

OCDS Ritual Documents

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Approval of the Holy See

DECREE

Congregatio de Cultu Divino
et Disciplina Sacramentorum
Prot. CD 151/91

**Ordinis Fratrum Discalceatorum
Beatae Marike Virginis De Monte Carmelo**

Instante Reverendo Patre Philippo Sainz de Baranda Ordinis Fratrum Discalceatorum B.M.V. de Monte Carmelo Praeposito Generali, litteris die 19 decembris 1990 datis, vigore facultatum huic Congregationi & Summo Pontifice IOANNE PAULO II tributarum, textum anglicum Ritualis ad usum Ordinis Saecularis Carmelitarum Discalceatorum perlibenter probamus seu confirmamus, prout exstat in exemplari huic Decreto adnexo.

In textu imprimendo inseratur ex integro hoc Decretum, quo ab Apostolica Sede petita confirmatio conceditur. Eiusdem insuper textus impressi duo exemplaria ad hanc Congregationem transmittantur.

Contrariis quibuslibet minime obstantibus.

Ex aedibus Congregationis de Cultu Divino et Disciplina Sacramentorum, die 22 februarii 1991.

(signed) **Eduardus Card. Martinez, Praefectus**

(signed) + **Ludovicus Kada, Archiep. tit. Thibicen, a Secretis**

###

General Definitory

DECREE

Casa Generaliza Carmelitani Scalzi
Corso d'Italia, 38
00198 Roma, Italia
Prot. N. 660/90 DF

Definitorium N. Generale in sessione 229, die 10 decembris 1990 habita, vidit translationem in linguam anglicam textus "Ritualis Ordinis Saecularis Carmelitarum Discalceatorum," cuius textus authenticus, lingua hispana exaratus, a Sede Apostolica die 10 Julii 1990 (Prot. N. CD 316/89) approbatus fuerat.

Cum autem allatem translationem praefato textui authentico conformem invenerit, eam, in quantum Definitorio attinet, approbabit, iussitque ut ipsius Apostolicae Sedis approbationi subiciatur.

Datum Romae, die 10 decembris 1990.

Fr. Philippus Sainz de Baranda, OCD, Praepositus Generalis

###

INSTRUCTION OF THE SUPERIOR GENERAL OF THE DISCALCED CARMELITES¹

1. The Holy See has approved a Ritual for the Secular Order of Discalced Carmelites. We offer this Instruction as an aid for priest assistants, for homilists, for the members of the local council, and for those who must carefully prepare the ceremonies of the Ritual which are expressly designed for Carmelites in the secular state of life.²
2. Looking to the Gospel³, to the example of the first Christians⁴, and to the Saints of the Order⁵, Secular Carmelites embrace the beatitudes and the evangelical counsels⁶. By making their formal 'Promise' in the order, they declare their firm purpose of striving more effectively day by day after the fullness of Christian charity⁷.
3. The making of the Promise confers membership in the Secular Order and establishes spiritual and juridical ties with the Discalced Carmelites⁸. In communion with Mary and the whole Order, the new member promises to follow Christ more closely by embracing the evangelical counsels of poverty of spirit, chastity according to one's state in life, and obedience to the Order, within the circumstances of the secular state⁹.
4. By the promise of obedience, Secular Carmelites pledge themselves to cooperate with the legitimate Superiors of the Order and the governing council of the community, and to obey them, within the limits of the OCDS Constitutions¹⁰. This enables them to become, in purity of faith, more responsive to the will of God¹¹ as they conform themselves to Him who "became obedient even unto death."¹²
5. The promise of chastity according to one's state in life expresses a conscientious intention to respect the law of God in a way proper to the unmarried, married or widowed state, as the case may be¹³, while seeking contemplative intimacy with God and the blessedness of the "pure of heart."¹⁴
6. The promise of poverty shows the esteem which Secular Carmelites have for the beatitude of poverty¹⁵. Imitating Christ who was poor, and stretching with the Church towards the

¹ Slightly modified to conform to OCDS Constitutions 16 June 2003.

² Cf. Ritual nn. 1 & 2. A careful catechesis should be given which is consistent with the OCDS Constitutions regarding profession of the evangelical counsels in the world. It ought to demonstrate a clear respect for the baptismal character of the secular state in itself without reducing it to a quasi-religious form of life.

³ Cf. Mt. chs. 5-7.

⁴ Cf. Acts 11:42-44.

⁵ Cf. OCDS Constitutions, Preface & #1.

⁶ Cf. OCDS Constitutions, #11; AA n. 4.

⁷ Cf. OCDS Constitutions, #11-#16.

⁸ Cf. Ibid.

⁹ Cf. Ibid.

¹⁰ Cf. OCDS Constitutions, #10-#12 & #15.

¹¹ Cf. Ibid.

¹² Phil. 2:8.

¹³ Cf. OCDS Constitutions, #13.

¹⁴ Mt. 5:8.

¹⁵ Cf. OCDS Constitutions, #14.

kingdom yet to come, they exercise that interior liberty which cultivates self-denial and moderation in the use of things, simplicity of life-style, and the generous service of God and His people¹⁶.

7. Anytime after a year from the definitive promise, a member may ask, as a personal option, to be admitted by the council to the profession of the vows of chastity and obedience for life¹⁷. While the Promise was made before God to the Superiors and members of the Order, the vows are made directly to God, for vows are acts of religious worship. Thus, the vows add the merit of the virtue of religion to the observance of chastity and obedience¹⁸. They constitute a more complete self-offering and therefore entail a greater moral responsibility¹⁹. The binding force of these vows, freely made, renders more visible the bond of love and commitment that exists between Christ and His Bride the Church²⁰.

8. Since the vows confer a new “cultic” or “worshiping” dimension upon the observance of the evangelical counsels, chastity according to one’s state and obedience to superiors become attitudes and acts of divine worship. This new context converts them into cultic expressions of one’s baptismal consecration²¹. Thus they witness to a more generous response and interior offering of the whole person²² to the Father who loved us in Christ²³.

9. The vows are intrinsically linked to the Eucharist as well as to Baptism, for the Eucharist is Christian prayer and worship ‘par excellence.’²⁴ The vows of chastity and obedience associate the Secular Carmelite by a new title with the mystery of Christ in His prayer of oblation and thanksgiving.²⁵ Furthermore in the face of human inconstancy, the vows aim at stability of purpose for the present and the future in conformity with Christ’s constancy in His obedient, sacrificial offering of self to the Father²⁶.

