



GENERAL CURIA
Friars Minor Conventual
Piazza Santi Apostoli, Rome



FRA TRES
MINORES
CONVENTUALES

General Office of Communications

2025-2031
SIX-YEAR PLAN
of the Order of
Friars Minor Conventual

... So That Christ May Remain

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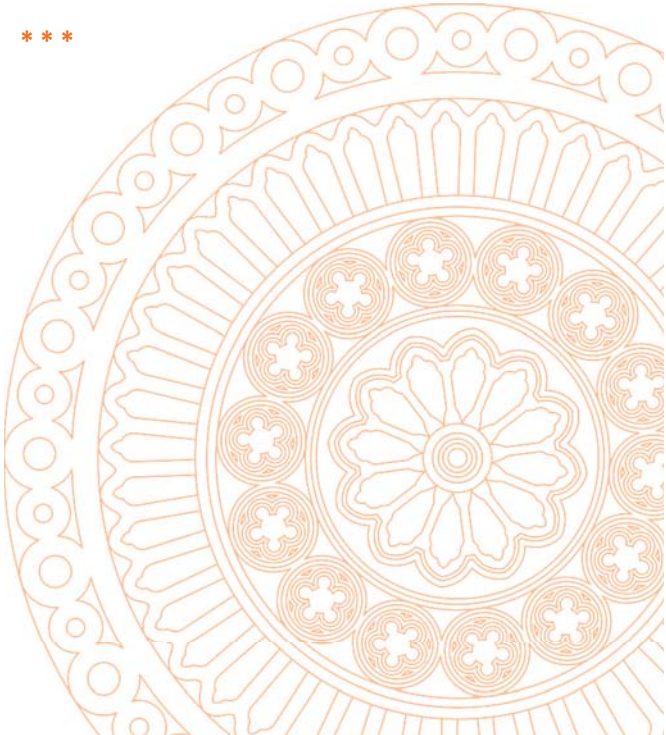
APPROVED MOTIONS15

MOTION No. 21 – External Financial Audit

By the end of June, 2026, the General Government of the Order shall engage a fitting outside managerial consulting firm to conduct an audit of the managerial practices of the General Government as they pertain to the use of the Order’s temporal assets in the best way possible. This audit shall include a review of all structures of the General Curia and its various offices with regard to financial administration and investment practices, including an assessment of asset management, but also an assessment of decision-making structures and internal processes. The audit shall contain recommendations that can be used in a long-term financial plan which includes capital improvement needs for the General Houses of Rome.

The Minister General, with his Definitory, is charged with the appropriate implementation of the auditors’ recommendations, including the possibility of establishing a Standing Committee on Financial Administration, which would include the members of the General Financial Office along with other friars and lay people with appropriate expertise.

* * *



MOTION No. 17 – Formation Fund 2026-2031

The General Chapter has decided to keep the Formation Deposit Fund in place. In addition to the sums that may arise from any surplus of annual contributions to the Fraternal Solidarity Fund (cf. Motion No. 15, §4), it will also be increased by contributions from the Provinces and Custodies.

The following amounts shall be paid to the Formation Deposit Fund:

- at least 10% of the proceeds from the sale of real estate;
- at least 10% of the sum from a bequest or significant donation.

MOTION No. 18 – General Houses in Rome

§1. The General Chapter has decided to designate the Friary of St. Maximilian M. Kolbe as a filial house subordinated to the Friary of the Twelve Holy Apostles, rather than suppressing it (General Statutes nos. 13-14).

§2. The spaces inside the Friary of St. Maximilian M. Kolbe that are not needed by the community, and are not connected to the Kolbean heritage, can be rented out or used for other commercial activities.

MOTION No. 19 – Training for Friars Responsible for Managing Finances

The General Chapter affirms the need for training sessions for Provincial, Custodial and Friary Economists and instructs the individual Federations to organize them, taking into account the laws and regulations of each country. These sessions are also to familiarize the Economists with the requirements of the General Curia regarding the reporting and presentation of annual budgets.

MOTION No. 20 – Spending Limits

The General Chapter approves the following spending limits:

- §1. For the Minister General: 20,000 euro;
- §2. For the Minister General with his Definitory: 4,000,000 euro.

**LETTER OF THE
MINISTER GENERAL**
to the Entire Order

*“To move aside so that Christ may remain,
to make oneself small so that He may be known and glorified (cf. Jn 3:30),
to spend oneself to the utmost
so that all may have the opportunity to know and love Him.”*

Pope Leo XIV, *Missa Pro Ecclesia*,
Sistine Chapel, first homily, May 9, 2025

Prot. N. 0001/2026

Dear brothers,

We still hold in our hearts the vivid memory of the period leading up to our 203rd Ordinary General Chapter, a time marked by the transition of the pontificate from Pope Francis to Pope Leo XIV.

Pope Francis, whose teaching and pastoral style were deeply inspired by the Poor Man of Assisi, left us on April 21, 2025. He bequeathed to us a Church that “goes forth,” that is merciful and pastoral—a Church that carries the “odor of the sheep,” that transforms itself into a “field hospital” for a world wounded by war, confusion, and social injustice. It is a Church that proclaims a message of global peace and solidarity, that is boldly—almost utopically—fraternal, as expressed in *Evangelii Gaudium* and *Fratelli Tutti*. It is a Church that prioritizes dialogue and closeness to the people, that promotes inclusive “processes,” and that loves simplicity and littleness.

Just before the Chapter (specifically on May 8, 2025), God’s providence gave us the gift of Pope Leo XIV. His first message to the cardinals, and therefore to the whole Church, was not only one of “littleness” but even of self-abandonment. The message of his first homily was “to move aside so that Christ may remain”—an idea that is concise and essential; an existential and faith-filled reality that we gladly embrace as the motto and “seal” of the six-year term our Order has just begun.

c) the solemnly professed absent from the religious house (can. 665, §§1 and 2),

d) friars in *extra claustra* granted by the Minister General (can. 686, §1) or imposed by the Holy See (can. 686, §3);

e) friars with a pontifical indult of *extra claustra* in anticipation of transitioning to the diocesan clergy (canons 691 and 693).

§3. Unless an agreement between Jurisdictions provides otherwise, the *Taxatio* is paid by the Jurisdiction for which the friar works, according to the rates in force for the country in which he serves.

§4. Regarding social insurance and pensions, the General Chapter decides (cf. Prot. 444/14 of October 23, 2014):

- for friars residing in the General Houses under the obedience of the Minister General, or assigned by the General Chapter, the responsibility for basic health insurance lies with the General Curia.

- the payment of pension contributions is the responsibility of the Province or Custody to which the friar belongs, unless otherwise decided by the General Curia.

