

DIRECTIVES

Sisters of St. Francis
o f M a r y I m m a c u l a t e

Revised January 2024

DIRECTIVES

Congregation of the Third Order of
St. Francis of Mary Immaculate

Joliet Franciscan Center
1433 Essington Road
Joliet, IL
2024

DIRECTIVES 2024

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January 2024

**DIRECTIVES:
SISTERS OF ST. FRANCIS OF MARY
IMMACULATE**

JOLIET, ILLINOIS

Foreword

The book of Directives begins with the Mission Statement and Core Values of the Congregation of the Third Order of St. Francis of Mary Immaculate. These are followed by specific directives which serve as implementation of the *Constitutions*. This book reflects changes regarding government approved by the delegates during our chapter of 2021.

~ ~ ~ MISSION STATEMENT ~ ~ ~

*Led by the Spirit,
we, the Joliet Franciscans,
embrace the Gospel life
by commitment to
Franciscan values
and
respond to the needs of our
time
through prayer, community
and ministry.*

~ ~ ~ ~ ~ **CORE VALUES**

Gospel Values: We live a Gospel life centered on Jesus and based on love, justice, peace and healing.

Prayer: We relate to God in every moment of our living, believing that our thanksgiving, praise, sorrow and needs are heard.

Hospitality: We open our hearts and homes, sharing the gifts with which we have been entrusted.

Simplicity: We seek to live in unencumbered and uncomplicated ways.

Franciscan Charism: We reverence our Franciscan spirituality through community, service and joy, and we affirm the Franciscan Values of conversion, poverty, prayer and minority.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~ **CORE VALUES** *continued*

Prophetic Presence: We challenge injustice and accept our call to radical transformation.

Compassion: We embrace others with understanding and love.

Confiança: We have confidence in the power and presence of the Holy Spirit active in each person.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~ **COMMUNITY (#8 – #12)**

In the words of Francis, “The world is our cloister.” Therefore, the Franciscan charism is unbounded. The emphasis of the Franciscan charism is a common heart: a prophetic witness to Christ and the whole of the Gospel.

In consultation with the Local Coordinator who serves as her immediate canonical superior and in a spirit of mutuality, each sister discerns her community living setting. This consultation takes into account the setting which best allows and challenges the use of her gifts for the building up of the personal, communal and ministerial dimensions of her life. The Local Coordinator, as the sister’s immediate canonical superior, advises the designated Councilor of the individual sister’s discernment, who in turn communicates the information to the Governing Board for approval.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~ **COMMUNITY (#8 – #12) *continued***

In the spirit of our Franciscan heritage, each sister has a two-fold challenge and opportunity to take time for solitary reflection and to foster unity and communion with all people who are a part of her life. The sisters and the Congregation leadership mutually maintain active communication.

It is the responsibility of all sisters to set aside times regularly for some form of community gathering and to give quality presence to one another. This may take place in local communities, Local Chapter gatherings and a variety of other settings in which sisters come together.

Essential to the formation and growth of a community are the following components:

~ ~ ~ ~ ~ **COMMUNITY (#8 – #12) *continued***

- A commitment to come together as community to share values, direction and expectations, as well as periodically to evaluate them.
- A commitment to pray individually and communally in a manner that is meaningful and spiritually nourishing.
- A commitment to share faith, to love one another and to provide for reconciliation and forgiveness.
- A commitment to strive for a balance among the various aspects of life in community.
- A commitment to the concerns and needs of the Church and the world, especially regarding justice, peace and the integrity of creation, in light of the Gospel.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~ **COMMUNITY (#8 – #12) *continued***

As followers of Francis and Clare, we embrace a communal form of life in relationship with our sisters and among all people. Community is a relationship intended to offer mutual support, to help one another grow in faith, and to witness Christian charity.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~ **PRAYER (#13 – #22)**

We believe that Eucharist is central to our life of prayer. We commit ourselves to community prayer. We participate in the liturgical prayer of the Church using our official Congregation office book. We enrich our communal worship with a variety of forms and styles of prayer.

