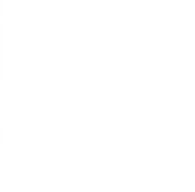


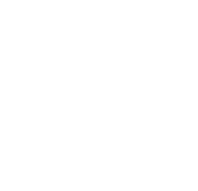


Order of Friars Minor Conventual

ROME 2021



**DIRECTORY FOR THE
CELEBRATION OF THE
PROVINCIAL CHAPTER**





CURIA GENERALE

DEI FRATI MINORI CONVENTUALI

PIAZZA Ss. APOSTOLI, 51 - 00187 ROMA (ITALIA)

Prot. N. 0817/2021

Rome, October 15, 2021

Presidents of the Federations

Ministers Provincial and Custodes

Subject: *Directory of the Provincial Chapter - Motion No. 10 of the 2019 General Chapter*

Dear friars,

May the Lord give you peace!

The 202nd Ordinary General Chapter, celebrated in 2019 in Assisi and Collevalenza, decided to revise the Directory for the Celebration of the General Chapter and the Directory for the Celebration of the Provincial and Custodial Chapter.

Motion No. 10 of the 2019 General Chapter established an approval process and prescribed four steps for the revision of the Directory for the Celebration of the Provincial and Custodial Chapter:

B. Approval and experimentation process for the Directory for the Celebration of the Provincial and Custodial Chapter:

§1. The Central Government of the Order - having consulted with the Presidents of the Federations - shall appoint an *ad hoc* committee for the revision of the aforementioned Directory by the end of the year 2019.

§2. The draft of the Directory for the Celebration of the Provincial and Custodial Chapter shall be sent to the Assemblies of the Federations for consultation and proposals by the end of 2020.

§3. The text subsequently approved by the Minister General with his Definitory shall be used as a binding text for the celebration of the Provincial and Custodial Chapters scheduled for the 2021-2024 quadrennium.

§4. The Directory for the Celebration of the Provincial and Custodial Chapter shall be studied and definitively approved by the Ordinary General Chapter of 2025.

[cf. 202nd GENERAL CHAPTER, *Motions approved by the 2019 General Chapter*. Motion No. 10, *Commentarium Ordinis* 116/2 (2019) 498]

The first two steps have been taken:

- in order to implement the first step (Motion No.10, B, §1), on December 13, 2019, the

Minister General appointed the *ad hoc* committee for the revision of the Directory (Prot. N. 904/19). The *ad hoc* committee prepared a draft of the revised Directory. This draft was discussed and approved by the General Definitory during its session of October 27-30, 2020. - in order to implement the second step (Motion No. 10, B, §2) it was necessary to translate the draft of the Directory into, at least, the four official languages of the Order. This was carried out and, subsequently, the draft of the Directory was sent, by letter dated January 7, 2021, to the Assemblies of the Federations for consultation and proposals. The Assemblies of the Federations worked on the text and delivered the results of their study during April and May of 2021. The General Definitory took the observations of the Federations into consideration and prepared the latest version of the text. This version was approved during the 18th session of the Definitory, celebrated July 1-9, 2021. The latest version was also presented in a summarized form to the Presidents of the Federations during the meeting of the Definitory with the Presidents of the Federations on July 5, 2021.

We are now at the third stage of the revision, where the text of the Directory shall be used as binding text for the celebration of Chapters scheduled over the next few years.

In view of implementing Motion No. 10, B, §3, we hereby send you the text of the 2021 version of the Directory for the Celebration of the Provincial and Custodial Chapter. The text shall be used as a binding text for the celebration of the Provincial and Custodial Chapters scheduled for the 2021-2024 quadrennium.

Therefore, use this Directory during your Chapters; experiment with the various proposed procedures, so that you can make your contribution during the 2025 General Chapter, which shall then definitively approve the Directory (as required by Motion No. 10, B, §4).

As you will see, the Directory is quite flexible and offers many possibilities. The Minister General with his Definitory will be pleased if you choose paths that involve the greatest possible number of friars while you are organizing your Chapters.

Good luck with your work; greetings from the Definitory and blessings throughout 2021.



Fra. Tomasz Szymczak
Friar Tomasz SZYMCZAK
Secretary General

Attachment:

Directory for the Celebration of the Provincial and Custodial Chapter (2021 version)

Order of Friars Minor Conventual

DIRECTORY
for the celebration of the
ORDINARY PROVINCIAL CHAPTER
EXTRAORDINARY PROVINCIAL CHAPTER
***SPIRITUAL* PROVINCIAL CHAPTER**
ORDINARY CUSTODIAL CHAPTER

APPROVED BY THE ORDINARY GENERAL CHAPTER OF 2007
WITH TWO MODIFICATIONS FROM THE ORDINARY GENERAL CHAPTER OF 2013

THE NUMBERING HAS BEEN UPDATED TO CONFORM TO THE PROPER LAW OF THE
ORDER (CONSTITUTIONS OF 2018 AND GENERAL STATUTES OF 2019)

REVISED BY THE WORKING GROUP APPOINTED
BY THE MINISTER GENERAL IN 2019

REVISED BY THE FEDERATIONS AND
APPROVED BY THE GENERAL DEFINITORY IN JULY OF 2021

DIRECTORY for the Celebration of the PROVINCIAL AND CUSTODIAL CHAPTER

This Directory was approved by the General Chapter of 2007 with two modifications approved by the General Chapter of 2013: (1) the computation of a qualified majority, and (2) the presentation of a iuxta modum must be made within six consecutive hours (cf. Gen. Stat., no. 99)

In addition, this text takes into account the changes made in the 2018 Constitutions and the 2019 General Statutes and was revised by the Working Group appointed in 2019 by the Minister General for the revision of the Directory.

*The amendment of the General Chapter of 2013 concerning the presentation of the iuxta modum is no longer valid, since the General Statutes of 2019 state in no. 92, § 1: Votes taken on proposals are expressed in these formulas: *placet* (affirmative), *non placet* (negative), *placet iuxta modum* (affirmative with reservations). Whoever votes with the formula *placet iuxta modum* is to present a signed explanation of his reservations (*modus*) to the Actuary of the Chapter within four hours of the conclusion of the sitting. After this period of time his reservations will not be considered.*

INTRODUCTION

Authority of the Chapter

1. The chief authority for each Province and its Custodies resides in and is exercised in the Provincial Chapter (cf. *Const.*, 183, §2). In the matter and questions to be treated, the Chapter must take into consideration the dispositions and indications of the General Chapters (cf. *Const.*, 183, §1).

Time and Convocation

2. Each duly constituted Province shall celebrate an ordinary, i.e., an elective, Chapter every four years at the end of the term of office of the Minister Provincial (cf. *Const.*, 192, §3).
3. The Minister Provincial with the consent of his Definitory may convoke an Extraordinary Chapter whenever matters of great importance are pressing (*Const.*, 209, §2; 219), informing the Minister General of it in due time.
4. The Ordinary Provincial Chapter is formally announced by the Minister General at least three months before it is held, unless there is a serious reason for acting otherwise (*Gen. Stat.*, 115, §1).
5. The Minister General may anticipate or postpone the Ordinary Chapter, but not by more than six months before or after the date (*Gen. Stat.*, 115, §2).

It is the task of the Ministers Provincial and Custodes, together with their Definitories, after consulting with experts and taking into account the legal provisions in force in each region, to evaluate if it would be possible to celebrate the Chapter, guaranteeing the participation and safety of all the friars convened, or whether it would be more appropriate to postpone the celebration of the Chapter and promptly ask the Minister General to postpone the date of the convocation by letter, presenting reasons why and offering suggestions for other dates and places.

In the same way, the Ministers Provincial together with their Definitories can present a request in derogation of the provisions of the Provincial Statutes, to proceed with the election of the Minister Provincial by letter, when it is impossible for some of the voting members to reach the election site. The same procedure is adopted for Custodies, the Superiors of which must consult their respective Ministers Provincial.

In all cases, the Ministers Provincial must consult the Minister General through the General Definitory of the area.¹

6. So that everything needed for the Chapter may be prepared as precisely and thoroughly as possible, the Minister Provincial shall notify the entire Province as soon as possible regarding the time and place at which the Chapter will be held. He shall order the election of Delegates to be held as quickly as possible (*Gen. Stat.*, 118, §1-2). In this election, all solemnly professed friars of the Province enjoy active voice. Those who are already Capitulars *ex officio* are excluded from passive voice (*Gen. Stat.*, 118, §2). Those mentioned in article 78, §1 of the Constitutions are also without active and passive voice. The Minister Provincial and his Definitory are to diligently prepare the work of the Chapter, including if necessary the appointment of an ad hoc committee; they are also to prepare a calendar for the Chapter's work so that the Chapter may have all the time needed to perform its tasks.
7. For the election of the Delegates to the Chapter, one of the systems indicated by the General Statutes 130-140 is adapted and then chosen as such by the Provincial Statutes (cf. *Const.*, 211, §3) or established by the previous Ordinary Provincial Chapter. In case of the election of Delegates by the Province, the Minister Provincial and his Definitory are to appoint a committee of three friars to count the votes in the election of Delegates to the Chapter. They act in conformity with what is found in *Gen. Stat.*, 117, §3 b1).
8. In the months preceding the Chapter (*Gen. Stat.*, 119), the Secretary of the Province publishes the names of those elected and the members of the Finance Committee appointed by the Minister Provincial and his Definitory (*Gen. Stat.*, 90, §2), unless they have already been appointed at the Chapter. Recourse against those elected, or against the manner of election, is permitted within fifteen days of the publication of the list of voting members. When a Delegate does not accept the election or after accepting, renounces it, this decision shall be irrevocable and definitive, as if the Delegate were missing. In such cases, if the election was conducted by mail ballot, whatever the reason for the vacancy or whatever system of mail balloting used to elect the delegate, the runner-up is then elected. However, if the delegate was elected in a Friary Chapter, then the Chapter, upon notice of the vacancy, shall immediately proceed to a new election (*Gen. Stat.*, 119; cf. *Const.*, 195, §2).
9. All changes which would interfere with the observance of electoral laws and rights are forbidden during the Chapter period. This term begins with the formal announcement of the Provincial Chapter (*Gen. Stat.*, 86).
10. The Provincial Chapter, aware that it is the primary authority of the Province, should fulfill its role faithfully, seeking and planning for the welfare of the entire Provincial fraternity and taking into

¹ During the work on the Directory, the Minister General with his Definitory was awaiting permission from the *Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life* to be able to celebrate, in situations of proven necessity, Provincial/Custodial Chapters or parts of them, remotely, namely in electronic mode. Cf. CIVCSVA, *Letter to the General Moderators*, July 1, 2020, Prot. N. Sp.R. 2452/20, on the possibility of using IT-telematic means for the Council of the Superior and for the celebration of General or Provincial Chapters. The new pronouncement of the CIVCSVA was issued on May 31, 2021, Prot. N. Sp.R.2452/20. By way of exception, the CIVCSVA authorizes the use of telematic means for a specific period of time and for individual cases. The authorization is valid until the end of the year 2022.

consideration the directives of the General Chapter and of the government of the Order (*Const.*, 186, §1).

11. Matters which rightly belong to the Chapter may not be remanded to the respective Definitory for solution except for a grave reason to be verified by a two-thirds vote of the Chapter (*Const.*, 186, §2).
12. Any reports, with the exception of confidential information, are to be sent to all solemnly professed friars in enough time to be able to examine them and discuss them in the communities (cf. *Gen. Stat.*, 121 and 122) and/or in the Pre-Chapter Assembly.
13. The report of the Minister Provincial, which has the primary role of examining if the Province is following the charism and legislation of the Order and is in accordance with the guidelines of the General Chapter (included in the Six-Year Plan of the Order) and the Province's Four-Year Plan, should have a broad outline and bring to the fore both the positive and problematic aspects of the Province.
14. Before the first session, the Minister Provincial and the Secretary of the Province examine the credentials or the minutes of the elections of the Delegates. If a committee had been named for counting the ballots in the election of Delegates by the Province, its members shall authenticate the minutes of its work. When this is done, the Secretary of the Province shall publish the list of voting members (*Gen. Stat.*, 120).

The Pre-Chapter Assembly

15. After the proclamation of the elected Delegates, the Minister Provincial shall convene the Pre-Chapter Assembly, which, as far as possible, provides for the participation of all the friars of the Province who have active voice with the aim of carrying out a synodal evaluation of the life of the Province, identifying prospects for the future and possibly conducting a poll for the election of the Minister Provincial.

Unless the Minister General decides otherwise, it is up to the previous Chapter to decide on the advisability of celebrating the Pre-Chapter Assembly and on the advisability of carrying out a poll for the election of the Minister Provincial.

For the first Chapter of the Province / Custody, which is to be celebrated according to this Directory, this decision shall be made by the Minister Provincial and his Definitory.

Bearing in mind the principle of synodality, which must always be respected, this Assembly can take place in different ways, as suggested by the possibilities and traditions of the Province:

- a) by gathering the friars of the Province in a single location or in a single assembly or in several assemblies spread out over several weeks;
- b) by gathering the friars of the Province in several assemblies divided into zones, so as to facilitate the convergence of friars from neighboring friaries;
- c) by gathering the friars of the Province by means of a mixed system, comprised of both physical and virtual attendance, in order to facilitate the participation of friars residing outside the Province

Provision should be made for the duration of each Assembly's celebration, which may last several days.

16. During the Pre-Chapter Assembly:

a. The main reports are read (from the Minister Provincial, the Visitor, the Provincial Definitory—where required, and the Econom) which beforehand will have been sent to the friars. Should the Province have a Provincial Custody (s) the report from the Custody shall be made in accordance with the Provincial Statutes (cf. *Gen. Stat.*, 110, §2).

It is up to the Minister Provincial and his Definitory to decide whether it is appropriate to request reports from the Guardians as well.

b. The evaluation of the life of the Province is carried out based on the indications given in the previous point. This evaluation shall take place in groups, with suitable time allotted (e.g. one and a half or two days), taking care, in the summaries of the respective secretaries, to indicate the assessments and prospects that were discussed (and how intensively they were discussed). At the start of the first meeting, each group shall choose its own secretary. To conduct the evaluation, use the methodological suggestion found in Appendix E of this Directory or, alternatively, choose another method, provided it is well specified and previously approved by the Minister Provincial with his Definitory.

c. At the proposal of the outgoing Definitory, each Pre-Chapter Assembly shall elect the friars to comprise the Commission for drafting the *Summary and Proposal Regarding the Life of the Province Document*, once the Pre-Chapter Assembly has concluded. They must be chosen from among the friars who will be participating in the Chapter, in a number not to exceed two (2) from each Pre-Chapter Assembly, or three (3) in the case of a single Pre-Chapter Assembly. These friars are tasked with collecting the summaries of the secretaries of the groups during the Pre-Chapter Assembly.

d. If it has been decided that a poll should be taken for the election of the Minister Provincial, the counting of the ballots takes place immediately after the conclusion of the Pre-Chapter Assembly (or after the last of the Pre-Chapter Assemblies) and the results are then communicated to the entire Province.

17. During the period between the Pre-Chapter Assembly and the beginning of the First Part of the Chapter:

a. The Commission for drafting the *Summary and Proposal Regarding the Life of the Province Document*, whose members were elected at the Pre-Chapter Assembly, shall meet together to work on this document. The document must offer, in addition to the results of the evaluation, indications on the issues to be addressed during the Chapter.

b. The Provincial Secretary sends the *Summary and Proposal Regarding the Life of the Province Document* to all the friars so that they can read it in their communities. They may reserve the right to propose additional changes to the text to be presented in the Chapter.

c. The friars of the Province send the ballots for the election of the Minister Provincial, where required by the Provincial Statutes (cf. *Gen. Stat.*, 117).

