

Introduction to the Statutes of CCA

Our Association was originally formed in 1970 in response to the need and desire for unity among our member Carmels and to the call of Vatican II for the renewal and adaptation of religious life. Our unity is rooted in the Gospel and our Carmelite heritage, and it flows from sisterly love and respect for one another in our differences. By virtue of our vocation and mission in the Church, we collaborate in the work of constant renewal through study and sharing in order to foster wholehearted fidelity to our Teresian charism. We seek mutual understanding and consensus among our member communities, and our goals as an Association will be carried out in accordance with the present Statutes.

UPDATED STATUTES OF THE CCA

I. NATURE

1. Carmelite Communities Associated is composed of the Monasteries of the Order of Discalced Carmelite Nuns listed in the Decree of Erection, given by the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life. It is a juridic person of pontifical right, governed by these Statutes.

2. The Monasteries of the Association remain juridically autonomous. They are each governed by their own Prioress, who is a Major Superior. They are subject to the Holy See and to their local Ordinary in accordance with Canon Law, and also the Regular Superior for those Monasteries under the jurisdiction of the Order.

3. In order to join the Association, a two-thirds vote of the Chapter of the petitioning Monastery and the acceptance by the President and Council of the Association are necessary. The President and Council will consult with member Monasteries before giving acceptance. The petition is to be forwarded by the President to the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, which will decide about the admission. The President will notify the Superior General of the Order that the petition was presented to the Congregation.

4. Withdrawal from the Association requires serious reasons and two-thirds vote of the Chapter of the petitioning Monastery. The petition is to be sent to the President of the Association, who after hearing the opinion of the Council, will forward it to the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life for a decision. She will likewise inform the Superior General of the Order about the petition for withdrawal.

II. AIM AND PURPOSE

5. The primary aim and purpose of the Association is to deepen and develop the Teresian Carmelite life in the contemporary Church and world.

6. To accomplish this primary aim, the Association and member Monasteries will:

- a. Encourage fidelity to the Teresian charism and the exigencies of our contemplative life of prayer in solitude and community in accordance with our Rule, Constitutions, and the documents of the Holy See;
- b. Foster study and increased understanding of Carmelite spirituality and history, and share prayerful reflections and experience related to present-day living of the Teresian spirit;
- c. Promote unity through communication and collaboration among the member Monasteries of the Association and the Order of Carmel;
- d. Provide opportunities for leadership development;
- e. Provide mutual aid, when necessary, in the form of personnel, materials, and financial help;
- f. Provide effective representation with properly constituted authorities.

III. III. ORGANIZATION OF THE ASSOCIATION

A. THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

7. The General Assembly is the primary decision making body of the Association

when it is in session. It is in ordinary session that the President, three Councilors, and the Association Financial Administrator (Treasurer) are elected

separately for a two-year term.

8. The General Assembly receives the recommendations of the member Monasteries, the reports of the President and Council, and the report of the Association Financial Administrator, and makes decisions for the Association in

accordance with its aims and goals.

9. The members of the General Assembly are:

- a. The President and Councilors of the Association;
- b. The Prioress of each autonomous member Monastery or her delegate;
- c. An elected delegate from each autonomous member Monastery;
- d. The local superior from each Monastery that is affiliated with either the Association or with another Monastery of the Association or her delegate;
- e. The Association Financial Administrator (Cor orans No. 141 c).

10. The Chapter of each Monastery shall elect the delegate by an absolute majority vote in the first or second ballot, or by a relative majority vote in the third

ballot. Only those may be elected who enjoy active and passive voice in their own Monastery. A Prioress who is unable to attend, may appoint a solemnly professed sister from her community to take her place. In the case of an Affiliated Monastery, the local superior or her delegate will have one vote.

11. The General Assembly shall convene in ordinary session every two years.

- a. The voting members are the Prioress and elected delegate from each autonomous Member Monastery and the local superior or her delegate from each Affiliated Monastery;

- b. Non voting members of CCA communities may attend the entire Assembly.

12. An extraordinary Assembly may be convoked for important and urgent reasons at the request of at least two-thirds of the autonomous Member Monasteries, and Affiliated Monasteries, expressed through the favorable vote of their respective Chapters.