We celebrate with special solemnity the Transitus of St. Francis, October 3; the feast of St. Francis of Assisi, October 4; the Immaculate Conception, December 8; the commemoration of the Profession of St. Francis, April 16; Our Lady of Angels (the founding anniversary of our Congregation), August 2; St. Clare of Assisi, August 11; and the death anniversary of our foundress, Mother Alfred Moes, December 18.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~ **PRAYER (#13 – #22) *continued***

We celebrate feast days and anniversaries with simplicity and joy in order to recall our heritage and strengthen our bonds as community. We participate in the joyous occasions of professions and jubilees.

We remember daily in prayer our sisters and associates who are celebrating a birthday. We remember the death anniversary of each sister and associate. When sisters or associates die, we remember their life, death and resurrection as we are united in prayer.

We challenge ourselves to deepen our spiritual life through meditative prayer and reflective reading, especially the scriptures. We also cherish those devotions significant to our Franciscan and Marian heritages.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~ **PRAYER (#13 – #22) *continued***

Our sacramental life is further enriched by celebrating the Rite of Reconciliation and the Rite of Anointing of the Sick and Infirm.

We are challenged by our values of paschal mystery, letting go, dying and rising. We treasure the value of a contemplative stance embracing all of God's creation. We strive to acquire an attitude of leisure which helps to free the heart and to foster an inner calm, basic to a prayer life.

We make an annual retreat, ordinarily of six consecutive days. For an extended retreat, e.g., one of 30 days, a sister makes a formal request to her Local Coordinator, who then advises the designated Councilor of the sister's request, who in turn communicates the request to the

~ ~ ~ ~ ~ **PRAYER (#13 – #22) *continued***

Governing Board for approval.
We value spiritual direction as an
important means to discern the action of
the Spirit within us.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~ **MINISTRY (#23 - #26)**

We affirm and continue works long characteristic of our Congregation which have become part of our heritage, especially the ministry of education and the many forms of service to the needy and underprivileged.

We search out ways to minister in accord with the needs of contemporary society. We assume personal responsibility for developing a spirituality that is integrated with our daily experience in ministry. We are challenged to take a prophetic stance in solidarity with all God's people, especially women and the poor and powerless.

We are called to assume personal responsibility for acting on behalf of justice. Communally and corporately we discern how to provide personnel,

~ ~ ~ ~ ~ **MINISTRY (#23 - #26) *continued***

finances, and encouragement for the development of ministries that challenge and change oppressive structures.

We prayerfully consider our own gifts and experience as we consider the need for Congregation service to our own sisters or for ministry in our Congregation-owned or sponsored institutions.

We engage in ongoing evaluation of our own ministry.

Whether we remain in a ministry or feel called to change, we discern with our Local Coordinator, and others as appropriate, the best response to issues of our time in light of the Gospel.

We value the ministry of prayer. Through this ministry we experience unity and support.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~ **VOWED LIFE (#27 - #32)**

Religious vows, a public witness of consecrated commitment, are a celebration of the whole Church. Together with the sacraments of Matrimony and Holy Orders, this commitment is a celebration through which the Church, as community, embraces its network of relationships.

Because profession of religious vows is an intensification of one's baptismal vows, we regard with added significance the anniversary of our baptism and commemorate it personally. The same paschal mystery is lived in the religious state as in the whole Church.

We renew our vows often, especially at the time of an annual retreat and each year on the anniversary of our own profession and on April 16th, the solemn commemoration

~ ~ ~ ~ ~ **VOWED LIFE (#27 - #32) *continued***

of the profession of St. Francis. The traditional formula may be used whenever the renewal is made publicly:

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen. I, Sister _____, hereby renew my vows, promising again to Almighty God to live all the days of my life in poverty, in chastity and in obedience.

