

**Commissio Constitutionum**

Proposed Revision of Chapter IV

CHAPTER IV

OUR LIFE IN POVERTY

# *General Curia of the Capuchin Friars Minor*

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Rome, 29 August 2009

Prot. N. 00610/09

*To all the brothers of the Order*

Dear Brothers,  
*May the Lord give you Peace!*

I invite you to read the “Proposals for revision” which the Commission has produced for chapter IV of the Constitutions. Reading them, I was reminded of the personal meeting I had with Pope Benedict XVI early in 2007. I asked him for a message for the Order. In reply, the Pope urged us to take seriously the observance of poverty, by insisting equally on its material and spiritual dimensions. At this point any of us could decide: “That’s fine with me!” and at the same time ask: “Who can tell me how to put my intention into practice?”

The “Proposals for Revision” of chapter IV on “Our Life in Poverty” are a very concrete and timely reply to that question. As you read the proposed text you will realise how much it really has been enriched. You will find a number of new references to the vision of poverty which our Seraphic Father had, not as something complete in itself but closely related to the choice he had made of the trinitarian, incarnate God. Furthermore, the Commission has made a careful selection of passages from the last two Plenary Councils, VI and VII, incorporating them where the text was not sufficiently complete.

These Plenary Councils, “Living Poverty in Brotherhood” (VI) and “Our Life in Minority” (VII) are gradually having a profound impact on the life of the jurisdictions and local fraternities. The reality of a fraternal economy, based on values such as transparency, participation, sharing, equity, austerity and solidarity, means that brotherhood becomes more than just an empty word. It is something real, enabling us to create bonds which are much more intense and responsible, both among brothers of the same jurisdiction and among the jurisdictions themselves. We will only be able to meet the needs of the poor if we think of “administrators” in the gospel sense of the term, as stewards of the good things bestowed by Providence and the work of us all. It thus becomes evident that any attempt to improve administration cannot hope to bear fruit if it is not accompanied by a responsible attitude on the part of each individual brother. “Without minority, our poverty would have no meaning and would become a source of pride, just as without material poverty, interior poverty would be unreal” (PCO VI, n. 3).

The choice of minority necessarily leads us to live alongside the poor and to choose a simple, joyfully austere lifestyle! The principle inviting us to keep to “the minimum necessary, not the maximum allowed” is still valid. Unless we are vigilant and careful about the actual ways in which we practise these values, we easily risk entering the downward slope of easy compromises until all of a sudden we find ourselves miles away from a life of poverty in practice. This is why I appreciate the insistence with which the proposed text highlights the need for honest and consistent evaluations about how we are living this dimension of the life we have chosen. In the current text of the Constitutions there are frequent references to our being close to the poor and to the need for us to be guided in our choices by what they can or cannot afford for themselves. I am quite sure this is a difficult aspect to implement, and yet it remains a touchstone of authenticity in our life. The Constitutions rightly also urge us to promote projects for the improvement of the life and dignity of the

poor, but they do this by insisting in a balanced way on promotion and real closeness: not working from the top down, but in relationships of conscious solidarity. It is important to keep hold of the difference between a kind of poverty that is freely chosen and one that is undergone through a whole series of circumstances which, more often than not, are in no way the responsibility of the individuals concerned. I have the impression that without serious commitment and conscious effort, instead of growing closer to the poor of our times, we are becoming more and more remote from them.

If we compare our actual, daily lifestyle with what is said in chapter IV of the present Constitutions, together with the “Proposals for revision”, this can only be beneficial and help us to re-adjust our option for the consecrated life.

I urge you, Brothers, not just to read the text carefully but in such a way that your reading becomes a privileged moment, a time of grace. My prayers are with you.

Br. Mauro Jöhri  
*General Minister OFMCap*

## Points for fraternal reflection

As with the preceding chapters we offer some questions to foster and assist personal reflection, fraternal dialogue and community discussion on chapter IV on “*Our Life in Poverty*”. We hope these questions help us to confront the reality of our lives in the light of the text of the Constitutions so that a spirit of renewal is fostered in us. The questions relate to the four articles into which chapter four is divided.

***1. The theological foundation of our voluntary poverty is the humility of God who became man for us so that we might become rich through His poverty. The Son of God lived as a poor man and loved the poor. Francis followed Him in a radical way.***

- What are the areas of our life in which the gospel ideal of poverty is clearly manifested?
- What are the main difficulties that obstruct our life of poverty, individually and as a community?
- How do we put into practice, individually and as a fraternity, compassion and solidarity with the poor, whether they are near at hand or far away?

***2. Francis did not wish to have anything of his own. At the time his complete rejection of money was a strong prophetic sign which soon however proved impracticable. Today we are called to live his ideal in our circumstances.***

- What are the signs today that we are really living, or could live, as “pilgrims and strangers” in this world?
- In what way do we live a life “without having anything of our own”?
- In what way does the topic of poverty, lived freely and joyfully, emerge in our gatherings at chapter? Does it become a real object of challenge and evaluation among us?

***3. Our life in poverty should be concretely expressed in our dwellings which should be “humble and poor.”***

- At the Provincial level are our houses in accord with our real needs and with the mission we are called upon to carry out?
- How have the circumstances in which we live changed in the last decade and what are the repercussions for our life style?
- What choices should we make in practice to ensure that our houses and churches are accessible to simple people, open and welcoming and expressing the moderation which we are called to live in our day following the footsteps of Saint Francis?

***4. Our life of poverty is also expressed through careful and wise administration of the goods entrusted to us.***

- The economic administration of our fraternities in general has been changed recently thanks to the introduction of new ways of conducting it which are more in keeping with the times. Have these changes promoted trust and communion among us, making the administration more transparent?
- Given the profound and swift economic changes taking place in our society, the office of bursar appears to be taking on a greater importance than in the past in our fraternities. Administrative Problems affect us all: how do we react to this fact? What questions need to be addressed?
- In what ways do we realise the costs of our life? Do administrative practices enable us to live as “strangers” in the present world and dispense us from the worries of ordinary people?
- How does the witness of our poor life still prevail over efficiency and productivity?

# OUR LIFE OF POVERTY

## PROPOSED REVISION OF CHAPTER IV

### Introduction

The Schema for the revision for the revision of Chapter IV of the Constitutions was prepared by the sub-commission in its meeting at the General Curia, 23-28 February 2009. Two brothers from the Commission made personal contributions prior to this work. The Schema was then further studied and revised via ongoing correspondence between the members of the Commission during March and April. The Schema was distributed to all the Commission on 3 May 2009.

During its full meeting (29 June – 11 July 2009) the whole Commission studied and revised the Schema twice, and then approved it on 10 July for distribution to the whole Order.

#### I. Basic Principles

As always, the fundamental principle that guided the work of the sub-commission first, and then of the Commission, is the one established by the General Chapter of 2006: “In the revision of the Constitutions their doctrinal and spiritual content is to be respected as much as possible, and then be further enriched by drawing from recent documents of the Church and of the Order.”<sup>1</sup> Therefore the Commission has carried out its work with the conviction that the current Constitutions must be *neither substituted nor contradicted*, but be *expanded* – and if necessary made clearer or more precise. Then in his Circular Letter of 27 May 2007 the Minister General set the guiding principle: (the revision) “is about an enrichment that is more qualitative than quantitative (*non multa, sed multum!*), the result of the journey of the Church and the Order as expressed in the more recent documents” (n.4,2)<sup>2</sup>.

Certainly Chapter IV of the Constitutions is the one that lends itself most to an expansion with the contributions made by the more recent Plenary Councils of the Order: *Living Poverty in Fraternity* (PCO VI) and *Our Fraternal Life in Minority* (PCO VII). Therefore the 2006 Project, beginning with these Plenary Councils, produced a radical revision of Chapter IV of the Constitutions. The 2006 Project replaced most of Chapter IV and included in the new draft some of the statements from the current Constitutions and transferred many others to the General Statutes.

Faithful to the mandate received from the General Chapter our Commission realised the urgent need for a further study, and obtained from the General Minister and his Definitory a more detailed study comparing the current Constitutions and the recent PCOs to identify development in the outlook (*mens*) of the Order: Do PCO VI and VII actually say anything new in regard to the Constitutions? What do they contain that comes from the Constitutions themselves? Is there a consistent development between the Constitutions and the PCOs? From what the PCOs say, what is already found in the Constitutions? What elements should then be included in the Constitutions?

Therefore the Commission has been able to make use of *three full comparative studies* (one of which is not yet finished). Regarding PCO VI these studies show that while the PCO does not say anything new in regard to the Constitutions, it does offer a contemporary way of interpreting (hermeneutical key) the reading and understanding of our Constitutions within a globalised context.<sup>3</sup>

In particular, it is noted that:

- the Constitutions (cf nn. 59,9; 60,1-6) already show a wealth of insights and responses concerning new themes e.g. greed and ambition, avarice and competitiveness, service and solidarity; sharing and involvement in the condition of the poor; a simple and sober life-style, the renunciation of power, etc.).

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. *Atti dell'83° Capitolo Generale*. Official version edited by Br. Carlo Calloni, Rome, Capuchin General Curia, 2006. vol.II, 833.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *Analecta OFMCap* 123(2007) 55.

<sup>3</sup> AGAPIT MROSO, *Living Poverty in Fraternity. A Comparative Study of the Constitutions and the Propositions of the Sixth Plenary Council of the Order*, in [www.ofmcap.org](http://www.ofmcap.org) Commission for the Constitutions.