10. While in their intimate association with Baptism and the Eucharist the vows offer God a more intensified dedication and worship, they also assume other ecclesial and eschatological dimensions. The graced freedom, which the vows confer, renders the Secular Carmelite more disposed to serve the needs of the ecclesial community at home and at large.²⁷ And together with a zealous apostolate, the concrete testimony of the evangelical counsels serves

¹⁶ Cf. OCDS Constitutions, #10-#11 & #14.

¹⁷ From the Juridical point of view, these are authentic vows with effects in the “external forum”; more than merely “private vows”, they are “recognized” by the Church. (Their juridical standing runs parallel to the nature of the vows taken by members of Secular Institutes, explicitated by the Vatican II Decree on the Renewal of Religious Life, *Perfectae Caritatis* n. 11). The nature of Secular Order vows is given in OCDS Constitution #39, officially approved by the Holy See in 2003 (Congregation for the Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life: Prot. n. C.228-1/2003). By means of the vows, members are more fully bonded with the Secular Order which is a “Public Association” according to Canons 301 and 312 of the Code of Canon Law. Admission to and dispensation from these vows require the confirmation of the Provincial Superior, who represents the authority of the Order (cf. OCDS Constitutions, #39, #47a & #58f).

¹⁸ Cf. OCDS Constitutions, #10-#16; cf. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, II-II, q. 88, arts. 5 & 6.

¹⁹ Cf. OCDS Constitutions, #10-#16.

²⁰ Principle analogous to that established by LG, n. 44.

²¹ Principle of the theology of “vows”, analogous to what is found in LG, n. 44, and in *Perfectae Caritatis*, n. 5.

²² Principle analogous to that found in LG, n. 44.

²³ Cf. 1 Jn, 4:10.

²⁴ Cf. *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, nn. 2 & 10.

²⁵ Principle analogous to that in LG, n. 44.

²⁶ Principle analogous to that in LG, n. 44.

²⁷ Cf. AA, n. 3.

as a sign that the Kingdom of God is in our midst, while the world and its values are passing away.²⁸

11. The fact that Secular Carmelites may add vows of obedience and chastity to their promise does not devalue poverty which is not formalized by vow. Christian baptism itself entails the cultivation of the spirit of poverty, great attention to the needs of the poor, and the living in this world as though possessing nothing²⁹. For pastoral reasons poverty is not vowed, for its concrete object and material limits are not easily determined by general principle. Rather, living the beatitude of poverty is a matter of on-going personal discernment under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Nonetheless, it is clear that, by making one's definitive commitment in the Secular Order, a member explicitly promises to tend, for the whole of one's life, towards evangelical perfection in the spirit of the evangelical counsel of poverty as well as of chastity and obedience³⁰. This holds true with or without a vow.

12. It is my fervent hope that the thoughtful celebration of these rites will serve as an effective pastoral tool for making all the more apparent the nature and mission of the Teresian Carmel in the world.

Given at Rome, October 15, 1990.

/s/ Fr. Philip Sainz de Baranda, OCD. (Superior General)

²⁸ Principle analogous to that in LG, n. 44.

²⁹ Cf. Mt. 19:23; 25:31-46; 1 Cor. 7:30-31; cf. AA, n. 4.

³⁰ Cf. Formula of the Promise, Ritual, n. 42.

RITUAL FOR CEREMONIES FOR ADMISSION, PROMISES AND VOWS³¹

Introduction

I. THE VOCATION OF THE SECULAR DISCALCED CARMELITES

1. The special vocation of lay Discalced Carmelites³² ought to be evaluated in the light of two basic realities: their dignity as baptized Christians (LG 32) and their secular state in life (LG 31). From this two-fold reality is derived their calling to perfect charity and to holiness of life, at the service of the Church, and to their apostolate in the world (LG 39-41; AA 1, 3, 13). They follow Christ closely through the way they carry out the ordinary affairs of their families and of daily life (AA 4).
2. Many Catholics, both in the lay state and among the clergy, identify themselves with the spirituality and charisms of the religious Order of Discalced Carmelites (AA 4; OCDS Constitutions Preface & #1). As secular members of the Family of the Teresian Carmel, in imitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, they aspire to a life of prayerful intimacy with Christ and the Father in the Holy Spirit, and of service to the Church. In fact, in conformity with the spirit of Carmel, they live their following of Christ with Mary, Mother of the Church, Queen and Beauty of Carmel (St. Teresa, *Interior Castle* III, 1,3; OCDS Constitutions, #29-#31).

II. RITUAL

3. This Ritual has been officially approved by the Holy See. It is the only text authorized for the liturgical ceremonies of the Secular Order of Discalced Carmelites. By reason of its normative character, this Ritual abrogates and replaces all the ceremonial elements found in regional and local statutes approved by the General Definitory of the Order.
4. Provided due discretion is observed, the ceremonies may be enriched with cultural elements of a regional flavor, and the presiding minister's monitions and introductions to prayers may be formulated with different words, as long as they adhere to, and reflect faithfully, the meaning of the text (cf. SC 38). However, the order to be followed in the rite, the prayers of the officiating minister who presides, and the formulas of acceptance and of commitment must be kept whole and unchanged.

III. THE RITES FOR ADMISSION AND FOR THE PROMISE AND THE VOWS

The Admission Rite

5. A candidate who meets the conditions for being accepted is received through the Admission Rite (cf. OCDS Constitution, #36). This ceremony of dialogue and prayer begins the journey of discernment which is the first phase of formation.
6. The rite takes place in the context of a Liturgy of the Word.

³¹ The Ritual has been corrected to reflect OCDS Constitutions rather than the previous Rule of Life.

³² Even though the clergy may belong to the Secular Order, the great majority of its members are men and women, and it is they who give the Order its secular character. For the meaning of "Laity" see LG 31, 4.

