

OCDS Provincial Statutes for the Oklahoma Province

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Provincial Forms *refer to Provincial Website <http://www.thereocds.org/forms.html>*

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Ratio Institutionis *refer to Provincial Website <http://www.thereocds.org/legislation.html>*

Preface

The Constitutions of the Secular Order of Discalced Carmelites are the fundamental, general law for its members. Provincial Statutes are to provide a practical application of this general law as directed by the Constitutions [Preface, Art. 58].

The present statutes are the particular law for Carmelite Seculars of the Oklahoma Province.

The term “Provincial Council” refers to the OCDS Provincial Council.

Section I: Formation

- 1) Formation at all levels must adhere to the provincial OCDS Formation Guidelines.
- 2) There are four periods of formation.
 - a) “Aspirancy” which lasts twelve months [Art. 36a]
 - b) “Formation I” leading to First Promise, which lasts a minimum of two years [Art. 36b]
 - c) “Formation II” leading to Definitive Promise, which lasts a minimum of three years [Art. 36d]
 - d) “Ongoing” formation of those who are definitively professed, which is lifelong [Art. 34]
- 3) Aspirancy begins when the local Council invites an individual to enter into an introductory study of the Carmelite Secular charism in order to discern whether there is a call to the Carmelite Secular Order.
- 4) Formation I begins with the Rite of Admission and clothing in the large or ceremonial scapular. During this period the person discerns more deeply whether he/she has the calling to and can live the life of a Carmelite Secular. Formation I may be extended for up to two years.
- 5) Formation II begins with First Promise. At this time the person fully becomes a member of the Order. The baptismal name is retained and a devotional title may be added, if desired. During this time the person lives as a member of the Secular Order of Discalced Carmelites and continues to discern, together with the Council, the vocation to the Order. Formation II may be extended for up to two years. The First Promise expires at the end of three years, and if an extension is granted must be renewed for the period of the extension.
- 6) Ongoing formation begins once the Definitive Promise is made. It is essential in enabling the Definitively Professed to live out their life-long commitment and responsibilities as Secular members of the Carmelite Community. Through it, members are being continuously transformed and prepared to live a life of deeper union with Christ for the good of the community, the Church, and the world.
- 7) When the Spiritual Assistant is unable to preside, no special delegation is needed for the local Council to ask another priest, deacon, or religious to clothe candidates or receive Promises and vows [Ritual 13, 31, 51, 67].
- 8) No presider is needed for the devotional renewal of the Promise made during the Easter Season. The renewal is made by all professed members, both Definitive and First Promise. [cf. Ritual, chpt. 5]

Section II: Prayer Life

The members of our province shall strive to:

- Practice mental prayer for at least one half hour each day in an atmosphere of interior silence and solitude
- Pray Morning and Evening Prayer daily from the Liturgy of the Hours, and Night Prayer if possible.
- Attend daily Mass, as able.

Section III: Apostolate

- 1) Apostolate is a duty and requirement of each baptized and confirmed person [CCL 225.1]. Even the most interior soul must respond to the demands of charity in some form or fashion. Thus all Carmelite Seculars are called to have an apostolate [Art. 27]. Through their apostolic endeavors, Carmelite Seculars demonstrate how it is possible to seek intimate union with God even in the midst of worldly duties and concerns, in addition to responding to the Gospel's call to serve one another. In this way, they share in the prophetic mission of Christ to which they are called in baptism and they put into practice the prophetic dimension of the Carmelite charism.
- 2) While priority is given to those places where the apostolic commitment is individual (the family, one's profession or work, one's parish), each OCDS canonical community shall have an apostolic commitment as well [Art. 28].
- 3) The primary Carmelite community apostolate is to share Carmelite spirituality with others.
- 4) In considering an apostolate, the community needs to be sensitive to the feelings, interests, abilities and talents, and the physical and financial capabilities of the members of the community working together as a whole. Effort should be made to include all members in this community apostolate in some way.
- 5) Local Councils should review any rules governing apostolic activities in their diocese. The Spiritual Assistant or a local pastor may be consulted if there is any question about the need for permission from the Bishop or local pastor. [cf. CCL 756 – 772]

