



Flos Carmeli

Oklahoma Province
Secular Order of Discalced Carmelites

Winter 2017

Volume XXVII No. 1



From the President's Desk

By Mary Kay Daniels, OCDS—President of the Provincial Council

Dear Faithful Companions in Carmel,

All Praise and Glory Be to Our Beloved Christ Jesus! Happy New Year to Our Carmelite Family!

We launch this beautiful New Year 2017 in Carmel with profound gratitude to each person who contributed time and talent to assist with the Statutes revision, and for the recent approval of the Revised OCDS Provincial Statutes for the Oklahoma Province. The revised Statutes are to be implemented immediately and are to be used from now on, until the next revision is due in ten years.

Regarding our newly Revised Statutes: enjoy taking some time out to carefully read through this final culmination of all of our diligent work. Appreciate how the Table of Contents has been rearranged, and how the brevity of the revised Statutes provides for more flexible interpretation to meet Community and Study Group Councils' particular challenges. Suggestions for "how" certain Statutes may be implemented can be found in the Policies and Best Practices files on our website,

<http://www.thereseocds.org>. The to-be electronic Permanent Record and Transfer Forms are also complete and will be sent out shortly after you receive this *FLOS CARMELI*. The revised Formation Guidelines are not attached to the Statutes because the Formation Guidelines Updating Team is still working on them. Once the Formation Guidelines are completed and approved, the PC will publish a new book to contain all of our revised legislation. Finally, reading the article, "**New Community Elections Process – How To, From Start to Finish**," in this *FLOS*, will be most useful for everyone.

"**Congress Tidings of Love**" reveals how the Congress Planning Team has been moving 'full steam ahead!' Be sure to check-out the 2017 OCDS Congress website ([www. 2017ocdscongress.com](http://www.2017ocdscongress.com)) for a full run down on the Plenary Session speakers, workshops, Congress schedule, pilgrimage information and much more. Recent Congress E-News Flashes sent out highlighted:

- The opening date for Congress registration, January 1, 2017. Early registration is \$275, which extends Jan 1 through June 30. Standard registration will be \$325 from July 1 through September 30.

(Continued on page 2)

Inside this issue:

From the Provincial President's Desk	1-2
Report from the Provincial Delegate	3-4
New Provincial Council	5-7
Financial Instructions	8
Community Election Instructions	9-13
Study Group Election Instructions	14-15
Congress Tidings of Love	16-17
Sioux City Carmelite Nuns support 2017 OCDS Congress	18
OCDS Revised Statutes	20-37
News from Around the Province	38
Carmelite Obituaries	39

From the President's Desk

By Mary Kay Daniels, OCDS—President of the Provincial Council—

(Continued from page 1)

- March 15th, the deadline for each community to send in a tote bag treasure
- A continued request for raffle and silent auction items

San Antonio is launching a delightfully delectable Congress fund-raiser, creating a Province-wide Cookbook. Let's gather our favorite family recipes, international recipes from family and friends, U.S. regional recipes (southwestern or northeastern) and send them to San Antonio!

On a different note, our wonderful Provincial Council Member from our Knoxville Community, Kathy DeWine, has had to resign from the PC due to health challenges she and her husband are living through. We thank Kathy for her excellent contribution to the Province, her wisdom, fine editing, great sense of humor, and most of all her loving care with which she gifted all of us. We wish her all the very best and pray with her for God's Will in all of her challenges at hand.

Our new Provincial Council Members John Stevens, Anna Peterson, and Mary Bellman, who will be serving for the upcoming Triennium beginning June 2017 through June 2020, are being introduced in this Newsletter too. Get to know our upcoming PC team! They will be meeting with the present PC in Dallas for training later this month and are looking forward to their tenures of service.

Each one of us is so richly blessed to begin another New Year, 2017, in Our Lord in Carmel, with Our Blessed Mother's constant, gentle, loving Presence, and with all of our wonderful Carmelite saints, those who physically share our lives with us every day, supporting us in prayer and in our faith journeys, helping us become better people, and those great ones who have paved the way before us in the past. May we always keep faithful to their rich and pure spiritual legacy and do what we can to share it!

With Prayer for Holiness, Peace, Joy and Bountiful Love in Christ for All,

Mary Kay Daniels, OCDS

President, Provincial Council for the OCDS Oklahoma Province

On Behalf of the Council Members:

Claire Bloodgood, OCDS,

Jo Ann Murphy, OCDS, and

Chris Wood, OCDS

Report of the Provincial Delegate

By *Father Bonaventure Sauer, O.C.D.*

Happy New Year to each and everyone of you. And many blessing for all on the list of those you love.

We as a province have lots to look forward to over this coming year. Each community will be electing a new council and then, the hard part, making the transition from old to new. The outgoing council is strongly encouraged to help the incoming council take up its responsibilities so as to make for a smooth transition. Anyone going off the council should let go and let the new council do things its own way, even if we don't understand or wholly approve.

[It wasn't just in the 60s that flowers were stuck in rifle barrels. The photo to the right is of a German soldier in WW I. So, in little ways and in big, the Prince of Peace has always reigned.]

We also have a new Provincial Council in our province. They'll be getting their feet wet over the coming months. By summer they should be set to go. A big event for the new Provincial Council will be their meeting with the friars gathered for our triennial Provincial Chapter. This meeting will be in the first week of June. The purpose of the meeting is (1) that we friars can receive a report on the state of the Secular Order in our province and (2) that the Seculars might be part of our province-wide planning for the coming triennium--to be informed of what we're doing, for one, and to assist us as they can and would, for another.

Of course, that means, as I've told you, that we friars have our triennial Province Chapter coming up. As the word "triennial" implies, this gathering happens once every three years, usually over the last week in May and the first week in June. This year it will be held in Dallas, at Mt. Carmel Center, the very place where I reside, although that's a coincidence.

As for the office of Provincial, we friars begin the election process this month, January. But it won't be until early March that we will know who the Provincial will be for this coming triennium--that is, from 2017 to 2020. (Believe it or not, we're three years out from 2020.) The other assignments for the triennium, such as who your Provincial Delegate might be, won't be made until the days immediately following the Chapter.

At the Chapter we'll have made resolutions as to what we want to do with each house of the province within an overall vision of where we are and where we hope to be going--as best we can discern by the light and grace of the Holy Spirit. Then, following the Chapter, and with these resolutions in place, we'll make the assignments. It's not easy, trying to juggle all the needs and responsibilities we have as a province with the very limited resources we have on hand. It's like building a house of cards. The slightest breeze can send it toppling.

For various reasons I've been delayed getting this report to the editor. But maybe it's for the best. I'm writing on the feast of the Epiphany, it is early evening, and now, because of my delay, I can write the following.

Fr. John Michael Payne, OCD, a friar of our Province, died this afternoon. He was at Marylake, the house he most loved, where he was serving as superior. It was a sudden heart attack that took him. None of us expected it. Thus, it descends on us like a bird of prey.

Yes, his death will register as a shock throughout the province. We will all take it hard. Fr. John Michael, needless to say, was a prominent member of the province. Everyone liked him. And, given his idiosyncrasies, he was a bit of a "presence" among us. I personally will miss that presence. It will be like having a hole among us whenever we gather for this or that provincial event.



(Continued on page 4)

Report from the Provincial Delegate

By *Father Bonaventure Sauer, O.C.D.*

(Continued from page 3)

Fr. John Michael had two passions that I'm aware of--photography and history. For some years now he was collecting old photographs from our houses and thereby compiling a visible record of the province, scanning them into the computer for safe keeping. He was also at work writing a history of the province. Alas, I don't think death has allowed him to finish it. What he did complete, though, will be interesting reading, I'm sure.



Of course, Fr. John Michael served many years as OCDS Provincial Delegate. He established many of your communities. He received the promise from many of you. And of particular importance it was Fr. John Michael who, as Provincial Delegate from 2005 to 2008, was in that position just as the new OCDS Constitutions were promulgated. Thus, he was responsible for setting up the very first Provincial Council, and then for working with them to draw up and get approval for your first set of Statutes and Formation Guidelines. Of course, the task wasn't then done. He continued working throughout the province to see to it that the Constitutions and both the Statutes and Formation Guidelines were being implemented in the communities. Thus, the Seculars owe Fr. John Michael a considerable debt.

