

Commissio Constitutionum

Proposed Revision of Chapter I

CHAPTER I
THE LIFE
OF THE CAPUCHIN FRIARS MINOR

Rome — General Curia — 2009

General Curia of the Capuchin Friars Minor

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Rome, 25 January 2009.

Prot. N. 00092/09

To all the Brothers of the Order

*Dear Brothers,
Peace and all good!*

Some of you receiving this letter will probably say, "At last!"

Yes, at last we are able to send you the *Proposals for Revision* of the first chapter of the Constitutions, prepared by the Commission assigned to the task.

Last year, after the difficulties encountered concerning the method, it was decided to make some changes. Now we are happy to write these few lines to present you with the *Proposals for Revision* of the first chapter.

The long wait, in my opinion, is amply repaid. We have been presented with a rich and vibrant text that deserves to be carefully read and studied. In this text, which *respects and enriches* the present Constitutions, good reasons are given for each proposed change. *Project 2006*, presented at the General Chapter of 2006, but not discussed or analyzed in its individual chapters at the time, is rightly taken into consideration.

Now, brothers, it is up to us, it is up to each one of us to study the *Proposals* we have received. The Commission, which has worked conscientiously, is now waiting for your comments and any suggestions for change. The Commission, as you can see, has given reasons for every single suggestion; you, too, must give reasons for all of your suggestions.

I underscore the Commission's request that study of the text be not only personal, but that it also be done in groups and fraternities. I strongly urge all the Ministers of provinces, vice-provinces and custodies to encourage the brothers entrusted to their ministry to study the text and to present any comments or suggestions *according to the guidelines indicated by the Commission*. The same Ministers are expected to personally study the *Proposals for Revision* of the first chapter and the others that will follow. The Commission, and I myself along with the General Definitory, are waiting especially for the contribution of the Ministers.

The Commission has also prepared a sheet with some *points for fraternal reflection*, another aid for deeper study of the text and for review of life.

So, there is no lack of subject material for local chapters and fraternal meetings on the regional level. We have only to devote all possible effort to building our life. We must have the zeal of our Seraphic Father and the first generations of brothers, when together, in the Chapters at Saint Mary of the Angels, they prepared the *forma vitae* of the Lesser Brothers. We must be animated by the same love as the first Capuchins, who were inspired by a vital need to be absolutely faithful to the gospel intuitions and intentions of Saint Francis, and who in the Chapter of Saint Euphemia created the first Constitutions of the Order, a source of inspiration for all our tradition and all later legislation.

I have been particularly struck by the fact, and at the same time very happy, that the work on the Constitutions should take place in the very year in which we celebrate “the grace of our origins” by recalling the VIII centenary of the confirmation by Pope Innocent III of the Proto-Rule or Life Plan which Saint Francis had presented to him. We have committed ourselves to live that charism which, on that very occasion, was authenticated by the Church itself with its hierarchical authority.

In the introduction to the first Constitutions (1536) it states that their function is to be a “hedge, or fence”, a protection for the Rule. At the same time they show us the way. Which way? The one that enables us to observe the Rule better and more spiritually. Today we would use different words and say: “to observe the Rule in a complete way and with dynamic fidelity”. I am convinced that, then as now, the text of the Constitutions exists for the sake of life, a life that must be able to find inspiration and be reflected in the text itself.

Dear Brothers, enjoy your work. May the text that is being sent to you together with this letter be a further opportunity to fan the flame of our charism!

Br. Mauro Jöhri
General Minister OFMCap

Points for fraternal reflection

Some brothers in the Order have pointed out the need for the work of revising the Constitutions to be more than just theoretical and formal. This is why we think it opportune to highlight some essential aspects of our life which call for careful reflection and attention by the whole Order. Even if these reflections cannot always be immediately translated into proposals, it is nevertheless hoped that they will contribute to an ever deeper interplay between actual life and the text of the Constitutions. To this end, we propose some questions that can be used in the local chapters or meetings of the brothers to facilitate fraternal sharing.

Introduction: 800 years of dynamic fidelity

- ◆ The sending of the *Proposals for Revision* of the first chapter of our Constitutions coincides with the start of celebrations for the eighth centenary of the approval of the First Rule of Saint Francis. As the General Minister Br Mauro Jöhri stated in his letter of Pentecost 2007, our task of “respectful enrichment” of the Constitutions is directly connected with this anniversary, underlining the fact that the Constitutions are the normative aid to living the Rule with greater intensity, and the Rule in turn is given to us so that we can live the holy Gospel as our norm of life. Thinking of the actual circumstances in which we live, and drawing on the treasure of our spiritual heritage, what do you think it is most vital to share with and communicate to people today?

1) Article I: Our life according to the Gospel

- ◆ Saint Francis of Assisi created a form of life according to the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. In which areas of our fraternal life is this best manifested? What positive signs do you see in our Order? And conversely, what are the difficulties you find in putting our Gospel programme into practice? In what ways can our life be made more authentic?
- ◆ According to one view, pluriformity has led to a loss of unity in our Order. Is this true in your circumscription? Taking account of the rapid process of globalisation, which elements make it possible to achieve greater balance in an Order like ours, which is spread throughout the world in different cultures and regions?

2) Article II: our life in the Church

- ◆ Our charism has to be expressed in the life of the Church. In this sense it is not easy to strike a balance between each brother’s personality, the charism of our Order and the needs of the Church today. In this respect, what measures are necessary to ensure that our form of life and our presence will have greater impact and be more effective in Church and society?
- ◆ The *Proposals for Revision* of chapter one remind us of the need for “dynamic fidelity”, for which it is necessary to evaluate the present forms of our life and if necessary to propose new ones, in order to live our charism in the present circumstances. Do you think this concern is recognised as a priority for you, for your fraternity and for your province?
- ◆ In the light of number 5.3 of the *Proposals for Revision* which describes our charism, which of its aspects ought to be given more attention, studied in greater depth and lived in ways that have more impact today?
- ◆ The apostolic life of the Capuchin brother has been described as: “the readiness to go where no-one else wishes to go”. Where are these places, in your Church and in your world? (cf. 14, 3-4).

Introductory Notes

This document contains the *Proposals for Revision* of the first chapter of the Constitutions, as it has developed in the course of the Commission's work. For the understanding and study of all that is proposed here, the following preliminary observations must be well considered.

1. Throughout its work, the Commission has tried to keep to the mandate it received, expressed in the motions of the General Chapter of 2006, which was amply described in the study material sent to the whole Order and repeatedly recalled in the General Minister's letters. The principles which the Commission was bound to follow can be summarised in two verbs: *to respect* and *to enrich* the present Constitutions. It was also invited to proceed with the study of the possibility of removing parts of the legislation, which could eventually be inserted into A Complementary Code.
2. Beginning with the official text of the present Constitutions and the in-depth studies, the revision of this first chapter takes account of the *Project presented to the General Chapter of 2006* and the almost 500 responses received from the Order. Many of the proposals received did not meet the above criteria; despite this the Commission tried to take account of the suggestions or basic indications and, where possible, to incorporate them into the text. On the other hand, some contributions come from the Commission itself.
3. In the course of the work it became clear that many observations received by the Commission or proposed by Project 2006 did not in fact concern the text or the content of the Constitutions as expressed in Latin; instead they referred to the translations into the various languages, which do not always appear to express accurately or fully what is said in the official text. The Commission recommends that special attention be paid to the official Latin text, to check the accuracy of the translations. On the Commission's website, together with the translations in the various languages, it is possible to consult also the *Proposals for Revision of the First Chapter of the Constitutions" in Latin*.
4. The issue of *inclusive language* does not have the same significance in all cultures. The Commission therefore has disregarded this aspect, which will have to be addressed in the translations of the official Latin text, according to the usage proper to each language.
5. Wherever possible, the Commission has replaced the term *superior(s)* by *minister(s)* and/or *guardian(s)*. Sometimes this was not possible because the replacement would reduce the general content of the term. On the other hand, it was not thought appropriate to replace *religious life* by *consecrated life*. Both formulations are interchangeable and can be used indifferently, as is the case in the documents of the Church and in the CIC (Code of Canon Law)
6. At present the Commission does not believe it can identify any points in chapter one of the Constitutions that should be transferred to a complementary code, but reserves the right to examine at a later date the proposals contained in the *2006 Project for General Statutes*.
7. For easy access and to facilitate study of the proposals, the new texts have been arranged in synoptic form: in the first column is the Latin text of the present Constitutions, which is the point of reference for all further development; in the second column is the translation of that text in the relevant language; in the third column is the vernacular text of the *Proposals for Revision*. In the same third column, the text of each individual paragraph is preceded by an indication: *Current text* (if the text currently in force has not been modified); *Current text with (an) addition(s)* (if the current text, is maintained but with new elements); *Current text with changes* (if changes are made to the current text); *Current text with changes and addition(s)* (if the current text has been partly modified and new elements added); *new text* (if the text is completely new).
8. The *Proposals for Revision* are made up of 15 numbers: two more than the text currently in force. Each text is preceded by a number: both the numbering of the *Proposals for Revision* and in brackets the numbering of the text currently in force: **n. 4 (3)**, etc.

9. Each proposal is accompanied by explanatory notes, presented after the synopsis of each number of the text. The explanatory notes contain only what, in the judgement of the Commission, is necessary to understand the changes or modifications, or the new text. References to Church documents and those of the Order are also reduced to what is necessary. There are no bibliographical references, except in a few cases to Lexicons and/or dictionaries¹.
10. The brothers of the Order are asked to consider the proposed text, evaluating in particular the modifications made and expressing their own opinion. In this first chapter, in addition to minor proposals, the Commission has also inserted a few new numbers and in some cases has reorganised the content, and transferred some numbers; these new features require greater attention and reflection.
11. Saving the freedom of each brother to express his opinion individually, the work benefits greatly from being shared by groups of brothers, or collected and forwarded by the Ministers themselves, using the outline provided, as in the attached sample.
12. The evaluation of every single number and/or paragraph should be done using the outline provided, following the model prepared by the Commission Secretariat.
It is necessary to fill in each form in all its parts, keeping in mind that anonymous entries or those sent by "a group of ...brothers" without a name, will not be accepted.
If you agree with the proposed text, or if you disagree, it is sufficient to state your opinion "briefly".
If on the other hand you are proposing an alternative text, this should be drafted clearly and concisely. You must give the reason(s) for the alternative you propose.
The evaluation sheets for Chapter I and the proposals regarding it must reach the Commission by June 30 2009.

Rome, December 20, 2008.

Fr. Felice Cangelosi
General Vicar OFMCap
President of the Commission

Fr. José María Sanz, OFMCap
Secretary of the Commission

The "abbreviations" of the biblical books are those in common use. For the writings of Saint Francis and Saint Clare we have added references to FA:ED (FA:ED= *Francis of Assisi: Early Documents*, vols. I-III, edited by Regis Armstrong, J.A.Wayne Hellman and William Short (New York: New City Press, 1999-2001; and CA:ED= *Clare of Assisi: Early Documents* (St Bonaventure, NY: Franciscan Institute, 1993). The following "abbreviations" are also used:

- *Acta1968* = *Acta Capituli generalis specialis Ordinis Fratrum Minorum Capuccinorum Romae a die 19 Augusti ad 25 Octobris 1968 celebrati*. 2 volumes. Romae, Curia generalis OFMCap., 1969.
- *Acta1982* = *Acta Capituli Generalis LXXIX Ordinis Fratrum Minorum Capuccinorum. Romae a die 1 iunii ad 11 iulii 1982 in Collegio S. Laurentii a Brundisio celebrati*. Roma, Curia generalis OFMCap., 1983.
- *Const* = *Constitutiones/Constitutions*
- *Const1988* = FR. IGLESIAS (a cura di), *Constitutiones Fratrum Minorum Capuccinorum post Concilium Vaticanum II retractatae (a.1968-1988)*. I. *Textus*. Romae, Curia generalis OFMCap., 1988.
- CORTELAZZO-ZOLLI = M. CORTELAZZO - P. ZOLLI, *Dizionario etimologico della lingua italiana*. 4 volumi. Bologna, Zanichelli, 1996
- *PCO* = *Plenary Council of the Order*.
- *DELL* = A. ERNOUT – A. MEILLET, *Dictionnaire étymologique de la langue latine. Histoire des mots*. Paris 1959.
- *LTL* = AE. FORCELLINI, *Lexicon totius latinitatis*. Secunda impressio anastatica confecta quartae editionis aa. 1864-1926. Patavii 1965.

