaining to their family, spiritual, and apostolic life, either by way of fraternal consensus or, pursuant to the Constitutions, as the council of the Guardian or as a collegial body.

3. All friars who, according to Const. n. 203, are members of the friary chapter must participate in it. They should freely and humbly express their own views with a lively sense of responsibility and offer their own personal experience in the solution of problems and the advancement of projects.

89 - 1. The regular observance of common life should neither hinder nor restrict the legitimate undertakings of individual friars; rather, these should be encouraged, evaluated, and organized according to the needs and opportunities of both the community and the friars involved.

2. The friars, however, should not seek what serves only their own interests, nor engage in their own activities - in isolation as it were from the community - nor prefer their personal advantage to the good of the community.

90 - 1. Superiors should so exercise their authority toward the friars that they express God's love for them and lead them to unity in charity. Consequently, the spiritual and temporal welfare of the community and of each friar should be uppermost in their hearts.

2. Friars should cheerfully support their superiors by charity and obedience and share in their concerns by prayer and work so that superiors may fulfill their office more fruitfully.

91 - 1. Friars should always express their mutual love by courteous conduct; they should render spiritual and material services to one another for their mutual development and activity.

2. The friars should avoid judgments and any words or actions which may hinder or disturb peace, charity, and the duties of fraternal affection. They should be especially vigilant lest differences of situation or age give rise in the brotherhood to discrimination or favoritism. Rather, these differences should be an incentive to charity and integral relationships. They should promptly forgive offenses should any occur.

92 - 1. The superiors and other friars should exercise constant and provident charity in assisting older friars and in caring for the sick so that spiritual comfort may be available to them, especially through the sacraments.

2. Sick friars should confidently disclose their condition so that they may receive whatever is necessary for the recovery of their health or the alleviation of their suffering. At the same time they should realize that by offering up their infirmities to God they contribute greatly to their own sanctification, to the works of the apostolate, and to the life of the community.

TITLE 11

COMMON EXERCISES

93 - 1. The nature and discipline of the fraternity require that the friars perform certain exercises in common and adopt certain external forms of life as appropriate means for strengthening and expressing the unity of life in common.

2. Likewise, activities which are carried out personally according to the needs of each one's spiritual life and of the apostolate are to be coordinated with the goals of the community.

94 - A suitable schedule for community exercises which takes into account the spiritual and apostolic needs of each of the friars should be established in the friary chapter and confirmed by the major superior.

95 - 1. The friars should be diligent in performing liturgical celebrations and other sacred services in common so that their spirit, thus refreshed in liturgical communion, may permeate their common apostolic activity and their whole family life.

2. Members of the same family, friars should also share in the communion of the same table, expressing their love for one another and the similarity to the Eucharistic banquet. A brief spiritual reading should precede the meal.

3. They should also participate actively and joyfully in common recreation and fraternal conversation.

4. Friars should assume community offices and carry out household chores gladly. When they are detained outside the friary they should find comfort in the thought of their own community.

96 - 1. In order to safeguard the privacy and freedom of common life better, access to the private quarters of the friary should not be allowed to outsiders except for a just cause.

2. It is the right of the major superiors to define or change the cloister limits. For a reasonable cause, however, the Guardian may suspend the cloister in individual instances.

3. Silence which is conducive to work, study, and the spirit of prayer should be encouraged. Necessary discretion is to be observed in the use of communications media, and whatever is harmful to one's vocation and dangerous to the chastity of a consecrated person is to be avoided (can. 666).

4. Friars of the Order and of other Franciscan families as well as guests who come to our friaries should be received with religious charity and hospitality.

97 - 1. The religious habit of the friars, the sign of our consecration and of our community and a witness to poverty, must be simple and modest, poor and becoming. It consists of a black tunic with a capuche and a white cord. In certain places, for a reasonable cause approved by the Minister General with the consent of his definitory, the grey habit may be worn.

2. According to custom, it is laudable to wear - suspended from the cord - the Franciscan crown of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

3. The friars must wear the habit of the Order. The Minister General, however, for particular reasons and as long as these last may permit another form of dress.

98 - 1. It is proper for friars who are traveling through cities and places where there are friaries of the Order to lodge at these insofar as this is possible.

2. Vacations shall be granted in accordance with the provincial statutes and the diversity of times and needs in a manner, however, that is proper to religious.

99 - 1. Friars should gratefully pay their obligations toward their parents, relatives, and benefactors for whom we pray privately and in common, so that this may redound to their edification and spiritual welfare.

2. The friars, who have chosen to serve God alone, should not become involved inopportunistly in the affairs of their relatives; superiors, however, should prudently and charitably assist such persons when they are in want.

3. The respective ministers may enroll those who have assisted the Order or province in some outstanding way among the spiritual sons and daughters and friends of the Order or province. A suitable diploma should be used to indicate that they share in all the spiritual graces of our brotherhood.

100 - All those whom we employ should be treated charitably and respectfully. They should be assisted in leading a Christian life and should be paid a just wage stipulated by contract in conformity with the norms of civil law.

101 - The friars should rejoice in being considered "lesser brothers" and in acting as members of one

family. Whenever an order of precedence is required the general statutes are to be observed.

TITLE III

THE DUTY OF CHARITY TOWARD THE DECEASED

102 - 1. Since it is a good and holy thought to pray for the dead that they may be released from their sins the friars should exercise the greatest concern and charity toward our confreres, parents, relatives, and benefactors who have left this world. The souls of the friars and all the faithful departed, for whom the friars are bound to pray according to the precept of the Rule, should be assisted by devout suffrages.

2. Every month a Mass should be celebrated in each friary for our deceased confreres, parents relatives and benefactors. The friars should participate in it; if they cannot they should attend another Mass or recite vespers.

3. On the day after All Souls Day suffrages shall be offered as prescribed in the preceding paragraph; all friar priests, however, shall offer the sacrifice of the Mass for the deceased.

4. Other suffrages are to be determined more exactly in the general and provincial statutes.

TITLE IV

THE ADMINISTRATION OF GOODS IN COMMON

103 - 1. The principal responsibility for the administration of the goods of the fraternity resides and is exercised in the friary, provincial, and general chapters. With due precautions the general and provincial chapter may expressly authorize its respective minister with his definitory to handle acts of extraordinary administration.

2. Ordinary and daily administration is the responsibility of the officials elected by counters in their respective chapters. They are dependent on the superiors, whose duty it is to see to the correct administration of the goods.

3. For the validity of any alienation, exchange, or lease of goods the written permission of the respective superior and his council is required, according to the statutes. If, moreover, it is a matter of an act of administration which exceeds the amount set by the Holy See, and also of items given to the Church in virtue of a vow, or items of precious art, or of historical value, besides the written approval of the Minister General and his definitory the permission of the Holy See is also required.

104 - Friaries, provinces, and the Order itself, as well as other juridical persons of the Order are to be legally incorporated, according to the provincial statutes. Likewise, respective legal representatives of these juridical persons are to be appointed who, personally or through delegates,

under the dependence of the superiors, are empowered to carry out acts of administration valid under civil law. Should this become impossible other appropriate arrangements should be made.

105 - 1. In each friary, in each province, and in the Order there should be one central administration which respectively shall unite all the subadministrations of various offices, institutional activities, offerings, and the like.

2. The entire administration of a friary, of a province, or of the Order should be entrusted to the exactor and the econom by the respective chapter. The exactor shall receive all receipts, assist the econom, and with him oversee the account books. The econom shall make all expenditures within the limits of his competence and procure whatever is necessary for the temporal sustenance of the community. The assignments of exactor and econom can be joined, if the statutes so permit.

106 - 1. The office of major superior is incompatible with the assignment of both exactor and of econom.

2. The Guardian may not exercise the office of exactor or econom of a friary unless necessity requires it and he is approved by the Minister Provincial with the consent of his definitory. Permission is to be given in writing and recorded in the account book.

107 - 1. The friary chapter shall determine what acts of administration the Guardian and other officials are authorized to carry out habitually.

2. The provincial chapter shall decide what goods and administrative responsibilities belong to the province. So, too, it shall define the competence of both the Minister Provincial alone as well with his definitory, that of the friary chapter, and also the amount and the frequency of the assessments to be levied on the friaries of the province.

3. The general chapter shall define what goods and administrative responsibilities belong to the Order. It shall determine the competence of the Minister General alone and with his definitory. By deliberative vote it shall determine the assessments to be levied on the provinces and general custodies to meet the needs of the Order and of the poor provinces.

108 - 1. Friars, especially administrators, should beware of any unlawful activities and illicit acts of administration as well as of every semblance of the amassing of goods and of trade.

