

**The Secular Order of Discalced Carmelites**  
**Provincial Statutes for the**  
**California-Arizona Province of St. Joseph**  
**December 10, 2016**



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**APPROBAVIT**

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

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

1. Members of the Secular Order of Our Lady of Mount Carmel and Saint Teresa of Jesus are faithful members of the Church who are called to live “in allegiance to Jesus Christ” [cf. *Const.* #3]. The fundamental elements of the vocation of Teresian Secular Carmelites can be summarized as follows:
  - a) to live in allegiance to Jesus Christ, supported by the imitation and patronage of the most Blessed Virgin Mary, whose way of life is a model of being conformed to Christ;
  - b) to seek union with God through contemplation and apostolic activity, indissolubly joined together, for service to the Church and the world;
  - c) to let prayer penetrate their entire daily existence, nourished by the Word of God, by the Eucharistic Liturgy, and the Liturgy of the Hours, in order to walk continually in God’s presence [cf. *Const.* 17];
  - d) to spend at least one half-hour daily in the practice of mental prayer (*lectio divina*) in an atmosphere of interior silence and solitude [cf. *Const.* #21; *Formation Guidelines*, pp. 156A-1,2]. Mental prayer, as practiced in *lectio divina*, with its four aspects of spiritual reading, reflection, conversation with God, and contemplation, is the foundation of Teresian prayer [cf. *Const.* #35];
  - e) to develop the gifts of the Holy Spirit through the constant exercise of the virtues, especially the theological virtues of faith, hope, and above all charity, continually striving toward union with God [cf. *Const.* #17].
  - f) to live evangelical self-denial in an ecclesial perspective [CCC #873, #900, #929].
  - g) to be committed to evangelization, always faithful to our Teresian Carmelite identity [cf. *Const.* #6 & #9].
2. The value of the sacramental and liturgical life in the Secular Order leads its members to:
  - a) take part in the daily celebration of the Eucharist, insofar as possible. Those who are unable to participate in the celebration of daily Mass are encouraged to pray and reflect on the daily Scripture readings of the Mass.
  - b) have a great esteem for the Sacrament of Reconciliation and to avail of it frequently. [cf. *Const.* #23 & #24].
  - c) “try to recite Morning and Evening Prayer of the [Liturgy of] the Hours in union with the Church throughout the world. When it is possible they will also recite Night Prayer [cf. *Const.* #24].
  - d) make a daily examination of conscience. Ideally this is done before mental prayer and/or at the beginning of Night Prayer.
3. Secular Carmelites will endeavor daily to nurture their prayer life through study and spiritual reading, particularly the Gospels and the writings of our Carmelite Saints.
4. In order to deepen their spiritual life, members are encouraged to participate in an annual Carmelite Retreat [cf. *Const.* #18 & #21].

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

1. The primary apostolate of the Teresian Carmel is prayer, and its mission is the sharing of Teresian Carmelite spirituality. Carmelite Seculars participate in this apostolate according to their state in life [cf. *Const.* #28].
2. In John 21:15-19, Jesus bids Peter, ...if he loves Him, ...to feed His lambs and feed His sheep to the point of laying down his life for them. Because we love Christ, we must express that love outwardly in service to others, leading them to Christ. This is the basis for our apostolate.
3. The Carmelite Secular is called to live and witness to the charism of the Teresian Carmel in the local Church. For this reason, each one will have an apostolate either individually or collaborating with others in the Community/Group [cf. *Const.* #27].
4. Through apostolic endeavors resulting from contemplative prayer, Carmelite Seculars demonstrate how it is possible to seek intimate union with God while living amidst worldly concerns and responsibilities, as Saint Teresa explains, “*let us desire and be occupied in prayer not for the sake of our enjoyment but so as to have this strength to serve.*” [*Interior Castle*, VII, 4,12] This prayer will bear fruit and will flow into their Carmelite Communities, the local Church, family, and workplace whenever and wherever the opportunity presents itself.
5. Evangelization keeps in mind a sensitivity to each Community’s interests, abilities, and talents, as well as the physical and financial capabilities of its members working together. “Each Christian and every Community/Group must discern the path that the Lord points out, but all of us are asked to obey His call to go forth from our own comfort zone in order to reach all the “peripheries” in need of the light of the Gospel” [*Joy of the Gospel*, #20].
6. The apostolate takes Carmelite spirituality into the world. Each O.C.D.S. Community/Group should have an apostolate in order to share Carmelite spirituality with others. Examples are sponsoring a parish day of recollection, sharing O.C.D.S. materials, giving a presentation on prayer and our Saints at parish and diocesan events, and organizing a Carmelite book study.
7. Once a year, in February, a report of the Community’s apostolic activity shall be sent to the Provincial Council.
8. Formation for the apostolate, now a requirement of the formation program, is based upon the theology of the Church concerning the responsibility of the laity and an understanding of the role of Seculars in the apostolate of the Order [cf. *Const.* #35, #36d, *Apostolicam actuositatem* (Decree on the Apostolate of Lay People) and *Christifideles laici* (“The Vocation and the Mission of the Lay Faithful in the Church and in the World”)].

