

INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF LAY DOMINICAN FRATERNITIES / BUENOS AIRES 2007

RESOLUTIONS

Commission 1 – PRAYER AND PREACHING

PRAYER

Issue 1: Contemplative prayer - how to recover the tradition of contemplative prayer in order to benefit the relationship between active and contemplative life?

What do we propose?

Proposal:

Create a team in order to study and teach meditation and contemplative prayer according to the Dominican tradition, and also promote communal prayer to strengthen our Dominican spirituality through the Liturgy of the Hours, Reflection of the Word and the Praying of the holy Rosary.

Why we propose this?

1. We need to deepen and broaden our understanding of Christian prayer in order to develop a spiritual experience of the Truths of the Scriptures and the teaching of the Church.
2. The experience of our union with God is a precondition for preaching 'life' – and not merely repeating knowledge.
3. It is a need of our time.
Prayer helps us choose the right priorities and enables us to read the signs of our time in a better way. Many people are searching for the meaning of life and ways of self-realization through different meditation-techniques not connected to the christian understanding of God, We need to be able to show how meditation is part of our own Christian tradition - and to make known the purpose of prayer.

To whom does this proposal go?

We propose this to the Provincial councils of the Laity.

When to elaborate this proposal?

To be effected when the councils decide.

PREACHING

Issue 2: How do we preach in our time for new generations?

What do we propose?

Proposal:

Do a systematic process of listening to groups of people around us; young people, families, etc. to inform us of their needs. Then come up with an operative plan of preaching and ministry.

Why we propose this?

1. Our methods of preaching are poorly adapted to our contemporary times.
2. We need to meet the young people on their own terms in order to understand how to preach to them.
3. In order to understand our time we need to listen to people and consider the vast differences of life conditions.

To whom does this proposal go?

We address this proposal to the Lay Dominican chapters.

When to elaborate this proposal?

As soon as possible

Issue 3: Lay Dominican Preachers

What do we propose?

Proposal:

Live our charism of preaching creatively. In order to do this it is necessary to develop and strengthen the awareness and the confidence of being Lay Dominican preachers through Word, charity and example, seeking better formation in methods of preaching, making use of the new technologies of information and communication.

Why we propose this?

1. Our Dominican identity as Lay Dominican preachers has not been recognized in the past due to historical and cultural reasons.
2. The Order is now recognizing us as companions in preaching in a new way.
3. We have many opportunities as Lay Dominicans to reach people who do not normally come to Church or believe in the existence of God.

To whom does this proposal go?

We address this proposal to all the Lay Dominican Fraternities of our Order.

When to elaborate this proposal?

As soon as possible

Commission 2 – STUDY AND FORMATION

Issue 1: Formation programme

What do we propose

Proposal:

A written formation programme should be developed for the Lay Dominicans in accordance with the Rule of the Lay Fraternities of Saint Dominic (Nº 11).

Why we propose this?

Such a programme provides material for the spiritual development of lay Dominicans to enhance their preparation for preaching.

To whom does this proposal go?

Such a programme is to be written by each Provincial council of Lay Dominicans according to the Rule of the Lay Fraternities of Saint Dominic (N^o 11).

When to elaborate this proposal?

The programme is to be completed within 3 years.

Issue 2: Recommended fundamental contents of the Formation Programme

What do we propose?

Proposal:

A. Initial Formation

- **Dominican Spirituality**
- **Four pillars of Dominican life: prayer, study, preaching (*specially methods and skills*), community**
- **Life of St. Dominic and other saints of the Order**
- **Lay Rule and directory**
- **Dominicans symbols**
- **Human formation**

B. Ongoing formation

- **Sources of Dominican Formation (Sacred Scripture, theological reflection)**
- **Christology**
- **History and tradition of the Order**
- **Documents of the Church and the Order**
- **Study of the signs of the times and present day culture**
- **Justice, Peace and Care of Creation**

Why we propose this?

1. This programme would be an instrument for the formation of formators, as well as being of use to those in formation.
2. It would strengthen collaboration between fraternities in different countries who share the same basis for the programme.

