

STATUTES OF  
THE INTERNATIONAL FRATERNITY OF THE SECULAR  
FRANCISCAN ORDER

Letter of confirmation

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**CONFERENZA DEI MINISTRI GENERALI  
DELLE QUATTRO FAMIGLIE FRANCESCANE**

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Rome, December 30, 1994

Dear Sister Emanuela DE NUNZIO

General Minister SFO

31, Via Pomponia Grecina

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Dear Sister,

Peace and all good in the Lord!

The Conference of General Ministers of the four franciscan families, during its meeting of December 28, 1994, have discussed the Statutes of the International Fraternity SFO and introduced the following changes:

1) Art. 5 The International Presidency, after consultation with the National Councils of the SFO in nations where the Franciscan Youth exists, will determine the number and the method of election of the International Councillors representing the Franciscan Youth.

2) Art. 23 The International Councillors may be re-elected for a second six-year period. They can be re-elected for further successive six-year periods if they gain at least two-thirds of the votes of those present.

With these changes, the General Ministers *confirm* the Statutes of the International Fraternity of the Secular Franciscan Order.

The Statutes enter in force from January 1, 1995.

With fraternal and cordial greetings,

*Br. John Corriveau OFM Cap  
General Minister  
President of the Conference of  
General Ministers of the four Franciscan Families*

## **STATUTES OF THE INTERNATIONAL FRATERNITY OF THE SECULAR FRANCISCAN ORDER**

### **INTRODUCTION**

The Secular Franciscan Order "- is divided into fraternities of various levels - local, regional, national and international -" (Rule 20), coordinated among themselves in conformity with the indications of the Rule and of the General Constitutions.

Each of the Fraternities has its own juridical personality within the Church as a public association (see Const. 1.5).

Therefore, the Secular Franciscan Order establishes and adopts the present Statutes to promote the life of the International Fraternity, and specifically, to provide for its organization and it's functioning.

## **THE INTERNATIONAL FRATERNITY**

### **Definition and organization**

#### **Article 1**

The International Fraternity:

1. is formed by the organic union of all the Catholic Secular Franciscan Fraternities in the world. It corresponds to the SFO in its entirety. It has its own juridical personality within the Church (see Rule 2; Const. 69.1);
2. is guided and animated by the Minister General (or International President), with the International Council of the Secular Franciscan Order (CIOFS), who conjointly see to the observance and fulfillment of the Rule, the General Constitutions and the Ritual (see Const. 69.2; 92.2);
3. is organized and functions in conformity with the Rule, the General Constitutions, the Ritual and the present Statutes (see Const. 69.1);
4. has its seat in Rome, Italy, and its official title is ORDO FRANCISCANUS SAECULARIS.
5. its official languages for communication and correspondence are: English, French, Italian and Spanish.

### **Governing bodies of the International Fraternity**

#### **Article 2**

The governing bodies of the International Fraternity of the SFO are:

- the International Council
- the Presidency of the International Council (the executive council)
- the Minister General (or International President)

## **THE INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL**

### **Composition**

#### **Article 3**

The International Council (see Const. 70,1) is composed of:

- secular representatives of the National Fraternities of the SFO;
- the secular members of the Presidency of the International Council of the SFO;
- representatives of the Franciscan Youth;
- the four General Assistants of the SFO, also as representatives of the Spiritual Assistants.

#### **Article 4 International Councillors**

The number of the secular International Councillors is established according to the following criteria:

1. Every National Fraternity, formally constituted by the Presidency of the International Council of the SFO according to the norms of the General Constitutions (see Const. 65,1-2), has the right to one representative in the International Council.
2. Representation in the International Council of the SFO can be assured for the emerging National Fraternities, with the approval of the Presidency:
  - a. through the International Councillor of a nearby National Fraternity;
  - b. or through the constitution of a group of National Fraternities that present similar situations and characteristics. The group will have the right to one International Councillor. To assure an equitable representation in the International Council or the SFO, the National Fraternities concerned will also propose to the Presidency of the International Council of the SFO the method of rotation or of alternation among themselves.

#### **Article 5 Franciscan Youth Councillors**

The International Presidency, after consultation with the National Councils of the SFO in nations where the Franciscan Youth exists, will determine the number and the method of election of the International Councillors representing the Franciscan Youth.