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

1. The Virgin Mary is present in a special way, most of all as a model of faithfulness in listening to the Lord and in service to Him and to others [cf. *Const.* #4]. For Secular Carmelites, Mary is a model of obedience and total commitment to God’s Kingdom. She teaches us to listen to God’s Word in Scripture and in life, and to believe in it in every circumstance in order to live its demands. All this she did, without understanding many things, guided solely by faith, pondering all in her heart (Lk 2:19, 50-51) until light dawned through contemplative prayer [cf. *Const.*

#29]. She is Mother, Sister and Queen, who goes before us in a pilgrimage of faith and in following the Lord Jesus, keeping us company so that we may imitate her life hidden in Christ and committed to the service of others [cf. *Const.* #30]. The purpose of all our devotion to Mary is always to lead us to Christ. The Secular Order recognizes the value of pondering and praying:

- a) the Rosary;
  - b) the Litany of Loreto;
  - c) the Angelus;
  - d) and other such devotions recommended by the Church [cf. Pope Paul VI, Apostolic Exhortation, *Marialis Cultus*, (“For the Right Ordering and Development of Devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary”), Feb. 2, 1974].
2. The Secular Carmelite is committed to knowing Mary through the daily practice of devotion exercised through faith and love in her honor [cf. *Const.* #31].
  3. The Secular Order strives to live the Marian spirit, embodied in the latest documentation on the scapular [cf. *The Scapular of Our Lady of Mount Carmel: Catechesis and Ritual* prepared under the direction of the North American Provincials of the Carmelite Order, October 30, 2000].

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

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

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

1. The large ceremonial brown scapular is given as the habit of the Secular Order at the time of admission to formation. Each candidate is “clothed” by the Spiritual Assistant assisted by the Director of Formation. The large scapular is the “*signum habitus*” or sign of the habit of Our Lady of Mount Carmel.
2. The large scapular shall be made of brown cloth and a maximum of 7x9 inches in size. It shall be plain. (Pins or badges should not be attached). [cf. *The Scapular of Our Lady of Mount Carmel: Catechesis and Ritual*, prepared under the direction of the North American Provincials of the Carmelite Order, October 30, 2000, p. 2].
3. A small brown scapular, or scapular medal, is worn internally for everyday use.

4. The large scapular may be worn at mass on solemnities or feasts of the Discalced Carmelite Order and at Carmelite meetings and events. With permission of the local Community/Group Council, it may also be worn at diocesan church functions where members attend as a group, giving visible witness to the Secular Order.
5. If a member wishes to be buried wearing the large scapular externally, prior arrangements should be made with the member's family or closest associates [cf. *Provincial Statutes*, Sec. VIII, para. 6b].

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

Fast and abstinence:

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

## Sec. VII: The Sick and Dying

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

## Sec. VIII: Prayers for Deceased Members

1. Anyone learning of the death of a member shall immediately ensure that someone on the Council is informed.
2. The President/Group Leader will inform the entire Community/Group and provide information regarding funeral arrangements.
3. The Community/Group:
  - a) will have a Mass offered for the deceased member(s).
  - b) at its next meeting it should also choose from the following.
    - 1) attend Mass together.
    - 2) pray the Liturgy of the Hours - Morning or Evening Prayer.

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

- 3) recite the Rosary or other suitable prayers.
4. Each member of the Community/Group will if possible:
  - a) attend the vigil and/or funeral Mass.
  - b) participate in a Mass and receive Holy Communion for the deceased.
  - c) pray the Liturgy of the Hours Office for the Dead (Morning and Evening Prayer).
5. Carmelite Seculars should remember the deceased members of the entire Order in their daily prayers.
6. Each Community/Group shall maintain a record of its deceased members [cf. *Const.* #54].
7. Members are encouraged to inform their families regarding:
  - a) their wish to have the Secular Carmelites notified of their death.
  - b) burial in the large Brown Ceremonial Scapular.
  - c) having the initials "O.C.D.S." included on their headstone.

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

1. Those members of the Church, lay person or cleric, who are called by the Lord, are free from impediments, and conscientiously accept this special vocation and the Constitutions offered by the Secular Order may be admitted to the Secular Order in accordance with the provisions of *Const. #36* [cf. *Formation Guidelines, "Impediments to Joining the Secular Order"* by Doreen Glynn Pawski, O.C.D.S.].
2. The screening process shall include certificates of Baptism, Confirmation, Marriage, and letters clearing impediments [cf. *Provincial Statutes Sec. XIX, #6b*].
3. A Candidate for admission to formation in the Secular Order must be at least eighteen years of age. Experience demonstrates there is no upper age limit to God's call to the special vocation of being a Secular Carmelite, therefore none is prescribed so long as the potential vocation appears to be valid. God always grants, along with a vocation, the necessary means to live it out without presenting a burden to the Community.
4. Sufficient contact with a Community/Group is understood to entail an Aspirant's attendance at the meetings of the Community/Group for not less than one full year. If it is in the best interest of the Aspirant, this period may be extended for another year; but in no case longer than two years.
5. Visitors are welcome to the meeting. It is always recommended that the President or Director of Formation speak with them beforehand. During this conversation, they will be introduced to the Carmelite Secular way of life and what is required. The portion of the meeting-day they are invited to attend will be outlined along with the expectations for participation. There will be someone assigned to accompany them through the meeting, unless they have already come with a member. Visitors can benefit from continuing attendance at meetings while waiting for an Aspirancy class to begin. During this period, visitors may have the option of attending a formation class as an observer, at the discretion of the Council. They should not attend the business meeting while confidential matters, such as the treasurer's report are discussed. Once the Council has approved the visitor to begin an Aspirant's formation class, they must either join the class or no longer come to meetings.



