

# PARTICULAR DIRECTORIES OF THE LAY DOMINICAN PROVINCE OF ST. ALBERT THE GREAT (CENTRAL)

*Our Provincial Guidelines (Directory), as they were before the official translation of the Rule was released, are in boxed italics immediately following the pertinent paragraph of the rule. The text of the Rule is from the official English translation of the 2019 Rule.*

## I. THE FUNDAMENTAL CONSTITUTION OF THE DOMINICAN LAITY

### THE DOMINICAN LAITY

2 - Some lay people, moved by the Holy Spirit to lead a life according to the spirit and charism of St Dominic, are incorporated into the Order by a special promise according to their own statutes.

*2. A prospective member of the Lay Dominicans must be a practicing Catholic, at least 18 years of age who has a desire for Christian perfection and a willingness to engage in the components of Dominican life: prayer, study, community and apostolate. The individual must have received the sacraments of initiation: baptism, confirmation, and Eucharist. Moreover, the person should be involved in a specific apostolate or be willing to assume one. Finally, the individual must complete the application process in accordance with provincial Guidelines. A period of discernment and instruction follows. Persons are admitted as Lay Dominicans when the Formation Director, Moderator, and a majority of the community Council agree that entrance is appropriate.*

### THE SPECIFIC CHARACTER OF THE DOMINICAN LAITY

4 - They are therefore marked in a particular way both in their own spiritual life and in service of God and neighbour in the Church. As members of the Order, they participate in its apostolic mission through study, prayer and preaching, in accordance with their condition as lay people.

*4. By agreement with the Canadian-American Association of Lay Dominicans (Dominican Laity Interprovincial Council), prospective members must join an extant community of Lay Dominicans. Private members are not accepted except under extraordinary circumstances, and then only if the candidate has been actively associated with the Order.*

## THE APOSTOLIC MISSION

**6** - They carefully reflect on the particular objectives of the present apostolate of the Church, and are dedicated in a special way to showing true mercy to all, defending freedom, and promoting justice and peace.

*6. Lay Dominicans are expected to offer their services in response to the contemporary needs of the Church. This response should arise naturally from reflection on the Word of God in light of the signs of the times and knowledge of the conciliar and post-conciliar documents of the Second Vatican Council.*

## II. THE LIFE OF THE FRATERNITIES

### FRATERNITY LIFE

**10** – The following are the main sources from which the laity of St Dominic draw in order to advance in their own vocation, which is both contemplative and apostolic at the same time:

- a) Listening to the Word of God and reading Sacred Scripture, especially the New Testament.
- b) Liturgical celebration and participation in the Eucharistic sacrifice, if possible on a daily basis.
- c) The frequent celebration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

*c. The individual member determines what frequent means to him/her.*

- d) The celebration of the Liturgy of the Hours in union with the whole Dominican Family, as well as private prayer, such as meditation and the rosary.

*d. Each member is expected to say some portions of the Liturgy of the Hours daily, especially the two principal components: Morning Prayer and Evening Prayer.*

- e) The conversion of the heart according to the spirit and practice of Gospel penitence.

*e. Conversion of heart occurs through the practice of reconciliation in light of the Gospels.*

- f) The assiduous study of revealed truth and constant reflection on contemporary problems in the light of faith.  
g) Devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary according to the tradition of the Order, to our Holy Father St Dominic and to St Catherine of Siena. h) Periodic spiritual retreats.

*g. Devotion to Mary, the Virgin Mother of God.*

- h) Periodic spiritual retreats.

*h. Days of reconciliation, retreats and other suitable spiritual exercises, which allow for times of prayer, meditation, study or instruction, should be held annually.*

- 11** - The objective of Dominican formation is to form people who are truly mature in the faith, so that they are able to receive, celebrate and proclaim the Word of God.

It is up to each Province to elaborate a programme:

- a) of progressive formation for beginners.

