

PARTICULAR DIRECTORY OF THE LAY FRATERNITIES OF ST. DOMINIC OF THE POLISH PROVINCE

On the basis of the sec. 24 let. c of the Rule of the Lay Fraternities of St. Dominic and the Declaration 8 § III General Declarations of br. Bruno Cadoré OP of March 9, 2019 the Particular Directory below is established as an executive act.

PREAMBLE

In honor of Almighty God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, Blessed Mary Virgin and St. Dominic, we, the laity of St. Dominic - sisters and brothers of the Polish Province of the Dominicans, united by love for God and the Order and belonging to it under the promises made, referring to venerable traditions, committed, as representatives of all fraternities, to creating law in the spirit of *unanimitas*, with a sense of responsibility before God and with our own conscience, we establish the following Directory for the Laity of the Fraternities of St. Dominic of the Polish Province as a particular law and an executive act to the *Rule* and *General Declarations*.

PRELIMINARY PROVISIONS

Article 1

The Lay Fraternities of St. Dominic

1. Every Christian is consecrated by Holy Baptism and Confirmation¹. The laity of St. Dominic deepens this consecration through profession², being thus called to follow Christ in a special way.

¹ Comp. Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC) no. 1294, 1535; John Paul II, *Consecrated Life*, no. 31.

² Comp. Rite of Vestition and Lay Professions of the Order of Preachers, No. 33; see Book of Constitutions and Ordinances Friars of the Order of Preachers, 149 § I: "The word 'profession' still officially used by the documents of the Order in relation to the Laity of the Order of Preachers, in the case of members of the fraternity, both laity and priests, unlike in the rituals for religious, means having the intention to lead an evangelical life, by which they are bound and share in the Order's spirit and mission (cf. Code Canon Law (January 25, 1983), can. 725) "in a form adapted by the Order to their secular state."

In the official report of the International Secular Dominican Congress in Fatima (2018) it reads: "In accordance with the tradition of the Order and the spiritual meaning of the word profession, which better expresses the nature of the laity's connection to the Order of St. Dominic, we recommend that the Order use the word profession with regard to the Lay Fraternities of Saint Dominic".

2. They should strive with all their strength to live in true fraternal communion expressed in all circumstances, in accordance with the spirit of the Beatitudes, so that all might have one heart and one soul³.
3. The Lay Fraternities of St. Dominic is the official name used to refer to lay faithful included in the Order of Preachers in Polish Province⁴. In writings, publications, on stamps and in online statements only the official name should be used.
4. Brothers and sisters who are members of the Laity of Fraternities of St. Dominic are called lay Dominicans⁵.
5. The use of post-nominals OP is regulated by the decree of the Prior Provincial.
6. During the vestition ceremony, a novice will accept a patron, which is a sign of conscious undertaking of evangelical life in accordance with the charism of St. Dominic. Patron's names can be given as a religious name. It is advisable that it be a patron chosen from among the saints or blessed of the Order of Preachers.
7. During vestition, lay Dominicans, in agreement with the fraternity council, are clothed in a habit or scapular as a sign of incorporation into the Dominican Family and fraternity.
8. On a daily bases, instead of the scapular, a medallion with an image of Holy Mary and Saint Dominic may be used. The pattern of the scapular and the medallion is approved by the Prior Provincial.
9. The Laity of Fraternities of St. Dominic may wear a habit, which is for them a sign of belonging to the Order, avoiding, however, the possible confusion with the habit of the religious of the Order. The form and conditions for the use of the habit are determined by the decree of the Prior Provincial.
10. Each of the lay Dominicans has the privilege of being buried in the Dominican habit.

³ Cf. John 17:20-23; Acts 4:32.

⁴ In the territory of the Polish Province, common and historical names were used: Secular Fraternities St. Dominic, the Dominican Laity, the Secular Dominican Order, the Third Order of St. Dominic and former name: the Order of St. Dominic of Penance.

⁵ The name "Dominican Tertiaries" is also commonly used.

Article 2

Specificity of the Laity of Fraternities of St. Dominic

1. Faithful to their adherence to the Order of Truth (*Ordo Veritatis*), lay Dominicans strive to study the Catholic doctrine. They are characterized by their love for the teachings of the Church and are sensitive to the spread of errors and heresies in the modern world.
2. The foundation of the lay Dominicans apostolate is prayer, community and contemplation. The fundamental motto of the Order of Preachers to “Contemplate and to pass on the fruits of contemplation to others” (*Contemplari et contemplata aliis tradere*) determines the contemplative and active character of their lives.
3. The Laity of Fraternities of St. Dominic realize their vocation by imitating Jesus Christ following the example of Saint Dominic, by living in the spirit the evangelical counsels in a manner which is appropriate to lay people.

FRATERNITY LIFE

Article 3

Fraternity

1. The fraternity is the basic community in the organizational structure of the Laity of Fraternities of St. Dominic. It is a public legal person in the meaning of the Code of Canon Law, i.e. a team of people appointed by the competent ecclesiastical authority directed to and corresponding to the mission of the Church, but exceeding the purpose of individuals⁶. It is also a sign of the Dominican presence in the world. The fraternity is a place of formation in fidelity to one’s vocation, with particular emphasis on living by evangelical counsel and in the spirit of the Beatitudes.
2. Participating as fully as possible in the life of the fraternity is one of the foundations of development according to the Dominican charism.

Article 4

Prayer and penance

1. Lay Dominicans, continuing the traditions of the Order of St. Dominic of Penance, consciously and willingly undertake acts of penance, offering them to God in atonement for their own sins and for those of the whole world. Our acts of

⁶ CIC, can. 114 § 1; 116 § 1.

penance are participation in the one sacrifice of Jesus Christ. They make us open to the grace offered by the Lord God for us and for the whole world⁷.

2. To strengthen the witness of Dominican life, lay Dominicans strive to cultivate the spirit of penance, especially through:⁸
 - a) generously accepting the hardships of life and offering them to God;
 - b) faithful fulfillment of the duties resulting from belonging to the Order, without which other forms of penance are fruitless;
 - c) prudently undertaking mortifications.
3. A member of the Laity of Fraternities of St. Dominic cares for the development of their personal spiritual life, if possible, daily by:
 - a) full participation in the Eucharistic Sacrifice;
 - b) the celebration of the Liturgy of Hours, at least the Lauds and Vespers; for a just cause, the Liturgy of Hours can be replaced with a part of the Holy Rosary, and when that is not possible, also with the antiphon *O spem miram* with the verse and oration;
 - c) prayer, in the spirit of unity with the whole Order and in accordance with its tradition, antiphons: *O spem miram* (after Lauds), *Salve Regina*, *O lumen* and *Ave florum* (after Vespers);
 - d) praying the rosary;
 - e) mental prayer.

