

Dear Sisters, April 5, 2019

At last we have a working draft for updating our Statutes ready to share with you. Like many of you, we have been looking closely at VDQ, Cor Orans, talks by Fr. Saverio, Msgr. Carballo, and others, as well as letters from Fr. Saverio. We have been in touch with our own US Associations and with several international associations to see if we might coordinate some of our updates and rationale for requesting exceptions. We are very grateful for the translations of talks/questions and answers that we have received from them as well as other information we have shared with you. However, at this time there seems to be no movement towards submitting a common document to Rome. Rather, each Association is working independently on updating their own Statutes.

Because Cor Orans is already “in effect” we have been consulting with Fr. Rafal Wilkowski, OCD (Secretary for Nuns) and Sr Nancy Reynolds (canon lawyer) regarding what seems necessary, based on Cor Orans, to update our own Statutes. Fr. Rafal has read and approved our present working draft. We have also shared our working draft with Fr. Daniel Chowning, OCD.

Our goal, as your Leadership Team, is to get your suggestions and questions on this working draft well before our next Assembly June 7-13 2020 so that we can begin a process whereby we can present a proposal of our updated Statutes for a vote on June 11, 2020.

It is our responsibility to involve all of our member monasteries in this process and, if possible, to complete it during our term of office.

To help you compare our original Statutes and our working draft, we are attaching copies of each with this letter. The working draft will have all changes in blue to make it easier for you to compare documents.

Respecting the simplicity of and keeping the spirit of our original Statutes, we have made only “essential changes” (made necessary by Cor Orans). The following are some of the areas for which we will be asking exemptions from CICLSAL:

* Term of office of President *(language preferred by Rome rather than what we have called Chairperson or Coordinator*) and Council to be 3 years, with possibility of a second term of 3 years. Our rationale is based on



A) our own Constitutions where a prioress is elected for 3 years with a possibility of being reelected for an additional 3 years and

B) our member monasteries have fewer members than they did even 3 years ago with the result that some of our monasteries would find it a serious hardship to have one of their sisters take on the additional duties of the business of the Association. (*Yes, we know many of our communities want only a 2-year term. However, we have been advised that Rome will no longer accept a 2-year term*.)

* 3 Councilors rather than the 4 required by CO.
  + Our rationale is that it is difficult enough to have enough nominees approved by our member monasteries to elect even 3 councilors because of the increasing work of our Association and the resulting stressing of the resources of the monasteries to which the councilors belong.

There still is no clarity regarding the necessity of a Religious Assistant at this time. So, after consultation, we have not included one in our working draft.

We know that these last weeks of Lent into the Easter Octave and both sacred times and busy ones for all. Keeping this in mind we are asking that you send us the feedback, edits, questions, etc. from your communities no later than Wednesday June 30, 2019.

May this Holy Season be one of many blessings for each and all of our member communities!

United in heart and prayer,