To whom does this proposal go?

Each province would elaborate this programme (in compliance with present Rule N^o11)

When to elaborate this proposal?

Within three years.

Commission 3 – GOVERNMENT: RULE AND STATUTES

RULE

Issue 1: Identity

The name should be "**Lay Dominican Fraternities/Chapters**".

The lay Dominican who has made a promise will be entitled to the free use of the acronym **O.P.** after his/her name.

However, if they use this acronym they must put **Mr., Mrs. Ms.** before their name.

Issue 2: The term "Profession or Promise" or commitment (Rule Nº 14)

14. *In order to be incorporated into the Order, members are bound to make profession, that is a promise in which they formally promise to live a life according to the spirit of Saint Dominic and the way of life prescribed by the Rule.*

This profession or promise is either temporary or perpetual. The following or a substantially similar formula is to be used for making profession.

"To the honour of Almighty God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and of the Blessed Virgin Mary and of Saint Dominic, I ... (name) before you ... (name) President of this Fraternity/Chapter, and ... (name), the Religious Assistant, in place of the Master of the Order of Friars Preachers, promise that I will live according to the Rule of the Lay Dominicans for three years / for life."

It was decided to use the expression **"promise" in all cases** so as to be in accordance with the lay state.

Issue 3: President

20. a) *The Prior Provincial presides over the fraternities/chapters within the territorial limits of his province, and, with the consent of the local Bishop, establishes new fraternities/chapters.*

It is recommended that the expression **"preside"** be correctly interpreted, specially in Spanish. It is requested that there be **faithfulness to the translations** of the Latin text approved by the Holy See.

Issue 4: Should the word "lay" be included? Their own rights

20. b) *The Provincial Promoter (brother or sister) represents the Prior Provincial, and is a member of the Provincial Lay Council with full rights. He/she is appointed by the Provincial Chapter, or by the Prior Provincial with his Council, after the Provincial Lay Council of the Dominican Laity has been heard.*

In order to interpret this article, it is asked that the words in the brackets include **lay, friar, brother, sister, nun. It is asked that they be included without the right to vote.**

Issue 5: Religious assistant

21. c) *The Religious Assistant (brother or sister) assists members in doctrinal matters and the spiritual life. He/she nominated by the Prior Provincial, after he has first heard the Provincial Promoter and the local Laity Council.*

As in the case of the previous article it is asked to include in the brackets a lay person as an assistant.

Issue 6: Dispensation from the commitment and the involvement

(cf. also Friar's General Chapter 2001 at PROVIDENCE Nº 446)

Add: When a lay Dominican wishes to obtain dispensation from his/her promise, this person needs to bring this concern to the local Council of the Fraternity/Chapter. The Council in turn will present the request to the Prior Provincial.

The Prior Provincial upon the request of the Fraternity/Chapter, has the authority to dispense a member from their promises.

Issue 7: Dismissal

The Prior Provincial, upon the request of the Council of a Fraternity/Chapter has the authority to dismiss any member in the case of lack of communion with the Church or public scandal, recognizing that this person has the right to defend himself/herself and call upon the Master of the Order.

STATUTES

OF THE INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL OF LAY DOMINICAN FRATERNITIES (ICLDF)

Preamble

The International Council For Lay Dominican Fraternities hereafter referred to as the ICLDF or the "Council", is motivated by the love of Christ and His Church as expressed by the apostolic spirit of Saint Dominic. It was established, in accordance with Rule 22b) of the Rule of Lay Fraternities of Saint Dominic, in May, 2002 in Santa Sabina, Rome, in the presence of fr. Carlos A. Azpiroz Costa O.P. Master of the Order and fr. Gerald Stookey, O.P. General Promoter for the Dominican Laity.

While recognizing that each Province, Vice-Province and Vicariate is entitled to its own autonomy according to the rights and responsibilities as defined in the Rule, the Council draws on and supports each one's specific charism.