- PCO VI bases its own statements on the Constitutions,
- PCO VI systematically organises some of the themes already in the Constitutions and sometimes focuses on them in a new perspective so as to identify new ways today to reword truthfully and powerfully the lasting values that identify our charism.<sup>4</sup>

**As for PCO VII** the comparative study points out that this was not the only Council to reflect and focus on minority. PCO I (Quito 1971) also did this, adopting for its theme for reflection: *Fraternal Life, Poverty and Minority*. In the concluding document of PCO I one may note how minority is in the background and inspires many of its statements. However the theme is hardly ever treated explicitly.<sup>5</sup> While signs of its presence and consequences can be discerned, there is a discreet silence about the theme of minority as such.<sup>6</sup> So then, should it not be asked: isn't minority a concept that describes more an *essence* rather than a *thing*, an *agent* rather than an *action*, more a *spirit* rather than some *thing*?<sup>7</sup>

If such is the case, strictly speaking 'minority' is not a theme in itself, but an aspect that qualifies all the particular themes possible concerning our life: fraternal life, poverty, chastity, obedience, prayer, apostolic life, work, itinerancy, our life in common. Therefore, when comparing the Constitutions and PCO VII particular attention should not be given so much to the frequency of the appearance of such terms as *minority* and *minor*<sup>8</sup> but rather to verify whether minority, or any aspect of it, may have been considered in a better way in PCO VII than in the Constitutions. Or perhaps the PCO discovered an aspect that was not only new, but which may be perennially valid for the whole Order.

Therefore we arrive at these important conclusions:

- regarding minority, the Propositions of PCO VII are more expressions that enhance an awareness or articulate that awareness already present in germ, whether implicitly or generally, in the Constitutions. Rather than introduce something new, probably one worthwhile contribution of PCO VII was that of giving greater clarity to the Order's awareness that minority is more than an isolated theme in itself. Rather, minority is a spirit that should characterise all the dimensions and aspects of our life, including those that have not always been associated with minority in our tradition.
- The theological foundations for minority and its expressions in the Propositions of PCO VII certainly go beyond what is found in the current Constitutions, even if those Propositions are not fully elaborated and are only listed together. Minority has its foundations within the Trinity itself. It pervades the *kenosis* of the Son of God (Phil 2,5-11) and the Francis of Assisi's spiritual outlook. As such it broadens the horizon of the understanding of our charismatic identity and life, lending a special quality to the relationships of Francis' brothers in all the contexts and aspects of their life.<sup>9</sup>

Bearing in mind the contributions received by the Commission and what the Commission has studied itself, we believe that the last two PCOs have served to make the Constitutions more actual and up-to-date, thus prompting the Order to a more *dynamic faithfulness* to our charism. From this we can see the specific character

<sup>4</sup> Cf. LUCIANO PASTORELLO, *The Constitutions and the PCO VI. A Rich Comparison*, in [www.ofmcap.org](http://www.ofmcap.org) Commission for the Constitutions.

<sup>5</sup> In this sense the General Minister and his Definitory believed it sufficient to note in summary form: "Likewise, it became more vividly evident to the brothers of the Plenary Council of the Order how dynamic and full of feeling our Franciscan way of life is if we sincerely strive to live in real fraternity the "minority" in poverty that we have vowed, in that unity of mind and heart that makes Christ really present among us, so that each and every fraternity of ours, whether local or provincial, becomes a kind of expression of the presence of the poor and humble Christ, the Servant of God and man in charity." In the letter from Quito, 23 October 1971 in *Renewing the Capuchins. The Plenary Councils of the Order 1971-1992*, Gowland & Co, Merseyside, 1993, p.7.

<sup>6</sup> Nevertheless it is useful to consult "Minority, Friars Minor" in the index to *Renewing the Capuchins. The Plenary Councils of the Order 1971-1992*, p. 243-244.

<sup>7</sup> Ci si chiede allora: non è forse la minorità un concetto che descrive non tanto un *quid*, quanto piuttosto una *quidditas*, non tanto un *factum*, quanto un *factor*, non tanto *qualche cosa*, ma piuttosto uno *spirito*?

<sup>8</sup> *minorità, minore, minoritico.*

<sup>9</sup> Cf. PRUDENTE L. NERY, *Our Fraternal Life In Minority. A systematic comparison between the Constitutions of the Capuchin Friars Minor and the Propositions of PCO VII* in [www.ofmcap.org](http://www.ofmcap.org) Commission for the Constitutions.

of the PCO documents as means to put the Constitutions into practice. In themselves they do not need to be included in the Constitutions. Regarding Chapter IV then the Commission developed this approach:

- to closely follow the present text;
- seeking to respect it as much as possible;
- while working to add the contributions of PCO VI and VII into the current text.

## II. Enriching the Text

The structure of Chapter IV in the *proposed revision* contains 4 articles, just like the present Constitutions. The text in each article has been enhanced with a number of modifications and inclusions drawn especially from PCO VI and VII and the Circular Letters of John Corriveau. Reference is also made to documents of the Church Magisterium, e.g. Pope John Paul II's post-Synod Exhortation *Vita Consecrata* and the Encyclical *Sollicitudo rei socialis*; the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* and the *Compendium of the Church's Social Teaching*; and lastly, Benedict XVI's Encyclical *Caritas in veritate*.

The explanatory notes indicate the references to documents of the Church and of the Order.

**Article I** – *Our Commitment to Poverty* – has been enriched with references to:

fundamental Trinitarian and Christological models, as well as inspirational models (Saint Francis) for our life in poverty;  
the Capuchin tradition.

Other clarifications and inclusions concern:

the apostolic dimension of our life in poverty;  
simplicity – austerity and minority;  
solidarity with the poor;  
the observance of common life and the sharing of goods;  
the criteria of equity, pluriformity and enculturation  
the *scrutinium paupertatis* ('poverty inventory').

**Article II** – *Poverty Concerning Goods and Money* has some clarifications about:

personal management of money;  
financial surplus at the local fraternity level and at the provincial level;  
investments

The criterion *the minimum necessary and not the maximum allowed* is clarified. It is to be put into practice in the differing contexts in which we live. In the light of PCO IV this requirement is connected to the criteria of *equity*, pluriformity and enculturation.

Given the relevance that the topic of *economic solidarity* has gained within the Order, the topic will be treated in a special number at the end of the Article II where the matter is already considered.

**Article III** – *Poverty in Our Buildings* has inclusions concerning:

the relationship between our dwellings and the dwellings of the poor in the region;  
the correspondence between our dwellings and our lifestyle of poverty and minority;  
the need to avoid the accumulation of property and consequently the need to restructure property assets.

**Article IV** – The Administration of Goods highlights the criteria of *transparency* and *involvement*, as well as the need for formation in the spirit of the *fraternal economy*.

Other inclusions concern the texts that refer to bursars and administrators, as well as the need for a more detailed regulation for the administration of goods in the *Codices additicii*.

In all, Chapter IV has 18 numbers, two more than the current text of the Constitutions. This is due to the introduction of a number on economic solidarity and another in Article IV on the administration of goods (cf the *Proposed Revision* nn. 74 and 77). Article I has six numbers (62-67), three more than the current Constitutions. This is due to the introduction of some matters, the division of some numbers of the text, and the transfer of some paragraphs. Article II has seven numbers, one more than current Constitutions. A special number has been added regarding economic solidarity. Article III has two numbers (one less than the current Constitutions). Number 69 of the current Constitutions has been transferred, in the proposal, to the complementary code (Statutes or Ordinances). Article IV has three numbers, one less than the current Constitutions. A new number has been introduced (n.77) at the beginning of the article, while nn.72 and 73 are transferred to the complementary code.

## Synoptic overview

### Article I

| Current Text | Proposed Revision            |
|--------------|------------------------------|
| 59: 1-3      | 62: 1-6                      |
| 59: 4-8      | 63: 1-6                      |
| 60: 3-4      | 64: 1-5                      |
| 60: 5-6      | 65: 1-3 + complementary code |
| 61: 1-3      | 66: 1-4                      |
| 60: 1        | 67: 1-2 + complementary code |

### Article II

| Current Text | Proposed Revision            |
|--------------|------------------------------|
| 62: 1-4      | 68: 1-3 + complementary code |
| 63: 1-4      | 69: 1-4                      |
| 64: 1-2      | 70: 1-2                      |
| 65: 1-4      | 71: 1-4 + complementary code |
| 66: 1-4      | 72: 1-4                      |
| 67: 1-5.7    | 73: 1-7 + complementary code |
| 67: 6        | 74: 1-6 + complementary code |

### Article III

| Current Text | Proposed Revision          |
|--------------|----------------------------|
| 68: 1-3      | 75: 1-3                    |
| 60: 2        | 75: 4 + complementary code |
| 69: 1-3      | complementary code         |
| 70: 1-4      | 76: 1-2                    |

### Article IV

| Current Text  | Proposed Revision            |
|---------------|------------------------------|
|               | 77: 1-5                      |
| 71: 1-7.9     | 78: 1-5 + complementary code |
| 67: 8 + 71,10 | 78: 6                        |
|               | 78: 7-8                      |
| 72: 1-2       | complementary code           |
| 73: 1-3       | complementary code           |
| 74: 1-4       | 79: 1-5                      |

### III. Editorial Principles

Compared to the first three chapters of the Chapters. Chapter IV uses the third person plural more often as the subject, even when the first person plural could have been easily used, according to the general criterion in use after 1968. The *Proposed Revision* generally follows this detail of Chapter IV, at least when the current text has not been modified or altered. However, we have formulated some various new texts in the first person plural- texts which tend to be exhortations.