Article 5

Fraternity meetings

1. The meeting of the fraternity with the participation of the assistant connected with the Holy Mass takes place at least once every month.
2. The frequency of the meetings depends on the habits and needs of each fraternity.
3. The fraternity council determines which meetings are obligatory.
4. The topics of the meetings are determined by the fraternity council after consultation with the assistant, in accordance with the adopted plan of ongoing formation.

⁷ See CCC, no. 1430-1433 and 2015.

⁸ Identity of the Laity of the Order of Preachers, Provincial Council of the Laity of the Order of Preachers Province of Poland, 2022, p. 48.

5. Fraternity members are informed in advance about the topic of the meeting, so that they can prepare for it.
6. A ongoing element of the meetings is the common celebration of the Liturgy of Hours.
7. Fraternity members attend all obligatory fraternity meetings.
8. Those who, for a valid reason, cannot attend a fraternity meeting:
 - a) if obligatory - they should obtain a dispensation from their president;
 - b) if optional - they should notify their president in advance or another council member.
9. In each case, the absentee makes every effort to participate in the meeting spiritually.
10. Seriously ill and elderly individuals through their prayer and suffering, have a special part in the mission of the Order. The fraternity council is entrusted to enable such individuals to participate in sacramental and community life.

Article 6

Fraternity feasts

1. The liturgical memorial of the patron is a fraternity feast. The fraternity on this occasion organizes a solemn meeting combined with participation in the Holy Mass.
2. It is recommended to admit new members during this occasion and to make and renew professions, unless a different custom has been adopted by the fraternity.

Article 7

Fraternity retreats

1. At least once a year, the fraternity holds closed retreat or days of recollection, which are obligatory meetings.
2. The president and formation master, or individuals appointed by the fraternity council participate in the retreats organized for them.

Article 8

Remembrance of the dead

1. In remembrance of the deceased members and benefactors of the Order of Preachers, its lay members:
 - a) offer participation in the Holy Mass during the Anniversaries of the Order for the dead:

- February 7th : the annual remembrance of deceased Fathers and Mothers;
 - September 5th: the annual remembrance of the deceased members of the household and Benefactors of the Order of Preachers;
 - November 8th: annual commemoration of the deceased Brothers and Sisters of the Order Preachers;
- b) recite Psalm 130 (De Profundis) daily for the dead throughout the Order;
 - c) in the case of the death of a lay member of the Order in the Polish Province, offers to participate in one Holy Mass for the intention of the deceased and prays the Glorious part of the Holy Rosary in their intention.
2. The death of a lay member of the Order must be notified immediately to the members of their fraternity and to the Provincial Council.
 3. All members of the deceased's fraternity:
 - a) attend the funeral where possible;
 - b) on the day of the funeral or within eight days of the news of the death exercise in his intention the Office for the Dead;
 - c) within eight days of receiving the news of the death, they are obliged to participate in the Holy Mass for the intention of the deceased and say the Glorious part of the Holy Rosary.

THE ORGANIZATION AND GOVERNMENT OF THE FRATERNITY

Article 9

Admission to fraternity

1. In the ranks of the Laity of Fraternities of St. Dominic in the Polish Province can validly admit:
 - a) the Master of the Order of Preachers or the Prior Provincial of the Polish Province;
 - b) the fraternity president and their assistant. The assistant may be replaced by a priest delegated by the Prior Provincial. The president may be replaced by an individual delegated by them.
2. In extraordinary cases, justified by local conditions or circumstances concerning the candidate, the Prior Provincial or priest delegated by him may make a private

admission, by exception. Private admission may be a subject to a reservation as contained in the acts of the General Chapter⁹.

3. Privately professed individuals residing in countries where there is no province or vicariate of the Order of Preachers, and that are professed to the Prior Provincial, the Provincial Promoter or their delegates, may be affiliated to the Province of Poland as long as the conditions are not met in their places of residence allowing them to move to their own province (vicariate).
4. The provincial president must be notified of a private admission of the Laity of Fraternities of St. Dominic.

Article 10

Belonging to a fraternity

The laity of Fraternities of St. Dominic are always assigned to a fraternity in their place of canonical permanent or temporary residence or in the closest location to their place of permanent or temporary residence. Deviation from this rule requires consent from the Prior Provincial after consulting the Provincial Council.

Article 11

Transferring to another fraternity

1. The transfer from one fraternity to another requires a resolution of the council of the receiving fraternity.
2. The resolution is adopted upon a written request of the interested party, after becoming acquainted with their written or oral justification.
3. A person declaring a transition to another fraternity, submitting an application for admission, submits a copy to the council of their mother fraternity.
4. Before adopting a resolution, the president of the admitting fraternity addresses the Provincial Council for an opinion. The Provincial Council, when issuing its opinion, seeks out information from the council of the mother fraternity regarding the transferring individual. The council of the mother fraternity is obliged to provide the information immediately. All documents are issued in writing.
5. The president of the admitting fraternity informs the Provincial Council and the president of the mother fraternity about their decision in writing.

⁹ Files of the General Chapter, Krakow 2004, point 289: "We encourage the brothers to not let singly admitted individuals join the Laity of the Order by privately accepting their professions, but by putting them in contact with the nearest Dominican lay fraternity or with a member of the provincial or vicariate council of the laity."

6. In the case of a positive decision, the president of the mother fraternity immediately sends the transferee's personal documents to the president of the receiving fraternity, leaving copies in the documentation of the mother fraternity.

Article 12

Fraternity Visitation

1. Ordinary visitation is carried out by the Provincial Promoter, with assistance of the Provincial Council president and/or a designated council member.
2. The date of the visitation is determined by the promoter after consultation with the council of the visited fraternity and Provincial Council, presenting the visitation plan.
3. The purpose of the visitation is to identify and evaluate the needs of the fraternity and its members, as well as the strengthening of community life and individual vocations.
4. During the visitation, the Provincial Promoter and a representative of the Provincial Council have the right to speak with any member of the fraternity, without witnesses.
5. The Provincial Promoter with a representative of the Provincial Council of the Laity draws up a post visitation letter and submits it to the Prior Provincial and the visited fraternity through its president.
6. The Prior Provincial may order an extraordinary visitation as established by their own rules.