Section IV: Mary: Mother, Sister, and Model

- 1) Carmelites follow their vocation under Mary's patronage and protection. Carmelites cultivate a filial devotion to Mary as their model of interior prayer, discipleship, and service. Mary exemplifies the total gift of self to God and to the building up of God's Kingdom.
- 2) The devotion of Carmelite Seculars to Mary expresses itself by:
 - Knowing her better daily through the Gospels
 - Taking her as a model of interior prayer – of “pondering all things in the heart”
 - Imitating her virtues and her docility to the Holy Spirit, especially in living the Promise to strive to follow Christ in the spirit of chastity, poverty, obedience, and the Beatitudes
 - Participating in liturgical and in other devotions to her
 - Sharing her maternal concern for and solidarity with the poor

Section V: Feast Days and Fasting

- 1) In addition to the days of fasting and of abstinence proper to the Church in the United States and in response to the encouragement of our bishops “to prepare for each Church festival by a day of particular self-denial, penitential prayer and fasting” [cf. National Conference of Catholic Bishops, Pastoral Statement, “*Penitent-Discipline in the United States*,” Washington, DC, 1966] and in keeping with our Carmelite traditions and identity, our members, unless excused by reasons allowed under Church norms¹, shall fast on the vigils of the following feast days:

Saint Joseph	[March 19]
Our Lady of Mount Carmel	[July 16]
The Prophet Elijah	[July 20]
St Therese of the Child Jesus, Patroness of the Province	[October 1]
Our Holy Mother St. Teresa of Jesus	[October 15]
All Saints of the Order	[November 14]
Our Holy Father St. John of the Cross	[December 14]
Feast day of the title or patron of the local community	

- 2) For sufficient reason, the above fast days may be anticipated. Anticipation should never involve fasting on Sundays nor on Holy Days [cf. CCL 1249-1253].
- 3) In order to foster fellowship, communities are encouraged to share in some sort of communal liturgical celebration and recreation on feasts of the Order.

Section VI: External Signs of Membership

- 1) The large ceremonial brown scapular shall be given as the habit of the Secular Order at the time of admission to Formation I.
- 2) A smaller brown scapular or scapular medal is worn for everyday use.
- 3) In addition to regular OCDS meetings, the ceremonial scapular may be worn when participating as a group at gatherings and events approved by the local Council. The ceremonial scapular is not worn publicly by OCDS members at other times, nor in an individual capacity.

Section VII: Remembrances of the Dead

- 1) At the death of a community member:
 - a) The President or a designated member of the community shall inform the members of the community of the member's death as soon as possible and provide information regarding the funeral.

¹ The Church dispenses from fasting, those who are over 59 years of age, infirm, mentally incompetent, pregnant, breastfeeding, or engaged in heavy physical labor. In all cases, common sense is to prevail. Those OCDS members unable to fast from food are to choose some other equivalent penance for the day.

- b) The President or a designated member shall contact the family of the deceased to determine how the community may be of service and participate in the funeral service. The desires of the family regarding funeral arrangements must always be honored.
 - c) The community of the deceased shall notify the Central Office Administrator. The community is encouraged to submit a short obituary for publication in the provincial newsletter.
 - d) Those unable to attend the funeral shall participate in a Mass and receive Holy Communion for the deceased, or remember the deceased in prayer, preferably by reciting the Office for the Dead.
- 2) At the first meeting following news of the death of a member of the province (including friars and nuns), the community shall pray for the deceased member.
 - 3) Deceased members of the entire Order should be remembered in daily prayers, especially on the Feast of All Souls of the Carmelite Order (November 15).
 - 4) Members are encouraged to inform their families regarding:
 - a) participation by their brothers and sisters in Carmel in the funeral services
 - b) burial in the habit of the Carmelite Secular, namely the large brown scapular
 - c) having the initials “OCDS” included on their headstone
 - 5) Each community shall maintain a necrology of the deceased members of that community.