§5. The General Chapter authorizes the Minister General and his Definitory to establish particular norms for certain Jurisdictions.

§6. Friars in the situations described in 2d and 2e should make sure that the *Taxatio Ordinis* has been adjusted for the period of their absence.

MOTION No. 16 – Fraternal Solidarity 2026-2031

§1. The General Chapter has decided to continue the practice of using the Fraternal Solidarity Fund to support formation efforts around the world and to cover expenses related to the exceptional needs of the Order.

§2. The contribution from each Province and Custody of the Order shall be determined annually by the Minister General, in consultation with his Definitory, based on the annual financial statements submitted to the General Curia (General Statutes no. 43, §§1-5).

§3. The Provincial and Custodial Chapters shall be required to include a strategy in their Four-Year Plan for raising the established funds.

§4. Any surplus from the annual contributions shall be transferred to the Formation Fund.

D) ECONOMIC ISSUES

MOTION No. 15 - *Taxatio Ordinis* (contribution to the General Curia) 2026 – 2031

Motion No. 15, §1. The General Chapter has decided on the following rates of the *Taxatio Ordinis* for the period of January 1, 2026, to December 31, 2031:

AFCOF	1 Mass Intention	Burkina Faso, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia
CEF	€40,00	Austria, Belgium, Croatia, Denmark, Germany, Holland, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland
CFF	€40,00	Australia, Canada, Great Britain, Ireland, USA
FALC	€20,00	Central America, Argentina, Brazil (SF), Brazil (SMK), Chile, Uruguay,
	1 Mass Int.	Bolivia, Brazil (Imm), Brazil (SB), Colombia, Cuba, Ecuador, Mexico, Paraguay, Peru, Venezuela
FAMC	€40,00	South Korea, Japan
	20,00	China
	1 Mass Int.	The Philippines, India, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Vietnam
FEMO	€40,00	Czech Republic
	€20,00	Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia, Hungary
	1 Mass Int.	Belarus, Bulgaria, Russia, Ukraine, Uzbekistan
FIMP	€40,00	France, Italy, Malta, Orient and the Holy Land, Portugal, Spain
	1 Mass Int.	Romania

§2. The following friars are exempt from paying the *Taxatio Ordinis*:

- the friars in service to the General Curia, who reside in the General Houses with the obedience of the Minister General, or with the task entrusted to them by the General Chapter;
- the solemnly professed who serve in houses of formation and houses of study,

Pope Leo XIV, the successor to the Chair of St. Peter, reminded the cardinals gathered in the Sistine Chapel about the difficulty of giving witness and proclaiming the Gospel in our day. He proposed, as the guiding principle of his papacy, total humility, *kenosis* [self-emptying] and selfless service—a ministry free from any form of self-promotion; a style of discipleship that diverts focus away from oneself.

I would interpret the Pope’s vision to “move aside so that Christ may remain” to mean not only bringing Christ to the world, but more radically, allowing Him to reveal Himself through us, to make His presence felt, and thus offer His light to all people.

It is a wish for total consumption of oneself, for the gradual emptying of oneself. This involves “abandoning all self-promotion, all worldly trust in power, in structures, in money, and in religious marketing projects, in order to abandon oneself to the One...without whom...we can do nothing” (Andrea TORNIELLI, Vatican News, May 8, 2025).

It is important to note how the new pope’s call for us to focus on the essential, brings us Franciscans back to a deeply familiar topic: that of *alter Christus*. From the time of St. Bonaventure and across nearly eight centuries of tradition, we have applied this term—perhaps somewhat iconically, yet not without truth—to the son of Pietro Bernardone [St. Francis of Assisi].

Indeed, Francis of Assisi made himself a lesser brother to the utmost, just as God humbled Himself in entering the womb of Mary of Nazareth. Moreover, Francis became a servant like the Crucified One; in fact, he came to be identified with Him, having been pierced by divine Love.

Francis was not simply a preacher of the Gospel, but a disciple who was “always active,” constantly trying to conform himself to Christ, not through outward imitation, but through the radical conversion of his life. He was a penitent in a continuous process of transformation, a man who allowed himself to be molded by the Master until he became, as far as possible, a living embodiment of the Gospel.

The Christ of the Gospels, in fact, took shape in Francis’ soul, in his body, in the way he chose to live, in his feelings, and in his entire way of life.

I consider Pope Leo XIV’s call to focus on the essentials and the General Chapter’s intention to deepen and strengthen within us the specific gift of our charism, to be a happy convergence, so that we may transform ourselves and our mission into a credible image of Christ and his Gospel, lived in fraternity and generosity.

To speak provocatively, I would say that living our evangelical charism authentically does not mean becoming lofty or unapproachable people, much less becoming hard-faced clerics with a crushing moralism. Rather, it means being redeemed men, evangelically peaceful, gentle, and constructive; not “domineering fathers,” but sons in the Son; not overseers of the sacred, but disciples of Jesus of Nazareth.

Proclaiming the primacy of God and the centrality of Christ in our lives is not a pastoral strategy or a parish proclamation. It is a difficult, rocky—but fascinating—path of personal and communal conversion. It is not about appearances; it is about our very lives and how we live them.

Ultimately, it is about taking the path that leads us to internalize, however timidly, the humanity of Christ. Indeed, Jesus manifested the full transcendence of God in a real human life, a life marked by littleness, fragility, limitations, self-giving, suffering, the cross, and thus redemptive death.

This is where the attributes of love, charity, humility, meekness, gentleness, mercy, beauty—and many others—are revealed, the very attributes Francis used in the *Canticle of the Creatures* (cf. FF 261) to address our eternal and yet profoundly human God.

It is therefore a question of setting out on a path of a new humanism: not the humanism of this or that ecclesial trend, but the humanism of Christ, the New Man, and that of the new creation, and the new covenant.

I learned from studying the liturgy that “becoming holy” as Christ is holy is not about striving for moral perfection but about seeking union with God through the offering of oneself. Holiness—our conformity to Christ—is always an act of worship, both in its form (a sacrifice, true spiritual worship, as described in Romans 12:1-2) and in its source (baptism). This spiritual worship draws us closer to Christ and fulfills our life as believers.

2. The General Chapter has decided to have the Order open at least one new missionary presence in a country where we do not yet have any permanent presence. It has asked the Minister General and his Definitory to plan and implement this initiative, involving one or more Jurisdictions.

