

Responses of CCA Monasteries to 1st draft of updating Statutes
(compiled July 2019)

Beacon

The Beacon community agrees with and supports what you have done with the statutes, including the exceptions you have asked for.

Latrobe

We are all very pleased with the working draft of the CCA Statutes and we didn't have any suggestions for changes.

Barrington

The last section on Leadership is well done - clear and practical. We voted unanimously for this. The rest of the draft is also well organized and clear. We had one question about II. Aim and Purpose, #6: Did you omit the phrase: "in accordance with the norms concerning enclosure" because it isn't in sync with Cor Orans? We are ok with it being omitted but are just curious about the procedure.

DANVILLE - Our response would be similar to others. We don't have any suggestions for changes. We're always grateful for the LT's work for us.

CONCORD

We will send something from the community later even if you need to go ahead with what you have.

SAN RAFAEL

Our entire community (6 votes) agrees with all the changes to the Statutes sent to us on April 6, 2019.

ELDRIDGE

OLDENBURG

CLEVELAND

We recognize that this project is being done in response to Cor Orans and with the assistance of canonical counsel, and that some of these changes and additions are necessary to receive approval from Rome.

We want to affirm strongly the following changes: I. #3 "may consult with member monasteries before giving acceptance"; II. #6 omitting "in accordance with the norms concerning enclosure"; II. #6a "and community"; and especially II. 36d "opportunities for leadership development".

The organization of the Association with its term of three years may be difficult for CCA, and the listing of leadership duties is daunting. We assume that these items cannot be changed much. Hence the need for leadership development

and a recommitting ourselves to CCA.

Although not a part of the official Statutes of CCA, we wonder whether the Introduction to the 1993 statutes might be reworked and updated a bit to reflect where we are now in our membership, and to reiterate our values of understanding, acceptance of one another, and pluralism. Doing so might make these more formal statutes feel more like the CCA we know, and which has developed and matured over these many years.

BOSTON

Our community was generally in agreement with the changes proposed by the LT, with the exception of the term of office for the president and councilors on which we had differing opinions. A majority of us were in favor of the proposed 3-year term for the President and its Council, A minority preferred a 2-year term. Those in favor of the three year term justified their position with these arguments:

1. A three-year term allows the president and council enough time to implement projects and goals proposed by the assembly without undue stress.
2. Planning for a general assembly takes a great deal of energy and work on the part of leadership and a 2-year term puts a lot of pressure on leadership to plan such meetings, especially given the added responsibilities of leadership with the implementation of CO. If the goal of a shorter 2-year term is more in-person meetings, this can be achieved by way of in- person ongoing formation programs or other such meetings during the term of the council.
3. Travel is costly and also getting more difficult for sisters who are aging.
4. Zoom meetings (esp. via WWD) have provided a wonderful way for sisters to connect and establish deeper bonds, without the travel.
5. It is not easy to engage in a search for new leaders every 2 years.

Those in favor of a 2-year term provided this reason:

The term is more manageable for communities who offer their sisters for leadership.

Baltimore

CCA Leadership proposed language is in [blue](#).

Our proposed language is in [red](#).

General: Wherever the statutes refer to a “three year” cycle (meetings, terms, etc), we propose changing it to “two years.”

We suggest sending in a rationale to the congregation.

Rationale: In our experience of many years, it is difficult for communities to free up a nun for a three-year term, and even if it is possible, it is highly unlikely that she would be able to serve 2 consecutive three-year terms, which would result in a lack of continuity in terms of the leadership team. In addition, many of the sisters have expressed the opinion that three years is too long between meetings, as they value the more frequent in-person interaction.

We propose either changing the language to “two years” or saying “shall ordinarily convene a session every three years, which would allow us to convene every two years. (We prefer by far sticking to the “two years.” This is how law changes.)

Section I. NATURE

Item 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 must may 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

Section II. AIM AND PURPOSE - we propose no changes

Section III ORGANIZATION OF THE ASSOCIATION

A. THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Item 7. The General Assembly is the meeting of the Nuns of our Association whose task is to elect the President and the three Councilors, and to deal with the important business of the association. The General Assembly is the primary decision-making body of the association.