The change in terminology (from *superiors* to *ministers* and/or *guardians*) corresponds with a general norm adopted for the entire text of the Constitutions. This conforms with a widespread practice in the Order. The Commission has followed this practice whenever it could. There are instances where this not been possible, or it has not been opportune to replace *Major Superiors* with *Ministers*. The fundamental objective to pursue is faithfulness to the spirit of Saint Francis rather than to textual formulas. The same change in terminology will not be indicated again in the explanatory notes. Similarly the replacement of the noun *province* with *circumscription* – a term that includes all the entities within the Order – is not indicated in the notes. Nor is the substitution of *Council* for *definitory*.

### IV. The Complementary Code

The *Proposed Revision* of Chapter IV assigns 28 norms to the complementary code, nine of which are new passages. (cf *Proposed Revision*, nn. 65,3; 57,2; 71,2; 73,5[2]; 74,3; 75,4; 78,3-4). The following numbers of the current Constitutions would be transferred to the complementary code: nn. 62,4-5; 67,7; 69; 71,2 (partly); 71,4-7; 72; 73. Three current Ordinances are placed among the norms of the complementary code (4/1; 4/2; 4/3).

The criteria already indicated in the presentation of Chapters 1-3 are also valid for Chapter IV:

The Commission believes it opportune to transfer to the complementary code only that which can be easily changed over time;

In order to make a prudent decision, according to the sound criteria for the transfer of some secondary norms, it is necessary go ahead first with the analysis and revision of the Chapters of the Constitutions.

For the Commission

*Br. Felice Cangelosi* ofm cap  
Vicar General  
President

*Br. José Maria Sanz* ofm cap  
Commission Secretary

*Rome, 15th July 2009*

# Technical Notes

The Commission invites the brothers to keep in mind the suggestions already set out in the *Introductory Notes* to Chapter One. With regard to Chapter four be especially aware that

- 1) To facilitate the understanding and study of the proposals, the new texts have been placed side by side in columns: the first column contains the text of the Constitutions in force at present *in one's own language*; the second column contains the text of the "revised version" *in one's own language*; when required, the third column contains the text of the norms that are envisaged as belonging to the supplementary Code, again *in one's own language*.
- 2) In the second and third columns the text of each paragraph is preceded by a rubric: *current text* (when the text currently in force has not be changed); *current text with additions* (when the text that is currently in force has been retained with new elements added); *current text with changes and additions* (when the text which is currently in force has been partly changed and new elements have been added); *new text* (when the text is completely new).
- 3) Each proposal is accompanied by explanatory notes, which appear after the summary of each individual number in the text. The explanatory notes contain only what in the opinion of the Commission is regarded as necessary for the understanding of changes or additions or the introduction of a new text. Reference to the documents of the Church or of the Order is restricted to what is necessary and the bibliographical references have been greatly reduced.
- 4) The following are presented in another table: the *Latin* text of the Constitutions appears in the first column; the *Latin* text of the "revised proposals" appears in the second column; when required the *Latin* text of the norms that are envisaged as belonging to the supplementary Code is presented.
- 5) The Order is invited to consider the proposed text, evaluating in particular the changes put forward, the new additions and in some cases the new arrangement of the content presented with some transfer of text.
- 6) Respecting the freedom of each brother to express individually his own opinion, the work would be greatly assisted if the observations were shared by groups of brothers or collected and sent in by the Ministers themselves, using the sheets provided following the attached models.
- 7) The evaluation of each number or paragraph is to be made using the sheets provided following the model prepared by the Commission Secretariat.  
All the parts of each sheet must be filled in, keeping in mind that anonymous sheets are not acceptable, or those sent in by "a group of brothers..." without any signature.  
Whether you agree with the proposed text or not it is sufficient to "briefly" express your own opinion.  
If instead you propose an alternative text this should be presented clearly and concisely. You must provide the reason for the alternative text which is being proposed.

*The evaluation sheets for chapter 4 and the proposals for the same should reach the Commission by 28<sup>th</sup> February 2010.*

Rome, 21<sup>st</sup> July 2009

Br. Francesco Polliani, OFM<sup>Cap</sup>  
Secretary of the Commission

Model form to be sent to the Secretary of the Commission  
(PLEASE SEND BY E-MAIL NO LATER THAN 28<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY 2010)

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**C o m m i s s i o C o n s t i t u t i o n u m**

[costituzioni@ofmcap.org](mailto:costituzioni@ofmcap.org)

**EVALUATION**

*of each no. or § of the “Proposed revision of Chapter IV”.*

*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:

Name:

Surname:

(...)

♦ THE EVALUATION refers to n. (        ) of the “Proposed revision of Chapter IV”.

♦ EVALUATION:

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

♦ Reasons for the alternative text:



# Commissio Constitutionum

## CHAPTER IV<sup>10</sup>

### OUR LIFE OF POVERTY<sup>11</sup>

#### Article I

#### Our Commitment to Poverty

n. 62

| CONSTITUTIONS (1990)   | PROPOSED REVISED TEXT   |
|--|---|
|  | <b>New text</b> <sup>(1)</sup><br><i>1. God the Most High, perfect Trinity and simple Unity, is a mystery of humility. The pure relationship of love between the divine Persons, which overflows into creation and into salvation history, is the model of all human relationships and the foundation of our life in poverty and humility.</i>  |
| <b>59,1.</b> Jesus Christ, the Son of God, Who receives everything from the Father and, with the Father, communicates everything in the Spirit, was sent to evangelize the poor. Although He was rich, for our sake He was made poor and in our likeness that by His poverty we might become rich. | <b>Current text (59,1) with addition</b><br><i>2. The greatest manifestation of the humility of God is Jesus Christ, the Son<sup>(2)</sup> who receives everything from the Father and shares all things with the Father in the Spirit, and who was sent to proclaim the Good News to the poor. Although he was rich He became poor for our sake, and came in the likeness of men, so that we might be enriched by His poverty.</i> |
| <b>59,2.</b> From His birth in a manger until His death on a cross He loved the poor and, as an example for His disciples, bore witness to the love of the Father Who seeks them.  | <b>Current text (59,2)</b><br><i>3. From his birth in the manger until His death on the cross He loved the poor and, as an example for His disciples, bore witness<sup>(3)</sup> to the love of the Father who seeks them.</i>  |
| <b>59,3.</b> The Church recognizes voluntary poverty, especially in religious, as a sign of the following of Christ and proposes Saint Francis as a prophetic image of evangelical poverty.  | <b>Current text (59,3)</b><br><i>4. The Church recognizes voluntary poverty, especially in religious, as a sign of the following of Christ, and proposes Saint Francis as a prophetic image of gospel poverty.</i>  |
|  | <b>New text</b> <sup>(4)</sup>  |

<sup>10</sup> The Italian text of the Commission's "Proposed revision" differs in many places from that of the Italian edition of the *Constitutions* published in 2002. The translation has been revised to make it more faithful to the Latin original. This work was done by constantly comparing the Italian versions of 1971, 1978, 1983, 1990 and 2002.

<sup>11</sup> The Commission thinks it right to keep the present title of Chapter IV without further specification or additions. It did not seem pertinent to say: *Our life in poverty and minority*. As already noted, *minority* is a dimension that involves and permeates not just a single aspect of our life but the whole of it. One could perhaps add the phrase *in minority* to the headings of all the chapters of the Constitutions, but it is not necessary; it is sufficient to understand that the Constitutions are the "life of the Capuchin Lesser Brothers", and in that "life" the two components of the phrase – *lesser-brothers* – constitute a single *substantive* (from *substantia*) which indicates our specific charismatic identity. One also has to keep in mind that the material in chapter IV is in part the object of the "vow" to which we oblige ourselves by profession; but we take a vow of poverty (having nothing of our own), not of minority.

|  |  |
|--|--|
|  | 5. Filled with amazement at the beauty of God, who is humility, patience and meekness <sup>(5)</sup> , he was led to the choice of poverty, which he experienced in the humility of the Incarnation and the charity of the Passion <sup>(6)</sup> , so that, naked himself, he could follow the crucified Lord in His nakedness <sup>(7)</sup> . |
|  | <b>New text</b><br>6. The gospel ideal of poverty led Francis to humility of heart and to radical self dispossession, bringing him to experience compassion for the poor and the weak and to share in their life <sup>(8)</sup> .  |

## Explanatory Notes

- (1) The proposed formula introduces the Chapter by bringing out the Trinitarian foundation of poverty. The text is inspired by some expressions of St Francis (cf. *LOrd* 52:) and is intended to show that God is humility precisely because He is Trinity, because of the relationship of love flowing among the three Persons. The text is also inspired by *Vita Consecrata* (n. 21), to underline the reciprocal total self-giving of the Persons of the Trinity as the model of all human relationships and the foundation of our poverty and humility. Cf. also *Caritas in veritate* n. 54.
- (2) The new opening phrase added to the current text establishes the link with the preceding §. The formulation of the text therefore requires: “and who was sent to preach good news to the poor”.
- (3) In the Latin text the first verb is in the perfect tense (*amavit - loved*), and the second in the imperfect (*testificabatur – gave witness*). The text of 1968 said: “A nativitate in praesepio usque ad mortem in cruce amorem Dei quaerentis pauperes testificabatur in discipulorum exemplum”<sup>12</sup> (From his birth in the manger to his death on the cross he gave witness to the love of God seeking out the poor as an example for his disciples). In 1982 the text was modified by inserting *amavit pauperes*, changing *Dei* into *Patris* and inserting the pronoun *eos* (= *pauperes*)<sup>13</sup>. We believe that in doing this the revisers neglected to modify the verbs to make the tenses agree, and it seems more appropriate that both verbs should be in the perfect.
- (4) To make the definition in the preceding § more explicit (*Saint Francis is a prophetic image of gospel poverty*), it was thought appropriate to recall the personal example of St Francis. We therefore propose to insert two paragraphs into the current text: the first explains how Francis was led to choose poverty; the second expresses what the choice of poverty actually meant for Francis.
- (5) The proposed text has a strongly Christological connotation. It begins with a reference to *LodAl*, in which Francis, among the many divine attributes, mentions four which are a kind of watermark of the attributes of Jesus: the Son of God who “did not cling avidly to his equality with God” (*Phil* 2,6), but humbled himself to the point of annihilation (*You are humility!*); the *Christus patiens*, (suffering Christ) who gave himself up to suffer on the cross (*You are patient!*); thus became “the fairest of the sons of men” (Ps 44,3; [*You are beauty!*]), the “meek king” with a heart full of gentleness (*You are meekness!*)<sup>14</sup>. In v.6 of *LodAl* Francis repeats and joins together “You are beauty!” and “You are meekness!”, as if to underline that the beauty of the Son of God is identical to meekness and manifests itself in meekness, or that conversely beauty is the external reflection of that inner *attractiveness* which is imparted by meekness<sup>15</sup>. The association of *beauty* and *meekness* (cf. the *meek lamb* of Jer 11,19) is perhaps a hint of the

