

**PRIVATE ASSOCIATION
OF CHRIST'S FAITHFUL**

THE SONS OF SAINT PIUS OF PIETRELCINA

(PADRE PIO BROTHERS)

STATUTES

LIRA, SEPTEMBER 2025

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ABBREVIATIONS

Mt	The Gospel according to Mathew
Lk	The Gospel according to Luke
Jn	The Gospel according to John
Acts	Acts of The Apostles
Rom	The Letter to the Romans
Eph	The Letter to the Ephesians
1Pet	First Letter of Peter
1Chron	First Chronicles
Can	Canon of the Code of Canon Law
PC	<i>Perfectae Caritatis</i>
ET	<i>Evangelica Testificatio</i>
SC	<i>Sacrosantum Concilium</i>
LG	<i>Lumen Gentium:</i>
EN	<i>Evangelii Nuntiandi</i>
VC	<i>Vita Consecrata</i>
PI	<i>Potissimum Institutioni</i>
TOR	<i>Rule of the Third Order Regular</i>

FOUNDING MEMBERS' STATEMENT

The Founders of the Private Association of Christ's Faithful "Sons of St. Pius of Pietrelcina," commonly known as "Padre Pio Brothers" are Rev. Fr. Michael Onyango and Sr. Margaret Awor, respectively.

The foundation was officially approved as a Private Association of Christ's Faithful in the Diocese of Lira, Atego village in Ngetta sub-county Lira City, on the 4th day of the Month of September 2025 the year of the Lord with the Decree of His Lordship Rt. Rev. Wanok Sanctus Lino.

Our profound gratitude to His Lordship, Rt. Rev. Wanok Sanctus Lino, who benevolently welcomed and accepted to establish the Association of the Sons of St. Pius of Pietrelcina in the Diocese of Lira to begin engaging in a profound discerning exercise in view of following the processes towards future approval of our project as a Clerical Society of Apostolic Life by the Holy See upon obtaining the necessary requirements.

We remember with utmost appreciation our brothers Rev. Dr. Fr. David Kamau Mbugua, OFMCap, Rev. Dr. Fr. John Martin Owor, Rev. Fr. Emmy Opio, Mr. Christopher T. Hoar, OFS and all those who are contributing to the growth of the Association with their wise counsel and material resources towards the realization of this God given gift to the Church.

**DECREE OF ERECTION
INTO A PRIVATE ASSOCIATION OF CHRIST'S FAITHFUL**

CHAPTER I

NATURE, SPIRITUALITY, PURPOSE OF THE ASSOCIATION

Nature

1. The Private Association of the Sons of St. Pius of Pietrelcina, commonly known as “Padre Pio Brothers”, is a Clerical Association, founded by Rev. Fr. Michael Onyango and Sr. Margaret Awor. Our Association, though clerical by reason of its foundation and recognition by Church authority, is open to lay brothers as members with full rights and duties as prescribed by the Statutes and Directory, and in conformity to provisions of the Universal law¹ in the Diocese of Lira, Atego village in Ngetta sub-county, Lira City, with the intention of becoming in future a Clerical Society of Apostolic Life. They live in common as brothers by following their own rule of life, and they strive for perfect charity by observing the Statutes.

Charism

2. Our Charism is to live and share the Mystery of the Mercy that Our Lord Jesus Christ taught us as brothers and also transmit it to the world in fidelity to His plan of salvation.

Purpose

3. We seek to witness the mercy of God in the world permeating from the Gospel principles through the virtues of fortitude, deep devotion to the Holy Eucharist; the great miracle of mercy, sacrament of reconciliation and restoration of human dignity among the people of God, looking upon St. Pius of Pietrelcina, as our model.

Spirituality

4. Our spirituality is to live and to serve in loving openness to the will of God in our personal and communitarian life, through integrating prayerful dedication with the spirit of forgiveness, mercy, and compassion, inspired by Our Lord Jesus Christ on the Cross, who forgave and reconciled the world to the Father, to bring hope and healing to the poor, sinners and most vulnerable of the world in the footsteps of St. Pius of Pietrelcina, who dedicated his entire life in their service.

Mission

5. Our mission is to integrate and share the divine mercy through diverse ministries with our physical presence regardless of diversity of cultures, places of origin, religion, languages and political affiliations, a deep devotion to the Holy Eucharist, a dedicated practice of prayer and penance, and a compassionate commitment to serving all humanity as children of God in response to the needs of the times.

¹ *Can.* 588, § 1.

Patrons of the Association

6. The Patrons of the Association are St. Pius of Pietrelcina, the Blessed Virgin Mary, venerated under the title of “Our Lady of Grace;” who is the foundation of hope, and St. Joseph the worker, St. Francis of Assisi, Uganda Martyrs and St. Faustina Kowalska.

CHAPTER II

CONSECRATION

7. We freely accept the gift of the Divine call² and offer ourselves as Sons of St. Pius of Pietrelcina entirely to God by placing our whole life exclusively in following Christ, the origin of our consecration through baptism,³ by undertaking to live the evangelical counsel of chastity, poverty and obedience through a promise made in accord with these Statutes.⁴

8. By the act of consecration in the Association, we unite more closely to Christ and enriched by his graces we grow in virtues lived by St. Pius of Pietrelcina, to witness the wonderful communion of the Trinity and the Kingdom of God, already existing and still to come.

Chastity

9. We choose consecrated chastity, which also implies great purity of mind, heart and body, and embrace it for the sake of the kingdom of heaven,⁵ as a surpassing gift of grace⁶ and a sign of the world to come.⁷

10. We welcome consecrated chastity to liberate our hearts in a unique way from earthly pleasures, and as the most suitable way through which we spend ourselves in God's service and in works of the apostolate.⁸

11. We live chastity to grow constantly in service and love for God and our brothers and sisters with total commitment.

12. Imitating Christ by living the vow of chastity, we undertake the obligation of perfect continence in celibacy and we commit ourselves to avoid engaging in any internal or external acts contrary to chastity and to renounce marriage for the sake of the Kingdom of God.⁹

13. Keeping in mind that this promise is like a "treasure in pots of earthenware,"¹⁰ given that this extraordinary force comes from God and not from man, we embrace and live it faithfully through:

- ▶ Prayer and personal meditation
- ▶ Reading spiritual books
- ▶ Spiritual direction
- ▶ Fidelity to fraternal life in community
- ▶ Avoiding circumstances that may compromise our ability to persevere in chastity

² *Jer.* 1:5; *Gal.* 1:15-16.

³ *Rom.* 6:4.

⁴ *Can.* 607, § 3.

⁵ *Mt.* 19:12.

⁶ *Can.* 575.

⁷ Cf. *Can.* 599.

⁸ *Perfectae Caritatis*, 12.

⁹ *Mt.* 19:12.

¹⁰ *2 Cor.* 4:7.

- ▶ Promoting physical exercises to enhance discipline of the senses
- ▶ Counseling and self-knowledge
- ▶ Discipline in the use of social media
- ▶ Avoiding use of harmful substances.

14. In pursuit of perfect continence, we support the growth of each other towards maturity of senses and self-control by embracing a trusting, caring, loving and healthy relationship with everyone and in communities where God is sought and loved above all things.

Poverty

15. In following the example of Christ who though rich became poor to enrich us¹¹ and who totally depended on the Father with trust, we choose voluntary poverty so as to bear witness to values beyond materialism as a better way of expressing our religious consecration.

16. We take the vow of poverty to be free from all attachment to material possessions, self-interest and profit, and to be completely at the disposal of Christ and the Church.

17. By our vow of poverty, we commit ourselves to embrace a way of life which is poor in fact and in spirit in the footsteps of St. Pius of Pietrelcina as we adhere to the dictates of our Association's rule of life.

18. We accept to depend willingly on our superiors in the use of temporal goods, limitation in the use and disposition of goods, to share all that we have and receive,¹² to be frugal and choose work as our ordinary means of support.