2. Agreements entered into by officials should be duly honored and the price of purchases paid exactly and on time.

3. Debts should not be contracted unless it is certain that the capital and interest on the debt can be repaid with certainty and within a reasonable time from regular income or from other sources.

109 - 1. If any official acts in the name and by mandate of a chapter or the major superior with the consent of his definitory, the respective juridical person is responsible and not the higher juridical person.

2. No friar can participate in any way in the administration of the goods of a physical or juridical

person outside the Order unless by way of exception and with the written permission of the major superior.

3. Should a friar violate the law or cause damage through his own malice or fault, he alone will be responsible.

I 10 -It is the responsibility of chapters to adopt uniform account books and to regulate the insurance of goods and of friars as well as the safe deposit of money or other securities. These and other like matters are to be defined more exactly in the statutes.

II 1 - 1. Under the careful supervision of the superiors the officials are to record exactly and faithfully all receipts and expenditures, all business transactions, and changes in economic condition in the account books so that the financial status and state-

TITLE V

RELATIONS WITH OTHER FRANCISCAN FAMILIES

114 - 1. Fraternal association and cooperation with friars of the other families of our Seraphic Father St. Francis should be encouraged. Our friars should, therefore, promote suitable initiatives and support those of the other families so as to strengthen the life and apostolate of the entire seraphic community.

2. Moreover, the unity of the Franciscan spirit in the First and Second Orders, in Franciscan congregations, and also in the Secular Franciscan Order should be fostered so that the seraphic charism may flourish in all its fullness.

115 - 1. Major superiors should exercise authority in the houses of women religious affiliated or aggregated to our Order and attend to their spiritual assistance in the manner decreed in their constitutions. They should also conduct canonical visitation in conformity with the norms of law.

2. The superiors should willingly provide them with competent confessors, preachers, spiritual advisors, and chaplains, all of whom are to effectively promote the nuns' contemplative life which must always play a prominent role in the Church and the spiritual and apostolic life of the sisters.

116 - 1. The friars, particularly the designated assistants, should offer to the Secular Franciscan Order the means for leading a life of perfection and for cooperating in the works of the apostolate, in such wise that its members can effectively fulfill their responsibilities in the Church.

2. The Minister General everywhere and the Minister Provincial in his own province have the right to do whatever is required, in conformity with the prescriptions of law and of the respective constitutions, for the erection and assistance of fraternities of the Secular Franciscan Order.

3. The provincial chapter shall carefully select an assistant for the Secular Franciscan Order so that

everything may be promoted and coordinated properly.

TITLE VI

SAFEGUARDING FRATERNAL LIFE

117 - 1. Friars in difficulty should be suitably helped by the other friars, especially by the superiors, even by discreet admonition or fraternal correction should this be necessary and charity so dictate.

2. All should exercise fraternal charity toward those who have left the Order, remember them constantly to God in their prayers, and always treat them as true brothers.

118 - 1. The following lack active and passive voice:

- a) one who is exclaustated, no matter for what reason, until six months after his return to cloister;
- b) one who has requested reduction to the lay state or an indult of secularization from the Minister General and Provincial, during the time his request is pending with the ecclesiastical superiors;
- c) one who has been received back into the Order after having left it unlawfully, for three years from the time of his return.

2. Common law is to be observed with regard to the imposition of other penalties.

119 - 1. The right to dismiss a novice belongs to the novice's own major superior. Should there be danger in delay the local superior with the consent of his chapter may dismiss him.

2. Common law is to be observed in what pertains to absence from a religious house, exclaustation, permission for leaving the Order, and the dismissal of friars both in temporary and solemn vows (cann. 665, 1; 686, 1-3; 688, 2; 691; 695-702).

3. in each case of dismissal the reason for dismissal must be made known to the friar in question and he should be given full liberty to defend himself. Before the decree of dismissal is issued, the friar should be granted, with due observance of the law, the opportunity to leave the Order of his own accord.

CHAPTER V

THE APOSTOLIC LIFE OF THE FRIARS

Spiritual Introduction

- a) Our Seraphic Father St. Francis, who considered the ability to work a vocation and called it a grace, acknowledges: "I worked with my hands, and I want to work; and I earnestly want all the other brothers to work at some honest occupation" (Test.). "The brothers who know a trade should work and exercise the trade they know, if it is not contrary to the good of their soul and can be done honestly" (Rnb 7).

"Those who do not know how, should learn, not for the sake of the pay but for the example and to banish idleness" (Test.) All the brothers should endeavor to work hard in good works... Wherefore, the servants of God should be always busy in praying or doing good" (Rnb 7).

b) Francis also indicated the dispositions or attitudes of friars at work: " ' ..(they) should do their work faithfully and devotedly so that, in avoiding idleness, the enemy of the soul, they not extinguish the spirit of holy prayer and devotion to which all other temporal matters must be subordinate" (Rb 5). "All the brothers wherever they may be among people for service or work... should not be superintendents... nor accept any position that may cause scandal or bring harm to their soul; rather, they should be lesser brothers and subject to everyone..." (Rnb 7).

c) Our Father St. Francis, called by the Lord Christ to apostolic service in these words: "Francis, go, repair my house which as you can see is falling completely to ruin,' prepared himself to obey and dedicated himself entirely to the command" (2 Cel 10)

When he heard the words of the gospel about the mission of the apostles, "intensely exulting in the spirit of God, he said: 'This is what I want, this is what I seek, this I long to do with all my heart'" (1 Cel 22) For Francis, a man who was catholic and apostolic, "did not consider himself a friend of Christ unless he loved the souls whom Christ had loved" (2 Cel 172)

d) Francis, the herald of the great King, preached in many regions "...the way of the Son of God and the doctrine of truth by example" (1 Cel 891 and he commanded his brothers: "Go, dearly beloved, two by two into the different parts of the world, announcing to men peace and repentance unto the forgiveness of sins; and be patient in tribulation..." (1 Cel 29@ And he encouraged their efforts: "For this is the reason he has sent you into the whole world, so that by word and example you may bear witness to His message and convince everyone that there is no one almighty besides Him" (EpOrd)

e) For the servant of the most high God, Francis, on leaving the Saracens, " ' ..walked the land and furrowed it with the plow of his word, sowing the seed of life-bearing fruit" (1 Cel 56). He sent his friars as missionaries to the nations and wrote: "whoever by divine inspiration may wish to go among the Saracens and other unbelievers may go with the permission of his minister and servant. . The minister should give them permission and raise no objection, if he sees them fit to be sent; for the minister shall have to give an account of it to the Lord if he acts imprudently in this and like matters. The

TITLE I

THE BASIS OF FRANCISCAN ACTIVITY

120 - 1. Since they share in various and specific ways in the Church's ministry, established by God to spread the kingdom of Christ throughout the world to the glory of God the Father, and thus to make all people partakers of the saving redemption, and through them to direct the entire universe to Christ, the friars should strive zealously to lead apostolic lives completely directed to this same goal.

2. The Order shares in and exercises this ministry through all its members and in different ways, namely, through the friars who have received sacred orders, or through the friars who, sharing in this same ministry by virtue of their Christian and religious vocation, fulfill a role in the mission of the

Church.

3. Since our Seraphic Father intended that he and his Order should share in the mission of the Church through apostolic activity, the friars should diligently engage also in external works of the apostolate. Their entire religious life, therefore, should be imbued with an apostolic spirit and all their apostolic work should be informed by a religious spirit.

121 - 1. By their profession of the evangelical counsels the friars consecrate all their energies in a special way to the proclamation of Christ's message in word and deed and to the dispensation of His grace, so as to be able to instill the spirit of the gospel in diverse communities and spheres of life and give witness to the coming of Christ's kingdom.

2. The primary apostolate of the friars is to live the gospel life among people in charity and poverty, in simplicity and humility.

122 - 1. Whatever kind of work the friars may do, it should always manifest the true quality of fraternity and minority.

2. As true friars minor they should make themselves available to all for the service of the Church and the assistance of others. They should undertake humble tasks joyfully, even without compensation. In choosing among suitable means of work they should select the poorer and employ the simpler methods.

3. The activity of the fraternity should express its interior unity and day by day become the leaven of a more effective apostolate.

123 - 1. Friars should work in such a way that they do not extinguish the spirit of prayer and devotion; rather, they should foster prayer more intensely and thus sanctify their work and make it fruitful.

2. From the very first stages of the friars' formation great care should be taken to develop spontaneity and responsibility in prayer and work.

124 - 1. Works of the apostolate should be undertaken on the basis of a consensus among the friars and should be assigned by the superiors to individual religious after taking into account the quality and ability of the friars.