Commissio Constitutionum

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EVALUATION

of each no. or § of the "Proposed revision of Chapter I".

Indicate as clearly and concisely as possible whether you agree with the proposed text or not. You may propose an alternative text, giving your reasons.

♦ Name of the Circumscription:

♦ Brother/s:

Name:

Surname:

Name:

Surname:

Name:

Surname:

(...)

Surname:

♦ THE EVALUATION refers to n. () of the "Proposed revision of Chapter I".

♦ EVALUATION:

♦ Proposed alternative text (if you think it is necessary):

♦ Reasons for the alternative text:



Commissio Constitutionum

CHAPTER I

THE LIFE OF THE CAPUCHIN FRIARS MINOR

Article I

Our Life according to the Gospel

n. 1

CONSTITUTIONES (2002)	CONSTITUTIONS (1990)	PROPOSED REVISED TEXT
1. Sanctum Domini nostri Iesu Christi Evangelium est in omne tempus pro Ecclesia totius vitae principium et pro universo mundo nuntium salutis.	1. The holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ is, in every age, the source of the entire life of the Church and the message of salvation for the whole world	Current text (n. 1,1) 1. The holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ is at all times the principle of the entire life of the Church and the message of salvation for the whole world.
2. Per illud enim, Spiritus Sancti ductu, Ecclesia Christum cognoscit eiusque gesta et verba fide suscipit, quae credentibus spiritus et vita sunt.	2. For, through it, the Church, led by the Holy Spirit, comes to know Christ and accepts in faith His deeds and words which are spirit and life to those who believe.	Current text (n. 1,2) 2. For, through it, the Church, led by the Holy Spirit, comes to know Christ and accepts in faith His deeds and words, which are spirit and life to those who believe.
3. Sanctus Franciscus, Fraternalitatis nostrae fundator, inde ab initio conversionis suae Evangelium accepit ut vitae et actionis suae rationem.	3. Saint Francis, the founder of our Fraternity, accepted the Gospel as the principle of his life and activity from the very beginning of his conversion.	Current text (n. 1,3) with change 3. Saint Francis, the founder of our Fraternity, embraced ⁽¹⁾ the Gospel from the very beginning of his conversion and made it the guiding principle of his life and activity.
4. Ideo in exordio et in fine Regulae observantiam eius expresse statuit, et in Testamento asseruit sibi revelatum esse se debere vivere secundum formam sancti Evangelii.	4. In the beginning and end of the Rule, therefore, he expressly commanded its observance and, in the Testament, declared that it was revealed to him to live according to the pattern of the holy Gospel.	Current text (n. 1,4) 4. This is why at the beginning and end of the Rule he expressly commanded its observance and stated in the Testament that it was revealed to him that he should live according to the pattern of the holy Gospel
5. Curemus igitur, cum simus eius filii, ut semper in Evangelii intelligentia progrediamur.	5. Since we are his sons, therefore, let us always take care to make progress in our understanding of the Gospel.	Current text (n. 1,5) with additions 5. Therefore, since we are his sons, and <i>led by the Holy Spirit</i> ⁽²⁾ , let us always take care to grow in <i>knowledge</i> ⁽³⁾ and understanding of the Gospel.

<p>6. In omnibus vitae adiunctis, Evangelium ut supremam legem sequamur, verba salutis assidue legamus et, sicut beata Virgo Maria, in corde conferamus, ut vita nostra magis magisque iuxta Evangelium informata, per omnia in Cristo crescamus.</p>	<p>6. In all circumstances of our life, let us follow the Gospel as the supreme law, assiduously read the words of salvation, and, like the Blessed Virgin Mary, carry them in our heart. Thus, as the Gospel increasingly fashions our life, we may grow in Christ in all things.</p>	<p>Current text (n. 1,6) with additions 6. We should follow the Gospel as the highest law in all the circumstances of life, attentively reading the words of salvation, and, <i>in imitation of</i> the Blessed Virgin Mary, pondering them in our heart, <i>receiving the eternal Word of the Father in faith to give birth to him in the testimony of our good works</i>⁽⁴⁾. In this way our life will be moulded more and more by the Gospel, so that in all things we may grow to the full stature of Christ.</p>
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EXPLANATORY NOTES

- (1) The Commission thinks it appropriate to replace the Latin verb *accipere* (*accepit*) by another suitable verb which expresses the affective connotation that characterised Francis' particular attitude to the Gospel. Therefore in the Latin text we propose to say: "Sanctus Franciscus, Fraternitatis nostrae fundator, inde ab initio conversionis suae Evangelium *amplexus est*...".
- (2) The text approved in 1968 contained the insertion *in Spiritu Sancto* (cf. *Acta1968*, II, 415), which was maintained in the successive General Chapters of 1970, 1974 and 1982 (cf. *Acta1982*, 205; *Const1988*, 1, note 10). We think it opportune to reinstate this concept, which is expressed by *Spiritu Sancto compulsus* (*led by the Holy Spirit*) to give the text greater significance in relation to the "understanding of the Gospel" *intellegentia Evangelii*, which does not mean mere intellectual knowledge, but rather that "inner reading" *intus legere*, a penetration into the *sensus Evangelii*, which can only be achieved *in Spiritu Sancto*. The inserted phrase is not a repetition of the one in § 2: here, the subject is us (not the universal Church), who have to be docile to the action of the Spirit in order to achieve this understanding of the inner meaning of the Gospel. (*intellectus Evangelii*).
- (3) Accepting the suggestion made by several brothers and shared by a majority of the Commission, we propose to add *in knowledge* so that that the meaning of a profound knowledge of the Gospel that has its impact on life is expressed more concretely.
- (4) *Project 2006* and various brothers stress the need to highlight the fact that it is not sufficient to know the Gospel; it has to be lived and put into practice. To meet this request, we felt it appropriate to formulate a text explicitly dependent on the words of Saint Francis in the *Letter to the Faithful* and which also finds its foundation and point of reference in the patristic and Bonaventurian vision and ultimately in the entire Christian tradition, right up to the recent Synod of Bishops in 2008, especially with reference to the exemplary role of Mary as the model of one who is open to the Word of God. The text is implicitly underpinned by St Francis' theological insight, expressed in the phrase *Virgin made church* (*SalBVM1*; FA:ED I, 163).

n. 2

CONSTITUTIONES (2002)	CONSTITUTIONS (1990)	PROPOSED REVISED TEXT
1. Verus Christi discipulus et insigne vitae christianae exemplar, sanctus Franciscus suos edocuit Iesu Christi pauperis et humilis vestigia laete sequi, ut per eum in Spiritu Sancto ad Patrem ducerentur.	1. Saint Francis, a true disciple of Christ and an outstanding example of Christian life, taught his own brothers to follow the foot prints of the poor and humble Jesus Christ joyfully that, through Him, they would be led in the Holy Spirit to the Father.	Current text (n. 2,1) with additions 1 As a true disciple of Christ and an outstanding example of Christian living, Saint Francis taught his brothers to walk joyfully in the footsteps of the poor, <i>humble</i> ⁽¹⁾ and <i>crucified</i> ⁽²⁾ Jesus Christ so that, through Him, in the Holy Spirit, they might be led to the Father.
2. Christi amore incensi, ut ei magis conformemur, eum in incarnationis et crucis exinanitione contemplemur, et, communi gaudio Eucharistiam celebrantes, in paschali mysterio partes capiamus, gloriam resurrectionis eius praegustantes donec veniat.	2. Burning with love of Christ, let us contemplate Him in the self-emptying of His Incarnation and Cross that we might be ever more conformed to Him. As together we joyfully celebrate the Eucharist, let us take part in the Paschal Mystery, enjoying a foretaste of His Resurrection until He comes.	Current text (n. 2,2) with an addition 2. Burning with love for Christ, let us contemplate Him <i>daily</i> ⁽³⁾ in the self-abasement of the Incarnation and the Cross in order to become more like Him. We should take part in the Paschal Mystery by celebrating the Eucharist in brotherly joy, enjoying a foretaste of the glory of His Resurrection until He comes.
3. Magno animo servemus consilia evangelica, praesertim ea quae promissimus: castitatem Deo dicatam, paupertatem quae nobis est specialis via salutis, necnon caritativam oboedientiam.	3. Let us courageously observe the gospel counsels, especially those we have promised: chastity dedicated to God, poverty that is a special way of salvation for us, and loving obedience.	Current text (n. 2,3) with changes and additions 3. We should courageously <i>and faithfully</i> ⁽⁴⁾ observe the gospel counsels, especially those we have promised: loving <i>obedience</i> , <i>poverty</i> which for us is a special way of salvation, and <i>chastity</i> consecrated to God ⁽⁵⁾ .

EXPLANATORY NOTES

- (1) Various proposals we received asked that one should always say *humble and poor* or *humility and poverty*. In the Commission's judgement, there is no need to strive for uniformity on this point Even Saint Francis uses *humility and poverty* and *poverty and humility* interchangeably (cf. *Rnb* 9,1; *Rb* 6,3 and 12,4; 90; 109. FA:ED I, 70, 103,106) and considers poverty and humility "sister virtues" (cf. *Salvir*: FA:ED I, 164) . We find the same in the writings of Saint Clare (cf. *RsC* 8,2; 12,13; *TestsC* 46; *LEr* 14) *TestsC* 56; *3LAg* 4, 25; CA:ED, 70;76;57;53;58;41;45).
- (2) According to the desire expressed in more than one proposal, we return to the formulation of 1968, 1970 and 1974. The text of the Constitutions itself, with the formula *to follow in the footsteps of Christ* seems to require the addition of *and crucified*. In this way the text conforms to the typical approach of Saint Francis, who often uses the phrase *sequi vestigia Christi (to follow in the footsteps of Christ)* (cf. *Rnb* 1,1; 22,2; *2Lf* 1,13; *LfL* 3: FA:ED I,63,79), which he took from *1Pt* 2,21 and which had considerable impact on his writings. From the Apostle, Francis derives the language and even more so the urgency of following in the steps of Christ: He "suffered for you, leaving you an example so that you should follow in his steps" (*1Pt* 2,21).

- (3) In conformity with the proposal of *Project 2006*, the aim is to express the need for an attitude of constant contemplation of the mystery of the *kenosis* of Jesus Christ.
- (4) The addition of *and faithfully* reinforces the concept expressed in the text, highlighting the aspects of “loyalty” and “perpetuity”. The same adverb also recalls the dimension of the “special covenant” with God, which is proper to the religious life (*fidelis*, from *fides*; and *fides*, from *foedus* [pact, covenant]; cf. *LTL* 2, 472; *DELL* 414), which is underlined in some of the documents of the Magisterium, including *Redemptionis donum* (n. 8) and *Vita consecrata* (n. 93).
- (5) Accepting the proposal of several brothers, the listing of the evangelical counsels is changed to conform with *Rb* 1,1 and with the Formula of Religious Profession (cf. *Const* n. 20,4). The question also concerns n. 21 of the present Constitutions. The present version, both in n. 2 and in n. 21, follows the “order of the vows” found in the documents of Vatican Council II, in the Code, the Catechism of the Catholic Church, etc. But the Council did not intend to give any doctrinally decisive character to the order of the religious vows. So much is this the case that the *Ordo Professionis Religiosae* promulgated after Vatican II (in 1970) gives ample faculties to every religious Institute to compose its own formula of religious profession, as long as it is approved by CICALSAL. The documents of the Magisterium particularly stress the vow of chastity, seeing virginity and celibacy as the highest expression of an undivided heart, and therefore the most essential element of religious consecration. But the Tradition of the Church itself and of the religious life places the choice of virginity-celibacy within the form of the *sequela Christi* (Christian discipleship) and, therefore, of obedience. Furthermore, for Saint Francis, obedience was theologically fundamental: as the comprehensive element embracing the whole of the religious life, it was much more than a vow.