Article 13

Establishing a new fraternity

1. A new fraternity can be established by the Master of the Order or the Prior Provincial, after hearing the opinion of the Provincial Council of the Laity.
2. The new fraternity must have at least seven perpetually professed members.
3. It is recommended that the fraternity be established at a priory of the Order of Preachers.

Article 14
The expiry of the fraternity

1. By its nature, a fraternity is perpetual, but is expired if it is suppressed lawfully by the competent authority or has not operated for a period of one hundred years from the death of the last of its members¹⁰.
2. If the number of the perpetually professed in a fraternity is less than five, the Provincial Council is bound to make efforts with special care in order to establish a formula of further activity with all interested parties.
3. In order to resume operations to a fraternity with no living members, seven perpetually professed need to be transferred to this fraternity by decision of the Prior Provincial.

Article 15
Extraordinary fraternity management

1. In special circumstances, where serious reasons require it, the Prior Provincial may appoint a representative to temporarily manage the fraternity on his behalf.
2. The Prior Provincial always appoints a representative for a specified period of time.

FORMATION IN THE FRATERNITY

Article 16
Candidates

1. A candidate for the Order is required to:
 - a) being in full communion of faith, sacraments and ecclesiastical jurisdiction;
 - b) rooted in the community of the Catholic Church and interest in the spirituality and tradition of the Order of Preachers;
 - c) have Christian maturity characterized by sound devotion and the ability to live in community;
 - d) have personal maturity and lack of psychological obstacles to a life in accordance with the requirements of the *Rule*;
 - e) not belong to another religious order or secular institute;
 - f) be 18 years of age.

¹⁰ CIC, can. 120.

Article 17

Basic formation

1. Initial formation includes: the postulancy, the novitiate and the period of temporary profession.
2. Formation is based on a program approved by the Prior Provincial initial formation.

Article 18

Postulancy

1. The fraternity council decides on the admission of a candidate to postulancy by voting secret, upon the written request of the candidate¹¹. The council informs the candidate about the negative decision in writing without providing justification.
2. The postulancy lasts one year. The postulancy period may be shortened by a maximum of three months or extended by a maximum of 12 months by the council of the fraternity which adopts a resolution on this matter at the request of the candidate, formation master or president. The postulant submits the application in writing to the council, and the president or formation master submits the application orally for the record.
3. The postulant, under the guidance of the formation master, becomes acquainted with the specificity of the vocation of the Laity of Fraternities of St. Dominic, with particular emphasis on the meaning of the profession and the rights and obligations arising from the *Rule*, the *General Declarations*, *Directory* and other documents of the Order concerning the laity.
4. The postulant is obliged to have a personal conversation with the assistant and if possible the ability for individual retreats.
5. The fraternity council has the right to make decisions by secret ballot for the immediate termination of the postulancy. The council informs the candidate about the decision in writing without providing justification.

Article 19

Novitiate

1. The fraternity council decides on the commencement of the novitiate in a secret ballot, upon receiving the postulant's application in writing. Before adopting a resolution, the council holds a discussion after hearing the opinion of the formation master and president. The council informs the candidate in writing about a negative decision without providing justification.

¹¹ According to the model approved by the provincial council.

2. Together with the application, the postulant is obliged to submit to the fraternity council:
 - a) a current copy of their baptism certificate;
 - b) in the case of postulants bound by the sacrament of marriage – information about the opinion of the spouse regarding the candidates joining the fraternity.
3. Admission to the fraternity takes place through vestition.
4. The novitiate period begins on the day of admission and lasts one year. The extension of the novitiate for a maximum of one year is decided by a secret voting by the fraternity council, at the request of a novice or member of the council. The novice submits the request in writing, and a member of the council adds it to the minutes.
5. The purpose of the formation in the novitiate is the introduction in life in accordance with the *Rule*.
6. During the novitiate, the novice should familiarize themselves with the documents and customs that govern the life of the fraternity and its members.
7. An individual retreat can help a novice discern their vocation; At the end of the novitiate, it is advisable to conduct a personal conversation with the president, the formation master, the assistant and selected members of the council.
8. The novice ceases to be a member of the fraternity at the end of the novitiate period if in fact they do not make profession, if its date has been established by the council.
9. The fraternity council, by secret ballot, has the right to make decisions about the immediate termination of a novitiate. The council informs the novice about the decision in writing without providing justification.
10. If a novice is close to death, they may make temporary profession without formalities to the president, assistant or any priest, after prior confirmation by any of the above mentioned of circumstances indicating the risk of death. If it is impossible to contact any of these, they may communicate this intention to anyone else by obliging them to give notice to the mother fraternity.
11. The Rite of Vestition is defined by the *Rite of Vestition and Lay Profession of the Order of Preachers*, approved by the Master of the Order.

Article 20

Professions

1. The fraternity council decides on admission to profession upon a written application from the interested party. Before making a resolution, the council listens to the president's and formation master's opinion. It is recommended that

the council seek the opinion of the assistant and the perpetually professed. Perpetually professed members express their opinion in the form the council deems appropriate.

2. Temporary profession is made annually, for at least three consecutive years.
3. At the request of the person concerned, the fraternity president or the formation master, the fraternity council may permit additional annual temporary professions, however, only for a total period not exceeding three consecutive years. The temporary professed person submits the application in writing to the council, and the president or formation master submits the application orally for the record. In the case of the professed that are married, one month before making the decision regarding admission to the perpetual profession, the council, keeping in mind life situation of the professed, decides in what form it will ask for information about their spouse's opinion regarding perpetual profession. This information can take the form of:
 - a) a written declaration by the professed;
 - b) verbal consent of the spouse expressed in the presence of the president and one council member;
 - c) the written consent of the spouse.
4. The lack of consent of the spouse does not determine a negative decision of the fraternity council, but it should lead to an even deeper consideration of the possible consequences of the decision for the professed person and their family.
5. The president notifies the person concerned about the council's decision at the latest two weeks before the end of the period of novitiate or temporary profession. In case of a negative decision, the notification is made in writing without providing a specific justification.
6. One-year, temporary profession can be extended by a maximum of four weeks to date appointed by the fraternity council in order to make another profession. Furthermore an extension is possible only with the consent of the Prior Provincial. By the fact of expiration of the deadline of profession, the temporarily professed individual ceases to be a member of the Order.
7. The Rite of Temporary and Perpetual Profession defines the *Rite of the Vestition and Profession of the Laity of the Order Preachers*, approved by the Master of the Order.

Article 21

Persons not admitted to the profession

1. The faithful who are in specific life situations due to which the fraternity council believes that it would not be prudent to admit them to profession, are still

nevertheless allowed to participate in the life of the fraternity and undergo ongoing formation by following Christ in accordance with the Dominican charism, with the discipline and Magisterium of the Church.