Here is some biographical information for Fr. John Michael. More will be forthcoming. We'll send out the obituary once it's published. I also think it would be meaningful for the OCDS to do something by way of a commemoration. Maybe we can get a few Seculars who knew Fr. John Michael well and even worked with to write up a reminiscence or two.

But for now here are the main dates:



Fr. John Michael Payne of the Child Jesus was born on August 11, 1941. His parents named him Patrick. Thus, before entering Carmel he went by the moniker Patrick Payne, a name he once told me he was happy to part with when he entered religious life and took the name John Michael. He made profession on July 20, 1964, the feast of St. Elijah. I know he did his theology here and there around the country, in California for a while and then in Washington, DC, among other places. He was ordained a priest on June 13, 1970.

I know that Fr. John Michael was a devotee of St. Elizabeth of the Trinity. May she have been there to receive him into that corner of God's kingdom where Carmelites congregate.

New Provincial Council Members

The current Provincial Council congratulates these three generous, talented, and committed members of our Province who have been appointed by our Provincial to serve on the next Provincial Council as replacements for Mary Kay Daniels, Chris Woods and Kathy DeWine.

John Stevens, OCDS

I was born in Seattle and have lived in Texas most of the time since 1986 and have lived in the Rio Grande Valley since 2000. I have served as Director of Formation for the McAllen community from 2000 to 2008 and am completing my service as its President from 2011 to 2017. I serve as a Eucharistic Minister and Lector in my parish and was certified last year as a Lay Ecclesial Minister by the Diocese of Brownsville.

I am a single parent. My three wonderful children are the greatest blessing of my life, and I am very proud of them as they set out on their own life journeys.

I served in the Army for 11 years, which included 15 months in South Korea and two years in Saudi Arabia. I have worked in manufacturing since 1998 and have been a Quality Manager since 2003 for a small company which ships molded plastic parts to the Maquilas in Mexico for assembly.

I am completely committed to our Teresian charism. I believe with all my heart in our vocation to be contemplatives for the Church and for the world. We help to save souls and make the world more humane. I am privileged and blessed to serve you all on the Provincial Council and will serve the best I can with the help of the grace of God.



New Provincial Council Members

Continued from page 5)

Anna Peterson, OCDS

It is an honor and privilege for me to serve on the Provincial Council. I entered the San Antonio OCDS Community about 15 years ago while still living in Corpus Christi. I was fortunate to be able to move back home to San Antonio in 2012 and to return to my first parish – Little Flower. In Carmel, I have served on the local Council for three years (2008-2011) and as President for three years (2011-14). I have also assisted the formation director and written several study guides as well as being study group leader for a number of years. Currently, I serve on the 2017 OCDS Congress Planning Team.

I have served my parishes in various capacities -- RCIA, Reader, Eucharistic Minister and sacristan and have recently become a tour guide for the Basilica of the Little Flower.

My immediate family includes my son, daughter-in-law and daughter. After retiring last year after 47 years in education – teacher, trainer, and administrator, I began searching to find my new niche. It found me! I pledge to serve Carmel and the OCDS Provincial with love and dedication.



(Continued on page 7)

New Provincial Council Members

(Continued from page 6)

Mary Therese Bellman, OCDS

I live in Grand Prairie, TX along with my husband Will of 12 years and our 4 cats. I love gardening, reading, and hiking in West Texas. In my opinion, Big Bend National Park might just be one of the most beautiful places on earth. Photos from recent hiking trips regularly serve as my desktop background.

I've been a member of the Dallas Community since 2007. I'm currently serving as the President and have previously served as a council member and aspirancy facilitator.

For the past 8 years I've worked as administrative assistant at Mount Carmel Center in Dallas, TX. I've certainly enjoyed getting to know the Friars over the years and being able to serve the Order in this way as well.

To the Provincial Council I bring administrative and technical/computer skills, some web design (Joomla and WordPress), and an open mind and heart. Please pray for me as you will be in my prayers daily.



Spotlight on 2017 PC assessment

With the implementation of the revised Provincial Statutes came some new and revised categories of OCDS community membership status. This leads to questions about which community members are counted for the Provincial Council (PC) assessment that funds the work of the PC. Additionally, I'm sure that communities are already wondering if the assessment will be the same as it was in 2016.

First, the amount - yes, it will remain \$50 per active member. As before, this will be due at the end of March. Each community will send one check made out to **OCDS Province of St. Therese to the Central Office**. A letter will be emailed to each President, and it will contain the address.

Next, what is meant by "active members" - First, we'll deal with the word "members". Aspirants are not yet members, so **no fee is assessed** for them. Second, what is meant by the word "active"? Members of the community who attend meetings and/or receive spiritual support from the community are considered to be active. Members on Leave of Absence (LOA) are not involved with the community during their LOA, and so are not currently active. Therefore, **no fee is assessed** for them.

What about members who are Infirm or are on **Extended Excused Absence**? In theory, these members continue to attend community as they can, or at the very least are continuing to receive contact and spiritual support from their community. **A fee is assessed** for them unless the community is unable to collect it. If a community has the resources and would like to contribute this assessment for these members anyway, they are certainly at liberty to do so. Such funds help to support the communities in the Province without enough resources to contribute their portion of visitation costs. This would be completely voluntary on the part of communities and a means to contribute to the communal good of the Province.

Isolate members are considered to be active as they should be in monthly contact with their community and attend at least once a year. **The fee is assessed** for them.

To recap - the **\$50 per active member fee** is assessed for all **except** :

Aspirants,

Members on LOA, and any Infirm or

Extended Excused Absence members from whom the community cannot collect.

Greetings Carmelites!

By this time, everyone should be aware that the newly revised statutes for our province have been approved by the General Definitory. The new statutes became effective as of December 10, 2016 and the provisions for community council elections will of course be the norm this spring.

What's New under the Revised Statutes?

Here are the main differences between the new and old provisions:

- Candidates' names will be published ahead of the election, so that community members have ample time to pray and reflect on their choices.
- Presidential candidates who are not elected are automatically added to the councilor ballot.
- There will be separate ballots for each of the three councilor positions.
- Nominations from the floor are no longer accepted.

If they haven't already done so, your community Council should begin appointing a nominating committee.

The Nominating Committee

The current Council appoints a nominating committee of at least three professed members. Definitively professed is preferable. Members of the nominating committee should demonstrate good judgment and be mature in the OCDS vocation. They should understand the role of the Council, so that they will be able to answer nominees' questions.

About three months before the elections, the names of the members of the nominating committee are announced to the community.

The nominating committee reviews the roster of members to create a list of possible candidates for the president and the three council positions.

They determine whether members are eligible to serve.

- Not finishing a second consecutive term on the Council (serving a third consecutive term needs special permission from the Provincial.)
- Definitively professed
- First Promise members may serve on the Council if there are not enough definitively professed members able to serve. The preference would be for those who are close to making the Definitive Promise.

(Continued on page 10)

New Community Elections Process – how to, from start to finish

compiled by Claire Bloodgood, OCDS, on behalf of the Provincial Council

(Continued from page 9)

The nominating committee may also discuss whether a member is suitable to serve.

- Mental and physical capacity
- Sufficient flexibility of family and/or work obligations to attend Council meetings and carry out the duties of the office
- Good attendance
- Has shown responsibility in carrying out assigned community jobs
- Demonstrates harmony, charity, and prudence in the context of community life

Individual members may make nominations by submitting the person's name to the committee.

The nominating committee calls the members on the list to ask whether they are willing to serve on the Council. There need to be at least two candidates for president and four for councilor.

At least three weeks before the election a list of candidates is given to the members of the community. This may be done at the meeting prior to the election, or via letter or email; or both.

As Carmelites, we clearly know that we don't campaign for any Council positions as is done in political elections in the world. Our elections aren't to be political, but truly led by the Holy Spirit. So a kind reminder, absolutely no campaigning in any form. That said, can one member ask another member who they may be voting for as a way of helping their own discernment? Yes, of course. This is not campaigning.