MOTION No. 13 – Protection of Minors

The General Chapter has decided that:

§1. the Order shall establish a Commission that promotes a safe environment and responds to the complaint needs of minors, people who habitually have an imperfect use of reason, and vulnerable adults (Const. art. 26);

§2. the Minister General, with his Definitory, shall organize a gathering for all Jurisdictions of the Order within the next three years to address the topic of “Abuse and Prevention”;

§3. during the 2025-2031 six-year term, each Federation and/or Jurisdiction of the Order shall promote reflection and formation for the friars and their collaborators on issues related to the development of a culture of protecting minors and vulnerable persons;

§4. The members of the Second Order and the communities of the Secular Franciscan Order entrusted to our friars shall also be involved in this process of reflection and formation, if possible, with the aim of implementing shared protocols.

MOTION 14 – The Kolbe Project

Recognizing the importance of St. Maximilian M. Kolbe’s charism for the interior and missionary formation of the friars (cf. Const. art. 1 §6-7), the Chapter supported the “Kolbe Project” in the form of a formation course for the friars of the Order, especially in those Areas/Jurisdictions where Kolbe’s spirituality is less known and propagated.

§2. Mission Formation

Topics that enhance missionary awareness are to be intensively presented at all stages of formation in order to:

- deepen understanding of the Franciscan charism's unique approach to mission;
- encourage reflection within each Federation and Jurisdiction to boldly explore new forms of evangelization methods, including beyond the parish setting;
- equip friars to engage in missionary work within the world of digital communication, also known as the "eighth continent," with particular attention to, and respect for, the principles contained in the Assisi Act on Artificial Intelligence (Ethical Charter on Artificial Intelligence).

§3. Lay Missionary Volunteering

It is important to promote missionary experiences and missionary volunteering among the laity who are drawn to the Franciscan charism. This shall be done under the guidance of the General Secretariat for Mission Animation (SGAM) and the Projects Office, in collaboration with the missionary secretariats of the various Jurisdictions, and in the spirit of synodality. These initiatives shall provide opportunities for lay people to get involved in the missionary service carried out by the friars.

§4. Missionary Diaconate

It is important to nurture new vocations from countries where our Order is not yet present, providing opportunities for candidates to join and receive formation within the context of what is known as the "Missionary Diaconate."

§5. Missionary Experience for the Friars

In collaboration with the missionary secretariats of the Provinces and the missionary friars of their respective Jurisdictions, efforts are to be made to provide friars an opportunity to take part in a missionary experience.

§6. Promoting Conventual Franciscan Missions

Conventual Franciscan missions are to be thoroughly promoted in the media, emphasizing the unique aspects of the missionary vocation and the Conventual Franciscan charism, as well as the work the friars do to help develop mission communities.

As we journey as disciples—and as Conventual Franciscans—on the path of the Gospel, and as we celebrate the Liturgy (Liturgy of the Hours, the Mass, etc.), we are progressively transformed into a living sacrifice. Thus, we renew our minds, not through emotional and superficial religiosity, but through the sharp sword of the Word and the life-giving power of Grace. It is this Grace that accompanies and sustains us, transfiguring our poor lives as sinners into a new humanity, marked by benevolence, purity of heart, and the capacity for forgiveness and redemption.

"To move aside so that Christ may remain" is not primarily expressed in ceremonial displays or in superficial communal rituals, but in hearts dedicated to self-sacrificing love, in hands soiled with the mud of one's own suffering and that of others, and in bodies accustomed to the toil of "dying to self" and "serving," so that others may experience life as a freely given gift.

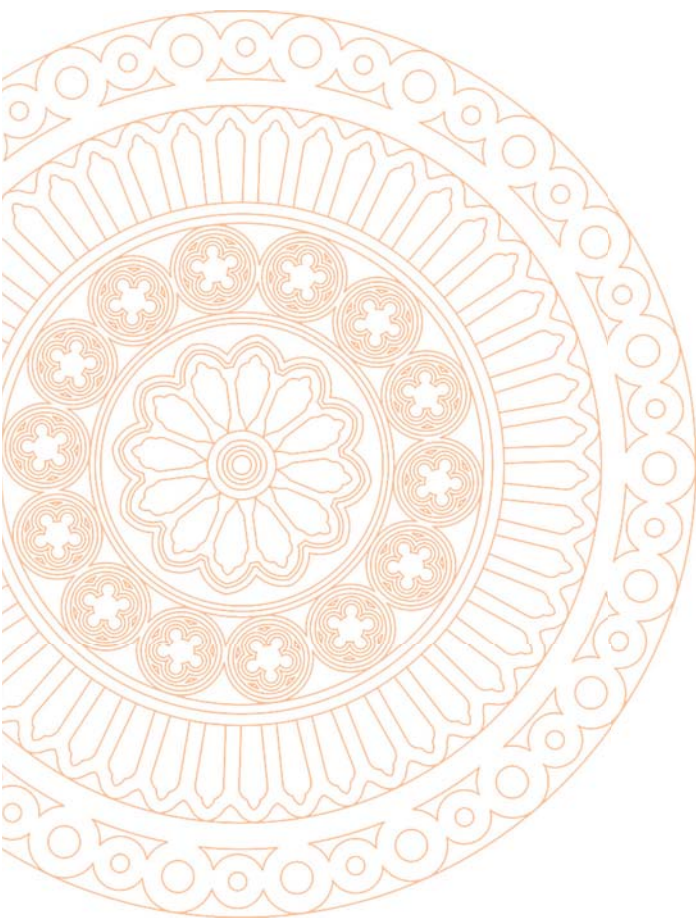
"To move aside so that Christ may remain" is not an act of sheer willpower or some pious feeling. Nor is it an empty phrase tucked into our usual "plans" (which often end up in a desk drawer or forgotten on a friary bulletin board).

"To move aside so that Christ may remain" is an anointing. It is Christ himself within us, upon us, and before us. It is the living, transformative power of the Gospel—prayed over personally and in community, embraced in faith, celebrated in Grace, and made flesh in our actions, relationships, and sufferings. It enables us to transform our frailties, redeem our weaknesses, shape our daily choices, and give of ourselves completely, following in the footsteps of St. Francis.

The Seraphic Father, the Poor Man, the Brother of Assisi, the spouse of Lady Poverty, almost eight hundred years ago (October of 1226), departed from this world after a lifetime of daily dying to himself in love. In the fullness of his years, he cried out that "Love is not loved," and yet he continued to love Love itself, his brothers, and the least of this world to the very end.

Rome, January 1, 2026

Friar Carlos A. Trovarelli
Minister General



MOTION No. 11 – The St. Bonaventure Project

The General Chapter has requested that the Faculty of St. Bonaventure develop and expand, in collaboration with the General Government of the Order, the St. Bonaventure Project, so as to provide expert theological and Franciscan formation to our friars at every stage of their journey and, directly or indirectly, to the rest of the world as well. The Pontifical Theological Faculty of St. Bonaventure:

§1. shall collaborate ever more closely with the General Curia in producing materials, especially on Franciscan topics, useful for the drafting of documents, letters, or formative resources intended for the entire Order. For its part, the General Government shall make every effort to provide the Faculty with the necessary support to promote the training of new professors and researchers.