As a Congregation we celebrate with special solemnity each sister's 15th, 25th, 40th, 50th, and 60th anniversaries of first profession, as well as the 75th and 80th anniversaries of reception into the novitiate. These jubilee celebrations provide an opportunity to renew our commitment in a public way.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~ **VOWED LIFE (#27 - #32) *continued***

As religious, we dress in accord with the values defined in our *Constitutions*. We wear the Congregation emblem as an official sign of our membership. Perpetually professed members also wear a gold ring.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~ **POVERTY (#33 - #40)**

The spirit of poverty is embraced first and foremost as an inner attitude, a holy disposition from which we live our communal interdependence. It is in this spirit that we profess and live our vow of poverty.

Recognizing that we are the recipients and caretakers of God's many gifts, we gratefully cherish these gifts in a responsible and accountable manner. We share them with others in justice and love, and eagerly develop them out of love for God and one another.

All of us generously share our resources, our time, our talents and income, and our very selves to support one another and help further the Congregation's mission. We recognize that this often involves self-sacrifice.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~ **POVERTY (#33 - #40) *continued***

We strive to have an understanding of stewardship as an accountable way of life.

We observe the Congregation's policies regarding finances.

We keep informed of current issues pertaining to human rights and ecological concerns. Through prayer and action we affirm just practices and work toward alleviating injustices and ecological abuses.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~ **OBEDIENCE (#45 - #53)**

Dialogue with Church authorities is part of our tradition, beginning with Francis and Clare of Assisi.

It is in this spirit that we reflect on the various communications from the Apostolic See, particularly those canons, encyclicals and letters pertaining to us as religious.

We reflect also on our own documents: the *Constitutions* and the book of *Directives* of the Congregation, the enactments of the General Chapter, the handbook of *Policies and Procedures*, and the policies and letters issued by the President, Councilors, General Treasurer and General Secretary.

As Franciscans, we reflect on the Third Order Rule and other Franciscan writings. We reverence the Spirit's action, embrace

~ ~ ~ ~ ~ **OBEDIENCE (#45 - #53) *continued***

continuous conversion, and are encouraged to discover our personal gifts and call as we respond in obedience to God.

As sisters, we strive to live in mutual obedience, affirming the role of minister and servant. We discern our ministry, place of living and other life-direction decisions with the Local Coordinator, who serves as our immediate canonical superior, and others as appropriate. The Local Coordinator discusses the matter with the designated Councilor who then presents the matter to the Governing Board for approval.

If, on a rare occasion, a canonical superior finds it necessary to express a command in virtue of the vow of obedience, she does so either in writing or before two witnesses.

~ ~ ~ ~ GOVERNMENT (#56)

The General Chapter

The purpose of the General Chapter is described in our *Constitutions* and follows the norms established by the *Code of Canon Law*. Canons 631 – 633 address “Chapters.”

The Chapter Planning and Agenda Committee for the General Chapter is named by the Governing Board. The Chapter Planning and Agenda Committee prepares the necessary detail for the business of the General Chapter. A member of the Governing Board is the liaison to the Chapter Planning and Agenda Committee.

The Steering Committee for the General Chapter is composed of the Central Administration together with all the

~ ~ ~ ~ ~ **GOVERNMENT (#56) *continued***

members of the Chapter Planning and Agenda Committee.

Eligible as elected delegates to the General Chapter are all sisters in perpetual profession.

The immediate past president of the Congregation attends, as a voting delegate, the first General Chapter held after her term of office is completed. In subsequent General Chapters, a past president may come either as a consultant with voice but no vote, or may choose to enter the process for election of delegates.

Participants, who have voice but no vote, are perpetually professed sisters who are not delegates, temporary professed sisters, novices, and affiliates.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~ **GOVERNMENT (#56) *continued***

The Steering Committee of the General Chapter determines if observers will be invited to any Chapter sessions.

The method of election of delegates to the General Chapter is as follows. Each perpetually professed sister of the Congregation is considered nominated. She may accept or reject the nomination. In agreeing to accept the nomination, the sisters must meet the criteria established by the Chapter Planning and Agenda Committee.