*a. The development of a candidate into an adult in the Faith is an ongoing process. Responsive to the gifts of the Holy Spirit, the Lay Dominican makes use of all phases of the Lay Dominican Formation Program. New members usually spend at least six months studying the Initiate Phase.*

*This phase may be shortened or lengthened at the suggestion of the prospective candidate or at the discretion of the Formation Director and the Council. The consent of the Formation Director, Moderator and Council is required for reception. Following reception, the candidate spends one year studying the Candidacy I phase. This time may again be shortened or lengthened at the discretion of the candidate in consultation with the Formation Director, Moderator and Council. On completion of this phase, the candidate makes temporary*

*profession, also called the temporary promise.<sup>1</sup> The candidate then enters the Candidacy II phase. The time spent in this phase is again variable, but usually does not exceed three years. The consent of the Formation Director, Moderator and Council is required to make final profession, which constitutes a lifelong commitment to Dominican life and ministry, as expressed in the Lay Dominican Rule and Guidelines.<sup>2</sup>*

b) of permanent formation for all, even those who are isolated.

*b. Ongoing formation through the Lay Dominican Formation Program is a personal and communal obligation, which necessarily addresses the Dominican charisms of prayer (personal and liturgical), study, apostolate and community. Ongoing formation enables members to witness to the Dominican apostolate in the life of the Church and in the world. It presupposes continued study of Sacred Scripture, papal encyclicals, the Catechism of the Catholic Church, directives of the Master of the Order, acts of General Chapters of the Order, bishops' pastorals, Church history, Catholic Tradition, Dominican history, prayer, spirituality, the Trinity, Christology, Marian theology, Church teachings on peace and justice, the lives of the saints, and other content as seems useful and appropriate.*

**12** - Every Dominican should be able to preach the Word of God. In this preaching the prophetic office is exercised by the baptized Christian, strengthened by the sacrament of Confirmation. In today's world, the preaching of the Word of God should extend in a special way to the dignity of the human person and also to defence of life and of the family. Promoting Christian unity as well as dialogue with non-Christians and non-believers also belongs to the Dominican vocation.

*12. Preaching and the lay vocation are described in detail by the Second Vatican Council, Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity, *Apostolicam Actuositatem* (November 19, 1965); Pope Paul VI, *Apostolic Exhortation on Evangelization in the Modern World, Evangelii Nuntiandi* (December 8, 1975); and Pope John Paul II, *Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation on the Vocation and**

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<sup>1</sup> In the editio typica of the Rule of Lay Dominicans, Profession or Promise ("Professio vel promissio") are equivalent terms; *Regula Fraternitatum Laicalium S. Dominici*, no. 14, Ed. D. Byrne, *Analecta Sacri Ordinis Prædicatorum* 95, 1987, pp. 83-88.

<sup>2</sup> Neither temporary nor final profession are in any way equivalent to the canonical vows taken by those in consecrated religious life.

*Mission of the Lay Faithful in the Church and in the World, Christifideles Laici (December 30, 1988).*

**13** - The main sources for a complete Dominican formation are:

- a) The Word of God and theological reflection
- b) Liturgical prayer.
- c) The history and tradition of the Order
- d) Contemporary documents of the Church and the Order
- e) Understanding of the signs of the times.

*e. Some examples of "signs of our times" include the prevalence of evil, disregard for the dignity of the human person, denial of basic necessities, persecution of minority groups, relativism, consumerism, wars, oppression, and disregard for the sacredness of life.*

## THE PROFESSION OR PROMISE

**14** - In order to be incorporated into the Order, members must make a profession or promise by which they formally commit themselves to live according to the spirit of St Dominic, in accordance with the way of life prescribed by the Rule. This profession or promise may be temporary or perpetual. In making profession, the following form, or one substantially similar, is to be used:

*“To the honour of Almighty God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and of St Dominic, I, N.N., in the presence of you, N.N., prior (president) of this fraternity, and N.N., religious assistant, in the place of the Master of the Order of Friars Preachers, promise to live according to the Rule of the Lay Fraternities of St Dominic (for three years)/(for my whole life)”.*