Members and Organisms of the Chapter

18. Members of the Chapter

Only solemnly professed friars may participate in the Provincial Chapter; the temporary professed

cannot take part, even as “auditors.” Members of the Chapter are the Minister General or his delegate, the former Minister General in his home Province, the Minister Provincial, the former Minister Provincial who left office during the last ordinary Chapter (but not after the next Ordinary Chapter), the Provincial Custodes, the Provincial Definitors, the Delegates elected according to the General Statutes, unless the Minister General with the consent of his Definitory decides otherwise regarding the participation of all solemnly professed friars according to the norms of the Statutes (Const., 210, §2); and the Assistant General in the Chapters of the Provinces and Custodies belonging to his Conference or Federation (*Gen. Stat.*, 116 §3).

The participation of all the solemnly professed friars of the Province in a Provincial Chapter requires the consent of the Minister General and his Definitory (cf. *Gen. Stat.*, 116, §1).

19. The *Praeses* of the Chapter

The *Praeses* of the Ordinary Provincial Chapter is the Minister General or his delegate up to the end of the fourth session (*Const.*, 210, §1). The other sessions are presided over by the Minister Provincial (*Const.*, 210, §1). The *Praeses* of the Extraordinary Provincial Chapter is the Minister Provincial.

The *Praeses* of the Provincial Custodial Chapter, up to the end of the fourth session, is the Minister Provincial or his Delegate. If the Minister General decides to take part in a Chapter of the Custody, then he is the *Praeses* (cf. *Gen. Stat.*, 128, §1).

20. The Steering Committee

The Steering Committee (*Consilium praesidentiae*) must see to it that the Chapter is conducted according to this Directory and that the norms of common and particular law are faithfully observed. So, too, doubts and questions concerning the agenda and voting procedures are to be resolved by this committee. It is also the responsibility of the steering committee to examine the Minutes of the Chapter and, if they are found to be accurate, to sign them together with the Secretary in the name of the Capitulars (*Gen. Stat.*, 89, §1-2). This committee is composed of the *Praeses* of the Chapter, who is President of the committee, and at least three Capitulars, who are to be elected or confirmed at the first session (cf. *Gen. Stat.*, 88, §1-2). It is advisable that the members of the Steering Committee also serve as presidents or moderators of any work groups at the Chapter.

The members of the Steering Committee can be either

- elected in Chapter by written ballot (by individual vote or by writing three names on a single ballot);
- named in advance by the Minister Provincial with his Definitory and confirmed by the Chapter assembly by a secret ballot. If the majority of the assembly is in favor, this may also be done by a show of hands.

After his election, that is after the third session, the Minister Provincial also becomes a member of the Steering Committee (cf. *Gen. Stat.*, 88, §2).

At the discretion of the *Praeses* of the Chapter, the Assistant General of the Area can also be part of the Steering Committee.

21. The Secretary of the Chapter (the Actuary)

The Secretary of the Chapter (the Actuary) functions as the Chapter's notary, and records the proceedings of all the Chapter sessions and edits the Minutes. He is nominated in advance of the Chapter by the Minister Provincial with his Definitory and then confirmed by the Chapter in its first session (cf. *Gen. Stat.*, 88, §1). It is also possible to confirm any assistants of the Actuary, potentially chosen from among the non-voting friars at the Chapter and nominated by the Minister Provincial or Custos with his Definitory before the Chapter begins (cf. *Gen. Stat.*, 88, § 1).

22. The Grievance Committee

The Grievance Committee, composed of three Capitulars, shall take into consideration the questions, complaints or denunciations made to the Chapter and referred to them by the Steering Committee: they are to study them and, if opportune to do so, propose responses or solutions for the evaluation and decision of the Chapter (*Gen. Stat.*, 90, §1). They are chosen at the beginning of the Chapter (first session) and can be chosen in the same type of procedure indicated for the election of the Steering Committee (see above, no. 20). They choose one of their members as president, who will report to the Chapter on the results of their work.

23. The Finance Committee

The Finance Committee is composed of three members, possibly with some expertise in the field of administration. Among these, at least one, religious or lay, must be a qualified specialist. They shall examine all the financial records of the Provincial administration² and attest to their accuracy (cf. *Gen. Stat.*, 90, §2). The Provincial Econom must give them all the information they need. The members of the Finance Committee are nominated by the Definitory, unless they have already been appointed during the Chapter (see above, no. 8). They choose one of their own members as president, who will report to the Chapter on the results of their work.

The Provincial Statutes can stipulate that, in order to perform their work as accurately as possible, the Finance Committee can report on their conclusions in the second part of the Chapter. In this case, it is more appropriate to have the Provincial Econom (and the Exactor) elected in the second part of the Chapter, after having heard the report of the Finance Committee.

24. Other Particular Responsibilities

Before the Chapter, the Minister Provincial should choose some friars, including non-Capitulars, with special tasks of a practical nature, to guarantee the proper functioning of the Chapter. These could include, for example, a liturgist, someone to take care of supplies (Econom), additional members of the Chapter Secretariat, someone in charge of keeping the friars not at the Chapter informed of the Chapter's proceedings (by fax, e-mail, etc.) and others.

² For example, in examining the finances of the friaries, the auditors can use the results of the canonical visitation and / or the documents present in the Provincial / Custodial curia.

25. Work Groups

The members of the Chapter should be divided into work groups to facilitate the Chapter's work and help all members take an active participation in the Chapter, unless the Chapter decides that this should be done in the Chapter assembly. The Minister Provincial may take part in one of the work groups so as to give his own contribution.

The composition of the groups can be established in advance by the Minister Provincial, with his Definitory, in order to guarantee a diversity of age, expertise, origin, etc. The number of work groups is to be determined by the number of voting members of the Chapter itself. The Steering Committee is to decide what the Chapter should work on in the groups. At the beginning of their first meeting, each group will choose a *Secretary-reporter*; these can also be designated in advance by the Minister Provincial and confirmed by the group.

26. The Moderator of the Chapter Assembly

If it is considered opportune, the Chapter may name one or more Moderators of the Chapter Assembly (if more than one, they will take turns): they are to conduct the Chapter work in assembly according to the method determined by the Steering Committee, giving the floor to those who request it, seeing to it that time limits are respected, proposing an end to discussion and putting the matter to a vote, etc. (cf. *Gen. Stat.*, 96). In performing his work, the Moderator must follow the guidelines of this Directory, of the Steering Committee and/or the *Praeses*. He may be elected by ballot or appointed by the Minister Provincial and confirmed by the Chapter. If the Minister Provincial with his Definitory deem it advisable, in order to have a particularly skilled person, they may choose as a Moderator a person who is not a member of the Chapter.

Voting and Elections

27. For the validity of Chapter acts the presence of at least two-thirds of the voting members is required (*Const.*, 187, §1).
28. For a vote to be valid, it must be: free, secret, certain, absolute, determinate (*CIC*, can. 172, §1). Hence, blank and invalid ballots are completely ignored and not reckoned in the majority that is required. Similarly, the abstentions are not reckoned in an election. However, the following is to be taken into consideration:
 - in elections, the majority is calculated on the basis of the valid votes, therefore excluding the invalid ballots and abstentions;
 - in voting on decisions or for the approval of legislative texts the majority is calculated based on the number present, except for cases that are expressly treated otherwise (*Const.*, 187, §3).
29. The term absolute majority means that more than half the votes must be in favor.³ To have a qualified majority two thirds of the votes are required, without taking into consideration any fractions. If the total number of the votes cannot be divided into three equal parts, one additional vote is required⁴.
30. Ministers Provincial and Provincial Custodes can remain in office only for two consecutive terms

³ For example, the absolute majority of 25 is 13, of 47 is 24, of 60 is 31 and of 61 is 31.

⁴ For example, the qualified majority of 60 is 40, of 90 is 60, of 62 is 42, 91 is 61 (*Gen. Chap.* 2013).

(*Const.*, 191, §3), while Provincial and Custodial Definitors, in order to be elected for a third term, must reach a qualified majority of the votes, namely, two thirds, within the first two ballots. (cf. *Const.*, 191, §2).

31. To be appointed for a third term in the same friary, Guardians also must receive a qualified majority in the balloting (cf. *Const.*, 191, §2).
32. If in voting relative to an appointment (e.g. the Vicar Provincial, a Guardian, etc.), an absolute majority is required and a candidate receives the exact number of positive and negative votes, he may be presented for a second balloting. If the same results are obtained a second time, his name may not be presented on a third ballot.

In voting relative to an appointment the *Praeses* does not have the faculty of breaking a tie vote; however, in this case he may propose the same person for a second time after having given further explanation, if necessary, of the reasons for his choice. In other cases the *Praeses* can break tie votes (*CIC*, can. 119, §2). The person whose name is proposed for an office by voting abstains from voting; his abstention must be recorded in the minutes with the formula "*ipso non suffragante*".

33. Whenever the person elected does not accept the election and clearly and definitively expresses his refusal, the entire election process must be repeated, beginning with the first ballot (*CIC*, can. 177, §2). In this case, too, a person being elected for a third consecutive term must obtain a qualified majority on the first or second ballot.
34. In addition to election, recourse to postulation is also possible; this consists in the election of a person who does not have passive voice. Such an election, however, requires two thirds of the votes, to be reached on the first or second ballot, and the confirmation of the competent authority (*CIC*, cann. 180-183).
35. After their election and acceptance of the office, the Superiors (Ministers Provincial, General Custodes, Provincial and Custodial Vicars, Guardians) must be confirmed by the *Praeses* of the Chapter (*CIC*, can. 625, §3). This confirmation must be written and countersigned by the Secretary of the Chapter (*CIC*, can. 179, §1-5).
36. Cases in which a matter contrary to common law or a question of extreme importance is to be examined in plenary session require
 - the prior approval of the Steering Committee if the case or question is to be discussed in the Chapter hall;
 - the agreement of an absolute majority of the assembly;
 - a qualified majority of those present for any solution or decision (*Gen. Stat.*, 93, §2)
37. If some Capitulars have sufficient reason to believe that a certain proposal was disregarded, the proposal must be discussed on the floor, if a petition to this effect, signed by one-third of the voting members, has been received (*Gen. Stat.*, 94).
38. To reopen discussion on a proposal already accepted or rejected, it is necessary that a petition made to the Steering Committee and signed by at least one-third of the voting members be approved by a qualified majority of those present (*Gen. Stat.*, 95).
39. It is the right of the moderator of the Chapter to end discussion and bring an issue to a vote. Any voting member, however, may propose an end to the debate and an immediate vote, or the

postponement of a vote. Such resolutions require approval by an absolute majority of those present (*Gen. Stat.*, 96).

40. Prior to the third session of the Chapter, the Steering Committee appoints two voting members as tellers and two friars to read the ballots. These names are submitted for the approval of the Chapter in due time (*Gen. Stat.*, 97, §1).

Election by Ballot before the Chapter

41. When the Minister Provincial is elected by written ballot before the Chapter (cf. *Gen. Stat.*, 117, §3b), care should be taken to send the ballots in due time, in a way that all those having the right to vote will be able to send their ballot. The outgoing Minister Provincial, with the consent of his Definitory, will appoint a committee for counting the ballots (cf. *Gen. Stat.*, 117, §3b 1); said committee is to be composed of three members, one of whom is the president and another, the secretary. The secretary will prepare the minutes of the various ballots (date on which each ballot was sent, the number of ballots sent, the number received, the number of votes, etc.). The minutes, signed by the president as well, are to be presented to the *Praeses* after the first session.

The Minister General is to be informed of the election, including by telephone or other media, for his consent and necessary confirmation (cf. *Const.*, 191, §5). The results of the election are not published until the confirmation is given (cf. *Gen. Stat.*, 117, §3b-1) He begins his mandate at the third session of the Ordinary Provincial Chapter, after having made a profession of faith and taken an oath (see below no. 93).

42. If the Province adopts the system of electing the Minister Provincial by mail, with the ballots to be opened in the Chapter, the ballots must be kept until the third session of the Ordinary Provincial Chapter.

Special Questions

43. If letters are addressed to the Chapter, they are handed over to the *Praeses*. If they concern problems or particular questions, the *Praeses* shall evaluate them with the members of the Steering Committee and, together with them, eventually hand them over to the grievance committee, which will examine them and, if necessary, submit them to the judgment of the entire Chapter.
44. Complaints against the Minister Provincial or against other persons must be presented in writing along with supporting evidence and duly signed by the accuser. They shall not be accepted in any other form (cf. *Gen. Stat.*, 90, §1). They are to be examined and discussed before the conclusion of the second session of the Chapter.
45. The Steward of the Chapter shall see to it that all necessary items are made ready in the Chapter hall: the Gospels, a copy of the Code of Canon Law, the Constitutions of our Order, the General Statutes and this Directory, ballot papers for the elections, a ballot-box, the list of voting members indicated in no. 49 of this Directory, etc.

46. NOTES

- a. For a just reason and with a two-thirds vote of the Chapter, this Directory can be modified but only as regards the order of business.

- b. This Directory is intended for the celebration of the Ordinary Provincial Chapter. In as far as applicable, it should also be followed in the Extraordinary Provincial Chapter and, with due observance of law and in keeping with *Const.*, 221 and 222, in Custodial Chapters.
- c. Practical guidelines (e.g. time limits for written and oral interventions, procedure for nominations for some internal responsibilities of the Chapter, norms concerning the use of mass media, etc. etc.) may be added to this Directory provided that they do not contradict it. These norms are to be approved during the first session of the Chapter.

THE FIRST PART OF THE CHAPTER

FIRST SESSION

47. To create an atmosphere that helps everyone understand that a Chapter is not only a juridical requirement, but also a spiritual-charismatic event, as a moment of evangelical discernment and gathering in true brotherhood, the Chapter should be preceded by (or at another time) an appropriate time of prayer such as:
- a time of spiritual reflection, for example, a day of recollection;
 - and/or a special liturgical celebration, such as a Votive Mass of the Holy Spirit, or of St. Francis of Assisi, or the patron of the Province, or “for a spiritual gathering”, etc.;
 - or by the celebration of a part of the Liturgy of the Hours, with an added reading chosen appropriately for the occasion (for example from the Franciscan sources or Church documents on consecrated life);
 - or an *ad hoc* celebration such as a prayer vigil prepared specifically for the occasion.
48. When the Capitulars are assembled in the Chapter hall, the *Praeses* opens the work by inviting everyone to recite a prayer to be chosen from those found in Appendix A of this Directory. Then the *Praeses* asks the assembly to confirm the Chapter Secretary already nominated by the Minister Provincial (see above, no. 21; *Gen. Stat.*, 88, §1).

When he has been confirmed, the Secretary, standing in front of the *Praeses*, takes the oath to fulfill his duties faithfully, saying:

I, Friar..., promise to perform my duties as Secretary of the Chapter faithfully in all matters and in full.

The *Praeses* adds:

On behalf of this Province, be empowered to notify and inform all persons concerned of the commands of this Chapter, and to issue public notices and documents. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

49. Then, on the instructions of the *Praeses*, the Secretary takes a roll call of the Capitulars. Each one is to respond: “*Present*”. He follows this order: the *Praeses*, any ex-Minister General of the Province, the Assistant General (*Gen. Stat.*, 116 §3), the Minister Provincial, the ex-Minister Provincial who left office at the last Ordinary Chapter, the Provincial Custodes, the Provincial Definitors and the Delegates following the order of solemn profession (cf. *Const.*, 210, §2; *Gen. Stat.*, 22, §2). Meanwhile the *Praeses* checks the attendance and verifies the legitimacy of the assembly. He inquires the reasons for any absences, as for the validity of Chapter acts the presence of two-thirds of the voting members is required (*Const.*, 187, §1).
50. The *Praeses* invites the Secretary of the Chapter to read, in his name, the declaration of the opening of the Chapter. All stand.