n. 3

CONSTITUTIONES (2002)	CONSTITUTIONS (1990)	PROPOSED REVISED TEXT
		<p>New text⁽¹⁾</p> <p>1. <i>The Lord granted Brother Francis the grace to begin to do penance by leading him among lepers. He showed mercy to them and after hearing the voice of the Crucified One at San Damiano he undertook the gospel life in order to follow in the footsteps of Christ, with a burning desire to pattern his life upon Him in everything. In this way, true love of Christ transformed the lover into the image of the Beloved.</i></p>
<p>2. Ad formam veri discipuli Iesu Christi addiscendam, quae mirabiliter in illo apparuit, studeamus eum imitari, eius patrimonium spirituale vita et opere diligenter excolere, atque cum omnibus cuiusvis temporis hominibus communicare.</p>	<p>2. That we might learn the pattern of a true disciple of Jesus Christ, which was so wonderfully evident in Francis, let us strive to imitate him, to cultivate his spiritual inheritance diligently in our life and work, and to communicate it with all peoples of whatever age.</p>	<p>Current text (n. 3,2) with changes and additions</p> <p>2. In order to learn the pattern of a true disciple of Jesus Christ, <i>so⁽²⁾</i> wonderfully evident in Francis, we should be eager to imitate him, <i>and in him, Christ⁽³⁾</i>. <i>Therefore we should</i> diligently cultivate his spiritual <i>inheritance⁽⁴⁾</i> in our life and work, and share it with people in every age⁽⁵⁾.</p>

EXPLANATORY NOTES

- (1) The need to introduce this text arises from a consideration of the current no.3, which refers to the origins of the Order of Lesser Brothers (§ 1), and where the brothers are exhorted to imitate Saint Francis so as to acquire the form, or pattern, of a true disciple of Jesus Christ (§ 2). There does not seem to be a logical connection or consequence between the two paragraphs: the basis of our attempt to imitate Saint Francis is the fact that he is the Founder of our brotherhood. The truth is that this is the only aspect that is *not* part of our striving to imitate him, which is founded on other reasons that make it compulsory. On the other hand, the structure of the entire constitutional text is founded on the following pivotal points: the Gospel; the following of Christ; the example of Saint Francis; Capuchin inspiration; the observance of the Rule and Testament and of the Constitutions. The centre and summit of our life is the *sequela Christi* (Const. n. 2), in function of which stands the observance of the Gospel (Const. n. 1). On the *sequela Christi* depends the example of Saint Francis (Const. n. 3), (Const. n. 4), the observance of the Rule (Const. n. 5), of the Testament (Const. n. 6), of the Constitutions (Const. n. 7). At the same time, Constitutions, Testament, Rule, Capuchin inspiration and example of Francis all stand as functions of the observance of the Gospel and of the *sequela Christi*. The one insufficient element in the text of the present chapter 1 is the example of Saint Francis, or rather, the way in which our Father Francis imitated Christ. This is not to say that this aspect is absent from the Constitutions, or that it is absent from chapter I: see no. 2,1, no. 9,1 or no. 10,1. References to the exemplary status of Saint Francis are not lacking. Rather, it is a matter of systematically making them more explicit in the structure of chapter 1.
The new proposed text follows the spiritual journey of Saint Francis in a kind of crescendo (observance of the Gospel – following of Christ – conformity to Christ – transformation in Christ), beginning with the first words of the Testament, and recalls explicitly what the sources report about the events that gave rise to Francis' spiritual journey: the encounter with the lepers and the encounter with the Crucified One of San Damiano. It brings out the purpose of the gospel life of Saint Francis: to follow in the footsteps of Christ in order to conform his life to His. The specification *to conform himself to Christ in all things* (cf. *Fior XIII*) is a response to a requirement highlighted in particular by the first hagiographical sources, with their frequent use of terms such as to transform himself, conform, reform, form, which refer to the mould or "shape" of Christ, which Francis, by undertaking the journey of discipleship, wishes to imprint in himself and to see imprinted in his brothers. The term most often used by the Sources is that of *conformity* to Christ "in all things" especially in the Passion, which reveals the need Francis felt to conform himself always to the pre-established model, as his biographers never cease to underline: "O truly the most Christian of men, who strove by perfect imitation to be conformed while living to Christ living, dying to Christ dying, and dead to Christ dead, and deserved to be adorned with an express likeness" (*LegM XIV,4*). This is why the text proposed for the Constitutions ends with the very words that Saint Bonaventure places after having spoken about the imprinting of the stigmata (*LegM XIII, 5*).
- (2) The insertion of the adverb *so* strengthens the statement in order to underscore the truly wonderful way in which the pattern of the disciple of Jesus Christ was manifested in Saint Francis
- (3) The addition of *and in him, Christ* is inspired by a constant statement in the Capuchin Constitutions: "Each brother is therefore exhorted to strive to imitate Father of ours...; or rather *let them imitate in him our Lord Jesus Christ...*" (Const. 1536; n. 6). To become like Francis in order to become like Christ is an aspect that is strongly stressed by our tradition and stands as the great yearning of the Capuchin Reform, for whom Christ is the definitive summit.
- (4) According to the proposal of *Project 2006* and the suggestion of others, we replace *spiritual patrimony* by *spiritual inheritance*, because we consider this expression more appropriate in reference to Saint Francis, as our Founder. The expression "spiritual patrimony" also has a particular meaning, but normally refers to an Institute, rather than to its founder. In the case of an Institute of consecrated life, the *spiritual patrimony of an Institute comprises* both the spirit and aims of the Founder and the holy traditions of the Institute. .
- (5) The new form of the verb (*Therefore we should...*) is made necessary by the changes inserted into the previous sentence.

n. 4 (3)

CONSTITUTIONES (2002)	CONSTITUTIONS (1990)	PROPOSED REVISED TEXT
<p>1. Sanctus Franciscus, postquam audivit verba missionis discipulorum, initium dedit Fraternitati Ordinis Minorum, quae communione vitae Regnum Dei testificaretur, paenitentiam et pacem exemplo et verbo praedicans.</p>	<p>1. After he heard the words of the sending forth of the disciples, Saint Francis founded the Fraternity of the Order of Minors which would bear witness to the Kingdom of God by a sharing of life and by preaching penance and peace through example and word.</p>	<p>Current text (n. 3,1) with changes and additions 1. After hearing the account of the sending of the disciples, <i>the Lord gave him brothers and revealed to him that he and his companions were to live according to the form of the holy Gospel. Thus began⁽¹⁾</i> the fraternity of the Order of Minors, to give testimony to the kingdom of God through communion of life, and preaching penance and peace by example and word.</p>
		<p>New text⁽²⁾ 2. <i>In brotherhood and minority we recognise the essential features of the charism which the Spirit has given us. It is from these that the intrinsic apostolic dimension of our vocation also derives its form. Docile to the same Spirit we commit ourselves to live this gospel ideal to the full.</i></p>

EXPLANATORY NOTES

- (1) The text has been redrafted with more regard for historical truth, as recalled and presented in the Testament. In this way, as well as giving a broader reminder of the events that gave rise to Francis' spiritual experience and to the birth of our Fraternity (cf. the previous number) the formulation underlines the two-fold gift received by St Francis himself: the brothers, and the Gospel he was to live in their company. Thus, the text brings out more clearly the intrinsic *evangelical* connotation of our brotherhood. In addition, this passage does not say that Francis is the Founder of the Fraternity, but accepts the observation of Project 2006: "it was the Lord who initiated the "fraternity", and not Francis"
- (2) In the light of the historical reminder in the previous paragraph, it seems appropriate to remind the reader, right at the beginning of the Constitutions, that *brotherhood* and *minority* are the essential components of our charism, but that it is at the same time an *apostolic brotherhood* (cf. *Const.* 39,4; 144,3). The same three components are further developed in the last three numbers of chapter I, as happens in the current text.

n. 5 (4)

CONSTITUTIONES (2002)	CONSTITUTIONS (1990)	PROPOSED REVISED TEXT
		<p>New text <i>1. Our specific form of life as Capuchin lesser brothers flows from a passionate intention to be faithful to the evangelical insights of Saint Francis, who inspired our first brothers. The sound tradition which began with them also inspires our form of life⁽¹⁾.</i></p>
<p>1. Qua Fratres Minores Capuccini novisse oportet nostrae Fraternitatis indolem atque proposita, ut vita nostra, recte temporibus accommodata, sana traditione fratrum nostrorum inspiretur. 2. In primis eos imitari convenit in reditu ad primigeniam inspirationem, id est ad vitam et regulam Patris nostri Francisci, per conversionem animi, ita ut Ordo noster semper renovetur.</p>	<p>1. As Capuchin Friars Minor we should renew our knowledge of the genius and ideals of our Fraternity so that, correctly adapted to the times, our life may be inspired by the wholesome tradition of our brothers. 2. It is especially appropriate to imitate our first brothers by a return to [their] original inspiration, that is, to the life and Rule of our Father Francis. In this way our Order may always be renewed through a conversion of spirit.</p>	<p>Current text (n. 4, 1-2) with changes <i>2. Therefore it is necessary to know the nature and purpose of our fraternity, so that⁽²⁾ we remain always faithful to the Gospel⁽³⁾ and to our genuine spiritual tradition⁽⁴⁾, by returning to the original inspiration, that is, to the life and Rule of our Father <i>Saint</i>⁽⁵⁾ Francis⁽⁶⁾, through conversion of the heart, so that our Order may be constantly renewed⁽⁷⁾.</i></p>
<p>3. Vestigia eorum sectantes, studeamus priorem partem vitae orationis, praecipue contemplativae, dare, radicalem paupertatem sive personalem sive communitariam, simul cum minoritatis spiritu, colere, necnon vitae austeritatem ac laetam paenitentiam, in dilectione crucis Domini, praebere, curando etiam, sub luce signorum temporum, ut novae formae, a legitimis superioribus approbandae, in hac nostra vita ducenda inveniantur.</p>	<p>3. Following their footprints, let us strive to give priority to a life of prayer, especially contemplative prayer, to cultivate, together with a spirit of minority, radical poverty, both personal and communal; and, out of love of the Lord's cross, to manifest a life of austerity and joyful penance, taking care as well that even new forms of leading this life of ours, approved by legitimate superiors, are discerned in light of the signs of the times.</p>	<p>Current text (n. 4,3) with changes <i>3. With this aim in view⁽⁸⁾ we should strive to cultivate and to protect the primacy of the fraternal evangelical life enlivened by a powerful contemplative experience⁽⁹⁾ acquired through faithful care for the spirit of holy prayer and devotion⁽¹⁰⁾. Living as pilgrims and strangers in this world, we should practice radical poverty, both individual and communal, animated by a spirit of minority⁽¹¹⁾, and manifest a life of austerity and joyful penance⁽¹²⁾ out of love for the cross of the Lord⁽¹³⁾.</i></p>
<p>4. Spontaneitatem fraternam inter nos exercentes, gaudenter conversemur inter pauperes, debiles et infirmos, vitam ipsorum participantes, atque peculiarem nostrum ad populum aditum servemus.</p>	<p>4. While exercising among ourselves the freedom of brothers, let us joyfully live among the poor, the powerless and the weak, sharing their life, and let us maintain our special approach to people.</p>	<p>Current text (n. 4,4) with an addition <i>4. Gathered together in Christ as a single distinctive family⁽¹⁴⁾, we should develop among ourselves relationships of fraternal spontaneity, and joyfully live among those who are poor, weak and infirm, sharing in their lives and maintaining our facility of approach to people⁽¹⁵⁾.</i></p>

<p>5. Dynamismum apostolicum, in spiritu servitii explendum, variis formis, in primis ope evangelizationis, promoveamus.</p>	<p>5. In many ways, above all in the work of evangelization, let us promote an apostolic dynamism that is carried out in a spirit of service.</p>	<p>Current text (n. 4,5) with changes 5. <i>Being an apostolic fraternity, we should promote this dimension⁽¹⁶⁾ of our life and conduct it in a spirit of service and minority⁽¹⁷⁾, especially through evangelization, but also through other various forms that are in harmony with our charism⁽¹⁸⁾.</i></p>
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EXPLANATORY NOTES