2. All friars, especially those experienced in specialized tasks and assignments should offer to help other communities willingly and fraternally.

3. In planning and executing projects the friars should, insofar as possible, work together as a group.

4. The friars should also be solicitous so that the obligations they take on will not hamper the unity

or witness of the fraternity.

TITLE 11

AREAS AND FORMS OF FRANCISCAN ACTIVITY

125 - 1. The friars may carry out their apostolate in many ways, either through pastoral, intellectual, and manual activity or also through the witness of their Franciscan presence.

2. Responding to the more urgent needs of their own time, with bold spiritual confidence and in accordance with the directives of the Church, friars should attempt new approaches both in the choice and in the exercise of the apostolate.

3. Although no form of the apostolate is foreign to the Order, nevertheless those activities should be chosen which are more urgent in view of the good of the Church and the needs of the times, places, and groups, abandoning those works which today are less effective or opportune.

4. Friars should strive to know the society in which they live, to be in communion with it, and to give it their pastoral ministry.

TITLE II

AREAS AND FORMS OF FRANCISCAN ACTIVITY

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4. Friars should strive to know the society in which they live, to be in communion with it, and to give it their pastoral ministry.

126 - 1. The goal of the pastoral ministry of the friars should be to bring the faithful, as sharers in the Eucharist who have been instructed through the preaching of the gospel in the plan of our heavenly Father and incorporated through the sacraments into the mystical Body of Christ, to unite their life and death in the paschal mystery with the sacrifice of Christ the Head.

2. The ministry of preaching and of the sacraments by which the Church makes Christ, the author of salvation, present is entrusted in a special way to friar priests; however, the other friars should make their own important contribution to this ministry.

3. Through the ministry of preaching, faith is kindled in the hearts of unbelievers and nourished in the hearts of the faithful; through the ministry of the sacraments the union with Christ proclaimed in that preaching is brought about and deepened.

127 - Zealous care should be exercised to make our more imposing or famous churches centers of Christian life, of liturgical worship, and of specialized pastoral activity.

128 - 1. Friars should exercise the ministry of the Word in accordance with their particular charisms and for the benefit and edification of their hearers, pointedly yet briefly applying the perennial truth of the gospel to the concrete circumstances of life, using also the more effective means of communication to this end.

2. Since preaching, the proclamation of the wonderful works of God in the history of salvation,

namely, the mystery of Christ, must first draw on Sacred Scripture and on the liturgy as its sources, the friars should read and listen to the Word of God daily so as to be better able to communicate to others the fruits of their own contemplation.

3. Friars should proclaim the mystery of Christ and His gospel of peace, charity, and conversion, exhorting all to an upright life in accordance with the law of the gospel.

4. In order to make their preaching of the gospel fully effective, friars should be trained carefully and acquire special competence in pastoral preaching by constant practice.

129 - 1. Friars should regard the ministry of grace as the principal goal of the mission of the Church and within this mission the celebration of the Eucharistic Sacrifice as the high point of the ministry of sanctification. For friar priests the celebration of the Eucharist should constitute the principal apostolic action of their ministerial priesthood by which the sacrifice of the cross is continually made present and becomes in fact the sacrifice of the people of God. For the other friars participation in the Eucharistic Sacrifice should likewise constitute the principal apostolic action of their common priesthood.

2. According to their particular state, friars should dispense the other sacraments, together with all the Church's ministries and apostolic works, intimately united with and ordered to the Eucharist, with a promptness and zeal so as to promote sacramental life and a life of prayer, especially liturgical prayer, among the faithful.

3. Friar priests should devote themselves with particular zeal to the administration of the sacrament of penance or reconciliation, keeping in mind both the human condition, so much in need of continual renewal and increase of God's grace, and the goodness of our Redeemer who does not will the death of the sinner but that he be converted and live.

130 - 1. Friars should strive to bring back those who have fallen away from the practices of Christian life into living union with Christ.

2. Friars should take special care of the sick and, therefore, they should visit them frequently and provide them ample opportunity to receive the sacraments. Likewise, they should carefully prepare the dying for a holy passing to eternal life.

131 - Friar priests, who are consecrated for the office of the presbyterate, should remember that they, too, are the providential assistants of the episcopal order in meeting the increased needs of people. The other friars, who also form part of the diocesan family in a special way, should provide important help to the sacred hierarchy.

132 - 1. With a view toward the good of souls the friars may accept parochial responsibilities, even on a temporary basis; always, however, in such a way as to be able to give effective testimony before the people of God to their minority and fraternity in their life and work.

2. Moreover, the greatest care is to be taken that in these parishes apostolic life is coordinated with the observances of friary life. Therefore, insofar as possible, no parishes are to be accepted where a community cannot be formed.

133 1. Mindful of the calling of all the laity to the apostolate, friars should work fraternally with them in and for the Church and have a special concern for the laity in their apostolic endeavors. Friars should not take on duties which by their nature are better suited to the laity.

2. The Secular Franciscan Order should be promoted everywhere, in accordance with Const. n. 116. Moreover, knowledge of the spirit of St. Francis should be fostered among diocesan priests so that they, too, will join the Secular Franciscan Order, extend its activities into their parishes and societies, and then in turn receive assistance from the members of the Secular Franciscan Order.

3. Likewise, friars should zealously and devoutly develop the Militia of Mary Immaculate among the laity and clergy since it expresses more fully the Marian spirit of our seraphic Order and is rightly considered an outstanding form of evangelical apostolate.

134 - Inspired by the spirit of that peacemaker, our Father Francis, friars should take part in ecumenical activities. On becoming well-versed in ecumenism they should patiently and prudently endeavor by personal contact and group work, in accordance with the directives of the Church, to contribute to the realization of that fullness which the Lord wills for His Body.

135 - In the field of non-Christian relations, friars can collaborate out of apostolic concern, within the limits laid down by competent ecclesiastical authority, in those projects whose immediate goal is the promotion of human values.

136 - 1. Qualified friars, evaluating social and economic problems wisely in the light of faith, should share to a certain extent in the life, needs, and trials of their fellow men and women so as to be able to assist them effectively.

2. Friars should cooperate as much as they can with all persons of good will in charitable initiatives, social welfare, and international solidarity to lead all people out of misery and ignorance into truly human conditions of life and to foster justice and peace among all.

137 - 1. Friars should promote scholarly activity and research particularly in the fields of Franciscan life and doctrine. The results of this research as well as the practical experiences of the friars should be made public, by way of the various communications media, too. Permission of the major superior as well as that of the local ordinary is required to publish writings dealing with religion or morals (cf. can. 832).

2. Friars attending institutes of higher learning, whether as teachers or as students, should give a witness of Franciscan life by joining love of truth with the wisdom and following of the gospel.

138 - 1. Friars who are qualified may participate in the apostolate of education or higher learning in institutes of any kind, even non-Catholic.

2. Educational activities, whether teaching the arts and sciences or providing other services related to this work, are also to be considered among forms of the apostolate always open to the apostolic mission of our Order.

3. At institutes and centers of information, friars should help people to become imbued with the spirit of Christ so that they themselves may attend to the good of society and strive to relate all aspects of human culture to the message of salvation.

4. To avoid as far as possible any termination of the educational process, alumni associations imbued with the true spirit of the Church should be promoted.

139 - 1. All the friars should work faithfully and devotedly, and if they are working under the authority of others, they should strive to carry out their contractual obligations obediently and with diligence.

2. Whoever is blessed with a special charism should, under the guidance of competent authority and with the support of the other friars, use it for the edification of the kingdom of God.

TITLE III

THE ORGANIZATION OF THE FRIARS' ACTIVITIES

140 - it is the responsibility of the provincial chapter to examine whether or not the various apostolates of the province are meeting the needs of the

times and the mission of the Franciscan Order: whether they are well chosen; are carried out properly; have any witness value. The chapter should also investigate whether the province is capable of extending its work for the expansion of the kingdom of God among the nations, and

whether it is ready to begin work in mission territory.

141 - 1. It is likewise the right of the provincial chapter to investigate and determine the general apostolic program of the province and to formulate statutes in conformity with diocesan or regional decrees for those ministries requiring special guidelines.

2. The Minister Provincial with the assistance, as the case may be, of his definitory shall direct the activities of the province according to the dispositions of the provincial chapter, with the cooperation of the Guardians and the opportune advice of the competent commissions.

142 - 1. It will be the responsibility of the conference of Ministers Provincial to coordinate those projects which the provinces decide to implement through fraternal cooperation, and to devise appropriate means for fostering this collaboration.

2. Attention should be given to those works which a province could do better in collaboration with other provinces and which contribute to the good of the whole Order.