2. The fraternity council determines whether a person can participate in fraternity life and if so, for how long and to what extent. The fraternity council can extend and shorten the time or change the scope of participation.

Article 22

Active fraternity members

1. An active member of the fraternity is a professed person who:
 - a) attended at least 50% of the mandatory fraternity meetings during the year;
 - b) participated in retreats and days of recollection at least twice in three consecutive years;
 - c) paid contributions, if the fraternity council determined the amount of the contribution and the necessity for paying them;
 - d) has not been suspended as a fraternity member in accordance with Art. 23;
 - e) has not been dispensed from participating in fraternity meetings for a longer period than half a year.
2. The fraternity council ascertains the activity/inactivity of a fraternity member at the council meeting, when updating the list of active fraternity members each year. In the election year of the fraternity council, this update should take place at least one month before sending notice to fraternity members regarding the date of the elections.

Article 23

Suspension of fraternity membership

1. A lay member of the Order of Preachers may be suspended from fraternity membership for:
 - a) violation of the *Rule, General Declarations, Directory*, General decrees and Provincial decrees;
 - b) remaining an inactive member of the fraternity for reasons specified in art. 22 sec. 1 let. a-c, for a period longer than 1 year.
2. The fraternity council decides about the suspension in a secret ballot. In the same mode the council decides to restore full rights. The council also determines the conditions of the reinstatement of full rights.

3. Before deciding to suspend, the council has the duty to allow the submission of written explanations by the person who is to be sanctioned.
4. After adopting a resolution on suspension, the council shall notify the person concerned and the Provincial Council in writing, with a copy attached to the file.
5. The fraternity council determines the scope of the suspension. The results of suspension are in particular:
 - a) loss of active and passive voting rights in the fraternity and in the province;
 - b) loss of function in the fraternity; then, the position of the suspended is considered vacant;
 - c) loss of function in the province, if the Provincial Council so decides.
6. If after the expiration of the period of suspension fixed by the council, the reasons for the suspension do not cease, the fraternity council may extend the period of suspension or apply to the Prior Provincial with a request to expel the person suspended from the Order.

Article 24

Leaving the Order

1. After the term of temporary profession has expired, if it has not been renewed, a member of the fraternity leaves the Order without any obligations resulting from profession.
2. During the period of temporary profession or after perpetual profession, a lay of the Order of Preachers can ask for an indult to leave the Order only for a serious reason, considered before God and with the help of other fraternity members. In the case of such a reason, the person submits a motivated request to the president of the fraternity, who forwards it to the Prior Provincial with his own opinion and the opinion of the fraternity council.
3. The Prior Provincial is competent to grant an indult to leave the Order definitively. The indult results in the dispensation from the profession and the observance of the particular law of the laity of Fraternities of St. Dominic at the moment of providing it in writing to the person concerned¹².
4. Apart from the situations specified in can. 316 § 1 CIC13, the person who made their temporary or perpetual profession, may be expelled for the following reasons:

¹² General Declarations, 20 § III, 21 § V.

- a) grave violations of the *Rule, General Declarations, Directory, General decrees* and Provincial decrees;
 - b) causing serious public scandal among the faithful.
5. In the cases specified in par. 4 the fraternity president is first obliged to reprimand the member of the fraternity in writing, with a copy attached to the file.
 6. If this admonition is ineffective, the fraternity president with the consent of the fraternity council may ask the Prior Provincial to expel a member of the fraternity. In the situations specified in can. 316 § 1 of the Code of Canon Law¹³, the president is obliged to immediately ask the Prior Provincial to expel a member of the fraternity.
 7. If the Prior Provincial, after giving the member of the fraternity the opportunity to defend himself, decides the expulsion is justified, he shall issue a written expulsion decree.
 8. The decree of expulsion, after being lawfully communicated in writing to the fraternity member concerned, results in the cessation of rights and obligations resulting from the profession¹⁴.
 9. A person who has received an indult to leave the Order and who then asks for reintegration into any fraternity, should complete the formation period again. This person may make perpetual profession only with the permission of the Prior Provincial and with the consent of the council of the new fraternity. Profession and admission to the fraternity of a person, who concealed the earlier indult to leave the Order, are invalid¹⁵.
 10. A person who has been expelled from the Order after careful assessment of living conditions and checking for improvement, can be readmitted to the fraternity after meeting the conditions described in par. 9.
 11. A person leaving the Order is obliged to hand over the fraternity council any downloaded documents of the fraternity, the habit, scapular and all the fraternity's financial resources.

¹³ "A person who has publicly abandoned the faith cannot be validly admitted to public associations or has broken ecclesial communion or is subject to excommunication imposed by a sentence or declared".

¹⁴ General Declarations, 21 § V.

¹⁵ General Declarations, 22 § I.

GOVERNMENT IN FRATERNIS

Article 25

Fraternity council

1. The fraternity is governed by the president together with the council. Full responsibility for the government and administration rests on the council and president. Decisions are made collectively by a simple majority of votes.
2. The fraternity council consists of 3 or 5 councilors, including the president, deputy president and formation master at minimum. These functions cannot be combined among themselves. The remaining functional fraternities are: the secretary, treasurer and infirmary. It is only allowed to combine the functions of the secretary, treasurer and infirmary with other functions and among themselves. Individuals outside the council may also perform the functions of treasurer and infirmary.
3. Only perpetually professed members who are active may be members of the fraternity council.
4. The term of office of the fraternity council lasts three years. The president and the members of the council exercise their duties until the Prior Provincial approves new president and formation master.
5. Immediately after the elections, the council of the fraternity communicates the results to the Provincial Council along with the contact details of the elected members.
6. The fraternity council meets when necessary, but not less often than once a quarter.
7. For the session to be valid it is essential for all of the members to be invited with the majority present, including the president.
8. A religious assistant may participate in council meetings in an advisory capacity.
9. The course of the council's session is confidential.
10. The fraternity council:
 - a) submits a written letter to the Prior Provincial for the appointment of an assistant, after consultation with the prior and the candidate for the assistant;
 - b) draws up a meeting agenda and specifies which meetings are mandatory;
 - c) is responsible for organizing retreats and days of recollection;
 - d) determines the number and schedule of collecting contributions;

- e) draws up and adopts the annual plan of ongoing formation, taking into account the recommendations of the Provincial Council; sends the plan to the Provincial Council by the end of July; the year of ongoing formation is counted from September to September;
- f) makes decisions regarding members of the fraternity: on admission to individual stages of formation, on suspension and on sending an application for expulsion to the Prior Provincial. These votes are conducted in secret; no one can abstain from voting during voting; these decisions require an absolute majority of votes of all council members, i.e. two votes for a 3-person council, three votes for a 5-person council;
- g) makes all other decisions concerning the fraternity and its members by a simple majority of votes, taking into account sec. 7;
- h) after careful consideration, in the spirit of prudence, in consultation with the assistant they can impose penance (duty of reparation) on a fraternity member for failure to fulfill obligations under the *Rule*, *Declaration*, *Directory*, decrees of the Master of the Order or the Prior Provincial; a fraternity member can ask the council to impose penance on themselves for the reasons listed above;
- i) maintains records based on templates approved by the Provincial Council;
- j) annually updates the list of active members of the fraternity and passes on the card catalog to the records kept by the Provincial Council.