Rite of the First Promise

7. After the first stage of formation, the candidate makes a personal promise and commits himself or herself before God and the local community (fraternity) to follow the Constitutions of the Secular order of Discalced Carmelites for three years. The Rite of the First Promise may be celebrated during a Eucharistic Liturgy, during the common recitation of the Morning or Evening Prayer of the Church, or in the context of a Liturgy of the Word.
8. During this new state the Secular Carmelite lives in accord with the Constitutions in a spirit of fidelity to the prescribed daily program of liturgical and contemplative prayer (cf. Constitutions, #17-#28), in faithful participation in the meetings of the community (cf. Constitutions, #40 and #56), in formation and ongoing discernment. He or she does this with a view to making a life-long commitment at the end of three years (OCDS Constitution #36).

Rite of Definitive Promise and of the Vows

9. Those who have been duly admitted to the Definitive Promise, which gives origin to a permanent and stable tie with the Order, or to the vows (cf. OCDS Constitution #39) make their commitment during a Liturgy of the Eucharist, or in the course of the Morning or Evening Prayer of the Church, or during a Liturgy of the Word.
10. The formula proposed below for the Renewal of Commitment is to be understood as a devotional act, not a liturgical one. Therefore it is to be made in a simple way at some fitting moment during common prayer.

**CHAPTER I:
RITE OF ADMISSION TO FORMATION**

11. The Rite of Admission, which precedes the formation period, is held during a Liturgy of the Word.
12. The rite is to be carried out in a simple manner during a meeting of the Community, either at the monthly meeting or on a feast day of the Order.
13. The local Assistant of the Community, or another authorized priest, is to preside at the celebration. He wears a white stole.
14. Copies of the Gospel and of the OCDS Constitutions, as well as the Scapulars with which the candidates are to be clothed, are to be placed in a convenient location.
15. See the Appendix for the choice of readings.
16. The ceremony begins with the singing of a suitable hymn.

Introductory Rites

17. The celebrant makes the Sign of the Cross and greets those taking part in the rite.
18. He then addresses them in these or similar words:

The Lord has called you to live an evangelical life in the world as brothers and sisters. He brings us together today to receive those who have expressed their desire to begin formation in the Secular Order of Discalced Carmelites. This stage of formation, with God's help, will lead to an evangelical commitment. Let us ask the Lord always to give them the grace of the Holy Spirit so that they may persevere in their purpose. May he also enable us to support them along the way.

19. Following this brief admonition, the priest says:

Let us pray.

Holy and merciful Father, you call us to holiness in Christ in order that our life may be a spiritual oblation. Look with favor on these your children. They desire to live in the world and to walk in the light of the Gospel in the spirit of the Teresian Carmel and under the protection of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Grant that they may come to know your will and to follow your inspirations with filial and generous love. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

All: *Amen.*

Liturgy of the Word

20. The liturgy of the Word takes place in the ordinary way, as in the celebration of the Eucharist and of the Sacraments. Two or three readings with a responsorial psalm and a Gospel acclamation may be chosen. (See the Appendix for choices of texts).

Homily

21. After the Gospel is read, the celebrant gives a brief homily.

Rite of Admission

The celebrant or the president of the Community says:

Let N.N.... who desire to be admitted to the Community come forward.

The Candidates come forward, accompanied by the master [director] of formation.

22. One of the candidates in the name of all, or all the candidates together, expresses their wish to join the Secular Order of Discalced Carmelites.

The celebrant accepts their petition in the following dialogue or in other similar words:

Brothers and sisters, what do you ask of this Community of the Secular Order of Carmel?

The candidates say:

We ask to be admitted to the period of formation in this Community of the Secular Order of Discalced Carmelites.

Or:

Trusting in the mercy of God and in the fraternal help of all of you, we ask to be admitted to the period of formation in the Community [Fraternity] of the Secular Order of Discalced Carmelites. We wish to live our baptismal consecration according to the ideal of life of the Teresian Carmel, and to collaborate in fulfilling the mission of Carmel in the Church.

The celebrant accepts the petition in the following, or similar, words:

The Church and the Order of Carmel accept and confirm your petition. May the Lord grant you to persevere in your purpose, so that, when the time comes, you may make your promise for the glory of God and the good of the whole Church.

All: *Amen.*

Complimentary Rites

23. The celebrant gives each candidate a copy of the Gospels and of the Constitutions of the Secular Order, saying to each as he does:

Brother (or Sister), The Constitutions of the Secular Carmel are this: To live in allegiance to Our Lord Jesus Christ, following the doctrine and example of St. Teresa of Jesus and St. John of the Cross. May the Word of Christ dwell abundantly in your hearts. In all that you do, whether in words or in works, do it in the name of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

24. Assisted by the master [director] of formation, the celebrant clothes each candidate with the scapular which is the “signum habitis” or token of the habit, of the Carmelite Order, while saying to each:

Receive this scapular. It is the habit of the Order of Carmel. Wear it worthily by imitating Mary in the service of Jesus Christ.

25. To show that the candidates have been welcomed into the Fraternity [Community], the brothers and sisters give them a sign of peace.

The candidates return to their places.

Prayer of the Faithful and Lord’s Prayer

26. The prayer of the faithful or intercessions and the Lord’s Prayer follow. (See the Appendix for typical intercessions).

27. The celebrant concludes by praying:

We beseech you, Lord, that the powerful intercession of the Holy Virgin Mary, Mother and Queen of Carmel, may assist us always; so that, guided by her example and protection, we may reach the summit of the Mount of Perfection, which is Christ Our Lord. He lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever.

All: *Amen.*

Dismissal

28. The celebrant blesses and dismisses the assembly in the usual way or with a formula taken from an approved liturgical text.

29. The celebration may end with the singing of a final hymn in honor of Our Lady, such as the Flos Carmeli or Salve Regina.

**CHAPTER II:
RITE OF MAKING THE PROMISE AND THE VOWS
DURING THE CELEBRATION OF THE EUCHARIST**

30. The rite described here takes place during the celebration of Mass.
31. The local Assistant of the Community, or another authorized priest, presides.
32. This rite should be held during the monthly meeting of the Community, or on a feast day of the Order.
33. The liturgical formulas of the Mass are those of the day, or of a suitable votive Mass when permitted by the rubrics.