- 14. a. Prior to making either temporary or final profession a candidate must:*
- i. demonstrate proper disposition;*
  - ii. complete appropriate phases of formation;*
  - iii. request making the profession;*
  - iv. secure approval from the Formation Director, Moderator and Council of his/her community.*
- b. The profession (promise) is a formal commitment- without being a canonical vow- to live according to The Lay Dominican Rule. Reception and profession are*

*made in the presence of the community, its Moderator, and, when possible, the Provincial Promoter and/or the Provincial President.*

*c. Communities must maintain a Register of Receptions and Professions in which the names of those received and professed are recorded together with the date, the location and the person performing the ceremony for each person who is received or professed. This information must be forwarded to the Provincial President.*

*d. Transfer to another community or affiliation with a different province is possible. Such transfers are ordinarily arranged by the Provincial President. Those transferring to another community or affiliating with a different province should be welcomed with the same status they held previously, once having obtained the consent of the new community and province.*

*e. While the Code of Canon Law (1983) permits simultaneous membership in more than one lay Order, such is not allowed by Lay Dominicans of the United States and Canada (Dominican Laity Interprovincial Council, 2006). Therefore, members of other lay Orders wishing to affiliate with Lay Dominicans in the Province of Saint Albert the Great (U.S.A.), must decide, prior to making final profession, whether they wish to become a Lay Dominican or revert to their previous Order. Similarly, if a fully professed Lay Dominican wishes to transfer to another Order, formal release from his/her promise must be given by the Provincial Promoter. In addition, before being admitted into another lay Order, that Order should be informed of previous membership as a Lay Dominican.*

### **III. THE STRUCTURE AND GOVERNMENT OF THE FRATERNITIES**

**15** - The Fraternity is the ideal means for the dedication of each member to the nourishment and growth of his or her own vocation. The frequency of meetings is different according to the fraternity. The regular attendance of each member testifies to his or her own fidelity.

*15. a. Communities should meet at least once per month; ideally, two meetings per month should be considered so as to build and strengthen community.*

*b. Regular attendance at meetings is of the utmost importance for all members. For those having made their final profession, regular attendance witnesses to their Dominican vocation. For those in the early stages of formation, their presence at meetings manifests their Dominican calling. Consistent unexplained absences of those preparing for final profession should be taken into consideration as a*

*possible basis for dismissal. Members who have made final profession and who are consistently and inexcusably absent from meetings may, after two warnings, be considered inactive members. While still remaining Lay Dominicans, their names should be removed from both community and provincial mailing lists. Fidelity to one's vocation through regular attendance at community meetings is of the utmost importance.*

**16 -** Having observed the prescriptions of the Directory concerning the conditions required and the time of admission, the admission of candidates is entrusted to the lay person responsible for the fraternity, who, after the deliberative vote of the Council of the fraternity, proceeds to the reception of the candidate according to the rite determined by the Directory, with the religious assistant.

*16. a. Following completion of the application process and approval from the Formation Director, Moderator and Council, the prospective member is received into the Initiate Phase of Lay Dominican formation. If appropriate, an admission ceremony may be conducted by the Moderator or Formation Director.*

*b. After completing the Initiate Phase of the Lay Dominican Formation Program, and with the approval of the Formation Director, Moderator and Council, the initiate is received as a Lay Dominican.*

*c. At reception, new members are invested with the Dominican scapular. The scapular is a sacramental with rich historical roots reaching to the first days of the Order. In addition, a medal of Saint Dominic is given, which may be worn in place of the scapular. A copy of the Rule and the Ceremonial for Lay Dominicans is also provided, the study of which proves most important in preparing for temporary profession.*

**17 -** After the time of probation determined by the Directory and the favourable vote of the Council of the fraternity, the lay person responsible receives the temporary or perpetual profession, together with the religious assistant.