19. By embracing the vow of poverty, we retain the rights to acquire, retain, administer and alienate temporal goods as an Association and its other entities allowed by the Association's law. Brothers are, however, obliged by the virtue of this vow to cease to administrate temporal goods under their proprietorship and to dispose of their use and usufruct. Novices entrust these rights before temporary profession in the Association to whomever they prefer. Before perpetual profession, brothers are to make a will of their assets which is to be valid also in the civil law of their country of origin.¹³

20. As brothers who have chosen voluntary poverty, we live and bear witness by:

- ▶ Being sensitive to the environment and God's creation
- ▶ Identify ourselves with the poor of our society as we restore their hope by being in solidarity with them
- ▶ Sharing what we have among ourselves and between our communities with transparency and without discrimination
- ▶ Allocate with due diligence our goods for the needs of the Church and divine worship
- ▶ Embrace at all times a simple and unpretentious life style

¹¹ 2 Cor. 8:9; Can. 600.

¹² *Evangelica Testificatio*, 21.

¹³ Can. 668, § 1.

- ▶ Respect to the wills of the faithful who give and leave their resources to the Association by greatest diligence in their fulfilment and even as regards the mode of administration.¹⁴

21. As an outward sign of consecration, and witness to poverty, our habit is simple and modest, poor and at the same time suitable to the circumstances of time and place.¹⁵

The Promise of Obedience

22. By embracing the promise of Obedience we surrender our own will to the legitimate superiors¹⁶ of the Association by emulating Jesus Christ who came to do the will of the Father.¹⁷

23. Following the example of St. Pius of Pietrelcina who was obedient and reverent to the Supreme authority of the Church and who constantly encouraged reciprocal fraternal corrections among the friars, we choose the promise of obedience so as to bear witness of fraternal communion, by caring, accompanying and encouraging one another in observance of the laws of our Association and obedience to the Superiors.¹⁸

24. Bound by the promise of obedience we obey the Supreme Pontiff as the highest Superior,¹⁹ the Local Ordinary of our Principal house and the other Ordinaries in our places of ministry, and submit ourselves to their guidance in the service of the Church.

25. We live our obedience through obeying the orders of the Minister General and other Superiors when they command in accordance to the rules and regulations, who stand in the place of God, when they command according to the proper statutes.²⁰

26. The means by which we search for the will of the Lord through the vow of obedience are:

- ▶ Prayer and meditation on the word of God
- ▶ Submission of our own will and listening to legitimate superiors
- ▶ Respect to the Church hierarchy
- ▶ Humility
- ▶ Listening to our conscience
- ▶ Following community schedules and bearing our everyday burdens with serenity, fraternal consultation and dialogue
- ▶ Fulfilling in a responsible way mandates entrusted to us
- ▶ Spirit of fraternal collaboration.

¹⁴ *Can.* 1300.

¹⁵ *Perfectae Caritatis*, 17; *Can.* 669, § 1.

¹⁶ *Can.* 601.

¹⁷ *Jn.* 4:34.

¹⁸ *Regula Bullata*, Rule of St. Francis, Ch. 10, 1223.

¹⁹ *Can.* 590, § 2.

²⁰ *Perfectae Caritatis* 14; *Can.* 601.

CHAPTER III

PRAYER LIFE

27. The Lord Jesus who calls to himself those whom he loved,²¹ teaches us in our pursuit of perfection through religious profession, to pray without becoming weary,²² for we have received in us the spirit of adoption²³ so that we can constantly praise and glorify the Father, the same way Christ intercedes for us at the right hand of God.²⁴

28. By our religious profession in the example of St. Pius of Pietrelcina who persevered in spirit of prayer and devotion,²⁵ we are bound to praise, adore and thank God assiduously so as to remain steadfast in God's presence at all times.

29. We choose prayer as the supreme rule of life as we follow Christ by our religious profession and we dedicate ourselves to contemplation of divine things in fidelity to the Gospel and provisions of our Statutes.²⁶

30. In union with the Catholic Church, we participate in the daily celebration of the Eucharistic sacrifice, taking it as the essential event each day,²⁷ as well as, the source and summit of our religious consecration, fraternal communion and mission.

31. The Eucharist is the primary way in which we celebrate the continuing Incarnation of Christ in the world and sign of His presence among us and His continuing role for the salvation of our souls.

32. We adhere to the call of St. Pius of Pietrelcina to live a life of greatest reverence and honour 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 God²⁸ by adoration and frequent visits to the Blessed Sacrament as we express our prayerful love for Christ our saviour and redeemer.

33. We participate daily in the celebration of the Liturgy of the hours to sanctify the day with prayer as we offer praises to God in the name of the Church.²⁹

34. For our sanctification and in harmony with the Church, we observe faithfully the events of the Liturgical year, the seasons and feasts with proper disposition and appropriate preparation.

²¹ *Rom* 8:30.

²² *Lk.* 18;1,7; *I Thess.* 5:15.

²³ *Rom.* 8:15.

²⁴ *Rom.* 8:34.

²⁵ *Legenda Maior*, 6, Life of St. Francis by St. Bonaventure, In "Analecta Franciscana," Florentiae 1926-1941.

²⁶ Cf. *Can.* 662; 663, § 1.

²⁷ *Can.* 663, § 2.

²⁸ Pascal Robinson, *Writings of St. Francis of Assisi*, p. 109; Cf. *Rule of the Third Order Regula*, 12.

²⁹ *Sancrosanctum Concillium*, 85.

35. We turn to Mary our Lady of Grace,³⁰ to imitate her faith-filled life, by celebrating with filial joy the Marian feasts and devotions. We particularly venerate with special honour the Virgin Mother of God through the prayer of the Rosary.³¹

36. In honour of our patron St. Pius of Pietrelcina, we joyfully celebrate his feast day with a three-day event culminating in a special Mass on the last day of celebrations and also the celebrate the Franciscan feast days as stipulated in the Franciscan liturgical calendar.

37. Our Association, faithful to St. Pius of Pietrelcina we choose penance as testimony to the inner most change of our hearts and bring forth fruits worthy of penance and reconciliation. We commit ourselves to daily examination of conscience and approach the sacrament of penance frequently.

38. We strengthen our prayer life by:

- ▶ Spiritual readings and study
- ▶ Daily meditation
- ▶ Monthly recollections
- ▶ Annual retreats
- ▶ Spiritual direction
- ▶ On-going formation
- ▶ Prayer of the Novenas
- ▶ Observing other special prayers of the Association

39. Our Association keeps the bond of love with our departed brothers by remembering them during our prayers, especially on the anniversary of their transition to God's glory.

³⁰ *Lumen Gentium*, 68.

³¹ *Can.* 663, § 4.

CHAPTER IV

FRATERNAL LIFE IN COMMUNITY

40. Our Lord Jesus Christ in his life and mission taught those whom he called to himself that, a community of brotherhood is formed by those who listen to the word of God and act on it.³² We, the Sons of St. Pius of Pietrelcina, establish our fraternal life in community in communion with Our Lord Jesus Christ, as brothers who in response to the divine vocation, are united around the word of God and the Eucharist, and manifest in an existential way the mystery of eternal love, among ourselves and with our brothers and sisters in the world.

41. We build our fraternal life as a family of faith and love, as we follow the example of St. Pius of Pietrelcina, who lived and encouraged a sense of brotherhood among the brothers and a life in harmony with all creatures.³³

42. The Fraternity is made up of brothers, that did not choose each other but given by God to one another.³⁴ Each brother as an essential member of the community, strives to build a bond of acceptance of himself and others to intensively cultivate a family spirit that is proper to the Franciscan tradition.³⁵

43. As Sons of St. Pius of Pietrelcina, we embrace each other in fraternal love and build a community in a legitimately established house under the authority of a Guardian designated according to our Statutes. Our communitarian experience is enriched by the celebration of the Eucharist and the presence of the Blessed Sacrament which constitute the center of the community.³⁶

44. We maintain joyful spirit in our communities in such a way that each member, irrespective of race, colour, nationality or status, feels welcome. We strengthen our fraternal communion by observing common moments of prayer, sharing of meals, recreation.³⁷

45. In our communities, we achieve our objectives harmoniously and continuously by establishing community schedules, that guide our activities, by the collaboration of each member of the community. The schedules are approved by the Minister General.