§2. shall be available to respond (in the four official languages) to requests from the Federations, Provinces, Custodies, and Delegations of the Friars Minor Conventual regarding the Franciscan formation of the friars. It shall prepare and propose meaningful meetings and educational resources for continuing formation, including organizing study visits to the most significant Franciscan locations.

§3. shall support initial formation in the Order by assisting the formators in each Jurisdiction with resources that aid in the spiritual growth of postulants, novices, and post-novices.

§4. shall collaborate and interact with scholars of Franciscanism from around the world and contribute to theological and Franciscan research through publications and conferences that foster the development of Franciscan thought and spirituality.

MOTION No. 12 – Mission

1. To revive the missionary spirit in our Order, the General Chapter reiterates and proposes:

§1. Prayer

Keeping in mind that the Holy Spirit is the true principal agent of the mission (cf. *Redemptoris Missio* 21), it is essential to engage in deep prayer for renewed fervor and missionary conversion (cf. *Evangelii Gaudium* 25).

C) CHARISM AND MISSION

MOTION No. 10 – Identity and Charism

The Ordinary General Chapter, aware of the profound connection that exists between life and study, has approved the following Motions:

§1. Every four-year term, Major Superiors and/or Provincial, Custodial, and House Chapters are to provide Franciscan formation for the friars. This can be done in person or online, for example, by participating in refresher courses on Franciscanism. These courses are ideally to be offered by the various study centers of the Order such as the Pontifical Theological Faculty of St. Bonaventure, or other centers affiliated with the Franciscan Families in various countries, or by other academic institutions, or through other valid means. Major Superiors are to ensure and facilitate such formation throughout the four-year term.

§2. The Major Superiors are to offer the friars an opportunity to spend a prolonged period in Assisi and other Franciscan places in order to learn about, and closely study, the roots of our charismatic heritage.

§3. Each community shall schedule days for ongoing formation in its yearly calendar and present the program for approval to their respective Major Superiors at the beginning of the year (as part of the Community Plan). Additionally, each Province, Custody, Delegation, or mission house shall establish a serious annual program for continuing formation as part of the Provincial/Community Four-Year Plan. These programs are also to have a final review (see Const. art. 58, §3).

§4. The Government of the Order shall organize a fraternal Assembly midway through the 2025-2031 six-year term, focusing on Franciscan identity, the transmission of charism, mission, and New Evangelization (also using culture and art as mediums).

§5. Each Province or Custody is encouraged to establish a special welcoming community (preferably international) dedicated to vocation and youth ministry, characterized by a simple lifestyle with a particular focus on communal and personal prayer, fraternal life, and a missionary spirit. Special attention is also to be given to friars who are experiencing personal difficulties.

**2025-2031
SIX-YEAR PLAN**
**of the Order of
Friars Minor Conventual**

... So That Christ May Remain



What are the Order's priorities today? What is its primary objective? What are we called to work on together?

These questions are answered by the General Chapter, given that *"supreme authority in the whole Order resides in and is exercised by the General Chapter, eminent sign of unity and fraternal communion"* (Constitutions, art. 183, §1).

Several months have passed since the 203rd General Chapter was held on June 1-21, 2025, in Rome. Since then, the Government of the Order has reflected on the outcome of the Chapter sessions, on the guidelines the Chapter provided, and the message the Church entrusted to us—especially during our private audience with Pope Leo XIV.

The Pope gave us a phrase that can guide us for the entire six-year term: *"Move aside so that Christ may remain."* Indeed, during the first homily of his pontificate, Pope Leo reminded us of what was *"an indispensable commitment for all those in the Church who exercise a ministry of authority...to move aside so that Christ may remain, to make oneself small so that he may be known and glorified (cf. Jn 3:30), to spend oneself to the utmost so that all may have the opportunity to know and love him."*

His advice applies not only to those who exercise true service of authority—the Minister General, the Minister Provincial, the Guardian—but to every friar. We are all called to live this way, centered on Christ, in a spirit of minority, as missionaries.

In the case of CFF and FALC: The two Federations representing North and South America should establish a framework of mutual dialogue and formation. To this end, they should meet at least twice during the next six years.

In the case of AFCOF: Areas of collaboration in initial and continuing formation should be strengthened: common formation houses, joint study of the charism, etc.

In the case of FAMC: A language study program should be established.

§3. For all the Federations: regarding the friaries and friars of one Jurisdiction in the territory of another (Const., art. 29, §§1-2), the Government of the Order, after consulting all interested parties, should guide the processes and specific methods of such collaboration.

MOTION No. 9 – Province of Southern Italy

Following the progress made in accordance with Motion No. 15 ("Jurisdictions of Southern Italy") of the 2019 General Chapter, namely:

- the merger of the Province of St. Agatha and St. Lucy in Italy (Sicily) with the Provincial Custody of St. Daniel and Companion Martyrs in Italy (Calabria) to erect the new Italian Province of the Immaculate Conception (Sicily-Calabria);
- the merger of the Province of St. Bernardine and St. Angelo in Italy (Abruzzo-Molise) with the Province of St. Nicholas and St. Angelo in Italy (Puglia) to erect the new Italian Province of St. Joseph of Cupertino (Abruzzo-Molise-Puglia);
- the process of reform and redesign undertaken by the Province of the Seraphic Father St. Francis in Italy (Naples);

the General Chapter has granted the Minister General and his Definitory the mandate to set up the process for their further restructuring (and possible unification), to be discussed in the respective Ordinary Chapters of the Provinces in 2029, and to present the plan during the 2031 Ordinary General Chapter. To this end, it shall also promote an itinerary of continuing formation and collaboration between the Provinces.

B) ORGANIZATION/STRUCTURE OF THE ORDER

MOTION No. 6 – Projects Office

The Government of the Order shall reorganize and strengthen the Order's Project Office, making it independent from SGAM. This Office, serving the Government of the Order, the Provinces, and the Custodies, should work in collaboration with other secretariats to provide the necessary support for researching, developing, and reporting on projects.

MOTION No. 7 – Office of Cultural Assets

The Government of the Order shall establish an Office of Cultural Heritage as part of the Curia's structure. This office, serving the Government of the Order, the Provinces, and the Custodies, will provide the necessary support to protect and promote the cultural heritage entrusted to the care of our Order.