### **Aims and Competencies of the International Council of the SFO**

#### **Article 6**

The aims and duties of the International Council of the SFO are (see Const. 71):

1. to promote and sustain the evangelical life according to the spirit of St Francis of Assisi within the secular condition of the faithful living throughout the world;
2. to strengthen, in the spirit of fraternal help, the bond of communion, of collaboration and interrelation, and of sharing among the National Fraternities and among National Fraternities that present shared situations, needs and problems and which assemble in different ways (e.g., "- conferences -" of leaders, meetings, congresses); to make the interdependence and reciprocity of the SFO a reality among the various levels of Fraternity; to increase the sense of unity, with respect to the pluralism of persons and groups, as well as the awareness of a particular responsibility with respect to the entire order (see Const. 30.1).
3. to harmonize sound traditions, according to the original nature of the SFO, with advances in the theological, pastoral and legislative fields, with a view to a specific evangelical Franciscan formation;

4. to contribute, in line with the tradition of the SFO, to the spreading of ideas and initiatives which are valuable for promoting the active presence of Secular Franciscans in the life of the Church and of society;
5. to participate in providing fraternal aid in the clarification and resolution of grave and urgent problems of the SFO, in a spirit of service, by means of its own Presidency, according to the circumstances and its own prudent evaluation.
6. to strengthen reciprocal relationships of collaboration at the world level among the SFO and the other branches of Franciscan Family and also with the ecclesial Organizations and Associations and with the civil institutions which defend the same values.

## **Article 7**

The competencies of the International Councillors of the SFO are:

1. to participate in the General Chapter;
2. to speak in the General Chapter in the name of the National Fraternity that they represent, and to present what has been entrusted to them by decision of the Council of the respective National Fraternity;
3. to inform the same National Fraternity of the decisions made and the initiatives undertaken by the General Chapter;
4. to maintain frequent and regular contacts of communication and dialogue with the Presidency of the International Council of the SFO, with the Minister General and with the Secretariat;
5. to present to the General Chapter, in the manner established by the Presidency, the report prepared and approved by the respective National Council, including the updated statistical data.
6. the duties described correspond, with the proper adaptations, to the International Councillors representing the Franciscan Youth.

## **THE GENERAL CHAPTER OF THE SFO**

### **Definition and competencies**

## **Article 8**

1. The International Council, meeting in Assembly, constitutes the General Chapter of the Order (see Const. 70.3).
2. The International Councillors indicated in Art. 3 of the present Statutes are members of the General Chapter with full rights.  
In the case of an elective chapter, both the outgoing and the incoming Presidency are members.
3. The General Chapter:

- a. has legislative, deliberative and elective powers (see Const. 70.3) exercised in the form and within the limits of the Rule, Constitutions and the present Statutes;
  - b. issues dispositions and orientations for the development of the life of the SFO;
  - c. has the competency to give a practical interpretation of the General Constitutions (Const. 5.2);
  - d. clarifies and resolves the questions and/or problems that are submitted to it;
  - e. fixes the "- pro capite -" quota for the annual financial contribution. By way of exception, the Presidency can admit exemptions, resulting in a proportional reduction of the quota to be paid;
  - f. when it is elective, elects the Minister General and the secular members of the Presidency of the International Council of the SFO;
  - g. is convoked by the Minister General, with the consent of the members of the Presidency. The convocation is made preferably with six months' notice and, in any case, not less than three months beforehand and by means of communication in the official languages of the International Council (see Const. 74.2.b; Statutes FIOFS 1.5);
  - h. meets in plenary session at least once every three years;
  - i. meets as an elective Chapter every six years (see Const. 70.4).
4. Experts with a consultative function may be invited to the General Chapter, at the discretion of the Presidency.
  5. The General Chapter will be carried out in conformity with its own Regulations of Procedure.

### **Decisions and Votes**

#### **Article 9**

1. The deliberations (agreements, decisions) made by the General Chapter must be approved by the absolute majority of those present (see CIC 119.2).
2. The proposals voted as suggestions or "- desiderata -", that require further reflection by the Presidency or by appropriate study Commissions appointed by the Presidency, have only an indicative character.
- 3.

### **THE PRESIDENCY OF THE INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL OF THE SFO**

#### **Definition and competencies**

#### **Article 10**

The Presidency is the executive body of the International Council of the SFO.

## Article 11

The Presidency of the International Council of the SFO is composed of (see Const. 72):

- the Minister General;
- the Vice Minister;
- six secular International Councillors elected to represent the linguistic areas identified in each General elective Chapter;
- a member of the Franciscan Youth;
- the four General Assistants of the SFO.