In the name of the Lord, as *Praeses* of this Chapter, I, Friar..., the [No.] Minister General of the Order of Friars Minor Conventual after the Seraphic Patriarch St. Francis and *Praeses* of this Chapter (If the Minister General is not presiding, the *Praeses* says: “I, Friar, ..., Delegate of the Minister General and *Praeses* of this Chapter”), declare that the Ordinary Provincial Chapter of the Province of..... is now open.

I invite everyone to safeguard the well-being of the Province: examining the life and activities of its friars in the light of the Gospel, our Rule and Constitutions and the teaching of the Church; proceeding to the election of the Minister Provincial and of all those who, according to these norms, are to render the service of authority and leadership; planning the Province’s path for the next four years and seeking solutions for the problems that the Chapter will choose to discuss.

All this is to take place in an atmosphere of prayer, fraternity, mutual listening and joint discernment, for the greater glory of God, in a sincere search for the good of this Province and the whole Order, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit and the protection of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Patroness of our Order, of St. Joseph her Spouse, and of all the men and women Franciscan saints, especially our Seraphic Father St. Francis, asking his blessing for you.

Given at our friary of..., in the city of..., on the...day of the month of..., in the year....

Friar..., *Praeses*
Friar..., Chapter Secretary

51. The Chapter proceeds to the establishment of:
- a) the Steering Committee, with the choice of at least three members (it is advisable that the same persons serve as presidents or moderators of the work groups);
 - b) the Grievance Committee;
 - c) the Moderator(s) if it has been decided to have any).

Their nomination is to follow the procedures listed in the Introduction (nos. 20, 22 and 26).

52. The *Praeses* presents and asks the Capitulars to approve the *horarium* prepared by the Minister Provincial with his Definitory, and any other proposals of a practical nature for the smooth functioning of the Chapter. Then, if he chooses, he addresses the Capitulars with a brief exhortation, emphasizing

the importance of the Chapter and urging them to participate in it with a purity of spirit, committing themselves to work in the light of the Spirit and in fidelity to our charism.

- 53.** The Secretary of the Chapter next reads the following notices/tasks:
- a. Any documents addressed to the Chapter are to be immediately handed over to the *Praeses*.
 - b. The commissions should hold their meetings in the intervals between the plenary sessions.
 - c. Before elections the Capitulars may, responsibly and charitably, discuss among themselves and with the *Praeses* of the Chapter, the best-qualified candidates (cf. *Gen. Stat.*, 91).
 - d. Capitulars should attend the sessions unless they are excused by the *Praeses* and they should be dressed in habit.

- 54.** After the reading, on the instruction of the *Praeses*, the Secretary announces the second session:

The second session of the Provincial Chapter to hear the reports on the state of the Province and of the individual friaries will be held on the... day of the month of..., in the year..., at... a.m. /p.m.

- 55.** Next, after the prayer of thanksgiving (see Appendix A), the Assembly is dissolved.

SECOND SESSION

In the event that the Pre-Chapter Assembly was celebrated (described in nos. 15-17), the procedure described in nos. 56-60 is followed. If the Pre-Chapter Assembly was not celebrated, the procedure described in nos. 61-67 is used.

In the event that the Pre-Chapter Assembly was celebrated

56. After the opening prayer (to be chosen from Appendix A of this Directory), on the instruction of the *Praeses*, the Secretary takes the roll call. This may be omitted when there is no break between the first and second sessions.
57. At this point, the *Praeses* calls upon the drafters of the *Summary and Proposal Regarding the Life of the Province Document* to present their *Document*. The Capitulars must have a copy of the report that is being presented.

Other reports should also be read in summary form, which - in the judgment of the outgoing Provincial Definitory and the preparatory Commission for the *Summary and Proposal Regarding the Life of the Province Document* - are of particular importance for future decisions of the Chapter.

The editors of the main reports (the General Visitator, the Minister Provincial and the Provincial Econom) could highlight those elements of the reports which in their opinion are of particular importance and which have not been sufficiently taken into consideration in the Pre-Chapter Assembly, or which have not been given due weight in the *Summary and Proposal Regarding the Life of the Province Document*.

At the end of the reading, requests for further explanation or clarification on statements contained in the *Document* are possible. In addition, after the *Summary Document* has been read, observations received from the communities may also be read.

Once any additions have been made to the *Summary and Proposal Regarding the Life of the Province Document*, it is approved by the Chapter.

58. Before concluding the second session, the *Praeses* invites the Chairmen of the Grievance and Finance Committees to report on their work. The report must be presented in the Chapter hall by the respective Committee Chairman and delivered in writing to the Chapter Secretary, signed by all of the Committee members.
59. After the reading, on the instruction of the *Praeses*, the Secretary announces the third session:

The third session of the Provincial Chapter to hear the reports on the state of the Province and of the individual friaries will be held on the... day of the month of..., in the year..., at... a.m. /p.m.

60. Next, after the prayer of thanksgiving (see Appendix A), the Assembly is dissolved.

In the Event That the Pre-Chapter Assembly Was Not Celebrated

61. After the opening prayer (to be chosen from Appendix A of this Directory), on the instruction of the *Praeses*, the Secretary takes the roll call. This may be omitted when there is no break between the first and second sessions.

62. Next the chapter reports are read. It is best to read the following reports in their entirety:

- a) the report of the General Visitor (if any),
- b) the report of the Minister Provincial,
- c) the report of the Provincial Econom.

If the above-named reports are too long, a summary may be prepared, but in such a way that gives the Capitulars an understanding of the most important contents. This presupposes that the reports are sent in advance (at least a month before) to all the Capitulars. The report of the Provincial Econom is distributed, read and copies collected in the Chapter. It is the right and duty of each Capitular to be familiar with the administration of the Province: both its financial activity for the quadrennial and the state of its patrimony. The other reports to the Chapter are determined according to the Provincial Statutes. In any case, however, there should be reports from:

- the chairmen of any Provincial commissions, especially the initial formation and ongoing formation commissions;
- the delegate for the Militia of the Immaculate;
- the vocations promoter,
- those in charge of Provincial institutions.

The report on any Provincial Custodies is to be given in accord with the Provincial Statutes (cf. *Gen. Stat.* 110, § 2).

These reports can be given in summary form, according to the amount of time agreed upon during the organizational part of the Chapter. The entire text of the reports, however, must be presented to the Capitulars before the Chapter. The Capitulars, obviously, are bound by conscience to come to the Chapter well prepared for it.

63. The *Praeses* calls on these persons, beginning with the General Visitor or Minister Provincial to present their reports. Each Capitular is to have a copy of the report or summary that is presented. At the end of the reading of the report, the Capitulars may ask for clarification or further information on statements contained in the report, but they are not to begin a discussion of the contents of the report or any problems it highlighted.

64. When the reports have been read, the *Praeses* reminds those present about the purpose of this chapter session, which is not so much to analyze the reports as to *examine the life and activity* of the Province, underscoring the fact that this examination is an important and essential right and duty of the Provincial Chapter. For this reason, in distributing the work of the Chapter over the various days, sufficient time should be given to the second session of the Chapter.

To conduct the evaluation, use the methodological suggestion found in Appendix E of this Directory or, alternatively, choose another method, provided it is well specified and previously approved by the Minister Provincial, with his Definitory.

65. If work groups are planned, the Chapter begins working in these groups, according to a methodology that must be prepared in advance and presented to the assembly.

66. Following the group work, the Capitulars will gather in plenary assembly to hear the presentations of each group made by their respective-secretary-relators or a synthesis of them. If time allows, the

Praeses can allow a discussion in the Chapter hall in order to allow further clarification, evaluation and a better understanding of the life of the Province. It is advisable that the second session is not closed until the Chapter has formulated, if necessary by an *ad hoc* committee, a document regarding its examination and evaluation, the *Summary and Proposal Regarding the Life of the Province Document*.

The *Summary and Proposal Regarding the Life of the Province Document* is approved by the Chapter.

67. Before the close of the second session, the *Praeses* instructs, the Chapter Secretary to call the chairmen of the Grievance Committee and the Finance Committee to present their reports to the Chapter. The report is to be presented in the Chapter hall by the committee chairmen and a written copy, signed by all the committee members, given to the Chapter Secretary.

Finally, on the instruction of the *Praeses*, the Chapter Secretary announces the third session:

The third session of the Provincial Chapter, for the election of the Minister Provincial, will be held on the... day of the month of..., in the year..., at... a.m./p.m.

Following a prayer of thanksgiving (see Appendix A), the assembly is dismissed.

THIRD SESSION

Election of the Minister Provincial

68. Whenever the Minister Provincial is to be elected by the Capitulars are by all the solemnly professed friars *per praesentiam* (*Gen. Stat.*, 117, §3a), the votive Mass of the Holy Spirit is to be celebrated in the morning.
69. Gathered in assembly at the fixed time, after an opening prayer, the procedure is carried out according to the method chosen for the election of the Minister Provincial.
70. If the Minister Provincial is to be elected by mail, with all the balloting before the Chapter (cf. *Gen. Stat.*, 117, §3b), the *Praeses* invites the President of the Elections Committee (or if he is not present, the Committee Secretary or the Provincial Secretary) to read the results of the various ballots, the election and the Minister General's letter of confirmation. Then the Chapter Secretary declares:

I, Friar..., Secretary of this Provincial Chapter, on behalf of all legitimately assembled here with the right according to the Rule and Constitutions to elect the Minister Provincial, hereby declare that on (date when the counting of the ballots was finished) Friar, having obtained the number of votes required, has been legitimately elected Minister Provincial of this Province; he has accepted and has been canonically confirmed by the Minister General.

The Chapter proceeds as indicated in this Directory in no. 93 and following.

71. *If the Minister Provincial is elected by mail with the ballots to be counted in Chapter* (cf. *Gen. Stat.*, 117, §3c), it is possible to open the external envelopes, the ones bearing the signature of the friar voting, outside the Chapter before the second session. The *Praeses*, with the advice of the Steering Committee, chooses for this purpose two Capitulars who, together with the Chapter Secretary, shall open the envelopes and count the number of internal envelopes, ascertaining that this number is not less than two thirds of those having the right to vote and not greater than the number of ballots sent (cf. *CIC*, can. 173, §2-3). When the friars are gathered, after the opening prayer the Chapter Secretary will inform the assembly of the number of ballots sent and received. They then proceed to the opening of the internal envelopes and the reading of the votes, following this Directory, no. 80 onwards. If no one is elected, the Chapter proceeds to the election of the Minister Provincial, following the procedure indicated in this Directory in no. 74. This also holds for cases of direct suffrage by mail with a maximum of three ballots when no one has received the necessary majority, as well as when the person elected by direct suffrage does not accept (cf. *Gen. Stat.*, 117, §3b-2).
72. *If the Minister Provincial is elected in Chapter* by the Capitulars, or by all the solemnly professed members of the Province, when all are gathered, they sing the *Veni Creator* or some other hymn invoking the Holy Spirit, with the following closing prayer recited by the *Praeses*:

V. Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created.

R. And you shall renew the face of the earth,

Let us pray.

O God, who taught the hearts of the faithful by the light of the Holy Spirit, grant that by the gift of the same Spirit we may be always truly wise and ever rejoice in his consolation.

Enlighten our minds so that, with pure hearts and uprightness we may choose the one who is to serve this fraternity, called to follow you on the way of the Gospel, in eternal praise of your name, in the search for perfect charity and the proclamation of your Kingdom. You who live and reign for ever and ever. Amen.

73. When the Minister Provincial is to be elected by all the solemnly professed friars per *praesentiam*, and the Pre-Chapter Assembly has been celebrated, and if the Steering Committee deems it appropriate, at this point the final text of the *Summary and Proposal Regarding the Life of the Province Document*, approved by the Chapter, is to be read to all the friars (see above, no. 57).
74. Unless the Chapter decides otherwise, the Chapter Secretary asks the non-Capitulars to leave. He then takes the roll call and the *Praeses* determines that at least two thirds of those with the right to vote are present. He then has the Secretary read the following from the Constitutions and General Statutes:

a) *The Manner of Electing the Minister Provincial*

Const., 191, §1: In holding elections, universal law and the proper law of the Order are to be observed. However, except for the prescriptions of the following paragraphs 2 and 4, he is to be considered elected and proclaimed as such by the presider of the electoral college who, after the invalid votes have been subtracted, has obtained an absolute majority or who, after two inconclusive ballots, has obtained a relative majority in the third. If the result is a tie after the third ballot, the elder in solemn profession and then in age is to be considered elected.

Const., 191, §3: Election to the offices of Minister General, General Definitor, Minister Provincial, and Custos is limited to only two consecutive terms.

Const., 191, §4: Five ballots are allowed for the election of the Minister General, Minister Provincial and General Custos. After the second inconclusive ballot, candidates requiring a qualified majority lack passive voice. In the fifth ballot only the two who received the highest number of votes in the fourth ballot enjoy passive voice; if several obtain the same highest number of votes, they are all candidates; all candidates lack active voice in the fifth ballot. He is to be considered elected who receives a relative majority of the votes and, in the case of a tie, the eldest in solemn profession and then in age.

b) *Qualities of a Minister Provincial*

Const., Chapter VI, the Government of the Order, Spiritual Introduction, g.

The Seraphic Father wanted the Ministers Provincial— this holds true as well for Custodes— "to be friendly to the lesser ones, and peaceful and kind so that those who committed faults would not be afraid to entrust themselves to their affection. He wanted them to be moderate in commanding, gracious when offended, more willing to bear injuries than to inflict them, enemies of vice but healers of the vice-ridden. In short, he wanted them to be men whose life would be a mirror of discipline for others."

Const., Chapter VI, the Government of the Order, Spiritual Introduction, h.

“In the name of the Lord! Let all the brothers who have been designated the ministers and servants of the other brothers assign their brothers in the provinces and places where they may be, and let them frequently visit, admonish and encourage them spiritually. ... Let the ministers and servants remember what the Lord says: ‘I have not come to be served, but to serve’; and because the care of the brothers’ souls has been entrusted to them, if anything is lost on account of their fault or bad example, they will have to render an account before the Lord Jesus Christ on the day of judgment.”

Const., 214: To be elected Minister Provincial, a friar is to be solemnly professed for at least five years and possess maturity, prudence, Franciscan expertise and spirit, and the other requisites of universal law.⁵

Const., 215: The Minister Provincial, in a spirit of love and concern for all, is to be diligent in ensuring that the friars lead a life ever more in conformity with the Rule and Constitutions, for their own sanctification and for the edification of the brotherhood and of the Church.

Const., 216: The Minister Provincial has proper ordinary power over the entire Province, over the Custodies dependent upon it, over each Friary and house, and over each and every friar according to the norms of proper law⁶.

75. The *Praeses* asks the Capitulars: *Do you swear to vote for the person whom in conscience you consider best suited to the office of Minister Provincial?*

The Capitulars reply: *We do!*

76. After this, the *Praeses*, if he sees fit, may say a few words about the qualities needed in a Minister Provincial, and the importance of this moment.

77. The election of the Minister Provincial is by written ballot. The *Praeses* chooses two of the friars with the right to vote as tellers and asks the Chapter to confirm them. It is their duty to distribute the ballots, collect them and help the Chapter Secretary to count them.

78. The Capitulars should be reminded to write only the name and surname of the candidate of their choice without additional words or marks. When requested by the *Praeses*, the tellers distribute a ballot-paper to each Capitular; they are to be prepared in advance with the following words:

I elect/postulate as Minister Provincial of this Province Friar.....

When the ballot has been marked, the friar folds it in and places it in the ballot box or hands it to the tellers.