Article 26

Fraternity president

1. The fraternity president is the example and guardian of observance of the *Rule*. They care about unity and fraternity development.
2. The president, together with the council, governs the fraternity and coordinates its work. They have the full responsibility for the direction and administration of the fraternity.
3. The term of the president lasts three years, until a new one is approved by the Prior Provincial.
4. The fraternity president, in particular:
 - a) encourages the members of the fraternity to observe the prescriptions of the *Rule* and politely admonishes;
 - b) presides over fraternity meetings;
 - c) calls the fraternity council together and presides over its meetings;

- d) watches over the formation in the fraternity;
 - e) ensures that the documents of the Laity of Fraternities of St. Dominic are known, considered and applied;
 - f) takes special care of candidates;
 - g) takes care of acquiring candidates;
 - h) supervises over the work schedule, organization of retreats and days of recollection;
 - i) represents the fraternity externally;
 - j) cooperates with the Provincial Council;
 - k) collaborates with the presidents of other fraternities;
 - l) cooperates with the religious assistant;
 - m) may dispense from a provision of a *Rule, Declaration or Directory* on a case-by-case basis and for a limited period of time;
 - n) keeps records of granted dispensations.
5. If a candidate for the fraternity reports previous affiliation with the Laity of Fraternities of St. Dominic, the president is obliged to inquire opinions about them from the president of the previous fraternity.
 6. The president may perform their function for two consecutive terms of office. They may be elected after a gap of at least one term. As an exception, the president may be postulated for a third consecutive term of office, i.e. after receiving at least 2/3 of the votes in the first ballot.

Article 27

Deputy Fraternity President

1. The deputy president assists the president in fulfilling their ministry.
2. In addition, the deputy president:
 - a) Takes over the duties of the president in the event of their temporary inability to perform duties;
 - b) in the event of a vacancy in the position of the president, takes over the duties until a new president is approved by the Prior Provincial;
 - c) organizes and conducts the election of a new council after the end of the term of office as well as a member of the council immediately when a vacancy arises.

Article 28

Formation master

1. The formation master, acting discreetly and prudently, is responsible for the formation of postulants, novices and the temporary professed.
2. The formation master is expected¹⁶ to:
 - a) take care of doctrinal preparation and knowledge about the Order;
 - b) be prudent in interpersonal relationships;
 - c) have ability to assess people in formation;
 - d) express sensitivity to the problems of those in formation;
 - e) show humility and the ability to listen and understand.
3. The tasks of the formation master towards the individuals being formed include:
 - a) the implementation of the approved program of formation;
 - b) shaping and deepening the Dominican spirit and love for the Church and the Order;
 - c) getting to know them and introducing them to the evangelical life and Dominican spirituality;
 - d) education in healthy piety;
 - e) showing the value of community life and teaching responsibility for the development of the entire fraternity.
4. In addition, the tasks of the formation master include:
 - a) presenting opinions on postulants, novices and temporary professed to the fraternity;
 - b) presenting to the fraternity council plans for initial formation;
 - c) cooperation with the formation masters of other fraternities;
 - d) seeking new vocations.
5. At the request of the formation master, the fraternity council may appoint individuals for a definite period of time to help him with work. The same competences are expected from these individuals as from the formation master.
6. In the situation when the people supporting the formation master are not members of the fraternity council, the council has a duty to listen to their views before making a decision about admitting a candidate to particular stages of formation.

¹⁶ Cf. Resolutions of the Third International Congress of the Laity of the Order of Preachers, Fatima 2018.

Article 29

Secretary

The secretary is responsible for the fraternity's records and minutes of the meetings of the council and takes care of the fraternity archives.

Article 30

Treasurer

The treasurer deals with the economic affairs of the fraternity and keeps its financial records.

Article 31

Infirmary

1. The infirmary ensures communication with the sick and elderly members of the fraternity; maintains contact with them, takes particular care to give them access to the sacramental life and cares for their unity with the fraternity and with the whole Order.
2. If necessary, the infirmary together with the entire fraternity helps in satisfying the basic living needs of the sick and the elderly fraternity members.

Article 32

Religious assistant

1. The assistant is not a member of the fraternity.
2. The assistant is appointed by the Prior Provincial on the proposal of the fraternity council, after consulting the Provincial Promoter.
3. The assistant's term is three years.
4. The assistant aids the members of the fraternity in doctrinal matters and in spiritual life.
5. The assistant may participate in the meetings of the fraternity council in an advisory capacity.
6. The assistant acts as a scrutineer during elections and when necessary conducts elections in accordance with the provisions of the articles regarding elections in the fraternity.
7. The assistant supports the formation master and the members of the fraternity in initial formation in discerning a vocation through:
 - a) individual conversations with postulants, novices and the temporarily professed;
 - b) attending initial formation meetings, if appropriate;

- c) presenting the opinions about a person at fraternity council meetings held before the council decides to proceed to the next stage of formation.
- 8. It is recommended that the assistant does not provide confession to people in the initial formation.

