



OCDS Provincial Newsletter

California-Arizona Province of St. Joseph – January 2020

Election Timeline and Other Important Reminders

“Christ is the center of our lives and of Christian experience. Members of the Secular Order are called to live the demands of following Christ in union with Him, by accepting His teachings and devoting themselves to Him....” (OCDS Constitutions, No. 10.)

Important Reminders	2020 Election Timeline
<p>It’s important for the incumbent Councils to ensure that the following actions are completed prior to the 2020 elections. <u>Please Do not leave these responsibilities as past due action items for the newly-elected Councils:</u></p> <p>Provincial Dues of \$35 each should be collected from all clothed and professed members during the month of <u>January</u>. The Treasurer should submit the dues in <u>February</u> to the OCDS Central Office, Carmelite House of Prayer, P.O. Box 347, Oakville, CA 94562, <u>along with the annual Financial Report</u>. Aspirants and Study Group Members are not required to pay Provincial Dues. (See Provincial Statutes, Sec. XX, No. 2, on page 75.)</p> <p>The Apostolate Report for activities completed during the year of 2019 should be submitted to the Regional Representative in <u>February</u>. (See Provincial Statutes, Sec. II, No. 7, on page 54.)</p> <p>If you have not already done so, an Excel Roster with updated information on all professions, vows, etc., should be submitted to the Central Office. The Form and instructions can be found at www.ocds.info/Forms.htm.</p> <p>This year, Easter falls on Sunday, April 12. Renewal of Promises should take place at your meeting during the Easter Season (See OCDS Constitutions, Sec. II, No. 12, on page 21.) The formula for the promise can be found on page 80, No. 42(A) of the Ritual for Promises and Vows. (www.ocds.info/LegislativeDocuments/ritual.pdf)</p>	<p>All <i>Canonically-Established OCDS Communities</i> conduct their triennial elections in March or April 2020. The following is a brief timeline of the actions that need to be taken in the coming months for elections held in April 2020. (For March elections, the required steps should be completed one month earlier.) Please familiarize yourselves with all of the detailed requirements included in Sec. XXVI and Sec. XXVII of our Provincial Statutes (pp. 81-87).</p> <p><u>January 2020:</u> The Community Council reviews the attendance roster and makes a list of the Members eligible to vote and Members eligible to serve in office.</p> <p><u>February 2020:</u> The Council distributes the list of eligible Members to the Community. ALSO, the Council selects the Nominating Committee. Between the February and March meetings, the Nominating Committee becomes familiar with their responsibilities and prepares for the straw vote.</p> <p><u>March 2020:</u> The Council announces the names of the Members of the Nominating Committee AND the Nominating Committee conducts the straw vote. Following the March meeting, the Nominating Committee tabulates the results of the straw vote, and based on the results, selects the nominees for President and Councilors. The Nominating Committee contacts the nominees to ensure they understand the requirements of the offices and are willing and able to serve.</p> <p><u>April 2020:</u> The election is held as outlined in the Provincial Statutes. Following the election, at a convenient time, the new Council appoints the Director of Formation, Secretaries, and Treasurer. As soon as possible, the “Elected Council” form (www.ocds.info/Forms.htm) is completed and sent to the Central Office, with a copy to the Provincial Council Regional Representative.</p> <p><u>May 2020:</u> An Installation Ceremony is held for the new officers. Go to ocds.info/Forms.htm for the “Installation of Officers” ceremony.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Changes in Officers in OCDS Study Groups and Groups</p> <p>When a Study Group is recognized by the Province, the Provincial Delegate, in consultation with the Provincial Council, appoints a Group Leader, Director of Formation, and one Councilor. When a Study Group advances to become a recognized Group, there are no provisions in our Statutes for changes in the appointed officers. If your Study Group or Group is in need of a change in any or all of the officers, contact your Regional Representative and the Provincial Delegate for guidance.</p>

Suggested Prayer for Elections

O God, Most Holy Trinity, through Your grace the Church gave birth to the Order of Carmel so that we might live with You in prayer and fraternity, after the example of Our Lady and the Prophet Elijah, and be a prophetic presence in our world.

We ask You to send the Holy Spirit upon our Community as we prepare to elect a new Council. We pray that this will be a grace-filled event for us.

May our preparations renew in each of us an openness to the workings of the Holy Spirit, to follow Jesus Christ with love and fidelity, and to live more fully our Carmelite charism.

May each of us be willing to serve the Community in an office, if called upon.

Send your blessing upon us all through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother and Patroness of Carmel.

We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

(Author unknown)

On the Promise of Obedience in Council Members

By Lynn Miyake, OCDS, Provincial Councilor

Recently, a Member asked for a definition of the Promise of Obedience as it applies to the Discalced Carmelite Secular Order. The Promise of Obedience is addressed in the OCDS Constitutions, Sec. II, No. 15, on page 22. In addition to the spirituality of the Promise, this section states: "...The Secular Carmelite freely cooperates with those who have responsibility for guiding the community and the Order in discerning and accepting God's ways: the Community's Council, the Provincial and the General."

This article is not intended to give an all-encompassing definition of the responsibilities of the Promise of Obedience. In light of our upcoming elections, however, I would like to offer a few thoughts on the Promise of Obedience as it specifically pertains to Council Members.

The Council is the local authority in our Communities and Groups. By agreeing to serve on the Council, each Council Member, in conjunction with the other Council Members, agrees to lead and serve the Community in accordance with the provisions of the OCDS Constitutions and our Provincial Statutes. This means that the Council Members must be fully versed in the requirements of our Legislative Documents and in the specific requirements of their respective positions. It also means that they must not exceed the authority given to them in the Legislative Documents.

Since the Council as a whole is the authority of the Community or Group, each individual Council Member is also required to be obedient to the will of the Council as a whole. For example, if three Council Members vote "yes" on an important decision, and the other two vote "no," the two dissenting Members are subject under obedience to the decision made by the majority vote of the other three Council Members. This requires humility and a genuine desire to honor the Promise of Obedience on the part of each Council Member.

Another area of confusion that sometimes arises pertains to the responsibilities of the Formation Director, which are listed in the OCDS Constitutions, Sec VII, No 53, on page 44. These responsibilities must be considered in light of our Provincial Statutes, Sec. XIX, "The Provisions for Council Actions," No. 6, pp. 73 – 74, especially No. 6(h). It states: "The President, the three Councilors and the Director of Formation shall actively work together [emphasis added] in the following: 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." In other words, the Formation Director is not a law unto herself or himself with respect to all things pertaining to formation. According to Sec. XIX, No. 2, on page 73, the entire Council is responsible for formation.

On another topic, when you are nominated to serve as a Council Member, our Statutes require that you are given the opportunity to decline the nomination if you are unwilling or unable to assume the responsibilities of the position. Although it is not specifically stated in our statutes, the same courtesy should be extended to Members who are asked to serve as Secretary, Treasurer, or in other designated positions. Since we don't live together in community, we don't know all of the responsibilities and burdens that our Members may be carrying outside of our Community/Group meetings. When you ask for volunteers to fill these positions, instead of arbitrarily appointing them, you give your Members the opportunity to generously offer their talents and their time.

Finally, bring everything to God in prayer. Serving on the Council isn't always easy, but if you ask Him, God will provide the grace required.