Section VIII: Community Life

“Concern for the needs and good of others in the community is a principle of our Rule that guides our Carmelite life.” [Art. 6e] “A fundamental element of our vocation is to infuse prayer and life with apostolic zeal in a climate of human and Christian community.” [Art. 9d]

- 1) The local community makes visible the Discalced Carmelite Secular Order within the diocese.
- 2) The local Council is the immediate, competent authority of the local community within the limits of the Constitutions of the Secular Order of Discalced Carmelites [Art. 47]. The local Council has the authority and responsibility to develop appropriate methods and means to facilitate human and spiritual growth which will enable the members to understand and live fully their Promise in the community and in the Order. The local Council shall continuously assess the health of the community to determine what is needed to nurture its members. The local Council may assign members to serve the community in various responsibilities not outlined in the Constitutions or Statutes [Art. 52-55].
- 3) The community shall meet at least once a month. Attendance at meetings is expected. Unjustifiable absences should be lovingly addressed by the local Council [Rule of St Albert #15; Constitutions Art. 24.c]. Persistent absenteeism without the approval of the local Council may lead to dismissal [Sec. IX.4].

Regular meetings shall include:

- Formation
- Mental prayer
- Liturgy of the Hours

- Business meeting
- Social time

Communities are encouraged to attend an annual OCDS retreat and day of recollection, either their own or hosted by another OCDS community. The local Council may determine whether these will take the place of that month's regular community meeting.

4) Community life is central to the Carmelite charism. It applies to the local community, the province, and the Order as a whole. Members are encouraged to participate in events sponsored by the province or Order, such as congresses, workshops, and special celebrations. Communities are encouraged to share retreats, days of recollection, and various events with other communities.

5) Infirm members

A professed member who is aged or infirm may be granted infirm status by the local Council.

- Such a member is welcome to attend OCDS meetings and events as able.
- Daily mental prayer, the Liturgy of the Hours, and ongoing formation are encouraged, as the member is able.
- The community shall maintain regular contact with aged and infirm members.

6) Isolates

A professed member for whom excessive distance has become a significant obstacle to attendance at the nearest community's meetings may be granted "isolate" status by the local Council [Art. 56].

- Each Isolate shall be associated with a community or Study Group, unless otherwise directed by the Provincial Delegate.
- Isolates in Formation II (formation for Definitive Promise) must be assigned to a canonical community [Art. 58b].
- Isolates and their communities are mutually responsible to maintain regular contact.
- Isolates shall meet with their communities at least once a year, if possible.

7) Extended excused absence

A definitively professed member who is temporarily unable to attend meetings for an extended period due to circumstances beyond his/her control may be excused from attendance by the local Council. Extended excused absence should not be granted lightly or without serious reason. Such a member is allowed to attend OCDS meetings and events as able.

Examples include but are not limited to:

- Primary caregiver of a seriously infirm family member
- Non-voluntary change in work schedule
- Military deployment

In so far as possible, the member will continue to live other requirements of the vocation and remain in regular contact with the community via a point of contact assigned by the local Council.

8) Leave of Absence

The local Council may approve a one-year Leave of Absence (LOA) for those in Definitive Promise. Reasons for a LOA include but are not limited to:

- A vocational crisis, for which the member needs time away to evaluate God's call
- The member needs time away from the community for personal reasons

The Leave of Absence may be renewed by the local Council for up to two additional years. Further extensions must be applied for through the Provincial Council.

A Leave of Absence releases a member from all OCDS responsibilities, including daily mental prayer, the Liturgy of the Hours, and community dues. A member on LOA may not attend community meetings, retreats, or other members-only functions. The Leave of Absence may be shortened at the request of the member.

9) Release from the Promise

The local Council has the authority to release from the Promise.

- a) A member in First Promise, who becomes unable to meet the requirements of the vocation for an extended period, or who discerns that he/she is not called to Carmel, may be released from the Promise at the member's request.

If the person reapplies for admittance, the Council discerns whether to readmit and then determines the appropriate level of formation.

- b) A member in Definitive Promise may ask to leave the Order, in which case the local Council should release the member from the Promise. A member should not leave the Order without providing some explanation to the local Council.

When a definitively professed member requests release from the Promise, **it must be explained to the member that once the member has left the Order, the member cannot return to the Discalced Carmelite Secular Order at any time in the future.** The local Council may offer, without pressure, the option of a LOA to allow the member sufficient time for discernment before making such an irreversible decision.

