

MINISTER GENERALIS  
ORDINIS FRATRUM MINORUM CONVENTUALIUM

Prot. N. 588/19

Dear Brothers in the Lord!

“This was tiring work, but well worth the effort.” That was what Pope Francis said about the commitment shown by the entire Order in revising its Constitutions and preparing its new General Statutes—a text which “touches upon the essential elements of your fraternal and missionary life.” Those were the words we heard on June 17, 2019, in the Clementine Hall of the Apostolic Palace, during the papal audience granted to us at the end of our 202<sup>nd</sup> General Chapter.

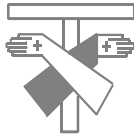
Pope Francis gave a reason why all that work was important: “the Constitutions are the necessary instrument for guarding the charismatic heritage of an Institute and ensuring its future continuance. In fact, they express the concrete way of following Christ proposed by the Gospel, an absolute rule of life for all consecrated people and especially for the followers of St. Francis of Assisi, who, by their profession, commit themselves to ‘live according to the pattern of the Holy Gospel’” (cf. St. Francis, *Testament*, 14).

It is the duty of each religious family to constantly interpret its charismatic heritage, regulating the practice of that heritage with legislative instruments (cf. *CIC*, can. 576). However, the Holy Father reminds us that the Constitutions and the General Statutes not only “regulate” but “preserve the charismatic heritage”, ensuring “future continuance”. For us Franciscans, our charism is nothing less than living the Gospel. Therefore, with the new Constitutions already approved (2018), we created a new draft of our General Statutes, in order to observe even more concrete ways of living the Gospel in today's historic setting.

**Therefore, by virtue of my office, I hereby order that the revised text of the General Statutes of the Order be published and promulgated, effective immediately, as of today's date, August 14, 2019, the feast of St. Maximilian M. Kolbe and the Eve of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary.**

The Italian edition of the General Statutes shall serve as the master version upon which translations in the various languages shall be based. This is because the changes that were approved in the last General Chapter were made in the Italian language.

Promulgating this edition of the General Statutes today, the day we commemorate St. Maximilian M. Kolbe, I offer everyone my best wishes, namely:



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that we fall in love with the Gospel again and live it, with the help of the Constitutions and the General Statutes, in a concrete and creative way, as St. Maximilian did. It takes a lot of passion and love; indeed, according to the words attributed to our holy Confrere Martyr, “only love creates!”

Pope Francis told us, “The Gospel must be our *vademecum*.” Then he added: “Always listen to it carefully; pray with it, and, following the example of Mary, “Virgin made Church” (cf. St. Francis, *Greeting to the Blessed Virgin Mary*, 1), meditate on it assiduously, so that, by assimilating it, you may conform your life to the life of Christ “.

May the Lord God grant that we walk the path of the Gospel by conforming ourselves to Christ in a joyful and concrete way, as our Seraphic Father St. Francis did! Moreover, let us pray to the Virgin Mary who was assumed into heaven, who first walked the path of her Son as his disciple. May she now intercede for us and for the whole Order.

Rome, Friary of the Twelve Holy Apostles, August 14, 2019,  
Feast of St. Maximilian M. Kolbe,  
Eve of the Solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Friar Carlos A. Trovarelli  
*Minister General*

Friar Tomasz Szymczak  
*Secretary General*

Attachment: General Statutes - Italian Text

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TO THE FRIARS OF THE ORDER