A ballot listing all eligible nominees is presented to all professed sisters for a vote. A sister will vote for each individual nominee she wishes to elect. A nominee receiving ten percent or more of the valid votes cast is considered an elected delegate to the General Chapter, with voice and vote.

~ ~CENTRAL GOVERNMENT (#57 - #59)

The Central Administration

The Central Administration is composed of the President, the Councilors, the General Secretary and the General Treasurer.

The Governing Board

The Governing Board is composed of all elected members of the Congregation leadership, namely, the President and Councilors.

The President is at least thirty-five years of age and is the General Superior of the Congregation of the Third Order of St. Francis of Mary Immaculate, Joliet, and President of the Governing Board. She

~ ~ ~ ~ ~ **CENTRAL GOVERNMENT (#57-#59)**
continued

must be perpetually professed for at least six years. She is elected to the position of President by the General Chapter.

She is the President and a voting Director of the Corporation of the Congregation of the Third Order of St. Francis of Mary Immaculate, Joliet. She oversees the Congregation's formation and development programs and is a member of the corporate boards of the Congregation-sponsored institutions. She is the Congregation's official representative with the Apostolic See. She holds membership in the Leadership Conference of Women Religious and other groups deemed appropriate.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~ **CENTRAL GOVERNMENT (#57-#59)**
continued

The Councilor is a perpetually professed sister who is at least thirty years of age. She is elected to the position of Councilor by the General Chapter. She is a member of the Central Administration and a Governing Board member. In addition, she is a voting Director of the Corporation of the Congregation of the Third Order of St. Francis of Mary Immaculate, Joliet. The Councilor holds membership in the Leadership Conference of Women Religious and the Franciscan Federation.

The General Secretary is a perpetually professed sister. She is appointed to the position of General Secretary by the Governing Board. She maintains confidentiality and is responsible for secretarial, archival and clerical work. She attends Governing Board meetings and keeps the record. She has neither voice nor

~ ~ ~ ~ ~ **CENTRAL GOVERNMENT (#57-#59)**
continued

vote in matters pertaining to the Governing Board. She is the Secretary and a Voting Director of the Corporation of the Congregation of the Third Order of St. Francis of Mary Immaculate, Joliet.

The General Treasurer is a perpetually professed sister. She is appointed to the position of General Treasurer by the Governing Board. She has knowledge and expertise in all matters of financials. She maintains confidentiality and manages her office with integrity and prudent judgment. She attends Governing Board meetings that pertain to financial agendas and is an advisor on financial matters to the Governing Board. She has neither voice nor vote in matters pertaining to the Governing Board. She is the Treasurer and a voting Director of the Corporation of the Congregation of the Third Order of St.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~ **CENTRAL GOVERNMENT (#57-#59)**
continued

Francis of Mary Immaculate, Joliet. She holds membership in the Resource Center for Religious Institutes.

Right of Succession

Should the Councilor elected to succeed the President be unable to assume the responsibilities of the office of President, or should she herself be unable to complete the term of office, the right of succession will pass to the Councilor who received the greater number of votes during the election of the Vice President. If the number of votes was equal, the right of succession will pass to the one older by religious profession; if equal in religious profession, then the one older by chronological age.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~ **LOCAL GOVERNMENT (#61)**

Coordinator

The Coordinator is a perpetually professed sister who serves as the immediate canonical superior for designated members of the Congregation. She is responsible for these sisters and calls them to an accountability of their corporate witness individually and collectively. She assists sisters in developing their gifts and talents in the tradition and spirit of the Congregation and makes herself available for personal consultation with individual members. *After* a process of dialogue and consultation with the sisters, Coordinators are named, affirmed and canonically appointed by the Governing Board. [*Constitutions*, #60].