The nominating committee prepares the materials needed ahead of time and sets everything up the day of the election.

Because there are individual ballots for each of the councilors, it is recommended that the names be listed on a poster or white board, and that the members use a blank piece of paper for each ballot. If the local Council and/or nominating committee prefer another method, they are free to use it.

Election Day

The incumbent president presides over the elections. The president is assisted by the nominating committee.

The Spiritual Assistant invokes the Holy Spirit. If he is not present, the president invokes the Holy Spirit.

(Continued on page 11)

New Community Elections Process – how to, from start to finish

compiled by Claire Bloodgood, OCDS, on behalf of the Provincial Council

(Continued from page 10)

Only professed members may vote (First or Definitive Promise). Members must be present to vote.

First is the election for president.

- The members are given one blank slip of paper each.
- The members write their choice on their ballots.
- Write-in votes are valid if the person is eligible.
- Nominations from the floor are not accepted.
- The ballots are collected and counted.
- The vote results are announced and recorded in the minutes.
- The person receiving over 50% of the votes is elected
- If there is a tie or if no one receives over 50%, a second vote is taken, and members choose between the top two. There may be a third vote if needed. If it is still a tie the office goes to the most senior by profession, and then by age.
- Candidates for president who were not elected are added to the list of candidates for councilor.

Next is the election for the first council position

- The members are given one blank slip of paper each.
- The members write their choice on their ballots.
- Write-in votes are valid if the person is eligible.
- Nominations from the floor are not accepted.
- The ballots are collected and counted.
- The vote results are announced and recorded in the minutes.

(Continued on page 12)

New Community Elections Process – how to, from start to finish

compiled by Claire Bloodgood, OCDS, on behalf of the Provincial Council

(Continued from page 11)

- If no one receives over 50%, a second vote is taken, and members choose between the top two. If there is a tie a third vote is taken. If it is still a tie the office goes to the most senior by profession, and then by age.
- The winner is crossed off the list.
- The remaining candidates are then on the ballot for second councilor.

Then the election for the second council position

- Exactly the same as for the first councilor position
- The remaining candidates are then on the ballot for third councilor.

Last is the election for the third council position

- Exactly the same as above

The newly elected Council assumes their duties **at the conclusion of the community meeting** or retreat in which they are elected. Just to be clear, this is **not** at the end of the business meeting, but the entire meeting or retreat.

Choosing a Formation Director

The office of Formation Director is vacated when the newly elected Council assumes its duties.

The new Council should not rush to name a new Formation Director, but should allow sufficient time to pray and consider the best candidates. The new president contacts them about their willingness to serve. If possible there should be at least two candidates. But it is better to have only one than to have someone who is clearly not suitable.

Qualities to consider:

- Experience as a formator, part of the Formation Team
- Understands that formation, when effective, is transformative
- Good understanding of the OCDS vocation and the Carmelite charism
- Spiritual and emotional maturity

(Continued on page 13)

New Community Elections Process – how to, from start to finish

compiled by Claire Bloodgood, OCDS, on behalf of the Provincial Council

(Continued from page 12)

- Ability to develop, in concert with the Council, the Community's formation program based on the Provincial Formation guidelines
- Ability to nurture members' growth and progress in living out their Carmelite vocations
- Ability to discern and recommend when a person is not being called to Carmel

The new Council elects the Formation Director after prayerful discussion and discernment. The office of Director of Formation is crucial to the wellbeing of the community. The choice should never be made hastily, without sufficient reflection and prayer. It is better to leave the office unfilled for a time than to choose a person who is not up to the responsibilities.

If one of the new Council members is made Formation Director, the candidate with the next highest number of votes on the last councilor ballot is made a councilor.

Passing the Mantle

It is strongly recommended that the previous president and/or Council bring the new Council up to date on community matters, council concerns, upcoming tasks, and community and council files and records. Sharing this information is not considered a breach of confidentiality.

Secretary and Treasurer

The new Council appoints a Secretary and Treasurer. The previous Secretary and Treasurer continue to serve until these appointments are made.

Updating

The names, addresses, phone numbers, and email addresses of the new Council members (President, Councilors, and Formation Director), the Secretary, and the Treasurer are sent to the Central Office Administrator, so that the provincial roster may be brought up to date.



Study Group Elections Procedure for 2017

Everything is the same as for canonically established OCDS Communities, up to the election itself. Only professed members (first or definitive) may serve on the Council. Only professed members (first or definitive) may vote. Members must be present to vote.

The Ballot

List all the candidates on one page. The presidential candidates are put at the top, marked in some way to show that they are different from the councilor candidates. Candidates for councilor are added below.

At the time of the election, a ballot is given to each professed member. The members vote by writing “president” next to the presidential candidate they want, and writing “council” next to their choices for council according to the number of positions open.

In other words if there are to be two councilors, each member chooses two names, if only one councilor they choose only one name.

After choosing one candidate for president, they may mark the other presidential candidate as their choice for councilor if they would like.

Sample ballot:

Candidates for president are in bold print . Please select one president, and two council members	
Susie Carmen	<i>council</i>
John Cruz	<i>president</i>
Theresa Rose	
Terry Avila	
Mary Carmelo	<i>council</i>
Ely Mantel	

The completed ballots are collected and sealed in an envelope without being counted. Then they are mailed to the Provincial Council president as soon as possible.

The address is
Mary Kay Daniels, OCDS
3001 S Paxton St.
Sioux City IA, 51106

The Provincial Delegate will make the Council appointments by email.

(Continued on page 15)

Study Group Elections Procedure for 2017

(Continued from page 14)

Formation Director

After the new Council is appointed, they meet to discuss who to recommend for Formation Director. The Council should take the time needed to thoroughly evaluate possible candidates. Candidates must be definitively professed, and preferably have experience as a formator.

The new president contacts them about their willingness to serve. The Council then makes their selection and the president sends their recommendation to the Provincial Delegate.

The Provincial Delegate will make the appointment by email.

If you have any questions, please contact the Provincial Council.



Congress Tidings of Love



HAPPY NEW YEAR ONE AND ALL!

2017 is upon us with barely nine months until our Regional Congress commences on November 2nd. Plans are in place and now all we need, by the Grace of God, is **YOU** to partner with your Carmelite brothers and sisters in other communities to make this Congress a holy and blessed event for all.

During 2016, we've been sending many pieces of communication to keep you updated - through FLOS articles, Congress Tidings of Love updates, emails and most recently through e-News Flashes. In the event you missed one of them, here's a recap...there's still time for you to get involved and make things happen ~

DONATIONS!

Help defray the costs of Congress by donating as a community or individual to the Sioux City Congress Fundraising Initiative. Contact: Karen Luft
6801 Whispering Creek Dr.
Sioux City, IA 51106

Or make a donation online when you register
<http://www.2017ocdscongress.com>

YOUR COMMUNITY SNAPSHOT FOR THE CONGRESS WEBSITE!

Join the ranks of other communities represented on the website reaching out to welcome our Congress attendees. Send photo to:
ocdsprojectplan2017@gmail.com

CONGRESS FUN-RAISERS!

Create or purchase quality Carmelite-related items suitable for the **Raffle, Silent Auction and/or Congress Sales Table** in the Vendor Room. If interested contact:
Teresa Sweedyk

doodledoo53@gmail.com

REGISTRATION OPENS ONLINE JANUARY 1ST!

Early Registration - \$275. (Jan 1 - June 30)
Standard Registration - \$325 (Jul 1 - Sept 30)

- To register via mail, contact your President!

TOTE BAG TREASURES!

What is your community donating to fill the Congress tote bags? The deadline is **March 15th**. Contact:
Kim Lawlis
lawlis4@msn.com
512-864-7660

VOLUNTEERS

TO SERVE AS LITURGICAL MINISTERS!
Are you interested in serving as a Lector, Musician, Pianist, Vocalist/Cantor @ Mass or as a Leader, Cantor I or II, or Reader for Morning Prayer? Contact Kathy Rasmussen
ocdsprojectplan2017@gmail.com

**SEE THE NEXT PAGE FOR A NEW ANNOUNCEMENT -
HOT OFF THE PRESS...**

Congress Tidings of Love

...We're publishing a Congress Cookbook!