143 - 1. The Guardian should consider it his responsibility to direct the work of the community and to keep friars who are engaged in different activities fraternally united.

2. It is the responsibility of the friary chapter, without violation of the competence of the superiors, to decide what temporary obligations are to be accepted or discontinued and, in order to strengthen the unity of the friars, to receive reports on the apostolate of each friar and to discuss the individual apostolates.

3. In accepting apostolates for which a written agreement is necessary or advisable, the Minister Provincial, after consulting with the friary chapter and with the consent of his definitory, shall endorse only those agreements which explicitly define what pertains to the work to be done, to the personnel to be assigned, and to the economic aspect.

144 - 1. Superiors shall assign only those responsibilities to the friars which are in harmony with a life according to the Rule. Activities should be coordinated with the exercises of common life.

2. In assigning apostolic tasks attention should be given to the religious, apostolic, doctrinal, and professional competence of the friars, as well as to whether they are suitably informed regarding the social mores of today's society, its mentality, and thought.

3. Superiors, especially the Minister Provincial, should take care to always have available a sufficient number of trained and experienced friars. Whoever is skilled in any art or discipline should exercise it for the good of the Church with the permission of his superior.

145 - 1. In whatever ministry or work allotted the friars should remain faithful to the observance of the Rule and obedient to their superiors.

2. Friars under contract for any work are, as religious, subject to visitation and correction by the

Minister Provincial and to supervision by their Guardian. In what pertains to the apostolic work itself they are also subject to the authority of the party with whom the contract is made.

146 - 1. Friars assigned to the pastoral care of souls should, by opportune renewal, adapt their program and procedures to those of episcopal conferences and of diocesan and regional organizations.

2. Cooperation with other provinces and with institutions of the same region should be fostered, especially in mission lands.

147 - 1. Parishes may be accepted by the Minister Provincial with the consent of his definitory, with due observance of all legal requirements, after having consulted with the Minister General and having forwarded a copy of the contract to him.

2. In accepting a parish the Minister Provincial and the local ordinary shall draw up an agreement clearly specifying all conditions involved.

3. Friars in the parochial ministry are subject to the bishops according to the norms of law in what pertains to their pastoral office and the care of souls. The parish books, which are subject to the inspection of the local ordinary, are likewise subject to the supervision of the superiors of the Order.

4. Parishes are entrusted to the province and, therefore, it is the responsibility of the Minister Provincial with the consent of his definitory to present the friar or, if pastoral care is entrusted to several friars jointly, the friar-moderator mentioned in can. 517, 1, to the local ordinary for nomination as pastor (cann. 520, 1; 682, 2). The same applies when presenting the rector of a church, treated in can. 556 (can. 557, 2). It is likewise the responsibility of the Minister Provincial after consulting with the pastor to present the parochial vicars.

5. Although in virtue of the written agreement the parish is entrusted to the province, nevertheless, the pastor is directly responsible for it (can. 520, 1). He must work in association with his vicar assistants and avail himself of the cooperation of the other friars in the community, who should willingly offer their help with the full approval and consent of the Guardian.

6. The provincial statutes should determine precisely the competence of the Guardian and of the pastor and what concerns the administration of parish goods, with due observance of general law. In regard to the length of the pastor's term of office, although he is removable according to the prescription of can. 682, 2, he should normally possess stability. Therefore, whatever is decreed in this matter by episcopal conferences is to be observed (cf. can. 522).

TITLE IV

THE MISSIONARY ACTIVITY OF THE ORDER

148 - 1. Christ the Lord, sent by the Father who wills all to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth, evangelized the poor in order that all persons may become sharers in His divine nature.

He entrusted the continuation of this very same mission to the Church. The Seraphic Order zealously endeavors to share in this mission, too, through its apostolic missionary activity.

2. The Order should strive to foster and extend its missionary apostolate, accepted by our Father St. Francis as a mandate of the Church, both among people and nations commonly described as missionary and in churches long since established but presently in a certain state of decline or weakness and need.

149 1. Every care is to be taken to foster and promote the missionary spirit throughout the Order, especially in our seminaries, and prayers and sacrifices should be offered continually for the missions.

2. Friars should seek to arouse mission awareness among the laity and to encourage responsibility for the missions among the faithful.

150 - Should a friar by divine inspiration wish to go to the missions he should request in writing the consent of his Minister Provincial who, after judging the suitability of the request, should not deny permission if he finds the friar suited for the missions.

151 - 1. The ministers should see to it that before friars leave for the missions they are prepared through specialized formation in spirituality, language, and missiology.

2. This formation should be so completed in institutions in the missions that the friars will be ready to speak the native language fluently and correctly and will have deepened their knowledge of local religion, history, and culture.

3. Such formation is to be carried on continually so that the missionaries may always be equal to the demands and avail themselves of the opportunities arising from changing times.

152 - 1. All missionary activity of the friars, and particularly the preaching of the gospel by word and deed, should aim at the spreading of the faith and the implanting of the - Church.

2. Missionaries should endeavor to become part of their society, to accept and develop native values, and at the same time to be aware of the profound transformation occurring among peoples.

3. To prevent divisions among Christians from becoming an obstacle to anyone's acceptance of the faith, the friars should seek ways and means of collaborating correctly and prudently with the separated churches.

153 - 1. Since religious life affords a very precious and necessary aid to missionary activity, the permanent establishment of the Order should be pursued together with the implanting of the Church.

2. The superior of the mission shall take care that all friars foster native vocations and that these candidates are trained in the best way possible. He should also be very concerned that native sons

be assumed gradually into positions of trust in the apostolate and in government.

154 - 1. It is the responsibility of the province to which a mission is entrusted to supply sufficient and capable missionaries as well as adequate means of support.

2. A province without its own mission should, to the extent possible, send missionaries and support to the missions entrusted to another province or to those of the Order itself.

3. The secretary for the missions should promote communication with the missionaries and those activities aimed at fostering a missionary spirit.

4. In accordance with the special statute, missionary activities of the Order are to be coordinated and directed by the secretary general for the missions. Wherefore, each year the superior of the missions should send him a report on their spiritual, disciplinary, and financial situation.

CHAPTER VI

THE GOVERNMENT OF THE ORDER

Spiritual Introduction

a) Since the Apostolic See is accustomed to accede to the pious requests and to be favorably disposed to grant the praiseworthy desires of its petitioners, the Supreme Pontiff confirmed the Rule of the Order by his apostolic authority. After that the Church, either by laying the foundations for dominative power through the approval of the Rule or by delegating to the authorities of the Order a share in her supreme jurisdiction, has assumed the superiors of the Order as her associates in the task of governing the fraternity.

The friars in positions of responsibility should exercise authority in the spirit of our Founder.

"However, the friars who are subject to them should remember that they have renounced their own wills for God. Therefore, I strictly command them to obey their ministers in all those things which they have promised the Lord to observe and which are not against their conscience and our Rule" (Rb 10).

b) Our Seraphic Father himself, in replying to the question of a certain friar, described what kind of a man the Minister General of this family should be: "He must be a man who takes religious life seriously, is very discreet, and has a good reputation. A man who has no particular friendships, so as not to be a source of scandal to the rest. A man zealous for prayer... He must be a man who has no place in his heart for sordid favoritism, who cares no less for the humble and simple as for the wise and great. A man who, although he may be very learned, reflects piety and simplicity in all that he does and cultivates virtue. A man who detests money, the main cause of corruption of our profession and perfection... A man who consoles the afflicted, since he is the last refuge for the troubled, for fear that, not finding any healing remedies from him, the illness of despair may overwhelm the weak. In order to induce the violent to meekness he should humble himself and

forego something of his rights so as to gain a soul for Christ. Toward those who take flight from the Order, as to lost sheep, he should not stifle his own inclination to tender mercy, knowing that the temptations which bring a man to such a pass are overpowering.

I would want him honored by all in the place of Christ, and with all charity to be provided with all necessities. On the other hand he should not seek honors, nor delight in favors more than in offenses... Finally, he should be a man who will in no way weaken the stern standard of justice in an effort to retain honors, and will consider so great an office a burden rather than a dignity. However, he should not let apathy grow out of excessive gentleness, nor a breakdown in discipline out of lax indulgence, so that while he is loved by all, he will be none the less feared by those who do evil... This is what the Minister General of the Order must be like" (2 Cel 185, 186).

St. Francis further remarked: "I would want him to have assistants of upright character, who like himself would give good example: strict as regards pleasure, strong in adversity, affable and approachable, welcoming with holy joy all who visit them" (2 Cel 186)

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"Those who are put in charge of others should be no prouder of their office than if they had been appointed to wash the feet of their brothers" (Adm 4). "Moreover, whoever is in authority should be the servant of the other brothers. Let him have and show each brother the mercy he would wish to have shown himself in any similar case. Nor should he become angry with a brother over his offense, but kindly admonish him and bear with him in all patience and humility" (EpFid II).