79. Should one of the persons with the right to vote is in the house in which the Chapter is being held but is too ill to be present in the Chapter hall, his vote will be collected by tellers especially elected for this purpose. The sick person fills in the ballot-paper secretly, then folds it and places it in an envelope, which he then seals, and hands to the tellers. The tellers return directly to the Chapter hall and give the envelope to the *Praeses*, who then opens the envelope, removes the ballot-paper and with raised hand and fingers extended so that all may see he places the ballot in the ballot box.

⁵ cf. CIC, canons 129, §1; 134, §1; 274, §1 and CCEO, canons 979, §1; 984, §3; 371, §1.

⁶ cf. CIC, canons 134, §1, 617, and 620.

80. When all the ballots have been placed in the ballot box, one of the tellers, in the presence of the *Praeses*, counts the ballot-papers; the *Praeses* then checks whether they are the same as the number of those voting. If the number of votes exceeds the number of electors, the act is null (*CIC*, can. 173, §2-3).

81. The *Praeses* proposes to the Chapter the names of two friars to read the ballots; they do not have to be members of the Chapter. The *Praeses* asks the Capitulars:

Do you agree that Friar..., and Friar... be the readers of the votes?

When this has been affirmed, the two friars are called. In the presence of the *Praeses* they promise:

We, Friar... and Friar..., promise to faithfully read the ballots and to maintain absolute secrecy should we recognize how anyone has voted.

82. The *Praeses* opens and checks each ballot and then passes it to one of the readers who reads it in a loud and clear voice to the whole assembly. The other reader checks it and says: **Correct**.

83. While the ballots are being read the Secretary keeps a tally of the votes received by each person; the tellers do the same. When the votes have been counted, the Chapter Secretary checks that his count agrees with those of the tellers.

84. One who receives an absolute majority is elected, with the possibility of five ballots. If nobody is elected or postulated in the first ballot, a second ballot is taken. After a second inconclusive ballot, all candidates requiring a two-thirds majority, including the Minister Provincial who is ending a second consecutive term, are eliminated. In the third and fourth ballots, an absolute majority is still required. In the fifth ballot, only those two with the greatest number of votes in the fourth ballot enjoy passive voice except that in the event of a tied vote all who had an equal majority remain candidates. In this fifth ballot the candidates do not enjoy active voice and the election goes to the one who has the greatest number of votes and in the event of a tie to the senior first by solemn profession and then by age.

85. When the voting has ended, the Chapter Secretary declares the results, giving the number of votes received by each candidate in ascending order.

If no one has received the necessary majority, he declares:

We do not have an election. The number of voters is... (the number of invalid votes is..., the number of blank ballots is...) and the number of valid votes is.... Friar... received ... votes; Friar... received... votes, etc. No one has received the required majority.

The *Praeses* then invites the Capitulars to proceed to the next vote.

86. When an election is had, the Secretary declares the result giving the number of votes received by each candidate in ascending order:

We have an election. The number of voters is..., (the number of invalid votes is..., the number of blank ballots is...) and the number of valid votes is.... Friar... received... votes, Friar... received... votes [etc.], and Friar... received the remaining... votes

87. Immediately, the *Praeses* asks the assembly:

Does anyone of you raise an objection to Friar...as Minister Provincial or to the manner of his election?

If no objection is raised, the established norm of *Gen. Stat.*, 117, §4 shall be followed, which reads: It is advisable that the Minister General or his delegate, prior to any eventual confirmation, personally confer with the one elected.

If anyone raises an objection, the *Praeses* of the Chapter shall ask for a break to consider the arguments being put forward. Then, in consultation with the Steering Committee, he shall decide on the next course of action.

88. After conferring with the person elected, the *Praeses* addresses the person elected and asks him:

Friar..., you have been canonically elected Minister Provincial of the Province of... Do you agree to serve in this ministry for the next four years?

Although a newly elected Minister Provincial is allowed up to twenty-four hours deliberation, nevertheless, in order to avoid damage to the government of the Province and burden to the Chapter and inconvenience to the Capitulars, he should humbly accept office in a spirit of obedience and service

89. Upon agreement of election, the *Praeses* of the Chapter confirms the election in these words:

Friar... I confirm your election as Minister Provincial and from this moment, I declare you in full possession of your office.

The *Praeses* of the Chapter then confirms this in writing, which is then countersigned by the Secretary of the Chapter (cf. *CIC*, cann. 179, §1-5 and 625, §3; see no. 35).

90. If the person elected is not present, the Chapter Secretary must inform him immediately of the election; the Chapter is recessed until he arrives. If the *Praeses* sees fit, he may receive the acceptance by telephone or other means of communication, and can express his confirmation in the same way.

91. When the *Praeses* has given the confirmation, and all the friars are assembled in the Chapter hall, the Chapter Secretary announces the election in these words:

In the year of our Lord,..., the...day of the month of..., I, Friar..., Secretary of this Provincial Chapter, on behalf of all legitimately assembled here in the Holy Spirit at the friary of...in the city of...with the right according to the Rule and Constitutions to elect the Minister Provincial, hereby publish that the Minister Provincial of this Province of... is Very Reverend..., who received a majority of the votes, I therefore declare him duly elected.

The Chapter Secretary may also make this declaration in a public place, for example, in the church before the singing of the *Te Deum*.

92. The Chapter Secretary makes sure the ballot papers are burned as soon as possible.

93. If it can easily be done, all proceed to the church or chapel where they sing a hymn of praise such as the *Te Deum* (cf. Appendix A)

After the hymn, the Minister Provincial, kneeling in front of the *Praeses*, makes the profession of faith and takes the oath of office (cf. Appendix B).

The *Praeses* prays:

O God, shepherd and guide of all the faithful, look down in favor on this your family and kindly grant that the servant whom you have willed to place over it may render you fitting pastoral

ministry. As we continue to walk faithfully in our vocations may we be enabled to come with him to the perfection you have proposed to us in your Son. Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

94. The *Praeses* congratulates the new Minister Provincial and exhorts him to govern the Province well; he invites all the friars to profess obedience to him, according to the tradition of the Province / Custody.
95. After this, the Minister Provincial receives the obedience of the friars.
96. Finally, on the instructions of the *Praeses*, who has first consulted with the newly elected Minister Provincial, the Chapter Secretary announces the fourth session:

The fourth session of the Provincial Chapter of this Province of..., for the election of the Definitors, the Vicar Provincial and the Provincial Secretary, [Delegates for the General Chapter], the Provincial Econom and the Provincial Exactor will be held at... (indicating the day and time).

It is up to the Minister Provincial to decide if he wants to receive suggestions regarding the names of possible Definitors. It is for him to determine the manner of such fraternal consultation.

In any case, it is advisable that the pause between the third and fourth sessions be long enough so that the new Minister Provincial can have the time necessary for consultations about the future government of the Province.

97. If all of the solemnly professed friars of the Province are participating in the election of the Minister Provincial, the procedure followed is the same as that of an election by Chapter. In this case, all the electors are equal to the friar Capitulars.

FOURTH SESSION

a) Election of the Provincial Definitory

98. At the appointed time, all the Capitulars assemble in the Chapter hall. After the opening prayers (the *Veni Creator* may be sung or a prayer of invocation to the Holy Spirit recited) the Chapter Secretary is instructed by the *Praeses* to take the roll call.
99. Then the *Praeses* invites the Chapter Secretary to read the prescriptions of the Constitutions and the General Statutes of the Order concerning the Provincial Definitory:

Const., 217, The Vicar and three other Definitors constitute the Definitory of the Minister Provincial, unless more are required by the Provincial Statutes.

Gen Stat., 149. In each session of a Definitory, the Minister or Custos is to submit the business on hand to open and fraternal discussion according to an agenda provided the members beforehand in reasonable time and accompanied by sufficient explanation. The Definitors may also propose items beforehand for discussion.

Gen Stat., 150, §1. Definitors are to express their views based on their knowledge and according to their conscience. By voting conscientiously, they promote the good of the Church and of the Order. In matters of greater complexity, they may request a suitable recess for further reflection, or that some question be resolved by secret ballot.

§2. When the Minister or Custos requires the consent or counsel of his Definitory, he himself does not have the right to vote (*CIC*, canon 127; *CCEO*, canon 934). If, however, the Minister or Custos acts with his Definitory in a quasi-collegial manner then he can vote (*CIC*, canon 119).

§3. The Minister or Custos may seek the counsel of any absent member of the Definitory by telephone when there is a really genuine difficulty in convoking the members and there is an urgent need to reach a decision (*CIC*, canon 127, §1; *CCEO*, can. 934 §1).

§4. In cases of urgent necessity and when there is a really genuine difficulty in convoking the members, the Minister or Custos may seek the counsel of the Definitors by letter, phone, or any other means of communication, especially by a conference call, except in those cases in which a secret vote is required by universal or proper law.

Gen Stat., 151. The Secretary is to record all proceedings. In each meeting of a Definitory, the minutes of the previous meeting are to be read and, if they are found to be accurate, they are signed by all the Definitors who were present.

100. Then the *Praeses* asks the Capitulars:

Do you swear to vote for the persons whom in conscience you consider best suited in the Lord for each office?

The Capitulars reply:

We do!

101. The Definitors are elected one at a time. The Minister Provincial may suggest or not suggest possible candidates as he pleases (the Capitulars may have already submitted a list to the Minister Provincial by various means, see 96). The election is by written ballot so that each Capitular is free to vote for whomever he, in conscience, believes is the best candidate. Those whose names have been suggested by the Minister Provincial also vote. The names are listed according to the order of profession. Three ballots may be held: on the first two ballots an absolute majority is required for election, on the third and last ballot whoever receives the majority is elected; in case of a tie the senior by profession is elected and if they were professed on the same day, the senior by natural age (cf. *Const.*, 191, §2).

102. The *Praeses* invites the tellers to distribute the ballots. Each Capitular writes the name of the candidate of his choice on the ballot. If possible, these ballots should be prepared in advance with the following formula:

I elect/postulate as a Definitor of this Province Friar....

He folds the ballot and puts it into the ballot box or hands it to the tellers. When all the ballots have been collected, they are counted aloud by one of the tellers in the presence of the *Praeses*.

103. The ballots may be read by the same readers as in the election of the Minister Provincial or by others. In the latter case, the new readers read in front of the *Praeses* the promise found in no. 81. The *Praeses* opens and checks each ballot, then passes it to one of the readers who reads it in a loud clear voice to the whole assembly. The other reader checks it and says: *Correct*.

104. While the ballots are being read, the Chapter Secretary keeps the tally in writing; the tellers do the same. When the votes have been read, the Chapter Secretary checks to see that his tally coincides with that of the tellers.

105. When the ballots have been counted, the Chapter Secretary declares the results, reporting in ascending order the names of those who have received votes.

If no one has received the majority, he declares:

We do not have an election. The number of voters is... (the number of invalid votes is..., the number of blank ballots is...) and the number of valid votes is.... Friar... received ... votes; Friar... received ... votes, etc. No one has received the required majority.

The *Praeses* then invites the Capitulars to proceed to the next ballot.

106. If the necessary majority has been obtained, the Chapter Secretary declares:

We have an election. The number of voters is... and the number of valid votes is.... There are... blank ballots and ... invalid ballots... Friar... received... votes [etc.], and Friar... received the remaining... votes.

107. Immediately, the *Praeses* asks the assembly:

Does anyone of you raise an objection to Friar...as Definitor of this Province or to the manner of his election?

108. If no objection is raised, the *Praeses* addresses the person elected and asks him:

Friar..., you have been canonically elected Definitor of this Province. Do you agree to serve in this ministry for the next four years?

Those who have been elected are to promptly express their acceptance, so as not to slow down the work of the Chapter.

109. If those elected are not present, they are to be contacted without delay by the *Praeses* or his delegate for their acceptance; this will not cause the session to be recessed. If those elected are not Capitulars they immediately become full members of the Chapter (*Gen. Stat.*, 124, §3).

Not being superiors, but only counselors, the Definitors do not need the confirmation.

110. The Secretary sees to the burning of the ballots as soon as possible.

b) Voting for the Vicar and Provincial Secretary

111. When the election of the Provincial Definitors has been completed, the Chapter immediately proceeds to the selection of the Vicar and the Provincial Secretary, who must be chosen from among the Definitors.

112. The voters express their judgment on the person whose name has been proposed, each one placing in the container a white counter (favor) or a black one (opposed), or abstaining from putting a counter in. This may also be done by written ballot, with the Capitular writing *placet* (yes) or *non placet* (no), or leaving the ballot blank for an abstention. The tellers are responsible for the distribution and collection of the counters or ballots.

113. They then count the counters or ballots – positive, negative and blank (abstentions) in the presence of the *Praeses* and communicate the results to the Chapter Secretary. If the majority is in agreement, the person proposed is considered to have been canonically elected; if not, the minister suggests another Definitor, etc. until one gains a majority. For a third successive designation as Vicar, a qualified majority is required.

114. If when the number of abstentions has been subtracted the number of negative votes is higher than the number of positive ones, the Chapter Secretary declares:

The result of the vote is negative. There are ... present, with ... positive votes and negative votes; there were abstaining.

The Minister Provincial may propose the same person a second time after explaining the reasons for his choice (see above, no. 32). A new balloting takes place. If the second ballot is also negative, another Definitor must be proposed as Vicar.

115. If the result of the voting is positive, the Chapter Secretary declares:

The vote is positive. There arepresent, ...with ... positive votes and negative votes; there were.... abstaining

116. The *Praeses* asks:

Does anyone of you raise an objection to Friar... as Vicar Provincial or to the manner of his election?

If there is no objection raised, the *Praeses* asks the newly elected:

Friar...as you have been canonically elected as Vicar of this Province, do you agree to perform this ministry for the next four years?

Upon agreement of election, the *Praeses* of the Chapter confirms the election in these words:

Friar... I confirm your election as Provincial Vicar and from this moment, I declare you in full possession of your office.

The *Praeses* of the Chapter then confirms this in writing, which is then countersigned by the Secretary of the Chapter (cf. *CIC*, cann. 179, §1-5 and 625, §3; see above, no. 35).

117. The appointment of the Provincial Secretary takes place in the same manner. The Minister Provincial proposes one of the elected Definitors and, as above, the voting takes place by ballot. The Vicar can also be appointed Provincial Secretary.

118. If when the number of abstentions has been subtracted the number of negative votes is higher than the number of positive ones, the Chapter Secretary declares:

The result of the vote is negative. There are ... present, with ... positive votes and negative votes; there were abstaining.

The Minister Provincial may propose the same person a second time after explaining the reasons for his choice. A new balloting takes place. If the second ballot is also negative, another Definitor must be proposed as Provincial Secretary.

119. If the result of the voting is positive, the Chapter Secretary declares:

The vote is positive. There are ... present, ...with ... positive votes and negative votes; there were.... abstaining.

120. The *Praeses* asks:

Does anyone of you raise an objection to Friar... as Secretary of this Province or to the manner of his selection?

If there is no objection raised, the *Praeses* asks the newly selected:

Friar... as you have been canonically selected as Secretary of this Province, do you agree to perform this ministry for the next four years?

121. When the election of the Provincial Definitory and the selection of Vicar and Secretary of the Province has been completed, on the instructions of the *Praeses*, the Chapter Secretary declares the outcome of the elections and selections in this way:

On behalf of those to whom is entrusted the election of the Definitors and the selection of the Vicar Provincial and of the Provincial Secretary, I, Friar..., Chapter Secretary, hereby publish that the Definitors of this Province are: Friar..., Friar... [etc.]; that the Vicar Provincial is Friar..., and the Provincial Secretary is Friar...; and I declare that they have been duly elected and selected.