Entrance Rite

34. When all the participants are gathered together and after everything has been prepared, the entrance hymn begins and the procession proceeds to the sanctuary. Those who are to make their profession take the places assigned to them. The celebrant reverences the altar and begins the Mass, making the Sign of the Cross.
35. Following his greeting, the celebrant invites all to participate fully in the rite, admonishing them in the following or similar words:

Dear brothers and sisters, we are here for this Eucharistic sacrifice during which our brothers and sisters (N.N.) will make their profession in the Secular Order of Discalced Carmelites. We give thanks to God our Father for having called them to follow more closely his Son Jesus Christ, and we beg him to accept them as an oblation in Christ, who offered himself as a living victim for the life of the world.

36. The Mass continues in the usual way.

Liturgy of the Word

37. The Liturgy of the Word is celebrated in the normal way. The readings may be taken from the texts which are indicated in the Appendix. The Creed may be omitted.

Rite of Making the Promise or Vows

38. After the Gospel has been proclaimed, all take their seats. The formation director calls those who will make their promise or vows, one by one, and they take their place, standing in front of the celebrant. One of them in the name of all, or all of them together, asks that they be allowed to make their promise or vows, in these or similar words:

- A) Those who will make their promise say:

We/I ask to be admitted to the Promise in the Secular Order of Discalced Carmelites. The experience of the period of formation has confirmed us in the certitude that the Lord is calling us to live the Gospel of Jesus Christ in the world in union with Mary, Mother of God, and under her protection, as Secular members of Carmel.

The celebrant answers:

This Community accepts your petition and it accompanies you with its prayers. May the Holy Spirit confirm in you the work which he has begun.

All: *Amen*.

B) Those who will take vows say:

With the help of God we/I wish to follow more perfectly Christ, the chaste and obedient one. We therefore ask you, Father, to allow us to make the vows of chastity and obedience in the Secular Order of Discalced Carmelites for the glory of God.

The celebrant answers:

May God who has begun in you this good work bring it to completion for the day of Christ the Lord.

All: *Amen*.

Homily

39. All take their seats for the homily. The celebrant comments on the readings from the Word of God and explains the evangelical meaning of the bonds of the Secular Order of Carmel.

Examination

40. When the homily has ended, the candidates stand up and the celebrant questions them in the following, or similar, words:

Beloved brothers and sisters, in the presence of this Community and of the other brothers and sisters in Christ who are here with us, I ask you:

Do you wish to embrace the form of evangelical life which is inspired by the example and words of St. Teresa of Jesus and of St. John of the Cross and which is set forth in the Constitutions of the Secular Order of Discalced Carmelites?

The candidates answer:

Yes, I do.

Celebrant:

You are called to give witness to the Kingdom of God by living an evangelical life in the world in fraternal communion. Taking the Virgin Mary as your model, do you wish to be faithful to this vocation?

Candidates:

Yes, I do.

Celebrant:

You have been made members of the People of God through Baptism and you have been sealed with the Holy Spirit in Confirmation. You must witness to Christ in words and deeds. Do you wish to bind yourself more strictly to the Church in order to collaborate in her mission by means of contemplative prayer and apostolic activity?

Candidates:

Yes, I do.

Celebrant:

May Almighty God grant you this by his grace.

41. The celebrant then invokes the Divine Assistance:

Let us pray.

Look with favor, Lord, on these your servants. Fill their hearts with your Spirit of Love so that, by the help of your grace, they may persevere faithfully in the life they propose to live. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

All: *Amen.*

Promise and Vows

42. Once the prayer is ended, the candidates come before the priest, one by one, and read the formula of the promise or, as the case may be, of the vows.

A) The Promise:

I, N____, inspired by the Holy Spirit, in response to God's call, sincerely promise to the Superiors of the Order of the Teresian Carmel and to you my brothers and sisters, to tend toward evangelical perfection in the spirit of the evangelical counsels of chastity, poverty, obedience, and of the Beatitudes, according to the Constitutions of the Secular Order of the Discalced Carmelites, for three years (for the rest of my life). I confidently entrust this, my promise, to the Virgin Mary, Mother and Queen of Carmel.

B) The Vows:

I, N____, in order to live in union with the Virgin Mary in following Jesus Christ, make a vow of chastity and obedience to God in the hands of the Superior of the Order of the Teresian Carmel according to the Constitutions of the Secular Order of Discalced Carmelites for the rest of my life.

Acceptance

43. When all the candidates have made their promise or vows, the celebrant confirms their commitment:

Brothers and Sisters, in the name of the Teresian Carmel, I confirm your new commitment of the (promise/definitive promise/vows as the case may be). I welcome you with joy. All of us here present wish you the grace and peace of the Lord.

44. If it is the custom, or, if local culture should require it, at this time a sign or emblem of membership (other than the Gospel, Constitutions and Scapular of the Admission Rite) may be given to the newly professed.

45. The brothers and sisters present express their congratulations in an appropriate manner.

Liturgy of the Eucharist

46. The liturgy of the Eucharist then follows in the normal way.

47. During the singing of an offertory hymn, the newly professed may bring to the altar, gifts of bread, wine and water, for the Eucharistic sacrifice, as well as other offerings.

48. On this occasion, Eucharistic communion may be given under both species.

49. After the communion prayer of the Mass, the celebrant blesses the assembly and dismisses them in the customary way or with a solemn formula taken from the Roman Missal or from the Appendix of this Ritual.

**CHAPTER III:
RITE OF MAKING THE PROMISE AND THE VOWS
DURING THE DIVINE OFFICE**

50. The rite described in this chapter takes place during celebration of Morning or Evening Prayer of the Church.
51. The local Assistant, or another authorized priest, presides.
52. This rite should be held at the monthly meeting of the Community or on a feast day of the Order.
53. The Morning or Evening Prayer is taken from the office of the day or from a votive office when permitted by the rubrics (see the Appendix of the Ritual). The hour is celebrated in the usual way and solemnized by singing the principal parts of the celebration.
54. The president, or a lector, briefly explains the meaning of the rite and invites all to participate attentively and devoutly.
55. The hymn and psalmody follow.

Rite of Making the Promise and Vows

Petition

56. After the Psalms, all take their seats. The Master [Director] of Formation calls, one by one, all those who will make their promise or vows. They take their place, standing in front of the celebrant. One of them in the name of all, or all of them together, asks to be allowed to make their promise or vows in these or similar words.

A) Those who will make their promise say:

We/I ask to be admitted to the Promise in the Secular Order of Discalced Carmelites. The experience of the period of formation has confirmed us in the certitude that the Lord is calling us to live the Gospel of Jesus Christ in the world in union with Mary, Mother of God, and under her protection, as Secular members of Carmel.