Our Host Community, San Antonio, is leading the charge to create a 'one of a kind' cookbook. We're looking for recipes from family, friends, neighbors or perhaps some of your personal favorites ~

- International Recipes
- Regional and Ethnic Recipes within the United States
- You name it, we want it!

The categories are:

Appetizers & Beverages
Breads & Rolls
Casseroles
Desserts

Meat & Game
Seafood
Special Holiday & Holy Day

Soups & Salads
Vegetables & Side Dishes
Vegetarian

Send your recipes now to Susan King @ susanking100@gmail.com

MEET THE COMMUNITY OF GEORGETOWN, TEXAS...



Lansing Prescott, President and the Georgetown Community have risen to the occasion by heading up the Congress Reservations Team. THANK YOU!
A special 'shout out' to Kim Lawlis and Marianne Gonzales for your leadership in making this happen!

Visit the Congress website for new information relating to the Congress schedule, pilgrimage photographs, Registration and more! <http://www.2017ocdscongress.com>

See you in San Antonio!

Kathy Rasmussen, Congress Coordinator
ocdsprojectplan2017@gmail.com

"Put love where there is no love, so we may find love in the Church,
in our families and in the world!"

Sioux City Carmelite Nuns Support the 2017 OCDS Congress



To our Sisters and Brothers of the Carmelite Family,

The Sioux City Carmelite Nuns are with you in spirit and prayer during this time of preparation and for the final and successful completion of the 2017 OCDS Congress in November in San Antonio.

May our dear Lord bless all of your endeavors, and may all the love and energy you are pouring into give great glory to God.

Your Sioux City Carmelite Nuns





*Believe that He loves you.
He wants to help you Himself
in the struggles
which you must undergo.
Believe in His Love,
His exceeding Love.*

-Blessed Elizabeth of the Trinity



Definitorium Generale O.C.D.
in sessione 41^a, die 10 decembris 2016

APPROBAVIT

*Statuta Ordinis Sæcularis Carmelitarum Discalceatorum
Provinciae Oklahomæ*

Prot. n. 377/2016 DF



P. Xaverius Cannistrà
P. Xaverius Cannistrà, OCD
Præpositus Generalis

Oklahoma OCDS Statutes—
approved by Definitory October 10, 2016

Contents

Preface

Section I: Formation

Section II: Prayer Life

Section III: Apostolate

Section IV: Mary: Mother, Sister, and Model

Section V: Feast Days and Fasting

Section VI: External Signs of Membership

Section VII: Remembrances of the Dead

Section VIII: Community Life

Section IX: Dismissals

Section X: Community Size

Section XI: Age Requirements

Section XII: Establishment of an OCDS Community

Section XIII: Special Provisions for Study Groups

Section XIV: Finances

Section XV: Permanent Records

Section XVI: Community Elections

Section XVII: Transfers within the Province

Section XVIII: Transfers between Provinces

Section XIX: Transfers of Lay Members of the O.Carm. (TOC) to OCDS

Section XX: Vows

Section XXI: Plenary Council Meeting

Section XXII: OCDS Provincial Council

Appendices

Formation Guidelines, in progress

Ritual

Provincial Forms, in progress

Ratio Institutionis

(Continued from page 21)

Preface

The Constitutions of the Secular Order of Discalced Carmelites are the fundamental, general law for its members. Provincial Statutes are to provide a practical application of this general law as directed by the Constitutions [Preface, Art. 58].

The present statutes are the particular law for Carmelite Seculars of the Oklahoma Province.

The term “Provincial Council” refers to the OCDS Provincial Council.

Section I: Formation

- 1) Formation at all levels must adhere to the provincial OCDS Formation Guidelines.
- 2) There are four periods of formation.
 - a) “Aspirancy” which lasts twelve months [Art. 36a]
 - b) “Formation I” leading to First Promise, which lasts a minimum of two years [Art. 36b]
 - c) “Formation II” leading to Definitive Promise, which lasts a minimum of three years [Art. 36d]
 - d) “Ongoing” formation of those who are definitively professed, which is lifelong [Art. 34]
- 3) Aspirancy begins when the local Council invites an individual to enter into an introductory study of the Carmelite Secular charism in order to discern whether there is a call to the Carmelite Secular Order.
- 4) Formation I begins with the Rite of Admission and clothing in the large or ceremonial scapular. During this period the person discerns more deeply whether he/she has the calling to and can live the life of a Carmelite Secular. Formation I may be extended for up to two years.
- 5) Formation II begins with First Promise. At this time the person fully becomes a member of the Order. The baptismal name is retained and a devotional title may be added, if desired. During this time the person lives as a member of the Secular Order of Discalced Carmelites and continues to discern, together with the Council, the vocation to the Order. Formation II may be extended for up to two years. The First Promise expires at the end of three years, and if an extension is granted must be renewed for the period of the extension.
- 6) Ongoing formation begins once the Definitive Promise is made. It is essential in enabling the Definitively Professed to live out their life-long commitment and responsibilities as Secular members of the Carmelite Community. Through it, members are being continuously transformed and prepared to live a life of deeper union with Christ for the good of the community, the Church, and the world.
- 7) When the Spiritual Assistant is unable to preside, no special delegation is needed for the local Council to ask another priest, deacon, or religious to clothe candidates or receive Promises and vows [Ritual 13, 31, 51, 67].
- 8) No presider is needed for the devotional renewal of the Promise made during the Easter Season. The renewal is made by all professed members, both Definitive and First Promise. [cf. Ritual, chpt. 5]

(Continued on page 23)

(Continued from page 22)

Section II: Prayer Life

The members of our province shall strive to:

- Practice mental prayer for at least one half hour each day in an atmosphere of interior silence and solitude
- Pray Morning and Evening Prayer daily from the Liturgy of the Hours, and Night Prayer if possible.
- Attend daily Mass, as able.

Section III: Apostolate

- 1) Apostolate is a duty and requirement of each baptized and confirmed person [CCL 225.1]. Even the most interior soul must respond to the demands of charity in some form or fashion. Thus all Carmelite Seculars are called to have an apostolate [Art. 27]. Through their apostolic endeavors, Carmelite Seculars demonstrate how it is possible to seek intimate union with God even in the midst of worldly duties and concerns, in addition to responding to the Gospel's call to serve one another. In this way, they share in the prophetic mission of Christ to which they are called in baptism and they put into practice the prophetic dimension of the Carmelite charism.
- 2) While priority is given to those places where the apostolic commitment is individual (the family, one's profession or work, one's parish), each OCDS canonical community shall have an apostolic commitment as well [Art. 28].
- 3) The primary Carmelite community apostolate is to share Carmelite spirituality with others.
- 4) In considering an apostolate, the community needs to be sensitive to the feelings, interests, abilities and talents, and the physical and financial capabilities of the members of the community working together as a whole. Effort should be made to include all members in this community apostolate in some way.
- 5) Local Councils should review any rules governing apostolic activities in their diocese. The Spiritual Assistant or a local pastor may be consulted if there is any question about the need for permission from the Bishop or local pastor. [cf. CCL 756 – 772]

Section IV: Mary: Mother, Sister, and Model

- 1) Carmelites follow their vocation under Mary's patronage and protection. Carmelites cultivate a filial devotion to Mary as their model of interior prayer, discipleship, and service. Mary exemplifies the total gift of self to God and to the building up of God's Kingdom.
- 2) The devotion of Carmelite Seculars to Mary expresses itself by:
 - Knowing her better daily through the Gospels
 - Taking her as a model of interior prayer – of “pondering all things in the heart”

(Continued on page 24)

Oklahoma OCDS Statutes— approved by Definitory October 10, 2016

(Continued from page 23)

- Imitating her virtues and her docility to the Holy Spirit, especially in living the Promise to strive to follow Christ in the spirit of chastity, poverty, obedience, and the Beatitudes
- Participating in liturgical and in other devotions to her
- Sharing her maternal concern for and solidarity with the poor

Section V: Feast Days and Fasting

1) In addition to the days of fasting and of 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” [cf. National Conference of Catholic Bishops, Pastoral Statement, “Penitent-Discipline in the United States,” Washington, DC, 1966] and in keeping with our Carmelite traditions and identity, our members, unless excused by reasons allowed under Church norms¹, shall fast on the vigils of the following feast days:

- Saint Joseph [March 19]
- Our Lady of Mount Carmel [July 16]
- The Prophet Elijah [July 20]
- St Therese of the Child Jesus, Patroness
of the Province [October 1]
- Our Holy Mother St. Teresa of Jesus [October 15]
- All Saints of the Order [November 14]
- Our Holy Father St. John of the Cross [December 14]
- Feast day of the title or patron of the local community

2) For sufficient reason, the above fast days may be anticipated. Anticipation should never involve fasting on Sundays nor on Holy Days [cf. CCL 1249-1253].