- (1) The current text of n.4 has been carefully maintained, but restructured and expanded in response to many requests. The first paragraph is by way of an introduction and aims to express a summary of the specific nature of Capuchin life in the light of the *entire* tradition of the Order (not just its initial moments) which is consistently geared towards the faithful implementation in practice of the gospel insights and intentions of St Francis. The text is formulated without any kind of triumphalism, but is inspired by the resonant words of Paul VI: "The whole spirit and life of the Capuchins express exactly the fact that what marks them out is this earnest desire to be genuinely faithful to the most humble, most arduous and most original expressions of the primitive Franciscan spirit" (*Address to the General Chapter of 1968* [21 October 1968] in *Analecta OFM Cap* 84 [1968] 314).
- (2) The expression *our life, correctly adapted to various times* found in the current text, has not been suppressed but transferred and explained in the following number. (6,3).
- (3) We follow the suggestion of *Project 2006* (n. 4,2) in order to bring out more clearly the links between St Francis' original intention, the purpose of the Capuchin Reform and our tradition.
- (4) "*Our genuine spiritual tradition*" replaces "*the genuine tradition of our brothers*" found in the current text, in order to underline once again not just the original moment, but the entire history and tradition of the Order. Cf. *Project 2006*.
- (5) According to the unanimous opinion of the Commission, this text has to say "*Our Father Saint Francis*". In this way it expresses both the relationship of *proximity* and *affection (our Father)* and the sense of *reverence* and *veneration* we owe to Francis: for us, his sons and brothers, Francis remains for ever not just a *father and brother*, but also a *Saint*, and as such an example for us to imitate. This is a case of terminology shared by the entire Franciscan Family (I, II, III Orders).
- (6) The entire paragraph sets out the significant content of our Reform within the First Order, but the text of the Constitutions avoids the use of the noun "Reform", in continuity with the line adopted by the General Chapter of 1982 and with the sensitivity that had arisen even before the Chapter, moving the Capuchin Order to abandon the terminology of the reformers of the XIV and XV centuries, in favour of affirming the need to "return" to St. Francis and to his genuine spirit, as the first Capuchins understood and achieved this through the documents at their disposal. For us it is a question of "returning to the original inspiration, i.e. to the life and Rule, of our Father Saint Francis". In other words, fidelity to our vocation requires us to *look for Saint Francis with the love of the first Capuchins, but with modern eyes, so that we find him*. The formulation of the proposed text faithfully reflects the present one, which in turn recalls the teaching of Paul VI cf. *Address to the General Chapter of 1968* [21 October 1968] in *Analecta OFM Cap* 84 [1968] 313-314).
- (7) The text makes explicit the requirement of conversion of heart and of constant renewal in the Order (*ita ut Ordo semper renovetur*), precisely because we are a "Reform": personal renewal of individuals and communities is the substance of the Reform. Renewal can be understood as being synonymous with reform.
- (8) § 3 sets out the *essential aspects* of our form of life in line with the inspiration of St Francis and the fact that we are a "Reform" within the Franciscan Family, aiming to "return to the original inspiration, i.e. to the life and Rule of our Father Francis". "*With this aim in view...*", it says in the proposed text, in other words, with the aim of returning to the original inspiration.

- (9) The perspective is noticeably different from that of the current text: it does *not speak* of “giving priority to the life of prayer, especially contemplative”, *but it does say*: “1. “to cultivate and safeguard the **primacy of the fraternal gospel life**, 2. enlivened by a strong contemplative experience”. The text derives from the Speech of John Paul II to the General Chapter of 1988: “...to guarantee *this fidelity to your vocation* I would like to recommend to you a three-fold task. First of all, a commitment to awareness, which will ensure at all times due sensitivity and freshness with regard to the typical identity of the Capuchin, namely ***the primacy of the fraternal gospel life, enlivened by a strong contemplative experience, lived in radical poverty, austerity, simplicity, joyful penance, and with complete readiness for service to all people***. To grow in this way presupposes constant growth in awareness of one’s own religious identity, it takes for granted constant attention to the fundamental evangelical reasons for one’s charism and one’s Order” (cf.. *Analecta OFMCAp* 104 [1988] 163). The proposed text affirms the contemplative aspect as a dimension that belongs to **any** form of consecrated life (Cf. can. 663, § 1; CICALSAL, *The contemplative dimension of the religious life* (March 1980); CICALSAL, *Religious Life in the Teaching of the Church. Its essential elements in Institutes devoted to the apostolate* (31 May 1983); 28-30).
- (10) The reference is to a phrase in *Rb* 5, 2 (FA:ED I, 102) and to its specific context in the Rule. According to the intention of Saint Francis, life in the spirit cannot be made subservient to work; on the contrary, “all temporal things must be subservient” to “holy prayer and devotion”. (cf. *1Tes* 5,17-19). In order “not to extinguish the spirit” (cf. *1Tes* 5, 17-19) it is necessary to guarantee the primacy of prayer and to persevere in it. It is thus that one achieves contemplation. The two elements are not synonymous: *the spirit of holy prayer and devotion* is not equivalent to *contemplation*, but the effort not to extinguish the spirit of holy prayer and devotion leads to contemplation.
- (11) Once again the text is derived from the Speech of John Paul II to the General Chapter of 1988 and brings together the elements present in the current text and in *Project 2006* (n. 4,3). In particular, it brings out the aspect of *itinerancy*, which is absent from the current text, in the words of *Rb* 6, 2: *pilgrims and strangers in this world*. The relationship between poverty-minority, as outlined in the current text, (*radical poverty... together with the spirit of minority*) gives the impression of a juxtaposition of the two elements. It is more exact to speak of *poverty in minority* or *in the spirit of minority*, because minority gives a soul and a particular content to poverty, detaching it from the merely material aspect of an absence of things, and transferring it to the more profound dynamic of *living without anything of one’s own*, or of the most radical *expropriation* (cf. *Rnb* 1,1; *Rb* 1,1; *LOrd* 2,29). For this reason we would prefer to say: *living as pilgrims and strangers in this world, let us practise radical poverty, both individual and communal, animated by the spirit of minority*. In this way, *itinerancy, poverty, minority*, essential components of our form of life, are all well highlighted and at the same time are seen to be interconnected. .
- (12) The austerity and penance demanded by our form of life are connected to love for the Cross of Christ. The formulation of the text draws on some words of Paul VI (cf. *Address to the General Chapter* [30 September 1974] in *Analecta OFMCAp* 90 [1974] 290).
- (13) The phrase *in the light of the signs of the times, let us commit ourselves to search for new forms of our life approved by the lawful superiors* has not been deleted, but transferred to the following number and restated more explicitly.
- (14) The expression: *Gathered together in Christ as one special family* (cf. can. 602), prefaced to the current text to reinforce the idea of *fraternal spontaneity*, corresponds to the intention of Saint Francis, according to which the brothers should always show that they are members of the same family (cf. *Rb* 6, 7: FA:ED I, 103)).
- (15) The expression *brothers of the people*, present in the most recent Italian translation of 2002, does not fully convey the dynamic character of the original *peculiarem nostrum ad populum aditum servemus*: the Latin *aditūs* (from *ādēō*) indicates *going towards* a place or a person, *to advance, to come close, to approach, to visit*, but also *to be accessible or available* (cf. *LTL* 1,77-78). The Italian translation of 1983 is preferable: *particolare entrata nel popolo*, (“our own ease of access to the people”) which expresses an ability to approach people easily, a familiarity with the people which earns us their trust.
Also the Latin noun *accessus* (from *accedo*), which our curial Latinists prefer to *aditus*, keeps the same dynamic character (cf. *LTL* 1,31-32).
- (16) The formulation of the text is intended to underline once again that apostolic dynamism is not something external to our form of life, but is an essential constitutional dimension of our charism and is to be promoted as such.

- (17) Here too, the Commission thinks it appropriate to expound the dimension of *minority*, an essential quality of our charism, which must be a feature of the apostolic activity of Capuchin friars.
- (18) The specification *various other forms* (of the apostolate) *which are in harmony with our charism* reverts to a proposal of *Project 2006*, and is considered particularly important in discerning which apostolic commitments to undertake.

n. 6

CONSTITUTIONES (2002)	CONSTITUTIONS (1990)	PROPOSED REVISED TEXT
		<p>New text</p> <p>1. <i>Dynamic fidelity⁽¹⁾ to the charism of the Capuchin Lesser Brothers requires us to safeguard and lovingly develop the spiritual heritage of our fraternity.</i></p>
<p>3. In hunc finem frequenter legamus vitam scriptaque tum ipsius sancti Francisci tum filiorum eius, in primis capuccinorum, sanctitate, operositate apostolica et scientia eminentium, necnon alios libros, quibus spiritus eius innotescit.</p>	<p>3. To this end we should frequently read the life and writings of Saint Francis himself, those of his sons [and daughters], especially of Capuchins renowned for their holiness, apostolic zeal and knowledge, and other books by which his spirit is made known.</p>	<p>Current text (n. 3,3) with additions</p> <p>2. To this end <i>we should assiduously study the writings of Saint Francis and frequently read both the Franciscan sources and the sources of the Capuchin tradition, especially those referring to our brothers</i> renowned for their holiness, apostolic zeal and learning, as well as other books which make known the spirit <i>of our Founder⁽²⁾.</i></p>
<p>1. Qua Fratres Minores Capuccini novisse oportet nostrae Fraternitatis indolem atque proposita, ut vita nostra, recte temporibus accommodata, sana traditione fratrum nostrorum inspiretur. 3. Vestigia eorum sectantes, studeamus priorem partem vitae orationis, praecipue contemplativae, dare, radicalem paupertatem sive personalem sive communitariam, simul cum minoritatis spiritu, colere, necnon vitae austeritatem ac laetam paenitentiam, in dilectione crucis Domini, praebere, curando etiam, sub luce signorum temporum, ut novae formae, a legitimis superioribus approbandae, in hac nostra vita ducenda inveniantur.</p>	<p>1. As Capuchin Friars Minor we should renew our knowledge of the genius and ideals of our Fraternity so that, correctly adapted to the times, our life may be inspired by the wholesome tradition of our brothers. 3. Following their footprints, let us strive to give priority to a life of prayer, especially contemplative prayer, to cultivate, together with a spirit of minority, radical poverty, both personal and communal; and, out of love of the Lord's cross, to manifest a life of austerity and joyful penance, taking care as well that even new forms of leading this life of ours, approved by legitimate superiors, are discerned in light of the signs of the times.</p>	<p>Current text (n. 4,1 + n. 4,3) with additions</p> <p>3. In the light of the signs of the times⁽³⁾, <i>we should take care to search for suitable ways, approved by the legitimate superiors, including new ways of living our form of the gospel life and giving our apostolic witness in the different regions and cultures⁽⁴⁾.</i></p>

EXPLANATORY NOTES

- (1) The requirement of *dynamic fidelity* is already expounded in various chapters of the Constitutions, starting with the first, which speaks of the observance of the Rule in *modi aptiores, etiam pluriformes* (more suitable ways, even pluriform ones) (cf. n. 5 of the current text). Nevertheless the Commission unanimously believes that the subject deserves to be brought out even more, in a more systematic way, to provide a foundation and to nourish an ever greater awareness of the need to ensure fidelity – dynamic, creative and historical. This means fidelity in the midst of the changes that life involves, and making the core of fundamental values of our charism more and more in line with the times. In this sense it is fundamental to be in tune with the Church's magisterium and the teachings addressed to the Order by Paul VI and John Paul II (cf. PAUL VI, *Address to the General Chapter of 1968* (21 October 1968) in *Analecta OFM Cap* 84 (1968) 315; JOHN PAUL II, *Message to the XIV General Assembly of the Conference of Religious of Brazil* (11 July 1986), n. 1 and 4; *Address to the General Chapter of 1988* (13 July 1988) in *Analecta OFM Cap* 104 (1988) 163; *Address to the capitulars of the General Chapter of TOR* (15 June 1989) in *Analecta OFM Cap* 105 (1989) 156; *Vita consecrata* n. 37; 110.
- The proposed text consists of three paragraphs: the 1st is an introduction; in the 2nd and 3rd paragraphs two current texts (n. 3,3 and part of n.4,3), appropriately modified and integrated, have been linked together.
- With regard to the position of the text, the question arises whether this is the correct context, or whether it would be more appropriate to place the same text at the end of art. I, after having spoken of the Rule, the Testament and the Constitutions.
- (2) The text reproduces the current n. 3,3 and takes account of suggestions made in *Project 2006* and by other brothers.
- (3) The present content of n. 4,1 is reproduced here (*so that our life, correctly adapted to various times*) and of n. 4,3 (*in the light of the signs of the times, let us furthermore commit ourselves to seek new forms for our life, with the approval of the legitimate superiors*), adding a reference to *different regions and cultures*.
- (4) In this case it is preferable to speak of *lawful superiors*, because the adaptation of our form of life in particular cases could also require reference to the authority of the Church, outside the Order.

n. 7 (5)

CONSTITUTIONES (2002)	CONSTITUTIONS (1990)	PROPOSED REVISED TEXT
1. Regula sancti Francisci ex Evangelio procedens ad vitam evangelicam impellit.	1. Flowing from the Gospel, the Rule of Saint Francis impels us to an evangelical life.	Current text (n. 5,1) 1. The Rule of Saint Francis, flowing from the Gospel, spurs us on to live the gospel life.
2. Eius intellegentiae spirituali sedulo incumbamus atque eam, iuxta monitum ipsius Fundatoris in Testamento expressum, et secundum spiritum, intentiones evangelicas et exempla sanctitatis priorum fratrum capuccinorum, simpliciter et pure cum sancta operatione observare nitamur.	2. Let us zealously commit ourselves to a spiritual understanding [of that Rule]. Following the admonition of the Founder himself expressed in his Testament, as well as the spirit, gospel ideals and examples of holiness of our first Capuchin brothers, let us observe it simply and purely with [the Spirit's] holy activity.	Current text (n. 5,2) with additions 2. <i>Following the example of our saints</i> , we should eagerly strive to grasp the spiritual meaning of the Rule, and to observe it simply and purely, through the Spirit working in us, just as our Founder himself cautioned in his Testament, in accordance with the spirit and the gospel intentions of the first Capuchin brothers <i>and the living tradition of the Order</i> ⁽¹⁾ .