Article 33

Fraternity council elections

1. The elections for the president, formation master and councilors take place one month before the expiration of the term of the outgoing council at the earliest, but not later than month after the expiration of this term.
2. Elections are organized and carried out by the deputy president of the outgoing council, who is obliged to notify the fraternity members and the assistant of the election date.
3. As an exception, if the deputy president is incapacitated for any reason from performing their duties, the election shall be conducted by the assistant. The incapacity of the deputy president is decided by the council in an ordinary secret ballot by a majority of votes. In such a situation, all electoral powers of the deputy president are taken over by the assistant.
4. The elections are valid regardless of the number of individuals participating in them.
5. Elections are held secretly.
6. You can only vote in person. No one can validly vote for themselves.
7. Two scrutineers are appointed to count the votes. It is advisable for one of the scrutineers to be an assistant. An elected scrutineer may be a temporarily or perpetually professed member. Scrutineers swear an oath to keep the elections secret according to the formula approved by the Provincial Council. The scrutineer cannot stand as a candidate in these elections.
8. The number of members of the new council is determined in an open ballot. The right to vote is granted to perpetually professed members who are active members of fraternities.
9. Perpetually professed members who are active members of the fraternity have voting rights. Elections are made from among the perpetually professed who are active members of this fraternity, reported without limit in number. A nominated candidate must consent to the nomination.
10. If the elections are not held within the set time limit mentioned above, an assistant will carry them out immediately.

11. If carrying out an election by the assistant turns out to be impossible or ineffective, the assistant immediately informs the Provincial Council which then submits an application to the Prior Provincial asking for the appointment of the professed that will perform the duties of the president, formation master and councilors for one year.

Article 34

Elections of the fraternity president

1. Firstly, the president is chosen in direct elections.
2. Only a perpetually professed active member of a given fraternity, who agrees to be nominated, can be a candidate.
3. Candidates for president are proposed by the perpetually professed members who are active fraternity members. The number of candidates is unlimited.
4. Voters may decide by a simple majority of votes in an open ballot to close the list of candidates.
5. It is recommended that voting be preceded by a *tractatus* according to an procedure approved by the Provincial Council. The decision on this matter is made by voters in an open ballot.
6. In a given ballot, in order to cast a ballot, one candidate must be selected from a preestablished list of candidates.
7. No more than three votes may be held during the election. An absolute majority of votes is required to be elected in the first or second ballot. In the third ballot, one elects from two candidates who received the highest number of votes in the second ballot. In the case where two candidates cannot be elected due to the votes obtained *ex aequo*, decisions are made according to precedence¹⁷. After the third inconclusive ballot, the elder by precedence from the candidates shall be deemed elected in this ballot.
8. In the event of a vacancy in the position of a president, by-elections are held immediately, in a similar manner. The term of the president elected in this mode ends with the term of the council.

Article 35

Elections of Formation Master

1. The formation master is elected right after the fraternity president.

¹⁷ By date of first temporary profession.

2. The election of the formation master is carried out in the same manner as the election for the president, in accordance with art. 34.

Article 36

Elections of other members of fraternity council

1. The other members of the council are elected after the election of the president and the formation master.
2. Only a perpetually professed active member of a given fraternity, who agrees to be nominated, can be a candidate.
3. Candidates for councilors are proposed by perpetually professed members who are active fraternity members. The number of candidates is unlimited.
4. Voters may decide by a simple majority of votes in an open ballot and can decide to close the list of candidates.
5. Voting takes place simultaneously for all members of the council (one or three persons depending on the size of the council) without specifying which functions the individuals will be serving on the council.
6. No more than three ballots may be held during the election. An absolute majority of votes is required to be elected in the first or second ballot. In the event of two tied ballots, in the third ballot, the candidates who received the majority of votes are considered elected. If such determination is not possible due to votes obtained *ex aequo*, the eldest according to precedence¹⁸ will be chosen.
7. A vote is valid when it is cast for candidates in an amount less than or equal to established in accordance with Art. 33 sec. 8.
8. The deputy president is elected by the members of the council in a secret ballot, immediately after the councils establishment.
9. No more than three votes may be held during the election. An absolute majority of votes is required to be elected in the first or second ballot. In the event of two tied ballots, in the third ballot, the candidate who received the majority of votes is considered elected. If such determination is not possible due to votes obtained *ex aequo*, the oldest by precedence shall be deemed elected.
10. The exercise of other functions is entrusted by the council in an open ballot.

¹⁸ See note 17.

11. By-elections are carried out in a similar manner in case of a vacancy of a councilor. Newly elected councilors hold office until the end of the term of the current fraternity council.

Article 37

Approval of elections

1. Immediately after the election, the person carrying it out shall notify the Prior Provincial about the election results.
2. The Prior Provincial, after consulting the Provincial Council, approves the election of the president and formation master within four weeks of the date of the election. He may also order re-elections for one or more functions. In the absence of a response from the Prior Provincial within four weeks, the election is considered approved.
3. In the case of three unconfirmed elections, the Prior Provincial after consultation with the Provincial Council, appoints a president, a formation master, or both.
4. There is no right of appeal against the decisions of the Prior Provincial mentioned above.
5. The newly elected council takes office immediately upon the confirmation of both functions.
6. It is possible to hand over the duties to the new president and formation master, according to the custom of the fraternity in a solemn way. It is advisable that the acceptance of the office took place before the fraternity and the assistant through the *Confession of Faith* according to a formula approved by the Provincial Council.

Article 38

Fraternity documentation

1. The Fraternity maintains documentation¹⁹, which consists of:
 - a) fraternity membership cards and/or robes and profession books;
 - b) records of attendance and dispensations;
 - c) meeting minutes, signed by the president and the secretary;
 - d) financial records;
 - e) archives, collections of correspondence and various documents;
 - f) chronicles.

¹⁹ According to the formulas developed by the provincial council.

2. The documents mentioned above are the property of the Province of Poland of the Order of Preachers.
3. Personal data in fraternities are processed in accordance with applicable regulations.

Article 39

Sections in Fraternities

1. The fraternity council can establish sections within the fraternity.
2. When establishing a section, the fraternity council will determine its status, profile, tasks and frequency of meetings, etc.

GOVERNMENT IN THE PROVINCE

Article 40

Prior Provincial

1. The Prior Provincial is the head of all the laity of Fraternities of St. Dominic in the Polish Province.
2. Within the scope of his competence, the Prior Provincial:
 - a) may admit to the ranks of the Laity of Fraternities of St. Dominic;
 - b) may grant an indult to leave the Order definitively;
 - c) may expel from the Order;
 - d) consents to perpetual profession of a person who has been expelled or has received an indult to leave the Order;
 - e) may establish a new fraternity;
 - f) consents to the transfer of perpetually professed members to a fraternity that does not have existing living members;
 - g) can dispense entire fraternities from the provisions of the *Rule and the Directory*, and individual laity of Fraternities of St. Dominic;
 - h) before the expiry of the period of profession, he may grant permission for an extension or shortening the deadline for making profession;
 - i) appoints the Provincial Promoter and the fraternity assistants;
 - j) approves fraternity presidents and formation masters;
 - k) approves the provincial president and members of the Provincial Council;
 - l) determines the model of the scapular and the medal;
 - m) determines the form and conditions of use of the habit.