<sup>12</sup> Cf. *Acta Capituli generalis specialis Ordinis Fratrum Minorum Capuccinorum Romae a die 19 Augusti ad 25 Octobris 1968 celebrati*. Romae, Curia generalis OFMCap., 1969; II, 428.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. *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; 232; Cf. FR. IGLESIAS (a cura di), *Constitutiones Fratrum Minorum Capuccinorum post Concilium Vaticanum II retractatae (a.1968-1988)*. I. *Textus*. Romae, Curia generalis OFMCap., 1988; 60, note 7.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. J.-C. COMINARDI, *Quand la louange prend toute la place. Prier avec saint François* (Presence de saint François, 36). Paris, Les Editions Franciscaines, 1994; 164-180.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. I. RODRIGUEZ HERRERA - A. ORTEGA CARMONA, *Los Escritos de San Francisco de Asis...* (Publicaciones del Instituto Teológico Franciscano). Murcia, Editorial Espigas, 2003; 88-89.

“unimaginable *beauty*” and the suffering of the crucified man-seraph contemplated in the vision of the stigmata (cf *1Cel* 94)»<sup>16</sup>. The biblical text by which Francis was most likely inspired, is *2Cor* 10,1<sup>17</sup>; and from this we can deduce that he made reference to the *pruytēs* (sweetness, gentleness, humility, kindness, meekness)<sup>18</sup> and to the *epiekeēs* (meekness, kindness, amiability)<sup>19</sup>, attitudes which are characteristic of Jesus in his relationships with people during his life on earth and are typical features of the lordship of Christ. He is the saviour-king who on entering Jerusalem<sup>20</sup> fulfils the prophecy of Zachariah<sup>21</sup>, after having proclaimed himself *prays*, or of lowly condition<sup>22</sup>, and *tapeinōs* of heart. From this experiential concept of God Francis derives his choice of a life in poverty-humility. But the biblical hinterland of vv. 4 and 6 of *LodAl* clarifies their underlying meaning and aesthetic dimensions, which have recently found an echo in the teaching of *Vita consecrata*: “The One who in death appears to human eyes as disfigured and without beauty, so much so that the bystanders cover their faces (cf. Is. 53:2-3), fully reveals the beauty and power of God's love” (n. 24).

- (6) The inserted phrase *experienced in the humility and charity of the Incarnation and in the charity of the Passion*, is a literal reference to *1Cel* 84, and brings out the foundation and origin of the choice of radical poverty which Francis made. He arrives at poverty after having listened, on February 24, 1209 in the Portiuncula, to the words of the gospel (*Mt* 10,7-9; *Mt* 6,7-12; *Lk* 9,1-6; 10,1-16) about the sending of the disciples (cf. *1Cel* 22; *3Comp* 25), but also – according to the account of *3Comp* (29) – after having consulted the book of the gospels: the first time *Mt* 19,21; the second time *Lk* 9,3ff.; and the third time *Lk* 9,23ff. Francis encountered poverty because he had heard the Lord's words, not because he had seen it in others. He himself makes this clear in his Testament. (cf. *Test* 16). Through the *sacramentum* of the word he discovered the *reality* (*res*) of Christ's poverty, which particularly impressed him and gripped him totally, to the point of provoking in him a profound sense of emotional participation and an intense desire to conform his life to Christ in His poverty. In the light of the *Sacrum commercium*, we can say that the poverty of Christ is the genetic cause of Francis' poverty<sup>23</sup>. He discovered poverty in the Incarnation of the Son of God and in the Paschal Mystery. He came to know the historical reality of Jesus “not according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit” (cf. *2Cor* 5,16). Contemplation of the poor and crucified Christ put the seal on his vision of the Christian life. He was the lover whose only wealth is his Beloved, and in this way he was able to see the cross as glory and the historical form of the poverty of the crucified one as his absolute and permanent norm of life, the spiritual expression of the covenant.<sup>24</sup> The Capuchin Constitutions have constantly stressed the fact that Francis contemplates poverty in the mysteries of Christ: “Our Seraphic Father Saint Francis pondered the most high poverty of Christ, King of heaven and earth: When he was born *he did not have even a small place in the inn* for his dwelling, and he lived *as a pilgrim*, staying in the houses of others. And when he was dying *he had no place to rest his head*. Reflecting moreover that He was most poor in everything else, and wishing to imitate Him, Francis commanded the friars in the Rule not to possess anything of their own, so that unencum-

<sup>16</sup> *Scritti di san Francesco d'Assisi*. Translated by F. Olgiati and C. Paolazzi. Introduction and notes by C. Paolazzi in FF<sup>2</sup> 2004 p. 175, nota 8.

<sup>17</sup> Cf. I. RODRIGUEZ HERRERA – A. ORTEGA CARMONA, *Los Escritos*... 89.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. *1Cor* 4,21; *Eph* 4,2

<sup>19</sup> Cf. *Phil* 4,5.

<sup>20</sup> Cf. *Mt* 21,4-5.

<sup>21</sup> *Zac* 9,9 expresses the post-exilic expectation of a non-Zealot messiah who renounces violence and who in that sense is meek. In *Mt* the meaning of *pruytēs* and *prays* derives from a Christology structured in OT terms: Jesus is the “peacemaker king” riding on a donkey and a colt (*Mt* 21,5), he is wise, meek and humble for those who are “weary and oppressed”, who are consoled by the light and easy yoke of the wisdom of Jesus, and to whom he addresses the words: “learn from me” (*Mt* 11,29), which is the same thing as discipleship. Cf. H. FRANKEMÖLLE, *pruytēs, prays* in *Dizionario esegetico del Nuovo Testamento* II, 1087-1088.

<sup>22</sup> Cf. *Mt* 11,29. A typically Semitic thought pattern: the Hebrew concept of *'ani*, which underlies the Matthean text, leads us to conclude that by *prays* (meek) we are also to understand the humble condition of the Messiah. Cf. W. BAUDER – H.-H. ESSER, *Umiltà, mansuetudine* in *Dizionario dei concetti biblici del Nuovo Testamento*... 1890.

<sup>23</sup> Cf. L. HARDICK, *Povertà* in *Dizionario Francescano* 1553-1559.

<sup>24</sup> Cf. J. GARRIDO, *La forma di vita di santa Chiara* (Presenza di S. Francesco 35). Milano, Edizioni Biblioteca Francescana, 1989; 287.

bered, *like pilgrims on earth and citizens of Heaven, they might run with alacrity of spirit in the way of God.*” (Const 1536, n. 69)<sup>25</sup>.

- (7) The final phrase in the text: *so that, naked himself, he could follow the crucified Lord in His nakedness*, is an almost literal reference to *LegM* (II,4). The sources particularly stress the theme of Francis’s nakedness: from the moment when he undresses and gives his clothes back to his father (cf. *LMj*, II,4; *LMj VII*; *L3C* IV,19; *AP* I,8) to the moment when he dies naked on the earth (c. *2Cel* CLXII, 214; *2Cel* CLXIII,217; *LMj*, XIV,3; *LMj VII*,3; 2319), through a whole journey of discipleship “in nakedness” (i.e. in the most extreme poverty), from start to finish (Cf. *LMj XIV*,4) following the Crucified One in his nakedness (cf. *LMj*, II,4). The hagiographical sources also recount that Francis stripped or had himself stripped as a sign of a penitential attitude (cf. *LMj VI*,2; *LegP*, 60; *2MP*, 61), and that he ordered Brother Rufino (cf. *Fioretti XXX*) and another brother (cf. *LMj VIII*, 5 ) to strip as a penance. Nudity, as a spiritual attitude of radical expropriation, is required by Francis of those who wish to enter the Order (cf. *2Cel* 194; (*LMj VII*,2). Spiritual “nudity” therefore appears as an essential characteristic of the *forma vitae* of the lesser brothers. This is underlined by Jacques de Vitry: “*They renounce all ownership, deny themselves and, taking up their cross, they strip themselves of everything in order to follow Christ in his nakedness*” (*Historia Occidentalis*, 1, II, c. 32, 5). In the Capuchin Constitutions we find the expression *the Crucified One, naked and humble*<sup>26</sup> and in *Proposal* n. 11 of PCO VI we read: “Francis embodied gospel radicalness and, in his unmistakable style, stressed the fact that to live and proclaim the Gospel means *nudus nudum Christum sequi.*”
- (8) The proposed text is intended to highlight the choices made by Francis: poverty as expropriation (*living with nothing of one’s own*) and *minority*, above all as a spiritual attitude (*poverty of spirit* or *humility of heart*) and then as a sharing of life with the poor.