Upon release the local Council shall document the change of status in the Permanent Record Form and send a copy of the updated form to the Central Office."

- c) An OCDS member who leaves the OCDS to pursue a vocation to the OCD nuns or friars may be readmitted to the OCDS. Such a person is not considered to have left the Order.
- d) Release from vows is governed by Sec. XX.5.

IX: Dismissals

Numbers 1-5 apply to definitively professed members.

- 1) "The local Council has the authority to dismiss a member of the community, should this be necessary, after consulting the Provincial" [Art. 47e]. **Dismissal from the community is dismissal from the Order.** Dismissal releases the person from the Promise.
- 2) Dismissal is to be a last resort. The local Council shall first attempt to resolve the situation. In the event that it cannot be resolved at the local level, the Council shall consult with the

Provincial Delegate. The local Council must consult with the Provincial Delegate before beginning the process of dismissal.

- 3) From the OCDS Constitutions Article 24e: *In order to dismiss a member for the reasons set out in the Code of Canon Law (public rejection of the Catholic faith, abandonment of ecclesiastical communion, being under imposed or declared excommunication) or for such other reasons as are given in the Provincial Statutes [cf. IX.4, below], the Community Council shall observe the following procedure:*

- a) *verify with certainty the facts*
- b) *warn the member verbally before two witnesses, if possible, and in writing*
- c) *allow a reasonable time for repentance*

If there is no change, it is permitted, after consulting the Provincial, to proceed with the dismissal. In all cases, the member retains the right to appeal to the competent ecclesiastical authority.

The two witnesses would be members of the local Council and/or the Spiritual Assistant. The competent ecclesiastical authority for appeal is the Provincial. Further appeal may be made to the Superior General.

Any other reason for dismissal, beyond those explicitly mentioned in Canon Law, must be grave, observable, imputable to the person, and sufficiently proven. Dismissal is not a way to deal with disagreeable members or personality clashes. Neither is dismissal a way to correct the faults of members. The Council may not dismiss a member without the concurrence of the Provincial. The Council may never dismiss a member without giving ample opportunity for explanation and response.

- 4) Other grounds that can lead to dismissal include:
- threatening behavior toward other members
 - behavior causing grave emotional and/or spiritual harm to other members
 - persistent disruptive behavior which negatively affects the wellbeing and harmony of the community
 - persistent absenteeism, without the approval of the local Council [Sec VIII.3]
 - persistent refusal to pay dues, when financially able to do so
 - subsequent discovery of deception when applying to be admitted to the Order regarding anything that would have prevented admission, whether intentional or not
 - behavior that in any way disgraces the Order
- 5) A member may not be dismissed without first being warned. Dismissal may be made via certified mail if the member refuses to communicate with the Council.

Numbers 6-9 apply to members who have made First Promise and are in Formation II.

- 6) It is assumed that the local Council has regular periodic reviews with all members, especially those in formation for the Definitive Promise, to assess how they are doing and to address any issues. It is further assumed that the Council deals with problem behaviors promptly and frankly. **No member should be dismissed without prior discussion with the Council and adequate opportunity to amend.**
- 7) If, after reasonable time, the local Council concludes that a release from the Promise is in the best interests of the community and/or the member, the following steps are followed.

- a) The Council meets with the member to explain why the Council believes that the member is not suited to the vocation.
 - b) The Council asks the member to formally request release from the Promise.
 - c) The Council accepts the request, and the person is thereby released.
 - d) The person's permanent record is updated and a copy sent to the Central Office.
- 8) If the member refuses to meet with the Council and/or voluntarily request release from the Promise, the local Council has the authority to dismiss the member. No special permission is needed. Upon notification by the Council, the person is released from the Promise, the community, and the Order. The Council updates the person's permanent record and sends a copy to the Central Office.
 - 9) The person has the right to appeal to the Provincial. The Council should be aware that if proper procedure was not followed, the Provincial may overturn the dismissal. This would not prevent the Council from discerning not to admit to the Definitive Promise when the time comes.

Section X: Community Size

Following Holy Mother Teresa's wisdom, communities are to limit their size in order to maintain a strong sense of intimacy and Christ-centered fellowship within the community.