46. Like St. Pius of Pietrelcina, we express our love for parents, relatives and friends by according them warm hospitality in our communities, and visiting them, during our one-month annual break, except in cases of emergency and special situations with permission from the competent superior.

³² Mt. 8:21; *Vita Consecrata*, 16; *Can.* 602.

³³ *Regula non Bullata*, Rule of St. Francis, Ch. 9/11, 1221.

³⁴ *Testament of St. Francis*, 14.

³⁵ *Regula Bullata*, 6,7, 1223; *Rule of the Third Order Regula*, 23.

³⁶ *Can.* 608.

³⁷ *Admonition of St. Francis of Assisi*, 17.

47. We take care of the sick,³⁸ the elderly, the restless and faint of heart among the members, with all tenderness, understanding and love.³⁹

48. Confreres who are obliged to live alone in works entrusted to them by the Association, should take care to spend some time with other confreres, so that they might experience the benefits of community. We, however, should remain close to them to ease their loneliness, and we should invite them with solicitude to share our fraternal and apostolic life from time to time.

49. In the use of means of social communications, we oblige ourselves to observe discretion and discernment on its benefits for our study and mission, while we avoid any of its aspects that may endanger our vocation and discipline of our communities.⁴⁰

50. We reserve a section of our communities exclusively for members and at all times, and we preserve a serene atmosphere that enhances our constant awareness of God's presence in our midst.

51. Each brother is co-responsible for personal and communitarian growth. To this end, we:⁴¹

- ▶ Treat each other with fraternal love of Christ
- ▶ Forgive and reconcile with one another without keeping grudges
- ▶ Make known our whereabouts and safeguard the good name of each brother and the community
- ▶ Share talents and gifts with each other and for the good of the community
- ▶ Preserve good reputation and esteem among ourselves
- ▶ Respect each other's privacy
- ▶ Care for one another in times of need
- ▶ Promote dialogue, free and friendly sharing of opinions.

52. We maintain a close bond of unity with each brother in the whole Association and with the central leadership as an expression of our love for Christ and fidelity to our charism by praying for each other and through healthy communication.

53. In case of death of a brother, the burial takes place in a cemetery of the territory in which the community he was assigned or temporarily attached is located. Moreover, the Association cemetery for deceased brothers from the Eastern Africa region is in Lira Diocese, as much as this is possible. The family of a departed brother, in consultation with the General administration of the Association, may be allowed to lay to rest a brother to their family cemetery at their own expense.

³⁸ *Regula Bullata*, Ch. 6, 1223.

³⁹ *Mt.* 7:12.

⁴⁰ *Inter Mirifica*, 4; Can. 666.

⁴¹ *Rule of the Third Order Regula*, 24.

CHAPTER V

THE APOSTOLIC MISSION

54. Our Association, living in active faith and constantly searching and trusting in the appearance of the glory of our great God and Saviour, Christ Jesus,⁴² embraces the apostolic mission in communion with the Church, with prayer that the heart of each brother and that of all peoples may be flooded with light, so that everyone can understand with confidence the hope⁴³ that the Lord gives to us, especially in time of need.

55. Following the example of St. Pius of Pietrelcina, who intended to share in the mission of the Church guiding souls and relieving suffering, we, the Sons of St. Pius Pietrelcina diligently commit ourselves to receive Jesus in the Eucharist before we can begin His work in behalf of the human family which still needs manifestation of that same love and mercy as spelt out in the scriptures.

56. Guided by our Spirituality of mercy and compassion,⁴⁴ we participate in the ministry of evangelization in communion with the Church through diversity, such as in parishes, families, hospitals, counselling centres, retreat houses, schools, prisons, and collaborative pastoral activities considering the needs of the Local church where we are present⁴⁵ following the diocesan pastoral guidelines and the norms of the Universal law of the Church.

57. As Sons of St. Pius of Pietrelcina, we collaborate in the mission of the Church both within the Local church of our foundation and elsewhere in the world so as to preach the message of mercy and compassion and bear witness to the love of God.⁴⁶

58. With devoted submission and reverence to the order of our Minister General, we are disposed for the designation to ministries of the Association. Whereas, assignments are made, while considering the capability and suitability of the brothers for the specific tasks.

59. We accept functions and offices outside the Association only upon receiving express permission from the Minister General having heard from his council.⁴⁷

60. Popular missions, so dear to the heart of our Founders, are to be earnestly promoted. Therefore, we should undertake the work of the missions according to circumstances of time and place, searching for all possible means to give this work new vitality, both to renew and to build up a true Christian community and to awaken faith in the hearts of unbelievers.

⁴² *Titus* 2:13.

⁴³ *Eph.* 1:18.

⁴⁴ *Can.* 675, § 1; *Rule of the Third Order Regula*, 30.

⁴⁵ *Perfectae Caritatis*, 20.

⁴⁶ *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, 59.

⁴⁷ *Can.* 671; 681, § 2; 682.

CHAPTER VI

FORMATION

61. Conscious that God is the primary source of all formation,⁴⁸ our Association collaborates with the action of the Holy Spirit⁴⁹ to help each brother to discern and respond freely and progressively in offering of himself to God and to the service of the Church.⁵⁰

62. Learning from the great spiritual treasure transmitted to the Church in St. Pius of Pietrelcina, we take the formation process as our constant preoccupation to build and sustain a holistic vocation growth.

63. Our Association achieves the goal of integral formation by faithful adherence to the *Magisterium* of the Catholic Church, our Statutes, Directory, General plan of formation which specify, principles, contents and procedures of every state of formation.⁵¹

64. Our Association, through the leaders, gives special attention to the formation process and dedicates resources, opportunity and time as required by the different stages.⁵²

Vocation promotion

65. We give the youth and young adults, through vocation promotion, an appreciation of each vocation and also, a special opportunity to learn the basic elements of our charism and way of life, and give them the enlightenment and means to discern God's call in their own lives.

66. It is incumbent on all the brothers of our Association to animate vocations through prayer and by bearing joyful witness of their consecration in pastoral work and personal encounters with the youth and young adults.⁵³ However, the Minister General designates a brother to the office of Vocations director to coordinate the exercise of vocation promotion on a stable basis.

Aspirancy

67. During the time of Aspirancy, candidates remain outside the Association. This preparatory stage aims at verifying their intention and elements of human and emotional maturity necessary to recommend them for admission to Postulancy.⁵⁴ The Directory and General plan of formation sets out the procedure for admission and duration.

⁴⁸ *Lk* 6:13.

⁴⁹ *Vita Consecrata*, 25.

⁵⁰ *Can.* 573, § 1.

⁵¹ *Vita Consecrata*, 68.

⁵² *Perfectae Caritatis*, 18; *can.* 661.

⁵³ *Vita Consecrata*, 64.

⁵⁴ Pope Francis, Apostolic Exhortation *Christus Vivit*, 283, 2019, *Rule of the Third Order Regula*, 5.

Postulancy

68. During Postulancy our Association gives candidates opportunity to experience human and spiritual maturity under the guidance of the Postulancy Director as they respond to God's call with sufficient and proper responsibility and freedom.⁵⁵

69. The Minister General, with the consent of his Council admits candidates to Postulancy, having heard the opinion and recommendation of the Vocations director and the Formation team regarding the level of the candidates' human and emotional maturity, and hope to be formed in our way of life.

70. Our Association requires that those to be admitted to Postulancy:

- ▶ Are baptised male Catholics between the age of eighteen and twenty-nine years, have right intention and are not prevented by any impediments.⁵⁶
- ▶ Have good health, suitable character and sufficient qualities of maturity.⁵⁷
- ▶ Have completed secondary school education with a grade acceptable for access to a University or Institution of higher learning in their respective countries of origin.
- ▶ Are introduced by their parish priests.

71. Candidates under the age of eighteen and over thirty years are admitted in our Association on exceptional basis by the Minister General with the consent of his Council, having heard the opinion of the Vocations director and the Formation team.