Here after 'Province' shall be used to refer to all Provinces, Vice-provinces and Vicariates

Mission Statement:

ICLDF is an international network for promoting greater communication between Lay Dominican Fraternities in order to achieve a more effective preaching of the Gospel.

STATUTES

1. THE COUNCIL

A) Government

- 1) The Council is governed by:
 - a) Statutes
 - b) Regulations
- 2) The Statutes can be changed only with a two-thirds majority of all voting members at an International Congress. The Council can alter the Regulations and Recommendations.
- 3) The Council understands its obligation to uphold the interests of the Lay Dominican Fraternities and is under the canonical authority of the Master of the Order.
- 4) All Statutes and Regulations are subject to and must be compliant with and not inconsistent with the Rule.

B) Membership

- 1) The Council is composed of the Promoter General of the Lay Dominicans and five elected Lay Dominicans who have made Perpetual (Life, Final) Promise, one from each of the Regions.
- 2) The Regions are:

AFRICA - African Council for Lay Dominican Fraternities	(ACLDF)
ASIA PACIFIC- Asia Pacific Council of Lay Dominicans	(APCLD)
EUROPE - European Council for Lay Dominican Fraternities	(ECLDF)

NORTH AMERICA - Dominican Laity Inter-Provincial Council (DLIPC)
LATIN AMERICA - Consejo de las Fraternidades Laicales
Dominicanas de America Latina y el Caribe (COFALC)

Each Region shall elect one representative and one substitute according to the procedure prevalent in that Region. Under special circumstances, the Master of the Order shall appoint the representative for a particular Region until a regular election can be held.

- 3) The members of the Council shall be elected for a non-renewable term of three years beginning on July 1. The substitute member shall be eligible for a regular term.
- 4) Terms shall be staggered so that no more than 2 Council members will currently end in any given year.
- 5) Each Council member shall serve for one year as Co-ordinator of the Council on a rotating basis, as agreed upon by the Council. The Council shall elect a Co-ordinator each year from their members by lottery. If the Co-ordinator cannot be present, the Co-ordinator shall appoint his/her temporary replacement from among the remaining Council members, who shall have the Co-ordinator's proxy voting authority.
- 6) The Council shall elect a treasurer from the Council members, or co-opt, hire or seek assistance from a competent Dominican for that office. The co-opted treasurer is not a member of the Council.
- 7) A quorum of 3 members is required for a valid meeting.
- 8) All decisions of the Council require a majority vote. In cases where there are four members present and there is a tie vote, the Council shall, if possible and practicable, contact the absent member. If this is impossible then the Coordinator shall have the casting vote even if he/she is a temporary replacement.

c) Duties of the Council

- 1)
 - a) The Council members shall establish continual communication with the Lay Dominicans in their respective region.
 - b) The Council shall establish and maintain an effective relationship with the other groups in the Dominican Family
 - c) The Council shall endeavour to collaborate with all groups in the international activities of the Dominican Family.
- 2) The Council shall present subjects pertaining to the International Regions to the official institutions of the Dominican Order.
- 3)
 - a) The Council shall prepare an annual budget and financial report.
 - b) The Council shall request an annual financial contribution from each Region.
- 4) The Council shall collect and distribute information and relevant documents.

- 5) When requested the Council shall nominate its representative for International meetings
- 6) The Council shall prepare for and be responsible for the effective running of any International Congress of Lay Dominican Fraternities every ten years and perform the following activities:
 - a) establish appropriate committees
 - b) produce a programme for the Congress
 - c) notify all Provincial Promoters, Provincial Presidents (or delegated Contact persons) of the Congress
 - d) establish the membership of the Electoral Body at the Congress. (The Electoral Body consists of those members who are eligible to vote)
 - e)
 - (i) present the operating budget.
 - (ii) raise funds for the effective running of the Congress
 - (iii) provide a financial report on the Congress
 - (iv) prepare and publish the Acts of the Congress.
- 7) Lay Dominicans, Friars, Nuns or Sisters with special skills or qualifications may be co-opted at the discretion of the Council for a specific period. They do not have voting rights