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TITLE 11 OFFICES

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4. Friary offices are those of guardian and vicar of the friary.

5. All other offices, taken in the broad sense in these Constitutions, are called duties or assignments.

163 - 1. All general, provincial, and quasi-provincial offices are conferred in their respective chapters through election by written ballots unless otherwise stated. When an office is vacant outside chapter the vicar succeeds thereto by virtue of the law itself until new elections are held. Appointment is made to all other offices by the respective minister with his definitory.

2. Guardians are instituted by the provincial chapter or, for a just reason, outside chapter by the Minister Provincial with his definitory through balloting with counters after proposal by the Minister Provincial. The vicar is instituted in the same manner in the friary chapter. Those to be constituted to these offices should be solemnly professed for at least two years (cf. can. 623).

3. Conferral of assignments is carried out by balloting with counters or by appointment, as may be determined in each instance by the Constitutions or statutes.

164 - 1. In holding elections common law and our particular law are to be observed. However, except for the prescriptions of 2 and 3, he is to be considered elected and proclaimed as such by the praeses of the electoral college who, after the invalid votes have been subtracted, has obtained an absolute majority or who, after two inconclusive ballots, has obtained a relative majority in the third. If the result is a tie after the third ballot, the elder in profession and then in age is to be considered elected.

2. For the third and final successive election to the same office a qualified majority, namely, two-thirds of the votes is required and must be obtained in the first or second ballot. The same

non-n regarding a qualified majority obtains also for the third and final successive institution of the Guardian to the same friary. Care should be taken to avoid having friars remain for too long a period in offices of governance without an interval (can. 624, 2).

3. Five ballots are allowed for the election of the ministers general and provincial and of the general custos. After the second inconclusive ballot, candidates requiring a qualified majority lack passive voice. In the fifth ballot only the two who received a relative majority in the fourth ballot enjoy passive voice; if several obtain the same relative majority, they are all candidates and lack active voice in the fifth ballot. He is to be considered elected who receives a relative majority of the votes and in a tie the elder in profession and then in age.

4. The Minister General shall be designated by canonical election according to n. 164, 3, of the Constitutions. The other superiors shall likewise be constituted according to the norms of the Constitutions, in such wise, however, that if elected they need the confirmation of the competent major superior, according to law (can. 179, 1-5); however, if they are nominated by the superior a suitable consultation should precede.

165 - 1. General offices are conferred for a six-year term; provincial and quasi-provincial as well as friary offices for a three-year term.

2. Assignments conferred by a chapter are for six years if general, otherwise for three years. However, assignments conferred by nomination can be for a definite or indefinite time but not longer than a three-year period which may then be renewed.

166 - 1. In order to foster the bond of brotherhood and the unity of purpose of the friars, major superiors should maintain frequent contact with their friars by means of personal dialogue, correspondence, and reports on chapter and definitory transactions and on all matters relevant to the life of the fraternity.

2. At least once during their term of office major superiors, either personally or through a delegate, should conduct a canonical visitation and give a report of it at the respective ordinary chapter.

3. In his visitation the minister should deal with his confreres humbly and charitably, attentively review the life and activities of the community according to the directories, and in the friary chapter carefully illustrate and discuss all matters.

167 - 1. Superiors are bound by law to residence so as to be available for service to the friars.

2. Major superiors should keep their vicars constantly informed about all matters of government and administration and willingly avail themselves of their assistance in ordinary matters as well.

3. A superior about to absent himself or impeded in the exercise of his office shall forewarn his vicar who should then carry on the affairs of office according to law and the mind of the superior.

168 - 1. A friar should willingly resign an office conferred on him if for the common good the superiors consider him necessary for another office.

2. Resignations from any office or assignment conferred by a chapter may be accepted by the chapter while it is in session or outside chapter by the minister with the consent of, or together with, his definitory, as the case may require. Resignation from offices conferred in the definitory may be accepted by the minister with the consent of his definitory. Resignation from assignments conferred by nomination may be accepted by the nominating superior.

3. The resignation of the Minister General outside chapter may be accepted solely by the Apostolic See. The resignation of a Minister Provincial or General Custos may be accepted by the Minister General with the consent of his definitory.

169 - 1. No one is irremovable from an office or assignment in the Order. The friars, however, should enjoy that stability which the good of souls and of the Order as well as of the friars themselves requires.

2. Friars shall not be removed from offices conferred for a specified time except for a grave and proportionate reason to be examined and legitimately proven by the minister with his definitory and with due concern for justice and natural equity.

3. The removal of any friar from office pertains to the same authority which is empowered according to n. 168 of the Constitutions to accept resignation from that office.

170 - The Minister General with the consent of his definitory may, for a just cause, dispense from the law of incompatibility of offices or from one disqualifying from offices which are sanctioned in our particular law.

TITLE III

THE GENERAL CHAPTER

171 - 1. The general chapter shall be convoked by the Minister General and celebrated in accordance with the general statutes.

2. The ordinary general chapter in which the Minister General is to be elected shall be celebrated at Pentecost with due regard for Const. n. 180.

172 - The Minister General with the consent of his definitory or at the request of the majority of ministers provincial may convoke an extraordinary general chapter to handle more serious items of business.

173 - 1. The capitulars for each act of the ordinary and extraordinary general chapter are: the minister general, former ministers general, general definitors, ministers provincial, general and provincial custodes, the capitular custodes of the provinces, and deputies of the provinces according to the norms of the general statutes.

2. When the minister provincial or general custos is legitimately impeded the respective vicar shall attend the chapter and should he also be impeded a delegate should be sent by the respective superior.

174 - The Minister General himself presides over the general chapter or, when he is absent, the vicar.

TITLE IV

THE MINISTER GENERAL AND HIS DEFINITORY

175 - 1. The friar to be elected Minister General must have been solemnly professed at least ten years.

2. The duty of guiding and caring for the Order and of promoting the works and projects of the Order for the good of the Church rests upon the Minister General as the father of the entire brotherhood.

176 - 1. The Minister General has proper ordinary power in the entire Order, to be exercised according to the norm of universal law and our own.

2. The following are immediately subject to the Minister General: general definitors, ministers provincial, general custodes, general delegates and officials in the exercise of their assignments, and guardians of friaries under his immediate jurisdiction. All other friars are mediately subject to the Minister General.

177 - In the government of the Order the Minister General is assisted by the general definitors who are assistants general. All these are disqualified from election or postulation to provincial offices during their term of office.

178 - The procurator, who is also an assistant general, is to handle the business of the Order with the Apostolic See by order of the Minister General or at

the instance of a Minister Provincial, excepting matters of the missions or of the general postulation for the causes of saints.

179 - It is the duty of the assistants general to examine matters of the provinces of their circumscription, to visit them frequently and present their appraisal of them to the Minister General or in definitory, and to maintain communication with the friars of their own region.

180 - When the Minister General's authority ceases outside chapter the vicar general assumes the government of the Order and convokes the general chapter, to be held not sooner than three nor later than six months from the vacancy of the office of the generalate.

181 - There should be various offices and secretariats, according to the general statutes, to examine matters concerning the life and work of the entire Order and to implement decisions taken by the general chapter or approved in the definitory as well as to provide assistance to the provinces.

TITLE V

THE PROVINCIAL CHAPTER

182 - 1. The ordinary provincial chapter shall be convoked by the Minister General and celebrated according to the norms decreed in the general statutes.

2. The Minister Provincial with the consent of his definitory may convoke an extraordinary chapter whenever matters of great importance are pressing.

183 - 1. The praeses of the ordinary chapter in the first part of the chapter up to the fourth session is the Minister General or his delegate (cf. Directory for Provincial Chapters). The Minister Provincial presides over the remaining sessions of the ordinary chapter and over other chapters.

2. The voting members of the ordinary provincial chapter are: the minister general or his delegate, the former minister general in his native province, the minister provincial, the former minister provincial who terminated his office in the last ordinary chapter (not, however, beyond the next ordinary chapter), the provincial custodes, the provincial definitors, the capitular custos, and deputies elected according to the general statutes, unless the Minister General with the consent of his definitory, in accordance with the statutes, should provide otherwise as regards the participation of all solemnly professed friars.

3. The voting members of the extraordinary provincial chapter are: the minister general or his delegate, the former minister general in his native province, the minister provincial, the former minister provincial who terminated his office in the last ordinary chapter, the provincial custodes, the provincial definitors and the capitular custos actually in office, the deputies who were present at the last ordinary chapter, unless the Minister General with the consent of his definitory, in accordance with the statutes, should determine otherwise as regards the participation of all solemnly professed friars.