MOTION No. 8 – Federations

The Federations shall seek ways of greater collaboration within themselves and in relation to others:

§1. In terms of qualifying this, the Chapter asks the entire Order (Federations, Provinces, and Custodies) to develop and implement strategic restructuring programs aimed at greater transparency of the charism and sustainability of the presences.

§2. In terms of collaboration: The Chapter asks the Federations to creatively restore all areas of internal and external collaboration.

In the specific case of Europe (FEMO, FIMP and CEF): The three European Federations should establish collaboration in various areas such as new evangelization and youth pastoral care (for example, the Astorga Project and other initiatives). To this end, the three European Federations should meet at least two or three times during the next six years in a European Assembly (somewhat revisiting the so-called "Project Europe").

I. BASIC OBJECTIVES

We chose this theme—[to move aside] *...So That Christ May Remain*—because it clearly summarizes what emerged in the Chapter:

1) we want to show the **RELEVANCE** of our Christian life, which is rooted in the **hope** that is the Risen Christ;

2) we want to rekindle our charismatic **IDENTITY** in order to establish how we ought to live our **charism** as friars, as minors, and as Conventual Franciscans today;

3) we want to grow in our **AVAILABILITY**, to overcome our tendency to be absorbed with ourselves and instead, open ourselves to the dynamics of **mission**.

1. Hope

We wish to face the present time firmly rooted in the theological virtue of Christian hope: the hope of the Gospel, born of our encounter with the Risen Christ, which makes us people capable of embracing the future.

It is a hope that invites us to look beyond, to not be overcome by hardship or weariness, and to trust that the Spirit continues to act within history.

2. Charismatic Identity

We want to live, with renewed evangelical boldness, the beauty of our specific gift: our Conventual-styled Franciscan charism.

It is founded on four pillars: the primacy of God, fraternity, minority, and mission, meaning, service to the world (culture, society, cities, religions, etc.).

Renewing and strengthening what identifies us as Conventual Franciscans means purifying and deepening the meaning of our consecrated life. In this way, our presence becomes a sign that is credible, constructive, and attractive.

A more authentic charismatic life is also our best safeguard against mediocrity or vocational fragility. Being faithful to our vocation will benefit us and those who share our faith and our journey.

3. Mission

We want to rediscover mission as the beating heart of our Franciscan vocation: to go forth together, generously, to proclaim the Gospel, promoting peace, justice, reconciliation, and renewed humanity. It means coming out of ourselves in order to meet others, to encounter Christ and help others encounter Him. It means serving everyone—especially the least—with a presence that is gentle, persevering, reconciling, humanizing, and fraternal.

One biblical passage that can guide our reflections and practical decisions is the account of the miraculous catch of fish described in John 21:1-14. Only through an encounter with the Risen Christ will our daily work, service, and mission be made fruitful.

II. OBJECTIVES OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE ORDER FOR THE SIX-YEAR TERM

These three areas—hope, charism and mission—are the foundation of our six-year journey.

To realize them, we propose some intermediate objectives. The Motions of the General Chapter help define these objectives and guide our common actions.

1. Regarding Hope

1.1. To move from being absorbed with ourselves, our problems, and our urgent needs and instead, occupy ourselves with Christ and the Gospel, choosing and preserving a time and place for silence and seclusion (cf. Motions No. 8, §1; 10).

1.2. To engage in deeper Franciscan discernment, both personal and communal, in order to live our mission as signs of hope in the world (cf. Motion No. 4).

2. Regarding Charismatic Identity

2.1. To find new ways of living and new institutional tools to better embody our charism today (cf. Motion No. 6).

2.2. To promote continuing formation as a path of charismatic growth (cf. Motions 10, §1-2; 11; 14; 19).

Chapter Four ADMINISTRATION OF ASSETS

15.

The properties and works of the Custody are determined by the Custodial Statutes.

16.

The board of directors of the “Ente Basilica” is appointed by the Custos with his Definitory.

17.

The administration of the Custody’s assets is determined by the Custodial Statutes.

Given in Rome, Friary of the Twelve Holy Apostles, April 1, 2025

Friar Tomasz Szymczak, OFM Conv.
Secretary General

Friar Carlos A. Trovarelli, OFM Conv.
Minister General

Final approval by the Ordinary General Chapter took place on June 11, 2025.

§2. is also the Guardian of the Sacred Convent.

§3. is the Coordinator and Director of Public Relations with Church and civil organizations, as well as the media.

§4. By virtue of his own office, he is a member of the Federazione Inter-mediterranea Ministri Provinciali (FIMP).

13.

The Custos in his office as Guardian of the Community of the Sacred Convent is assisted by a Council called the Guardian's Council. The Guardian's Council is consultative and helps the Guardian in leading the community. The composition of this Council is established by the Custodial Statutes.

14.

§1. The Vicar of the Custody may also serve as the Vicar of the Sacred Convent, based on the discretion of the Custos after consulting with the friars.

§2. If the Vicar of the Custody is not the Vicar of the community of the Sacred Convent, proper law is to be followed for the election of the latter.

§3. It is up to the Custos to define the particular tasks and areas to be delegated to the Vicar of the Custody (and, if there is one, to the Vicar of the Sacred Convent), with the aim of fostering the fraternal animation of the community of the Sacred Convent and the pastoral life of the Basilica.

2.3. To pay greater attention to vocations and collaboration with the laity (cf. Motion No. 10, §5).

2.4. To rediscover our common identity as brothers, as religious, and as Franciscans—an identity which is at the root of all our service and mission (cf. Motion 10, §4).

3. Regarding Mission

3.1. To face the human challenges of our time, especially in the age of artificial intelligence, by proposing an alternative, Franciscan vision of humanity (cf. Motion No 1, §2).

3.2. To resolutely commit ourselves to eliminating all forms of abuse and to promoting the protection of minors and vulnerable persons (cf. Motion No. 13).

3.3. To strengthen missionary witness in every culture where the Order is present, promoting formation and the transmission of the charism across different cultural contexts (Motions No 8, §2; 12, 14).

III. MEANS

It is up to each Province and Custody to identify the most appropriate means to reach these objectives, according to their own historical, cultural, and ecclesial settings.

The General Government, for its part, will carry out leadership and guidance strategies, namely:

- promoting these objectives at Provincial Chapters and in the Assemblies of the Conferences and Federations.
- reaffirming them in the letters of the Minister General and whenever the friars come together and share fraternity.
- providing materials for House Chapters.

CONCLUSION

During the audience that Pope Leo XIV granted the General Chapter, he reminded us of something essential about the RELEVANCE of our way of life. He said: *"It is not our personal interest that should move us, but that of Christ."* He stressed: *"It is his Spirit that we must listen*

to...in the voice of your brother, in the discernment of your community, in attentiveness to the signs of the times, and in the appeals of the Magisterium.” All of this was to encourage us to write the future by the way we live today.