The celebrant answers:

This Community accepts your petition and it accompanies you with its prayers. May the Holy Spirit confirm in you the work which he has begun.

All: ***Amen.***

B) Those who will take vows say:

With the help of God we/I wish to follow more perfectly Christ, the chaste and obedient One. We therefore ask you, Father, to allow us to make the vows of chastity and obedience in the Secular Order of Discalced Carmelites for the glory of God.

The celebrant answers:

May God who has begun in you this good work bring it to completion for the day of Christ the Lord.

All: **Amen.**

Reading of the Word of God

57. The Word of God is proclaimed, the text chosen according to the norms of the General Instruction for the Liturgy of the Hours (see the Appendix of this Ritual) or from the office of the day.

Homily

58. All take their seats for the homily. The celebrant comments on the reading from the Word of God and explains the evangelical meaning of the bonds of the Secular Order of Carmel.

59. There is no Examination or Prayer of the Faithful.

Promise and Vows

60. After the homily, the candidates come before the priest, one by one, and read the formula of the promise or, as the case may be, of the vows.

A) The Promise:

I, N_____, inspired by the Holy Spirit, in response to God's call, sincerely promise to the Superiors of the Order of the Teresian Carmel and to you my brothers and sisters, to tend toward evangelical perfection in the spirit of the evangelical counsels of chastity, poverty, obedience, and of the Beatitudes, according to the Constitutions of the Secular Order of Discalced Carmelites, for three years (for the rest of my life). I confidently entrust this, my promise, to the Virgin Mary, Mother and Queen of Carmel.

B) The Vows:

I, N_____, in order to live in union with the Virgin Mary in following Jesus Christ, make a vow of chastity and obedience to God in the hands of the Superior of the Order of the Teresian Carmel according to the Constitutions of the Secular Order of Discalced Carmelites for the rest of my life.

Acceptance

61. When all the candidates have made their promise or vows, the celebrant confirms their commitment:

Brothers and Sisters, in the name of the Teresian Carmel I confirm your new commitment of the promise/ definitive promise/vows (as the case may be). I welcome you with joy. All of us here present wish you the grace and peace of the Lord.

62. If it is the custom, or if local culture should require it, at this time a sign or emblem of membership (other than the Gospel, Constitutions and Scapular of the Admission Rite) may be given to the newly professed.

63. The brothers and sisters present express their congratulations in an appropriate manner.

The Gospel Cantic and Intercessions

64. The Benedictus, or as the case may be, the Magnificat, is intoned with its respective antiphon. The Intercessions and the Lord's Prayer follow. In the Intercessions, mention may be made of those who have made promises or vows, in the style proper to the prayers of the Divine Office.

65. The oration of the Divine Office and the blessing and dismissal follow.

**CHAPTER IV:
RITE OF MAKING THE PROMISE AND VOWS
DURING A SERVICE OF THE WORD**

66. The rite described in this chapter is conducted during a celebration of the Word of God.
67. The local Assistant of the Community or another authorized priest presides.
68. The rite should be celebrated during a monthly meeting of the Community or on a feast day of the order.
69. The readings, the responsorial psalm and acclamation are to be chosen in accord with the spirit of the liturgical season and the nature of the commitment of Secular Carmelites.

Opening Rites

70. The celebration begins in the customary way with an appropriate hymn, the Sign of the Cross and the greeting of the celebrant who then briefly instructs the assembly regarding the significance of the rite and invites them to participate fully.
71. He then says:

Let us pray.

Holy and merciful Father, you call all to holiness in Christ. Look favorably on these your sons and daughters and grant that, imitating the ready obedience of the Virgin Mary, they may always take your word to heart and put it into practice.

All: *Amen.*

Liturgy of the Word

72. The readings from Scripture are proclaimed in the usual manner.

Rite of Making the Promise and the Vows

Petition

73. After the Gospel has been proclaimed, all take their seats. The master [director] of formation calls, one by one, those who will make their promise or vows. They take their place, standing in front of the celebrant. One of them in the name of all, or all of them together, asks that they be allowed to make their promise or vows in these or similar words:

A) Those who will make their promise say:

We/I ask to be admitted to the Promise in the Secular Order of Discalced Carmelites. The experience of the period of formation has confirmed me in the certitude that the Lord is calling me to live the Gospel of Jesus Christ in the world in union with Mary, Mother of God, and under her protection as a Secular member of Carmel.

The celebrant answers:

This Community accepts your petition and it accompanies you with its prayers. May the Holy Spirit confirm in you the work which he has begun.

All: *Amen.*

B) Those who will make vows say:

With the help of God we/I wish more perfectly to follow Christ, the chaste and obedient One. We therefore ask you, Father, to allow us to make the vows of chastity and obedience in the Secular Order of Discalced Carmelites for the glory of God.

The celebrant answers:

May God who has begun in you this good work bring it to completion for the day of Christ the Lord.

All: *Amen.*

Homily

74. All take their seats for the homily. The celebrant comments on the readings from the Word of God and explains the evangelical meaning of the bonds of the Secular Order of Carmel.

Examination

75. When the homily has ended, the candidates stand. The celebrant questions them in the following, or similar words:

Dear brothers and sisters, in the presence of this Community and of the other brothers and sisters in Christ who are here with us, I ask you: Do you wish to embrace the form of evangelical life which is inspired by the example and words of St. Teresa and of St. John of the Cross and which is set forth in the Constitutions of the Secular Order of Discalced Carmelites?

The candidates answer:

Yes, I do.

Celebrant:

You are called to give witness to the Kingdom of God by living an evangelical life in the world in fraternal communion. Taking the Virgin Mary as your model, do you wish to be faithful to this vocation?

Candidates:

Yes, I do.

Celebrant:

You have been made members of the People of God through Baptism, and you have been sealed with the Holy Spirit in Confirmation. You must witness to Christ in words and deeds. Do you wish to bind yourself more strictly to the Church in order to collaborate in her mission by means of contemplative prayer and apostolic activity?

Candidates:

Yes, I do.

Celebrant:

May Almighty God grant you this by his grace.

Invocation

76. The celebrant then invokes the Divine Assistance, saying:

Let us pray.