- 1) When a community reaches 40 to 50 active professed members, the local Council shall consult with the Provincial Delegate about establishing a second community. [Sec. XII]
- 2) Formation of the second community shall follow the procedures outlined in the provincial policies.

Section XI: Age Requirements

A candidate for admission to formation in the Discalced Carmelite Secular Order must be at least eighteen years of age.

Section XII: Establishment of an OCDS Community

Communities are founded by the Order, not by individuals.

Community:

- A canonically established community of OCDS members
- That has local autonomy to elect a council and receive professions according to the provisions of the Constitutions and Statutes

Study Group:

- A group of OCDS members who are attempting to establish an OCDS community
- That must be authorized by the Provincial Delegate
- And is under the supervision of the Provincial Council according to the provisions of the Constitutions and Statutes [cf. Sec XIII]

Group in Development (GID):

- A “seed group” from an OCDS community (Mentoring Community), with the intention of establishing a new OCDS community
 - That must be authorized by the Provincial Delegate
 - And is under the supervision and authority of their Mentoring Community’s Council until raised to Study Group [cf. Sec XIII.2]
- 1) When a community has reached its maximum size [Sec. X] it may, with the advice and approval of the Provincial Delegate:
 - found another group that qualifies for canonical status,
 - or found a Study Group,
 - or start a GID.
 - 2) A community may, with the advice and permission of the Provincial Delegate, generate a GID based on geographical or other considerations.
 - 3) A canonical community that is unable to function may be put under the supervision of the Provincial Delegate and the Provincial Council until such time as it is again able to function with autonomy or until it is decided that the community is no longer viable. If a community is disbanded, the members shall request transfer to other communities or Study Groups. [cf. Sec. XVII]

Section XIII: Special Provisions for Study Groups

- 1) Study Groups normally begin as a Group in Development (GID), but may also be founded directly by a canonical community [Sec XII]. After a GID and its Mentoring Community (MC) have discerned together that the GID demonstrates maturity and viability, the MC may recommend to the Provincial Council that the GID be recognized as a Study Group. The Provincial Council shall pass the recommendation on to the Provincial Delegate. Discernment and recommendation guidelines may be found in the provincial policies.
- 2) If the Provincial Delegate agrees, he may grant the GID the status of recognized Study Group, placing it under the supervision of the Provincial Council, and appointing a Spiritual Assistant, President, Director of Formation, and possibly one or two Councilors. At this point the group may take a name. It is no longer under the supervision of the MC Council, its members being members of the new Study Group, not of the Mentoring Community.
- 3) The Study Group Council is authorized to admit candidates to Aspirancy and Formation I.
- 4) The Provincial Council reserves the right to admit to the Promise, First and Definitive. The local Council shall evaluate the candidate’s readiness to make the Promise and forward its evaluation and recommendation to the Provincial Council, who will discern whether the person demonstrates the human, spiritual, and Carmelite attributes needed to live as a professed member of the Order.
- 5) Permission to make vows by a member of a Study Group is reserved to the Provincial Delegate and requires the recommendation of the Provincial Council. [cf. Sec. XX]
- 6) The Provincial Delegate reserves the right to appoint and replace any or all Study Group Council members.

- 7) After the Study Group has enough professed members to allow for regular changes of leadership, it may petition the Provincial Council for permission to elect a council for itself. The length of service and size of this provisional council may vary as determined after consultation with the Provincial Council and Provincial Delegate.
- 8) Study Group Council elections are done differently from OCDS community elections.
 - a) Section XVI.2 applies.
 - b) The Provincial Council shall provide policy for how Study Group elections are to be held.
 - c) The Provincial Delegate reviews and makes the appointments.
- 9) When the Study Group has demonstrated over time that it can fully function as an OCDS community, it may be invited by the Provincial Delegate to petition for canonical status. It is understood that this is by way of invitation, after discernment by both the Provincial Delegate and the Provincial Council. Factors in discerning the Study Group's readiness and procedures for petitioning canonical status may be found in the provincial policies.
- 10) If it becomes apparent that a Study Group is not likely to develop into a canonical OCDS community, it may request to be disbanded, or may be directed to disband by the Provincial Delegate. Members of a Study Group that is disbanded shall request transfer to an OCDS Community or another Study Group. [Sec. XVII]