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

1. At the time of admittance into Formation, a simple title of devotion may be added to one's baptismal name. The title must be approved by the Council. It may only be used when reciting the promise or vows at Community/Group ceremonies. "Sister" or "Brother" are never to be used. For a good reason, the title of devotion may be changed with the approval of the Council.
2. A person becomes a member of the Community/Group at the reception of the scapular in the Rite of Admission.
3. There are two periods of initial formation. Each stage of formation concludes with a face-to-face interview of the candidate by the Council to discern the member's progress. For either stage, a one-year extension may be granted by the Council if it is determined to be in the best interest of the candidate.
4. The first period of initial formation is the two years before making the Temporary Promise. With the Temporary Promise, a person is a member of the Discalced Carmelite Order. Then "O.C.D.S." may be added to one's name.
5. The second period of initial formation is the three years of living the Temporary Promise before making the Definitive Promise. An extension granted by the Council at this stage requires renewing the Temporary Promise for one year. The ceremony may take place privately in the presence of a representative of the Council and the priest with delegated faculties.
6. Ongoing Formation is the responsibility of the Council together with the definitively professed members in accordance with the *Formation Guidelines* [cf. Const. #34]. The Council retains the responsibility for formation of all its members, including those who have made vows. [cf. Const. #34, 39 and 46, *Formation Guidelines* p. 22].
7. Leave of absence
  - a) The term "leave of absence" means that an active member, who has made at least the Temporary Promise, but is temporarily unable to attend meetings regularly, may receive permission from the Council to be released from meeting attendance for up to one year. However, the member must keep in touch by personal contact, phone, email, letter, etc. with the member of the local Community/Group designated by the Council for this purpose.
  - b) If the Temporary Promise would expire during the leave of absence, a date must be scheduled for its renewal.
  - c) Professed members returning from a leave of absence are required to perform a "year of discernment" for full reintegration into the Community. This begins with an interview with the Council where the discernment and formation requirements will be identified. Another interview at the end of that year will be required for the Council's evaluation and decision regarding reintegration into the Community.
  - d) A member in the Temporary Promise resumes formation at the stage when the leave of absence began. If the leave began in the middle of a formation year, the person would begin that formation year again.

## Sec. XI: Formation Guidelines

1. The *O.C.D.S. Formation Guidelines for the California-Arizona Province of St. Joseph* is the official formation program for our Province.

2. All professed members shall be provided with a copy of the *Formation Guidelines*. At the discretion of the Community/Group Council, the *Formation Guidelines* may also be distributed to candidates preparing for the Temporary Promise.
3. The Provincial Council is authorized to revise the *Formation Guidelines* as deemed necessary under *Const. #57* and *#58a* with the approval of the General Definitory.

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

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

## **Sec. XIII: Organization and Life**

1. O.C.D.S. Communities, Groups, and Study Groups are a local manifestation of the entire Teresian Carmelite Family.
2. The local Community/Group shall meet once a month exercising fraternal charity for one another. The monthly meeting should include formation, a conference by the Spiritual Assistant, quiet prayer, the Liturgy of the Hours, devotion to Mary, time for socializing, and business as necessary. Ideally, the meeting should be about four hours in length, and never be less than three hours.
3. Because communal life is central to the Teresian Carmelite charism, attendance at the monthly meetings is required [cf. Const. #24c]. Every Community/Group will keep its own written attendance record. Sometimes there are unavoidable demands on the secular state of life that prevent a member from being present. For Communities and Groups, a minimum of nine out of twelve meetings or at least 75% attendance every year, is required to progress to the next level of formation. [cf. Const. #24c; Provincial Statutes Sec. X, para. 2 & 4]. Similarly, a minimum of nine out of twelve meetings or at least 75% attendance prior to the election is required for voting within a Community/Group or serving on the Council. The Council may allow reasonable exceptions. Lack of regular attendance without excuse or notification is a negative indication of a vocation.
4. Extended members:
  - a) Are members of a particular Community/Group who, for reasons of distance, age, illness, or other approved circumstances, cannot participate in the regular meetings. They remain active members of the Secular Order under the authority of the local Council.
  - b) It is the responsibility of the Community/Group to maintain contact with the Extended members (i.e., meeting minutes, newsletters, prayer requests, etc) and it is the responsibility of the Extended members to maintain contact with the Community/Group [cf. Const. #56].
  - c) Extended members are invited to return to regular attendance if the reason for becoming extended is resolved. Extended members who move close to another Community/Group are encouraged to seek a transfer to that Community/Group.

5. Inactive members:

- a) Are members of the Secular Order who have no further obligation to their Community, Group or Study Group, and their Community, Group or Study Group has no further obligation to them.
- b) A Council may determine that a member should become inactive as a result of lack of attendance or for a disciplinary measure. The Provincial Delegate should always be consulted. When it is due to lack of attendance, the following steps are required:
  - 1) The local Council sends a “first letter” to a member who has been absent for a year with no communication to the Council. The “first letter” is sent to encourage the member to return to regular contact with the Community/Group.
  - 2) If there is no response after two months, a “second letter” is sent informing the member that, if there is no response within two months, the Council will understand that the person no longer wants to be a part of the Community/Group. The Provincial Delegate must be consulted. [cf. *Const.* #47e].
  - 3) If there is no response after two months from the “second letter”, then the Council will send a formal letter stating that the member will be removed from the active roster and placed on the Inactive list.
- c) If an Inactive member petitions the Council for possible re-admission as an active member of the Community/Group, and the Council agrees, the Council will send the petition to the Provincial Delegate for approval. If he is favorable to the request, a “year of discernment” will be required for reintegration into the Community/Group. This begins with an interview with the Council, during which the member’s discernment and formation requirements will be identified. Another interview at the end of that year will be required for the Council’s evaluation and decision regarding full reintegration into the Community/Group.
- d) If an inactive member petitions for membership in another Community/Group as an active member, the petitioned Community/Group must consult the prior Community/Group and send the prior Community/Group’s recommendation with the petition to the Provincial Delegate for approval. With the Provincial Delegate’s approval, the normal transfer procedure is followed (cf. *Provincial Statutes*, Sec. XXIII).