## n. 63

| CONSTITUTIONS (1990)   | PROPOSED REVISED TEXT   |
|--|---|
|  | <p><b>New text</b> <sup>(1)</sup></p> <p>1. <i>Holding fast to the gospel insights of Saint Francis and to the tradition of the Order, we take on as a special task to follow the poverty of our Lord Jesus Christ in simplicity of life and joyful austerity, in hard work and trust in Providence, and in charity towards all.</i></p>  |
| <p><b>59,4.</b> Through our poverty for the sake of the Kingdom of God we participate in the filial attitude of Christ toward the Father and in His condition of being a brother and servant among people.</p> | <p><b>Current text (59,4) with additions and changes</b></p> <p>2. <i>Poverty</i> <sup>(2)</sup>, <i>chosen in order to follow Christ</i> <sup>(3)</sup>, <i>makes us sharers</i> in the filial attitude of Christ <sup>(4)</sup> toward the Father and in His condition of being a brother and servant among people, <i>and inclines us to live in solidarity with the little ones of this world</i> <sup>(5)</sup>.</p> |
| <p><b>59,5.</b> Evangelical poverty embraces availability in love, conformity with the poor and crucified Christ Who came to serve, and leads to solidarity with the little ones of this world.</p>            | <p><b>Current text (59,5), expanded and modified</b></p> <p>3. <i>Commitment to the gospel ideal of the highest poverty, which makes us heirs and kings in the kingdom of heaven</i> <sup>(6)</sup>, <i>calls for</i> <sup>(7)</sup> <i>availability in love and conformity with the poor and crucified Christ Who came to serve.</i></p>   |

<sup>25</sup> Cf. *Constitutiones Ordinis Fratrum Minorum Capuccinorum saeculorum decursu promulgatae*. Vol. I. *Constitutiones Antiquae* (1529-1643). Anastatic edition. Vol. II. *Constitutiones Recensiores* (1909-1925). Anastatic edition. *Accedunt Constitutiones an. 1896 Bibliographia et Indices*. Roma, Curia generalis OFMCap., 1980-1986. For a specific reference to what is said above, modified vol. I, 53; 105-106; 172-173; 248; 360; 485; 596; vol. II, 89; 242; 396; 504.

<sup>26</sup> Cf. *Constitutiones ... saeculorum decursu promulgatae* vol. I, 63; 122; 189; 266; 398; 527; 617; vol. II, 129; 276; 428; 541.

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <p>59,6. Let us not make the gifts of nature and grace our own as if they were given only for ourselves, but let us strive to use them entirely for the benefit of the People of God.</p>               | <p><b>Current text (59,6), with one change</b><br/> 4. Let us not claim the gifts of nature and grace as our own as if they were given only for ourselves <sup>(8)</sup>, but let us strive to <i>make them entirely available</i> for the benefit of the People of God.</p>   |
| <p>59,7. Let us use temporal things with gratitude by sharing them with the indigent and, at the same time, by giving an example of the proper use of things to people who desire them excessively.</p> | <p><b>Current text (59,7)</b><br/> 5. Let us use temporal things gratefully and share them with those in need, at the same time giving an example of the right use of things to people who desire them excessively.</p>  |
| <p>59,8. We will truly proclaim to the poor that God Himself is with them in so far as we share in their lot.</p>   | <p><b>Current text (59,8), expanded and modified</b><br/> 6. <i>In the awareness that voluntary poverty in the following of Christ is in itself apostolic</i> <sup>(9)</sup>, we will truly proclaim to the poor that God Himself is with them to the degree that we <i>are available to them</i> (10) and share in their condition.</p> |

### Explanatory Notes

- (1) After the reference to the example of Saint Francis, the new text has been introduced to provide a link with Capuchin tradition. The text as formulated is inspired by the Constitutions of 1968, 1970, 1974, which said: “Speciale munus Ordinis nostri est, ut freti providentia Dei et fideliter laborantes, praeceptum paupertatis revera servemus” (“It is a special task of our Order that we should truly observe the precept of poverty, relying on God’s providence and working faithfully”). The new formulation maintains the content of that text, underlining the idea of the *speciale munus*: to live in poverty is a special mission of the Order. At the same time it maintains the reference to *hard work* and *trust in Providence*, as essential components of a truly poor life. The aspect of *sharing in the lot of ordinary people* also appears essential for us, called as we are by vocation to be part of the company of the poor. From this point of view the text is inspired by the teaching of Paul VI: “We have often wondered how it is that the sons of St Francis are less present among the masses of working people than they fittingly should be, with their words full of popular appeal, *their vocation to share the bread of ordinary people earned by the sweat of their brow*, and with their ability to sow joy and hope among the thorns of this life!” (*A hard and perfect road*. Address to participants at the General Chapter of 21 October 1968). The text, as formulated, also reflects PCO VI: “Within the Franciscan movement the Capuchins have placed particular emphasis on *austere simplicity* in their manner of living poverty and *closeness to the people* in practising minority (preaching to the people, serving the sick and plague victims, questing...). These values, when they are lived in brotherhood, renewed and encultured, are a powerful witness to the gospel and a stimulus for the advancement of the weakest people”. (*Proposal* n. 5).
- (2) According to some opinions raised in the Commission, the change of subject, from (*we*) *participate* (current text) to *Poverty... gives us a share* (proposed text), was intended to make the text more concrete: it is not poverty in the abstract, but *our life of poverty that makes us sharers... .*
- (3) The phrase *for the kingdom* or *for the Kingdom of heaven* in Matthew’s gospel (19,12), and subsequently in the patristic and liturgical sources and in the documents of the Magisterium, is more properly used in reference to virginity and celibacy. For this reason the Commission proposes to replace the current formulation, *poverty for the sake of the kingdom of God*, by *poverty, chosen in order to follow Christ..*
- (4) The Latin text reads: *habitudinem Christi filialem erga Patrem*, with the preposition *erga*, which has a local meaning (in the direction of, towards, opposite)<sup>27</sup>, corresponding to the Greek *pròs* (in front of, directly ahead, preceding). The text approximates to the Johannine vision *lógos - pròs* (towards) *tòn theón* (Jn 1,1). Translators should take this feature of the Latin text into account.

<sup>27</sup> Cf. A. ERNOUT – A. MEILLET, *Dictionnaire étymologique de la langue latine. Histoire des mots*. Paris 1959; 201; AE. FORCELLINI, *Lexicon totius latinitatis*. Secunda impressio anastatica confecta quartae editionis aa. 1864-1926. Patavii 1965II, 292.

- (5) This paragraph anticipates the final expression of the current n. 59,5 *and it leads to solidarity with the little ones of this world*. In this way the text (*Proposed revision* n. 63,2 – *Current text* n. 59,4) suffers no alteration and enables a fuller development of the concepts contained in the following paragraph.
- (6) The proposed formulation returns to the *poverty-Kingdom* link in the light of the gospel beatitude (cf. *Mt* 5,3; *Lk* 6,20) and of Francis’ hymn to poverty: “This is that sublime height of most exalted poverty which has made you, my beloved brothers, heirs and kings in the kingdom of heaven, poor in temporal things but rich in virtue” (*Rb* 6,4). What the Saint has in mind is not only the reward of glory in heaven...but also the fact that, here and now, we belong, by right, to the Kingdom and have a “royal dignity”. (*LPer* 61)<sup>28</sup>.
- (7) In the Commission’s judgement, availability in love and conformity to the poor and crucified Christ are basic requirements and essential conditions in order to live in poverty. We therefore prefer to say that commitment to *the gospel ideal of highest poverty* “calls for” *availability in love and conformity to the poor and crucified Christ*. This is why we believe the Latin verb *complectitur* should be replaced by another that is more appropriate to the concept.
- (8) The use of the pronoun *our own* seems to lend the text greater immediacy and impact. At the same time it also simplifies the phrase *velut nobismetipsis data* (“as if they were given to us”) found in the Latin text, which is not always appropriately translated.
- (9) The opening words of this paragraph, prefixed to the current text, are intended to bring out the apostolic dimension of our life in poverty. It implicitly refers to *Proposal* n. 5 of PCO VI.
- (10) The text is slightly amplified in the light of PCO VI and with a reference to n. 45 of the 1968 text, which said: *quatenus simus eorum adiutores et sortis participes*<sup>29</sup>. (In so far as we are their helpers and share in their lot).

#### n. 64

| CONSTITUTIONS (1990)  | PROPOSED REVISED TEXT   |
|---|---|
| 60,1-2 <sup>(1)</sup>   |   |
| 60,3. For, in order that our individual and communal poverty be authentic, it must be a manifestation of an interior poverty that needs no explanation.             | <b>Current text (60,3)</b><br>1. For <sup>(2)</sup> our individual and communal poverty to be authentic it must be the expression of an interior poverty that needs no explanation.   |
| 60,4. Poverty demands a frugal and simple way of life in clothing, food, dwellings, and a renunciation of every form of social, political and ecclesiastical power. | <b>Current text (60,4), expanded and with deletions</b> <sup>(3)</sup><br>2. Poverty demands a frugal and simple life-style. <i>We should therefore strive to reduce our material needs to a minimum and to live only on what is necessary, and firmly reject consumerism in our attitude and practice</i> <sup>(4)</sup> . |
|   | <b>New text</b><br>3. <i>Austerity makes us concentrate on spiritual values, preserves us from anything that weakens our relationship with God and our brothers and sisters, and opens us to solidarity</i> <sup>(5)</sup> .  |
| 60,4. Poverty demands (...) a renunciation of every form of social, political and ecclesiastical power.   | <b>Current text (60,4), adapted and expanded</b><br>4. Poverty requires us not to <i>seek for ourselves</i> any form of prestige, power, or dominion <sup>(6)</sup> , whether in society, in politics or in the Church. <i>Rather we should choose to be servants, and subject to every human creature, accepting</i>       |

<sup>28</sup> Cf. L. IRIARTE, *Vocazione francescana. Sintesi degli ideali di san Francesco e di santa Chiara*. Quarta edizione italiana... Bologna, Centro Editoriale Dehoniano, 2006; 189.