Look with favor, Lord, on these your servants. Fill their hearts with your Spirit of Love so that, by the help of your grace, they may persevere faithfully in the life they propose to live. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

All: *Amen.*

Promise and Vows

77. Once the prayer is ended, the candidates come before the priest, one by one, and read the formula of the promise or, as the case may be, of the vows.

A) The Promise:

I, N_____, inspired by the Holy Spirit, in response to God's call, sincerely promise to the Superiors of the Order of the Teresian Carmel and to you my brothers and sisters, to tend toward evangelical perfection in the spirit of the evangelical counsels of chastity, poverty, obedience, and of the Beatitudes, according to the Constitutions of the Secular Order of Discalced Carmelites, for three years (for the rest of my life). I confidently entrust this, my promise, to the Virgin Mary, Mother and Queen of Carmel.

B) The Vows:

I, N____, in order to live in union with the Virgin Mary in following Jesus Christ, make a vow of chastity and obedience to God in the hands of the Superior of the Order of the Teresian Carmel according to the Constitutions of the Secular Order of Discalced Carmelites for the rest of my life.

Acceptance

78. When all the candidates have made their promise or vows, the celebrant confirms their commitment:

Brothers and Sisters, in the name of the Teresian Carmel I confirm your new commitment of the promise/definitive promise/vows (as the case may be). I welcome you with joy. All of us here wish you the grace and peace of the Lord.

79. If it is the custom, or if the local culture should require it, at this time a sign or emblem of membership (other than the Gospel, Constitutions and Scapular of the Admission Rite) may be given to the newly professed.

80. The brothers and sisters present express their congratulations in an appropriate manner.

Concluding Rites

81. The celebrant invites everyone to recite together the **Our Father**. He then says:

We beseech you Lord, that the powerful intercession of the Most Holy Virgin Mary, Queen and Mother of Carmel, may assist us always; so that guided by her example and protection we may reach the summit of the Mount of Perfection, which is Christ Our Lord. He lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever.

All: *Amen*.

82. The ceremony ends with the blessing and dismissal. The formulas found in the Roman Missal may be used or, if desired, the text provided in the Appendix to this Ritual.

83. A suitable closing hymn in honor of the Blessed Virgin Mary may be sung.

**CHAPTER V:
DEVOTIONAL RENEWAL OF THE PROMISE**

84. The devotional renewal of the promise and of the vows is done in a simple way during a suitable period of common prayer. The following formula is used:

I, N____, desiring to follow the Crucified and Risen Christ in the Secular Order of Carmel, renew my profession, and I promise to tend toward evangelical perfection in the spirit of the evangelical counsels of chastity, poverty and obedience, and of the Beatitudes, according to the Constitutions of the Secular Order of Discalced Carmelites. I confidently entrust my promise to the Virgin Mary, Mother and Queen of Carmel.

**CHAPTER VI:
CEREMONY FOR THE CANONICAL CERTIFICATION
OF A NEW COMMUNITY**

85. The ceremony for the canonical certification of a new Community is held in a convenient place.

86. The priest who has the faculty for canonical certification for the Community presides.

Introduction

87. After a few words of greeting and encouragement by the presiding priest, constitutions #1-#9 and #37 are to be read.

88. The priest then says:

Let us pray.

Grant to us, O Lord, who have come together in the love of Christ your Son, to be of one heart and mind and to persevere in prayer and good works together with the Blessed Virgin Mary, so that we may build up your holy Church. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

All: *Amen.*

Reading from the Holy Scripture

89. A suitable passage is then read from the Holy Scripture, for example: Rom 12, 4-13.

Promulgation of the Decree of Canonical Certification

90. Following the reading from the Word of God, the decree of certification of the Community Is presented to the assembled members in a suitable way.

91. Words appropriate to the occasion may be spoken.

Common Prayer and Conclusion

92. Common prayer, in the manner of the Prayer of the Faithful of the Mass, may be offered. The rite ends with the common recitation of the Our Father, after which the presiding priest prays as follows:

God, Almighty Father of Our Lord Jesus Christ, grant that this new Carmelite Community may be united by your Holy Spirit and guided by his inspirations. May its members take your Word to heart and contemplate it always so that their lives in the world may bear much fruit. Through Christ Our Lord.

All: *Amen.*

93. The ceremony ends with the singing of a hymn to our Lady, for example: The “Salve Regina” or the “Rosa Carmeli.”

APPENDIX

A. Norms for selecting votive offices and alternative texts for biblical readings and other formulas for Morning and Evening Prayer

The *Institutio Generalis Liturgiae Horarum* (IGLH, which was published in English as *The General Instruction for the Liturgy of the Hours*), permits, for various pastoral reasons, the use of votive offices and alternative texts for the biblical readings as well as for the formulas used in Morning and Evening Prayer. The celebration of the “Rite of the Promise and the Vows” (see Chapter III of this Ritual) is one such occasion. The chief norms which should guide these optional choices are to be found in numbers 44-46 and 244-245 of the IGLH.

1. On Choosing a votive office: Except on solemnities, on the Sundays of Advent, Lent and Eastertide, on Ash Wednesday, during Holy Week and during the Octave of Easter, and on November 2nd, a votive office may, for a public cause or devotion, be celebrated in whole or in part [IGLH, n. 245].

2. On choosing alternative formulas: The formulas for the office are not to be altered for the offices on Sunday and on solemnities and on feasts of Our Lord on the common calendar. Nor is an alteration permitted of the ferial offices of Lent and Holy Week or of the offices of the Octaves of Easter or Christmas or the offices of December 17th through 24th [cf. n. 246]. On the other hand, on the Ordinary Sundays of the year, the psalms may be substituted by psalms from Sundays other than the one occurring or even by other psalms, in the case of an office, celebrated with the People, in order to give them a gradual introduction to the entire psalter [cf. n. 247]. On days other than the ones mentioned, if spiritual or pastoral considerations should recommend it, the psalms of an hour may be substituted by psalms assigned to the same hour on some other day. On an occasional basis one may even choose other suitable psalms and other parts of the office after the manner of a votive office [cf. n. 252].

3. On choosing alternative readings: During the ordinary time of the year one may, for a good reason, choose on a day or for a short series of days, other readings from among those proposed for other days or even other biblical readings [cf. n. 248].