6. For serious reasons, if a member desires to be released from his/her promise, he/she must petition the local Council with a written letter stating the reasons. The local Council will contact the Provincial Delegate to make the formal request. The Provincial Delegate will review the petition and if approved will have a formal letter sent to the member from the Central Office releasing him/her of their Promise. A copy will also be sent to the local Council for the permanent record.

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

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

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

- a) Although it is normal that disagreements and conflicts may arise, it is encouraged that they be expressed with the fruits of the Spirit, “love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control” (Gal 5:22-23). Disagreements unrelated to the

Community/Group or our Constitutions and Statutes should not be addressed at Community/Group meetings.

- b) Community/Group life and interaction is under the authority of the local Council. It is the duty of the Council to swiftly identify and resolve any issues that may potentially disrupt or negatively affect the Community/Group. Any member who recognizes such an issue is encouraged to discretely bring it to the Council's attention that they may facilitate a resolution.
- c) In the Gospel, Our Lord outlines the appropriate course to resolve conflict. It begins with a request for the conflicting parties to facilitate a dialogue in private to resolve the issue on their own, "*go and tell him his fault between you and him alone*" (Mt 18:15).
- d) If this has already been tried and failed, or if either side of the conflict is reluctant to do so, then it progresses to a discussion of the matter with, "*one or two others...that every fact may be established*" (Mt 18:16). In other words, it comes under the jurisdiction of the local Council to mediate a resolution. The conflicting parties will each submit their understanding of the exact issue in writing, summarizing to no more than two or three main points.
- e) The local Council should meet as soon as possible to explore the issue as appropriate to ascertain the whole truth, and to resolve the issue judiciously. The process should consist of conversations with all involved allowing each to express their viewpoint and their desired outcome. It may also require seeking the help and advice of the Spiritual Assistant or O.C.D.S. Provincial Council as appropriate, providing them with the written complaints and notes that have been prepared. Great care must be exercised to avoid rash judgment or breaking confidentiality which may result in damage to the good name and reputation of persons.
- f) In the case that a conflict involves the President or a Council member, the same process shall be applied: The Council shall make a decision, but not in the presence of the conflicting parties and the Council member involved will not be allowed a vote on the conflicted issue.
- g) In case the complaint is against the local Council itself, or is an appeal regarding the Council's decision, the knowledgeable members of the Community/Group regarding the issue should seek a dialogue with the Council members to clarify matters in dispute. If such a dialogue fails, the same knowledgeable members should submit a written report including all previous documentation to the O.C.D.S. Provincial Council. It will discretely review the case, and report its findings to the Provincial Delegate for a decision.
- h) In some cases, the Provincial Superior may need to intervene (cf. Const. 48, CCL 305§1).
- i) No one who has been legitimately enrolled may be dismissed from an association except for a just cause in accord with the norm of law and the statutes (CCL 308; cf. Const. #47e).

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

1. It is essential to keep records for various reasons, but most importantly to maintain a history of the Community/Group and member data.
  - a) A Community/Group register is required for elections, Council meetings and fraternal visits.
  - b) At a minimum, the register must contain a membership roster including active, extended, and inactive members; also a record of elections, admissions, promises, vows, dismissals, deaths and transfers.
  - c) This information must be kept as a common document that the local Council can easily review.
  - d) An updated copy of the membership roster, to include contact information, titles of devotion, and the date of the most recent ceremony, must be submitted to the Central Office annually or immediately after the ceremony.

2. Other records to be maintained are: minutes, treasurer reports, agendas, copies of ceremonial forms, attendance records of Community/Group meetings, and formation classes, newsletters/flyers, apostolates, special events, etc.
3. The secretary of the local O.C.D.S. Council shall keep the Community/Group register and other records at all times. He/she will make the register available for Council meetings and at the time of elections.
4. Each Group and Study Group shall send concise monthly minutes to the Provincial Delegate.

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

Any member who feels called by God to make vows of chastity and obedience for life must be fully informed of both the seriousness of the obligation and the rich graces that accompany it. [cf. Formation Guidelines p. 25] “While the promise was made before God to the superiors and members of the Order, the vows are made directly to God, for vows are acts of religious worship. Thus, the vows add the merit of the virtue of religion to the observance of chastity and obedience. They constitute a more complete self-offering and therefore entail a greater moral responsibility. The binding force of these vows, freely made, renders more visible the bond of love and commitment that exists between Christ and His Bride the Church.” [O.C.D.S.

*Documents and Ritual for Promises and Vows, Instruction of the Superior General of the*

*Discalced Carmelites, n. 7, p. 90] Vows are strictly voluntary. The promise makes one a full member of the Order and the vows do not enhance that status. [Formation Guidelines p. 25]*

- a) No less than three years after making their definitive promise, the member may petition the Council in writing to make vows.
- b) Initial discernment and formation for this call will include the assistance of one’s own confessor or spiritual director, the Council and the Spiritual Assistant for the Community/Group.
- c) The Council will interview the member:
  - 1) The member will provide the Council with the name of their spiritual director; priest, deacon, religious, or lay spiritual director certified by the diocese, who will be directing him/her during the year of discernment. This person cannot be a member of their own Community/Group.
  - 2) When making its decision, the Council should consider the following criteria: the member must be faithful in living the promise. The member’s life must be suitably ordered, with any major irregularities resolved so that there is no hindrance to grace. The member must have a healthy, balanced integration of the experience of God with that of daily life; and there should be evidence of greater charity, detachment and humility.
- d) If the request is approved, the member will commence one year of prayerful discernment, including an in-depth study of the *Legislative Documents* and other articles in the *Formation Guidelines*. (ie The Sanctifier, Where the Spirit Breathes, Vows in the Secular Order of Discalced Carmelites). [Formation Guidelines p. 26]
- e) A guided retreat and a general confession are highly recommended. [Formation Guidelines p. 25]
- f) After the year’s discernment, the member will send a formal letter to the Council expressing his/her preparedness to make vows. A letter of recommendation from the member’s spiritual director should be sent directly to the Council.
- g) At the final interview, the Council, together with the Spiritual Assistant, will meet with the petitioner. When the Council has reached a decision, it will inform the Provincial Delegate in writing of the request, and if the decision is in the affirmative, seek his approval. If the Council’s decision is not unanimous, it will inform the Provincial Delegate of the concerns

that were raised. After the Council is informed of the Provincial Delegate's decision, it will notify the member of its decision.