He also added some important words about our IDENTITY, that is, our charism as *“sons of St. Francis of Assisi,”* saying: *“On the eight-hundredth anniversary of the composition of the Canticle of the Creatures, or Brother Sun, I urge each one of you personally, and in each of your fraternities, to be a living reminder of the primacy of the praise of God in Christian life.”*

Finally, he spoke about our AVAILABILITY, mentioning that: *“You Conventuals are also celebrating the anniversary of your renewed presence in the Far East.”*

These, then, are our guidelines for the next six years. We shall revisit these three themes many times during our meetings and gatherings. For now, let us ask ourselves: *Am I centered on Christ? How does “minority” take shape in my daily life? Am I available for mission?*

Chapter Three GOVERNMENT

6.

In the General Custody of the Sacred Convent of St. Francis in Assisi, the principal authority resides in the Custodial Chapter (cf. Const., art. 183, §3) and is exercised according to the norms of the Constitutions and the General and Custodial Statutes.

7.

The Custodial Statutes, approved by the Custodial Chapter, must be confirmed by the Minister General with his Definitory. For the practical aspects of managing the Custody, an Internal Order will accompany the Custodial Statutes, *which is approved by the Custos and his Definitory* and can be revised and updated if necessary by the same Government.

8.

The Custos, with the consent of his Definitory, and after informing the Minister General, may convoke an Extraordinary Custodial Chapter whenever there is urgent business of great importance (cf. Const., art. 209, §2).

9.

All solemnly professed friars who are members of the Custody enjoy active and passive voice in the Custodial Chapter (Const., art. 231, §3), both ordinary and extraordinary (cf. Chapter II no. 4, §1).

10.

The composition of the voting members in the Custodial Chapter is determined by the Custodial Statutes.

11.

The Custos is appointed by the Minister General with the consent of his Definitory, after a general visitation to the Custody.

12.

The Custos, in the Custody:

§1. enjoys authority according to common and proper law (cf. CIC can. 134, §1; 620; Const., art. 184; 220, §2).

§5. The friars living in the Custody, aware of the mission entrusted to them by the Order and the Church, should be people of peace: serene, effective guides in helping others on their journey toward God and in vocational discernment.

Chapter Two MEMBERS

4.

§1. The members of the Custody are all the friars affiliated to it and all those who are assigned to it by legitimate obedience.

§2. Remembering that the first and fundamental “service” to which each friar is called is to follow the “Rule and life of the Friars Minor” (*Later Rule 1*), each friar is asked to be willing to fit into the custodial fraternity according to his personal skills and the needs of the Custody.

5.

§1. Friars who join the Custody may be incorporated by affiliation in perpetuity, by temporary affiliation or by a contract between the Custos and the friar’s Major Superior.

§2. The friars’ stay in the Custody should ordinarily last at least four years.

§3. In the case of transfiguration in perpetuity or *ad tempus*, proper law is to be followed (cf. Const., art. 231, §5).

§4. In the case of a contract - to be stipulated in anticipation of the friar’s arrival in the Custody - the reciprocal rights and duties are to be specified and the duration of his stay should be determined (cf. Const., art. 231, §4), which should be no less than four years, with the first year considered a probation period. After this period, the contract can either be confirmed or terminated. It should be noted that, by privilege, friars may be granted the right to exercise Provincial rights both within the Custody and in their Jurisdiction of origin (cf. Const., art. 231, §3).

APPROVED MOTIONS

**203rd Ordinary General Chapter of the
Friars Minor Conventual**

**June 1-21, 2025
Rome – *Seraphicum***

A) LEGISLATIVE TEXTS

MOTION No. 1 – Changes to the Constitutions

The General Chapter has approved the following change to the Constitutions:

1. In **art. 78, §1**, point e) the following wording has been added:

The following lack active and passive voice:

[...]

e) one who, due to severe mental and/or physical incapacity, proven by medical expertise, in the judgment of the Minister Provincial and his Definitory, is declared by special decree to be temporarily or permanently unable to cast a valid vote. (Note: cf. CIC, canons 99, 171§1,1, and 172).

2. **Article 133, §1** has been reworded and reads:

There shall be for the entire Order a *Ratio formationis* (Franciscan Discipleship), periodically revised and approved by the Minister General with his Definitory, after consultation with the Presidents of the Federations.

MOTION No. 2 – Changes to the General Statutes

The General Chapter has made the following changes to the General Statutes:

1. A new paragraph has been added to **number 23**:

New numbering: §1. The Guardian, for a good reason, may give permission to be absent from the Friary but within the borders of the same Province, Custody, or nation, but not beyond thirty consecutive days. Permission beyond these limits is given by the Minister or Custos for his own subjects, unless the Provincial or Custodial Statutes provide otherwise, and by the Minister General for friars in friaries immediately subject to him.

New: §2. The Minister Provincial, with the consent of his Definitory, may grant a religious who requests it for a just and serious cause, the indult of absence from the religious house under CIC, can. 665, §1. However, this dispensation may not exceed one year and

linked to the memory of St. Francis - in particular his tomb, the Basilica, the Sacred Convent - have had, and continue to have, in the life of the Franciscan Order. Therefore, the Sacred Convent is a privileged place of spiritual inspiration, deepening of the charism, continuing formation, as well as a meeting place of universal brotherhood and harmony with creation.

2.

The Custody is entrusted to the special care of the Minister General, with his Definitory, and the active collaboration of all the Provinces of the Order. Meetings between the Minister General and the Custos - also with their respective Definitories - should be frequent, so that common discernment and effective sharing of intentions may take place.

3.

§1. In order to harmonize the realization of the various aims of the Custody, the different communities listed in the Custodial Statutes, each according to its abilities, should feel united in a particular way to the Sacred Convent and the Basilica, sharing in their charism and life. Each community should have its own community plan.

§2. The Papal Basilica of St. Francis, being the heart of the Custody, is above all a place of evangelization, mercy, and reconciliation, offering a fraternal welcome to pilgrims and visitors and also highlighting the “way of beauty” [*via pulchritudinis*] (*Evangelii Gaudium* 167). The community’s mission is to solemnly and carefully celebrate the “praises of God Most High,” humbly giving prophetic witness to universal fraternity through its own multicultural composition.

§3. The communities of the Custody present in Assisi should be places in which to offer the friars of the Order the possibility of formation courses, experiences of fraternity, service and study, or short or medium-long periods - for example, in preparation for solemn profession, sabbatical periods, or jubilees of profession or priestly ordination.

§4. Initiatives that allow pilgrims and visitors to benefit from visiting and praying at the tomb of St. Francis and in Franciscan places should be encouraged. Communities should focus on welcoming those seeking spiritual guidance, enlightenment, compassion, and peace.