B. Readings for the Rite of Admission, the Promise and Vows

Two or three readings may be chosen. The following list of readings may be used, if the rubrics permit, in the celebration of the Rite of the Promise and Vows during a Eucharistic celebration.

1. Old Testament Readings

1. **1 Sam. 3,1-10.** “During the time young Samuel was to minister to the Lord under Eli...”

2. **1 Kg 19, 4-9; 11-15.** “[Elijah] went a day’s journey into the desert until he came to a broom tree....”

3. **Song 2, 8-14.** “Hark! my lover – here he comes....”

4. **Song 8, 6-7.** “Set me as a seal on your heart....”

5. **Isaiah 61, 9-11.** “Their descendants shall be renowned among the nations....”

6. **Wis. 7, 7-14.** “Therefore I prayed, and prudence was given me; I pleaded and the spirit of Wisdom came to me....”

2. Responsorial Psalms

1. **Ps. 23, 1-2, 3-4ab, 6-6.**

R/ *“Lord, this is the people that longs to see your face.”*

2. **Ps. 26, 1, 4, 5, 8b-9abc, 9d and 11.**

R/ *“I long to see your face, O Lord.”*

3. **Ps. 32, 2-3, 4-5, 11-12, 13-14, 18-19, 20-22.**

R/ *“Happy the people the Lord has chosen to be his own.”*

4. **Ps. 33, 2-3, 4-5, 6-7, 8-9. Or Pb. 34 [33], 10-11, 12-13, 14-15, 17 and 19.**

R/ *“I will bless the Lord at all times.”*

5. **Ps. 44, 11-12, 14-15, 16-17.**

R/ *“My heart overflows with a goodly theme as I sing my ode to the king.”*

6. **Ps 62, 2, 3-4, 5-6, 8-9.**

R/ *“In the shadow of your wings I shout for joy, O Lord!”*

7. **Ps. 99, 2, 3, 4, 5.**

R/ *“Come with joy into the presence of the Lord.”*

3. New Testament Readings

1. **Acts 2, 42-47.** “[At that time] they devoted themselves to the Apostles’ instruction

2. **Acts 4, 32-35.** “[At that time] the community of believers were of one heart and one mind....”

3. **Rom 6, 3-11.** “Are you not aware that we who were baptized into Christ Jesus....”

4. **Rom 8, 5-17.** “Those who live according to the flesh are intent upon the things of the flesh....”

5. **Rom 12, 1-13.** “And now, brothers, I beg you through the mercy of God....”

6. **1 Cor 1, 22-31.** “[Brethren], the Jews demand ‘signs’ and the Greeks look for ‘wisdom’....”

7. **Gal 4, 4-7.** “When the designated time had come....”

8. **Eph 1, 3-14.** “Praised be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ....”

9. **Phil 2, 1-4.** “[Brethren] in the name of the encouragement you owe me in Christ....”

10. **Phil 3, 8-14.** “[Brethren], I have to rate all as loss....”

11. **Col 3, 1-4.** “[Brethren], since you have been raised up in the company of Christ....”

12. **Col 3, 12-17.** “Because you are God’s chosen ones....”

13. **1 Pt 1, 3-9.** “Praised be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ....”

14. **1 Jn 4, 7-17.** “Beloved, let us love one another....”

5. Gospel Acclamation

1. Cf. Mt 11, 25. “Blessed are you, Father. Lord of heaven and of earth, because you have revealed to little ones the mysteries of the kingdom.”

2. Lk 8, 15, cf. Luke 11, 28. “Blessed are those who hear the word in a spirit of openness, retain it, and bear fruit through perseverance.”

3. Lk 11, 27-28. “Blest are those who hear the word of God and keep it.”

4. Jn 14, 23. “Anyone who loves me will be true to my word, and my Father will love him; we will come to him and make our dwelling place with him.”

5. Jn 1.5. 5. "I am the vine and you are the branches, says the Lord; He who lives in me and I in him will produce abundantly."
6. Jn 15. 8. "My Father has been glorified in your bearing much fruit and becoming my disciples."
7. Gal 2. 19b-20. "I have been crucified with Christ and the life I now live is not my own; Christ is living in me."
8. Gal 6. 14. "May I never boast of anything but the Cross of Our Lord Jesus Christ. Through it the world has been crucified to me and I to the world."

6. Gospel Readings

1. **Mt 5, 1-12.** "When (Jesus) saw the crowds he went up on the mountainside...."
2. **Mt 5, 13-16.** "You are the salt of the earth...."
3. **Mt 11, 25-30.** "On one occasion Jesus spoke thus...."
4. **Mt 18, 1-4.** "[At that time] the disciples came up to Jesus with the question...."
5. **Mk 3, 31-35.** "[At that time Jesus'] mother and his brothers arrived...."
6. **Lk 9, 28-36.** "About eight days after saying this, [Jesus] took Peter, John and James and went up onto a mountain to pray...."
7. **Lk 10, 38-42.** "On their journey Jesus entered a village where a woman named Martha welcomed him...."
8. **Lk 11, 21-28.** "While [He] was saying this, a woman from the crowd called out...."
9. **Jn 4, 5-15.** "[Jesus] had to pass through Samaria and his journey brought him to a Samaritan town...."
10. **Jn 7, 37-39.** "On the last and greatest day of the festival, Jesus stood up and cried out...."
11. **Jn 12, 24-26.** "[At that time Jesus said to his disciples], I solemnly assure you, unless the grain of wheat die...."
12. **Jn 14, 22-26.** "Judas, not the Iscariot, said to him...."
13. **Jn 15, 1-8.** "[At that time, Jesus said to his disciples], I am the true vine and my Father is the vine grower...."
14. **Jn 15, 9-17.** "[At that time Jesus said to his disciples], as the Father has loved me, so I have loved you. Live on in my love...."
15. **Jn 17, 20-26.** "[Jesus looked up to heaven and said], I do not pray for them alone."
16. **Jn 19, 25-27.** "Near the cross of Jesus there stood his mother...."

C. Models for the Prayer of the Faithful

1. For use in the Rite of Admission

The presiding priest begins the prayer with the following invitation:

Let us raise our prayer to God the Father through the intercession of the Virgin Mary.

Reader:

Let us respond and say: *Lord, hear our prayer.*

1. For the Church, that it may grow in the love of Christ and work for the salvation of all men and women, we pray to the Lord. R/.