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

1. The O.C.D.S. is juridically dependent upon the O.C.D. Friars [cf. *Const. #41*]. The General Superior, the Provincial Superior **aided by the Provincial Delegate**, and the Council of the Community/Group are the legitimate superiors of the Secular Order.
2. Juridical personality [cf. *Const. #40*] is only applicable to canonically established Communities. It is not applicable to Groups and Study Groups, who are directly supervised by the Provincial Delegate. Even when Groups have been granted permission by the Provincial Delegate to operate with an appointed Council, this still does not constitute a grant of juridical personality. The legitimate superiors for Groups are the General Superior, the Provincial Superior and the Provincial Delegate.

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

1. It is the prerogative of the Provincial Superior, or his Delegate, after consultation with the local O.C.D.S. Council, to appoint a Spiritual Assistant. If the Spiritual Assistant is not a member of the Order, he must have the consent of his own Superior [cf. *Provincial Statutes Sec. XXII, 5d*].
2. **We welcome the presence of the Spiritual Assistant in an advisory role at Council meetings, especially when evaluating candidates for acceptance into Formation, the Promise, the Vows, as well as release from them. [cf. *Const. #44*].**

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

1. The Council is made up of five members. The President and three Councilors are elected by the Community/Group [cf. *Const. #50*]. The Director of Formation is appointed by the new Council members after consulting with the Spiritual Assistant. These five members constitute the government of the Community. One of the three Councilors shall be designated as Secretary of the Council.
2. The primary responsibility of the Council is the formation and Christian Carmelite maturing of the members [cf. *Const. #46*]. The Council shall meet at least quarterly and always when necessary in reference to taking care of formation programs and the growth of their own Community/Group [cf. *Const. #47*]. The General Superior, the Provincial Superior, aided by the Provincial Delegate, and the Council of the Community/Group are the legitimate superiors of the Secular Order [cf. *Const. #48*]. Individual phone calls, e-mails, or text exchanges do not constitute a valid meeting of the Council. Teleconferencing or Skype is allowed when distance or weather makes travel difficult.
3. Confidentiality is required of all Council members regarding all Council business.
4. It is recommended that the Spiritual Assistant be present for the approval of admitting candidates to Formation, promise, vows, and other serious matters where his presence will be beneficial.
5. Recognized parliamentary procedure shall be observed by the Council in its actions to the extent that they comply with the following provisions:

- a) a quorum for the purposes of a valid action requiring the vote of the Council shall be at least three of the five Council members.
  - b) a majority of voting members present shall be required to carry a motion.
  - c) the President shall cast an additional vote if necessary to break a tie.
  - d) voting by phone, letter, e-mail, or proxy shall be invalid.
6. The President, the three Councilors and the Director of Formation shall actively work together in the following:
- a) the place to hold the monthly meeting and its general plan.
  - b) when Aspirants will be accepted and the screening process, to include certificates of Baptism, Confirmation, Marriage and letters clearing impediments.
  - c) the frequency and times for ceremonies.
  - d) assisting in obtaining a Spiritual Assistant as needed in consultation with the Provincial Delegate.
  - e) receiving or denying members transferring from other Communities/Groups.
  - f) all Councilors need to know every member of the Community, particularly Aspirants, and those in formation.
  - g) making every effort to maintain peace and fraternal charity, the Council will handle all disciplinary problems consulting with the Provincial Delegate as needed.
  - h) assisting the Director of Formation in determining the various levels to be taught, in approving and supervising the instructors, and being aware of any special formation needs.
  - i) maintaining contact with extended members.
  - j) determining the areas of service needed in the Community/Group and asking members to assist with these.
  - k) Councils are free to establish additional duties and responsibilities for individual Councilors as they may deem appropriate within the context of the *O.C.D.S. Constitutions* and these *Provincial Statutes*.

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

1. The Provincial Delegate has the help of a Central Office in carrying out his duties. This office is funded and supported by annual dues from the membership of the Province. The Central Office, in turn, contributes a portion of its funding for the General Delegate's office in Rome. **The Central Office will prepare an annual financial report for the Provincial.**
2. The O.C.D.S. Provincial Council will determine the amount of the annual dues. All professed members of a Community/Group will submit their donation through their Treasurer during the month of February, along with the financial report. Aspirants and Study Groups are not required to pay the annual dues.
3. The duties of the Treasurer are specified in *Const. #55*. The annual financial report to the Provincial Delegate shall be submitted no later than February 28<sup>th</sup> of each year.
4. The members of each Community/Group are invited to contribute a small donation according to their means, at every meeting for operational expenses as well as any apostolic works undertaken by one's Community/Group apostolate.
5. All members are encouraged to plan ahead for their annual Carmelite retreat and the Regional Congress. In keeping with our spirit of poverty, the Community's Council will be sensitive to those who may need assistance to participate in Carmelite events.

6. Members are also encouraged to support the larger Order; e.g., support of our Carmelite seminarians and our Carmelite Missions.