<sup>29</sup> *Acta Capituli generalis specialis... 1968*; II vol., 429.

|  |  |
|--|--|
|  | <i>the precariousness and vulnerability of our condition as lesser brothers</i> <sup>(7)</sup> .   |
|  | <b>New text</b><br>5. <i>Let us therefore embrace all the demands of living without anything of our own, conscious that true and holy poverty is not such without the spirit of minority, and that minority requires a life that is truly humble and poor</i> <sup>(8)</sup> . |

## Explanatory Notes

- (1) §§ 1-2 of the current n. 60 have not been deleted, but transferred later (cf. nn. 67,1; 75,4).
- (2) Because of the transfer of the first §§ of the current text, the conjunction *in fact* is no longer required.
- (3) This is not a textual deletion, because the current formulation, which has two parts, is amplified and part two is transferred to paragraph 4. This has been done in order to highlight two aspects of poverty: austerity and minority. Some details from the first part (clothing, food, houses) are brought out later (cf. *Proposed revision*, n. 73,6).
- (4) The new text which completes the current one is inspired by *Proposal 26* of PCO VI and by *Proposal 26* of PCO VII. Here we propose to underline further the meaning of austerity. Austerity is not just a matter of an external attribute found in the lives of saints, although as such it does have some value. Rather, it refers above all to the quality of moderation that should be evident in our lives, whatever our needs and however they may manifest themselves. The final part of the § merits particular emphasis, with its reference to the consumer mentality: we too are subject to its influence and should keep it at bay.
- (5) § 3 expounds on the meaning of the previous text. In an assertive sentence, similar to so many others in the Constitutions currently in force, the effects of austerity are underlined. Thus it links up with PCO VII, which among other things relates austerity with solidarity (cf. *Proposal* n. 26). In Circular Letter n. 24 (*Courageous choices for a more fraternal world*) (22 May 2005), Br. John Corriveau broadens the relationship still further: austerity “mediates between solidarity and equity. The use of modern tools of technology varies greatly throughout the world. Think of the tools which have become ordinary and necessary to our lives in the past 10 years: cell-phones, internet access, computers, and a host of other electronic devices. Access to the modern tools of technology is a major source of inequality in our world. Equity demands that the fraternal economy make available all that which is necessary, according to the diverse needs of each brother. Solidarity demands that the fraternal economy share resources between brothers and fraternities. In a world increasingly controlled by the ‘proliferation of desire,’ an economy without austerity leaves nothing for solidarity: ‘Marketing and advertising collapse the distinction between necessity and superfluity. The reach of need and want run to infinity. The consumer is ‘trained’ to exceed his/her satisfaction and to desire an infinite array of goods, products and services.’ Equity without austerity leaves nothing for solidarity! Austerity is a constitutive element of a truly ‘fraternal’ economy (n. 6.2)”.

The position of the text also reminds us of the ascetical value of austerity. Reducing our own material needs or depriving ourselves of something that may well be useful or necessary is not something that we do spontaneously. It takes effort and sacrifice, both as individuals and communities, but such a process is liberating because it enables us to concentrate on the essentials (God, the values of the spirit, the brothers): “Poverty, minority and itinerancy, as well as being constituent elements of the following of Christ, bring Franciscan freedom. They are means to our end, i.e., to building the kingdom of God or, in Franciscan language, building brotherhood wherever and whenever we can. Fraternally-structured poverty, minority and itinerancy, according to the situation in each place, help Capuchins to free themselves from the effects of structural sin, inconsistent inner drives, manipulation by other power interests, lack of skills for crossing boundaries, and anachronistic traditions that enslave us, in order to build a viable fraternity in the 21st century” (VII PCO, n. 4). So, paragraphs 2 and 3 complete one another: § 2 stresses the radical quality of austerity, namely the privations it involves, and therefore the effort and struggle required to practise it; while § 3 aims to describe the result of this ascetical process.

- (6) The text of § 4 underlines a second aspect of poverty, more directly connected to minority. In fact, it is also part of our choice of poverty to renounce “all forms of social, political or ecclesiastical power”.

The Commission reflected at length on this expression in the current text (n. 60,4) in the light of elements emerging from PCO VII, with particular reference to Proposal 18: “The word of God enlightens and inspires the decision of a Capuchin brother who wishes to live in minority. From it he learns the need to abandon every form of dominant power (cf Mk 9,33-37; Rnb V,12-15) and the fact that service is the correct attitude of him who understands Jesus as servant (cf Lk 22,24-27). In the same way, the Gospel teaches him to identify with the excluded (cf Mt 25, 31-46) and to share all good things with them (cf Rm 15,27). A good use of power is the “genuine sacrifice” characteristic of one who has had a profound experience of Jesus (cf. Rm 12,1). The modern social sciences make it clear that, because all social relationships are asymmetrical, it is impossible to live without exercising power. Jesus taught his followers not to “lord it over” one another as nonbelievers do (cf. Mt 20:25;Mk 10:42-45; Lk 22:24-27; 1 Pt 5:3). Francis wrote that the brothers should not exercise power or dominion (*RnB V 12-15*)”. Bearing in mind also that the connotations of the noun “power” are not the same in all cultures, we preferred to adopt a wider formulation which prescribes that we are to avoid *seeking for ourselves forms of prestige, power or dominion*.

- (7) In the second part of § 4 the text describes in a positive sense the choices that flow from our profession of a life in poverty and minority. It does this by reference to an expression of *2Lf IX,45* and to another from PCO VII (*Proposal 3*). This gives greater prominence to the aspect of minority.
- (8) § 5 serves as a concluding summary of n. 65 and is intended to underline the unbreakable connection between poverty and minority. The proposed text was formulated on the basis of the statement of PCO VI: “Without minority, our poverty would have no meaning and would become a source of pride, just as without material poverty, interior poverty would be unreal” (*Proposal n. 3*; cf. also *Project 2006 n. 42,4*). The Commission’s formulation contextualises poverty and minority within the category of a life *sine proprio*, in which a much broader horizon is visible than the one offered by the generally accepted meaning of the word poverty. Living *sine proprio* refers to the attitude of someone who does not appropriate anything to himself; it is the fundamental quality of the way of life of the friars, so that almost nothing else is needed to define how a friar lives. Also, this “life without anything of one’s own” is defined not just in relation to ownership of things, but also and above all as the attitude of someone who has renounced even his own legitimate rights and who therefore truly lives without anything of his own. This attitude should permeate every relationship, not just to things but also and above all with God and the brothers<sup>30</sup>.

## n. 65

| CONSTITUTIONS (1990)   | PROPOSED REVISED TEXT  |                    |
|--|--|--------------------|
|  | CONSTITUTIONS  | COMPLEMENTARY CODE |
| 60,5. Let us live in conscious solidarity with the countless poor of the world and, through our apostolic labor, lead Christian people especially to works of justice and charity that further the development of peoples. | <b>Current text (60,5), with one addition</b><br>1. We should live in conscious solidarity with the countless poor of the world and, through our apostolic work, encourage the people, especially Christians, to undertake works of justice and charity to <i>promote the common good</i> <sup>(1)</sup> . |                    |
| 60,6. Those who, in the particular circumstances of a region, urge the poor to social and cultural development and to an eschatological hope by living with them, shar-  | <b>Current text (60,6), with one change</b><br>2. Special tribute is due to those <i>brothers</i> <sup>(2)</sup> who, in the particular circumstances of a region, live  |                    |

<sup>30</sup> Cf. C. VAIANI, *La via di Francesco* (Presenza di San Francesco 41). Milano, Ed. Biblioteca Francescana, 1993; 38-69.

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| ing their lot and their aspirations are worthy of praise. | with the poor, sharing their conditions and aspirations, thereby encouraging social and cultural change and eschatological hope in the world to come.                                     |  |
|   | <b>New text</b><br>3. <i>Nevertheless, the preferential option for the poor challenges us as a fraternity and calls for concrete action arising from joint decisions</i> <sup>(3)</sup> . | <b>New text</b><br><i>Each circumscription or group of circumscriptions should devise and implement particular ways of being present among the poor</i> <sup>(4)</sup> . |

### Explanatory Notes

- (1) The problems associated with the use of the expression *progress* or *development of peoples* have already been faced in chapter I (n. 13, note 4). For the reasons given on that occasion, here too we prefer to change the expression in the present text to *the common good*.
- (2) It is certainly better to use the noun *brothers*, rather than the pronoun *those*.
- (3) The idea of PCO VI (Cf. *Proposal* n. 9) had already been accepted by *Project 2006* (cf n. 49,1). In our view it is appropriate to insert this into the text of the Constitutions to strengthen the two previous paragraphs and to make them more concrete. The formulation of the text does not ignore nor undervalue personal initiatives, but these cannot be individualistic – they must express a commitment of the community and be carried out as a *missio fraternitatis* (“mission of the fraternity”) and in obedience to the ministers. The text therefore states that the Order as such is bound to a preferential option for the poor which has to be translated into particular choices, and these must be assumed and shared at community level.
- (4) The text proposed for the complementary code is derived from Proposal n. 10 of PCO VI. The intention here is to encourage communal applications of what is said in the Constitutions. The formulation of the proposal takes account of the fact that it is not always possible for individual jurisdictions to implement particular ways of being present among the poor. This is one area where inter-provincial collaboration may be called for.