<p>3. Superioribus, una cum fraternitatibus, cordi sit Regulae cognitionem, amorem et observatiam promovere.</p>	<p>3. Superiors, together with the fraternities, should keep the promotion of knowledge, love and observance of the Rule close to their heart.</p>	<p>Current text (n. 5,3) with changes 3. <i>The ministers and guardians</i>⁽²⁾, together with <i>their</i>⁽³⁾ fraternities, should be keen to promote knowledge, love and observance of the Rule.</p>
<p>4. Ut ubique terrarum Regula et intentiones legiferi Patris fideliter servari possint, curent superiores maiores ut, secundum diversas regiones, culturas et necessitates temporum et locorum, modi aptiores, etiam pluriformes, ad vitam et apostolatam fratrum quaerantur.</p>	<p>4. Major superiors should take care to seek more appropriate, even pluriform, expressions of the brothers' life and apostolate, so that the Rule and intentions of our Father, who gave us a law, may be faithfully observed throughout the world according to different regions and cultures and the needs of times and places.</p>	<p>Current text (n. 5,4) with changes and additions 4. So that the Rule and intentions of our Father and law-giver may be <i>always</i> faithfully observed throughout the world, the <i>ministers</i>⁽⁴⁾ should take <i>diligent</i> care⁽⁵⁾ to seek the most suitable ways for the brothers to live their lives and conduct their apostolates, even in a variety of forms, according to different regions and cultures and the needs of times and places.</p>
<p>5. Vera autem pluriformis ratio est illa quae, servata semper unitate eiusdem genuini spiritus, in communiione fraterna et in moderatoribus obtemperacione innititur; quo fit ut evangelica libertas in agendo praebeatur, in primis in eo quod ad vitam nostram renovandam spectat, ne spiritus exstinguatur.</p>	<p>The true authentic expression of pluriformity, however, while always preserving the unity of the same genuine spirit, is based on fraternal communion and obedience to superiors. In this way it offers a gospel freedom of action, especially in whatever concerns the renewal of our life, so that we do not extinguish the spirit.</p>	<p>Current text (n. 5,5) with additions 5. True pluriformity, in fact, is based on fraternal communion and obedience to superiors⁽⁶⁾, safeguarding always the unity of the same genuine spirit. In this way, evangelical freedom of action is ensured, especially in what concerns the renewal, <i>vigour and fruitfulness</i>⁽⁷⁾ of our life, so that the spirit is not extinguished.</p>

EXPLANATORY NOTES

- (1) The formulation of the text, in its final part, accepts the proposal of *Project 2006* with its reference not only to the first Capuchins but also to the tradition of the Order. *The example of our Saints* refers to all the Capuchin saints who have accompanied the stages of the Order's life through the centuries; they offer us an authentic model for the observance of the Rule and enable us to attain the heart of our Franciscan inheritance.
- (2) In line with the proposal of *Project 2006*, the requests of other brothers and the widespread sensitivity within the Order, which prefers *ministers and guardians* to *superiors*.
- (3) The pronoun *their* seems required by the context, and is there to establish a relationship between the fraternities and the ministers and guardians.
- (4) *Major superiors* is replaced by *ministers*, following the suggestion of *Project 2006* and others, for the reasons explained above.

- (5) The word *diligent/diligently* was present in the Constitutions of 1968, del 1970, and 1974, but was removed at the General Charter of 1982. We propose to reinsert it, because it is required in a context that is particularly important and sensitive, namely our relation to the Rule. The adverb is intended to suggest that the search for the *more suitable ways, even pluriform ones* by which to guarantee the observance of the Rule is first of all an expression of love for the Rule, for Saint Francis, and for our vocation (*diligenter*, from *diligere* = to love), and at the same time has to be done with care, attention and vigilance.
- (6) In this case it does not seem possible to make the change from *major superiors* to *ministers* because the search for and implementation of the *more suitable ways, even pluriform ones* by which to observe the Rule might also involve the Apostolic See, to whom the authentic interpretation of the Rule and the safeguarding of our charism are reserved.
- (7) The addition is in line with the proposal of *Project 2006*; in this way the concept is enriched and reinforced.

n. 8 (6)

CONSTITUTIONES (2002)	CONSTITUTIONS (1990)	PROPOSED REVISED TEXT
1. Testamentum seraphicus Pater ordinavit quando, morti proximus, sacris stigmatibus ornatus, et plenus Spiritu Sancto, nostram ardentius exoptabat salutem.	1. Our Seraphic Father dictated the Testament when, near death, adorned with the sacred stigmata and full of the Holy Spirit, he eagerly longed for our salvation.	Current text (n. 6,1) with one change 1. Our Seraphic Father <i>dictated</i> ⁽¹⁾ the Testament when, being close to death, marked with the sacred stigmata and filled with the Holy Spirit, he more eagerly longed for our salvation.
2. Illo exprimit ultimam voluntatem suam, atque transmittit pretiosam spiritus sui hereditatem.	2. In it he expresses his last will and passes on to us the precious inheritance of his spirit.	Current text (n. 6,2) with an addition 2. In it he <i>recalls his gospel experience and puts it forward once more</i> ⁽²⁾ , expresses his last will and entrusts to us the precious inheritance of his spirit.
3. Quod nobis datum est, ut Regulam quam professi sumus perfectius in dies iuxta sensum Ecclesiae observemus.	3. It was given to us that, day by day, we might more perfectly observe the Rule that we have professed according to the mind of the Church.	Current text (n. 6,3) with one change 3. The Testament was given to us so that we might <i>constantly improve</i> ⁽³⁾ our observance of the Rule we have professed, according to the mind of the Church.
4. Ideo Testamentum pro prima expositione spirituali Regulae et eminenti inspiratione vitae nostrae accipimus, iuxta Ordinis nostri traditionem.	4. Therefore, according to the tradition of our Order, we accept the Testament as the principal spiritual explanation of the Rule and the preeminent inspiration of our life.	Current text (n. 6,4) 4. Therefore, continuing the tradition of our Order, we accept the Testament as the primary spiritual explanation of the Rule and an outstanding source of inspiration for our life ⁽⁴⁾ .

EXPLANATORY NOTES

- (1) The verb *dictate* seems more in keeping with the historical truth about the origin of the Testament of Saint Francis.
- (2) The expression *recalls his gospel experience and puts it forward once more* corresponds to a proposal from *Project 2006* and highlights “one” of the characteristics and purposes of the Testament, underlined by the most recent studies. But the purpose of the Testament is not only to “re-read, recount and re-propose the evangelical experience of St Francis; it is much more: a remembrance (*recordatio*), an admonition (*admonitio*), an exhortation (*exhortatio*); a *Testamentum*: “it is... my Testament”, declares Francis.
- (3) The phrase *more perfectly* in the current text is replaced by *constantly improve* for the sake of greater fidelity to the letter of the Testament.
- (4) The present formulation, drafted by the *Capitular Legislation Commission* between 1966 and 1968 and further refined in the General Chapters of 1968 and 1982, re-presents in contracted form the venerable text of the Constitutions of 1536. In its present formulation, the text presents no juridical problems regarding the observance of the Testament.

n. 9 (7)

CONSTITUTIONES (2002)	CONSTITUTIONS (1990)	PROPOSED REVISED TEXT
1. Constitutionum finis in eo est ut adiutorium praebeant, in mutatis vitae nostrae adiunctis, ad Regulam melius et perfectius observandam.	1. The purpose of the Constitutions is to offer us assistance in observing the Rule more perfectly in the changing circumstances of our life.	Current text (n. 7,1) 1. The purpose of the Constitutions is to help us to observe the Rule better and more perfectly in the changing circumstances of our life.
2. In ipsis invenimus securum spiritualis in Christo renovationis subsidium atque validum auxilium ad vitae consecrationem perficiendam qua quisque frater Deo se totaliter devovit.	2. We find in them a secure support for our spiritual renewal in Christ and an authentic assistance for carrying out the consecration of our life through which each brother gives himself totally to God.	Current text (n. 7,2) with changes 2. In them we find solid support for our spiritual renewal in Christ and effective help to bring to fulfilment the consecration of our life, <i>which</i> each brother <i>has made</i> ⁽¹⁾ totally to God.
3. Eas, quibus tenemur vi professionis nostrae, non ut servi sed ut filii observemus, ad Dei amorem super omnia anhelantes ac Spiritui Sancto nos erudienti aures praebentes, gloriae Dei et saluti proximorum intenti.	3. Let us observe [the Constitutions] to which we are bound by virtue of our profession, not as slaves but as sons desiring to love God above all else, listening to the Holy Spirit instructing us, and concentrating on the glory of God and the salvation of our neighbor.	Current text (n. 7,3) with changes and additions 3. We should observe the Constitutions, to which we are bound by virtue of our <i>religious</i> profession ⁽²⁾ , not as slaves but as sons who desire to love God above all things <i>in Christ</i> ⁽³⁾ , listening to the Holy Spirit instructing us, and intent on the glory of God and the salvation of our neighbour.

4. Omnes fratres enixe monentur ut in personale Regulae, Testamenti et Constitutionum studium incumbant et intimo eorum spiritu imbuantur.	4. All the brothers are strongly urged to apply themselves to a personal study of the Rule, Testament and Constitutions and to be intimately imbued with their spirit.	Current text (n. 7,4) with changes and additions 4. <i>We should lovingly apply ourselves⁽⁴⁾ to personal study and careful, meditative reading, conducted also in community⁽⁵⁾, of the Rule, the Testament and the Constitutions, so that we become deeply imbued with their spirit.</i>
		New text 5. <i>We should also apply ourselves to observe all the other norms of our particular law which are complementary to the Constitutions⁽⁶⁾.</i>

EXPLANATORY NOTES

- (1) In the current text consecration is considered in an exclusively active sense, as the action of a person who gives him/herself to God. This could involve an ongoing theological problem regarding religious consecration, which undoubtedly also has a passive aspect. To avoid this difficulty, it seems appropriate to slightly modify the current text, and say “to complete the consecration of his life, *which* (= life) every brother has offered totally to God”. This gives, among other things, a certain correspondence with *Rnb* 16,10: “And let all the brothers, wherever they are, remember that they have given themselves and abandoned their bodies to our Lord Jesus Christ” (FA:ED I,74)
- (2) It seems more correct to say: *religious profession*, rather than *our profession*.
- (3) In conformity with the proposal of *Project 2006* and to give the text a Trinitarian flavour such as we find in the Writings of Saint Francis. The Apostolic Exhortation *Vita Consecrata* strongly underlined the trinitarian dimension of the consecrated life. More generally, Catholic theology even before Vatican II, and especially after the Council, rediscovered the Trinity as the horizon of the whole of the knowledge and life of faith.
- (4) The present *The brothers are earnestly exhorted* is replaced by *let us devote ourselves* out of fidelity to the principle adopted in the General Chapter of 1968: whenever possible, the first person plural form, either as an exhortation or a command, is preferred. This makes the point that the Constitutions arise from the Brotherhood of the Order, rather than from any organism or body that imposes them (cf. *Acta 1968 I*, 127.129-130). It is a more engaging process, aptly expressing the commitment freely taken on by each one of us. The change is also called for stylistic reasons, to match the exhortatory style of the previous paragraph: *We should / let us observe...*
- (5) Accepting an explicit proposal which the Commission thought appropriate and pertinent, the text has been expanded with words taken from the Letter of the General Minister of 27 May 2007 (n. 9).
- (6) Avoiding any particular terms, the text simply speaks of *complementary norms*, because they are contained in *the complementary code(s)* (General Statutes, Ordinances, Regulations...). The term *complementary* expresses the aspect of *necessity* (*complementary* is said of any part which is more or less essential, but is necessary either quantitatively, structurally or in relation to function), and of *reciprocity* and *fullness* (from the Latin verb *complere* [= *to fill*, but also *fulfil*], from which derive *complementum*, and thence *complement*, *complementarity* and *complementary*; cf. CORTELAZZO-ZOLLI 1, 261). The intention therefore is to indicate that the complementary norms must refer back to the Constitutions and lead to the Constitutions, but at the same time that in order to observe the Constitutions one cannot do without the complementary norms. By *norms* which are *complementary to those* of the Constitutions, the intention is also to suggest that the Constitutions contain the fundamental norms, and that the Constitutions are themselves normative, even in their inspirational parts.