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

1. **Study Group:** A group of five or more practicing Catholics who have been meeting for a year and who are committed to discerning a vocation as Carmelite Seculars, with the consent and supervision of the Provincial Council. [cf. Const. #43 - #45 & #58b].
  - a) A Spiritual Assistant is to be appointed (Const. #44 - #45).
  - b) The Provincial Delegate in consultation with the Provincial Council will appoint:
    - 1) a Group Leader, a Director of Formation, and one Councilor.
    - 2) a Provincial Councilor to be this Study Group's mentor.
  - c) Monthly minutes and an annual financial report will be sent to the Provincial Delegate.
  - d) The Provincial Council will approve:
    - 1) a developed meeting schedule.
    - 2) a formation plan taken from the *Formation Guidelines*.
  - e) A Study Group does not pay annual dues.
2. **Group:** A Study Group that demonstrates stability and leadership with at least eight members, four of whom have made their Definitive Promise, may form a Group, with the consent and supervision of the Provincial Council.
  - a) The Provincial Delegate, in consultation with the Provincial Council and the Group's Provincial Councilor mentor, will approve:
    - 1) a developed meeting schedule.
    - 2) a formation plan taken from the *Formation Guidelines*.
    - 3) a mission plan for sharing Carmelite spirituality.
    - 4) reporting requirements, which include monthly minutes, an annual financial report, and annual Group apostolate report.
  - b) Mentoring by another Community approved by the Provincial Council is highly recommended.
  - c) A Group pays annual dues.
3. **Canonically Established Community:** After five years or more, a group of twelve members, six of whom have made the Definitive Promise, may contact the Provincial Delegate to explore the possibility of becoming a canonically established Community. [cf. Const. #49]
  - a) The Provincial Delegate will make a formal Fraternal Visit to see if the Group meets the standards for Canonical Establishment.
  - b) If his report is favorable, consent in writing must also be obtained from the Local Ordinary (Bishop) of the diocese, unless the Community is erected in association with a foundation of our Friars [cf. Const. #49].
  - c) Then a charter for Canonical Establishment will be obtained in writing from the Father General of the Order through the Provincial or his Delegate [cf. Const. #49].
4. **Diminishing Community/Group:**
  - a) The Constitutions of the Secular Order defines the "primary responsibility" of the existence of an O.C.D.S. Community/Group as the formation and Christian Carmelite maturing of the Community/Group and all its members [cf. Const. 46].
  - b) If a Community/Group is declining in membership and unable to select a viable Council, the Provincial Council may find it necessary to decrease the size of the Council to three, (President, Formation Director and one Councilor).



- c) A Fraternal Visit will be scheduled to discuss a growth plan with the Community.
- d) The Community/Group classification (i.e., Community, Group) once attained, is never reversed regardless of diminishing members.
- e) Closing a Group or Community:
  - 1) If actions to revive the Community/Group have not been successful, the Provincial Delegate will make a visit and consult with the local Council.
  - 2) If it is necessary to close the Community/Group, the reception of new candidates may be suspended.
  - 3) If a Community/Group closes, a member who is definitively professed may request a transfer to another Community/Group as an Active or an Extended Member.
  - 4) A member who is not definitively professed must transfer to another Community/Group as an Active member to finish their formation. Otherwise, if a temporary promise was made, it will expire.

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

1. The size of a Community has an impact on Community life. When a Community becomes too large, it may begin communication with the Provincial Delegate to form a new Group. For both the founding Community and the new Group, stability, good leadership, formation, a Spiritual Assistant, and growth potential are required.
2. The new Group is under the supervision of the Provincial Delegate.
3. To identify those who wish to stay in the founding Community and those who wish to go to the new Group, an anonymous questionnaire is taken of all the members and aspirants.
4. At the first meeting of the new Group, the Provincial Delegate presides at a consultative vote for a new Council. However, he is not bound by the results of the consultative vote.
5. Members going to the new Group should be allowed to change their mind and return to the founding Community, but only for a good reason and with the permission of each Council.
6. The founding Community will make a generous donation to the new Group to help with beginning expenses.
7. No transfers or aspirants are allowed to join the new Group for a period of time to be determined by the Group Council.
8. After a year, the Group takes another consultative vote for its Council. Thereafter, if one of the Council members needs to resign for any reason, the Provincial Delegate appoints a replacement, after consulting with the other Councilors (*Provincial Statutes* Sec. XXI, #2). Otherwise, no further consultative voting takes place.
9. In five years the Group can request Canonical Establishment, if it meets the requirements [*Provincial Statutes* Sec. XXI.3]. After Canonical Establishment, elections are held every three years (cf. *Provincial Statutes*, Sec. XVI).

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

1. A member normally belongs to the Community/Group in which they were admitted or made their promise. For a compelling reason a member may request to transfer to another Community/Group by completing an official transfer.
2. The transfer process is initiated by a member obtaining the official transfer application form from the original Community/Group, Central Office, or our O.C.D.S. website, [www.ocds.info](http://www.ocds.info). The member fills out section 1 of the transfer form and submits it for verification and signature to the Council/Group Leader for the original Community/Group.
3. The Council, or Group Leader with permission of the Provincial Delegate, will provide the member with the signed transfer form, and copy of their records verifying their status, level of formation, and other information useful to the receiving Community/Group.
4. When ready to attend, the member contacts the receiving Community/Group and requests to begin the “year of discernment”. This will begin with an interview with the receiving Community/Group Council where the discernment and formation requirements will be identified.
5. Another interview at the end of that year will be required, where the member and the receiving Council offer their evaluation and decision regarding finalizing the transfer process.
6. Councils are not obligated to accept members applying for transfer, but either way the completed transfer form is sent to the original Community. When a transfer is accepted, the completed transfer form, releasing the member from the original Community, is sent by the original Council to the receiving Community/Group and the Central Office.