3. In special situations, the Prior Provincial, after consulting the Provincial Council of the Laity, can:
 - a) impose a penance on the fraternity or individually on the Laity of Fraternities of St. Dominic;
 - b) suspend the fraternity for a certain period of time;
 - c) dissolve the fraternity.
4. As the head of the Order of Preachers in the Polish Province, the Prior Provincial has other powers not included in this *Directory*, and resulting from the *Code of Canon Law and the Book of Constitutions and Orders of the Brothers of the Order of Preachers*.
5. Doubts regarding the interpretation of this Directory are resolved by the Prior Provincial.
6. In matters not regulated by this Directory and other legal acts relating to the Laity of Fraternities of St. Dominic, the provisions of Church law and the orders and decrees of the Prior Provincial shall apply.

Article 41

Provincial Promoter

1. The Provincial Promoter represents the Prior Provincial and is a full member of the Provincial Council of the Laity. He has no active or passive voting rights in any organ of lay fraternities.
2. The Provincial Promoter recognizes and encourages those who are capable of serving lay Dominican fraternities as assistants.
3. The promoter, together with the Provincial Council, organizes a meeting for the assistants and fraternity presidents at least once every two years.
4. The Provincial Promoter may provide lectures on theological and spiritual topics or fraternity workshops.
5. The promoter conducts an ordinary visitation to the fraternity in accordance with art. 12.

Article 42

Provincial Council

1. The Provincial Council consists of five members elected by the electors, and the Provincial Promoter, who is a member of the council ex officio.
2. Provincial Council:

- a) represents the Laity of Fraternities of St. Dominic, in particular towards the Prior Provincial;
- b) may submit postulates to the general and provincial chapters of the Order;
- c) has a consultative vote in the appointment of the Provincial Promoter;
- d) gives its opinion on the proposal for the foundation of a new fraternity;
- e) ensures constant access to information and formation materials and applicable documents;
- f) organizes retreats and conventions as well as other common activities of the laity in the province;
- g) maintains contact with the fraternities and, where possible, with the private professed;
- h) establishes the amount and schedule of collecting contributions for the activities of the Provincial Council;
- i) ensures the consent and cooperation of the lay members of the province, helps in conflict resolution;
- j) discusses and submits the Directory, prepared by the commission composed of representatives delegated by all fraternities including the Vicariate of Ukraine, to the Prior Provincial for opinion and passing on further to the Master of the Order for the approval;
- k) approves other documents developed by the constituent committee of representatives whom all fraternities including the Vicariate of Ukraine have the right to delegate;
- l) appoints the committees referred to in par. 2 let. j and k of this article;
- m) visits fraternities together with the Provincial Promoter;
- n) develops and approves the templates of documents used in fraternities;
- o) provides the Prior Provincial with an opinion on the election of fraternity president and formation master;
- p) keep records of the members of the province based on the data provided by the fraternities;
- q) prepares and sends recommendations for fraternities annually, by the end of April concerning ongoing formation for the following year;
- r) supports the course of initial formation in fraternities;
- s) together with the Provincial Promoter, organizes meetings with student brothers on lay Dominicans and the role of an assistant.

Article 43
Provincial president

1. The provincial president of the Laity of Fraternities of St. Dominic is an exemplar and guardian of the *Rule*. He cares for the unity and development of the fraternities in the province.
2. The provincial president, in particular:
 - a) convokes and presides over the meetings of the Provincial Council, supervises it in carrying out its tasks;
 - b) collaborates closely with the Provincial Promoter;
 - c) supervises the record keeping of the Provincial Council;
 - d) together with the council, determines its funds and ensures its proper disposition;
 - e) has the right to delegate a lay member of the Order with their consent for temporarily carrying out assigned duties. Assigning specific powers of attorney is always made in writing;
 - f) directs the preparation of the annual catalog of the Lay Fraternities of St. Dominic.

Article 44
Deputy Provincial President

1. The deputy provincial president assists the president in fulfilling their duties.
2. In particular, the deputy president:
 - a) in the event of temporary inability to perform the function by the president, takes over their duties;
 - b) in the event of a vacancy in the position of a president, the deputy shall perform their duties until the by-elections;
 - c) conduct elections of the new council in due time as well as by-elections in the event of a vacancy of any member of the council.

Article 45
Provincial Council elections

1. The elected members of the Provincial Council are: the president, the deputy president, secretary, treasurer and councilor.
2. The term of the president and councilors lasts four years, and their rights and obligations expire on the date of approval of the newly elected council by the Prior Provincial..

3. Six months before the end of the term of the council, the deputy president directs a letter to all fraternities reminding them about the election of delegates.
4. Elections of the new council should be held not earlier than three months before expiry of the term and no later than three months after the expiry of the term.
5. The electors are fraternity presidents, formation masters and delegates. The outgoing provincial president is an ex officio elector.
6. If the president or formation master are unable to represent the fraternity, the fraternity may choose another delegate to take their place.
7. A fraternity that has less than 20 active perpetually professed members has the right to send one delegate other than the president and the formation master, counting 20 and more – two.
8. The testimonial letter of the election of a fraternity member as a delegate is signed by the fraternity president.
9. The election of the president and councilors for the new term is carried out by the deputy president.
10. As an exception, if the deputy president of the Provincial Council were for any reason unable to fulfill their duties, elections are to be carried out by the Provincial Promoter. The council decides about incapacity of the deputy president via secret ballot by a simple majority of votes. In such a situation, all the powers of the deputy president are taken over by the Provincial Promoter.
11. Elections are held by secret ballot.
12. Voting is only permitted in person. No one can validly vote for themselves.
13. Delegates of all fraternities outside Poland shall be allowed to vote online by secret ballot. The deputy provincial president, who, together with the council, selects a appropriate and trustworthy electronic device, sends instructions to all eligible voters on how to access the selected electronic device.
14. Two scrutineers are appointed to count the votes: one is elected by the electors from among themselves in an open ballot by a simple majority, and the other scrutineer is the Provincial Promoter. Scrutineers take an oath to keep the secret of the elections according to the formula approved by the Provincial Council. The scrutineer cannot stand as a candidate in this election.