Article II Our Life in the Church

n. 10 (8)

CONSTITUTIONES (2002)	CONSTITUTIONS (1990)	PROPOSED REVISED TEXT
<p>1. Ecclesia, instrumentum salutis et unionis cum Deo et inter homines, tamquam populus Dei in mundo peregrinans apparet, qui, a Christo in communione vitae, caritatis et veritatis constitutus, per Spiritum Sanctum multitudine donorum seu charismatum ditatur ad renovationem at ampliorem aedificationem eiusdem Ecclesiae utilium.</p>	<p>1. The Church, the instrument of salvation and of union with God and among people, appears as a pilgrim people of God in the world. Established by Christ in a communion of life, charity and truth, it is enriched by the Holy Spirit with a multitude of gifts or charisms that are useful for the renewal and the further building up of the same Church.</p>	<p>Current text (n. 8,1) with additions 1. The Church, the <i>universal sacrament</i> of salvation, <i>namely the sign and instrument</i>⁽¹⁾ of union with God and <i>of the unity of the whole human race</i>, is seen as the people of God making its pilgrim journey through the world. Established by Christ in a communion of life, charity and truth, it is enriched by the Holy Spirit with a multitude of gifts or charisms useful for its renewal and further development, <i>in order to usher in the kingdom of God</i>⁽²⁾.</p>
		<p>New text 2. <i>Among such a variety of charisms, the consecrated life is a singular gift that the Church has received from the Lord. Profoundly rooted in the example and teaching of Christ, it shows forth the innermost nature of the Christian vocation and belongs to the life of the Church, part of its holiness and its mission</i>⁽³⁾.</p>
<p>2. In eadem Ecclesia, tanta varietate charismatum exornata, sanctus Franciscus, Spiritu Sancto afflante, Fraternitatem religiosam suscitavit eique formam dedit. Ecclesia auctoritate sua hierarchica eam approbavit et materna cura protegit, ut signum Christi pauperis, humilis et servitio hominum praesertim pauperum dediti, super faciem suam clarius effulgeat.</p>	<p>2. In that Church, adorned with such a variety of charisms, Saint Francis, inspired by the Holy Spirit, raised up a religious Fraternity and gave it form. That a sign of Christ, poor, humble and especially dedicated to the poor, might shine more clearly upon her face, the Church approved it by her hierarchical authority and protected it with motherly care.</p>	<p>Current text (n. 8,2) with changes and additions 3. <i>Among the spiritual families raised up by the holy Spirit, the Church has accepted our religious fraternity</i>⁽⁴⁾ <i>and having approved the form of life presented by Saint Francis</i>⁽⁵⁾, the Church continues to protect it with motherly care, so that the image of Christ, poor, humble and devoted to the service of people, especially the poor, may shine more brightly upon her face.</p>

3. Itemque Ordo Fratrum Minorum Capuccinorum ab Ecclesia receptus est vi Bullae "Religionis zelus", a papa Clemente VII die 3 iulii anni 1528 datae.	3. The Order of Capuchin Friars Minor was also accepted by the Church by virtue of the decree "Religionis zelus" given by Pope Clement VII on July 3, 1528.	Current text (n. 8,3) 4. The Order of Capuchin Friars Minor was also accepted by the Church by virtue of the decree "Religionis zelus" issued by Pope Clement VII on July 3, 1528.
4. Itaque Ecclesiam summopere diligamus, eius mysterium meditemur, eiusque vitam et incepta actuose participemus.	4. Therefore, let us love the Church intensely, meditate upon its mystery, and actively participate in its initiatives.	Current text (n. 8,4) modified and expanded 5. Therefore, we should love the Church greatly ⁽⁶⁾ meditate upon her mystery, <i>diligently study her teachings and follow them faithfully⁽⁷⁾</i> , and take an active part in her life <i>and mission⁽⁸⁾</i> .

EXPLANATORY NOTES

- (1) The many proposals we have received lead us to return to the entire text approved in the General Chapter of 1968 and retained also by the Chapter of 1982 (cf. *Acta 1982*, 208) The text was changed in the post-capitular revision by the drafting Commission appointed for that purpose. The original text of 1968-1982, to which we now propose to return, depends on *Lumen Gentium* 1: "The Church, in Christ, is in the nature of a sacrament (*in Christo veluti sacramentum*), a sign and instrument, that is, of communion with God and of unity among all mankind". However, the Constitutions left out *veluti* (*like, in the nature of*) and stated outright that the Church is a sacrament, and at the same time, unlike *Lumen Gentium* 1, they defined it as a *universal sacrament of salvation*, making use of a venerable attribution of patristic and liturgical origin. In the *Missale Romanum* this conjunction of attributes, applied to the Church, is present twice. To this we must add the example *totius Ecclesiae sacramentum* in the Prayer after the VII reading at the Easter Vigil, which comes from the ancient liturgical sources of the Roman Church.
- (2) The expression *to usher in the Kingdom of God* is a new addition to the text. The Commission, albeit with some perplexity, accepted the proposal of *Project 2006*, which says that "the Church is at the service of the kingdom of God" and that therefore any shadow of "ecclesiocentrism" must be avoided. The teaching of *Lumen Gentium*., however, must not be forgotten: "But principally the kingdom is revealed in the person of Christ himself, Son of God and Son of Man, "who came to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many" (*Mk 10, 45*)"; "The Church while she is on earth is the seed and the beginning of that kingdom.. While she slowly grows to maturity the Church longs for the completed kingdom and, with all her strength, hopes and desires to be united in glory with her king" (n. 5).
- (3) In the specific context of the charisms, with which the Church is enriched by the Spirit, (cf. § 1), the "enrichment" of the Constitutions in accordance with the decision of the General Chapter of 2006 requires a succinct reference to the value of the consecrated life and to its function in the mystery of the Church. The proposed text is made up of expressions taken from *Lumen Gentium* 43 and 44, *Perfectae Caritatis* 1, *Ad gentes* 18, *Vita consecrata* 1 e 3.

- (4) With the proposed modification we return to the perspective of the *Capitular Legislation Commission* (1966-1968): “Holy Mother Church, with so great a variety of gifts bestowed by the Holy Spirit, accepted the religious Family of Saint Francis by approving and protecting its form of life”. The text approved by the General Chapter of 1968 said: “Eadem Ecclesia, in tanta varietate charismatum familiam Sancti Francisci genuit eiusque formam vitae auctoritate sua hierarchica approbavit et protexit, ut signum...”. The current text, approved by the General Chapter of 1982 (cf. *Acta 1982*, 208) and revised by the pre-capitular drafting commission (cf. *Const1988*, 7, is as follows: “In eadem Ecclesia, tanta varietate charismatum exornata, Sanctus Franciscus, Spiritu Sancto afflante, Fraternitatem religiosam suscitavit eique formam dedit. Ecclesia auctoritate sua hierarchica eam approbavit et materna cura protegit, ut signum...”. The perspective of the 1968 text is different from that of 1982. The 1968 text has the Church as its subject, which generates the spiritual family of Saint Francis, approves its form of life, protects it. In the text of 1982 the subject is Saint Francis who, by divine inspiration, (*Spiritu Sancto afflante*), raises up a religious brotherhood and gives it a form of life, which is approved by the Church. Therefore, an “ecclesiological impoverishment” was noted. In fact, while in the 1968 formulation it is the “motherhood” of the Church (an ecclesiological theme that is particularly evident in *Lumen Gentium*), which generated also the “family of Francis”, in the text of 1982 it is Francis as an “operational subject” who founds his fraternity within the Church. The Church’s relationship with the various charisms of consecrated life is not confined to a juridical function; it is a charismatic relationship arising out of mystery. The consecrated life, blossoming in a variety of charisms, is a gift of God to the Church. The Church does not receive the charisms of consecration from the Founders of the religious families, but from the Spirit of God who acts through the Founders. Therefore the formulation which is now proposed intends to mediate between the position of 1968 and that of 1982, by stating that the Franciscan brotherhood was raised up by the Holy Spirit, accepted by the Church and is approved by the Church’s hierarchical authority. In such a way, we ensure continuity and consistency with what we noted above at n. 4,1 and with the observation of *Project 2006*: “it was the Lord who initiated the “fraternity”, not Francis”.
- (5) In the current text the meaning of the Latin expression *eique formam dedit* seems rather obscure. The Italian translation *con una propria forma di vita* or the French *et lui a donné une forme de vie* are satisfactory. But the actual intention behind the Latin meaning remains unclear. By proposing to say that the Church approved *the form of life presented by Saint Francis* the text becomes clearer and more explicit.
- (6) *Project 2006* and other proposals we have received move towards a new formulation of the text, and it is very appropriate to refer to the teaching of Saint Francis, who constantly defines the Church as “holy” (cf. ER 2,12;17,1;23,7;LR 3,1; 12,3-4; (*Rnb* 2,12: 17,1; 23,7; *Rb* 3,1; 12,3-4;) *1Test* 6; *2Test* 5; *LOrd* 30; FA:ED I, 65;75;82;124:119) and expressly speaks of “Holy Mother Church” (cf. *2Test* 5: FA:ED I, 125).
- (7) *Project 2006* inserted into the current text a new exhortation: *we should study her teachings*. We accept the proposal and complete it by adding: *diligently study her teachings and follow them faithfully*. It seems appropriate to bring out also this second aspect, in conformity with the teaching of Saint Francis (cf. *Rb* 12,4: :ED I, 106), for whom *sentire cum Ecclesia* (being in harmony with the Church) is a fundamental principle on the same level as taking the gospel as one’s rule or following in the footsteps of Christ. Alongside *following in the footsteps of Christ*, Francis places *complectere reverenda vestigia Matris*, (“embrace the venerable footsteps of our Mother”) which has an equally important role in his thought and intention, his life and aspirations: he wants the brothers to *follow*, with particular devotion, *their mother’s venerable footprints* (Cf. *2Cel XVI* 24: FA:ED II, 260).
- (8) The context (*our life in the mystery of the Church*) suggests a preference for *mission of the Church* rather than *initiatives (incepta) of the Church*.

n. 11 (9)

CONSTITUTIONES (2002)	CONSTITUTIONS (1990)	PROPOSED REVISED TEXT
1. Ad exemplum sancti Francisci, qui fuit vir catholicus et totus apostolicus, oboedientiam fidelem Spiritui Christi in Ecclesia viventi praebeamus.	1. After the example of Saint Francis who was a catholic and thoroughly apostolic man, let us offer faithful obedience to the Spirit of Christ living in the Church.	Current text (n. 9,1) with an addition 1. After the example of Saint Francis who was a Catholic and totally apostolic man, we should offer faithful obedience to the Spirit of Christ living <i>and working</i> ⁽¹⁾ in the Church.
2. Summo Pontifici, cui religiosi tamquam supremo superiori subduntur etiam vi voti oboedientiae, et Collegio Episcoporum, quod simul cum eo est signum visibile Ecclesiae unitatis eiusque apostolicitatis, oboedientiam et reverentiam praestemus.	2. Let us offer obedience and reverence to the Supreme Pontiff, to whom religious are also subject, by virtue of their vow of obedience, as [their] highest superior, and to the College of Bishops, which together with him, is a visible sign of the Church's unity and its apostolicity.	Current text (n. 9,2) with changes and additions 2. <i>In a communion of faith, love and thought</i> ⁽²⁾ we should show obedience and reverence to the <i>Pope</i> ⁽³⁾ , to whom religious are subject as their highest superior ⁽⁴⁾ also by virtue of their vow of obedience, and to the College of Bishops which, together with him, is a visible sign of the unity and apostolicity of the Church.
3. Ubi sumus, Ecclesiae particularis bono, nostra praesentia fraterna et prophetica, conferamus, operam dando ad eius incrementum et progressum. 4. Sub ductu Episcopi dioecesanii nostrum servitium apostolicum, secundum nostrum charisma, populo Dei ac toti humanae communitati praebeamus.	3. Wherever we are, let us contribute to the welfare of the particular Church by our fraternal and prophetic presence and by working for its growth and progress. 4. Under the leadership of the diocesan bishop, let us offer our apostolic service for the People of God and the entire human community, according to our charism.	Current text (n. 9,3-4) joined⁽⁵⁾ and modified 3. Wherever we are, we should contribute to the good of the particular Church by our fraternal and prophetic presence and by working for its growth and progress, <i>in accordance with our charism</i> ⁽⁶⁾ and under the leadership of the diocesan bishop, so that we may offer our apostolic service to the people of God and the entire human community.
5. Presbyteros aliosque omnes, qui spiritum et vitam nobis ministrant, debito honore prosequamur et cum ipsis naviter operemur.	5. Let us offer due honor to priests and to all others who minister spirit and life to us and work assiduously with them.	Current text (n. 9,5) 4. We should show due honour to priests and to all others who minister spirit and life to us, and actively work with them.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

- (1) The presence of the Spirit in the Church is a dynamic one. Therefore, following the proposal of *Project 2006*, we propose to say: "the spirit of Christ who lives *and works* in the Church".
- (2) The paragraph begins with *In a communion of love and thought in the faith*, according to an explicit proposal we received, which is intended to underline Saint Francis' reason for placing himself in the Church, together with the insistence of Vatican II on collegiality and ecclesial sensitivity.
- (3) *Supreme Pontiff* in the current text is replaced by *Pope*, the attribute used by Saint Francis (cf. *Project 2006*).