3) In order to foster fellowship, communities are encouraged to share in some sort of communal liturgical celebration and recreation on feasts of the Order.

¹ The Church dispenses from fasting, those who are over 59 years of age, infirm, mentally incompetent, pregnant, breastfeeding, or engaged in heavy physical labor. In all cases, common sense is to prevail. Those OCDS members unable to fast from food are to choose some other equivalent penance for the day.

Section VI: External Signs of Membership

- 1) The large ceremonial brown scapular shall be given as the habit of the Secular Order at the time of admission to Formation I.
- 2) A smaller brown scapular or scapular medal is worn for everyday use.

(Continued on page 25)

Oklahoma OCDS Statutes—
approved by Definitory October 10, 2016

(Continued from page 24)

- 3) In addition to regular OCDS meetings, the ceremonial scapular may be worn when participating as a group at gatherings and events approved by the local Council. The ceremonial scapular is not worn publicly by OCDS members at other times, nor in an individual capacity.

Section VII: Remembrances of the Dead

- 1) At the death of a community member:
 - a) The President or a designated member of the community shall inform the members of the community of the member's death as soon as possible and provide information regarding the funeral.
 - b) The President or a designated member shall contact the family of the deceased to determine how the community may be of service and participate in the funeral service. The desires of the family regarding funeral arrangements must always be honored.
 - c) The community of the deceased shall notify the Central Office Administrator. The community is encouraged to submit a short obituary for publication in the provincial newsletter.
 - d) Those unable to attend the funeral shall participate in a Mass and receive Holy Communion for the deceased, or remember the deceased in prayer, preferably by reciting the Office for the Dead.
- 2) At the first meeting following news of the death of a member of the province (including friars and nuns), the community shall pray for the deceased member.
- 3) Deceased members of the entire Order should be remembered in daily prayers, especially on the Feast of All Souls of the Carmelite Order (November 15).
- 4) Members are encouraged to inform their families regarding:
 - a) participation by their brothers and sisters in Carmel in the funeral services
 - b) burial in the habit of the Carmelite Secular, namely the large brown scapular
 - c) having the initials "OCDS" included on their headstone
- 5) Each community shall maintain a necrology of the deceased members of that community.

Section VIII: Community Life

"Concern for the needs and good of others in the community is a principle of our Rule that guides our Carmelite life." [Art. 6e] "A fundamental element of our vocation is to infuse prayer and life with apostolic zeal in a climate of human and Christian community." [Art. 9d]

- 1) The local community makes visible the Discalced Carmelite Secular Order within the diocese.
- 2) The local Council is the immediate, competent authority of the local community within the limits of the Constitutions of the Secular Order of Discalced Carmelites [Art. 47]. The local Council has the authority and responsibility to develop appropriate methods and means to facilitate human and spiritual growth which will enable the members to understand and live fully their Promise in the community and in the Order. The local Council shall continuously assess the health of the community to determine what is needed to nurture its members. The local Council may assign members to serve the community in various responsibilities not outlined in the Constitutions or Statutes [Art. 52-55].

(Continued on page 26)

Oklahoma OCDS Statutes—
approved by Definitory October 10, 2016

(Continued from page 25)

- 3) The community shall meet at least once a month. Attendance at meetings is expected. Unjustifiable absences should be lovingly addressed by the local Council [Rule of St Albert #15; Constitutions Art. 24.c]. Persistent absenteeism without the approval of the local Council may lead to dismissal [Sec. IX.4].

Regular meetings shall include:

- Formation
- Mental prayer
- Liturgy of the Hours
- Business meeting
- Social time

Communities are encouraged to attend an annual OCDS retreat and day of recollection, either their own or hosted by another OCDS community. The local Council may determine whether these will take the place of that month's regular community meeting.

- 4) Community life is central to the Carmelite charism. It applies to the local community, the province, and the Order as a whole. Members are encouraged to participate in events sponsored by the province or Order, such as congresses, workshops, and special celebrations. Communities are encouraged to share retreats, days of recollection, and various events with other communities.

5) Infirm members

- A professed member who is aged or infirm may be granted infirm status by the local Council.
- Such a member is welcome to attend OCDS meetings and events as able.
- Daily mental prayer, the Liturgy of the Hours, and ongoing formation are encouraged, as the member is able.
- The community shall maintain regular contact with aged and infirm members.

6) Isolates

A professed member for whom excessive distance has become a significant obstacle to attendance at the nearest community's meetings may be granted "isolate" status by the local Council [Art. 56].

- Each Isolate shall be associated with a community or Study Group, unless otherwise directed by the Provincial Delegate.
- Isolates in Formation II (formation for Definitive Promise) must be assigned to a canonical community [Art. 58b].
- Isolates and their communities are mutually responsible to maintain regular contact.
- Isolates shall meet with their communities at least once a year, if possible.

(Continued on page 27)

(Continued from page 26)

7) Extended excused absence

A definitively professed member who is temporarily unable to attend meetings for an extended period due to circumstances beyond his/her control may be excused from attendance by the local Council. Extended excused absence should not be granted lightly or without serious reason. Such a member is allowed to attend OCDS meetings and events as able.

Examples include but are not limited to:

- Primary caregiver of a seriously infirm family member
- Non-voluntary change in work schedule
- Military deployment

In so far as possible, the member will continue to live other requirements of the vocation and remain in regular contact with the community via a point of contact assigned by the local Council.

8) Leave of Absence

The local Council may approve a one-year Leave of Absence (LOA) for those in Definitive Promise. Reasons for a LOA include but are not limited to:

- A vocational crisis, for which the member needs time away to evaluate God's call
- The member needs time away from the community for personal reasons

The Leave of Absence may be renewed by the local Council for up to two additional years. Further extensions must be applied for through the Provincial Council.

A Leave of Absence releases a member from all OCDS responsibilities, including daily mental prayer, the Liturgy of the Hours, and community dues. A member on LOA may not attend community meetings, retreats, or other members-only functions. The Leave of Absence may be shortened at the request of the member.

9) Release from the Promise

The local Council has the authority to release from the Promise.

- a) A member in First Promise, who becomes unable to meet the requirements of the vocation for an extended period, or who discerns that he/she is not called to Carmel, may be released from the Promise at the member's request.

If the person reapplies for admittance, the Council discerns whether to readmit and then determines the appropriate level of formation.

- b) A member in Definitive Promise may ask to leave the Order, in which case the local Council should release the member from the Promise. A member should not leave the Order without providing some explanation to the local Council.

When a definitively professed member requests release from the Promise, **it must be explained to the member that once the member has left the Order, the member cannot return to the Discalced**

(Continued on page 28)

(Continued from page 27)

Carmelite Secular Order at any time in the future. The local Council may offer, without pressure, the option of a LOA to allow the member sufficient time for discernment before making such an irreversible decision.

Upon release the local Council shall document the change of status in the Permanent Record Form and send a copy of the updated form to the Central Office.”

- c) An OCDS member who leaves the OCDS to pursue a vocation to the OCD nuns or friars may be readmitted to the OCDS. Such a person is not considered to have left the Order.
- d) Release from vows is governed by Sec. XX.5.