122. In the presence of the Chapter, the Definitors swear to faithfully execute their office. The Vicar also makes the profession of faith (see Appendix B of this Directory).

c) Election of the Delegate (Delegates) to the General Chapter

123. The Chapter proceeds to the election of the Delegate (Delegates) of the Province to the General Chapter. The *Praeses* invites the Chapter Secretary to call the roll. Then the Secretary reads from our legislation concerning the Capitular Custos.

Gen. Stat., 100, §1: A Province which at the time of the celebration of the Ordinary Provincial Chapter has one hundred solemnly professed friars with active voice affiliated to it (100-149) is to elect one Delegate to the General Chapter plus another one for every full complement of fifty (150-199, 200-249, etc.). The Delegates to the General Chapter are elected by written ballot in the Provincial Chapter. Friars affiliated to a Provincial Custody of the Province and those friars lacking active and passive voice by virtue of Constitutions 78 §1 are not counted for the election (*CIC*, canon 631, §2 and *Constitutions*, 200 §1).

124. Delegates are elected by written ballot (cf. *Gen. Stat.*, 100, §1). Three ballots may be conducted. An absolute majority is required for election on the first two; relative majority suffices on the third. In case of a tie, the senior by profession is elected; if professed the same day, the senior by natural age.
125. The *Praeses* invites the tellers to distribute the ballots. On the ballot, each will write the name and surname of the person for whom he intends to vote. If possible, the ballots are printed with the formula:

I elect as a Delegate to the General Chapter from this Province Friar....

He folds the ballot and puts it into the ballot box or hands it to the tellers. When all the ballots have been collected, they are counted aloud by one of the tellers in the presence of the *Praeses*.

126. The ballots may be read by the same readers as in the election of the Minister Provincial or by others. In the latter case, the new readers read in front of the *Praeses* the promise found in no. 81. While the ballots are being read, the Chapter Secretary keeps the tally in writing. The tellers do the same. When the votes have been read the Chapter Secretary checks to see that his tally coincides with that of the tellers.
127. When the ballots have been counted, the Chapter Secretary declares the results, reporting in ascending order the names of those who have received votes.

If no one has received the majority, he declares:

We do not have an election. The number of voters is... (the number of invalid votes is..., the number of blank ballots is...) and the number of valid votes is.... Friar... received ... votes, Friar... received ... votes, etc. No one has received the required majority.

The *Praeses* then invites the Capitulars to proceed to the next ballot.

128. When a ballot yields an election, the Chapter Secretary announces it immediately:

We have an election. The number of voters is... and the number of valid votes is.... There are...blank votes. Friar... received...votes, [etc.], and Friar...received the remaining... votes.

129. Then the *Praeses* asks:

Does anyone of you wish to raise an objection to Friar... as a Delegate from this Province to the General Chapter or to the manner of his election?

130. If there is no objection raised, the *Praeses* asks the newly elected:

Friar..., as you have been canonically elected a Delegate from this Province to the General Chapter; do you agree to fulfill this ministry?

131. The Chapter Secretary declares the outcome of the elections in this way:

On behalf of those to whom is entrusted the election of the Delegate (Delegates) to the General Chapter, I, Friar..., Chapter Secretary, hereby publish that, having obtained the required majority of votes, Friar... has been canonically elected a Delegate (Delegates) to the General Chapter.

132. At the end of the election, the Secretary provides for the burning of the ballot papers.

133. Documents certifying the election of each Delegate, signed by the Minister Provincial and by the Chapter Secretary and stamped with the Province seal, should be forwarded without delay to the Secretary General of the Order (see Appendix D of this Directory). If for any reason the office of a Delegate becomes vacant, a replacement should be elected by the next Chapter (even an Extraordinary Chapter) if one is about to be held, otherwise, by the Minister Provincial with his Definitory, who will vote by secret ballot.

d) Election of the Provincial Econom and the Provincial Exactor

134. If the Minister Provincial so desires, the Chapter next proceeds to the election of the Provincial Econom and Exactor. If this election does not immediately follow the election of the Definitors, the *Praeses* invites the Chapter Secretary to take a roll call. Then the Chapter Secretary reads the following from the Constitutions and General Statutes:

Const., 84, §1. The administration of the Friary, the Custody, the Provinces, and the Order itself, is to be a unified model. This administration likewise coordinates the sub administrations of all the various offices, institutional activities, offerings, and the like.

§2. The whole administration of a Friary, Custody, and Province, and of the Order itself, is to be entrusted to the Exactor and the Econom by the respective Chapter.

§3. The Exactor has the responsibility to receive all income, working with the Econom and overseeing with him the financial registers.

§4. The Econom is to make all expenditures within the limits of his competence, procure whatever is necessary for the temporal sustenance of the community, and maintain the financial registers of his office.

§5. The assignments of Exactor and Econom can be joined if allowed by the Statutes.

Gen. Stat., 28, §1. The financial administration is to be treated each quarter by the Minister or Custos with his Definitory. The Provincial or Custodial Econom is to present at least quarterly a report of the entire financial administration and, once a year, in the name of the Minister or Custos and his Definitory and according to the Statutes, the Econom is to send a financial report of the Province or Custody to all the Friaries of the Province or Custody. Moreover, at each ordinary Provincial and Custodial Chapter he is to report on his entire administration since the last Chapter (*CIC*, canon 636 §2).

135. If the offices of Econom [Bursar] and Exactor are divided, the Econom is to be elected first. The candidate for the office abstains during voting (*ipso non suffragante*).

136. The tellers are responsible for the distribution and collection of the ballots or the white and black counters. Then, in front of the *Praeses*, the tellers count the affirmative, negative, and abstaining votes and report the result to the Chapter Secretary.

137. If when the number of abstentions has been subtracted the number of negative votes is higher than the number of positive ones, the Secretary declares:

The result of the vote is negative. There are ... present, with ... positive votes and negative votes; there were abstaining.

The Minister Provincial may propose the same person a second time after explaining the reasons for his choice. A new balloting takes place. If the second ballot is also negative, another Definitor must be proposed as Econom or, with the agreement of the *Praeses*, the Minister Provincial can delay the selection of the Econom until the second part of the Chapter.

138. If the result of the voting is positive, the Chapter Secretary declares:

The vote is positive. There arepresent, ...with ... positive votes and negative votes; there were.... abstaining.

139. The *Praeses* asks:

Does anyone of you raise an objection to Friar... as Econom (and Exactor) of this Province or to the manner of his selection?

If there is no objection raised, the *Praeses* asks the newly selected:

Friar.... as you have been canonically selected as Econom (and Exactor) of this Province, do you agree to perform this ministry for the next four years?

140. The same procedure shall be followed for the election of the Provincial Exactor, if this office is separate from that of the Econom. The candidate for the office abstains during voting (*ipso non suffragante*).

141. If the result of the voting is positive, the Chapter Secretary declares:

The vote is positive. There arepresent, ...with ... positive votes and negative votes; there were.... abstaining.

142. The *Praeses* asks:

Does anyone of you raise an objection to Friar... as Exactor of this Province or to the manner of his selection?

If there is no objection raised, the *Praeses* asks the newly selected:

Friar.... as you have been canonically selected as Exactor of this Province, do you agree to perform this ministry for the next four years?

143. When the elections of the Provincial Econom and Exactor have been completed, on the instructions of the *Praeses*, the Chapter Secretary declares the outcome of the elections in this way:

On behalf of those to whom is entrusted the election of the Provincial Econom and Exactor, I, Friar..., Chapter Secretary, hereby publish the canonical election of:

Friar... as Provincial Econom

Friar... as Provincial Exactor

Conclusion of the First Part of the Chapter

- 144.** The Provincial Chapter is celebrated in two parts and the second part must be celebrated at least three weeks after the first (cf. *Gen. Stat.*, 125). The time between the first and second parts is to be devoted to the preparation of an *Instrumentum laboris*, for the drafting of a Provincial Four-Year Plan, which is in harmony with the Six-Year Plan of the Order (*Gen. Stat.*, 125, §3), and for any Motions or decisions regarding particular topics and problems that are to be discussed and approved by the Provincial Chapter.
- 145.** If the Minister Provincial with his Definitory deems it appropriate and necessary, the content presented in numbers 146-147 (below), may be implemented at this time. The purpose of this potential session of the Chapter is to assist the new government of the Province in preparing for the second part of the Chapter.
- 146.** The Moderator on duty explains the objectives of this session of the Chapter:
- to identify issues arising from the *Summary and Proposal Regarding the Life of the Province Document* (cf. 56 or 66);
 - to clarify the guidelines for drafting the Provincial Four-Year Plan;
 - to specify the topics that are to be explored by the Definitory and included in the *Instrumentum laboris* for the second part of the Chapter;
 - to deal with those issues that, in the opinion of the Assembly (through the intermediation of the Steering Committee), can be the subject of reflection and decision-making in the first part of the Chapter.

The Steering Committee decides whether topics are dealt with in groups or in Assembly.

- 147.** The procedure for achieving the objectives stated in the previous number can be as follows:
1. The Capitulars can divide into Working Groups in which:
 - a) they define the priorities that, in their opinion, should be included in the Provincial Four-Year Plan;
 - b) they define the topics or particular problems to be addressed in the second part of the Chapter;
 - c) they identify particular issues or problems to be addressed in the first part of the Chapter and submit them to the Steering Committee.
 2. Then the Assembly could formally vote on the priorities for the Four-Year Plan and the particular topics to be addressed in the second part of the Chapter. Both must be taken into consideration by the new government of the Province in preparing the *Instrumentum laboris* for the second part of the

Chapter.

There should be no more than four priorities for the Provincial Four-Year Plan

3. Based on the decision of the Steering Committee and the recommendation of the voting members (see above, no. 147, 1c), some topics may be addressed at this session for which there is no particular need for further study.

148. It is recommended that the *Instrumentum laboris* be prepared by the Minister Provincial with his Definitory; they can have an *ad hoc* committee to assist them.

a) If the Chapter Assembly has carried out the work described in numbers 145-147, it will use the results of that work as a foundation for expanding the *Instrumentum laboris* (see also methodological note - no. 156).

b) If the Chapter Assembly has not carried out the work described in numbers 145-147, it will use the *Summary and Proposal Regarding the Life of the Province Document* (cf. 56 or 66), and identify the priorities and particular topics which are to be included in the *Instrumentum laboris* (for this see also the methodological note - no. 156).

149. Furthermore, before the second part of the Chapter, the Minister Provincial should devote an adequate amount of time to choosing the Guardians, seminary rectors, etc. who are to be selected during the sixth session of the Chapter.

150. The outgoing government of the Province, after consulting the Minister General, should previously set a tentative time and place for the second part of the Chapter; this decision is to be confirmed by the Chapter. If a preceding decision had not been made, the Chapter should now approve the time and place for the second part.

Upon the instruction of the *Praeses*, the Secretary announces the second part of the Chapter, saying:

The second part of the Provincial Chapter of this Province of..., to deal with Province business and to select the Guardians and other officials, will be held on the... day of the month of..., in the year.... at [the friary of]..., in the city of..., at... a.m./p.m.

151. The session closes with a prayer of thanksgiving:

V) Blessed be the name of the Lord.

R) Now and forever.

Grant us, O Lord, the help of your grace, that we may faithfully fulfill what you have inspired us to do. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

(or some other prayer found in Appendix A of this Directory).

THE SECOND PART OF THE CHAPTER

FIFTH SESSION

152. The work of the second part of the Chapter is prepared by the Minister Provincial and his Definitory. To ensure the orderly and successful work of the Chapter, the Government of the Province and the Steering Committee should meet in advance to plan the work.
153. If the Minister Provincial with his Definitory so desire, the second part of the Chapter can also be preceded by a spiritual introduction to the topics that the Chapter is to treat. This may even be a whole day of reflection.
154. At the time appointed for the discussion of the business and problems of the Province, the Capitulars assemble in the Chapter hall. If any elections or selections of Chapter officials (Group Presidents or Secretaries, Moderators, etc.) are necessary, these are held with due observance of the prescribed procedure.
155. If the Minister Provincial with his Definitory consider it opportune to do so, items which have been forwarded by communities or by individual friars will also be treated provided they have been approved by the Steering Committee.

156. NOTE: Suggested Methodology

1. To draft the **Provincial Four-Year Plan** and to decide on the particular topics requiring a Chapter decision, the Chapter should have an *Instrumentum laboris (IL)*. It should be prepared by the government of the Province (Minister Provincial with his Definitory), with the assistance of other persons, if they choose.
The *IL* is to be made known to all solemnly professed friars before the second part of the Chapter, so that all solemnly professed friars have the opportunity to make their own contribution to the voting members.
2. At the beginning of the fifth session of the Chapter, the Minister Provincial or his delegate should introduce the *IL* and indicate the procedure for drawing up the Four-Year Plan.
As regards the Four-Year Plan, the following should be kept in mind:
 - a) that it must give guidelines for the life of the Province in the four years begun, in order to foster the Province's more meaningful and effective presence in the Church and in the world (cf. *Gen. Stat.*, 84);
 - b) that it should focus the attention of the entire Province on the commitments that arise from the priority of following Christ (cf. *Gen. Stat.*, 84);
 - c) that it should therefore ensure that the entire Province have a sense of mutual responsibility and

involvement in the decisions of the Chapter (cf. *Const.*, 57 §§ 2-3);

d) that these priorities/commitments must be aimed at improving the quality of Franciscan religious living (therefore they should not only reflect choices concerning administration and organization).

e) that it must be in harmony with the Six-Year Plan of the Order (cf. *Gen. Stat.*, 125, §3)

3. The following is a very brief summary of an outline that could be of use in preparing a Four-Year Plan (these points should already be included in the preparation of the *IL*).

It should present:

1) what **failures** or **demands** emerged from the study of the life of the Province (refer to the *Summary and Proposal Regarding the Life of the Province Document*);

2) which **values** implied in these failures or demands that need to be lived more intensely or with greater consistency or with greater fidelity to the charism or the renewal of Franciscan religious life;

3) the **concrete objectives** that it will be necessary to pursue in order to remedy these failures or demands;

4) the **means** that allow or help in the pursuit of these objectives, namely, the individuals involved in pursuing them; the criteria to assess their effectiveness; the timeframe involved; and the resources that are required.

4. The committee of Capitulars elected at the beginning of the second session could be charged with editing the Four-Year Plan. This editorial process could require:

-a first draft prepared by the committee after an initial discussion of the *IL*;

-a second draft that includes the observations emerging from group work or discussion in the plenary assembly;

-a final draft to be approved at the end of the second phase of the Chapter.

5. Concerning the **topics or particular problems**:

a) they could be presented in the *IL* by indicating the terms of the problem (history, present situation, problem areas, exigencies, etc.);

-a Motion that expresses a hypothetical decision, explaining the motivation for it;

-two or more alternative Motions, each one supported by observations for and against it (pro and con).

b) After the opening discussion in the Chapter hall, an *ad hoc* commission, or the government of the Province, presents the final Motions to submit to the vote of the Chapter, with provision for a vote *iuxta modum*. After that, the vote takes place.

157. It is the responsibility of the Provincial Chapter to examine whether or not the various apostolates of the Province are meeting the needs of the times and the mission of the Franciscan Order: whether they are well chosen; are carried out properly; have any witness value (*Const.*, 96, §§3-4). The Chapter should also investigate whether the Province is capable of extending its work for the expansion of the kingdom of God among the nations, and whether it is ready to begin work in mission territory (*Const.*, 128, §§1-3).

158. It is likewise the right of the Provincial Chapter to investigate and determine the general apostolic

program of the Province and to formulate statutes in conformity with diocesan or regional decrees for those ministries requiring special guidelines (*Const.*, 115 §1).