## Article 12

The duties of the Presidency of the International Council of the SFO are:

1. to coordinate, animate and guide the SFO at the international level (see Const. 73.a);
2. to commit itself with the National Councils and with the International Councillors to the attainment of the aims of the International Council of the SFO;
3. to identify the criteria for achieving the adequate formation and preparation of the leaders, formators and spiritual assistants;
4. to clarify specific points of the General Constitutions with validity until the next General Chapter (see Const. 5.2-3);
5. to have recourse to a vote by mail in the case when the Presidency must consult the International Council for a question that exceeds its competencies and if the Chapter cannot be convoked. (For the validity of the vote, it is necessary to obtain the consent of the absolute majority of the replies that have been returned, always provided that more than half of those having the right to vote have replied. In these cases the Presidency must use the necessary means to guarantee the secret nature of the vote);
6. to favor and promote collaboration with other associations of the apostolate of the Church (see Const. 100.2);
7. to see that the proper rights of the International Fraternity are guaranteed in the civil forum;
8. to give consent to the Minister General for the convocation of the General Chapter (Const. 74.2.b);
9. to have the decisions of the General Chapter carried out (see Const. 73.b);
10. to concern itself with the emerging fraternities (see Const. 46.3), taking care of their implantation, growth and maturation, normally through the Councillor of the Presidency who is particularly concerned;
11. to approve the establishment of the new national Fraternities (see Const. 65.2);
12. to approve the national Statutes (see Const. 6.2);
13. to decide on the fraternal visit to the Councils of the National Fraternities, even if it is not requested, when the circumstances require it;
14. to make decisions in order to resolve urgent problems that arise relative to the greater good of the SFO and not foreseen by the General Constitutions and these Statutes,

informing the National Council concerned and the next General Chapter of its action (see Const. 73.c);

15. to examine and decide upon all the disputes that may arise within the Fraternities at the various levels, always provided that they have been defined by the Councils of the lower levels. The decision on the matter treated may be contested only before the Holy See (see Const. 59 and 84.4);
16. to intervene and, if necessary, to make decisions in the resolution of serious and urgent problems of the Order, upon the request of the National Councils or on its own initiative when the Presidency considers it necessary;
17. to distribute the responsibilities of communication among the Councillors of the Presidency and the National Councillors who are included in the respective areas of responsibility;
18. to decide, in addition to the powers of the Minister General, on the concession of powers of legal representation, which it may consider to be opportune, to the Councillors of the Presidency;
19. to set up the commissions considered necessary for the achievement of the aims and objectives established by the General Chapter for the six-year period;
20. to guarantee and approve the adequate translation of the official documents of the SFO;
21. to request suitable and prepared General Assistants from the respective Ministers General of the First Order and the TOR, who have the competency to appoint them, having heard this same Presidency Council (see Const. 89.2 and 90; Statutes for Spiritual and Pastoral Assistance to the SFO 6.2 and 15);
22. to appoint the International Councillors of the Franciscan Youth according to the criteria contained in Art. 5;
23. to appoint the General Secretary, the Treasurer and the other officials necessary for carrying out the duties of the International Council;
24. to designate the Secretary and the other officials of the General Chapter.

### **Article 13**

The Minister General of the SFO is:

1. the visible and effective sign of the unity and communion in the Secular Franciscan Order (Const. 74.2.c);
2. the sign of the life-giving reciprocity between the SFO and the Franciscan First Order and the TOR, as well as the other branches of the Franciscan Family (Const. 74.2.c);



## Article 14

The duties of the Minister General are:

1. to represent the Secular Franciscan Order before each Minister General and before the Union of Ministers General of the First Order and the TOR (Const. 74.2.c);
2. to preserve the bond with the Conference of General Assistants (Const. 74.2.c);
3. to represent the SFO before the Holy See, excepting that which is foreseen in the General Constitutions, Art. 87.2;
4. to represent the SFO at the world level before ecclesiastical and civil authorities (Const. 74.2.d);
5. to convoke the meetings of the Presidency and to preside at its sessions (Const. 74.2.a);
6. to see that any tasks entrusted to the Councillors of the Presidency are carried out;
7. to convoke the meetings of the General Chapter with the consent of the Presidency and to preside at its sessions (Const. 74.2.b);
8. to make the fraternal visit to the National Councils, personally or through a delegate who is a secular member of the International Council of the SFO (Const. 74.2.e);
9. to preside at and confirm the elections of the National Councils, personally or through a delegate who is a secular member of the International Council of the SFO (Const. 74.2.f);
10. to request, with the consent of the Presidency, the pastoral visit from the Union of the Ministers General of the First Order and the TOR (Const. 74.2.g);
11. to intervene in urgent cases, informing the Presidency of the actions taken (Const. 74.2.h);
12. to sign the official documents of the International Fraternity of the SFO (Const. 4.2.i);
13. to exercise the rights of the International Fraternity in the civil forum, jointly with another Councillor of the Presidency designated by the same Presidency and with its consent (see Const. 74.2.j);
14. to entrust to the General Secretariat the powers necessary for carrying out the resolutions of the Presidency and of the General Chapter within the limits of the responsibilities proper to the Secretariat;
15. to present to the General Chapter a report of the situation of the Order at the world level, a report on the activity of the International Council of the SFO and of the Presidency and the state of the financial accounts.

## Article 15

Duties of the Vice-Minister General are (see Const. 52.1):

1. to collaborate with the Minister in a fraternal spirit and support him or her in carrying out his or her service;
2. to exercise the functions that are entrusted to him or her by the Chapter and/or the Presidency;
3. to substitute for the Minister in his or her competencies and responsibilities in the case of absence or temporary impediment;

4. to assume the functions of the Minister when the office remains vacant, according to the dispositions of Art. 81.1 of the General Constitutions.

## **Article 16**

1. Duties of the Councillors of the Presidency are:
  - a. to share, in a spirit of collegiality, the responsibility of the Minister General in the tasks of animation and guidance of the entire Order (Const. 74.1);
  - b. to participate in the meetings of the Presidency and in the General Chapter;
  - c. to maintain continual communication with the International Councillors and with the National Councils of the area of his or her responsibility;
  - d. to foster international contacts in the area of his or her responsibility;
  - e. to exercise the functions that are entrusted to him or her by the Presidency.
2. The Presidency may entrust the task to help in the animation of the National Fraternities to the Councillor of the area, if necessary.
3. The Presidency may entrust to one of the Councillors of the Presidency the coordination of possible Congresses, meetings, etc., among the National Fraternities of the respective area, collaborating actively in their organization.

## **Meetings**

## **Article 17**

1. The Presidency meets at least once a year or when at least a third of the members requests it.
2. For the validity of the resolutions of the Presidency, the presence of at least two-thirds of its secular members and of one General Assistant is required.
3. International Councillors, consultants and observers may be invited to the meetings of the Presidency, for the purpose of consultation and providing information. They will leave the room during deliberations and voting.
4. The General Secretary and the Treasurer participate in the meetings of the Presidency, without a deliberative vote.

## **GENERAL SECRETARIAT**

## **Article 18**

1. The International Council has its own Secretariat, the structure and seat of which are determined by the President, while taking the requirements of the office into account.
2. The Secretariat will be entrusted to the care of the General Secretary. The ordinary administrative functions are carried out within it under the direction of the Minister General. The Acts of the General Chapters and of the meetings of the Presidency, copies of the documents and the archives of the Secular Franciscan Order are preserved there.
3. The General Secretary:

- a. is a professed Secular Franciscan, not a member of the International Council of the SFO;
- b. is appointed by the Presidency for a period of six years;
- c. compiles the acts of the meetings of the Presidency Council and sends them to their respective recipients;
- d. keeps the archives of the Order up to date;
- e. communicates the more relevant events to the National Fraternities and to the ecclesial and/or social areas;
- f. fulfills all the other tasks that will be entrusted to him or her by the Presidency;
- g. may choose from among the members of the Secular Franciscan Order some collaborators who can help him or her in the task, after having consulted the Minister General;
- h. may ask the Presidency, when he or she considers it necessary, to take in one or more technicians for the work of the General Secretariat.