Section XIV: Finances

- 1) Communities are encouraged to develop a three-year budget in order to plan for recurring expenses, especially the cost of sending representatives to the triennial Plenary Council Meeting [Sec. XXI], provincial workshops, and visitations.
- 2) Each community shall determine the amount of dues to be assessed its members. Members start paying dues when they enter Formation I. A member's inability to pay dues, temporarily or indefinitely, is a matter to be handled by the local Council with discretion and sensitivity.
- 3) Dues collected should include some portion to be distributed to help the poor and/or help support the nuns and friars of the Order [Art. 55]
- 4) The Treasurer will present a status of Community funds to the Council when requested but at least once each six months [Art. 55]. An annual Financial Report shall be prepared as of December 31 of each year and sent to the Central Office together with the annual Provincial assessment by March 31. A copy of this report shall also be distributed to the members of the local community.
- 5) The Province shall collect an annual community assessment to help cover expenses of the Central Office, Provincial Delegate, and Provincial Council. The assessment for each community is made according to the number of its members. A portion of these funds shall also be forwarded by the Central Office to the General Secretariat of the Secular Discalced Carmelite Order to support its functioning. A portion may be sent to the Carmelite Institute of North America or a similar organization for Carmelite studies. The Central Office will send out a notice of assessment in January of each year. The assessment is due by March 31. The annual assessment does not apply to aspirants or members on Leave of Absence.

The local Council may request of the Provincial Council to be relieved of the assessment for members who are incapacitated or not in regular contact with the community.

If a member has dropped all contact with the community, the local Council may remove the member from the community roster and be relieved of the assessment for that individual. The member's permanent record is to be updated accordingly, and a copy sent to the Central Office.

Section XV: Permanent Records

- 1) Communities, Study Groups, and GIDs, shall keep permanent records of all members, using the official provincial record form.
- 2) Notices of death, dismissal, and release from the Promise are to be sent to the Central Office. Those for release from the Promise should specify whether the person is eligible for readmission. [see provincial policy]
- 3) While these duties may be delegated, the ultimate responsibility falls to the local Council.

Section XVI: Community Elections

- 1) Community elections shall be held in the same year and prior to the OCD Provincial Chapter. The newly elected local Council shall assume their duties at the conclusion of the community meeting or retreat in which they are elected.
- 2) Elections of the community President and three Councilors shall be conducted in accordance with recognized parliamentary procedures² with the following particular provisions:
 - a) A nominating committee of at least three professed members³ shall be appointed by the local Council. The names of the committee members shall be announced to the members no less than three months in advance of the election.
 - b) The nominating committee shall gather the names of qualified members who are willing to serve for each office. For the office of President there should be two or more nominees who have made their Definitive Promise [Art. 51]. For the office of the three Councilors there should be four or more nominees.⁴ Individual members may also submit names to the nominating committee. A list of the candidates shall be given to the community at least three weeks prior to the election.
 - c) Only professed members may serve as members of the local Council.⁴
 - d) All council members (President, Councilors, and Director of Formation) shall serve no more than two consecutive terms of three years in any capacity (e.g. one term as Councilor and one as President constitutes two terms). A partial term of 18 months or more shall be considered a full term for purposes of eligibility. To be elected to a third consecutive term requires a postulation from the Provincial.⁵

2 e.g. Robert's Rules of Order.

3 Those who have made at least their First Promise.

4 Article 52 states that Councilors "generally are community members with Definitive Promise, [but] in particular circumstances, members with First Promise can serve."