- 159.** The erection of a friary is reserved to the Provincial Chapter or, if there be urgent reason, to the Provincial Definitory, but always, subject to the consent of the Minister General and his Definitory and with due observance of canon law (*CIC*, can. 609, §1; 611; 625, §3).

The suppression of a friary is reserved to the Minister General with the consent of his Definitory after hearing the opinions of those involved and consulting the diocesan Bishop (*CIC*, can. 616, §1; *Const.*, 34, §§2 and 4). Both the erection and suppression of a friary are to be discussed and deliberated in the respective Chapter.

- 160.** To ensure that the Order's legislation is up to date and effective, the Statutes and other legislative texts of the Province should be reviewed. Any authentic interpretations of the Provincial Statutes given by the Provincial Definitory should also be examined.
- 161.** The Provincial Chapter shall decide what goods and administrative responsibilities belong to the Province (*Const.*, 82, §1). So, too, it shall define the competence of the Minister Provincial, both alone and with his Definitory, as well as that of the Guardian, both alone and with the Friary Chapter (*Const.*, 86, §3). Finally, it shall determine the modalities of the contributions for solidarity within the Province in accordance with its Statutes (*Const.*, 20, §3; *Gen. Stat.*, 43, §5).
- 162.** If extraordinary expenses are to be undertaken or large debts incurred, the consent of the Chapter is required, all other things being observed that are to be observed.
- 163.** The same applies if a building is to be constructed or a major renovation undertaken.
- 164.** It is the responsibility of Chapters to adopt uniform account books and to regulate the insurance of goods and of friars as well as the safe deposit of money or other securities. These and other like matters are to be defined more exactly in the Statutes.
- 165.** The Provincial Chapter should deal with any other items that pertain to it, supporting the good and reproofing the bad.
- 166.** If the *Praeses* sees fit, the venue for the next Chapter should be discussed and settled.
- 167.** Finally, the expenses of the Chapter shall be apportioned among the communities of the Province, unless the Minister Provincial with his Definitory decides otherwise.
- 168.** When these items have been concluded, the Chapter Secretary announces the sixth session:

The sixth session of the Ordinary Provincial Chapter of this Province of... for the selection of the Guardians and of the other officials will be held on the... day of the month of..., in the year.... at... a.m. /p.m.

- 169.** The fifth session closes with a prayer of thanksgiving:

V) Blessed be the name of the Lord.

R) Now and forever.

Grant us, O Lord, the help of your grace, that we may faithfully fulfill what you have inspired us to do. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

(or some other prayer found in Appendix A of this Directory).

SIXTH SESSION

170. The *Praeses* reads or has the Chapter Secretary read from the Constitutions and General Statutes:

The Guardians

Const., 226, §1: The local fraternity is governed by the Guardian, either alone or with the Friary Chapter.

§2. The local fraternity is made up of at least three friars.

Const., 227, §1: It is the duty of the Guardian to guide, direct, and coordinate the life and mission of the fraternity and of each friar in accordance with the Rule, the Constitutions, and the Statutes.

§2. The Guardian possesses ordinary authority over all the friars *de familia* and over other friars resident in the friary.

Const., 117, §1: It is the responsibility of the Guardian with the help of the Friary Chapter to coordinate the work and activities of the fraternity, to assign tasks, and to keep friars who are engaged in different pastoral activities fraternally united.

Const., 60, §1: Ministers, Custodes, and Guardians are to exercise the service of authority with charity and familiarity.⁷ They are to encourage the fraternity constantly; to provide for the necessary time for prayer and to take care of its quality; to foster human dignity and the responsible active expression of obedience; to instill courage and hope during difficult times; to keep alive the charism of the Order and the sense of “being with the Church”; and to accompany the continuing formation of the friars.⁸

171. The *Praeses* proposes a suitable Guardian for each friary and the elections take place in turn by means of white and black counters.

172. If when the number of abstentions has been subtracted the number of negative votes is higher than the number of positive ones, the Chapter Secretary declares:

The result of the vote is negative. There are ... present, with ... positive votes and negative votes; there were abstaining.

The Minister Provincial may propose the same person a second time after explaining the reasons for his choice (see above, no. 32). A new balloting takes place. If the second ballot is also negative, another person must be proposed as Guardian.

When the friar proposed as Guardian receives the required majority of the votes, the Secretary declares:

The vote is positive. There are ... present ... with ... positive votes and ... negative votes; there were ... abstaining.

⁷ Cf. *LR*, 10: 5; *FF* 102

⁸ Cf. *CIC*, canon 619.

173. After each positive selection the *Praeses* asks:

Does anyone of you wish to raise an objection to the person selected or to the manner of his selection?

If no objection is raised, the person is informed of his selection, and if he is present, the *Praeses* asks:

Friar.... as you have been canonically elected Guardian for the friary of... of this Province; do you promise to fulfill this ministry for the next four years?

174. After having obtained the consensus of the elected, the *Praeses* of the Chapter confirms the election in these words:

Friar... I confirm your election as Guardian of the friary of ... and from this moment, I declare you in full possession of your office, effective as soon as it is handed over.

The *Praeses* of the Chapter then confirms this in writing, which is then countersigned by the Secretary of the Chapter (cf. *CIC*, cann. 179, §1-5 and 625, §3; see above, no. 35).

The new Guardian and the outgoing Guardian, shall agree, with the consent of the Minister Provincial, on the time necessary for handing over the office. During the period needed for the transition, the outgoing Guardian shall act as an interim administrator.

The outgoing Guardian must also hand over all the official documents of the friary.

175. The Chapter Secretary declares the outcome of the selections as follows:

On behalf of those to whom the present selection of Guardians belongs, I, Friar..., Chapter Secretary, declare that the Guardians for this Province are: for... friary, Friar..., etc., and I declare that they have been duly selected.

176. The newly elected Guardians, at this moment, or if it is suitable, during the liturgical celebration of the Chapter, make the profession of faith and takes the oath of office (Cf. Appendix B).

If any of them cannot be present, they are to make the profession of faith and take the oath before the Minister Provincial or his delegate as soon as possible.

177. The *Praeses* reads or has the Chapter Secretary read:

The Provincial Heads of Formation: ⁹

Const., 134, §1: The Ministers, Custodes, and the other friars are to consider houses of formation the heart of the Order. They are to offer them their full assistance and support.

§2. The effectiveness of formation depends above all upon the presence of an exemplary fraternity, which includes formators, who are distinguished for their spirit of prayer, charity, and prudence; their understanding of the human sciences; and their capacity to accompany friars in formation by witnessing and communicating to them the values of the Franciscan charism.¹⁰

Const., 135, §1: Among Ministers, Custodes, Guardians, formators, and friars in formation there is to

⁹ When a Federation has a common house of formation, the choice and appointment of its formation directors is established in the Statutes of the Federation.

¹⁰ Cf. *VC*, 66.

be dialogue, collaboration, and harmony of mind and objectives; these are indispensable for the formation of the friars.

§2. The fraternity is to offer friars in initial formation an atmosphere of generosity, fervor, harmony, and mutual support, so they may more easily grow together in the spiritual and fraternal life.¹¹ Friars in initial formation are to adhere to the charism and mission of the Order, in virtue of which they will progress and persevere more firmly in their own vocation.¹²

Const., 137, §1: Among all formators, at all levels, fraternal cooperation is to be established, and projects to promote their own continuing formation are to be encouraged.

178. The *Praeses* proposes the most suitable person as director for each seminary and the selections take place in turns by means of white and black counters.

179. If when the number of abstentions has been subtracted the number of negative votes is higher than the number of positive ones, the Chapter Secretary declares:

The result of the vote is negative. There are ... present, with ... positive votes and negative votes; there were abstaining

The Minister Provincial may propose the same person a second time after explaining the reasons for his choice. A new balloting takes place. If the second ballot is also negative, another person must be proposed as director of the formation house.

If the result of the vote is positive, the Secretary of the Chapter declares:

The result of the vote is positive. There are ... present. With ... positive votes and ... negative votes; there were ... abstaining.

180. After each selection, the *Praeses* asks:

Does anyone of you wish to raise an objection to the person selected or to the manner of his selection?

If no objection is raised, those selected are informed. If they are present, the *Praeses* asks them:

Friar.... having been canonically elected Director of the Postulancy Program (or Novice Master, Director of the Post-Novitiate, Director of Ongoing Formation) for this Province, do you promise to fulfill this ministry for the next four years?

181. When the newly selected have given their consent, the Chapter Secretary, on the instructions of the *Praeses*, declares the outcome of the selections:

On behalf of those to whom the present selection of the Provincial heads of formation belongs, I, Friar..., Chapter Secretary, declare that the: the director of the Director of the Postulancy Program is Friar...; the Novice Master is Friar...; the Director of the Post-Novitiate is Friar..., and the Director of Ongoing Formation is Friar... and I declare that they have been duly selected.

182. The *Praeses* reads or has the Chapter Secretary read:

¹¹ Cf. *CIC*, canon 652 §4.

¹² Cf. *CIC*, canon 652 §3.

The Chairmen of Commissions and the Other Provincial Assignments

Const., 137, §2: A formation commission is to be established for the entire Order and for each Conference and Federation and Province and Custody. The membership of these commissions and their competency are to be defined in their respective directories of formation.

Const., 219: Province commissions are to be formed in order to coordinate and promote the mission of the Province. Their number, membership, competency, and modus agendi are to be determined in the Provincial Statutes.

Gen. Stat., 126: The chairs of commissions are elected by the Chapter through the use of counters upon nomination by the Minister Provincial. Outside of Chapter, this is done by the Minister Provincial with his Definitory (Const., 219).

Const., 190, §3: Conferral of assignments is carried out by ballot with counters or by appointment, as may be determined in each instance by the Constitutions or Statutes.

Const., 192, §2: Assignments conferred by General Chapter are for six years. Assignments conferred by general nomination can be for a definite or indefinite time but not longer than the current six-year term; in any case these may be renewed.

§3. Assignments conferred by Provincial or Custodial Chapter are for four years. Assignments conferred by Provincial or Custodial nomination can be for a definite or indefinite time but not longer than the current four-year term; in any case these may be renewed.

- 183.** The following are selected in turn, by means of white and black counters, with the *Praeses* proposing a candidate for each election:
- a. the prefect of formation of the Province, if provided for in the respective Provincial Statutes;
 - b. the chairman of each Provincial commission, unless the Provincial Statutes determine otherwise;
 - c. the Provincial Assistant of the Militia of the Immaculate (M.I.) and/or the Delegate for the Marian Apostolate, if provided for in the Provincial Statutes (*Gen. Stat.*, 60 §3).

- 184.** If when the number of abstentions has been subtracted the number of negative votes is higher than the number of positive ones, the Chapter Secretary declares:

The result of the vote is negative. There are ... present, with ... positive votes and negative votes; there were abstaining.

The Minister Provincial may propose the same person a second time after explaining the reasons for his choice. A new balloting takes place. If the second ballot is also negative, then another person must be proposed for the assignment mentioned in no. 172.

If the result of the vote is positive, the Secretary of the Chapter declares:

The result of the vote is positive. There are ... present. With ... positive votes and ... negative votes; there were ... abstaining

- 185.** After each of these selections the *Praeses* asks:

Does anyone of you wish to raise an objection to the person selected or to the manner of his selection?

If no objection is raised, those selected are informed. If they are present, the *Praeses* asks them:

Friar..., Friar..., [etc.], as you have been canonically selected to chair commissions and to fulfill other offices in the Province, do you consent to fulfill this assignment for the next four years?

186. When the newly selected, if present, have given their consent, the Chapter Secretary, on the instructions of the *Praeses*, declares the outcome of the selections:

On behalf of those to whom the present selections belong, I, Friar..., Chapter Secretary, hereby publish that the chairmen of the commissions and the other officials of the Province are: Friar... is the prefect of formation of the Province; Friar... is the chairman of the Provincial commission on... [etc.]; and I declare that they have been duly selected.

187. The conferral of other offices apart from those mentioned above will appropriately be by nomination in accordance with *Const.*, 190, §3

PARTICULAR ELECTIONS:

of the Provincial Custos (when elected during Provincial Chapter);

188. If a Province has a Custody, the election of the Provincial Custos, his Vicar and the other Definitors takes place in the Provincial Chapter unless the Provincial Statutes provide otherwise (cf. *Const.*, 221, §2). The election to the office of Provincial Custos is limited to two consecutive terms (cf. *Const.*, 191, §3)

189. The *Praeses* reads or has the Chapter Secretary read:

The Provincial Custos

Const., 222, §1: *It is the duty of the Custos to guide the fraternal life and mission and, in conformity with Constitutions 127, §2, to promote vocational recruitment.*

§2. *With the consent of his Definitory the Custos can affiliate candidates to the Custody; admit them to profession; issue dimissorial letters; name or substitute Guardians; sign written contracts with diocesan bishops (cf. Const., 117, §3); and present friars to the diocesan bishop to be pastors.*

§3. *As for other matters, especially extraordinary ones, the authority of the Custos, as vicarious, can be limited by the Provincial Chapter and the Provincial Statutes.*

190. The *Praeses* proposes the three candidates in accordance with the dispositions of *Gen. Stat.*, 127, §3 and each Capitular votes by writing on his ballot the name of whichever of the three he wishes to elect, using the formula: *I elect/postulate as Custos [of the Custody of...] Friar...*

He places his folded ballot in the ballot box placed before the *Praeses* or he hands it to the tellers. The ballots in the ballot box are mixed and then counted and if found to be correct they are read.

191. When the ballots have been counted there will be a decision on who has been canonically elected. An absolute majority is required in the first and second ballots; a relative majority suffices in the third.

192. When no one has received the required majority, the Chapter Secretary declares:

We do not have an election. The number of voters is... (the number of invalid votes is..., the number of blank ballots is...) and the number of valid votes is.... Friar... received ...votes;

Friar... received ... votes, etc. No one has received the required majority.

The *Praeses* then invites the Capitulars to proceed to the next vote.

193. If the necessary majority has been obtained, the Secretary declares:

We have an election. The number of voters is... and the number of valid votes is.... There are... blank ballots and ... invalid ballots. Friar... received... votes, [etc.] and Friar... received the remaining... votes.

194. Then the *Praeses* asks:

Does anyone of you wish to raise an objection to Friar... as Custos of the Custody of... or to the manner of his election?

If no objection is raised, the *Praeses* addresses the newly elected if he is present:

Friar..., as you have been canonically elected. Provincial Custos of the Custody of..., do you agree to fulfill this responsibility for the next four years?

Once the consent is given, the *Praeses*, according to the norms of *CIC*, can. 179, §1-5 and 625, §3, proceeds to the confirmation of the election of the Provincial Custos. Such confirmation, if no one is opposed, may immediately be given orally and later, it must be confirmed:

I confirm your election as Provincial Custos and from now on, I declare you to be fully in charge of your office.

195. After the election and the above questions, the ballots are burned and the election is published as follows:

On behalf of those to whom the election of the Custos of our Provincial Custody of...pertains, I, Friar..., Chapter Secretary, hereby publish that Friar..., who received a majority of the votes, is Custos, and I declare that he has been duly elected.

196. Finally, the *Praeses* asks the Capitulars:

Has anyone of you other business for the benefit of the Province?

197. When all items have been treated the final session is announced: When all items have been treated the final session is announced:

The final session of the Ordinary Provincial Chapter of this Province of... will be held on the... day of the month of... in the year..., at... a.m. /p.m.

198. Unless the final session follows immediately, the sixth session closes with a prayer of thanksgiving:

V) Blessed be the name of the Lord.

R) Now and forever.

Let us pray.