A sister is appointed to serve as Coordinator for four years; she may be

~ ~ ~ ~ ~ **LOCAL GOVERNMENT (#61) *continued***

appointed to serve additional terms according to proper law of the Congregation. A Coordinator is responsible for the duties outlined in the *Constitutions* [#60, p. 31], the *Directives* [#61], and the most recent *Handbook of Policies and Procedures*. When extraordinary circumstances arise, such as those related to a serious medical condition, hospitalization, or end-of-life care, Coordinators are assisted by members of the Governing Board and the sister's Power of Attorney, adhering to an individual sister's wishes as expressed in her Durable Power of Attorney. The Coordinator is accountable to the Governing Board in a spirit of collegiality and subsidiarity in serving the best interest of the sisters. Coordinators consult and collaborate with the Governing Board on a regular basis.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~ **LOCAL GOVERNMENT (#61) *continued***

Local Chapter

Local Chapters are comprised of sisters, novices, and affiliates who meet regularly to pray together, to discuss Congregational issues, and to celebrate special events on a local level. Local Chapters are determined and organized every four years by the newly elected Governing Board who appoint the members of each Local Chapter.

The appointment of sisters to Local Chapters takes place after a process of dialogue, individual and communal discernment, and consultation with sisters regarding their hopes, needs and preferences. After determining the membership of Local Chapters, the Governing Board invites each Local Chapter to select one sister from the group

~ ~ ~ ~ ~ **LOCAL GOVERNMENT (#61) *continued***

to serve as the convener of the Local Chapter and contact for the group with other entities (e.g. Central Administration, JPIC, CPAC, etc.) for four years. If there is a serious reason for a change, a sister has a right to recourse and, if necessary, due process.

Local Community Living

Local community life is enhanced by members of the local community gathering as sisters to pray, celebrate, discuss, and discern together. In a spirit of collegiality we determine the times and purposes for our coming together and agree on the stewardship of our resources of time and money in accord with Gospel values.

Due Process

The procedure for Due Process may be initiated in the case of a serious problem that cannot be resolved by any ordinary means available, namely, the Local Coordinator, the President, or the Governing Board. With the consent of the Councilors, the President names a sister who is not a member of the Central Administration, as facilitator for Due Process for a four-year renewable term. The procedure for Due Process is outlined in the Congregation handbook of *Policies and Procedures*.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~ **FORMATION (#62 - #67)**

Director of Initial Formation

The Director of Initial Formation is appointed by the President and her Councilors. She has a two-year term which is renewable. She is the chair of the Initial Formation Team which is made up of the Pre-Novitiate Minister, the Novice Minister, and the Temporary Professed Minister. The Director of Initial Formation oversees and coordinates all aspects of the Initial Formation Program. She is accountable to the President for all matters related to initial formation.

Vocation Minister

The Vocation Minister is appointed by the President and her Councilors. She has a two-year term which can be renewed. The Vocation Minister assists women

~ ~ ~ ~ ~ **FORMATION (#62-#67) *continued***

interested in religious life to discern God's call and to assess their readiness for beginning the process of affiliation. Although a designated sister is appointed as Vocation Minister, each sister in the Congregation has the responsibility for encouraging new membership.

Affiliation

The process of initial contact with the Congregation begins with informal communication between the Vocation Minister and the woman who is seeking to be affiliated with the Congregation. A woman seeking membership in this Congregation must have the ability to live the evangelical counsels of chastity, poverty, and obedience. She must have a desire to serve God and others as a member of this Franciscan Congregation.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~ **FORMATION (#62-#67) *continued***

She must be a woman of integrity and have the ability to experience this Congregation's manner of living in order to grow in mind and heart in its spirit.

She must give evidence of possessing the qualities and skills which will enable her to live according to the *Constitutions* of this Congregation. Norms of the Church and of the Congregation are observed throughout the period of initial formation.