2. For all the baptized, that they may give witness to Christ and to his Gospel in their daily lives, in their families, their work and their play, we pray to the Lord. R/.

3. For the entire family of the Teresian Carmel, for Carmelite Seculars, for Friars and Nuns, and for all the religious families which share its spiritual heritage, that they may be faithful to their contemplative, apostolic and Marian ideal, we pray to the Lord. R/.

4. For N.N., who are beginning today their period of formation, that, with the help of their brothers and sisters in Carmel, they may be enabled to live the vocation they received in their Baptism, we pray to the Lord. R/.

Other intentions may be freely added.

The presiding priest invites all to say the Our Father in the following, or similar words:

Let us pray now to the Father in the words that Jesus taught us:

All recite together the **Lord's Prayer**.

2. For use during the Rite of the Promise and of the Vows

Celebrant:

Let us pray to God our Father and ask him to bless these brothers and sisters [whom he has called to follow Christ in the way of holiness in union with the Virgin Mary].

Reader:

Let us respond and say: Lord, hear our prayer.

1. For the entire Church, that, in union with the Holy Father and the Pastors of the Church, all the baptized may persevere in prayer and in good works and give glory to Christ in their daily lives, we pray to the Lord. R/.

2. For N.N., who today commit themselves to persevering (for their entire lives) in the way of the Secular Order of Carmel, we pray to the Lord. R/.

3. For our brothers and sisters who are called to follow Christ in the world, that their practice of the beatitudes and of the evangelical counsels, may strengthen their families in love and fill them with the peace of Christ, we pray to the Lord. R/.

4. For all of us who are here gathered together so that we may serve the lord with health in body and soul, we pray to the Lord. R/.

Other intentions may be freely added.

The celebrant concludes the intercessions by saying:

Hear, O Father, the prayers of your family. Look with favor on your sons and daughters whom you have called to your service in the Secular Carmel. Grant that they may grow in perfect charity and so enter into eternal life. We ask this through Christ Our Lord.

All: *Amen.*

D. Solemn Blessings for use at the Rite of the Promise and of the Vows

In addition to the formulas found in the Roman Missal, the following solemn blessings may be used:

V/. The Lord be with you.

R/. *And with your spirit.*

Bow down your heads and pray for God's blessing:

May God who inspires every good purpose enlighten and strengthen you so that you may faithfully fulfill your promises.

R/. *Amen.*

May he grant you to run joyfully with Christ in the way of perfection and to serve your brothers and sisters with untiring solicitude.

R/. *Amen.*

May his Living Flame of Love light your way as your walk through all the nights of this world.

R/. *Amen.*

And may the blessing of Almighty God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, come upon you and remain with you for ever.

R/. *Amen.*

[The entire Ritual in Spanish, including the rubrics, may be found on the Provincial website.]

En Español

Rito de las Promesas y los Votos

The Mass begins with the sign of the Cross and after the Celebrant's greeting, he says:

Queridos hermanos, nos hemos reunido en este sacrificio Eucarístico en el cual nuestros hermanos y hermanas, (Nombres) _____ harán su profesión en la Orden Seglar de los Carmelitas Descalzos. Demos gracias a Dios Padre que les ha llamado a seguir a Jesucristo más de cerca y pidámosle que les acepte como una oblación junto a la de Cristo que se ofreció como hostia viva para la vida del mundo.

The Mass continues as usual.

Liturgy of the Word.

After the gospel, the Formation Director calls the candidates forward by their name and standing together they all say:

Pedimos ser admitidos a la promesa en la orden seglar de los Carmelitas Descalzos. La experiencia del período de formación nos ha confirmado en la certeza de que el Señor nos llama a vivir el evangelio de Jesucristo en el mundo en unión con María madre de Dios, y bajo su protección como miembros del Carmelo Seglar.

The Celebrant responds:

Esta comunidad acoge sus peticiones y les acompaña con su oración para que el Espíritu Santo confirme en ustedes lo que el mismo ha empezado.

All: Amen.

The homily is said at this time. Everyone sits.

The Celebrant then asks:

Muy queridos hermanos y hermanas, en la presencia de esta comunidad y de los otros hermanos en Cristo aquí congregados, les pregunto:

¿Quieren abrazar la forma evangélica que se inspira en el ejemplo y en las palabras de Santa Teresa de Jesús y San Juan de la Cruz y que está expuesta en la regla de vida de la orden seglar de los Carmelitas Descalzos?

The candidates then say:

Si, lo quiero.

The Celebrant then says:

¿Llamados a testimoniar el reino, de Dios viviendo en el mundo, en comunión fraterna, una vida evangélica, tomando a la Virgen María como modelo, quieren ser fieles a esta vocación?

The candidates say:

Si, lo quiero.

The Celebrant then says:

Hechos miembros del pueblo de Dios por medio del bautismo y, sellados con el Espíritu Santo en la confirmación, tienen que testimoniar a Cristo en palabras y obras.

¿Quieren vincularse mas estrechamente a la iglesia para colaborar en su misión por medio de la oración contemplativa y la actividad apostólica?

The candidate says:

Si, lo quiero.

The Celebrant then says:

Dios Todopoderoso se los conceda con su gracia.

Oremos:

Mira con bondad, Señor, a estos siervos tuyos, infunde en sus corazones tu espíritu de amor de manera que, con tu gracia, permanezcan fieles a lo que se propone vivir, por Cristo Nuestro Señor.

All: ¡Amen!

The candidates go up and facing the Celebrant, say:

Yo (nombre)_____, movida por la gracia del Espíritu Santo respondiendo a la llamada de Dios, sinceramente prometo a los superiores de la orden del Carmelo Teresiano, y a ustedes, mis hermanos, tender a la perfección evangélica en el espíritu de los consejos evangélicos de castidad, pobreza y obediencia, y de las bienaventuranzas, según la regla de vida de la Orden Seglar de los Carmelitas Descalzos, por [tres años]. Confío filialmente mi promesa a la Virgen María, madre y reina del Carmelo.

The Celebrant then says:

Hermanos y hermanas, en el nombre del Carmelo Teresiano confirmo sus nuevos compromisos, sus promesas, y los acojo con inmenso gozo, y todos los presentes les deseamos paz y gracia en el Señor.

The Eucharist follows.

[End of OCDS Ritual documents]