### **TREASURER - FINANCIAL COMMISSION - FINANCING**

#### **Article 19**

1. The Treasurer or Bursar is a professed Secular Franciscan, not a member of the International Council of the SFO. He or she is appointed by the Presidency for a period of six years, with the following responsibilities:
  - a. to administrate the general fund of the International Council of the SFO under the direction of the Presidency;
  - b. to work through a bank account and to sign the cheques or orders of payment conjointly with the Minister General or another secular member of the Presidency designated for that purpose;
  - c. to ask, with the collaboration of the General Secretary, for the annual contributions from any National Councils who are in arrears with their payments;
  - d. to present every year, in the first meeting of the Presidency, the report of receipts and expenses of the preceding financial period;
  - e. to present a complete report of the receipts and expenses to the General Chapter;
  - f. to ask the Presidency to take in one or more technicians to help with accountancy when he or she considers it to be necessary.
2. The Treasurer must have the professional requirements for carrying out the activity of a qualified accountant.
3. The Presidency will take the opportune initiatives to insure the Treasurer against the risks connected with the management of the funds of the International Council of the SFO.

## **Article 20**

1. The Presidency will constitute a Finance Commission, of which the Treasurer is a member by right, with the following responsibilities:
  - a. to draw up the annual budget, that must be approved by the Presidency;
  - b. to update the budget, indicating its practicability with regard to the ready flow of the necessary contributions and seeking the solutions to the lack of payments by the National Councils who find themselves in economic difficulties, and proposing, in such a case, the form of redistribution of the burden among the other Councils according to the principle of the sharing of goods;
  - c. to analyze the outflow of funds with respect to the budget.
2. The Presidency may appoint one or more experts to audit the accounts in a case of necessity.

## **Article 21**

1. In order to provide for the necessities of the International Fraternity, the National Councils and the Fraternities of the SFO will have to take into account and carry out what Art. 25 of the Rule and Art. 30 of the General Constitutions establish.
2. To cover the expenses of the functioning of the Presidency and of the Secretariat, and also of the activity proper to the members of the Presidency, a minimum annual contribution "- pro capite -" will have to be paid to the Treasurer of the International Council of the SFO within the first six months of the civil year, without excluding other contributions according to the possibilities of the National Council, in fraternal service.
3. The Presidency of the International Council of the SFO will promote the creation of a "- solidarity fund -" which it will administer to subsidize the more urgent necessities of the National Fraternities who are in obvious need.

## **ELECTIONS AND THE DURATION OF THE OFFICES**

### **International Councillors**

## **Article 22**

1. The International Councillors who represent the National Fraternities have a term of six years. They are elected by the respective National Council of which they will form a part, in conformity with the General Constitutions, the present Statutes and the Statutes of the National Fraternity which they represent.
2. At the same time, the National Councils will elect a substitute for the International Councillor. In the case that the Councillor is impeded from being present at the General Chapter, the substitute carries out the duties of the Councillor only for the duration of the Chapter. The National Council concerned will inform the Presidency of the International Council of the SFO about the impediment and the substitution.

3. For the election of the International Councillors to which Art. 4.3.b of the present Statutes refers, the procedure will be:
  - a. by means of a proposal to which all the National Fraternities concerned have agreed;
  - b. when the Fraternities concerned meet difficulties in arriving at an agreement, the Presidency will designate the Councillor from among the nominees proposed, and will give notice of the designation to the Councils concerned.
4. The International Councillors and the elected substitutes will have to be confirmed by the Presidency of the International Council of the SFO.

### **Article 23**

The International Councillors may be re-elected for a second six-year period. They can be re-elected for further successive six-year periods if they gain at least two-thirds of the votes of those present (see Const. 79.3).

### **Article 24**

1. The request for resignation from the office of International Councillor must be presented in writing to the National Council which has elected him or her. The acceptance of the resignation must be confirmed by the Minister General of the SFO.
2. In the case of the acceptance of the resignation, as in the case when the International Councillor is elected Councillor of the Presidency, the person elected by the National Council as the substitute (Art. 23.2) takes up the duty until the end of the mandate of the Councillor. The National Council concerned elects a new substitute within six months.

## **Councillors of the Presidency**

### **Article 25**

1. The General Chapter of the SFO elects the secular members of the Presidency of the International Council of the SFO according to the norms of the General Constitutions and of the present Statutes.
2. For their election, the following characteristics must be considered:
  - a. the competency and the readiness to deal with the problems of the Order at the international level;
  - b. the knowledge, if possible, of a second language among those most commonly spoken, in addition to their own.
3. For the election of the Councillor of the Presidency representing the Franciscan Youth, the requirements described in Art. 25.1,2 apply.
4. For the election of the Minister General, Vice Minister and Councillors of the Presidency, the principle of Art. 78.1 of the General Constitutions is applied: an election by absolute

majority in the first two ballots and, in the eventuality of a third ballot, between the two candidates who have obtained the largest number of votes.