184 - 1. Direct suffrage for the election of the Minister Provincial is allowed in the Order according to the general statutes.

2. The introduction of this method in any province pertains to the provincial statutes.

3. The provincial statutes shall determine both the method of election foreseen in the general statutes and the number of deputies, whether in the province or in the provincial custody.

185 - If for some serious reason an ordinary provincial chapter cannot be celebrated the Minister General with the consent of his definitory and, if possible, after consulting with the friars of the province shall appoint the Minister Provincial and his definitory.

TITLE VI

THE MINISTER PROVINCIAL AND HIS DEFINITORY

186 - The one to be elected Minister Provincial should be solemnly professed at least five years and possess maturity, prudence, Franciscan expertise and spirit, and the other requisites of law (can. 129, 1; 134, 1; 274, 1).

187 - In a spirit of love and concern for all, the minister should zealously take care that the friars lead a life ever more in conformity with the Rule and Constitutions for their sanctification and the edification of the Church.

188 - 1. The Minister Provincial has proper ordinary power over the entire province and over each friar as well as over each and all the friars according to the norms of the Constitutions.

2. The following are immediately subject to the Minister Provincial: the provincial custodes and guardians and, in what pertains to their duties, the provincial definitors, the provincial delegates, and the directors of seminaries. All the other friars are mediately subject.

3. Immediately subject to the general and provincial custos are the guardian and, in what pertains to their duties, custodial definitors and directors of seminaries. All the other friars are mediately subject.

189 - The vicar and three other assistants constitute the definitory of the Minister Provincial unless more are required by the provincial statutes.

190 - The definitorial council if it has been established by the provincial statutes shall be convoked by the Minister Provincial to handle greater province matters and it shall have the faculties of a council. The major superior shall seek advice or consent as prescribed in the provincial statutes.

191 - The voting members of the definitorial council are: the former Minister Provincial who terminated his office in the last chapter, the provincial definitors, the capitular custos, and other voting members already elected for three years according to the provincial statutes.

192 - The vicar shall assume the role and take the place of a Minister Provincial who is absent or impeded. However, should the authority of the Minister Provincial cease outside chapter, the vicar, retaining the title of vicar, succeeds him until the ordinary provincial chapter and immediately notifies the Minister General that the office is vacant.

193 - The capitular custos, who is to be elected in the provincial chapter by written ballot, shall

carry out a visitation during his term of office and give a report in the ordinary provincial chapter on the state of the province. His office is incompatible with the office of definitor.

194 - In order to coordinate and promote the principal activities of the province, it is opportune that province commissions be established. Their number, membership, competence, and modus agendi should be determined in the provincial statutes.

TITLE VII

THE GENERAL AND PROVINCIAL CUSTODES AND THEIR DEFINITORIES

195 - 1. What is prescribed above under titles V and VI concerning the province and its officials applies also to the general custody, with due proportion of law.

2. Inasmuch as the authority in a general custody is vicarious it can for a just reason be limited by statutes approved in the general chapter.

3. General custodies shall have their capitular custos who shall give the report in the ordinary custodial chapter on the state of the custody.

196 - 1. A provincial custody can have its own chapter according to the norms of the provincial statutes. The authority it has is determined by the same statutes.

2. The Provincial Custos and his vicar and at least two definitors shall be elected by the provincial or custodial chapter according to the norms of the provincial statutes.

3. Provincial custodies should have their capitular custos if the provincial statutes so determine. He is to give a report on the state of the custody only in the ordinary custodial chapter.

197 - 1. It is the duty of the Provincial Custos to encourage the religious life, ministry, and works of the friars and, in conformity with Const. n. 153, promote the growth of the Order.

2. With the consent of his definitory the custos can affiliate candidates to the custody, admit them to profession, issue dimissorial letters, institute or remove guardians, and present friars to the local ordinary to be pastors.

3. As to other matters, especially extraordinary, the authority of the custos, as vicarious, can be circumscribed by the provincial chapter and the provincial statutes.

TITLE VIII

CONFERENCES

198 - 1. It is advised that conferences of Ministers Provincial be established in the area of provinces and custodies which have a cultural or another special affinity so that, by sharing their wisdom and experience and exchanging views, a sincere union of effort may be made for the common good.

2. Each conference shall prepare its own statute to be approved by the Minister General with his definitory in which the membership - namely, only the ministers and custodes according to the geographical area - the competence, and times of meeting are defined.

199 - The secretariat of the conference shall opportunely foster and maintain close relation with the Minister General and his definitory and with other conferences through its own assistant general; likewise, it shall report on the main topics or questions submitted to the conference by major superiors or other friars, prepare the minutes and other reports, and transmit these to the individual provinces concerned.

200 - The Minister Provincial should cooperate willingly with conferences of major superiors for a better coordination of works and activities, in close union with the conferences of bishops.

TITLE IX

THE GOVERNMENT OF THE FRIARY

201 - The local fraternity is governed by the Guardian, either alone or with the friary chapter.

202 - 1. It is the duty of the Guardian to direct and coordinate the life and activity of the friars in accordance with the Rule, Constitutions, and statutes and to foster a spirit of true fellowship.

2. He has ordinary power over all the friars de familia and over others resident in the friary.

203 - 1. All solemnly professed friars in the friary, but not fewer than three, with chapter rights according to Const. n. 206, constitute the friary chapter which is presided over by the Guardian. For major seminaries the general statutes should be observed.

2. Ordinarily every month and whenever it seems necessary the chapter shall be convoked by the Guardian or, when he is absent and if the matter cannot be postponed, by the vicar.

204 - 1. It is the duty of the friary chapter to constitute the officials of the friary and of filial houses and to lay down norms for the individual offices. Other matters to be dealt with in the friary chapter in a collegial manner are indicated here and there in the Constitutions, especially in chapter IV.

2. Matters, however, already indicated in the Constitutions for which the Guardian needs the consent or advice of the friary chapter should also be specified in the statutes. In these cases what is prescribed in the Constitutions and statutes concerning definitories should also be applied to the

friary chapter.

205 - The Guardian of a friary under the immediate jurisdiction of the Minister General is instituted by the Minister General with his definitory; the officials, however, are instituted by the friary chapter.

206 - 1. All solemnly professed friars are to be assigned de familia to the friary where they reside and exercise their rights and obligations according to the norms of the Constitutions. -

2. Each solemnly professed friar has active and passive voice in only one friary and in only one province, either his native province or another.

3. Solemnly professed friars assigned to a friary of their province have active and passive voice in that same friary and province according to the norms of the Constitutions.

4. Friars assigned to some friary outside their province have rights and obligations according to the agreement made between the respective major superiors after consulting with the friar. These, together with the specific determination of the length of the friar's stay there, should be clearly defined in the letter of obedience.

5. The translocation of a friar from his own to another province can be effected either permanently or for a considerable length of time with the consent of the friar himself and of the ministers of both provinces after they have obtained the consent of their respective definitories.

6. A friar who has received permission to go to a missionary province or general custody exercises his rights there as long as he resides in it; meanwhile, the rights in his native province or custody remain suspended. The provincial statutes should provide for the case of a provincial custody.

CHAPTER VI

THE GOVERNMENT OF THE ORDER

Spiritual Introduction

a) Since the Apostolic See is accustomed to accede to the pious requests and to be favorably disposed to grant the praiseworthy desires of its petitioners, the Supreme Pontiff confirmed the Rule of the Order by his apostolic authority. After that the Church, either by laying the foundations for dominative power through the approval of the Rule or by delegating to the authorities of the Order a share in her supreme jurisdiction, has assumed the superiors of the Order as her associates in the task of governing the fraternity.

The friars in positions of responsibility should exercise authority in the spirit of our Founder.

"However, the friars who are subject to them should remember that they have renounced their own wills for God. Therefore, I strictly command them to obey their ministers in all those things which they have promised the Lord to observe and which are not against their conscience and our Rule" (Rb 10).

b) Our Seraphic Father himself, in replying to the question of a certain friar, described what

kind of a man the Minister General of this family should be: "He must be a man who takes religious life seriously, is very discreet, and has a good reputation. A man who has no particular friendships, so as not to be a source of scandal to the rest. A man zealous for prayer... He must be a man who has no place in his heart for sordid favoritism, who cares no less for the humble and simple as for the wise and great. A man who, although he may be very learned, reflects piety and simplicity in all that he does and cultivates virtue. A man who detests money, the main cause of corruption of our profession and perfection... A man who consoles the afflicted, since he is the last refuge for the troubled, for fear that, not finding any healing remedies from him, the illness of despair may overwhelm the weak. In order to induce the violent to meekness he should humble himself and forego something of his rights so as to gain a soul for Christ. Toward those who take flight from the Order, as to lost sheep, he should not stifle his own inclination to tender mercy, knowing that the temptations which bring a man to such a pass are overpowering.