IX: Dismissals

Numbers 1-5 apply to definitively professed members.

- 1) “The local Council has the authority to dismiss a member of the community, should this be necessary, after consulting the Provincial” [Art. 47e]. **Dismissal from the community is dismissal from the Order.** Dismissal releases the person from the Promise.
- 2) Dismissal is to be a last resort. The local Council shall first attempt to resolve the situation. In the event that it cannot be resolved at the local level, the Council shall consult with the Provincial Delegate. The local Council must consult with the Provincial Delegate before beginning the process of dismissal.
- 3) From the OCDS Constitutions Article 24e: *In order to dismiss a member for the reasons set out in the Code of Canon Law (public rejection of the Catholic faith, abandonment of ecclesiastical communion, being under imposed or declared excommunication) or for such other reasons as are given in the Provincial Statutes [cf. IX.4, below], the Community Council shall observe the following procedure:*
 - a) *verify with certainty the facts*
 - b) *warn the member verbally before two witnesses, if possible, and in writing*
 - c) *allow a reasonable time for repentance*

If there is no change, it is permitted, after consulting the Provincial, to proceed with the dismissal. In all cases, the member retains the right to appeal to the competent ecclesiastical authority.

The two witnesses would be members of the local Council and/or the Spiritual Assistant. The competent ecclesiastical authority for appeal is the Provincial. Further appeal may be made to the Superior General.

Any other reason for dismissal, beyond those explicitly mentioned in Canon Law, must be grave, observable, imputable to the person, and sufficiently proven. Dismissal is not a way to deal with disagreeable members or personality clashes. Neither is dismissal a way to correct the faults of members. The Council may not dismiss a member without the concurrence of the Provincial. The Council may never dismiss a member without giving ample opportunity for explanation and response.

- 4) Other grounds that can lead to dismissal include:
 - threatening behavior toward other members
 - behavior causing grave emotional and/or spiritual harm to other members
 - persistent disruptive behavior which negatively affects the wellbeing and harmony of the community

(Continued on page 29)

(Continued from page 28)

- persistent absenteeism, without the approval of the local Council [Sec VIII.3]
 - persistent refusal to pay dues, when financially able to do so
 - subsequent discovery of deception when applying to be admitted to the Order regarding anything that would have prevented admission, whether intentional or not
 - behavior that in any way disgraces the Order
- 5) A member may not be dismissed without first being warned. Dismissal may be made via certified mail if the member refuses to communicate with the Council.

Numbers 6-9 apply to members who have made First Promise and are in Formation II.

- 6) It is assumed that the local Council has regular periodic reviews with all members, especially those in formation for the Definitive Promise, to assess how they are doing and to address any issues. It is further assumed that the Council deals with problem behaviors promptly and frankly. No member should be dismissed without prior discussion with the Council and adequate opportunity to amend.
- 7) If, after reasonable time, the local Council concludes that a release from the Promise is in the best interests of the community and/or the member, the following steps are followed.
- a) The Council meets with the member to explain why the Council believes that the member is not suited to the vocation.
 - b) The Council asks the member to formally request release from the Promise.
 - c) The Council accepts the request, and the person is thereby released.
 - d) The person's permanent record is updated and a copy sent to the Central Office.
- 8) If the member refuses to meet with the Council and/or voluntarily request release from the Promise, the local Council has the authority to dismiss the member. No special permission is needed. Upon notification by the Council, the person is released from the Promise, the community, and the Order. The Council updates the person's permanent record and sends a copy to the Central Office.
- 9) The person has the right to appeal to the Provincial. The Council should be aware that if proper procedure was not followed, the Provincial may overturn the dismissal. This would not prevent the Council from discerning not to admit to the Definitive Promise when the time comes.

Section X: Community Size

Following Holy Mother Teresa's wisdom, communities are to limit their size in order to maintain a strong sense of intimacy and Christ-centered fellowship within the community.

- 1) When a community reaches 40 to 50 active professed members, the local Council shall consult with the Provincial Delegate about establishing a second community. [Sec. XII]
- 2) Formation of the second community shall follow the procedures outlined in the provincial policies.

(Continued on page 30)

(Continued from page 29)

Section XI: Age Requirements

A candidate for admission to formation in the Discalced Carmelite Secular Order must be at least eighteen years of age.

Section XII: Establishment of an OCDS Community

Communities are founded by the Order, not by individuals.

Community:

- A canonically established community of OCDS members
- That has local autonomy to elect a council and receive professions according to the provisions of the Constitutions and Statutes

Study Group:

- A group of OCDS members who are attempting to establish an OCDS community
- That must be authorized by the Provincial Delegate
- And is under the supervision of the Provincial Council according to the provisions of the Constitutions and Statutes [cf. Sec XIII]

Group in Development (GID):

- A “seed group” from an OCDS community (Mentoring Community), with the intention of establishing a new OCDS community
 - That must be authorized by the Provincial Delegate
 - And is under the supervision and authority of their Mentoring Community’s Council until raised to Study Group [cf. Sec XIII.2]
- 1) When a community has reached its maximum size [Sec. X] it may, with the advice and approval of the Provincial Delegate:
 - found another group that qualifies for canonical status,
 - or found a Study Group,
 - or start a GID.
 - 2) A community may, with the advice and permission of the Provincial Delegate, generate a GID based on geographical or other considerations.
 - 3) A canonical community that is unable to function may be put under the supervision of the Provincial Delegate and the Provincial Council until such time as it is again able to function with autonomy or until it is decided that the community is no longer viable. If a community is disbanded, the members shall request transfer to other communities or Study Groups. [cf. Sec. XVII]

(Continued on page 31)

(Continued from page 30)

Section XIII: Special Provisions for Study Groups

- 1) Study Groups normally begin as a Group in Development (GID), but may also be founded directly by a canonical community [Sec XII]. After a GID and its Mentoring Community (MC) have discerned together that the GID demonstrates maturity and viability, the MC may recommend to the Provincial Council that the GID be recognized as a Study Group. The Provincial Council shall pass the recommendation on to the Provincial Delegate. Discernment and recommendation guidelines may be found in the provincial policies.
- 2) If the Provincial Delegate agrees, he may grant the GID the status of recognized Study Group, placing it under the supervision of the Provincial Council, and appointing a Spiritual Assistant, President, Director of Formation, and possibly one or two Councilors. At this point the group may take a name. It is no longer under the supervision of the MC Council, its members being members of the new Study Group, not of the Mentoring Community.
- 3) The Study Group Council is authorized to admit candidates to Aspirancy and Formation I.
- 4) The Provincial Council reserves the right to admit to the Promise, First and Definitive. The local Council shall evaluate the candidate's readiness to make the Promise and forward its evaluation and recommendation to the Provincial Council, who will discern whether the person demonstrates the human, spiritual, and Carmelite attributes needed to live as a professed member of the Order.
- 5) Permission to make vows by a member of a Study Group is reserved to the Provincial Delegate and requires the recommendation of the Provincial Council. [cf. Sec. XX]
- 6) The Provincial Delegate reserves the right to appoint and replace any or all Study Group Council members.
- 7) After the Study Group has enough professed members to allow for regular changes of leadership, it may petition the Provincial Council for permission to elect a council for itself. The length of service and size of this provisional council may vary as determined after consultation with the Provincial Council and Provincial Delegate.
- 8) Study Group Council elections are done differently from OCDS community elections.
 - a) Section XVI.2 applies.
 - b) The Provincial Council shall provide policy for how Study Group elections are to be held.
 - c) The Provincial Delegate reviews and makes the appointments.
- 9) When the Study Group has demonstrated over time that it can fully function as an OCDS community, it may be invited by the Provincial Delegate to petition for canonical status. It is understood that this is by way of invitation, after discernment by both the Provincial Delegate and the Provincial Council. Factors in discerning the Study Group's readiness and procedures for petitioning canonical status may be found in the provincial policies.
- 10) If it becomes apparent that a Study Group is not likely to develop into a canonical OCDS community, it may request to be disbanded, or may be directed to disband by the Provincial Delegate. Members of a Study Group that is disbanded shall request transfer to an OCDS Community or another Study Group. [Sec. XVII]