5. For the possible re-election of the Minister General and Vice Minister, Art. 79.1-2 of the General Constitutions is applied. For the possible re-election of the Councillors of the Presidency, Art. 79.3-4 is applied.
6. If the Minister General elected is not present at the Chapter, he or she must be called urgently to be present.  
If he or she cannot come, his or her acceptance will be requested by the most efficacious and reliable means. When the Chapter has received the acceptance, it continues under the presidency of the Vice Minister or, in his or her absence, of the Councillor of the Presidency who is older by profession in the SFO.
7. The term of the Councillors of the Presidency is six years (Const. 79.2,4).

## **PROVISIONS IN THE CASE OF VACANCY AND REMOVAL OF THE INTERNATIONAL COUNCILLORS AND OF THE COUNCILLORS OF THE PRESIDENCY**

### **Vacant Offices**

#### **Article 26**

1. When the office of Minister General becomes vacant through an impediment of a definitive character, the Vice Minister assumes the functions:
  - a. if four years have passed since the election of the Minister General, until the end of the period for which the Minister General was elected.
  - b. if four years have not passed since the election, until the celebration of the General Chapter of elections, which must be convoked with the consent of the Presidency Council within six months from the date on which the office became vacant (see Const. 81.1).
2. To fill the office of Vice Minister, the Presidency Council elects a person from among its own members, with validity until the next General elective Chapter (see Const. 81.1).
3. When the office of a Councillor of the Presidency becomes vacant, the same body elects one of the International Councillors of the same area, with validity until the next General elective Chapter (see Const. 81.2).

### **Removal from Office**

#### **Article 27**

1. In the case where an International Councillor is negligent in his or her duties in a continual form or manner, the Minister General will establish a fraternal dialogue with the person concerned and, if necessary, promote the removal with the consent of the

Presidency, expressed by a secret ballot, informing the National Council or Councils concerned of the action taken (see Const. 84.3 and 93.6).

2. In the case of grave negligence on the part of a Councillor of the Presidency, the Minister General will establish a fraternal dialogue with the person concerned and, if necessary, promote the removal with the consent of the Presidency, expressed by a secret ballot.
3. If it is a question of the Minister General, the Councillors of the Presidency will manifest their concerns in a fraternal dialogue with him or her. If no positive result comes out of it, the Councillors of the Presidency will request the intervention of the Union of Ministers General of the First Order and of the TOR, through a pastoral visit, and, if necessary, they will propose the removal of the Minister General (see 84.5).

### **FRATERNAL AND PASTORAL VISITS OF THE MINISTER GENERAL AND OF THE GENERAL ASSISTANTS**

#### **Article 28**

1. The fraternal and pastoral visits will be carried out according to the spirit of the Rule, the dispositions of the General Constitutions (Arts. 92-95), the present Statutes and the Statutes for Spiritual and Pastoral Assistance to the SFO.
2. For a better development of the visits, whether fraternal or pastoral, the Visitors will prepare them beforehand by taking care:
  - a. to make enquiries about the preceding visits;
  - b. to communicate to the Councils concerned the program and the purpose of the visit;
  - c. to ask the Council of the National Fraternity for a background report containing the statistical and general data of the SFO within its area;
  - d. to be open to the suggestions of the visited Fraternity for its better development.
3. The Visitor may not make decisions about matters that require collegial deliberations of the Presidency, according to the norm of the General Constitutions and of the present Statutes. In such a case, he or she will inform the Presidency, and the visit, if necessary, will remain open.
4. Normally within two months following the visit, the Visitor will compile a report of the visit, with his or her recommendations, addressing it to the Council concerned and to the Presidency of the International Council of the SFO. These reports must be exchanged between the fraternal and pastoral Visitors and conserved in the General Secretariat, in appropriate and reserved archives.
5. The Presidency, after an adequate lapse of time, will ask for notice of the deliberations and decisions within the competency of the Council visited and, always in accord with the Council of the Fraternity visited, will see to it that the decisions made as a consequence of the visits are carried out.

## **APPROVAL AND MODIFICATIONS OF THE PRESENT STATUTES**

### **Article 29**

The approval and modifications of the Statutes of the International Fraternity:

- a. are within the competency of the General Chapter, having previously consulted the National Councils.
- b. must be confirmed by the Union of Ministers General of the First Order and of the TOR (see Const. 6.1).