*17. See Formation, No. 11a.*

*a. At the ceremony for temporary profession, a Dominican shield pin is presented to the newly professed and may be worn as a visible expression of one's vocation as a member of the lay branch of the Dominican Family.*

*b. As members of the Order of Preachers, Lay Dominicans who have made temporary profession may use O.P. after their names. However, when thus*

*identifying themselves as Dominicans in public, Lay Dominicans should preface their names with an appropriate title (e.g., Mr., Mrs., Ms.).*

*c. The Moderator of the local community, representing the Master of the Order, together with the Formation Director, usually receives the profession. The Provincial Promoter and Provincial President may also be invited to witness the profession.*

*d. The aforementioned process for temporary profession also applies to final profession. At final profession, a Dominican cross is presented to those making a lifetime commitment. If a member so wishes, this cross may be placed with his/her remains after death.*

## THE JURISDICTION OF THE ORDER AND THE AUTONOMY OF THE FRATERNITIES

**18 -** The fraternities of the laity are subject to the jurisdiction of the Order; but they nevertheless enjoy that autonomy proper to the laity, by which they govern themselves.

*18. Two organizational categories exist within the Province of St. Albert the Great – Chapter and Group.*

*a. A community which is designated a Chapter must have a minimum of six members who have made final promises. Any community with fewer than six finally promised members is designated a Group. The designation of Pro-Chapter is retained only for those which had that status in September 2014. They may retain that designation until they achieve Chapter status. (Provincial Council 2014)*

*i. A Chapter must have a Moderator, Secretary-Treasurer, Formation Director and Delegate to the Provincial Council. Larger Chapters may elect a Vice-Moderator and separate members to serve as the Secretary and Treasurer, respectively. The Moderator should be a finally professed Lay Dominican.*

*ii. Each Chapter must have a Council of no fewer than three and no more than six members, depending on the size of the Chapter. The professed members of the Chapter elect members to the Council.*

*iii. The Formation Director is appointed according to qualifications determined by the Chapter Council and in consultation with the Provincial Promoter and the Provincial President.*

iv. Additional formation personnel may also be approved by the Chapter Council with the consent of the Formation Director, so as to facilitate more conveniently the direction of members at various stages of formation.

v. Terms of office for the Moderator, Secretary-Treasurer and Council members should be at least three years with a maximum of four years. These officers may be re-elected to a second consecutive term.

vi. The Formation Director and other formation personnel are appointed and have no set term of office.

b. Pro-Chapters in existence in September 2014 consist of six or more members, with a minimum of two being finally professed.

i. A Pro-Chapter must have an elected Moderator and Secretary-Treasurer, plus a Delegate to the Provincial Council. The Formation Director is appointed by the Provincial President in consultation with members of the Pro-Chapter and should be a finally professed Lay Dominican.

ii. After meeting all necessary requirements (see No. 18a), a Pro-Chapter may petition the Provincial Council for Chapter status, but only after sufficient time to ensure cohesiveness and stability of the community.

iii. The terms of the various officers for a Pro-Chapter are the same as those for a Chapter.

c. A Group must consist of at least three members, potentially including a finally professed member who is qualified to lead them. More generally, the leader of the Group can be a layperson, friar or sister, but s/he must be approved for this role by the Provincial Promoter and the Provincial President.

i. Once the Group has become cohesive, all members may take part in the election of a Moderator.

ii. As the Group grows, it may elect other officers, such as Secretary-Treasurer and Delegate to the Provincial Council. A Formation Director may also be appointed in consultation with the Provincial President.

iii. After meeting all necessary requirements (see No. 18a), a Group may petition the Provincial Council for Chapter status. d. Ideally, all Chapters, Pro-Chapters and Groups within a given region of the province should strive to meet periodically for prayer, study, community, and exchange of apostolic efforts.

Contact should be maintained with private members within a given region and they should be invited to participate in activities within that particular region.