Rationale: It is the General Assembly that is responsible for generating issues, setting goals, and establishing priorities. It is the responsibility of the Council to implement these. We believe that this delineation should be spelled out clearly in the statutes.

Item 9. The members of the General Assembly are:

OMIT e. The Secretary of the Association

Rationale: We agree with Cor Orans (#134) which states that the Secretary “functions solely as an actuary.” Although the Secretary performs an important role, we recommend that she not be an ex officio member of the “General Assembly.”

B. LEADERSHIP

Add New paragraph l. under “17. THE DUTIES OF THE ASSOCIATION PRESIDENT,” as follows:

l. To model a collaborative and transparent manner of working with the council and member communities.

18 DUTIES OF THE ASSOCIATION COUNCIL

Item b, edit as follows: b. To collaborate with the President in drafting the report on the state of the Association, and the individual monasteries, to be sent to the Holy See at the end of their term, and to provide such report to each of the member monasteries;

Rationale: In light of transparency, so crucial in our Church today, it is necessary that any report sent to the Holy See be also provided to each member monastery. If this respect is not accorded the monasteries, there may be an erosion of trust in the leadership of the Association. If we are unwilling to make such a report public to all monasteries of the association, any monastery actually mentioned in the report should receive a copy of the report, or section in which they are mentioned. However, we strongly urge that all reports be shared with the member communities.

We also recommend adding a new section IV. to address formation, as follows:

IV. Duration of Temporary Vows in the Monasteries of the Association.

1. Sisters shall be evaluated for Solemn Profession after 3 to 5 years of temporary vows, and admitted to Solemn Profession by the Prioress at the

discretion of the Formators and Chapter.

2. A specific program will be developed for each sister's support and personal guidance for 3 to 5 years following Solemn Profession.

Rationale: While we understand and share the concern that many men and women leave religious life in the 5 years following their final commitment, we are not convinced increasing the length of formation addresses this issue, and may instead merely postpone it.

Instead, we advocate providing a supportive program tailored for each sister in the 3 to 5 years following her Solemn Profession to continue to assist her in her adjustment to live the life of the community as a solemnly professed sister. Were the length of initial formation to be increased it would prevent the sister from taking her place as a chapter member for too long a time and limit the sister's availability for service in a leadership capacity in her community and the Association; this is especially true given the fact that sisters are frequently entering later in life and would be much older by the time they professed final vows. The program envisioned in no. 2 above is essential to this proposed change. It is meant to address the concern mentioned above and will provide support, guidance, on-going education and creative relationships with member communities of Association.

(We assume this rationale, or a similar one, will be sent to the congregation with this addition. This proposed addition is very important and is following Father Saverio's lead in his letter of October 2018 on number 287 of Cor Orans where he proposes "that the Discalced Carmelite nuns could ask the Congregation to leave the possibility, albeit in a non-ordinary form, of a period of time of three (or four) years for the temporary vows....One way would be in getting approval of the Federation statutes. They could be incorporated into their own norms which deviate from common law....Once the statutes have been approved by the Holy See, then the law proper to the Order prevails over common law."")

We suggest the leadership team work to get other Associations both in the U.S. and abroad to add this suggestion to the updating of their Statutes.

RENO

WORKING DRAFT blue = CCA Leadership changes from 1993 Statutes
FOR UPDATING THE STATUTES OF THE CCA red = Reno comments
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 member 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 ~~may~~ must 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, **(we omitted the phrase: “in accordance with the norms concerning enclosure,)** 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. ORGANIZATION OF THE ASSOCIATION

A. THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

7. The General Assembly is the meeting of the Nuns **of our Association** whose task is to elect the **President** and the **three** Councilors, and to deal with the important business of the association. **(Rational—our diminishing numbers in monasteries means fewer communities are willing to release a member to serve in CCA leadership; difficult to get names on slate for election and electing 4: impossible)**