**Sec. XXIV: Transfers between Provinces**

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

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

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

- a) a Lay Carmelite, who desires to become a Secular Carmelite, by way of exception, may transfer if he/she has already made final profession as a T.O.C.. The receiving Community/Group determines conditions of acceptance.
- b) a letter of recommendation, from the T.O.C. Council to the O.C.D.S. Council to which the T.O.C. member wishes to transfer, will be required.

- c) the Lay Carmelite, who desires to become a Secular Carmelite, will retain his/her profession during a discernment period of directed O.C.D.S. formation agreed upon by the receiving Council.
- d) formation time frames and curriculum will be established by the Formation Director and the other members of the receiving Council.
- e) upon completion of formation, and after a period of at least one year of discernment, a letter of release from the Provincial Delegate of the T.O.C. must be obtained. A definitive promise will confer membership in the O.C.D.S..

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

1. The elections shall be held every three years in the spring prior to the Provincial Chapter of the Friars in May. The Provincial Delegate must be consulted for any modification of the election procedure.
2. Elections of the President and three Councilors shall be conducted in accordance with recognized parliamentary procedures (for example, Robert's Rules of Order) with the following particular provisions:
  - a) **Two months prior** to the election a Nominating Committee of at least three professed (Temporary or Definitive Promise) members, of which only one may be on the Council, shall be chosen and notified by the Council. The Nominating Committee will be announced to the members at a meeting one month in advance of the meeting when the election is to take place. [*cf.* Statutes Sec. XXVII: Guidelines for the Nominating Committee]
  - b) Also at the meeting two months prior, the Council will distribute to the Community a list of members eligible to serve in office and eligible to vote. To be eligible to vote a member must be professed, on the Community roster, and in compliance with the Community attendance policy regarding voter eligibility [*cf.* Provincial Statutes, Sec. XIII: Organization and Life, No. 4]. Diocesan priests, deacons and seminarians are ineligible to hold office as President or Formation Director.
  - c) Only professed members of the Community may serve as members of the Council. The President and Formation Director must be Definitively Professed.
  - d) In order that leadership qualities be developed in our Communities:
    - 1) No Council member (President, Councilors, or Formation Director) shall serve more than two consecutive terms on the Council. To be elected to a third consecutive term requires the postulation of the Provincial Delegate. This must be made clear before the straw ballot begins.
    - 2) Any member who has served two consecutive terms as a Council member is not eligible to hold any elected or appointed office in the Community for the next triennium without approval of the Provincial Delegate.
    - 3) The only exception is a member who is currently in his/her second consecutive term on the Council, but only first term as President. He/she is eligible to serve for a second term as President (*cf.* Const. 50). If not elected as President, his/her name is removed from the ballots for Councilors.
  - e) **One month prior** to the election, there will be a straw vote by secret ballot at which the nominating committee will preside. The ballots will be provided by the Nominating Committee. Each member will submit a first, second and third preference for President, as well as first, second and third preferences for each office of Councilor.
  - f) If a Community has become too small to have a five-member Council, the Council may petition the Provincial Delegate to decrease the size of the Council to three members. The

Provincial Delegate has the authority to decrease a five-member Council to three members if he thinks it is in the best interest of the Community.

- g) Only eligible voting members shall be present. All ineligible members present and all visitors are asked to go to another suitable location to pray for the election.
- h) After all professed members are gathered for the straw vote, the Spiritual Assistant or, in his absence, the President, shall invoke the Holy Spirit.
- i) The President will take a roll call of all eligible voting professed members. The number of voting members will be counted. This will serve to ensure that only one straw vote ballot has been submitted by each member, and that each member has submitted a ballot. A submitted blank ballot is counted as an abstention.
- j) After the straw vote is complete, the Nominating Committee, without opening any ballot, shall count the number of all the ballots submitted and ensure that the count is exactly that of the total number of eligible voting members present. If the count does not tally, all of these ballots must be destroyed without opening any of them, and the voting process repeated. When the count tallies correctly, the Nominating Committee will retain the correctly tallied ballots.
- k) After that meeting, but prior to the election, the Nominating Committee shall tabulate the straw vote ballots. From these results, they will contact the nominees, starting with those who have received the highest number of straw votes, to ensure they are aware of the responsibilities of office and to ask if they are willing and able to serve. From these results, they will prepare a slate of nominees which will include one list with two or three qualified nominees for the office of President and one list with four to six nominees for all three offices of Councilor, all of whom have consented to serve if elected. This will represent the desire of the Community as expressed in the straw vote. These results shall be known only to the Nominating Committee until Election Day.
- l) **On Election Day**, the process specified in g), h), and i) is repeated. The slate of nominees shall be presented by the Nominating Committee to the members of the Community. A spokesperson for the Nominating Committee shall announce the names of those who have agreed to serve for the office of President if elected. The President will write the names on a board or chart paper so that they are clearly visible to all voting members.
- m) The three Councilors will distribute voting papers and collect the votes for counting. Nominations will not be accepted from the floor. Neither will voting by proxy, email, letter or write-in ballots be acceptable. A member desiring to abstain from voting on a particular ballot must hand in a blank ballot.
- n) Voting is by secret ballot. For the purposes of an election, a quorum shall be the eligible voting members being present. A majority is one vote greater than half the legal votes cast.
- o) The ballots will be counted audibly in the presence of the Community by the incumbent Councilors and recorded by the Secretary. First the Councilors, without opening any ballot, shall count the number of all the ballots and ensure that the count is exactly that of the total number of voting members present. If the count does not tally, all of these ballots must be destroyed without opening them, and the process repeated. When the ballot count is the same as the number of voters, the ballots shall be opened and tallied.
- p) If one person receives at least one more than half the votes on the first ballot, that person is the newly elected President. If not, a second ballot will be held between the two members who have received the largest number of votes. Again, one person must receive at least one more than half the possible votes to be elected President. If necessary, a third and final ballot will take place. If this ballot fails to elect a President, the person who is senior in profession will be elected. If the two nominees have the same profession date, seniority in age will decide the election.
- q) The incumbent President shall preside over the entire election proceedings.