### n. 66

| CONSTITUTIONS (1990)  | PROPOSED REVISED TEXT   |
|---|---|
| 61,1. Let us preserve a common life and willingly share among ourselves whatever we receive as individuals.   | <b>Current text (61,1)</b><br>1. Let us practise common life and gladly share with one another whatever we individually receive.  |
| 61,2. All [those] goods that in any way come to us, including salaries and pensions, insurance policies and grants, should be handed over for the use of the fraternity, so that individuals may receive from the fraternity the same food, clothing and other necessities. | <b>Current text (61,2), expanded and modified</b><br>2. <i>In virtue of the promise we have made to the Lord before the Church, by professing to “live without anything of our own”, we are obliged to hand over to the fraternity all goods, including salaries and pensions, grants and insurance policies, which come to us in any way</i> <sup>(1)</sup> .  |
| 61,2. [...] so that individuals may receive from the fraternity the same food, clothing and other necessities.  | <b>New text</b><br>3. <i>The fraternity must provide each brother with food, clothing and everything necessary for the exercise of his office. Out of respect for the same dignity enjoyed by all the brothers, all forms of privilege and egalitarianism should be avoided. In addition, we should always keep in mind that our lifestyle should be a witness of gospel poverty and brotherhood in the diverse social and cultural contexts</i> <sup>(2)</sup> . |

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| <p><b>61,3.</b> Let superiors give the other brothers an outstanding example of the observance of poverty and promote its observance among them.</p> | <p><b>Current text (61,3), with one change</b><br/> 4. <i>The ministers and guardians</i> should give outstanding example to the brothers in the practice of poverty, and should promote its observance among them.</p> |
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**Explanatory Notes**

- (1) The current text has been expanded and modified to expound the foundation (the vow of poverty) which binds us to practice common life and to share all goods. The majority of the Commission considers the expression “*we are obliged to hand over to the fraternity*” more concrete and more realistic than the current: “should be handed over for the use of the fraternity”.
- (2) The new text of § 3 amplifies and sharpens the current text: “individuals receive from the fraternity the same food, clothing and other necessities”. At the same time it is intended to codify the criterion or principle of “equity” arising out of the *Proposals* of PCO VI, whose value lies in the development of fraternal relationships and in the observance of poverty in the different contexts and cultures. The application of different forms of observing poverty is closely bound up with a sense of *equity*, which protects us from egalitarianism. At the same time PCO VII exhorts us: “We should divest ourselves of any privilege that might arise from office, education received, presbyteral ministry or from any other service we render for the common good or for the benefit of the people of God (n. 9). “Equity does not require a universal and identical Capuchin model. It seeks to ensure that the varying and differing needs of each brother and of each fraternity will be met with equal concern. Communion cannot survive where there is privilege.”<sup>31</sup>

**n. 67**

| <b>CONSTITUTIONS (1990)</b>   | <b>PROPOSED REVISED TEXT</b>   |   |
|---|--|---|
|   | <b>CONSTITUTIONS</b>   | <b>COMPLEMENTARY CODE</b>   |
| <p><b>60,1.</b> Since evangelical poverty is a very great commitment of our way of life, let us deliberate in general, provincial and local chapters on how to observe it more faithfully each day in ways that are adapted to the changing times and, therefore, always in need of reform.</p> | <p><b>Current text (60,1), with one change and one addition</b> <sup>(1)</sup><br/> 1. Gospel poverty is <i>an essential</i> <sup>(2)</sup> ideal of our way of life. Therefore, in general, provincial and local chapters we should consider how to observe it ever more faithfully in ways which are adapted to the changing times <i>and the diversity of places</i> <sup>(3)</sup> and, for that reason, [remain] always in need of renewal.</p> |   |
|   | <p><b>New text</b><br/> 2. <i>With mutual charity and docility to the Spirit of the Lord we should often evaluate our way of observing poverty: our personal and communal life-style should always be simple and austere, the witness of our fraternities prophetic and credible, and our mission to the poor generous and authentic</i> <sup>(4)</sup>.</p>   | <p><b>New text</b><br/> <i>In each circumscription the ministers should issue specific norms regarding the periodical assessment of the observance of poverty, both individual and communal</i> <sup>(5)</sup>.</p> |

<sup>31</sup> J. CORRIVEAU, *Circular Letter* n. 17: 7.4; cf. also *Circular Letter* n. 20: 5.3.

## Explanatory Notes

- (1) N. 68 re-proposes the text of the current n. 60,1, which already commits us to verify how we observe poverty. The Commission thought it appropriate to make this aspect more explicit: we wish to propose and to instil the practice of *scrutinium paupertatis* (poverty-check). This aspect is particularly relevant to the ongoing formation of the brothers.
- (2) To define poverty as “an *essential commitment*” of our life is more appropriate than “a *very important commitment*”. PCO VI defines poverty as “an *essential element of our life*” (*Proposal* n. 12)
- (3) The addition of *and to the diversity of places* is called for by the principle of pluriformity and conforms to the words of *Rb* 4,2 .
- (4) § 2 outlines the scope of the verification (personal and communal) that has to be undertaken and the conditions required for its conduct: mutual charity and docility to the Spirit.
- (5) The text proposed for the Constitutions invites us to evaluate *often* our way of observing poverty. This principle needs to be implemented in practice, particularly in the *periodical* community meetings (local chapters). Next, the text of the complementary code calls on the ministers to issue guidelines on the frequency of the *scrutinium paupertatis*, its content and methods. While the expression *scrutinium paupertatis* is not being inserted into the text of the Constitutions, similar expressions are used to indicate ways of ensuring fidelity to a well-defined religious profession which we have made freely and in a public, ecclesial form. The result should be that we are enlightened and purified in our way of thinking, planning and working, in trustful dependence upon God and in joyful solidarity. The aim of the *scrutinium paupertatis*, which is more than a simple examination of conscience, is to lead each individual brother, each fraternity and each friar who exercises the ministry of authority to an experience of the Spirit that will revive our fidelity to a life *with nothing of our own*.

## Article II Poverty in Goods and Money

### n. 68

| CONSTITUTIONS (1990)   | PROPOSED REVISED TEXT  |                    |
|--|--|--------------------|
|  | CONSTITUTIONS  | COMPLEMENTARY CODE |
| 62,1. Let us observe the poverty we have professed, remembering of the mind and words of Saint Francis: 'Let the brothers not make anything their own, neither house, nor place, nor anything at all.' | <b>Current text (62,1)</b><br>1. Let us observe the poverty we have professed, remembering the mind and words of Saint Francis: 'The brothers shall appropriate nothing to themselves, neither house nor place nor anything at all'.                         |                    |
| 62,3. Let us use temporal goods for the necessities of life, for the apostolate, and for works of charity, especially for the poor.  | <b>Current text (62,3)</b> <sup>(1)</sup><br>2. We should use temporal goods for the necessities of life, the apostolate, and works of charity, especially on behalf of the poor.  |                    |
| 62,2. Therefore, as pilgrims and strangers in this world, while we are on our way to the Land of the Living, let us serve the Lord in poverty and humility.  | <b>Current text (62,2), expanded</b><br>3. Therefore, as pilgrims and strangers in this world, while we are on our way to the Land of the Living, let us serve the Lord in poverty and humility. <i>Let us abandon ourselves trustingly to God's unfore-</i> |                    |

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|   | <i>seeable ways, welcoming the calls of the Spirit to uproot ourselves from all forms of immobility, opening our minds and hearts to the signs of the times and the needs of people</i> <sup>(2)</sup> . |  |
| 62,4. Superiors, whether personally or through others, can perform civil acts concerning temporal goods, if and when this may be necessary for the brothers or for the works entrusted to us. |  | <b>Current text (62,4), expanded</b> <sup>(3)</sup><br>The <i>ministers and guardians</i> , either personally or through others <i>within the limits of their own competence and in obedience to universal law</i> <sup>(4)</sup> , can perform civil acts in connection with temporal goods, if and insofar as this may be necessary for the brothers or for the works entrusted to us. |
| 62,5. The major superiors should designate the physical or juridical persons in whose name the goods entrusted to us may be registered before the civil law.                                  |  | <b>Current text (62,5), with one change</b><br>5. <i>Ministers</i> should designate the physical or juridical persons in whose name the goods entrusted to us are to be registered in civil law.   |

### Explanatory Notes

- (1) Paragraphs 2 and 3 of the current text have been reversed. In this way the instruction concerning the use of temporal goods is immediately linked to the recommendation of Saint Francis, referred to in paragraph 1, and it is possible to expound the contents of paragraph 3 (= n. 62,2 of the current text) regarding itinerancy.
- (2) The expansion of the current text is intended to underline the aspect of itinerancy. It is based on *Proposals* n. 5 and n. 24 of PCO VII.
- (3) We see no need for n. 62,4-5 to remain in the Constitutions. We agree with the proposal of *Project 2006* to transfer them to the complementary code.
- (4) The addition of the phrase *within the limits of their own competence and in obedience to universal law* is justified for obvious reasons.