Pre-Novitiate Minister

The Pre-Novitiate Minister is appointed by the President and her Councilors. She has a two-year term which is renewable. The Pre-Novitiate Minister, or her delegate, helps the affiliate to reflect on her desire to serve the Church as a member of the Congregation.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~ **FORMATION (#62-#67) *continued***

The Pre-Novitiate Minister spends time with the affiliate in discussion, discernment and prayer, and invites her to participate in activities which may help her better understand the Congregation and its mission and values.

The Congregation and the affiliate who is in the process of incorporation mutually discern her desire and readiness to become a member of this Congregation. The affiliate lives in community with our sisters and meets regularly with the Pre-Novitiate Minister.

Novitiate

The novitiate begins with a simple ceremony at which the affiliate is received as a novice by the President or her delegate. The novice is given copies of the

~ ~ ~ ~ ~ **FORMATION (#62-#67) continued**

Rule and Life of the Brothers and Sisters of the Third Order Regular of St. Francis, and the Constitutions and book of Directives of the Congregation.

The novice meets regularly with the Novice Minister and those whom the Novice Minister delegates for direction in the novice's personal and community life as well as in her ministerial experience. During the canonical year, emphasis is placed upon the study of the theology of religious life, scripture, liturgy and worship, spirituality, the *Rule and Life of the Brothers and Sisters of the Third Order Regular of St. Francis*, the life and rule of St. Clare, and the history, traditions, and *Constitutions* of the Congregation, the book of *Directives* and complementary documents. The second year may include an experience in ministry.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~ **FORMATION (#62-#67) *continued***

Novice Minister

The Novice Minister is appointed by the President and her Councilors. She has a two-year term which is renewable.

The Novice Minister regularly reviews and evaluates the program of each novice in order to meet the needs of the novice in the areas of personal development, spirituality, theology, ministry, and growth in community living.

Temporary Profession

Temporary profession is made during a celebration of the Eucharist. The newly professed sister receives the Congregation emblem and a crucifix.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~ **FORMATION (#62-#67) *continued***

The sister with temporary vows has regular contact with the Temporary Professed Minister. Together they reflect on the sister's experience of the process of incorporation with a focus on ministry, community life, spirituality and commitment.

Like all vowed members, the sister with temporary vows is accountable to her Local Coordinator who is her canonical superior.

Temporary Professed Minister

The Temporary Professed Minister is appointed by the President and her Councilors. She has a two-year term which is renewable.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~ **FORMATION (#62-#67) continued**

The Temporary Professed Minister regularly reviews and evaluates the program of each sister in temporary profession in order to meet the needs of the sister in the areas of personal development, spirituality, theology, ministry, and growth in community living.

Perpetual Profession

Perpetual profession is made during a celebration of the Eucharist. The sister receives the gold ring of the Congregation.

Temporary profession, renewal of vows, and perpetual profession are made in accord with the *Rite of Religious Profession: The Roman Ritual* issued by the Congregation for Divine Worship.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~ **FORMATION (#62-#67) *continued***

Re-Admission, Transfer, Exclaustation, and Separation

The President of the Congregation, in accordance with Canon Law and Congregation policy, directs the process of re-admission, transfer, exclaustation, and separation.

Ongoing Formation

Ongoing formation is the responsibility of each member. We are challenged to grow in gospel living with Jesus as Center, in the charism of Clare and Francis, and as inspired by the pioneer zeal of Mother Alfred Moes.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~ **ASSOCIATE RELATIONSHIP**

An associate is one who makes a formal commitment to share in the mission, vision, and ministry of the Sisters of St. Francis of Mary Immaculate without being a vowed member of the Congregation. Through their association with the Congregation, associates bear witness in the Church and in the world to the values and legacy of the Sisters of St. Francis of Mary Immaculate.

The associate may be a woman or man, married or single, a member of a religious congregation or a priest. Associates are not vowed members of the Congregation; there is neither legal nor financial responsibility between the associate and the Congregation.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~ **ASSOCIATE RELATIONSHIP** *continued*

The essential element of the associate relationship is the desire to recognize and nurture a mutual relationship which will witness to a Gospel vision of Christian living in the spirit of Clare and Francis of Assisi.