- r) After the President is elected, the Nominating Committee spokesperson will announce the slate of nominees for Councilors. The incumbent President will write those names on a board or chart paper, along with the names of those nominees for President who were not elected.
  - s) The President proceeds with the election beginning with the members' first choice for Councilor. The three incumbent Councilors collect the ballots and repeat the process as noted above for the election of the President. [cf. *Provincial Statutes* Sec. XIX, para. 2n & o]. Once a Councilor has been elected, the process will be repeated for the remaining Councilors in succession. The slate of nominees in each case contains the names of all those not previously elected.
  - t) Upon completion of the voting for each Councilor, the incumbent President officially announces the results to the entire membership.
3. At a convenient time following the election and after careful consideration, the new Council will meet to appoint the Director of Formation from among those in the Community who are definitively professed. When possible they should consult with the Spiritual Assistant. The Director of Formation may be chosen from among the newly elected Councilors [cf. *Const.* #47d and *Provincial Statutes* Sec. XIX, para. 2d]. If the Director of Formation is appointed from the elected Councilors, the current Council will appoint a new Council member. Their choice does not need to be the person who received the next highest number of votes in the election.
  4. The Secretaries and the Treasurer shall be named at the discretion of the newly elected Council. [cf. *Const.* #50]. The Secretary for the Council must be one of the three Councilors. A Secretary for the Community may be named to take minutes of the monthly meetings of the Community and additional duties as needed. [I have deliberately underlined "Council" and "Community" in these last two sentences.]
  5. It is recommended that the Installation Ceremony of the new officers take place at the next meeting. The Spiritual Assistant, or, in his absence, the President, presides. The installation ceremony can be found on the O.C.D.S. website, [www.ocds.info](http://www.ocds.info), under *Legislative Documents*.

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

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

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

1. There shall be a Provincial Council for the Secular Carmelites. It shall be composed of five or more members of the O.C.D.S. California-Arizona Province of St. Joseph and the Provincial Delegate.
2. A Provincial Councilor must:
  - a) be definitively professed;
  - b) have served on a local Council (President, Formation Director, or Councilor);
  - c) takes an active interest in the Order and in all things Carmelite.
3. The Provincial Council will be elected in accordance with the following norms:
  - a) Each Community/Group will submit to the Provincial Council one name from the Province by May 31st of an election year. The Provincial Delegate retains the right to add nominees for consideration by the Provincial Council.
  - b) The current Provincial Council will meet as soon as possible after the Friars' Provincial Chapter and the appointment or re-appointment of the Provincial Delegate to choose the new members of the Provincial Council.
  - c) The term of office will be three years. An individual Councilor may be re-appointed for another three years or less. Appointment for a third consecutive term would require postulation.
  - d) In the event of a resignation or death of a Councilor, the Provincial Council will appoint a replacement to serve the remainder of that term, unless this occurs in the last year of the triennium, in which case no replacement needs to be made.
  - e) The new Provincial Council shall appoint from the O.C.D.S. Provincial Councilors a President and a Secretary who shall serve in these offices for a three-year term. The meeting to appoint these officers shall be held within three months subsequent to the date of the Provincial Chapter of the Friars, or as soon as possible.
  - f) The President shall normally coordinate all activities and preside at the meetings of the Provincial Council. In the event of the absence of the President, the senior professed O.C.D.S. Councilor will preside.
4. In order that the membership of the Province have contact with their Provincial Councilors, the names and contact information of the Provincial Council will be regularly published in the O.C.D.S. Provincial Newsletter.
5. The Provincial Council shall meet at least twice a year.
6. The primary responsibility of the Provincial Council is to:
  - a) assist in formation and the apostolate, [cf. Const. #57].
  - b) serve as an advisory body to the Provincial Superior, via the Provincial Delegate,
  - c) advise and assist the Provincial Delegate on the Central Office administration and finances.
7. Members of the Provincial Council shall make Fraternal Visits to Communities, Groups and Study Groups. A Provincial Councilor, while making a visit, comes as a representative of the Provincial Council with the same rights and privileges of that office. He/she respects the autonomy of the local Council's authority.
8. Provincial Councilors are excused from attending the monthly meetings of their Community/Group when prevented from doing so by Provincial Council duties.

9. A quorum for a valid vote consists of two-thirds of the members, one of whom must be the President or Provincial Delegate. Votes in absentia are not permitted.
10. In the case of a tie vote, the President shall cast an additional vote to break the tie.
11. Normally the Provincial Council organizes and hosts a Leadership Training Conference in the middle year of the triennium.
12. Each U.S. Province shall normally hold a Regional Congress every three years. A National Congress shall be held every ten years. The Provincial Council should lend its support to the Congresses.
13. All members of the Provincial Council are encouraged to attend the Inter-Provincial Council (IPC) meetings with the Oklahoma and Washington Provinces.
14. The Provincial Council may bring together members of the Province to utilize their specific skills in order to assist with the mission and goals of the Provincial Council.

**Abbreviations:**

Const = O.C.D.S. Constitutions

CCC = Catechism of the Catholic Church

CCL = Code of Canon Law

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