5 Postulation is a petition for exemption from the normal policy.

- e) Nominations from the floor shall not be accepted.
 - f) Write-in votes are valid if the member is eligible to serve.
 - g) Only professed members are eligible to vote.
 - h) Voting shall be by secret ballot.
 - i) Members must be physically present to vote.
 - j) The incumbent President shall preside at the election of the President and three Councilors.
 - k) The vote count shall be recorded in the community minutes.
- 3) Election of the President
- a) The Spiritual Assistant shall invoke the guidance of the Holy Spirit. In the absence of the Assistant, this shall be the duty of the incumbent President.
 - b) Election of the President shall be on a separate ballot from the three Councilors and shall precede the election of the Councilors.
 - c) If a majority⁶ is not reached by any nominee on the first ballot, the names of the two nominees receiving the highest number of votes shall be placed on the second ballot. If there is a tie on the second ballot, there shall be a third and final ballot. In the event of a tie on the third ballot, seniority of profession shall be the determining factor for election. If there is a tie in length of profession, then seniority by age shall determine the election.
 - d) Nominees for President shall be added to the Councilor ballot if not elected President.
- 4) Election of the local Council
- a) Each council position shall be voted on separately, using the same method as the election of the President [Sec. XVI.3].
 - b) The entire list of candidates shall be on the ballot for the first council position.
 - c) Candidates not elected for the first council position shall automatically be on the ballot for the second council position.
 - d) Candidates not elected for the second council position shall automatically be on the ballot for the third council position.
 - e) In all three council elections, in case of a tie, the same rules outlined in Sec. XVI.3c above shall apply.
- 5) The office of Formation Director is vacated when the newly elected Council assumes its duties.
- 6) The new Council shall elect the Formation Director after prayerful discussion and discernment. Councils are encouraged to spend adequate time discerning this important position.
- 7) If one of the new Council members is made Formation Director, the candidate with the next highest number of votes on the last councilor ballot is made a councilor.

⁶ A number greater than half the valid votes cast.

- 8) It is strongly recommended that the previous President and/or Council bring the new Council up to date on community matters, council concerns, upcoming tasks, and community and council files and records. This is not considered a breach of confidentiality.
- 9) The procedure for appointing the Secretary and Treasurer shall be left to the discretion of the new Council [Art. 54-55]. The previous Secretary and Treasurer continue to serve until these appointments are made.
- 10) Study Group Council elections are governed by the provisions in Section XIII.

Section XVII: Transfers within the Province

- 1) When a member of the Oklahoma Province moves within the province and is near another community, that member shall contact the community for permission to attend its meetings. The local Council should verify membership.
- 2) After at least six meetings, the member may complete the transfer request form and petition the local Council for admission.
- 3) The local Council shall verify the information and vote whether to admit the member to the community.
- 4) If, for whatever reason, the local Council does not grant admission, the member remains a member of the originating community as an Isolate [Sec. VIII].
- 5) A member who is transferred to a new community prior to Definitive Promise shall complete formation with the new community. The final decision about formation status and readiness shall be made by the local Council of the new community.
- 6) Members who move within the province and are no longer near a community remain members of their current community as Isolates [Sec VIII].
- 7) Members who move away and, for whatever reason, do not complete a transfer remain members of their current community as Isolates.
- 8) Transfers for reasons other than distance require prior consultation with and approval of the Provincial Delegate.

Section XVIII: Transfers between Provinces

- 1) Carmelite Seculars fall under the authority of the province in which they reside. When an OCDS member from another province moves into the Oklahoma Province, the same transfer procedures as in Sec. XVII shall apply.
- 2) When a member of the Oklahoma Province moves into another province, that member shall contact the Provincial Office of the new province for information and procedures for transferring into that province. The transferring member can obtain contact information for the two other Provinces of the U.S. from the Central Office of the Oklahoma Province.

Section XIX: Transfers of Lay Members of the O.Carm. (TOC) to OCDS

While not underestimating the genuine Carmelite spirituality of the TOC, it must be recognized that a change from TOC to OCDS is a change in vocation. The TOC member, as well as the

local Council, needs ample time and information to discern whether there is a calling to the OCDS.

- 1) The TOC shall visit the community for at least six meetings. During this period the TOC attends aspirancy classes. If the local Council decides to accept the TOC into formation, the TOC shall enter Formation I. If the TOC has already been clothed in the brown scapular, that part of the Rite of Admission to Formation should be passed over.
- 2) The person must be released from the Promise as a TOC before making First Promise as an OCDS.
- 3) The local Council may request a special dispensation from the Provincial Delegate to shorten Formation I, if it becomes apparent that this would be in the best interests of the member and the community.