- (4) Despite many proposed modifications of the text, the Commission prefers the precision of the current wording. This coincides with the formulation of can. 590, §2: “The individual members are bound to obey the Supreme Pontiff as their highest Superior, by reason also of their sacred bond of obedience”
- (5) In n. 9 of the current text there are two paragraphs that speak of our presence in the particular (local) Church, but paragraph 3 of n. 9 speaks of the particular Church; paragraph 4 speaks of the diocesan bishop. It seems more logical to link the bishop directly to his Church. And so, the text has been unified in a single paragraph, without thereby losing any of its present content.
- (6) Following a proposal of the Commission, we prefer to put *according to our charism* first, in order to highlight the fact that, while operating under the guidance of the diocesan bishop, our presence and action in the particular Church has to correspond to the specific nature of our vocation.

n. 12 (10)

CONSTITUTIONES (2002)	CONSTITUTIONS (1990)	PROPOSED REVISED TEXT
1. Ministrum generalem, qui ad servitium et utilitatem totius Fraternitatis est constitutus, utpote successorem sancti Fundatoris ac vivum vinculum nos cum Ecclesiae auctoritate et inter nos uniens, diligamus eique corde generoso oboediamus.	1. Let us love and obey with a generous heart the general minister who, as the successor of our holy Founder, has been appointed for the service and welfare of the entire Fraternity and as the living bond uniting us with the authority of the Church and among ourselves.	Current text (n. 10,1) 1. With a generous heart we should love and obey the General Minister who, as the successor of our holy Founder, has been instituted ⁽¹⁾ for the service and welfare of the entire Fraternity and as the living bond uniting us with the authority of the Church and among ourselves.
2. Alios quoque Fraternitatis ministros nobis a Domino ut pastores datos, eosdemque depositarios fiducia fratrum, dilectione atque activa et responsabili oboedientia prosequamur, ut Ecclesiae servitio in spiritu fidei et amore Christi arctius et securius devinciamur.	2. Let us also love and offer an active and responsible obedience to the other ministers of the Fraternity who have been given to us by the Lord as shepherds and recipients of the trust of the brothers. Thus we may be more closely and securely united in the service of the Church in a spirit of faith and love for Christ.	Current text (n. 10,2) 2. We should also show love, as well as active and responsible obedience, to the other ministers of the Fraternity who have been given to us by the Lord as pastors entrusted with the trust of the brothers, so that we might be more closely and firmly bound to the service of the Church in a spirit of faith and love for Christ.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

- (1) Attention must be paid to the translation of the Latin *est constitutus*, which underlines the fact that the General Minister is established and placed at the service and for the benefit of the Fraternity, in whatever way he acquires the office (election, appointment, etc.). The text does not mention these ways.

n. 13 (11)

CONSTITUTIONES (2002)	CONSTITUTIONS (1990)	PROPOSED REVISED TEXT
<p>1. Sanctus Franciscus ex Patris summi boni adoratione universalis hausit fraternitatis affectum, quo imaginem Christi primogeniti et salvatoris in omni creatura intuebatur.</p>	<p>1. From his adoration of the Father of all good, Saint Francis obtained a feeling for universal brotherhood through which he perceived in every creature an image of Christ, the firstborn and the saviour.</p>	<p>Current text (n. 11,1) with an addition 1. St Francis, <i>inflamed by the holy Spirit⁽¹⁾</i>, drew from his adoration of the supremely good Father a sense of universal brotherhood, by which he saw in every creature an image of Christ, the first-born and saviour.</p>
<p>2. Ut filii huius Patris, erga omnes homines sine ullo discrimine nos sentiamus fratres; necnon, omni creaturae fraterne obviantes, laudem creationis Deo, a quo bona cuncta procedunt, assidue offeramus.</p>	<p>2. As children of this Father, we should regard ourselves as brothers to all peoples without any discrimination; and as we fraternally encounter every creature, let us eagerly offer the praise of creation to the God from Whom all good flows.</p>	<p>Current text (n. 11,2) 2. As children of this Father, we should regard ourselves as the brothers of all without distinction and, as we fraternally encounter every creature, eagerly offer praise to the God of creation from Whom all good things come.</p>
<p>3. A Spiritu Sancto eadem vocatione congregati, communi oratione et activitate, sensum fraternitatis in toto Ordine et maxime in nostris provincialibus et localibus communitatibus promoveamus. Eundem sensum colamus erga omnes fratres et sorores, sive religiosos sive saeculares qui nobiscum unicam familiam franciscanam efformant.</p>	<p>3. United by the Holy Spirit in the same calling, let us foster a sense of brotherhood throughout the entire Order and especially in our provinces and local communities by common prayer and activity. Let us cultivate that same sense toward all our brothers and sisters, whether religious or secular, who form with us one Franciscan family.</p>	<p>Current text (n. 11,3) 3. United by the Holy Spirit in the same calling, we should foster a sense of brotherhood throughout the entire Order, especially in our provinces and local communities, by common prayer and activity. We should cultivate that same sense toward all our brothers and sisters, whether religious or secular, who with us form one single Franciscan family.</p>
<p>4. Hae nostra fraternitas evangelica, ut vitae socialis quasi exemplar et fermentum, homines invitat ad consortia fraterna inter se fovenda viresque uniendas ad meliorem evolutionem et liberationem totius personae atque ad genuinum progressum societatis humanae.</p>	<p>4. This gospel fraternity of ours, as an example and leaven of social life, invites people to foster fraternal relationships among themselves and to combine their efforts for the better development and liberation of the whole person as well as for the genuine progress of human society.</p>	<p>New text, replacing the present one (n. 11,4) 4. <i>Our fraternity, a sign of the transforming power of the gospel and of the coming of the kingdom of God⁽²⁾ like the leaven of the gospel⁽³⁾ and as a model of social life, is an invitation to people to foster just and equitable relationships among themselves, to develop solidarity and co-operation and to promote the full liberty of the human person, so that all may live in a more fraternal world⁽⁴⁾.</i></p>

<p>5. Vita nostra fraterna speciale habet momentum et maiorem acquirit efficaciam testimonii in processu sanae socializationis et consociationis, quo Deus nos interpellat ut pro actuacione et incremento fraternitatis in iustitia et pace impendamus.</p>	<p>5. [The witness of] our fraternal life has special significance and becomes more effective in the process of the sound social development and association through which God calls us to work for the realization and growth of brotherhood in justice and peace.</p>	<p>New text with elements from the present one(n. 11,5) 5. <i>Therefore we should give effective witness to a life of brotherhood⁽⁵⁾, keeping alive the⁽⁷⁾ sense of communion among individuals, peoples, races and cultures⁽⁶⁾, so fostering a genuine growth in social relationships. It is God, in fact, who prompts us⁽⁸⁾ to strive for the realization and growth of fraternity in justice and peace.</i></p>
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EXPLANATORY NOTES

- (1) In order to give the text a trinitarian dynamic for reasons already explained, we have reinserted the expression *inflamed by the Holy Spirit*, which is close to the formulation of the 1968 General Chapter, maintained in 1970 and in 1974 (cf. *Const1988*, 9, note 5). The expression *inflamed by the Holy Spirit* recalls the words of Francis in the concluding prayer of the *Letter to the whole Order* (cf FA:ED I, 120).
- (2) The text is introduced by a statement taken almost literally from the Document of CICALSAL, *Fraternal Life in community* (n. 42; cf. also *Vita consecrata* 51) in order to bring out more clearly that the social function of the fraternity has its origin in the transforming power of the gospel. In that sense we value this proposal we received: "Our fraternity, which draws its origin, meaning and strength from the gospel". At the same time the text underlines the fact that with its sign value, the fraternity witnesses that the kingdom of God is already present in the world.
- (3) Cf. CICALSAL, *Fraternal life in community* (n. 1b).
- (4) The current text has been changed to make certain human and evangelical values explicit: justice, equity, solidarity and collaboration. Brotherhood stands as a synthesis of these values and as a consequence of their implementation and development. For one thing, this alternative formulation has removed the expression "social progress" because of present-day problems with the term "progress", especially in the social sciences, and also in anthropology. Progress, in itself, even if genuine, does not automatically imply justice, co-operation and solidarity. There is the additional grave question, still not entirely clarified or resolved, whether the earth, whose resources are notoriously limited, can sustain infinite progress given the premises and values of contemporary society (technology, consumer goods, etc.). Hence, a type of progress founded on equivocal premises would not lead to greater justice and fairness, but would damage humanity and brotherhood. Cf. PONTIFICAL COUNCIL FOR JUSTICE AND PEACE, *Compendium of the social doctrine of the Church*, Vatican City 2004.
- (5) Among the proposals reaching the Commission was also one to eliminate § 5 of the present n. 11, on the grounds that its formulation is rather triumphalistic and redundant. In particular, the statement *Our special life of brotherhood has importance* could be read as feeling pleased with ourselves. We therefore prefer to turn the sentence into an exhortation: *let us therefore give effective witness*, where *effective* is intended to evoke the sense of an inner force, an *efficient cause*. Moreover, the text links up with the preceding paragraph, which can in itself stand as a statement of principle, valid for all religious and all Institutes of consecrated life. We are not the owners or holders of fraternity: it is a gospel value, and the gospel reduced to its essential core.
- (6) The second part of the exhortation is formulated according to the wording of n. 51 of *Vita consecrata*.
- (7) The formula *development of social relationships* is generic, but also simple and sufficient to recall the multiple expressions and manifestations of the social process. The current text, which in the Italian version speaks of a *process of healthy socialisation and solidarity (consociationis)*, has had a rather difficult ride and it is also difficult to understand and translate the meaning of the Latin word *consociatio*.