FINANCE

1. The brothers and the sisters of the Lay Dominican Fraternities/Chapters of the whole world following the spirit of unity of our Father Saint Dominic within the Church, support through an annual contribution to be approved by the International Congress for the expenditures of the office of Lay Dominican Fraternities established in Rome, and of the presented budget.
2. The annual contribution shall be updated each year in accordance with the Italian inflation rate.
3. The annual contribution is payable in advance each year, not later than December 31.
4. The first payment corresponding to the year 2008 will be due no later than March 31, 2008.
5. The Fraternities/Chapters will send their yearly contributions to their Provincial or National Councils to be forwarded to the International Treasurer.
6. Each year the International Treasurer will send copies of an audited statement to each Provincial or National Council, which will be sent to the individual Fraternities/Chapters.
7. The functions of the various governmental bodies of the Lay Dominican Fraternities/Chapters in respect to questions of economy or finances will be the following:

Functions:

 - a) ICLDF
 - 1) Approve the annual fee
 - 2) Approve the audited statement and send this on to the local councils
 - 3) Propose the annual contribution to the General Assembly
 - 4) Approve the fee for the Congress and other events

b) General Assembly

Approve the annual contribution on the basis of the approved audited financial statement of the previous periods

c) International Treasurer

- 1) Manage the financial resources necessary for the proper functioning of the ICLDF
- 2) Establish strategies in order to obtain financial resources
- 3) Establish the annual fee
- 4) Prepare the financial statements for the Congress and other events
- 5) Prepare the Budget for the Congress and other events

REGION	ANNUAL CONTRIBUTION PER CAPITA
AFRICA	€ 1.00
ASIA PACIFIC	€ 1.50
LATIN AMERICA & CARIBBEAN	€ 1.50
EUROPE	€ 1.50
UNITED STATES & CANADA	€ 1.50

II. THE CONGRESS

A) Composition of the Congress

- 1)
 - a) Each Province, vice Province and Vicariate shall send one delegate to the Congress. When possible this delegate shall be the president.
 - b) Each Province, vice-Province or Vicariate shall elect an alternative delegate should the president be unable to attend.
 - c) All delegates must be Finally Professed Lay Dominicans.
 - d) All ICLDF members shall be eligible to attend.
 - e) Members of the Congress Executive Committee shall be eligible to attend.
 - f) Regional Presidents are eligible to attend.
- 2) The Promoter General for the Dominican Laity shall also attend.
- 3) Each Province,(see Preamble) shall send one delegate. However, where there is a multinational province, fraternities may send one delegate from each country
- 4) The names of all delegates shall be submitted at least six months before the Congress.

- 5) All delegates shall have a letter of authorization from their Lay Provincial Council or Prior Provincial testifying that they have been chosen to represent their Province.
- 6) The Master of the Order shall be invited to the Congress.
- 7) A canon lawyer shall be invited to the Congress.

B) Duties and Functions

- 1) To study and discuss issues of the Lay Dominican Fraternities and make proposals to the ICLDF.
- 2) To discuss, propose and vote on changes to the Rule.
- 3) To make representations to the Master of the Order on matters concerning the Lay Dominican Fraternities.
- 4) To propose and promote means of financing the work of ICLDF.
- 5) To vote on the acceptance of any suggestions of changes to the Statutes of the Council.
- 6)
 - a) To discuss ways and means of assisting members to fulfill their preaching mission.
 - b) To discuss ways of promoting vocations to all branches of the Order.
 - c) To discuss ways of helping those missions where there is a lack of material for formation and study.
 - d) To promote collaboration with all members of the Dominican Family.

C) Electoral Body

- 1) The Electoral Body is composed of:
 - a) The delegates representing their province, vice-province, vicariate or country.
 - b) Members of the International Council or their substitutes.

If the member of the International Council is also a delegate for their province, vice-province or vicariate or country they may have one vote only.

- 2) The Council shall draw up a list of those entitled to vote in the Electoral Body.
- 3) The Council shall appoint a Facilitator of the Electoral Body.