Grant us, O Lord, the help of your grace, that we may faithfully fulfill what you have inspired us to do. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

(or some other prayer found in Appendix A of this Directory)

FINAL SESSION

199. The last session, in which the friars who have died since the last Chapter are commemorated, can be celebrated in a more solemn manner or more simply.
200. For the more solemn celebration, a **liturgy of the Word** (readings from Scripture, Franciscan texts, Prayers of the Faithful, etc.) can be prepared, and the commemoration of the deceased can be made with a **brief biography** presented by a friar of the community in which the deceased lived or by someone who knew him well.
201. For the simpler celebration, the Chapter Secretary reads to the assembly a list of the friars who died since the previous Provincial Chapter. Then all recite the following prayer:

Ant. If you, O Lord, should mark our guilt, Lord, who would survive?

Psalm 130

Out of the depths I cry to you, O Lord,
Lord, hear my voice!
O let your ears be attentive
to the voice of my pleading.

If you, O Lord, should mark our guilt,
Lord, who would survive?
But with you is found forgiveness:
for this we revere you.

My soul is waiting for the Lord,
I count on his word.
My soul is longing for the Lord
more than watchmen for daybreak.
Let the watchman count on daybreak
and Israel on the Lord.

Because with the Lord there is mercy
and fullness of redemption,
Israel indeed he will redeem
from all its iniquity.

Ant. If you, O Lord, should mark our guilt, Lord, who would survive?

Praeses: Let us acclaim Christ, Our Lord, through whom we hope that our mortal bodies will be made like his glorious body, saying: Lord, you are our life and resurrection.

Reader:

- *Christ, Son of the Living God, you raised your friend Lazarus from the dead; raise to life and glory our deceased brothers whom you have redeemed by your Precious Blood. Let us pray:*
- *Christ, Consoler of the afflicted, when Lazarus, the young man, and the young girl died, you kindly dried the tears of their relatives; console all who mourn their dead. Let us pray:*
- *Christ, Our Savior, destroy in our mortal body the reign of sin; that, as from sin we earned the wages of death, so in you may we gain everlasting life. Let us pray:*
- *Christ, Our Redeemer, look favorably on those who have no hope since they do not know you; may they come to believe in the resurrection and in the life of the world to come. Let us pray:*
- *Christ, who in bestowing sight to the eyes of the blind man gave him the benefit of seeing you, reveal your countenance to our deceased brothers who are still deprived of your light. Let us pray:*
- *Lord, you allow the body of our earthly dwelling to lie in death; grant us an everlasting dwelling place in heaven. Let us pray:*

Our Father ...

Almighty God, our Father, creator, redeemer, comforter and savior,
into your hands we entrust our departed brothers:

receive them into your kingdom

where they may see you clearly, and love you perfectly,

where communion with you is blessed, and joy without end.

Grant that we may love you with all our heart, always thinking of you,

with all our soul, always desiring you,

with all our mind, orienting all our intentions to you,

with all our strength, in the service of your love,

until the day in which Sister bodily Death

will lead us into the Passover of your son.

On that day we too, together with our father St. Francis and all our brothers,

shall contemplate you, who are all our delight, our eternal life,

great and wonderful Lord, God almighty and merciful,

who with your beloved Son and the Holy Spirit the Paraclete,

live and reign for ever and ever. Amen.

202. When all has been concluded, the *Praeses* asks: *Do you agree that this Chapter and its deliberations be officially closed?*

203. If they answer affirmatively, a thanksgiving hymn such as the *Te Deum* (in Appendix A of this

Directory) is sung. Then the *Praeses* adds:

V. Let us bless the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.

R. Let us praise and magnify him forever.

Let us pray. O God, whose mercy is beyond telling and whose goodness an infinite treasure, we give thanks to your sovereign kindness for the gifts we have received. We beg your continued favor. Do not forsake us but prepare us for the rewards to come. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

204. Finally, the *Praeses* imparts the seraphic blessing of our Holy Father St. Francis:

May the Lord bless you and keep you.

May he show his face to you and have mercy on you.

May he turn his countenance to you and give you peace.

May the Lord bless you.

R. Amen

205. The *Praeses* concludes the Chapter, saying:

My brothers, let us go in peace!

THE CUSTODIAL CHAPTER

206. In Provincial Custodies, the Chapter, as foreseen by the Provincial Statutes, is convoked by the Minister Provincial and presided by himself, or his delegate (Custos). The Assistant General for the area also has the right to participate in it with voting rights. (*Gen Stat.*, 116, §3).
207. It is to be held in two parts, according to the Directory for the Celebration of the Ordinary Provincial Chapter. In the second part, the Four-Year Custodial plan is to be drafted. (*Gen Stat.*, 128, §2).
208. For the celebration of the Custodial Chapter, the same Directory for the Celebration of the Ordinary Provincial Chapter is followed.
209. For Provincial Custodies, where the Provincial Statutes allow the election of the Provincial Custos and other offices in the Custodial Chapter, the sections within the Directory regarding the election of the Minister Provincial and other Provincial offices are followed. Otherwise, see nos.180-186.
210. Before the election of the Custos, the *Praeses* reads or has the Chapter Secretary read the following on:

The Provincial Custos

Const., 222, §1: *It is the duty of the Custos to guide the fraternal life and mission and, in conformity with Const.*, 127, §2, *to promote vocational recruitment.*

§2. *With the consent of his Definitory the Custos can affiliate candidates to the Custody; admit them to profession; issue dimissorial letters; name or substitute Guardians; sign written contracts with diocesan bishops (cf. Const.*, 117, §3); *and present friars to the diocesan bishop to be pastors.*

§3. *As for other matters, especially extraordinary ones, the authority of the Custos, as vicarious, can be limited by the Provincial Chapter and the Provincial Statutes.*

211. For the election of the Provincial Custos, five ballots are allowed.
212. When the *Praeses* has given the confirmation, and all the friars are assembled in the Chapter hall, the Chapter Secretary announces the election in these words:

In the year of Our Lord..., the...day of the month of..., I, Friar..., Secretary of the Custodial Chapter, on behalf of all legitimately assembled here at the friary of... in the city of... with the right according to the Rule and Constitutions to elect the Provincial Custos, hereby publish that the Provincial Custos of the Province of... is Friar... who received a majority of the votes. I therefore declare him duly elected.

The Secretary may also make this declaration in a public place, for example, in the church before the singing of the *Te Deum*.

* * *

THE EXTRAORDINARY PROVINCIAL CHAPTER

Preparations for the Extraordinary Provincial Chapter

213. The Minister Provincial with the consent of his Definitory may convoke an Extraordinary Chapter whenever matters of great importance are pressing. (*Const.*, 209, §2).
214. The voting members of the Extraordinary Provincial Chapter are all the members of the Ordinary Provincial Chapter. (*Const.*, 210, §3).
215. If they so desire, the Minister Provincial with his Definitory may ask the Minister General if all the solemnly professed friars with voting rights may participate in the Extraordinary Provincial Chapter. (*Const.*, 210, §3).
216. The Minister Provincial must advise the Minister General and the Assistant General of the area of the upcoming Extraordinary Provincial Chapter in advance and give reasons for calling it. (*Const.* 209 §2).
217. In announcing the Extraordinary Provincial Chapter, the Minister Provincial and his Definitory must establish both the time and place of the Chapter and send the *Instrumentum laboris* beforehand to all solemnly professed friars.
218. The *Praeses* of the Extraordinary Provincial Chapter is the Minister Provincial, unless the Minister General is present.
219. During an Extraordinary Provincial Chapter come into effect the members of the various organisms of the previous Ordinary Provincial Chapter (Steering Committee, Grievance Committee, and if there are financial matters, the Finance Committee), unless the Assembly decides otherwise.
220. The Chapter Secretary has the role of writing the minutes of the works and decisions of the Chapter, and then to sign the minutes together with the *Praeses* of the Chapter.

Conducting the Extraordinary Provincial Chapter

221. After the prayer at the beginning of the Chapter, when the Capitulars are assembled in the Chapter hall, the *Praeses* asks for the confirmation of the Chapter Secretary (see above, Directory no. 48).
222. The Chapter Secretary then takes the roll call of the Capitulars
223. If a moderator is needed, the *Praeses* presents him to the Capitulars for confirmation.
224. This opens up to discussion the themes of the Extraordinary Provincial Chapter, according to the methods used by the Minister Provincial with his Definitory (e.g. bringing up the themes in the Chapter hall, in work groups, working on proposals to present in the Chapter hall, etc.).
225. Motions are voted upon following proper procedure.
226. If there are to be elections during the Chapter (e.g. Delegates to General Chapter, or electing a substitute to a vacant office) the Directory is to be followed.
227. A copy of the Minutes of the Extraordinary Provincial Chapter (containing the minutes of the Secretary, any reports or attachments) are to be duly signed by the Secretary and the *Praeses*, and sent to the Secretary General.

THE SPIRITUAL PROVINCIAL CHAPTER

In the Franciscan tradition of our Order, the spiritual dimension of the Chapter is an essential element as well as an aspect that strongly expresses fraternal life and active participation in governing. For this reason, the Constitutions remind us that in Chapter we must look at “those things that pertain to God” (Chap. VI, Spiritual Introduction, J; cf. Earlier Rule 18, 1; FF 50). The Constitutions and General Statutes of the Order underline this dimension of Chapter especially when dealing with the friary Chapter (Const., 58, §3), but this can be extended to the Provincial Chapter.

That is why we have seen the emergence in our Order of the praiseworthy practice of celebrating the Spiritual Provincial Chapter as a strong expression of the spiritual life and as a way of continuing formation.

- 228.** The *Spiritual Provincial Chapter* is an assembly of all the friars of a Province. If the Minister Provincial with his Definitory so desire, the temporarily professed friars, together with the novices and postulants, may also participate. The Chapter may also be celebrated in two or more goes so that all friars may attend.
- 229.** The *Spiritual Provincial Chapter* is not juridical; thus the word “Chapter” is used in the sense of “fraternal gathering” of all the friars of the Province.
- 230.** In order to be lawful, any decisions that may arise from the *Spiritual Provincial Chapter* must be adopted by the Ordinary or Extraordinary Provincial Chapter or by the Minister Provincial with his Definitory.
- 231.** The *Spiritual Provincial Chapter* may be convoked more than once during the four-year term, upon the mandate of the Ordinary Provincial Chapter or by a decision of the Minister Provincial with his Definitory.
- 232.** Before announcing the *Spiritual Provincial Chapter*, the Minister Provincial must advise the Minister General and the Assistant General of the area in advance.
- 233.** The Minister Provincial must see to it that the *Spiritual Provincial Chapter* be properly prepared, especially the liturgy, communal and personal moments of reflection, and moments of fraternity as well.
- 234.** Dispensation from attending the *Spiritual Provincial Chapter* may be given only by the Minister Provincial.
- 235.** The Minister Provincial with his Definitory are to nominate a Secretary to the *Spiritual Provincial Chapter*, whose role is to write the Minutes of the Chapter and collect any documentation.
- 236.** The Minutes of the *Spiritual Provincial Chapter* are to be kept in the Provincial archives.
- 237.** A copy of these Minutes is to be sent to the General Curia.

* * *

Appendix A

PRAYERS

At the Beginning of the Chapter

1. **Veni, Creator Spiritus,**
mentes tuorum visita,
imple superna gratia,
quae tu creasti pectora.

Qui diceris Paraclitus,
altissimi donum Dei,
fons vivus, ignis, caritas
et spiritalis unctio.

Tu septiformis munere,
digitus paternae dexteræ,
tu rite promissum Patris
sermone ditans guttura.

Accende lumen sensibus,
infunde amorem cordibus,
infirma nostri corporis,
virtute firmans perpeti.

Hostem repellas longius,
pacemque dones protinus;
ductore sic te previo
vitemus omne noxium.

Per te sciamus da Patrem
noscamus atque Filium,
teque utriusque Spiritum
credamus omni tempore.
Amen.

Come, Holy Spirit, Creator, come,
From your bright heavenly throne,
Come take possession of our souls
And make them all your own.

You who are called the Paraclete
Best gift of God above,
The living spring, the living fire,
Sweet unction and true love

You who are seven-fold in your grace
Finger of God's right hand;
His promise, teaching little ones
To speak and understand.

O guide our minds with your blest light
With love our hearts inflame;
And with our strength, which ne'er decays
Confirm our mortal frame.

Far from us drive our deadly foe;
True peace unto us bring;
And from all perils lead us safe
Beneath your sacred wing.

Through you may we the Father know,
Through you the eternal Son,
And you the Spirit of them both,
Thrice-blessed Three in One.
Amen.

2. **We have come, O Lord, Holy Spirit, we have come before you,**

hampered indeed by our many and grievous sins, but for a special purpose gathered together in your name.

Come to us and be with us and enter our hearts.

Teach us what we are to do and where we ought to tend; show us what we must accomplish, in order that, with your help, we may be able to please you in all things.

May you alone be the author and the finisher of our judgments, who alone with God the Father and his Son possess a glorious name.

Do not allow us to disturb the order of justice, you who love equity above all things. Let not ignorance

draw us into devious paths. Let not partiality sway our minds or respect of riches or persons pervert our judgment.

But unite us to you effectually by the gift of your grace alone, that we may be one in you and never forsake the truth; inasmuch as we are gathered together in your name, so may we in all things hold fast to justice tempered by mercy, so that in this life our judgment may in no wise be at variance with you and in the life to come we may attain to everlasting rewards for deeds well done. Amen.

(“*Adsumus*”–Roman Pontifical)

3. Almighty, Eternal, Just and Merciful God,

give us miserable ones the grace to do for You alone
what we know you want us to do
and always to desire what pleases You.
Inwardly cleansed, interiorly enlightened,
and inflamed by the fire of the Holy Spirit,
may we be able to follow in the footprints of Your beloved Son,
our Lord Jesus Christ,
and by Your grace alone, may we make our way to You.
Most High, Who live and rule
in perfect Trinity and simple Unity,
and are glorified God almighty,
forever and ever. Amen.

(St. Francis, *A Letter to the Entire Order* 50-52, FF 233)

4. Come, O Creator Spirit,

help us in this Chapter “to be concerned about the things of God”
and to make of it a time of earnest evaluation of our life,
of sincerely seeking your will
and a lived experience of fraternity.
Guide our family in a renewal
in the school of our father St. Francis,
that it may become a confession of the Most Holy Trinity,
and a clear sign of fraternal love
in the service of the men and women of our day.
Inspire our choices
that they may be dictated by charity
and the search for the common good.
May the voice of the Gospel
that sounded so clearly through your servant Frances
resound again through us
in the church and the world. Amen.

5. Inspire Our Actions, O Lord

and accompany them with your assistance
so that our every action

may have in you its beginning and end
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

(from the Liturgy)

- 6. To You, O Mary, image and Mother of the Church,**
who desire the spiritual and apostolic renewal of your sons and daughters
in a response of love and complete dedication to Christ,
we address our confident prayer.
You who did the will of the Father,
ever ready in obedience, courageous in poverty
and receptive in fruitful virginity,
obtain for us from your divine Son that we may be enabled to bear witness
to that gift by our transfigured lives,
as we joyfully make our way with all our brothers and sisters
towards our heavenly homeland and the light which will never grow dim.
We ask you this, that in everyone and in everything glory, adoration and love
may be given to the Most High Lord of all things,
who is Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.

(St. John Paul II, "*Vita consecrata*")

- 7. Remember All Your Children, Father**
You, most holy one, know perfectly how,
lost in a maze of mystifying perils,
they follow your footprints
from how great a distance.
Give them strength, that they may resist.
Purify them, that they may shine radiantly.
Fill them with joy, that they may delight.
Pray that the spirit of grace and of prayer may inundate them
that they may have the true humility you had;
that they may cherish the poverty you embraced;
that they may be filled with the love
with which you always loved Christ crucified.
Who with the Father and the Holy Spirit
lives and reigns forever and ever. Amen.