(Continued on page 32)

(Continued from page 31)

Section XIV: Finances

- 1) Communities are encouraged to develop a three-year budget in order to plan for recurring expenses, especially the cost of sending representatives to the triennial Plenary Council Meeting [Sec. XXI], provincial workshops, and visitations.
- 2) Each community shall determine the amount of dues to be assessed its members. Members start paying dues when they enter Formation I. A member's inability to pay dues, temporarily or indefinitely, is a matter to be handled by the local Council with discretion and sensitivity.
- 3) Dues collected should include some portion to be distributed to help the poor and/or help support the nuns and friars of the Order [Art. 55]
- 4) The Treasurer will present a status of Community funds to the Council when requested but at least once each six months [Art. 55]. An annual Financial Report shall be prepared as of December 31 of each year and sent to the Central Office together with the annual Provincial assessment by March 31. A copy of this report shall also be distributed to the members of the local community.
- 5) The Province shall collect an annual community assessment to help cover expenses of the Central Office, Provincial Delegate, and Provincial Council. The assessment for each community is made according to the number of its members. A portion of these funds shall also be forwarded by the Central Office to the General Secretariat of the Secular Discalced Carmelite Order to support its functioning. A portion may be sent to the Carmelite Institute of North America or a similar organization for Carmelite studies. The Central Office will send out a notice of assessment in January of each year. The assessment is due by March 31.

The annual assessment does not apply to aspirants or members on Leave of Absence.

The local Council may request of the Provincial Council to be relieved of the assessment for members who are incapacitated or not in regular contact with the community.

If a member has dropped all contact with the community, the local Council may remove the member from the community roster and be relieved of the assessment for that individual. The member's permanent record is to be updated accordingly, and a copy sent to the Central Office.

Section XV: Permanent Records

- 1) Communities, Study Groups, and GIDs, shall keep permanent records of all members, using the official provincial record form.
- 2) Notices of death, dismissal, and release from the Promise are to be sent to the Central Office. Those for release from the Promise should specify whether the person is eligible for readmission. [see provincial policy]
- 3) While these duties may be delegated, the ultimate responsibility falls to the local Council.

(Continued on page 33)

(Continued from page 32)

Section XVI: Community Elections

- 1) Community elections shall be held in the same year and prior to the OCD Provincial Chapter. The newly elected local Council shall assume their duties at the conclusion of the community meeting or retreat in which they are elected.
- 2) Elections of the community President and three Councilors shall be conducted in accordance with recognized parliamentary procedures² with the following particular provisions:
 - a) A nominating committee of at least three professed members³ shall be appointed by the local Council. The names of the committee members shall be announced to the members no less than three months in advance of the election.
 - b) The nominating committee shall gather the names of qualified members who are willing to serve for each office. For the office of President there should be two or more nominees who have made their Definitive Promise [Art. 51]. For the office of the three Councilors there should be four or more nominees.⁴ Individual members may also submit names to the nominating committee. A list of the candidates shall be given to the community at least three weeks prior to the election.
 - c) Only professed members may serve as members of the local Council.⁴
 - d) All council members (President, Councilors, and Director of Formation) shall serve no more than two consecutive terms of three years in any capacity (e.g. one term as Councilor and one as President constitutes two terms). A partial term of 18 months or more shall be considered a full term for purposes of eligibility. To be elected to a third consecutive term requires a postulation from the Provincial.⁵
 - e) Nominations from the floor shall not be accepted.
 - f) Write-in votes are valid if the member is eligible to serve.
 - g) Only professed members are eligible to vote.
 - h) Voting shall be by secret ballot.
 - i) Members must be physically present to vote.
 - j) The incumbent President shall preside at the election of the President and three Councilors.
 - k) The vote count shall be recorded in the community minutes.

² e.g. Robert's Rules of Order.

³ Those who have made at least their First Promise.

⁴ Article 52 states that Councilors “generally are community members with Definitive Promise, [but] in particular circumstances, members with First Promise can serve.”

⁵ Postulation is a petition for exemption from the normal policy.

(Continued on page 34)

Oklahoma OCDS Statutes— approved by Definitory October 10, 2016

(Continued from page 33)

- 3) Election of the President
 - a) If a majority⁶ is not reached by any nominee on the first ballot, the names of the two nominees receiving the highest number of votes shall be placed on the second ballot. If there is a tie on the second ballot, there shall be a third and final ballot. In the event of a tie on the third ballot, seniority of profession shall be the determining factor for election. If there is a tie in length of profession, then seniority by age shall determine the election.
 - b) Nominees for President shall be added to the Councilor ballot if not elected President.
- 4) Election of the local Council
 - a) Each council position shall be voted on separately, using the same method as the election of the President [Sec. XVI.3].
 - b) The entire list of candidates shall be on the ballot for the first council position.
 - c) Candidates not elected for the first council position shall automatically be on the ballot for the second council position.
 - d) Candidates not elected for the second council position shall automatically be on the ballot for the third council position.
 - e) In all three council elections, in case of a tie, the same rules outlined in Sec. XVI.3c above shall apply.
- 5) The office of Formation Director is vacated when the newly elected Council assumes its duties.
- 6) The new Council shall elect the Formation Director after prayerful discussion and discernment. Councils are encouraged to spend adequate time discerning this important position.
- 7) If one of the new Council members is made Formation Director, the candidate with the next highest number of votes on the last councilor ballot is made a councilor.
- 8) It is strongly recommended that the previous President and/or Council bring the new Council up to date on community matters, council concerns, upcoming tasks, and community and council files and records. This is not considered a breach of confidentiality.
- 9) The procedure for appointing the Secretary and Treasurer shall be left to the discretion of the new Council [Art. 54-55]. The previous Secretary and Treasurer continue to serve until these appointments are made.
- 10) Study Group Council elections are governed by the provisions in Section XIII.

Section XVII: Transfers within the Province

- 1) When a member of the Oklahoma Province moves within the province and is near another community, that member shall contact the community for permission to attend its meetings. The local Council should verify membership.
- 2) After at least six meetings, the member may complete the transfer request form and petition the local Council for admission.

⁶ A number greater than half the valid votes cast.

(Continued on page 35)

Oklahoma OCDS Statutes—
approved by Definitory October 10, 2016

(Continued from page 34)

- 3) The local Council shall verify the information and vote whether to admit the member to the community.
- 4) If, for whatever reason, the local Council does not grant admission, the member remains a member of the originating community as an Isolate [Sec. VIII].
- 5) A member who is transferred to a new community prior to Definitive Promise shall complete formation with the new community. The final decision about formation status and readiness shall be made by the local Council of the new community.
- 6) Members who move within the province and are no longer near a community remain members of their current community as Isolates [Sec VIII].
- 7) Members who move away and, for whatever reason, do not complete a transfer remain members of their current community as Isolates.
- 8) Transfers for reasons other than distance require prior consultation with and approval of the Provincial Delegate.

Section XVIII: Transfers between Provinces

- 1) Carmelite Seculars fall under the authority of the province in which they reside. When an OCDS member from another province moves into the Oklahoma Province, the same transfer procedures as in Sec. XVII shall apply.
- 2) When a member of the Oklahoma Province moves into another province, that member shall contact the Provincial Office of the new province for information and procedures for transferring into that province. The transferring member can obtain contact information for the two other Provinces of the U.S. from the Central Office of the Oklahoma Province.

Section XIX: Transfers of Lay Members of the O.Carm. (TOC) to OCDS

While not underestimating the genuine Carmelite spirituality of the TOC, it must be recognized that a change from TOC to OCDS is a change in vocation. The TOC member, as well as the local Council, needs ample time and information to discern whether there is a calling to the OCDS.

- 1) The TOC shall visit the community for at least six meetings. During this period the TOC attends aspirancy classes. If the local Council decides to accept the TOC into formation, the TOC shall enter Formation I. If the TOC has already been clothed in the brown scapular, that part of the Rite of Admission to Formation should be passed over.
- 2) The person must be released from the Promise as a TOC before making First Promise as an OCDS.
- 3) The local Council may request a special dispensation from the Provincial Delegate to shorten Formation I, if it becomes apparent that this would be in the best interests of the member and the community.