3. A Place of Mercy, the Prophetic Vision of Universal Brotherhood and Harmony with Creation

The missionary potential of these preserved sites, symbols of the Franciscan charism around the world, is immense. The Basilica of St. Francis is a crossroads of humanity where different languages, cultures and faiths meet. It is therefore a herald of a spiritual and universal vision: that of a reconciled world, where every creature sings the praise of the Creator while waiting for the “blessed hope.”

Therefore, the friars are called to live in Assisi with gratitude and commitment and, in their personal and community lifestyle, in their encounters with people, to give an evangelical witness as builders of bridges, weavers of dialogue, artisans of peace with courageous and prophetic words, thus realizing the legacy left by St. Francis: “I have done what is mine; may Christ teach you yours” (2Cel 214; FF 804).

Chapter One NATURE

1.

§1. The General Custody of the Sacred Convent in Assisi is the fraternity entrusted with the shrine where the mortal remains of St. Francis are kept. It is governed by the norms of the Constitutions, the General Statutes of the Order of Friars Minor Conventual, the present Special Custodial Statute and the Custodial Statutes.

§2. Its special juridical condition derives from the fact that the Sacred Convent “has been entrusted with the care of the famous shrine where the mortal remains of our Seraphic Father lie in rest. The shrine has been declared head and mother of the whole Order and has been elevated to the rank of Patriarchal Basilica and Papal Chapel” (Const., art. 32), “the original center of the spirituality of the Order” (Extraordinary Chapter Mexico 1992, form no. 15) and declared a World Heritage Site by UNESCO.

§3. The unique nature of the Custody, even juridically, is the “grace of the place” - that is, the importance that the places in the city of Assisi

is not renewable, unless it is for reasons of personal illness, study or apostolate to be carried out in the name of the Institute, which would be incompatible with residing in the friary. The granting of the indult must be communicated to the Minister General and to the Ordinary of the place where the religious will reside. (Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and the Societies of Apostolic Life, *The Gift of Fidelity, The Joy of Perseverance, Manete in dilectione mea (Jn 15:9). Guidelines*, February 2, 2020; no. 67).

2. A new paragraph has been added to **number 91** of the General Statutes by which the Order’s legislation incorporates the *Rescript Issued by the Holy Father Francis about the Derogation from Can. 588, §2 CIC, May 18, 2022, concerning the election of lay brothers to governing offices*. With this change, the new number 91 reads:

New numbering: §1. It is good that before elections the Capitulars discuss, responsibly and charitably among themselves, and with the Presider of the Chapter, the best qualified candidates.

New: §2. If the Chapter or Definitory deems a non-clerical religious brother suitable for the office of government, it shall postulate his election by a qualified majority vote. The postulation of the Guardian or his Vicar shall be confirmed by the Minister General with his Definitory; the postulation of the Minister Provincial or Custos, or their respective Vicars, shall be endorsed by the Minister General and his Definitory, and presented to the Apostolic See. In this case, the Vicar must necessarily be a priest in order to carry out functions that require the authority of Holy Orders and to exercise ordinary governance until the elected individual is confirmed. Candidates are required to have sufficient theological preparation and meet the requirements set forth in Canon Law. (Const., articles 168 and 214) (Const., articles 168 and 214).

3. The office of the General Archivist has been added to **number 145**. With the new wording, number 145 reads:

The principal offices and assignments of the General Curia are: the General Procuration, the General Secretariat, the General Finance Office, the General Postulation for the Causes of Saints, **the General Archivist**, the General Delegate for Mission Animation in the Order, the General Delegate for Formation, the General Assistant for the Poor Clares and

aggregated congregations, the General Spiritual Assistant for the Secular Franciscan Order, the International Assistant of the Militia of Mary Immaculate, the General Delegate for Ecumenism and Interreligious Dialogue, the General Delegate for Justice, Peace, and the Integrity of Creation, the General Delegate for Communications (Constitutions, 189, §§1 and 208).

4. At **number 148**, two new paragraphs, §3 and §4, have been added. The revised version of number 148 reads:

§1. Each Province and Custody shall have an archive, following the indications of CIC, can. 486 §§1-3.

§2. A copy of any business carried on with the General Curia shall be kept in the Provincial or Custodial archives.

§3. The Current Archives, which contain the files on each friar and each friary, must be kept in a secure location, under the care of the Provincial or Custodial Secretary, who ensures the confidentiality of the data contained within and prevents the removal of any documents. The Historical Archives, which hold the files of deceased friars or those who have permanently left the Order, as well as older documents, is managed by the Provincial or Custodial Archivist, or, in their absence, by the Provincial or Custodial Secretary.

§4. In each Curia there shall be a confidential archive [organized] according to the norms of universal law (CIC, can. 489; 490), in accordance with applicable civil laws and particular instructions from the government of the Order.

5. **Number 157, §3** of the General Statutes has been deleted: “If [the] Provincial Statutes so provide, the Provincial Custos may make a canonical visitation of his Custody, separate from that of the Minister Provincial or his delegate.”

MOTION No. 3 – *Franciscan Discipleship*

In accordance with the Constitutions, Article 133, §1, the General Chapter has approved the text of *Franciscan Discipleship*, the *Ratio formationis* of the Order, without any changes, in the form in which it was approved *ad experimentum* on December 13, 2022, by the Minister General, with his Definitory (Prot. No. 0950/2022).

The first commitment of the friars who live in Assisi is therefore to listen to the voice of the Spirit and let themselves be moved by the grace that also speaks through the places, in a process of active involvement with the other Franciscan fraternities, with the diocesan clergy, with the communities of consecrated life, with the people of Assisi and with the pilgrims to the shrines; wherever the Lord calls, both in pastoral work as well as in services within the conventual community, making the prayer of Francis their own: “Give us...the grace to do for You alone what we know You want us to do and always to desire what pleases You” (A Letter to the Order 50: FF 233). Furthermore, the friars of the Custody are asked to take advantage of the many opportunities of their stay in Assisi to cultivate the continuous rediscovery and renewal of the Franciscan charism. This deepening goes to support and animate the process of personal and community conversion to which each friar is committed by his religious profession.

2. A Place of Lifelong Learning

Formation, understood as continuous conformation to Christ in the footsteps of St. Francis, is a lifelong commitment. The Custody therefore offers a unique environment where history, art, liturgy and encounters with pilgrims and visitors become opportunities and provocations for growth and renewal, testifying that indeed “the joy of the Gospel fills the hearts and lives of all who encounter Jesus” (Evangelii Gaudium, 1).