8. The General Assembly receives the recommendations of the member Monasteries, **the reports of the President and Council, and the report of the Treasurer,** 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 member Monastery;
 - c. One elected delegate from each member Monastery;
 - d. The Treasurer of the Association;
 - e. The Secretary of the Association. Why is this necessary? Omit
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 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.
11. The General Assembly shall **ordinarily** convene in ordinary session every **three** years.
- Rational: If, for some reason we need to change to 2 years, this would be a way to cover our decision. See also rational below under B.
12. An extraordinary Assembly may be convoked for important and urgent reasons at the request of at least two-thirds of the member Monasteries, expressed through the favorable vote of their respective Chapters.
13. The General Assembly cannot proceed with its elections and deliberations unless all the members have been convoked and at least two-thirds of them are present.
14. 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**. (see Cor Orans, No. 141e)
15. The Association shares with the member Monasteries responsibility for the formation of formators and their collaborators, and for courses for initial and ongoing formation.
16. If the President dies or ceases by law to be no longer in office, the Council, within one month **2 months** of the vacancy, convenes the Extraordinary Assembly to be held within two months (**three months**). At this Assembly the President and Councilors are to be elected. If a Councilor dies or no longer can fulfill her duties, the President, in consultation with her other Councilors may appoint a substitute for the remainder of the term of office rather than convene an Extraordinary Assembly for the purpose of an election.
- Rational: it seems unreasonable to expect that an Extraordinary Assembly be convened within 1-2 months with everything the Council is doing and the geographical size of our Association. (Another Rational: with the real challenges and expenses of travel spanning 3 time zones in the USA, we recommend that technology can benefit us by allowing us to convene a “Zoom” or online Extraordinary Assembly—this too needs time to set up and prepare; we have had very positive experiences of live-streaming [Zoom] our CCA General Assembly and our CCA ongoing formation program)
- B. LEADERSHIP: The term of President and Councilors shall ordinarily be three years with a possible second term of three years., and when necessary, every two years.**
- Rational: 1) by meeting every two years it gives us an opportunity to see each other more often, share our needs, look together to the future, and experience the realities of our communities. We tried for a while to meet every three years and found every two years better for all our member monasteries.
- 2) once again, with aging members and diminishing numbers in our monasteries it is very difficult for many of our member monasteries to release a sister

to serve in CCA leadership for a 3 year period, especially with the added responsibilities Cor Orans has given to the President and her Council, and often more travel involved)

17. THE DUTIES OF THE ASSOCIATION PRESIDENT:

- a. To provide opportunities, in consultation with her Council, for mutual support and sisterly visits by the President, the councilors and/or delegates;
- b. To accompany the Regular Visitor on the canonical visit to member Monasteries as a Co-Visitor 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;
- c. 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 Treasurer, as needed;
- d. To report to the Holy See, after discernment with her Council, when a member Monastery no longer possesses real autonomy of life;
- e. 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;
- f. To grant an extension of the indult of exclaustation, after discernment with her Council and consultation with the Prioress of the monastery, for a nun professed with solemn vows of a monastery of the Association for a period of no more than two years;
- g. 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;
- h. To work in collaboration with member Monasteries and the Council in providing assistance with formation for formators as well as initial and ongoing formation;
- i. To handle all official communication with the Holy See and the Order;
- j. To collaborate with the Council in drafting the report on the state of the Association and the individual monasteries, and then to send the report to the Holy See at the end of her term;
- k. To request a professional audit of the books of a member Monastery, if needed, after an official visit.

18. THE DUTIES OF THE ASSOCIATION COUNCIL:

- a. To discern with the President 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 collaborate with the President in drafting the report on the state of the Association, and the individual monasteries, to be sent to the

Holy See at the end of their term;

c. To discern with the President in choosing an Association Treasurer and Association Secretary for a three year term with a possible reappointment to a second term;

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

C. ASSOCIATION TREASURER

19. The duties are as follows:

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);

V. to make recommendation to the Association President that a professional audit of the books might be needed.

D. ASSOCIATION SECRETARY (once again we see no need for the Association Secretary to be a member of the General Assembly [9 d.]

20. The duties are as follows:

a. To reside in the monastery which is the see (headquarters) of the Association in so far as possible;

b. To retain the documents of the Association and keep archives updated.

A question: Does our non-profit legal status require us to have a dissolution clause? We bring this issue up because we have had to update our Nevada non profit incorporation paperwork due to multiple law changes in the past several years and are working both with civil and a canon lawyer with expertise in this area.

We in Reno appreciate the very thoughtful work that the LT has done in beginning a draft for updating our CCA Statutes. We wish that the language didn't have to be so juridical, yet we can live with it, knowing VDQ is much more spirit filled.