REGULATIONS

A) Responsibilities of Office Holders

1) The Co-ordinator

The duties of the Co-ordinator are:

- To ensure all relevant correspondence is distributed to all members of the Council.
- To ensure that documents concerning the Lay Dominicans internationally are obtainable by all concerned.
- To ensure that the acts of each meeting are produced and distributed to the members of the Council.
- To act as liaison between the council members when deemed necessary.
- To keep a record of the dates of the terms of office of each member of the Council
- Preside at the Congress

2) The Treasurer

The duties of the treasurer are:

- to manage the financial resources of the Council.
- to devise strategies to obtain resources.
- to set up a budget for the expenses concerning the Council.
- to submit yearly independently audited accounts to the Council.
- to set up a budget for any Lay Dominican Congress organized by the ICLDF.
- Liabilities incurred by the Council in the name of the Council will be the equal responsibility of all and each Council.
- Should the Council be disbanded, any outstanding funds remaining after the Council's settling expenses, will go to the body agreed by the International Assembly.

3) The Secretary

- to prepare the Acts of the Council meetings and distribute these to the Council members prior to the meeting
- to carry out routine secretarial duties.
- to produce Minutes for the new members of the Council.
- to oversee voting procedure
- to establish and up-date relevant contact names and addresses, e-mail and fax numbers.

B) Rules and Procedures

1) Financial

- All monies received will be deposited in a named account
- Only Council members have the right to draw on the account for the expenses incurred in their council business.
- Approval of expenses is the responsibility of the Co-ordinator, the Treasurer and Promoter General of the Laity.
- Liabilities incurred by the Council in the name of the Council will be the equal responsibility of all and each Council member.

2) Administrative

- The Council shall assemble at least once a year.
- The Council shall
 - a. inform all provinces, vicariates on matters relating to the Congress.
 - b. draw up and distribute the Acts of the meeting
 - c. produce and discuss matters pertaining to the International Congress.
 - d. maintain proper records of the meetings and the correspondence and safeguard records of the preceding Council that comprise its history.

Recommendations

- 1) In order to put into practice its nature, the Council being a fraternal community as well as a working and structure for organization, shall carry out the following at each meeting:
 - a) Some time in prayer appropriate to the Council.
 - b) Some time in fellowship.
- 2) The Council aims to publish news, information and themes for formation in IDI.
- 3) The Council will encourage the exchange of Formation Programmes
- 4) The Council will suggest dialogue concerning life in our fraternities and the creation of space for reflection on the problems of today.
- 5) When invited the Council shall nominate its representative to the General Chapters of the Order and elaborate a text with proposals and petitions to be presented.
- 6) Each member of the Council shall be able to speak English and one other language.

N.B. The above stated six (6) Recommendations are subject to review by a select Committee, as agreed upon by the Congress body.

Commission 4 – ORGANISATION AND STRUCTURE

Issue 1: Language befitting membership in the Dominican Order

Proposal:

That we establish a common glossary reflecting what we are, what our various roles are, therefore: what terminology is the norm for usage as adapted to the various languages of the world. We recommend:

- **'LAY DOMINICANS'** as the designation of the lay members of the Order; the noun *Dominicans* denotes what we are; *Lay* describes what kind of Dominicans
- **'O.P.'** as the designation for all professed Lay Dominicans
- **'Fraternity/Chapter'** as the title of our groups, which expresses our way of life as brothers and sisters and reflects one of our pillars.
- **'GROUP'** as a designation for a group whose aim is to form a fraternity/chapter
- **'COUNCILS'** as organisations of Lay Dominican government, as a minimum, at the fraternity/chapter and at the provincial levels
- **'PROVINCIAL PROMOTER'** as the friar, sister or lay, who is the link between the Lay Dominicans and the other branches of the Order
- **'RELIGIOUS ASSISTANT'** as the Dominican friar, sister, layperson, or other person approved by the Prior Provincial, who serves as a resource for the Lay Dominican Fraternity/Chapter
- **'PRESIDENT'** as the elected leader of a fraternity/chapter; *president* is the term used in the Latin version of the Rule and best describes the role

Issue 2: Structure for irregular applications

Proposal:

To be open to people who would like to follow the Dominican spirituality but, for personal reasons, cannot be professed. They should be able to join the lay Dominican fraternity/chapter on a local level, with the agreement of the members of the fraternity/chapter.