72. Candidates who had already been admitted to a Seminary or into other institutes require a testimony of the Local ordinary, major superiors, or rectors.

73. The Minister General with consent of the Council appoints a Postulant master, a brother who has an appropriate formation, understanding of the youth, and zealous about the quality and increase of vocations in our Association.⁵⁸

74. The duration of Postulancy is one year. The period is shortened, or prolonged but not beyond three years, according to the determination of the Minister General with consent of the Council, having heard the Formation team.

75. In addition to the criteria already established for admission to Postulancy, the candidate is to sign a document of no claims of any benefits or compensation whatsoever towards the Association, when he decides to leave or be asked to do so.

76. Upon completion of Postulancy, the candidate writes an application for admission to the Novitiate. The Minister General with consent of his Council, having considered the recommendation of the Postulancy Director, admits the candidate to the novitiate. The same

⁵⁵ *Renovationis Causam*, 4.

⁵⁶ *Can.* 597, § 1.

⁵⁷ *Can.* 642.

⁵⁸ *Vita Consecrata*, 66.

authority dismisses a postulant having heard the opinion of the Postulant master and the Formation team.

77. Our Association does not admit to the Novitiate a candidate who:

- ▶ Has contracted marriage which still exists
- ▶ Is currently bound by sacred bonds to some other institute
- ▶ Enters the Institute under unlawful external pressure or fear
- ▶ Conceals his former incorporation in another institute or seminary
- ▶ Conceals a grave health condition, such as terminal or highly contagious diseases
- ▶ Attracted debts or loans and has not fully served them
- ▶ Has attempted suicide
- ▶ Has been convicted for grave crimes
- ▶ Has committed delicts against the faith, and other grave crimes of which the judgement is reserved to the Holy See
- ▶ Has manifest homosexual tendencies.

Novitiate

78. The Novitiate is the period in which candidates begin to experience the way of life of our Association. The Novices are helped at this time to understand better the divine vocation and the demands of religious life in the charism and spirituality proper to our Association. They have the opportunity for human, emotional and spiritual growth as they deepen their knowledge and clarify their understanding of the call to personal union with Christ, fraternal life in community and the significance of living the evangelical counsels of chastity, poverty and obedience.⁵⁹

79. Entrance to the Novitiate is preceded by a three-day retreat and candidates receive from the Minister General or his delegate an appropriate uniform and a medal with an image of St. Pius of Pietrelcina as a mark of the beginning of their life in the Association.

80. Novices undertake their formation in a Novitiate house erected by the Minister General with consent of his Council. The Minister General with consent of the Council can allow a novice, in a particular case, to make novitiate in another house of the Association under the direction of a brother designated for this special role, who acts in the place of the director of novices.⁶⁰

81. The Novitiate programme is established in the Association's General formation plan, in such a way that it permits the integral growth of the Novices in religious life under careful direction of the Novice director and support of his assistants and all members of the Institute.⁶¹ To achieve this, novices are to:

⁵⁹ *Potissimum Institutioni*, 45; *Can.* 646.

⁶⁰ *Can.* 647, § 2-3.

⁶¹ *Can.* 651; *Can.* 652, § 4.

- ▶ Be led to cultivate human and Christian virtues through prayer and self-denial
- ▶ Be taught the mystery of salvation
- ▶ Read and meditate on the Sacred scriptures and worship of God in Sacred liturgy
- ▶ Live a life consecrated to God and to humanity in Christ through the evangelical counsels
- ▶ Learn the history of the Foundation of the Sons of St. Pius and life of the Association
- ▶ Learn to love the Church and its sacred pastors.⁶²

82. Novices collaborate with their Director with openness and trust in the formation itinerary in order to harmoniously integrate the spiritual, doctrinal, and charismatic elements for leading the life of perfection proper to the Association.⁶³

83. The Novitiate lasts for twelve months lived entirely in the Novitiate house erected for the purpose of forming novices.⁶⁴

84. A novice who absents himself, even by reason of sickness, from Novitiate for more than ninety days cumulative, invalidates his entire novitiate period and has to either start afresh or leave the community. An absence which lasts more than fifteen days must be made up.⁶⁵ Moreover, the Minister General, due to special circumstances, can admit a brother to First profession in anticipation, but not by more than fifteen days.⁶⁶

85. A Novice is free to leave the Association or is dismissed by the Minister General, having considered the report of the Novice master and the opinion of the Formation team.⁶⁷

Temporary Religious Profession

86. Temporary profession is a phase of formation in which each brother makes real progress in his human and spiritual growth by consolidating the benefits reaped from the precedent stages of formation. It is meant to deepen the vocation and mission of a Son of St. Pius of Pietrelcina and solidify the sense of belonging.⁶⁸

87. Temporary professed brothers diligently commit themselves to learn with openness from their Formators, brothers and the Church, all that enlightens the heart, increases true faith, strengthens hope and perfect charity, and builds sense and knowledge that helps to carry out holy and true command of Christ in consecration.⁶⁹

⁶² *Can.* 652, § 2.

⁶³ *Can.* 652, § 3.

⁶⁴ *Can.* 648, § 1.

⁶⁵ *Can.* 649, § 1.

⁶⁶ *Can.* 649, § 2.

⁶⁷ *Can.* 653, § 1.

⁶⁸ *Potissimum Institutioni*, 59; *Can.* 659, § 1; *VC*, 67-68.

⁶⁹ *Regula Non Bullata*, 23, 1221; St. Bonaventure, *Biography of St. Francis*, 1221-1274.

88. Brothers in Temporal profession are assigned to houses of our Association and apostolates that favour the process of their formation, and are accorded resources to enhance their spiritual, doctrinal, intellectual, cultural, liturgical, communitarian and pastoral formation, even with suitable academic degrees, and more especially for those preparing for holy orders “without extinguishing the spirit of prayer and devotion.”⁷⁰

89. The Minister General with consent of the Council admits candidates to Temporary profession and to the renewal of promises, having received their applications and recommendations of the Formators,⁷¹ with the opinion of the Formation team.

90. For the Temporary profession to be valid, it is required that, the:

- ▶ Candidate has completed the eighteenth year of age
- ▶ Candidate has received the sacrament of confirmation
- ▶ Candidate has ceded the administration of their goods and use of the revenue that accrues from them
- ▶ Novitiate has been validly completed
- ▶ Admission has been given by the Minister General with the vote of the Council
- ▶ Profession is expressed and made without force, grave fear or malice
- ▶ Profession is received by the legitimate superior personally or through another.⁷²

FORMULAR FOR PROFESSION

91. The profession in our Association is made privately in the hands of the Minister General or his delegate and expressed in these words:

In answer to God’s call, I, Brother (**Name**) led by the spirit of the Lord and through the intercession of St. Pius of Pietrelcina and the Blessed Virgin Mary, I place my hands in yours, brother..... (**The Minister General / his Delegate**), and freely promise to the Almighty God to live in OBEDIENCE, POVERTY, and CHASTITY for (one year / my whole life). I promise through the power of the Holy Spirit and the help of my brothers that I will faithfully dedicate myself, in the Sons of St. Pius of Pietrelcina, according to its Statutes laid down, which I will observe with all possible care. I implore the intercessions of St. Pius of Pietrelcina and Blessed Virgin Mary, and I ask you my brothers and sisters, to pray for me, that in serving God and the Church, I may reach the perfection of charity. So help me God!

Answer of the Minister General / Delegate:

First profession / Renewal - And I, with the Faculty granted to me, I receive the promises you have made, in the name of the Church. I earnestly commend you to God, that your gift of self, made one with the sacrifice of the Eucharist, may be brought to perfection. Amen.

⁷⁰ *Legends of Saint Francis of Assisi*, quoted in a *Fiction* by Candide Chalippe, 2018.

⁷¹ *Can.* 653, § 2; 657, § 1.

⁷² *Can.* 656; 668, § 1.