Section XX: Vows

- 1) Since vows constitute a strictly personal and more complete offering of oneself, and therefore entail a greater moral responsibility [Instruction on the Ritual], Carmelite Seculars desiring to make vows of obedience and chastity should undergo a serious discernment process.
- 2) This discernment should include discussions with one's personal spiritual director/confessor if available, the Spiritual Assistant of the local community, and the local Council. Discernment includes, but is not limited to, a review of the Constitutions Article 39 and the Superior General's Instruction on the Ritual. Both the member and the Council examine the member's reasons for desiring to make vows. It should be taken into consideration whether the member understands what making vows means, and the member's spiritual maturity. Vows should not be made if the member is struggling with keeping the Promise.
- 3) Making vows requires the permission of the local Council and the Provincial or his delegate [Art. 39].
- 4) Carmelite Seculars may be permitted to make the vows of obedience and chastity no sooner than five years after Definitive Promise.
- 5) A Carmelite Secular who has made vows and wishes to leave the Order and/or be dispensed from the vows must request dispensation from the Provincial Delegate.
- 6) Vows do not create a separate category of membership [Art. 39]. Vows do not change a member's status in the local community or the Order. Vows do not change a member's status as a layperson in the Church.

Section XXI: Plenary Council Meeting

- 1) The Plenary Council is a consultative body to the Provincial Council and Provincial Delegate. It is convened triennially by the Provincial Council.
- 2) Each community shall send two members: the President and an elected representative. If the President is unable to attend, another council member may be substituted. Each Study Group shall send one representative.
- 3) Each community and Study Group shall submit a written report prior to the Plenary Council meeting. The Central Office shall provide the format for the report to each Community and

Study Group. Communities are invited to submit agenda items when they send in their report. The President of the Provincial Council shall give a “State of the Province Report” at the Plenary Council based on the triennial reports of the communities and Study Groups.

Section XXII: OCDS Provincial Council

“Where there is an organized circumscription of the friars of the Order, the Secular Order is to form a Provincial Council to assist one another better in formation and the apostolate...” [Art. 57]

- 1) The OCDS Provincial Council shall consist of five definitively professed members of our province, with the right to vote on matters pertaining to our life.
- 2) The Provincial Council shall assist the Provincial Delegate in guiding the formation of a community from its initial development period, through Study Group status, to its eventual request for canonical recognition. It shall also assist the Provincial Delegate in determining when a canonical community is no longer able to function adequately and needs to have its status reduced.
- 3) The Provincial Council may provide assistance in resolving difficulties that a local Council is unable to resolve.
- 4) Members of the Provincial Council shall make visitations. A Councilor, while making a visitation, comes as a representative of the Provincial with the authority of that office. The visitor respects the autonomy of the local Council’s authority.⁷
- 5) The President shall coordinate the work of the Provincial Council and preside at its meetings. The President shall also preside at meetings of the Plenary Council.
- 6) Appointments to the Provincial Council shall be made in the same year as the OCD Provincial Chapter and before the OCDS local community elections. The term is six years and shall be staggered so that either two or three new members are appointed every three year cycle. Councilors may not serve two consecutive terms.
- 7) A list of candidates for selection to the Provincial Council shall be submitted to the Provincial. The list shall be based on recommendations received from Canonical Communities and Study Groups, members of the current Provincial Council, and the OCDS Provincial Delegate. New council members assume responsibility upon selection and appointment by the Provincial.
- 8) The Provincial Council shall elect a President every three years after the new members have been appointed.
- 9) The Provincial Council has the authority to replace one of its members after consulting with the Provincial Delegate.
- 10) The Provincial Council shall submit an annual financial report to the local communities of the Province.

⁷ The Councilor assists the local community without intervening in its government [Art. 57].



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

APPROBAVIT

*Statuta Ordinis Sæcularis Carmelitarum Discalceatorum
Provinciæ Oklahomæ*

Prot. n. 377/2016 DF



p. *Xaverius Cannistrà*
P. Xaverius Cannistrà, OCD
Præpositus Generalis



p. *Angelus Lanfranchi*
P. Angelus Lanfranchi OCD
Secretarius Generalis