I would want him honored by all in the place of Christ, and with all charity to be provided with all necessities. On the other hand he should not seek honors, nor delight in favors more than in offenses... Finally, he should be a man who will in no way weaken the stern standard of justice in an effort to retain honors, and will consider so great an office a burden rather than a dignity. However, he should not let apathy grow out of excessive gentleness, nor a breakdown in discipline out of lax indulgence, so that while he is loved by all, he will be none the less feared by those who do evil... This is what the Minister General of the Order must be like" (2 Cel 185, 186).

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d) In the judgment of blessed Francis, however, chapters of the friars enjoyed the highest importance in conducting the government of the Order. For "after the friars had increased, as a solicitous father he began to gather them in general chapter so that... he might give each his portion of obedience" (LM IV, 101 and to address everyone in words which he would address to future chapters by letter, so that the friars by studiously reading it might arrange all matters to promote its observance in the whole Order. "Listen, sons of the Lord and my brothers, and give ear to my words. Be attentive with the ear of your heart and obey the voice of the Son of God. Keep His commandments with all your heart and practice His counsels with pure intention. Proclaim the Lord for He is good, and glorify Him in your works, since this is why He has sent you into the whole world, so that by word and deed you may bear witness to His message and tell everyone that there

is no one almighty besides Him. Persevere in this instruction and in holy obedience, and what you have promised Him fulfill with good and firm resolve" (EpOrd).

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5. All other offices, taken in the broad sense in these Constitutions, are called duties or assignments.

163 - 1. All general, provincial, and quasi-provincial offices are conferred in their respective chapters through election by written ballots unless otherwise stated. When an office is vacant outside chapter the vicar succeeds thereto by virtue of the law itself until new elections are held. Appointment is made to all other offices by the respective minister with his definitory.

2. Guardians are instituted by the provincial chapter or, for a just reason, outside chapter by the Minister Provincial with his definitory through balloting with counters after proposal by the Minister Provincial. The vicar is instituted in the same manner in the friary chapter. Those to be constituted to these offices should be solemnly professed for at least two years (cf. can. 623).

3. Conferral of assignments is carried out by balloting with counters or by appointment, as may be

determined in each instance by the Constitutions or statutes.

164 - 1. In holding elections common law and our particular law are to be observed. However, except for the prescriptions of 2 and 3, he is to be considered elected and proclaimed as such by the praeses of the electoral college who, after the invalid votes have been subtracted, has obtained an absolute majority or who, after two inconclusive ballots, has obtained a relative majority in the third. If the result is a tie after the third ballot, the elder in profession and then in age is to be considered elected.

2. For the third and final successive election to the same office a qualified majority, namely, two-thirds of the votes is required and must be obtained

in the first or second ballot. The same non-n regarding a qualified majority obtains also for the third and final successive institution of the Guardian to the same friary. Care should be taken to avoid having friars remain for too long a period in offices of governance without an interval (can. 624, 2).

3. Five ballots are allowed for the election of the ministers general and provincial and of the general custos. After the second inconclusive ballot, candidates requiring a qualified majority lack passive voice. In the fifth ballot only the two who received a relative majority in the fourth ballot enjoy passive voice; if several obtain the same relative majority, they are all candidates and lack active voice in the fifth ballot. He is to be considered elected who receives a relative majority of the votes and in a tie the elder in profession and then in age.

4. The Minister General shall be designated by canonical election according to n. 164, 3, of the Constitutions. The other superiors shall likewise be constituted according to the norms of the Constitutions, in such wise, however, that if elected they need the confirmation of the competent major superior, according to law (can. 179, 1-5); however, if they are nominated by the superior a suitable consultation should precede.

165 - 1. General offices are conferred for a six-year term; provincial and quasi-provincial as well as friary offices for a three-year term.

2. Assignments conferred by a chapter are for six years if general, otherwise for three years.

However, assignments conferred by nomination can be for a definite or indefinite time but not longer than a three-year period which may then be renewed.

166 - 1. In order to foster the bond of brotherhood and the unity of purpose of the friars, major superiors should maintain frequent contact with their friars by means of personal dialogue, correspondence, and reports on chapter and definitory transactions and on all matters relevant to the life of the fraternity.

2. At least once during their term of office major superiors, either personally or through a delegate, should conduct a canonical visitation and give a report of it at the respective ordinary chapter.

3. In his visitation the minister should deal with his confreres humbly and charitably, attentively review the life and activities of the community according to the directories, and in the friary chapter

carefully illustrate and discuss all matters.

167 - 1. Superiors are bound by law to residence so as to be available for service to the friars.

2. Major superiors should keep their vicars constantly informed about all matters of government and administration and willingly avail themselves of their assistance in ordinary matters as well.

3. A superior about to absent himself or impeded in the exercise of his office shall forewarn his vicar who should then carry on the affairs of office according to law and the mind of the superior.

168 - 1. A friar should willingly resign an office conferred on him if for the common good the superiors consider him necessary for another office.

2. Resignations from any office or assignment conferred by a chapter may be accepted by the chapter while it is in session or outside chapter by the minister with the consent of, or together with, his definitory, as the case may require. Resignation from offices conferred in the definitory may be accepted by the minister with the consent of his definitory. Resignation from assignments conferred by nomination may be accepted by the nominating superior.

3. The resignation of the Minister General outside chapter may be accepted solely by the Apostolic See. The resignation of a Minister Provincial or General Custos may be accepted by the Minister General with the consent of his definitory.

169 - 1. No one is irremovable from an office or assignment in the Order. The friars, however, should enjoy that stability which the good of souls and of the Order as well as of the friars themselves requires.

2. Friars shall not be removed from offices conferred for a specified time except for a grave and proportionate reason to be examined and legitimately proven by the minister with his definitory and with due concern for justice and natural equity.

3. The removal of any friar from office pertains to the same authority which is empowered according to n. 168 of the Constitutions to accept resignation from that office.

170 - The Minister General with the consent of his definitory may, for a just cause, dispense from the law of incompatibility of offices or from one disqualifying from offices which are sanctioned in our particular law.

TITLE III

THE GENERAL CHAPTER

171 - 1. The general chapter shall be convoked by the Minister General and celebrated in accordance with the general statutes.

2. The ordinary general chapter in which the Minister General is to be elected shall be celebrated at

Pentecost with due regard for Const. n. 180.

172 - The Minister General with the consent of his definitory or at the request of the majority of ministers provincial may convoke an extraordinary general chapter to handle more serious items of business.

173 - 1. The capitulars for each act of the ordinary and extraordinary general chapter are: the minister general, former ministers general, general definitors, ministers provincial, general and provincial custodes, the capitular custodes of the provinces, and deputies of the provinces according to the norms of the general statutes.

2. When the minister provincial or general custos is legitimately impeded the respective vicar shall attend the chapter and should he also be impeded a delegate should be sent by the respective superior.

174 - The Minister General himself presides over the general chapter or, when he is absent, the vicar.

TITLE IV

THE MINISTER GENERAL AND HIS DEFINITORY

175 - 1. The friar to be elected Minister General must have been solemnly professed at least ten years.

2. The duty of guiding and caring for the Order and of promoting the works and projects of the Order for the good of the Church rests upon the Minister General as the father of the entire brotherhood.

176 - 1. The Minister General has proper ordinary power in the entire Order, to be exercised according to the norm of universal law and our own.

2. The following are immediately subject to the Minister General: general definitors, ministers provincial, general custodes, general delegates and officials in the exercise of their assignments, and guardians of friaries under his immediate jurisdiction. All other friars are mediately subject to the Minister General.

177 - In the government of the Order the Minister General is assisted by the general definitors who are assistants general. All these are disqualified from election or postulation to provincial offices during their term of office.

178 - The procurator, who is also an assistant general, is to handle the business of the Order with the Apostolic See by order of the Minister General or at

the instance of a Minister Provincial, excepting matters of the missions or of the general postulation

for the causes of saints.

179 - It is the duty of the assistants general to examine matters of the provinces of their circumscription, to visit them frequently and present their appraisal of them to the Minister General or in definitory, and to maintain communication with the friars of their own region.

180 - When the Minister General's authority ceases outside chapter the vicar general assumes the government of the Order and convokes the general chapter, to be held not sooner than three nor later than six months from the vacancy of the office of the generalate.