Final profession - And I, with the Faculty granted to me, I receive the promises you have made, in the name of the Church. I earnestly commend you to God, that your gift of self, made one with the sacrifice of the Eucharist, may be brought to perfection. By this perpetual profession, dear Brother, you are now fully and definitively a Son of St. Pius of Pietrelcina and incorporated into our Association with all its rights, favours and privileges. Amen.

92. The promises made with temporary profession are renewed every year for a period not less than three years and not more than nine years.⁷³ At the expiration of the time for which the profession was issued, the Associate who requires it spontaneously and is deemed eligible is admitted to the renewal of the profession or perpetual profession; otherwise, he leaves the Association.⁷⁴

93. The formula of the profession of promises is duly signed by the Professed, the Minister General or his delegate, the Invited celebrant and any two Perpetually professed brothers. This document is kept in the archives of the General House.

94. By religious profession, a brother is bound to live according to the demands of the evangelical counsels and embrace our way of life with rights and obligations as dictated by our Statute.

95. As an external sign of religious profession in our Association, a brother is given a brown habit, Franciscan brown code, a Cross or Tau and the Statutes.

Perpetual Profession

96. Perpetual profession made by a brother through the mediation of the Church, radically and irrevocably immerses him in the mystery of the Divine life, and fully incorporates him in our Association as a member with rights and obligations lived in accordance with the Statutes and our charism.

97. A brother, who has duly prepared himself in total collaboration and cooperation with the Formators and members of the Association during the Temporary profession, makes a handwritten application to the Minister General admission to Perpetual profession six months to final renewal of the Temporary promises.

98. For a brother to make Perpetual profession validly, he is to fulfil the requirements of art. 87 above, as well as:

- ▶ Completion of the twenty fourth year of age
- ▶ Completion of at least three years of Temporary profession,⁷⁵ without prejudice to art. 88 above, and the prescripts of can. 657, § 3, that permits the Minister General with

⁷³ Cf. *Can.* 657, § 2.

⁷⁴ cf. *Can.* 657, § 1.

⁷⁵ Cf. *Can.* 658, 2°.

consent of the Council, for a just cause, to anticipate the profession but not with more than three months.

99. Perpetual profession is preceded by a period of three months of intensive preparation. The month immediate to the profession is spent in an environment of spiritual retreat.

100. As an external sign of perpetual profession, a brother receives on the day of profession, the Medal of mercy that symbolizes the mission of our Association, besides the brown habit, Franciscan brown code, a Cross or Tau and the Statutes which are an outward sign of consecration, and witness to poverty as prescribed in artt. 21 and 77 above.

Lay brothers in our Association

101. All of us are conscious that vocation to brotherhood is excellent, constituting a state which of itself is one of total dedication to the profession of the evangelical counsels, and serves the pastoral work of the Church so usefully by discharging many ministries.⁷⁶

102. Lay brothers receive philosophical and theological training to facilitate gradual opening of their minds both to the treasures of human wisdom and to the mystery of Christ. They also receive technical and pastoral formation which is suitable both to the spiritual maturity of their vocation and to the special grace of working and exercising an apostolate.

Advancement to Ministries and Sacred Orders

103. After proper preparation, candidates for the Ministries make written request to the Minister General who according to the norms of law is competent to admit them to the ministries.⁷⁷

104. A candidate for Sacred Orders is a perpetually professed brother, who having fulfilled the academic requirements, submits a written petition to the Minister General. Before a Deacon is promoted to the Presbyterate, he is to participate in pastoral care, exercising his diaconal order for a suitable period of time to be determined by the Minister General.⁷⁸

Formation Directors

105. Formators in our Association have a grave responsibility to educate the brothers in the various stages of formation by giving witness to the joy of consecration with faithful observance of the evangelical counsels, the spirituality of St. Pius of Pietrelcina and authentic fraternal life in community.⁷⁹

⁷⁶ Cf. *Perfectae Caritatis*, 10.

⁷⁷ Cf. *Can.* 1035, § 1.

⁷⁸ *Can.* 1032, § 2.

⁷⁹ *Perfectae Caritatis*, 24.

106. Formators are to ensure that brothers are carefully formed according to the General plan of formation established by the Association on all matters that are necessary for the integral growth as consecrated religious, imbued with the wealth of our charism.

107. For a brother to be entrusted the office of formator, he:⁸⁰

- ▶ Has to be of Perpetual vows
- ▶ Is legitimately designated by the Minister General
- ▶ Has the ability to form the brothers in spiritual discernment
- ▶ Is passionate and gives witness to the charism and spirituality of the Association
- ▶ Has ability to observe confidentiality
- ▶ Has ability to listen, dialogue and create a rapport with other brothers

108. In exercising the responsibility of formation, Formators cooperate and collaborate with the Superiors, the Formation team, other brothers of the Association and all parties whose assistance is vital for the holistic growth of the brothers.

109. Formators are appointed by the Minister General with consent of the Council for the various phases of formation in the Association.

Ongoing Formation

110. In our Association we continue throughout our entire life to its final consummation to enrich ourselves through spiritual, doctrinal and practical formation through the assistance of the Association leaders in order that we diligently and constantly renew our consecration and commitment in service to the Lord and the human family.⁸¹

112. Each brother undertakes ongoing formation with high level of responsibility to enable him believe more in life, community and the Church, and to live more in Christ.⁸²

113. The Association establishes in the General plan of formation the means and times for ongoing formation, attentive to the age brackets of the brothers.

⁸⁰ *Perfectae Caritatis*, 66.

⁸¹ Cf. *Can.* 661; *PI*, 67.

⁸² *Mt.* 11.29.

CHAPTER VII

SERVICE OF AUTHORITY

114. Intent to commit the whole of our lives to the Lord in consecration and service in His Vineyard, we recognize that exercise of authority is a divine gift and constitutive element of ecclesial existence. We welcome with docility the authority of the Roman Pontiff, who is the Vicar of Christ on earth and hold filial submission to the Diocesan bishops in virtue of the vow of obedience.⁸³

115. We organize our life through visible structures that permit us to express the charismatic gift we have received under the influence of the Holy Spirit, taking St. Pius of Pietrelcina as a model. We accept with reverence in virtue of the vow of obedience authority of the Church and of those entrusted in positions of leadership in our Association. Those who are in position of leadership take it as service and exercise it with humility, in imitation of Jesus Christ the Good shepherd.⁸⁴

116. Authority in the Association is exercised in view of:

- ▶ Deepening the love and openness to the Divine mysteries
- ▶ Enhancing ecclesial communion and collaboration
- ▶ Safeguarding the patrimony
- ▶ Upholding observance of the Statutes
- ▶ Strengthening fraternal communion of the brothers.

117. Collegial authority is exercised in our Association by the General Assembly and Personal authority by the Minister General personally, on his own or together with the Council.⁸⁵ The authority of the Minister General is ordinary, proper and immediate over all the Zones, Houses, individual brothers and the ministries of the Association. In Zones and Houses authority is exercised by Association Superiors in accordance with the Statutes and the norms of the Universal law.⁸⁶ Exercise of authority is entrusted to Association Superiors for a period determined by our Statutes; moreover, same persons who have exercised authority in the Association are not to be constituted in positions of leadership continuously without interruption.⁸⁷

⁸³ 1 *Pet.* 5:11; *Rom.* 13:1 1 *Chron.* 29:11; *LG* 25; *VC*, 43; *can.* 618.

⁸⁴ *Jn.* 10:11-18.

⁸⁵ *Can.* 596, § 1.

⁸⁶ *Can.* 622.

⁸⁷ *Can.* 624, § 2.

118. Our Leaders, being faithful to the charism of the Association and guided by the *Magisterium* of the Church as communion, exercise authority while fostering the principles of co-responsibility and subsidiarity.⁸⁸

119. Leaders in our Association realize the principles of good ecclesial exercise of authority by:⁸⁹

- ▶ Encouraging close cooperation with the brothers in the community
- ▶ Promoting opportunities for consultation
- ▶ Allowing healthy communication and dialogue
- ▶ Maintaining friendly communitarian visits
- ▶ Cultivating supportive environment on the initiatives of brothers
- ▶ Fostering unity and harmony in diversity
- ▶ Being in solidarity with brothers in moments of joy and sorrow
- ▶ Strengthening mutual cooperation with other Institutes and Local churches.