Director of Associates

The Director of Associates is appointed by the President and her Councilors. She has a four-year term which is renewable once. She is accountable to the President of the Congregation and maintains regular contact with the Councilor designated by the President to be liaison. The Director of Associates directs and facilitates the Associate Relationship beginning with the process which leads to the formalization of the Associate Relationship. She works collaboratively with the Associate

~ ~ ~ ~ ~ **ASSOCIATE RELATIONSHIP** *continued*

Leadership Council, which is comprised of sisters and associates, including the sister who is the designated liaison. All members of the Associate Leadership Council are approved and appointed by the Governing Board in consultation with the Director of Associates.

~ ~ ~ ~ THE REGION OF BRAZIL

The community in the region of Brazil is an extension of the Congregation of the Third Order of St. Francis of Mary Immaculate, Joliet, having its centerhouse in Aparecida de Goiânia, Goiás. Since its establishment on December 18, 1963, the foundation in Brazil has received recognition by both Church and civil government.

Government of the Congregation in the Region of Brazil

The General Elective Assembly

The General Elective Assembly is an official gathering of the members of the region. It is convoked and presided over by the President of the Congregation or her delegate and normally meets every four years.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~ **THE REGION OF BRAZIL** *continued*

Members of the General Elective Assembly are all the sisters in Brazil. All professed members have the right to voice and vote. Only the sisters with perpetual vows and the sisters from North America who have served at least five years in Brazil have the right to be elected. Each General Elective Assembly decides who may be official observers.

The responsibilities of the General Elective Assembly include the following:

- To address the issues and concerns of the region.
- To elect the Regional Coordinator and the Regional Councilors.
- To fulfill legal requirements.
- To provide opportunities to nurture community among the sisters.
- To confront the reality of our life with

~ ~ ~ ~ ~ **THE REGION OF BRAZIL** *continued*

the ideal of the Gospel as seen in the
light of a deeper experience of our
values and beliefs.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~ **THE REGION OF BRAZIL** *continued*

The Regional Council of Brazil

The Regional Council is composed of the Regional Coordinator, two Regional Councilors, the Regional Secretary, and the Regional Treasurer.

The Election and Appointment of the Regional Council

The Regional Coordinator and the two Regional Councilors are elected during the General Elective Assembly by and among the professed sisters who belong to the Region of Brazil. They serve for a four-year term with the possibility of re-election.

Members of the Regional Council may serve for no more than three consecutive terms, with no more than two terms in any

~ ~ ~ ~ ~ **THE REGION OF BRAZIL** *continued*

one office. The procedure for elections follows the method described in the documents of the Congregation and the legal statutes.

The Regional Secretary and the Regional Treasurer are appointed by the Regional Coordinator and the Regional Councilors, and confirmed by the General Elective Assembly for a term of four years with the possibility of re-appointment.

Duties of the Members of the Regional Council

The Regional Coordinator is the immediate canonical superior of the sisters. She presides over the Regional Council in a spirit of co-responsibility. She is responsible for communication with the President of the Congregation, members of

~ ~ ~ ~ ~ **THE REGION OF BRAZIL** *continued*

the Central Administration, and the Regional Council in Brazil. She represents the region before Church and religious and civil entities on regional and national levels. Legally, she is the President of the Corporation of the Congregation in Brazil. She is perpetually professed for at least five years and is at least thirty years old. If she is not a citizen of Brazil, she should have resided in Brazil for at least five years.

The First Regional Councilor is a member of the Regional Council. In the absence of the Regional Coordinator, she is the legal representative of the region. Legally, she is the Vice President of the Corporation of the Congregation in Brazil. She is perpetually professed for at least five years and is at least thirty years old. If she is not a citizen of Brazil, she should have

~ ~ ~ ~ ~ **THE REGION OF BRAZIL** *continued*

resided in Brazil for at least five years.