Article 46

Election of the provincial president

1. Firstly, the president is elected in direct elections.

2. Only a perpetually professed member who is an active member of a fraternity, present at the election and who consents to the candidacy can be a candidate.
3. Candidates for president are proposed by electors from among themselves. The number of candidates is unlimited.
4. The electors may decide by a simple majority of votes in an open ballot to close the list of candidates.
5. Voting is preceded by a *tractatus* according to an approved procedure by the Provincial Council.
6. To cast a valid vote in a given ballot, one candidate must be selected from a preestablished list of candidates.
7. No more than three ballots may be held during the election. An absolute majority of votes is required to be elected in the first or second ballot. In the third ballot, one elects from two candidates who received the highest number of votes in the second ballot. In case two candidates cannot be elected due to the votes obtained *ex aequo*, decisions are made according to precedence²⁰. After the third inconclusive ballot, the elder by precedence from the candidates in this ballot shall be deemed elected.
8. Immediately after the election, the election supervisor shall notify the Prior Provincial of the election results.
9. The Prior Provincial shall approve the election of the Provincial President or order to repeat election.
10. In case of three unapproved elections, the Prior Provincial shall appoint the Provincial President.
11. The Prior Provincial may confirm or cassate the election of the Provincial President according to what he judges to be for the good of the Order, even if the election is carried out in accordance with the norm of law.
12. The provincial president may serve for two consecutive terms. They may be re-elected after a break of at least one term.

Article 47

Election of other members of the Provincial Council

1. Candidates for councilors are proposed by electors from among themselves. The number of candidates is unlimited.

²⁰ See note 17.

2. Only a perpetually professed member who is an active member of a fraternity, present at the election and who consents to the candidacy can be a candidate.
3. The electors may decide in an open ballot by a simple majority of votes to close the list of candidates.
4. No more than four votes may be held during an election. In every ballot, votes are taken for the number of candidates appropriate to the number of places that need to be filled. An absolute majority of votes is required to be elected on the first, second or third ballot. On the fourth ballot, those candidates shall be deemed elected who received the largest number of votes. In the event when it is not possible to select candidates due to the votes obtained *ex aequo*, the settlement is made according to precedence²¹. After the fourth inconclusive ballot, the eldest members by precedence among those who received the largest number votes in the ballot are considered elected.
5. Immediately after the election, the election supervisor shall notify the Prior Provincial of the election results.
6. The Prior Provincial shall approve the election of members of the Provincial council or orders a repeat election for the number of persons whose election he has not approved.
7. In case of three unapproved elections, the Prior Provincial shall appoint the unelected members of the Provincial council.
8. The Prior Provincial may confirm or cassate the election of a member of the provincial council according to what he judges to be for the good of the Order, even if the election is carried out in accordance with the norm of law.
9. After the election of the council, the councilors, in a manner they determine, elects other functionaries from among themselves. The deputy president is selected first.

Article 48

By-elections to the Provincial Council

1. If the president or councilor does not participate in the work of the council, without valid and justified reasons, for a period of six months, their mandate expires. The expiration of the mandate of the council is confirmed by a resolution adopted by a simple majority of votes in a secret ballot.
2. In the event of a vacancy of a president or a councilor, on the date of the next retreat of the province, an electoral convention is convened and by-elections are

²¹ See note 17.

held according to the normal procedure. The newly elected president or councilor serves until the end of the term of the current Provincial Council.

Article 49

Provincial Council records

1. The Provincial Council keeps records consisting of:
 - a) the minutes book containing the minutes from the meetings, signed by the president and secretary;
 - b) financial and accounting documentation;
 - c) the fraternity directory;
 - d) an archive with a collection of correspondence and other documents;
 - e) the book of expulsions from the Order;
 - f) the book of visitations and private professions.
2. The above-mentioned documents are the property of the Province of Poland of the Order of Preachers.

LAITY OF FRATERNITIES OF ST. DOMINIC ON THE APOSTOLIC TERRITORIES ENTRUSTED TO THE POLISH PROVINCE

Article 50

Areas entrusted to the apostolic care of the Polish Province

1. Fraternities located in territories entrusted to the apostolic care of the Polish Province of the Order of Preachers belong to this province. The same goes for individuals admitted privately to the Order.
2. The particular law for the laity in these territories is the *Directory*.
3. The Provincial Council, in organizing annual retreats, conventions and other ventures, invites all the lay people belonging to the Polish Province to participate in them.

Article 51

Provincial Vicariate

1. In the case of the establishment of a provincial vicariate, the lay community of such a vicariate enjoys the autonomy.

2. The provisions of the Directory apply accordingly in the territory of the Vicariate.
3. Within the vicariate, as provided for in the *Rule of the Lay Fraternities of St. Dominic* and in the *Directory*:
 - a) the competences of the Prior Provincial is exercised by the Vicar Provincial;
 - b) the competences of the Provincial Promoter is exercised by the vicariate promoter appointed by the Vicar Provincial;
 - c) the competences of the Provincial Council are exercised by the vicariate council appointed by the representatives of fraternities from the vicariate;
 - d) the competence of the provincial president is exercised by the vicar president.
4. Competences resulting from sec. 3 do not concern changes to the *Directory*, which for its validity should be made pursuant to art. 42 sec. 2 let. j.
5. The laity of the province outside the provincial vicariate have neither active, nor the passive rights for elections to the vicar's council.
6. The laity from the area of the vicariate has active and passive electoral rights to the council provincial.
7. The Provincial Council and the vicar council, respecting their mutual autonomy, cooperate in the exercise of their tasks by informing each other about their undertaken initiatives. Whenever possible and necessary, they also carry out joint initiatives and coordinate their implementation.

FINAL PROVISIONS

Article 52

Law and documents governing fraternities

1. Laws and documents governing the Lay Fraternities of St. Dominic are:
 - a) *The Rule of Laity of Fraternities of St. Dominic*;
 - b) *General Declarations* by the General of the Order or General Chapters concerning the fraternity;
 - c) the *Directory of the Laity of Fraternities of St. Dominic*;
 - d) the *Rite of Vestition and profession of the Laity of Fraternities of St. Dominic*;
 - e) the decrees of the Master of the Order and Prior Provincial regarding fraternities.
2. The customs of each fraternity are an essential element in shaping its members identity. They can be listed in a separate internal fraternity document, which, however, is not a normative act.

3. This *Directory*, as an implementing act for the *Rule and General Declarations*, should be interpreted in the spirit of these documents. The rules above are intended to serve the development of interior life and the deepening of relations between the lay members of the Order with God, other members of the Church, and with each other.
4. All decisions and resolutions, with the exception of art. 37 sec. 4, are subject to the right of recourse to a higher authority, keeping the hierarchy, within 14 days from the date of delivery.
5. All provincial forms, document templates and procedures are developed and approved by the Provincial Council and made available for fraternities to use.