General Assembly

120. The supreme authority of the Association is vested in the General Assembly when in session. As collegial authority it is a real sign of fellowship where sisters discern the will of God for the whole Association. Hence, it is composed in such a way that it represents the whole Association and becomes a true sign of unity in charity. This collegial body allows all members to exercise their juridical right and operate on an equal footing as they participate in the process of decision-making for the Association.⁹⁰

121. The fundamental functions of the General Assembly of the Association are, to:⁹¹

- ▶ Protect the patrimony
- ▶ Promote appropriate renewal in accord with the patrimony
- ▶ Elect the Minister General and General Association Councillors
- ▶ Treat matters of major importance
- ▶ Issue norms binding to all physical and juridical persons of the Association according to the charism of the Association
- ▶ Examine the state of the Association.

⁸⁸ Cf. *Can.* 618 and 619.

⁸⁹ Cf. *Can.* 619.

⁹⁰ *Can.* 631.

⁹¹ *Can.* 631; *Can.* 578.

121. The Association celebrates the Ordinary General Assembly after every three years or when the office of the General Ministers becomes vacant. When a grave need arises, an Extraordinary Assembly may be convoked by the Minister General after obtaining the consent of her Council and having heard the Zonal leaders and the Bishop of the Principal house.⁹²

123. The Minister General, or the Vicar General in case the Minister General is impeded, having informed the Bishop of the Principal house, announces the celebration of the General Assembly twelve months before the actual date of celebration. In the event that the office of the Minister General becomes vacant, the Vicar General is to convoke the General Assembly to be held not sooner than three months nor later than six months. The General Assembly may be anticipated or delayed by the Minister General with consent of the Council for grave reasons but for not more than three months in either of the case.

124. The General Assembly is composed of *ex officio* and elected delegates. The *ex officio* members are: The Minister General and his Council, the General Secretary, the Bursar General, the Zonal leaders, and the immediate former Minister General.

125. In the election of the delegates to the General Assembly, all members in perpetual promises including *ex officio* members have a right to active vote. Temporary professed members, brothers under exclaustation, and those who are affected by proven grave mental impairment do not have the right to vote delegates to the Assembly. The total number of delegates is determined by the Minister General having heard her Council, using a standard percentage on the total number of brothers per Zone. Depending on the determined number of delegates per Zone, each Zone chooses its delegates on the basis of those who obtain the highest votes. In case of equal votes, the senior in profession is elected. In case the two delegates have the same dates of profession, the age determines.⁹³

126. If an elected delegate, before starting the Assembly is unable to participate for valid reasons, the Minister General with the consent of his Council proceeds to replace him with another member of the Association, or with the member who had received the next highest number of votes after the delegates elected in her circumscription. *Ex-officio* members are not replaced.

127. The General Assembly is celebrated in an atmosphere of prayer and its procedure is guided by Assembly norms enshrined in the Association Assembly Directory and in conformity to the provisions of the Universal law.

128. A majority of two thirds of the votes is required for the valid election of the Minister General. If these votes are inconclusive in the first, second, and third ballots, a fourth and final ballot is carried out, in which the two brothers with highest votes in the third ballot have passive vote. The one who receives the highest number of votes is considered elected; if there is a tie and the two are equal in profession, the elder by age is elected.

⁹² Cf. *Can.* 632.

⁹³ *Can.* 631, § 1.

129. For the validity of the Assembly deliberations an absolute majority of the votes is required. For changes in the Statutes a two third majority of the votes is required, with the subsequent approval of the Diocesan bishop of the Principal house.⁹⁴

130. The Assembly is concluded and closed by the Minister General, decided by an absolute majority vote of the Assembly members. The Minister General ensures that the Assembly Acts are published and the deliberations transmitted throughout the Association as soon as possible by means of a circular letter. He likewise, sends a brief report to the Local Ordinary of the Principal house, concerning the life and state of the Association for the last three years and the outcome of the concluded Assembly.⁹⁵ The members of the Assembly, and any persons taking part in it, are bound to secrecy during and after the Assembly's work.

Minister General

131. The Minister General has power of governance over the whole Association, which he exercises, guided by the Statutes and the Universal law, in faithful adherence to our Charism. In executing his functions in the general governance of the Association, the General council collaborates with him according to the norms of the Statutes.⁹⁶

132. The Minister General relying on God's grace and with Divine cooperation⁹⁷ carries out the responsibilities entrusted to him as a sign of communion and peace in the Institute. He fulfils this role as a good shepherd as he builds a strong bond between him and all the brothers by frequent contacts through canonical visits to the houses and fraternal dialogue.⁹⁸

133. The Minister General is elected by the General Assembly for a three-year term.⁹⁹ To be validly elected the brother must be perpetually professed and at least thirty-five (35) years of age.¹⁰⁰ He can be re-elected for another term of three years but not more without the special permission of the Diocesan bishop of the Principal house. In case of postulation, by absolute majority vote of the Assembly members, the norms of the Universal law are applied.¹⁰¹ In case equal votes are obtained during the election of the Minister General, reference is made to the prescripts of art. 122.

134. The Minister General for a just cause, may resign from his office, having discussed the matter with the Diocesan bishop of the Principal house, whose decision he is to adhere to and informs the General council.¹⁰² If the General council for proven gravest of reasons¹⁰³ as

⁹⁴ *Can.* 595, § 1.

⁹⁵ Cf. *Can.* 595, § 1; *Can.* 592, § 1.

⁹⁶ *Can.* 627; *Rule of the Third Order Regula*, 26.

⁹⁷ *Eph.* 2:10; *Mt.* 20:28; *Jn.* 17:21.

⁹⁸ *Regula Non Bullata*, 4, 1221; *Can.* 628.

⁹⁹ *Can.* 624, § 1-2.

¹⁰⁰ *Can.* 623.

¹⁰¹ *Can.* 180, § 1 ff.

¹⁰² *Can.* 187 ff.

¹⁰³ *Can.* 194.

prescribed by the Universal law and the law of our Association, decides to remove the Minister General, they present the matter to the Bishop of the Principal house, whose decision they are to abide with.

135. The responsibilities of the Minister General are, to:

- ▶ Watch over the observance of the Statutes, fidelity to the charism and discipline in the Association
- ▶ Strengthen ways that promote greater communication between communities and among the brothers
- ▶ Admit into Postulancy, Novitiate, Temporary profession and Perpetual profession
- ▶ Present candidates for Ministries and Sacred Orders to the Local ordinaries for installations and ordinations
- ▶ Erect, unify and suppress houses of the Association having heard the opinion of the Local ordinary
- ▶ Assign or transfer brothers from one house to another
- ▶ Open new missions
- ▶ Designate offices and apostolates
- ▶ Grant exclaustation and leave of absence
- ▶ Keep vigilance over the correct administration and use of temporal goods of the Association
- ▶ Authorize extra ordinary acts of administration
- ▶ Convoke and preside over the General Assembly and other General Association meetings
- ▶ Dismiss and grant indults of departure from the Association
- ▶ Receive from Zonal leaders an annual report on the life, organization and administration of local communities
- ▶ Assess the economic situation of the various communities and take appropriate measures
- ▶ Strengthen ways that promote greater communication between communities.
- ▶ Promote on-going formation in spiritual, doctrinal and practical dimensions, even with suitable degrees, both ecclesiastical and civil
- ▶ Establish major contracts with external parties for the good of the Association

136. The Minister General requires the consent of the Council to place the following acts validly, besides those indicated by the Universal law:

- ▶ Appointment of the Secretary General, the Bursar General, and the Zonal leaders
- ▶ Convocation of the General Assembly and other General Association meetings
- ▶ Dismissal of a brother
- ▶ Exclusion of a brother from temporary profession when the period of renewal elapses
- ▶ Granting or imposing an exclaustation
- ▶ Re-admission of a brother who had left the Association without the need of repeating the Novitiate
- ▶ Promotion of brothers to Ministries and Holy Orders
- ▶ Opening of new missions

- ▶ Deposing for serious reasons and replacing a General councillor, having presented the matter to the Ordinary
- ▶ Removing and replacing brothers from other offices designated by the Minister General and the Council
- ▶ Establishing major contracts on behalf of the Association, acquisition of loans, alienation of property, and contracting debts
- ▶ Erecting of new houses and establishing Zones
- ▶ Admitting a cleric, a perpetually professed brother from another Institute and allowing a brother from our Association to transfer to another or a Diocese
- ▶ Granting permission for acts of extra-ordinary administration and acts of major importance
- ▶ Permitting International travels exceeding two weeks
- ▶ Granting sabbatical leave and leave of absence.