181 - There should be various offices and secretariats, according to the general statutes, to examine matters concerning the life and work of the entire Order and to implement decisions taken by the general chapter or approved in the definitory as well as to provide assistance to the provinces.

TITLE V

THE PROVINCIAL CHAPTER

182 - 1. The ordinary provincial chapter shall be convoked by the Minister General and celebrated according to the norms decreed in the general statutes.

2. The Minister Provincial with the consent of his definitory may convoke an extraordinary chapter whenever matters of great importance are pressing.

183 - 1. The praeses of the ordinary chapter in the first part of the chapter up to the fourth session is the Minister General or his delegate (cf. Directory for Provincial Chapters). The Minister Provincial presides over the remaining sessions of the ordinary chapter and over other chapters.

2. The voting members of the ordinary provincial chapter are: the minister general or his delegate, the former minister general in his native province, the minister provincial, the former minister provincial who terminated his office in the last ordinary chapter (not, however, beyond the next ordinary chapter), the provincial custodes, the provincial definitors, the capitular custos, and deputies elected according to the general statutes, unless the Minister General with the consent of his definitory, in accordance with the statutes, should provide otherwise as regards the participation of all solemnly professed friars.

3. The voting members of the extraordinary provincial chapter are: the minister general or his delegate, the former minister general in his native province, the minister provincial, the former minister provincial who terminated his office in the last ordinary chapter, the provincial custodes, the provincial definitors and the capitular custos actually in office, the deputies who were present at the last ordinary chapter, unless the Minister General with the consent of his definitory, in accordance with the statutes,

should determine otherwise as regards the participation of all solemnly professed friars.

184 - 1. Direct suffrage for the election of the Minister Provincial is allowed in the Order according

to the general statutes.

2. The introduction of this method in any province pertains to the provincial statutes.
3. The provincial statutes shall determine both the method of election foreseen in the general statutes and the number of deputies, whether in the province or in the provincial custody.

185 - If for some serious reason an ordinary provincial chapter cannot be celebrated the Minister General with the consent of his definitory and, if possible, after consulting with the friars of the province shall appoint the Minister Provincial and his definitory.

TITLE VI

THE MINISTER PROVINCIAL AND HIS DEFINITORY

186 - The one to be elected Minister Provincial should be solemnly professed at least five years and possess maturity, prudence, Franciscan expertise and spirit, and the other requisites of law (can. 129, 1; 134, 1; 274, 1).

187 - In a spirit of love and concern for all, the minister should zealously take care that the friars lead a life ever more in conformity with the Rule and Constitutions for their sanctification and the edification of the Church.

188 - 1. The Minister Provincial has proper ordinary power over the entire province and over each friar as well as over each and all the friars according to the norms of the Constitutions.

2. The following are immediately subject to the Minister Provincial: the provincial custodes and guardians and, in what pertains to their duties, the provincial definitors, the provincial delegates, and the directors of seminaries. All the other friars are mediately subject.

3. Immediately subject to the general and provincial custos are the guardian and, in what pertains to their duties, custodial definitors and directors of seminaries. All the other friars are mediately subject.

189 - The vicar and three other assistants constitute the definitory of the Minister Provincial unless more are required by the provincial statutes.

190 - The definitorial council if it has been established by the provincial statutes shall be convoked by the Minister Provincial to handle greater province matters and it shall have the faculties of a council. The major superior shall seek advice or consent as prescribed in the provincial statutes.

191 - The voting members of the definitorial council are: the former Minister Provincial who terminated his office in the last chapter, the provincial definitors, the capitular custos, and other voting members already elected for three years according to the provincial statutes.

192 - The vicar shall assume the role and take the place of a Minister Provincial who is absent or impeded. However, should the authority of the Minister Provincial cease outside chapter, the vicar, retaining the title of vicar, succeeds him until the ordinary provincial chapter and immediately notifies the Minister General that the office is vacant.

193 - The capitular custos, who is to be elected in the provincial chapter by written ballot, shall carry out a visitation during his term of office and give a report in the ordinary provincial chapter on the state of the province. His office is incompatible with the office of definitor.

194 - In order to coordinate and promote the principal activities of the province, it is opportune that province commissions be established. Their number, membership, competence, and modus agendi should be determined in the provincial statutes.

TITLE VII

THE GENERAL AND PROVINCIAL CUSTODES AND THEIR DEFINITORIES

195 - 1. What is prescribed above under titles V and VI concerning the province and its officials applies also to the general custody, with due proportion of law.

2. Inasmuch as the authority in a general custody is vicarious it can for a just reason be limited by statutes approved in the general chapter.

3. General custodies shall have their capitular custos who shall give the report in the ordinary custodial chapter on the state of the custody.

196 - 1. A provincial custody can have its own chapter according to the norms of the provincial statutes. The authority it has is determined by the same statutes.

2. The Provincial Custos and his vicar and at least two definitors shall be elected by the provincial or custodial chapter according to the norms of the provincial statutes.

3. Provincial custodies should have their capitular custos if the provincial statutes so determine. He is to give a report on the state of the custody only in the ordinary custodial chapter.

197 - 1. It is the duty of the Provincial Custos to encourage the religious life, ministry, and works of the friars and, in conformity with Const. n. 153, promote the growth of the Order.

2. With the consent of his definity the custos can affiliate candidates to the custody, admit them to profession, issue dimissorial letters, institute or remove guardians, and present friars to the local ordinary to be pastors.

3. As to other matters, especially extraordinary, the authority of the custos, as vicarious, can be circumscribed by the provincial chapter and the provincial statutes.

TITLE VIII CONFERENCES

198 - 1. It is advised that conferences of Ministers Provincial be established in the area of provinces and custodies which have a cultural or another special affinity so that, by sharing their wisdom and experience and exchanging views, a sincere union of effort may be made for the common good.

2. Each conference shall prepare its own statute to be approved by the Minister General with his definity in which the membership - namely, only the ministers and custodes according to the geographical area - the competence, and times of meeting are defined.

199 - The secretariat of the conference shall opportunely foster and maintain close relation with the Minister General and his definity and with other conferences through its own assistant general; likewise, it shall report on the main topics or questions submitted to the conference by major superiors or other friars, prepare the minutes and other reports, and transmit these to the individual provinces concerned.

200 - The Minister Provincial should cooperate willingly with conferences of major superiors for a better coordination of works and activities, in close union with the conferences of bishops.

TITLE IX

THE GOVERNMENT OF THE FRIARY

201 - The local fraternity is governed by the Guardian, either alone or with the friary chapter.

202 - 1. It is the duty of the Guardian to direct and coordinate the life and activity of the friars in accordance with the Rule, Constitutions, and statutes and to foster a spirit of true fellowship.

2. He has ordinary power over all the friars de familia and over others resident in the friary.

203 - 1. All solemnly professed friars in the friary, but not fewer than three, with chapter rights according to Const. n. 206, constitute the friary chapter which is presided over by the Guardian. For major seminaries the general statutes should be observed.

2. Ordinarily every month and whenever it seems necessary the chapter shall be convoked by the Guardian or, when he is absent and if the matter cannot be postponed, by the vicar.

204 - 1. It is the duty of the friary chapter to constitute the officials of the friary and of filial houses and to lay down norms for the individual offices. Other matters to be dealt with in the friary chapter in a collegial manner are indicated here and there in the Constitutions, especially in chapter IV.

2. Matters, however, already indicated in the Constitutions for which the Guardian needs the consent or advice of the friary chapter should also be specified in the statutes. In these cases what is prescribed in the Constitutions and statutes concerning definitories should also be applied to the friary chapter.

205 - The Guardian of a friary under the immediate jurisdiction of the Minister General is instituted by the Minister General with his definitory; the officials, however, are instituted by the friary chapter.

206 - 1. All solemnly professed friars are to be assigned de familia to the friary where they reside and exercise their rights and obligations according to the norms of the Constitutions. -

2. Each solemnly professed friar has active and passive voice in only one friary and in only one province, either his native province or another.

3. Solemnly professed friars assigned to a friary of their province have active and passive voice in that same friary and province according to the norms of the Constitutions.

4. Friars assigned to some friary outside their province have rights and obligations according to the agreement made between the respective major superiors after consulting with the friar. These, together with the specific determination of the length of the friar's stay there, should be clearly defined in the letter of obedience.

5. The transfiliation of a friar from his own to another province can be effected either permanently or for a considerable length of time with the consent of the friar himself and of the ministers of both provinces after they have obtained the consent of their respective definitories.

6. A friar who has received permission to go to a missionary province or general custody exercises his rights there as long as he resides in it; meanwhile, the rights in his native province or custody remain suspended. The provincial statutes should provide for the case of a provincial custody.