Issue 3: Other lay groups

Proposal:

The Lay Dominican fraternities/chapters should appreciate and welcome already existing and new Dominican lay groups, with their own structures, in order to share together as Dominican brothers and sisters and be more fruitful in our vocation to preach to others.

Issue 4: Internet

Proposal:

The use of internet is a wonderful mutual source of information and material for every branch in the Dominican Family. It is also a new means of preaching.

Therefore, it is important to form an international internet team to draw up an inventory of all Dominican sources to make them visible, useful and to link them for everybody in the Dominican Family.

Commission 5 – ECONOMIC AND FINANCE

Introduction

Simplicity, humility and solidarity express *the* beatitudes of the Sermon on the Mount. Unanimity identifies us as Dominicans throughout the world, Freedom gives us the possibility of presenting our ideas by always seeking the common good.

This is what concerns us when we speak of economy and finances.

All organisations have a structure. All structures have a *cost*, but structures are necessary to allow these organisations to function properly.

This is why if we wish to be adequately organized we need to have a strong structure that would allow us to be efficient in the fulfilment of our mission, which is to preach the Gospel. We are laypersons who are involved in the world and our space for preaching is this same world. We therefore must use the tools that the world has created so that we may speak its language and be listened to.

Issue: Financial support

What do we propose?

Proposal:

In respect to the International Council statutes we need to establish the following:

A specific section on finances should be included in the Statutes of the International Council. This section will include the following elements:

- 1. The brothers and the sisters of the Lay Dominican Fraternities/Chapters of the whole world following the spirit of unity of our Father Saint Dominic within the Church, support through an annual contribution to be approved by the International Congress for the expenditures of the office of Lay Dominican Fraternities established in Rome, and of the presented budget.**
- 2. The annual contribution shall be updated each year in accordance with the Italian inflation rate.**
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- 1) Approve the annual fee**

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- 4) **Approve the fee for the Congress and other events**

b) General Assembly

Approve the annual contribution on the basis of the approved audited financial statement of the previous periods

c) International Treasurer

- 1) **Manage the financial resources necessary for the proper functioning of the ICLDF**
- 2) **Establish strategies in order to obtain financial resources**
- 3) **Establish the annual fee**
- 4) **Prepare the financial statements for the Congress and other events**
- 5) **Prepare the Budget for the Congress and other events**

Why we propose this?

Allow all to support the upkeep of our "house" which in this case means support for the Lay Dominican Office for the Fraternities/Chapters of the whole world located in Santa Sabina in Rome in order to have it function properly.

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Commission 6 - Our Place in the Order and in the Church

Issue 1: Website

What do we propose?

Proposal:

Develop an international website for lay entities to serve as international clearing house for information among all lay entities.

Why we propose this?

1. Currently information exchanged between entities is limited, often outdated, and does not encourage collaboration and cooperation.
2. Such a site would consolidate in one place the many scattered sites in use now and allow greater utilization of web resources.
3. In identifying our entity and its mission to others, we clarify it for ourselves.

To whom does this proposal go?

We address this to the Webmaster under direction of the International Council.

When to elaborate this proposal?

As soon as possible

Issue 2: Basic formation

What do we propose?

Proposal:

To give attention to the task of developing in each province a formation programme, adapted to the needs of young people and those who have not had the benefit of an initial formation. In this way it will be easier to welcome into our Fraternities/Chapters those who wish to have a first encounter.

Why we propose this?

1. To introduce them into the commitment aspects of the Dominican charism such as prayer and study, which are not the driving principles of youth entities
2. To retain talented youth as life long members of Dominican laity

To whom does this proposal go?

We address this to the Formation Committees of provincial councils

When to elaborate this proposal?

Now