(Continued on page 36)

Oklahoma OCDS Statutes— approved by Definitory October 10, 2016

(Continued from page 35)

Section XX: Vows

- 1) Since vows constitute a strictly personal and more complete offering of oneself, and therefore entail a greater moral responsibility [Instruction on the Ritual], Carmelite Seculars desiring to make vows of obedience and chastity should undergo a serious discernment process.
- 2) This discernment should include discussions with one's personal spiritual director/confessor if available, the Spiritual Assistant of the local community, and the local Council. Discernment includes, but is not limited to, a review of the Constitutions Article 39 and the Superior General's Instruction on the Ritual. Both the member and the Council examine the member's reasons for desiring to make vows. It should be taken into consideration whether the member understands what making vows means, and the member's spiritual maturity. Vows should not be made if the member is struggling with keeping the Promise.
- 3) Making vows requires the permission of the local Council and the Provincial or his delegate [Art. 39].
- 4) Carmelite Seculars may be permitted to make the vows of obedience and chastity no sooner than five years after Definitive Promise.
- 5) A Carmelite Secular who has made vows and wishes to leave the Order and/or be dispensed from the vows must request dispensation from the Provincial Delegate.
- 6) Vows do not create a separate category of membership [Art. 39]. Vows do not change a member's status in the local community or the Order. Vows do not change a member's status as a layperson in the Church.

Section XXI: Plenary Council Meeting

- 1) The Plenary Council is a consultative body to the Provincial Council and Provincial Delegate. It is convened triennially by the Provincial Council.
- 2) Each community shall send two members: the President and an elected representative. If the President is unable to attend, another council member may be substituted. Each Study Group shall send one representative.
- 3) Each community and Study Group shall submit a written report prior to the Plenary Council meeting. The Central Office shall provide the format for the report to each Community and Study Group. Communities are invited to submit agenda items when they send in their report. The President of the Provincial Council shall give a "State of the Province Report" at the Plenary Council based on the triennial reports of the communities and Study Groups.

Section XXII: OCDS Provincial Council

"Where there is an organized circumscription of the friars of the Order, the Secular Order is to form a Provincial Council to assist one another better in formation and the apostolate..." [Art. 57]

- 1) The OCDS Provincial Council shall consist of five definitively professed members of our province, with the right to vote on matters pertaining to our life.

(Continued on page 37)

Oklahoma OCDS Statutes—
approved by Definitory October 10, 2016

(Continued from page 36)

- 2) The Provincial Council shall assist the Provincial Delegate in guiding the formation of a community from its initial development period, through Study Group status, to its eventual request for canonical recognition. It shall also assist the Provincial Delegate in determining when a canonical community is no longer able to function adequately and needs to have its status reduced.
- 3) The Provincial Council may provide assistance in resolving difficulties that a local Council is unable to resolve.
- 4) Members of the Provincial Council shall make visitations. A Councilor, while making a visitation, comes as a representative of the Provincial with the authority of that office. The visitor respects the autonomy of the local Council's authority.⁷
- 5) The President shall coordinate the work of the Provincial Council and preside at its meetings. The President shall also preside at meetings of the Plenary Council.
- 6) Appointments to the Provincial Council shall be made in the same year as the OCD Provincial Chapter and before the OCDS local community elections. The term is six years and shall be staggered so that either two or three new members are appointed every three year cycle. Councilors may not serve two consecutive terms.
- 7) A list of candidates for selection to the Provincial Council shall be submitted to the Provincial. The list shall be based on recommendations received from Canonical Communities and Study Groups, members of the current Provincial Council, and the OCDS Provincial Delegate. New council members assume responsibility upon selection and appointment by the Provincial.
- 8) The Provincial Council shall elect a President every three years after the new members have been appointed.
- 9) The Provincial Council has the authority to replace one of its members after consulting with the Provincial Delegate.
- 10) The Provincial Council shall submit an annual financial report to the local communities of the Province.

⁷ The Councilor assists the local community without intervening in its government [Art. 57].

News from around the Province

Journaling in the Chapel While in the Chapel after Mass this morning, a feeling of warmth came over me. Like being warmed by a heat, magnificent flame, I began to think what a gift it was to be here in the presence of my Creator and His faithful Missionary Carmelites of St Teresa. Talking to God, I asked, why do you love me? Why have you given me such a wonderful environment to grow in Carmelite spirituality.

How can you love me when I abandon you so often for worldly things. Let me focus on your Divine love for me. Please hold my hand when I falter. Lead me on the new path. Guide me towards the things that bring meaning to my soul. When I am down and my heart is heavy, lift me up in your arms. When I fall and stumble, forgive my ways. As I weary from sorrow, let me take rest in your arms, remembering your cross, 'love's crimson emblem' as St. Therese of Lisieux has said.

May I practice 'determinacion' as prompted by St. Teresa of Avila in my quest to enrich my soul, to make it beautiful for you, God. May I remember St John of the Cross saying, 'put love where there is no love'....and grow in compassion for others.

When I am low in spirit may your love hover over me like glowing embers on the hearth beckoning me to the inner recesses of your heart. Then when I soar with the eagles in joy and laughter may your magnificent flame flare vividly around me sharing my vibrant nature.

May I strive to be a representative of your love towards others. May I truly be humble and consider it an honor to be your follower. Give me strength to persevere in my intentions. Thank you God for loving me!

I am next to Father Bonaventure with Gerrie from our Community in the photo below:



Submitted by Kay Dumesnil, O.C.D.S. of the San Juan de la Cruz Community in Houston, Texas



Darlene Kelleher , OCDS

Community of the Most Holy Trinity and St. Joseph - Houston, Texas
Submitted by Rebecca Segura

The community of the Most Holy Trinity and St. Joseph - Houston, Texas announces the passing of our dear member in Carmel - Darlene Kelleher. She made her clothing and First Promise March 29, 1974, Definitive Promise June 6, 1976, and her Vows on December 6, 1992. She recently celebrated her 90th birthday.

She died at home surrounded by her children on November 9, 2016. She was an active member of St. Christopher's Catholic Church until Parkinson disease claimed her health and life. She was a member of our community for 42 years. Visitation and Funeral Mass was held at St. Christopher's Catholic Church with internment following.

Though Parkinson disease may have claimed her life it did not claim her heart or soul for surely that belonged to Carmel. She will be greatly missed for her gentle smile, her humility, her soft voice, and sweet disposition. At one of our community celebrations Darlene was asked how did you come to be a Carmelite. In all humility she answered - I was reading a book on St. Teresa of Avila when a secular member of the Carmelite group asked if I would like to go to a Carmelite meeting. After attending several meetings she was asked if she wanted to join the community - she said yes and the rest is history - 42 years of history. In the end it turns out - that we were the ones that were blessed in having her as a member of our community. May she rest in peace.

Flos Carmeli provides information for the Secular members of the Order of Discalced Carmelites in the Oklahoma Province, which has jurisdiction over O.C.D.S. members living in the states of Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, Iowa, Kansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Tennessee and Texas. For subscription information contact Jeannine Meaux at jtmeaux@cox.net

Parting Words

“One should consider the virtues and who it is who serves our Lord with greater mortification, humility, and purity of conscience; this is the one who will be the holiest. Yet, little can be known here below with certitude; we must wait until the true Judge gives to each one what is merited. In heaven we will be surprised to see how different his judgment is from what we can understand here below. May he be forever praised, amen.”

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Getting the *Flos Carmeli* to members

Community presidents, please remember that the Province no longer mails out copies of the Flos Carmeli to communities. It is the community's responsibility to get a copy to each of your members, either via email or by print. This includes all isolate, aged, or infirm members. Thank you!

Provincial Council for the 2014-2017 Triennium:

Mary Kay Daniels, Sioux City, IA—President

Kathy DeWine, Knoxville, TN

Claire Bloodgood, Georgetown, TX

Jo Ann Murphy, Austin, TX

Chris Wood, Houston, TX