In this context, the art of the Basilica and the Franciscan places becomes a privileged instrument for the proclamation of the Gospel. The friars are called to know and value this artistic heritage, not only as a historical testimony, but as a way of evangelization and catechesis, capable of speaking to the hearts of pilgrims and visitors through the beauty and depth of its spiritual meaning. The Custody is also committed to offering opportunities for spiritual and intellectual growth, not only to its members, but also to the friars of the entire Order and the laity, through formation programs, sabbatical periods and experiences of immersion in the Franciscan charism.

Spiritual Introduction

Propositum vitae

THE GIFT OF LIVING IN THE FRATERNITY OF THE CUSTODY

The Order of Friars Minor Conventual recognizes that the presence of the friars in Assisi, the birthplace of the Franciscan charism, is a grace, because in this city one comes to know and retrace the salient stages of the life and Christian experience of our Seraphic Father.

The General Custody of the Sacred Convent of St. Francis in Assisi has the specific aim of making itself a place of welcome for all, believers and non-believers alike, projecting an image of universal brotherhood, as taught by St. Francis. Consequently, the friaries of the Custody–international communities–are called to be centers of spiritual and fraternal life, of formation and mission, with the aim of giving witness to the evangelical way of Francis of Assisi today, both to the Franciscan Order and to the world.

Living in these places, especially in the Sacred Convent, is a source of spiritual inspiration and a deepening of the charism, of ongoing formation, as well as being an experience of universal fraternity and harmony with creation (cf. Special Statute of the Custody, no. 1, §3).

The friars are specially entrusted with the care of the Papal Basilica, the international shrine where the mortal remains of Our Seraphic Father Francis are kept (Caput et Mater totius Ordinis and the raison d'être of the General Custody of the Sacred Convent of St. Francis itself). Practically speaking, the service to the Basilica and to the pilgrims and visitors who visit it, constitutes, for the friars of the Custody of Assisi, the focal point for all the various Franciscan ministries.

1. A Place of Spiritual Inspiration and Deepening of the Charism

The Franciscan charism finds its source in Assisi, and the Custody is called to be a place where the message of Francis is embodied in fraternal relations, in the caring welcome for all kinds of pilgrims and visitors, in the constant openness to the challenges of our time, and in the care of creation from an Easter perspective.

MOTION No. 4 – Directory for the Provincial Chapter

The General Chapter has approved the Order's text of the *Directory for the Celebration of the Provincial and Custodial Chapters* in the form in which it was approved *ad experimentum* on October 15, 2021, by the Minister General and his Definitory (Prot. No. 0817/2021) with the following changes:

1. At **point 15**, the following new sentence has been added at the end:

After the proclamation of the elected Delegates, the Minister Provincial shall convene the Pre-Chapter Assembly [...]

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. **If circumstances make it more appropriate, instead of the Pre-Chapter Assembly described here, all of the friars of the Province or Custody may be summoned to participate in the second session of Part I of the Ordinary Chapter.**

2. At **point 20**, the sentence: "At the discretion of the *Praeses* of the Chapter, the Assistant General of the Area can also be part of the Steering Committee," has been replaced with the sentence: **"The Assistant General of the Area participates in the meetings of the Steering Committee."**

3. At **point 41**, two new paragraphs have been added, paragraphs 2 and 4:

New numbering: §1. When the Minister Provincial is elected by written ballot before the Chapter (cf. General Statutes, no.117, §3, b),

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.

New: §2. In Jurisdictions where the Statutes allow the Minister Provincial or Custos to be elected by letter, it is advisable to send out the first ballot only after the incumbent Minister Provincial/Custos and the General Visitor have completed the canonical visitation and sent their reports to all the friars at least one week prior.

Should the Minister General, with his Definitory, deem it necessary to establish this method as mandatory, he should indicate this in the letter announcing the Provincial Chapter.

New numbering: §3. 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 shall 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.

New: §4. The individual who has obtained the required majority according to the Constitutions, Art 191, should be informed of his election and his consent should be requested, which must be given within twenty-four hours.

The results of the vote and the consent of the elected person are to be communicated to the Minister General.

Upon receiving this communication, the Minister General shall request that the results of the vote be communicated to the electors, informing them of their right to submit written objections regarding the elected person or the election process within seventy-two hours.

Once the allotted time for objections has passed, the Minister General, after reviewing any objections, may proceed with, or withhold, the confirmation of the election in accordance with the Constitutions, Art. 191, §5.

After the election is confirmed, it may be officially published (cf. General Statutes, no. 117, §3, b 1). However, the newly elected friar assumes office only at the start of the third session of the Provincial Chapter (General Statutes, no. 117, §3, b 1) after making his profession of faith and taking the oath of office (cf. below no. 93).

MOTION No. 5 – The Special Statute of the General Custody of the Sacred Convent

The Ordinary General Chapter has approved the Statutes of the General Custody of the Sacred Convent:

Order of Friars Minor Conventual General Custody of the Sacred Convent of St. Francis in Assisi

SPECIAL STATUTE OF THE CUSTODY

The *General Custody of the Sacred Convent in Assisi* was established on June 2, 1972, by the General Chapter of the Order of Friars Minor Conventual, celebrated in Assisi (*Chap. Assisi. 1972, Acts p. 257*).

The first *Statute of the General Custody of the Sacred Convent in Assisi* dates to May 8, 1968. It underwent various revisions in 1975 and 1987 (*Comm. Ord. 1968, p. 133; 1975, p. 135; 1987, p. 173*).

On November 9, 2005, the Supreme Pontiff Benedict XVI issued the *Motu Proprio Totius orbis*, containing new provisions regarding the Basilicas of St. Francis and St. Mary of the Angels in Assisi (*Comm. Ord. 2005, p. 253*).

On January 28, 2011, the Minister General, with his Definitory, in historical continuity, and taking into account the changes made by the *Motu Proprio Totius orbis*, approved, *ad experimentum*, the amendments to the Special Statute.

The 2013 Ordinary General Chapter approved the changes to the *Special Statute*, delegating the Minister General and his Definitory to study and verify numbers 14, §3 and 8 of the text, regarding the privilege of the dual membership of the friars of the Custody.

The 2019 Ordinary General Chapter reviewed and approved the changes to the *Special Statute*, bringing it into conformity with the text of the Constitutions of the Order, which were promulgated by the Minister General on December 8, 2018.

The current text was approved by the Chapter of the Custody on February 6, 2025, and presented to the General Chapter in June, 2025.

The civil entity of the *General Custody of the Sacred Convent of St. Francis of the Friars Minor Conventual in Assisi* was established on May 16, 1975 by decree No. 286 by the President of the Italian Republic, (GU no. 182 of July 10, 1875, p. 4063).