- (8) The Latin expression *Deus nos interpellat* in the current text (n. 11,5), has always been rendered as “God calls us” in the Italian translations. The use of these verbs is not correct, either in the original Latin or in the Italian translation. Here it is not a case of a calling or vocation, and not even of a challenge by God. The Latin *interpello* (composed of *inter* and *pello*) properly means to “interrupt with a word”. In fact, *interpello* is a synonym of *interrumpo* and, like the latter, can acquire the meaning of “to disturb during an activity”. This being the case, it does not appear that *interpello* is the most suitable verb to express the concern of the Constitutions. The verb *impellere* would be more appropriate (= incite, induce, move, push, rouse, incite, stimulate; cf. *DELL* 875); one gets the impression that what we have here is a Latinised form of the Italian *interpellare*. We have therefore chosen the verb *permovere* (to impel). It seems, in fact, as though the text of the Constitutions intends to mean a *provocation* on God’s part: in the process of socialisation and association we receive just such a provocation and a *strong spur* to devote ourselves to the promotion of justice and peace.

n. 14 (12)

CONSTITUTIONES (2002)	CONSTITUTIONS (1990)	PROPOSED REVISED TEXT
1. Filius Dei, formam servi accipiens, non venit ministrari sed ministrare et vitam suam dare in salutem omnium.	1. Accepting the form of a servant, the Son of God did not come to be ministered to but minister and to give His life for the salvation of all.	Current text (n. 12,1) with an addition 1. The Son of God, accepting the form of a servant, did not come to be served but to serve and to give His life for the salvation of all. <i>His self-abasement is perpetuated in the sacrament of the Eucharist, where he daily humbles himself and comes to us under humble appearances⁽¹⁾.</i>
		New text 2. <i>Moved to the heart by God’s humility and compassion, Saint Francis chose to become lowly among the little ones. Thus he transmitted to others his amazement at the humility and patience of God⁽²⁾.</i>
2. Cupientes conformes fieri imaginis eius, non maiores esse praesumamus, sed ut minores in omnium servitium impendamus, maxime eorum qui penuriam et tribulationes patiuntur, vel etiam eorum qui nos persequuntur.	2. Wishing to be conformed to His image, let us not presume to be greater, but let us expend ourselves as lesser ones in the service of all, especially of those who suffer want and tribulation or even of those who persecute us.	Current text (n. 12,2) with additions 3. Following his example and with an ardent desire to be conformed to <i>the image of Christ⁽³⁾, we should strive to become truly minors, never presuming to become “greater”⁽⁴⁾. Therefore, animated by this spirit⁽⁵⁾, let us generously spend ourselves in the service of all, particularly of those who suffer want and adversity and even of those who persecute us.</i>
3. Libenter ergo vitam nostram fraternam apud pauperes degamus, eorum aerumnas et humilitatem peramanter participantes.	3. Therefore let us willingly live our fraternal life among the poor, sharing their hardships and humiliation in a very loving way.	Current text (n. 12,3) with an addition 4. Therefore we should gladly live our fraternal life <i>among</i> the poor ⁽⁶⁾ , sharing their hardships and lowly condition with great love.

4. Necessitatibus materialibus et spiritualibus eorum subvenientes, vita, opere et verbo in eorum promotionem humanam et christianam incumbamus.	4. While relieving their material and spiritual needs, let us devote ourselves by our activity, deed and word to promoting their human and christian development.	Current text (n. 12,4) 5. While relieving their material and spiritual needs, our lives, our work and our words should be devoted to promoting their human and Christian development.
5. Sic agentes manifestum facimus spiritum fraternitatis nostrae in minoritate, simulque fermentum iustitiae, unionis et pacis efficimur.	5. By acting in this way, we make known the spirit of our brotherhood in minority and, at the same time, become a leaven of justice, unity and peace.	Current text (n. 12, 5) with an addition 6. By doing this <i>we rediscover the genuine roots of our vocation⁽⁷⁾</i> , manifest the spirit of our brotherhood in minority and at the same time become a leaven of justice, unity and peace.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

- (1) The anamnesis of § 1 is amplified, strengthening the Christological foundation of minority. In this way even the message of n. 2,2 which speaks of the *kenosis* of the Incarnation and of the Passion, is completed by the mention of the continuation of the *kenosis* in the Eucharist. Hence the prototype which is the foundation of our life in minority is the Word made flesh, the *Christus patiens* and the Christ of the Eucharist. The text is completed with expressions from the Admonition (cf FA:ED I,128), where clearly Saint Francis considers and contemplates the Eucharist as the mystery of humiliation which perpetuates the abasement of the Incarnation.
- (2) In the current text (n. 12) there is no mention of the example of Saint Francis. The proposed formulation is centred on the reference to Saint Francis who chose minority because he had been gripped by the *kenosis* of the Son of God in the Incarnation, in the Passion and in the Eucharist. For this reason, the statements of PCO VII are used (Proposal n. 2). The references to being “moved” and to “amazement” are intended to underline the importance of the aesthetic canon by which Franciscan tradition has expressed the encounter with Christ and the ecstasy caused by the beauty of divine love, paradoxically manifested in the self-emptying involved in the Incarnation and in the deformity of the Cross. In particular Francis, Clare and Bonaventure underline this aspect of the divine beauty. Furthermore, this parallels the current rediscovery of the aesthetic canon both in philosophy and in theology and finds confirmation in the Apostolic Exhortation *Vita consecrata*, which underlines the aesthetic dimension of the consecrated life.
- (3) The text keeps all the elements of the current § 2, but completes them in the light of the new text previously introduced, so that it is no longer sufficient to say *Desiring (cupientes) to be conformed to his image*, but it is necessary to expand on the *image of Christ* with a reference also to the example of Saint Francis. Thus the paragraph begins with *Following his (Saint Francis’) example*.
- (4) The current text *let us not presume to be greater, but let us spend ourselves as lesser ones in the service of all ... (non maiores esse praesumamus, sed ut minores...)* is slightly modified into: *we should strive to become truly lowly, never presuming to become greater*. The new formulation refers immediately to the state of minority, to being little ones. The proposed text is intended to state that there must be a real effort (*truly*), because the state of minority which we enter by virtue of profession cannot be considered as something one acquires once and for all. Minority requires the dynamic ascetical process of remaining “minors”. PCO VII itself reminded us of this when it stated that “Minority is not a natural way that is easily chosen” and that we “need ongoing formation in order to acquire a spirit of service and minority” (n. 31).

- (5) As we have just said, the formulation of the text brings out our first task more clearly: to ensure that we ourselves are and remain in the condition of minority. But this does not exclude the concern expressed in the current text that we should be at the service of others. *As lesser ones we should spend ourselves in the service of all...* Thus, the single statement in the current text is divided into two, and the link between the two statements is provided by the opening phrase of the second: *animated by this spirit* (of minority). The rest of the text then follows the current formulation.
- (6) We propose to change *alongside the poor* to *among the poor*. In this way the concept of sharing the life of the poor, expressed by the text, is reinforced. In addition, *among the poor* is more in line with *Rnb 9,2*: “They should rejoice when they live among people considered of little value and looked down upon, among the poor and powerless, the sick and the lepers, and the beggars by the wayside” (cf. FA:ED 1,70) Finally, to be consistent with n.5,4, this number too requires *among the poor*.
- (7) The entire paragraph stands as a conclusion of what has been previously affirmed, and the addition of the new expression *we rediscover the genuine roots of our vocation* is a natural consequence of our striving for minority in imitation of Christ and of Francis, and of our commitment to the poor. . The phrase is taken from n. 2 of PCO VII, where it occurs precisely in a similar context and is stated as the result of a commitment.

n. 15 (13)

CONSTITUTIONES (2002)	CONSTITUTIONS (1990)	PROPOSED REVISED TEXT
1. Ut vocationem nostram evangelicam in Ecclesia et in mundo cum fructu adimpleamus, vitam apostolicam, in se contemplationem et actionem complectentem, fideliter ducere studeamus, Iesum imitantes, qui vitam in oratione et opere salutis incessanter duxit.	1. That we may fulfill our gospel calling in the Church and the world fruitfully, let us faithfully strive to lead an apostolic life that embraces contemplation and activity, imitating Jesus Who spent His life unceasingly in prayer and in the work of salvation.	Current text (n. 13,1) with an addition 1. So that we may fruitfully carry out our gospel calling in the Church and the world, we should strive faithfully <i>and generously</i> ⁽¹⁾ to lead an apostolic life that combines contemplation and action, imitating Jesus who spent His life unceasingly in prayer and the work of salvation.
2. Hanc Magistri vitam profitentes, apostoli a Domino in mundum universum missi, orationi et ministerio verbi instantes erant.	2. Professing this life of the Master, the apostles, sent by the Lord into the whole world, were constant in their prayer and in the ministry of the word.	Current text (n. 13,2) 2. Professing this life of the Master, the apostles whom the Lord sent out into the whole world were constant in prayer and the ministry of the word.
3. Sanctus Franciscus, quamvis loca solitaria praediligeret, Domini et apostolorum sequens vestigia formam vitae elegit in se intime unientem orationem et proclamationem nuntii salutis.	3. Although he preferred solitary places, Saint Francis, following the footprints of the Lord and the apostles, chose a form of life that intimately united prayer and the proclamation of the message of salvation.	Current text (n. 13,3) with changes and additions 3. Saint Francis ⁽²⁾ , following in the footsteps of the Lord and the apostles, chose a form of life that closely united prayer with the proclamation of the message of salvation, <i>wisely alternating times of apostolic work with times of contemplation</i> ⁽³⁾ .

		New text⁽⁴⁾ 4. <i>Capuchin tradition too⁽⁵⁾, in proposing from the outset the example of Martha and Mary⁽⁶⁾, teaches us the skill of uniting contemplation and action⁽⁷⁾. In this way it moves us to follow Christ, who both contemplated on the mountain and proclaimed the kingdom of God⁽⁸⁾.</i>
4. Idcirco in laude Dei eiusque verbi meditatione instemus, quo magis magisque ad hoc accendamus ut homines actuositate nostra ad Dei amorem cum gaudio perducantur.	4. Let us, therefore, devote ourselves to the praise of God and to meditation on His word through which we become ever more inflamed, so that we lead others joyfully to the love of God by our activity.	Current text (n. 13,4) with an addition 5. We should therefore persevere in praising God and meditating on His word. Thus we will be more and more inspired with the desire that people may be drawn, even ⁽⁹⁾ through our work, to love God joyfully.
5. Ita tota nostra orationis vita apostolico spiritu imbuetur, tota vero actio apostolica orationis spiritu informabitur.	5. In this way our entire life of prayer will be imbued with an apostolic spirit while all our apostolic activity will be fashioned by the spirit of prayer.	Current text (n. 13,5) 6. In this way our whole life of prayer will be imbued with an apostolic spirit, while all our apostolic activity is shaped by the spirit of prayer.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

- (1) We accept a suggestion of *Project 2006* and the text is enriched by highlighting the fact that the apostolic life, in conformity with our evangelical vocation, if it is to be lived authentically, requires generosity. This same disposition of heart enables us to be faithful to the apostolic life, which unites contemplation and action in an unbreakable bond.
- (2) The deletion of the insertion *quamvis loca solitaria praediligeret (although he preferred solitary places)* to avoid historical controversies, does not alter the content of the text.
- (3) This formulation, based in part on a suggestion we received, replaces *although he preferred solitary places*. The text goes back to the *Legenda Maior* of Saint Bonaventure (cfr. XIII, 1; FA:ED II, 630) and gives a better description of the conduct of Saint Francis, who for us becomes the inspiration and norm of our life.
- (4) The expansion of the current text in order to highlight the teaching of Capuchin tradition was already envisaged by *Project 2006*. We value this insight, while developing the text with the aid of other elements from our tradition.
- (5) The conjunction *also*, at the beginning of the paragraph, is intended to strengthen the link with the previous §.
- (6) The reference to the *example of Martha and Mary* belongs to the constant legislative tradition of the Order, from the Constitutions of 1536 up to those of 1925, deriving from Saint Francis' *Rule for Hermitages*.
- (7) The expression *teaches us to forge a unity between contemplation and action* is central to the message of the text and hinges on the verb *sapere* in the Italian text (to be able, to know how to), and also on the Latin verb *sapere*. It should imply an attitude and conduct born of *wisdom (sapientia)*, a commitment to acquire the *taste (sapere: to savour, to relish)* for a way of life that harmonises contemplation and action. Some similarity in this sense is found in Proposal 17 of PCO VI.

- (8) The expression *to follow Christ, both in his contemplation on the mountain, and when he proclaims the kingdom of God* links up with the previous reference to the “mixed life” in imitation of Martha and Mary. Indeed, the Constitutions from 1536 onwards have constantly recommended the brothers: “Thus living a mixed life, imitating now Martha and now Mary, they will follow Christ who, after having prayed on the mountain, went down to preach in the temple. He even came down from heaven to earth in order to save souls” (*Const. 1536*, n. 114). The proposed text is a literal presentation of a phrase in *Lumen Gentium* 46, where the concept is expressed in language closer to our own. The theme of the “mountain of prayer and contemplation” was further expounded by the Constitutions of 1536 (and subsequently also by the others, right up to 1925): “Lest it should happen that, having preached to others they themselves be rejected, let them at times withdraw from the company of people, and with our most sweet Saviour *ascend the mountain of prayer and contemplation*, and in those heights let them endeavour to be like seraphs, aflame with divine love, so that their warmth will warm others» (*Const. 1536*, n. 120). Finally, *ascend the mountain of prayer and contemplation* is an expression that is rich in biblical precedents (cf. *Ex* 19; *Mt* 14,23; *Jn* 6,15.); it also brings to mind the Transfiguration, which is the recurring theme of the Apostolic Exhortation *Vita consecrata*. As far as we are concerned, what the Pope says there in n. 14 is very significant.
- (9) The precision provided by the conjunction *even* or *also* seems necessary, in order to avoid the danger of thinking that people can only be drawn to the love of God by our activity.