Chapters, Pro-Chapters, and Groups are free to choose their own monthly meeting

*dates and to elect their own officers from among their members, in accordance with the Rule and Guidelines.*

## IN THE PROVINCES

**20 - a)** The Prior Provincial presides over the fraternities within the territorial limits of his Province and, with the consent of the local Ordinary, establishes new fraternities.

b) The Provincial Promoter (brother or sister) represents the Prior Provincial and participates with full rights in the Provincial Council for the Laity. He or she is appointed by the Provincial Chapter or by the Prior Provincial with his council after consultation with the Provincial Council of the Laity of St Dominic.

c) In the territory of each Province there is a Provincial President and a Provincial Council of the Laity, elected by the fraternities and regulated in accordance with the norms established in the Directory.

*20. c. Delegates to the Lay Dominican Provincial Council for the Province of St. Albert the Great {U.S.A.} are elected by professed members affiliated with each local community. First and Second Alternates are also elected to replace, if necessary. Delegates unable to attend a Provincial Council meeting. Terms of office are determined by the Bylaws of the Provincial Council. The officers of the Provincial Council and the Delegate to the Dominican Laity Interprovincial Council {and also First and Second Alternates} are elected from among the voting members of the Provincial Council.*

*Delegates to the Provincial Council are expected to maintain contact with Chapters, Pro-chapters and Groups within their regions. They are also responsible, along with Moderators in their regions, for making arrangements with respect to retreats, days of recollection, and other Lay Dominican events.*

## IN FRATERNITIES

**21 - a)** A local community is governed by a Moderator with a Council, who together assume full responsibility for its direction and administration.

*21. a. See THE JURISDICTION OF THE ORDER AND THE AUTONOMY OF THE FRATERNITIES, Nos. 18a-d.*

b) The President and the Council are elected for the time period and in the manner established by the particular Directories.

*21. b. See THE JURISDICTION OF THE ORDER AND THE AUTONOMY OF THE FRATERNITIES, No. 18*

c) The religious assistant (brother or sister) assists the members in doctrinal matters and in the spiritual life. He or she is appointed by the prior provincial after consultation with the provincial promoter and the local Council of the laity.

*21. c. In addition to a friar or sister in the role of a Spiritual Assistant, the General Chapter of Rome declared that "a qualified finally professed Lay Dominican" could assume this role.*

## THE NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL

**22 - a)** Where there are several provinces of the Order in the same national territory, a National Council may be instituted, according to norms established in the particular Directories.

*22. a. The Eastern, Central, Southern and Western Provinces in the United States, the Canadian Province, and the Vietnamese Vicariate of North America form the Dominican Laity Interprovincial Council (DLIPC).*

*Membership in the DLIPC is composed of the following:*

- i. the President of each Province and the Vicariate;*
- ii. an elected Delegate from each Province and the Vicariate;*
- iii. the Promoters of Lay Dominicans from each Province and the Vicariate.*

b) Likewise, there may be an International Council, if it seems appropriate, after consultation with the fraternities of the whole Order.

*22 b. The International Council for Lay Dominican Fraternities (ICLDF) was established, in accordance with the Rule of the Lay Fraternities of Saint Dominic, in May 2002, at Santa Sabina, Rome, in the presence of Fr. Carlos A. Azpiroz Costa, O.P., Master of the Order of Preachers, and Fr. Gerald Stookey, O.P., Promoter General for the Lay Dominicans. Representatives to the ICLDF are elected from members of the DLIPC, excluding Provincial Promoters.*

## THE STATUTES OF THE FRATERNITIES

**24** – The proper Statutes of the lay fraternities of St Dominic are:

- a) The Rule of the Fraternities (Fundamental Constitution of the OP Laity, norms of life and government of the fraternities).
- b) General Declarations of the Master of the Order or of a General Chapter.

*24. b. If statutory matters pertaining to Lay Dominicans are on the agenda, representative Lay Dominicans from Provincial or National Councils should be invited to participate in General Chapters of the Order.*

- c) Particular Directories.

*24. c. Guidelines for the Province of St. Albert the Great, U.S.A.*