(Thomas of Celano, *The Remembrance of the Desire of a Soul*, FF 820)

B) At the End of the Chapter

- 8. Te Deum laudamus:** * te Dominum confitemur.
Te aeternum Patrem, * omnis terra veneratur.
Tibi omnes angeli, * tibi caeli et universae potestates:
tibi cherubim et seraphim * incessabili voce proclamant:

Sanctus, * Sanctus, * Sanctus Dominus Deus Sabaoth.
 Pleni sunt caeli et terra * maiestatis gloriae tuae.
 Te gloriosus * Apostolorum chorus,
 te prophetarum * laudabilis numerus,
 te martyrum candidatus * laudat exercitus.
 Te per orbem terrarum * sancta confitetur Ecclesia,
 Patrem * immensae maiestatis;
 venerandum tuum verum * et unicum Filium;
 Sanctum quoque * Paraclitum Spiritum.
 Tu rex * gloriae, Christe.
 Tu Patris * sempiternus es Filius.
 Tu, ad liberandum suscepturus hominem, * non horruisti Virginis uterum.
 Tu, devicto mortis aculeo, * aperuisti credentibus regna caelorum.
 Tu ad dexteram Dei sedes, * in gloria Patris.
 Iudex crederis * esse venturus.
 Te ergo, quaesumus, tuis famulis subveni, * quos pretioso sanguine redemisti.
 Aeterna fac cum sanctis tuis * in gloria numerari.

 Salvum fac populum tuum, Domine, * et benedic hereditati tuae.
 Et rege eos, * et extolle illos usque in aeternum.
 Per singulos dies * benedicimus te;
 et laudamus nomen tuum in saeculum, * et in saeculum saeculi.
 Dignare, Domine, die isto * sine peccato nos custodire.
 Miserere nostri, Domine, * miserere nostri.
 Fiat misericordia tua, Domine, super nos, * quemadmodum speravimus in te.
 In te, Domine, speravi: * non confundar in aeternum.

8b. You are God: we praise you;
 You are the Lord: we acclaim you;
 You are the eternal Father:
 All creation worships you.
 To you all angels, all the powers of heaven
 Cherubim and seraphim, sing in endless praise:
 Holy, holy, holy, Lord, God of power and might,
 heaven and earth are full of your glory.
 The glorious company of apostles praises you.
 The noble fellowship of prophets praises you.
 The white-robed army of martyrs praises you.
 Throughout the world, the holy Church acclaim you:
 Father of majesty unbounded,
 your true and only Son, worthy of all worship,
 and the Holy Spirit, advocate and guide.
 You, Christ, are the king of glory,
 the eternal Son of the Father.
 When you became man to set us free

you did not spurn the Virgin's womb.
You overcame the sting of death,
and opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers.
You are seated at God's right hand in glory.
We believe that you will come, and be our judge.
Come then, Lord, and help your people,
bought with the price of your own blood,
and bring us with your saints
to glory everlasting.

9. The *Te Deum* or "The Franciscan Credo"

All-powerful, most holy, Almighty and supreme God,
Holy and just Father, Lord King of heaven and earth
we thank You for Yourself for through Your holy will
and through Your only Son with the Holy Spirit.
You have created everything spiritual and corporal
and, after making us in Your own image and likeness,
You placed us in paradise.
Through our own fault we fell.
We thank You, for as through Your Son You created us,
so through Your holy love with which You loved us
You brought about His birth as true God and true man
by the glorious, ever-virgin, most blessed, holy Mary
and You willed to redeem us captives through His cross and blood and death.
We thank You for Your Son Himself will come again
in the glory of His majesty to send into the eternal fire
the wicked ones who have not done penance
and have not known You and to say to all those
who have known You, adored You and served You in penance:
"Come, you blessed of my Father, receive the kingdom prepared for you
from the beginning of the world."
Because all of us, wretches and sinners, are not worthy to pronounce Your name,
we humbly ask our Lord Jesus Christ, Your beloved Son,
in Whom You were well pleased,
together with the Holy Spirit, the Paraclete,
to give You thanks, for everything as it pleases You and Him,
Who always satisfies You in everything, through Whom You have done so much for us. Alleluia!
Because of Your love, we humbly beg
the glorious Mother, the most blessed, ever-virgin Mary,
Blessed Michael, Gabriel, and Raphael, all the choirs of the blessed
seraphim, cherubim, thrones, dominations, principalities, powers, virtues, angels, archangels,
Blessed John the Baptist, John the Evangelist, Peter, Paul,
the blessed patriarchs and prophets, the innocents, apostles, evangelists, disciples,

the martyrs, confessors and virgins, the blessed Elijah and Henoah,
all the saints who were, who will be, and who are to give You thanks
for these things, as it pleases You,
God true and supreme, eternal and living,
with Your most beloved Son, our Lord Jesus Christ,
and the Holy Spirit, the Paraclete,
world without end. Amen. Alleluia!

(St. Francis, *Earlier Rule* 23; *FF* 63-67)

10. V) Blessed be the name of the Lord;
R) Now and forever.

Let us pray:

O God, source of all that is good,
inspire in us just and holy plans
and give us your aid
that we may fulfill them in our lives.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

(from the Liturgy)

11. V) Blessed be the name of the Lord;
R) Now and forever.

Let us pray:

Grant us, O Lord, the help of your grace
That we may faithfully fulfill
What you have inspired us to begin.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

(from the Liturgy)

12. V) Blessed be the name of the Lord;
R) Now and forever.

Let us pray:

May your grace, O Lord, always precede us and accompany us
So that, sustained by your fatherly assistance,
we may never tire of doing good.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

(from the Liturgy)

13. V) Blessed be the name of the Lord;
R) Now and forever.

Let us pray:

May your assistance, O merciful Father,
make us always attentive to the voice of the Holy Spirit,
so that we may in word and work
do your holy will.

Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

(from the Liturgy)

Appendix B

FORMULAS FOR THE PROFESSION OF FAITH AND THE OATH OF FIDELITY

I. Formula for the Profession of Faith and Oath of Fidelity

to be made by the:
Minister Provincial, the Vicar Provincial and the Guardians

(Formula of Profession of Faith)

I, Friar N., with firm faith believe and profess each and everything that is contained in the Symbol of faith, namely:

I believe in one God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible.

I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God, born of the Father before all ages. God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father; through him all things were made.

For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven, and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and became man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate, he suffered death and was buried, and rose again on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead and his kingdom will have no end.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets.

I believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church. I confess one baptism for the forgiveness of sins and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

With firm faith, I also believe everything contained in the word of God, whether written or handed down in Tradition, which the Church, either by a solemn judgement or by the ordinary and universal Magisterium, sets forth to be believed as divinely revealed.

I also firmly accept and hold each and everything definitively proposed by the Church regarding teaching on faith and morals.

Moreover, I adhere with religious submission of will and intellect to the teachings which either the Roman Pontiff or the College of Bishops enunciate when they exercise their authentic Magisterium, even if they do not intend to proclaim these teachings by a definitive act.

(Oath of Fidelity)

In assuming the office of Minister Provincial [or: of Vicar Provincial, of Guardian], I promise that in my words and in my actions I shall always preserve communion with the Catholic Church.

With great care and fidelity, I shall carry out the duties incumbent on me toward the Church, both universal and particular, in which, according to the provisions of law, I have been called to exercise my service.

In fulfilling the charge entrusted to me in the name of the Church, I shall hold fast to the deposit of faith in its entirety; I shall faithfully hand it on and explain it, and I shall avoid any teachings contrary to it.

I shall foster the common discipline of the entire Church and I shall insist on the observance of all ecclesiastical laws, especially those contained in the Code of Canon Law.

With Christian obedience, I shall follow what the bishops, as authentic doctors and teachers of the faith, declare, or what they, as those who govern the Church, establish. I shall also – with due regard for the character and purpose of my institute – faithfully assist the diocesan Bishops, so that the apostolic activity, exercised in the name and by mandate of the Church, may be carried out in communion with the Church.

The Minister Provincial adds:

Last of all, I promise that for the entire period that I am in office, I shall – as much as possible – try to cultivate and promote the observance of the Rule and Constitutions throughout the Province and I will spare no care, effort and zeal in doing so.

I furthermore promise submission, reverence and obedience to the Minister General and confirm my fidelity to him.

So help me God, and God's Holy Gospels, on which I place my hand.

The Vicar Provincial and the Guardians, instead, add:

Last of all, I promise to faithfully fulfill all the duties of my office, in accord with the prescriptions of the constitutions of our Order.

So help me God, and God's Holy Gospels, on which I place my hand.

II. Oath of Fidelity

for Provincial Assistants

I, Friar N..., elected as Provincial assistant, promise to faithfully fulfill all the duties of my office in accord with the prescriptions of the Constitutions of our Order.

So help me God, and God's Holy Gospels, on which I place my hand.

Appendix C

Directory for the Election of the Friary Delegate

Single session

1 At the appointed time the friars gather in the friary Chapter under the presidency of the Guardian or Vicar of the friary; after the *Veni Creator* (see Appendix A) they recite the prayer *Adsumus* (cf. Appendix A).

2. Upon the instruction of the Guardian, the Secretary of the Chapter will take the roll call.

3. They then choose two tellers whose are responsible for writing the results of the balloting.

4. Each friar with the right to vote shall be given a ballot upon which he writes the name of the person he prefers with this formula:

I elect as delegate to the Provincial Chapter Friar...

He then folds the ballot and places it in the ballot box near the *Praeses*.

5. Upon the instruction of the *Praeses*, the ballots are mixed and then counted.

6. If the number of ballots is correct, two friars are chosen to read the ballots.

7. While the ballots are being read both tellers and the Secretary keep an individual tally.

8. On the first or second ballot the friar receiving an absolute majority of the votes is elected; on the third ballot, relative majority suffices.

9. When the election has been concluded, the Secretary announces the result. If no one has received the required majority, the Secretary declares:

We do not have an election. The number of voters is... (the number of invalid votes is..., the number of blank ballots is...) and the number of valid votes is.... Friar... received ... votes; Friar... received ... votes, etc. No one has received the required majority.

The Guardian then invites the friars to proceed to the next ballot.

10. If the necessary majority has been obtained, the Secretary declares:

We have an election. The number of voters is... and the number of valid votes is.... There are... blank ballots and ... invalid ballots... Friar... received... votes, [etc.] and Friar... received the remaining... votes.

11. Immediately, the *Praeses* asks the assembly:

Does anyone of you raise an objection to the person elected or to the manner of his election?

If no objection is raised, the *Praeses* addresses the person elected and asks him:

Friar..., having been duly elected, do you agree to serve as delegate from our friary to the Provincial Chapter?

12. Upon agreement of election, the Secretary of the Chapter proclaims the election:

Today (specifying the date) the community of the friary of.... has elected Friar.... (and Friar...) as Delegate(s) to the Provincial Chapter

The *Praeses* orders the ballots to be burned.

13. The letter of election (cf. Appendix D) is marked with the seal of the friary and handed to the delegate.

14. The friary Chapter closes with the following prayer: (or some other prayer found in Appendix A of this Directory).

V) Blessed be the name of the Lord.

R) Now and forever.

Let us pray.

Grant us, O Lord, the help of your grace,

that we may faithfully fulfill

what you have inspired us to do.

Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Appendix D

VARIOUS FORMULAS

I. Letter Attesting to the Election of the Friary Delegate

*To the Friar Praeses,
To all our brothers gathered in the Provincial Chapter*

In our friary of, under the presidency of the Guardian, Friar, we have elected as delegate to the Provincial Chapter from the friary of

Friar ...

who, by secret vote through the use of ballots and in conformity with canon law and our Constitutions, has received the majority of votes, namely ... of the ... voting, during the ... ballot.

He will participate in the Provincial Chapter in our name and will vote in the election of the Minister Provincial.

(place), (date)

The signatures of all those who participated in the election follow:

Friar

Friar..... etc.

II. Letter Attesting to the Election of the Delegate to the General Chapter

To the Secretary General of the Order

During the Provincial Chapter of the Province of, celebrated in the friary of.... on (day, month and year), because at the time of the celebration of the Ordinary Provincial Chapter the Province numbered solemnly professed friars, in accordance with no. 100 of the General Statutes, by a secret vote on a written ballot in conformity with canon law and our Constitutions, we elected **as Delegate (Delegates) to the General Chapter** from this Province:

Friar, who received the majority of the votes.

(Friar ..., etc.)

Place and date

(seal)

Friar ... *Praeses* of the Provincial Chapter

Friar ... Secretary of the Provincial Chapter

III. Testimonial Letter for the Election of the Minister Provincial during the Provincial Chapter

After a Friar is elected to the office of the Minister Provincial, and is verbally confirmed (directly or by telephone) by the Minister General (or by his Delegate), it is required by law that the Secretary of the Provincial Chapter (in his role as notary of the Chapter) prepares the following declaration, cosigned by the *Praeses* of the Chapter.

Prot.

Date, XX.ZZ.20XX

DECLARATION

I the undersigned,, in my capacity as Secretary of the Provincial Chapter of the Province of of the Friars Minor Conventual, headquartered in, Friary of, address, no., declare that

Friar

born inon (*day, month, year*), has been legitimately elected, for a four year term, Minister Provincial of the Province of of the Friars Minor Conventual during the Provincial Chapter held (*days, month, year*).

In faith,

Friar
Secretary of the Provincial Chapter

Friar
Praeses of the Provincial Chapter

(*seal*)

TESTIMONIAL LETTER FOR THE ELECTION OF THE MINISTER PROVINCIAL BY MAIL BALLOT

If the Minister Provincial has been elected by mail ballot, the Minister General, besides confirming the election verbally, will send a written declaration.

DECLARATION CONCERNING THE ONE WHO HAS BEEN GIVEN THE POSITION OF MINISTER PROVINCIAL

Occasionally (outside of the time of Provincial Chapter), for example for certain legal activities (banking or other things) a declaration attesting to the identity of the Friar holding the position of Minister Provincial is requested. Such a declaration is prepared by the General Secretariat in the name of the Minister General.

Appendix E

Suggested Methodology to Analyze and Evaluate the Life and Activity of the Province

This is a brief summary of a method that could be used to analyze and evaluate the life and activity of the Province. It would be good to evaluate all of the following areas; but the first six should never be omitted;

1. Primacy of God, prayer life and Franciscan religious identity;
2. Fraternal life (life-style, means for increasing fraternity, harmonization between fraternal life and apostolic life, etc.);
3. Apostolate (witness, missionary involvement, Franciscan style of apostolate, etc.);
4. Vocational recruitment;
5. Initial formation;
6. Ongoing formation;
7. Leadership and guidance of the Province and of the communities; exercise of authority and obedience;
8. Poverty, administration and use of goods;
9. Involvement in the mission *ad gentes*, response to the signs of the times and to the needs of the Church and society;
10. Evaluation of the implementation of the Six-year Plan of the Order, the Provincial Four-Year Plan and any Motions of the previous Provincial Chapter;
11. Particular problems of the Province; e.g. specific works or ministries of the Province; and particular situations contingent to them;
12. Examination of the life, activities and plans of any Provincial Custodies.

For each of these areas, or for some of them, the groups should study and summarize:

- a) **Positive aspects:** what has been done, and what is being done in the Province so that it can be seen that reveals any growth or increase in the life of the Province;
- b) **Problem areas**, that require greater effort or commitment or new initiatives;
- c) **Which of the topics and problems arising from this analysis should be noted as possible priorities in planning for the next four years?**

This evaluation is to be based on the reports given to the chapter and any extraordinary Chapter that may have been held during the previous four years, and from the Capitulars' personal experience and their experience of the life of the Province.

A written summary of this analysis should be presented; the secretary-relator should first submit it to his group, if possible.