13. The General Assembly cannot proceed with its deliberations and elections unless all the autonomous Member Monasteries and the Affiliated Monasteries

have been convoked and at least two-thirds of their delegates are present.

14. At the time of the Election, the President will be elected first, followed by the

election of the councilors and the Association Financial Administrator. The autonomy of the member Monasteries is always to be respected in the decisions

of the General Assembly, and in the implementation of these decisions by the President and the Council, who, once elected, have responsibilities conferred upon them by Cor orans.

15. The Association shares responsibility with the member Monasteries for the

formation of formators and their collaborators, and for courses for initial and ongoing formation.

16. In the event that the President of the Association should die or become Incapacitated while in office and have **more than one year** remaining in her term, within one month of the office's vacancy the first councilor will convene an Extraordinary Association Assembly to elect a new President to complete the term. The Extraordinary Assembly is to be celebrated within two months of the convocation. In the event that the President of the Association should die or become incapacitated while in office with less than one year remaining in her term, the first councilor will assume the office of President, and each councilor will move up one position. The new President, after consultation with her councilors, will appoint the final councilor to complete the remainder of the term of office.

B. LEADERSHIP: The term of President and Councilors, and the Association Financial Administrator shall be two years with a possible second term of two years.

17. THE DUTIES OF THE ASSOCIATION PRESIDENT (see Cor orans 110-122)

a. To model a collaborative and transparent manner of working with the Council and member Monasteries

b. To provide opportunities, in consultation with her Council, for mutual support and sisterly visits by the President, the councilors and/or delegates;

c. To accompany the Regular Visitator on the canonical visit to member Monasteries as a Co-Visitator and, at the end of the canonical visit, following discernment with her Council, to indicate in writing to the

Prioress suitable solutions for anything that has come up during the visitation;

d. To visit member Monasteries at any time the need requires it or when such a visit is requested by a member community; a Councilor or Delegate may accompany her as a Co-Visitor along with the Association Financial Administrator, as needed;

e. To report to the Holy See, after discernment with her Council, when a member Monastery no longer possesses real autonomy of life;

f. To report to the Holy See, after discernment with her Council, when the Prioress of a Monastery denies consent for a member of her monastery to transfer to another monastery of the same institute;

g. To grant an extension of the indult of exclaustation, for a period of no more than two years for a nun professed with solemn vows, after discernment with her Council and consultation with the Prioress of the nun's Monastery of membership;

h. To give consent for the request of exclaustations beyond three years for a nun of solemn vows, after discernment with her Council and consultation with the Prioress of the monastery; this request is then to be sent to the Holy See following the directives of Cor orans, No.131;

i. In consultation with the council, to appoint 1 or 2 Association members as Association Formator/s who will work with the Council in providing assistance with formation for formators as well as initial and ongoing formation; whenever possible, to encourage collaboration with member monasteries and formators of other Associations;

j. To handle all official communication with the Holy See and the Order;

k. To collaborate with the Council in implementing decisions made by the General Assembly in accordance with its aims and goals;

l. To collaborate with the Council in drafting the report on the state of the Association and to send the report to the Holy See at the end of their term; to send a summary of the report to all CCA monasteries.

18. THE DUTIES OF THE ASSOCIATION COUNCIL (See Cor orans 124-132)

a. To discern with the President and Association Formator/s the most appropriate times and places to hold specific formation courses for the Association and to oversee any delegation of planning such courses;

b. To discern with the President in choosing an Association Secretary for a two year term with a possible reappointment to a second term;

c. To share responsibilities with the President of planning, delegating, and communication with member Monasteries; participating in meetings with other OCD Associations and Friars, and other business on behalf of the Association.

19. THE DUTIES OF THE ASSOCIATION FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATOR

a. To oversee the financial administration of the Association;

b. To carry out the responsibilities established by the President and Association Council;

c. To collaborate with the President in an official visit to a member

Monastery, noting the positives and negatives of financial data as needed:

- i. To make sure that there is accurate recording of income and expenses;
- ii. To make sure that the monastery is financially stable in so far as possible;
- iii. To make sure that there are accurate records of donors and donations;
- iv. To make sure that the monastery is true to their 501(c)(3) status (e.g., they do not use tax exempt status for personal purchases);