137. Besides the Universal law, acts which for validity the Minister General needs to request the opinion of the Council are:

- ▶ Determining the place and dates of celebration of a General Assembly and Mini-Assemblies
- ▶ Contribution towards charity causes
- ▶ Setting dates and places of professions, ordinations and other celebrations
- ▶ International travels not exceeding two weeks

138. The Minister General or his delegate presents a report to the General council after canonical visits to the communities.

139. The Minister General resides in the Generalate of the Association in order to execute his duties more effectively, and he is available and easily accessed by the brothers. Moreover, he is not to assume other offices within and outside the Association which are incompatible with his proper responsibilities.

General Council

140. The General Assembly elects five Councillors¹⁰⁴ for a three-year term of office, renewable once. All Councillors are to be perpetually professed; however, the Councillor who is chosen as the Vicar, in addition, possesses qualities prescribed in art. 129. They can be removed only for a grave reason and replaced by the General council with the approval of the Bishop of the Principal house. They can be removed only for a grave reason and replaced by the General council with the approval of the Bishop of the Principal house.

141. For the election of the Vicar General, the Minister General having been elected, proposes three names of brothers to the Assembly delegates. Among the three, the brother who receives the highest vote of the members of the General Assembly is elected as the Vicar General. In

¹⁰⁴ *Can.* 627.

case of a tie, the provisions of art. 122 applies. The Vicar General assists the Minister General in the discharge of her duties and substitutes the Minister General when she is impeded without prejudice to the provisions of art. 120.

142. For the election of the other three Councillors, the newly elected Minister General proposes to the General Assembly names of six brothers considered suitable for this office. The names are then approved by Assembly delegates. From the list of the six names, each Assembly delegate casts a vote with three names. The three brother with highest votes are considered elected as Councillors. In case of a tie, reference is made to the prescripts of art. 122.

143. The General council assists in the General governance of the Association by expressing its consent and opinion when requested by the Minister General or required by law.¹⁰⁵ The Councillors collaborate in a spirit of honesty and sincerity as they offer their wise and prudent counsel to the Minister General in the service of the Association. A matter in which a collegial vote is required, a Councillor who is absent is substituted by a Perpetually professed brother for that particular act by the Minister General with the consent of the Council.

144. The General Council is convened by the Minister General three times a year or any other time in case of emergency. Acting in freedom and unity of intent with the Minister General, the Council is obliged to observe secrecy in all discussions, proposals and voting.

145. Councillors have no authority over brothers and houses, nor competence to promulgate the Council decisions.

Association Bursar

146. The Association Bursar is appointed by the Minister General with the consent of the General council for a three-year period renewable. He is a Perpetually professed brother, outstanding in integrity, truly knowledgeable in financial affairs, and executes his mandate under the authority and guidance of the General Association Leader and her Council.¹⁰⁶ He takes an Oath before the General Council that he is to fulfil her responsibilities faithfully and observe confidentiality at all times. He is removed while in his function only for a grave cause, assessed by the Minister General after he has heard the Council.

147. The Association Bursar assumes as his own, the example of St. Pius of Pietrelcina, who was detached from earthly goods in fidelity to the Gospel principles.¹⁰⁷ He runs his office with diligence, prudence, wisdom and true witness to poverty for the good of the Association.

148. The Association Bursar is to:

- ▶ Administer the goods of the Association with care and for the designed objectives
- ▶ Keep accurate records of the Association's incomes and expenditures

¹⁰⁵ *Can.* 127.

¹⁰⁶ *Can.* 636, § 1.

¹⁰⁷ *Acts* 2:42-47.

- ▶ Execute financial undertakings decided upon by the Minister General and the Council
- ▶ Prepares and presents the annual budget of estimates of income and expenditure to the General council for approval
- ▶ Draws up a report of the administration at the end of each year
- ▶ Keeps well organized books of receipts and expenditures, all documents, acts of financial administration in the archives of the Principal house
- ▶ Fulfils financial commitments undertaken by the Association with the external parties
- ▶ Prepares a report for the three years on the economic situation of the Association to be presented to the General Assembly after the approval of the Minister General and the Council, and to Local Ordinary of the Principal house.¹⁰⁸

149. The Association Bursar performs his functions within the limits of ordinary administration as permitted by our Statutes. He cannot put in place acts of extraordinary administration without express permission of the Minister General with consent of the Council.

Association Secretary

150. The Association Secretary is appointed by the Minister General with the consent of the General council for a three-year period, renewable. He is a Perpetually professed brother and exercises his mandate under the authority of the Minister General.¹⁰⁹ He is to take an Oath before the General Council that he is to fulfil his responsibilities faithfully and observe confidentiality at all times. He is removed while in his function only for a grave cause, assessed by the Minister General after he has heard the Council.

151. The Association Secretary:

- ▶ Is the notary of the Association
- ▶ Attends the General council sessions without having a deliberative vote
- ▶ Records in writing the minutes of the Council meetings
- ▶ Keeps the seal of the Association under the authority of the Superior General
- ▶ Reviews all documents and acts pertaining to the whole Association, houses, brothers and files them in the archives
- ▶ Writes and files the obituary of the brothers
- ▶ Facilitates official correspondence of the Association approved by the Minister General.

152. The Minister General with the consent of the Council may appoint other persons who are truly qualified to support the Association Secretary in executing his duties.

¹⁰⁸ Cf. *Can.* 637.

¹⁰⁹ *Can* 636, § 1.

Zonal structures

153. The Association is divided into Zones made up of at least three houses juridically erected by the Minister General with the consent of the Council.

154. Each Zone has a Zonal leader appointed by the Minister General with the consent of the Council, for a three year-period, renewable. The same authority appoints two Zonal councillors upon the presentation of the Zonal leaders to assist him in the Zonal administration. The Zonal leader acts according to the delegated powers by the Minister General.

155. Only a Perpetually professed brother, conversant with the ecclesiastical and civil realities of the Local church in which the zone is established is appointed a Zonal leader. The Zonal leader and the Coordinators are removed for just reasons or transferred according to the needs of the Association by the Minister General with the consent of the Council.

156. The Zonal Leader:

- ▶ Represents the Association before the Local church and civil authorities
- ▶ He is the point of reference for communities in the Zone
- ▶ Fosters spiritual, charismatic and apostolic life of the Houses present in the Zone
- ▶ Promotes vocations with the assistance of the Coordinators and Leaders
- ▶ Animates and coordinates the unity of brothers in the Zone and with the General administration
- ▶ Writes annual reports on the life of Houses and a comprehensive report for the General Assembly which are sent and approved by General Administration
- ▶ Encourages and supports the brothers to observe the Statutes
- ▶ Convenes Zonal meetings on regular basis and in case a need arises
- ▶ Visits all Houses of the Zone at least once a year
- ▶ Assesses the economic situation of the Zonal houses, for a better balance between them
- ▶ Intervenes in Local houses to settle delicate situations and conflicts
- ▶ Permits travels within countries of residence for period not exceeding two weeks
- ▶ Permits annual breaks and emergency travels to brothers whose families or friends are within the Zone.
- ▶ Permits with the approval of the Minister General, annual breaks and emergency travels to brothers whose families or friends are beyond their Zone of residence.