The Second Regional Councilor is a member of the Regional Council. In the absence of the Regional Coordinator and the First Regional Councilor, she is the legal representative of the region. She is perpetually professed for at least five years and is at least thirty years old. If she is not a citizen of Brazil, she should have resided in Brazil for at least five years.

The Regional Secretary is a perpetually professed sister and a member of the Regional Council. She keeps the minutes of the meetings of the Regional Council and has voice and vote on corporate matters. She maintains confidentiality and is responsible for secretarial, archival, and clerical work.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~ **THE REGION OF BRAZIL** *continued*

The Regional Treasurer is a perpetually professed sister and a member of the Regional Council. She participates in the meetings of the Regional Council during those times that refer to financial questions, with the right of voice and vote on corporate matters. She should have knowledge and authority on financial matters. She collaborates with and consults with the General Treasurer of the Congregation on matters of finance and stewardship and on corporate matters.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~ THE REGION OF BRAZIL *continued*

The Right of Succession

In case of death, incapacity, or resignation of the Regional Coordinator, the First Regional Councilor takes her place. The Regional Council has the right to appoint a Regional Councilor, Regional Secretary, or Regional Treasurer when there is a vacancy.

Responsibilities of the Regional Council

The Regional Council governs between General Elective Assemblies using the principle of collegiality in accord with the *Constitutions* and the *Directives* of the Congregation and the policies specific to ministry in Brazil. It works as a team and reaches decisions by consensus. Meetings are held monthly or when necessary. The members divide among themselves the

~ ~ ~ ~ ~ **THE REGION OF BRAZIL** *continued*

ministries: Franciscan Spirituality and Integration of the Sisters, Formation, Mission and Pastoral Activity, Patrimony, and Finances.

The duties of the Regional Council are:

- To implement the decisions of the General Chapter of the Congregation and the General Elective Assembly.
- To dynamically formulate vital policies for the Region of Brazil.
- To guide the missionary direction of the Region, mindful of the charism and values of the Congregation in accord with the needs of the Church, especially in Latin America.
- To designate one of its members to participate in the meetings of the Formation Team and Vocation Promotion Team.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~ THE REGION OF BRAZIL *continued*

Relationship of the Congregation in Brazil with the Central Government of the Congregation

The President of the Congregation and/or one of the Councilors visits the sisters in Brazil yearly in order to keep alive the common spirit and strengthen the connections of the Congregation among the sisters in North America and Brazil.

Ordinarily, the President of the Congregation receives the vows of the sisters and admits new members to the novitiate in Brazil. In her absence, the Regional Coordinator does so.

Annually, a member of the Regional Council participates in a meeting of the Governing Board in the United States in order to keep alive the spirit that unites the Congregation.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~ **THE REGION OF BRAZIL** *continued*

The Governing Board of the Congregation and the Regional Council dialogue about matters pertaining to the Region of Brazil on a regular basis.

Matters that require the ratification or the decision of the President of the Congregation with the consultative or deliberative vote of the Councilors are:

- Reception of novices, first vows, renewal of vows and perpetual vows of sisters
- Permission for a sabbatical year
- Approval of the annual budget of the Region; large financial expenditures besides those included in the budget; purchase or sale of property; new constructions
- Establishing new missions within and/or outside of Brazil.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~ **THE REGION OF BRAZIL** *continued*

Finances of the Congregation in the Region of Brazil

The Congregation in Brazil follows the financial policies established for the entire Congregation. Specific financial policies and procedures for the Region of Brazil are established by the Regional Council, the General Elective Assembly, and the Fiscal Council.

Visits, Vacations and Interchange

Requests for visits to the United States or any other country, other than the regular visits of the North American sisters, are presented to the Regional Council and the Governing Board of the Congregation for approval. An interchange between the sisters in Brazil and the sisters in North America is encouraged and facilitated.

Sisters of St. Francis
of Mary Immaculate

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