157. The Zonal Bursar is appointed by the Minister General with the consent of the Council upon the recommendation of the Zonal leader, for a three-year term, renewable, without prejudice to the prescripts of article 143 and 144.

158. It is the responsibility of the Zonal Bursar to:

- ▶ Administer the goods of the Zone in collaboration with the General Administration and the Zonal leadership for the designed objectives of the Association
- ▶ Keep accurate records of the Zone's incomes and expenditures

- ▶ Execute financial undertakings decided upon by the Zonal leadership within the limits of their mandate
- ▶ Prepare and present estimates of annual budget of income and expenditure to the Zonal leadership and General Administration for approval
- ▶ Draw up a report of the administration at the end of each year
- ▶ Keep well organized books of receipts and expenditures, all documents, acts of financial administration in the archives of the Zone
- ▶ Fulfil financial commitments with external parties undertaken by the Zone
- ▶ Prepare a report after three years term on the economic situation of the zone to be presented to the Zonal leadership and the General Administration.

159. The Zonal secretary is appointed by the Minister General with the consent of her Council upon the recommendation of the Zonal leader, for a three-year term, renewable, and is removed or transferred for just reasons by the same authority.

160. The duties of the Zonal secretary are to:

- ▶ Record the minutes of each meeting of the Zone, indicating the topics, proposals, summary of the discussions and deliberations taken
- ▶ Draw up acts and reviews all documents pertaining to the life of the zone and keeps them in the zonal Archives
- ▶ Coordinate with Zonal guardians in the preparation of Zonal meetings
- ▶ Perform any other related secretarial work assigned by the Zonal Leader
- ▶ Facilitate official correspondence within the Zone and with the Association approved by the Zonal Leader

House

161. A House is the basic unit of our Association. At this level, we grow in companionship with our Lord and each other and manifest a bond of communion which is our special mark as Sons of St. Pius of Pietrelcina wherever we are present.

162. The Houses are formed by at least three brothers, one of whom is the House leader, commonly referred to as the Guardian, who represents the Association before the Ecclesiastical and civil authorities. In Houses where members are predominantly students, the Guardian is also the brother in charge of formation and studies.

163. The Guardian is appointed by the Minister General with the consent of the Council for a term of three years, renewable. He is a Perpetually professed brother, who like St. Pius of Pietrelcina, constantly graces his community with paternal presence and sincere concern for their spiritual life and general wellbeing.

164. The Guardian is to:

- ▶ Guide the community and coordinate spiritual, social and apostolic activities in accordance with the rule, Statutes and the Directory

- ▶ Guide and encourage the integral and continuous formation of the community members
- ▶ Promote the collaboration of all in the elaboration, execution and verification of the Community Schedule
- ▶ Carefully administer the community assets entrusted to him
- ▶ Educate brothers and himself on the sober use of goods and their proper administration
- ▶ Listen willingly and respectfully to the brothers, both individually and collectively
- ▶ Call and chair meetings of the House
- ▶ Entrust brothers in agreement with the members of the House other tasks complementary to their specific offices
- ▶ Assign the House Secretary and Bursar in consultation with the brothers of the House
- ▶ Make the annual report of life, organization and administration of the Community to the Zonal Leader.

165. In Houses with more than ten brothers, the Guardian appoints the vice guardian and at least two Perpetually professed brothers, with the consultation of the House members, to assist in the administration of the House.

166. The House secretary writes up the minutes of the House meetings, keeps the Chronicles of the House, the inventory of the movable and sacred goods of the House and carefully preserves the documents in the House Archives.

167. The House bursar administers the temporal goods of the house under the guidance and in collaboration with the Guardian. He keeps the financial records and provides for the community needs in agreement with the Guardian and in conformity to our way of life as stipulated in our Statutes.

CHAPTER VIII

TEMPORAL GOODS AND THEIR ADMINISTRATION

168. The Association, endowed with public juridic personality enjoys the right to acquire, retain, administer and alienate temporal goods in accordance with the Universal law and the Statutes. Zones and Houses do not exercise independent proprietorship over temporal goods but acquire and administer under the title and for the objectives of the Association.¹¹⁰

169. The temporal goods of the Association are used for these specific purposes:¹¹¹

- ▶ Fulfil the mission of hope by facilitating apostolates undertaken by the Association
- ▶ Decent care of the members
- ▶ Works of charity with special attention to the poor
- ▶ Formation and further studies
- ▶ Provide for divine worship and other needs of the Church within the possibilities of the Association
- ▶ Develop and sustain the facilities of the Association.

170. Our form of religious poverty as Sons of St. Pius of Pietrelcina especially in connection to temporal goods calls us to that aspect of common ownership. This means that those temporal goods which are acquired by the Association are entirely dedicated for the purposes stipulated in art. 166. All acts placed in relation to the temporal goods are regulated by the Statutes, the Universal law of the Church and in the visitation spirit for the salvation of souls.

171. The General Assembly is responsible for establishing the amount above which in contracting debts, alienating goods, incurring extraordinary expenditures or any affair in which the patrimonial condition of the Association can worsen, the Minister General needs consent of the Council and a written consent of the Local ordinary.

172. For validity of any affair on temporal goods that exceeds the amount defined by the Dioceses where our Houses are located, the licence of the Diocesan bishop and his equivalents is required; such licence is likewise to be obtained from the Holy See in cases it has defined for specific regions where our Association is present.

173. The administration of temporal goods is entrusted to the bursars at the different levels of the Association who discharge their offices under the authority and guidance of the respective Superiors of the Association in accordance with the Statutes.

¹¹⁰ Cf. *Can.* 634, § 1.

¹¹¹ Cf. *Can.* 1254, § 2; 640.

CHAPTER IX

SEPARATION FROM THE ASSOCIATION

174. Vocation to religious life requires a constant self-examination and total commitment to the Lord in fidelity to the specific charism of the Association. Before taking any decision of separation of a brother, either by himself or out of the initiative of the Association, fraternal support is to prevail. Association leaders and all the community members show great compassion for him and help him spiritually as much as possible and admonish, instruct and correct him humbly and diligently.¹¹²

175. A Perpetually professed brother may separate from the Association by:

- ▶ Transfer to another institute of consecrated life or Society of Apostolic life
- ▶ Voluntary or imposed exclaustation
- ▶ Departure from the Association
- ▶ Dismissal.

In any of these ways of separation, the norms of the Universal law¹¹³ and proper law are followed.

176. A brother in temporary profession who wishes to leave the Association is free to depart any time for grave reasons, with the dispensation of the promises by the Minister General and upon obtaining confirmation of the indult from the Diocesan bishop. He also does so by not renewing the promises when the time of profession lapses. Moreover, a brother in temporal profession is dismissed for causes mentioned in *Cann.* 694, 695, 696, or is excluded from making subsequent profession for a just cause by the Minister General with the consent of the Council.

177. Brothers who for any reasons leave the Association are offered the spiritual help they need. They have no right to remuneration for time they lived in the Association, but, in case of real need, they are helped also materially with evangelical charity, according to criteria set out in the Directory.¹¹⁴

¹¹² *Regula Non Bullata*, ch. 5,8, 1221.

¹¹³ *Can.* 684-704 and any other related norms.

¹¹⁴ *Can.* 702.

CHAPTER X

OBSERVANCE OF THE STATUTES

178. In order to aspire towards the perfection of our way of life, we are bound to observe faithfully the norms of the Statutes and the Directory of our Association and the norms of the Universal law and our way of life guided by our charism and spirituality.¹¹⁵ We accept them with faith as an expression of God's will and as a means of sanctification.

179. It pertains to the Minister General to ensure that all members of the Association have copies of the Statutes and the Directory, and encourage all to read, assimilate and observe them.

180. The Statutes is suitably revised, and obsolete laws are suppressed by the General Assembly. The Diocesan bishop of the Principal house is to approve the changes¹¹⁶ before the new Statutes is promulgated by the Minister General with the consent of the Council.

¹¹⁵ Cf. *Can.* 662; *Can.* 576.

¹¹⁶ *Can.* 587, § 2.

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