### n. 69

| CONSTITUTIONS (1990)  | PROPOSED REVISED TEXT  |
|---|--|
| 63,1. As children of the eternal Father, putting aside anxious care, let us place our confidence in divine providence and entrust ourselves to His infinite goodness. | <b>Current text (63,1)</b><br>1. As children of the eternal Father, putting aside anxious care, we should rely on God's providence and entrust ourselves to His infinite goodness. |
| 63,2. Therefore we should not be immoderately pre-occupied about goods, even about what is necessary for food.  | <b>Current text (63,2)</b><br>2. Therefore we should not accumulate material things extravagantly, even those necessary for sustenance.  |
| 63,3. Let us acquire the means and resources for the necessities of our life and apostolate, especially by our own labor.   | <b>Current text (63,3)</b><br>3. We should acquire the means and resources for the necessities of life and the apostolate, chiefly by our own work.                                |

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| <p><b>63,4.</b> When these are inadequate, let us confidently have recourse to "the table of the Lord" according to the laws of the universal and particular Church. Let this be done in such a way that, while we seek donations from people, we give them a witness of poverty, fraternity and franciscan joy.</p> | <p><b>Current text (63,4), with addition</b><br/> 4. Should these be lacking, we may have recourse to the table of the Lord with confidence, according to the laws of the universal and particular Church. This should be done in such a way that, while we seek donations from the people, we give them a witness of poverty, brotherhood and Franciscan joy, <i>ready to share the gifts of providence with the poor</i><sup>(1)</sup>, in accordance with our tradition.</p> |
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### Explanatory Notes

- (1) The final addition is intended to highlight a very important feature of Capuchin tradition and spirituality: "We are like the sea, which receives water from everywhere, and in turn distributes it to every river" (A. MANZONI, *The Betrothed*, chap. III). The text expresses a finding of PCO VI: "The values underlying questing need to be reinstated, namely trust in Divine Providence and a sense of dependence and reciprocity between us and the people. People give to us because we give to the poor, and in order to give alms, we must welcome alms" (*Proposal* n. 20).

## n. 70

| CONSTITUTIONS (1990)   | PROPOSED REVISED TEXT   |
|--|---|
| <p><b>64,1.</b> Saint Francis, according to his own charism of poverty and minority in the Church, commanded his sons not to accept money in any way in as much as it is a sign of riches, a danger of greed, and an instrument of power and domination in the world.</p>                                  | <p><b>Current text (64,1)</b><br/> 1. Saint Francis, true to his own charism of poverty and minority in the Church, commanded his sons not to accept money in any way in as much as it is a sign of riches, a temptation to greed, and an instrument of power and domination in the world.</p>  |
| <p><b>64,2.</b> But since the use of money is necessary because times have changed, the brothers, wishing to fulfill the intention of their Father, may use money only as an ordinary means of exchange and social life, necessary even for the poor, and according to the norms of the Constitutions.</p> | <p><b>Current text (64,2), with changes</b><br/> 2. But since <i>in today's conditions</i><sup>(1)</sup> the use of money is necessary, the brothers, <i>in order to remain faithful to the profound intention of the Seraphic</i><sup>(2)</sup> Father, shall use money only as an ordinary means of exchange and social life, necessary even for the poor, and according to the <i>prescriptions of our particular law</i><sup>(3)</sup>.</p> |

### Explanatory Notes

- (1) The proposed change (*in today's conditions*) does not alter the content of the current text.
- (2) The Latin text of the Constitutions, *fratres, volentes Patris intentionem adimplere*, does not in itself give rise to any ambiguity, but the latter can arise from the translations, for example, when *intentio* is translated as *voluntas* (will) and *Pater* is referred to God the Father. In order to remove such ambiguities of translation, we propose to make the text explicit and say *Seraphic Father*. In addition, the sentence has also been extended slightly in the light of n. 6 of PCO VI: "However, we are still bound to be faithful to the profound intentions of St Francis"
- (3) We propose *according to the prescriptions of our particular law* instead of *according to the Constitutions*. The current text was drafted at the General Chapter of 1968, when the Ordinances were abrogated and everything was put into the Constitutions. This was the intention of the Order until the General Chapter of 1982, but the Chapter of 1988 decided to reinstate the Ordinances and today, by the express will of two General Chapters (2000 and 2006), we are drafting a Complementary Code (Ordinances or General Statutes) alongside the Constitutions. This complementary code is also an integral part of our particular

law. It therefore seems more appropriate to say *according to the prescriptions of our particular law*. However we believe that the use of money in the Order needs to be regulated with greater precision and timely intervention.

n. 71

| CONSTITUTIONS (1990)  | PROPOSED REVISED TEXT   |  |
|---|---|--|
|   | CONSTITUTIONS   | COMPLEMENTARY CODE   |
| 65,1. Superiors, who by office have the responsibility of caring for the needs of the brothers, may use money for the necessities of life as well as for works of the apostolate and charity. | <b>Current text (65,1), with one change</b><br>1. The <i>ministers and guardians</i> , whose duty it is in virtue of their office to care for the needs of the brothers, may use money for the necessities of life and for works of the apostolate and charity. |  |
| 65,2. For the same reasons the other brothers, with the permission of the superior, can use money with the obligation of accounting for it.   | <b>Current text (65,2), with one change</b><br>2. For the same reasons the other brothers can also use money with the permission of the <i>guardian or the minister</i> , with the obligation of accounting for it.   | <b>New text</b><br><i>In particular cases, the Ministers may give permission for individuals to administer money, but only for a limited time. The permission must be given in writing, and must indicate for how long it is given, and the manner of accounting for the administration<sup>(1)</sup>.</i> |
| 65,3. But for everyone, whether superiors or not, the use of money must be such that it does not exceed the degree appropriate to those who are truly poor.                                   | <b>Current text (65,3), with one change</b><br>3. But everyone, whether <i>ministers or guardians</i> or not, must always use money in a way that does not go beyond what is appropriate to those who are truly poor.   |  |
| 65,4. To safeguard poverty, the brothers should not have recourse to their friends, relatives or neighbors for money or other things without permission.                                      | <b>Current text (65,4)</b><br>4. To safeguard poverty, the brothers shall not ask their friends, parents or relatives for money or other things without permission.   |  |

**Explanatory Notes**

- (1) The text proposed for the complementary code is intended as an application of the constitutional text. The prescription seems to be necessary because of a widespread practice, which is not always legitimate or legitimised. On the other hand there are cases and situations where individual brothers, other than those exercising the office of bursar or a similar administrative service (Mission secretaries, vice-postulators, etc) need to administer money.

| CONSTITUTIONS (1990)   | PROPOSED REVISED TEXT   |
|--|---|
| 66,1. In compliance with the norms promulgated by the provincial minister with the consent of the definitory, it is lawful for superiors to use insurance policies and other forms of social security where this is prescribed by ecclesiastical or civil authority for everyone or for those of certain professions or where such things are commonly used by the poor of the area. | <b>Current text (66,1), with one change</b><br>1. <i>The ministers, with the consent of their council</i> <sup>(1)</sup> , may make use of insurance policies and other forms of social security where these are prescribed by ecclesiastical or civil authority for everyone or for members of certain professions, or where such things are commonly used by the poor of the area.  |
| 66,2. But let them diligently avoid all those forms of security which have the appearance of affluence or profit-making in the area in which they live.  | <b>Current text (66,2)</b><br>2. But let them diligently avoid all those forms of security which have the appearance of affluence or - profit-making in the area in which they live.  |
| 66,3. It is appropriate, however, that they, like people of modest means, invest whatever money is really necessary for them in banks and similar institutions, even at a moderate rate of interest.   | <b>Current text (66,3), with additions and changes</b><br>3. It is appropriate, however, that the <i>ministers and guardians</i> <sup>(2)</sup> , like people of modest means, invest whatever money is really necessary in banks and similar institutions, <i>even in the form of investments, but always</i> at a moderate rate of interest <sup>(3)</sup> , <i>observing the precepts of our proper law</i> <sup>(4)</sup> . |
| 66,4. But they may not accept foundations, perpetual legacies or inheritances that have perpetual rights and obligations attached to them.   | <b>Current text (66,4)</b><br>4. But they may not accept foundations, perpetual legacies or inheritances that have perpetual rights and obligations attached to them.   |

### Explanatory Notes

- (1) The proposed change is substantial. In the current text *superiors* clearly refers to local superiors or guardians, who must act *according to norms issued by the provincial minister with the consent of the definitory*. However, the Commission now proposes that the legal competence indicated in the text should be reserved to the *ministers, with the consent of their Council*. The reason for this is clear enough, since we are dealing with a very important and sensitive issue. But there is nothing to prevent the prescription of the Constitutions, as proposed by the Commission, being further specified in the particular Statutes of the circumscriptions.
- (2) The statement needs an explicit subject, to replace the pronoun *they*.
- (3) The Draft composed by the C.C.L. and presented to the General Chapter of 1968 said: *Non eis tamen prohibetur, quominus pecunia necessaria, more hominum modestae condicionis, in tuto, etiam cum moderato fenore, collocetur*.<sup>32</sup> (However, it is not forbidden for them to safely deposit necessary funds, even at a moderate rate of interest, as is done by people of lowly condition). In this text the emphasis was clearly placed on “safely depositing” (*in tuto*) the necessary funds”, according to the custom of ordinary people. For this purpose – i.e. to safeguard the money - *even* a modest rate of interest is allowed. The 1968 Chapter deleted the words *in tuto, because they were materially contained in the following words*, i.e. they said that money that was clearly necessary can be deposited *in banks and other similar institutions, even at a moderate rate of interest*<sup>33</sup>. The text was approved in 1968<sup>34</sup> and maintained in successive Chapters<sup>35</sup>. It may have lost some

<sup>32</sup> *Schema Constitutionum nostrarum. Textus continuus quinque emendatus cum indice alphabetico* (Pro manuscripto ad usum PP. Capitularium). Romae, Officium Secretariatus C.C.L., 1968; n. 93,3 (p. 59).

<sup>33</sup> Cf. *Acta Capituli generalis specialis... 1968*; I, 425.

<sup>34</sup> Cf. *Acta Capituli generalis specialis... 1968*; II, 430.

<sup>35</sup> Cf. FR. IGLESIAS (a cura di), *Constitutiones... I*. 66.

of its clarity but the intention underlying *even at moderate interest* seems to have been preserved. Subsequently the practice of the Order changed, with the sanctioning of recourse to investments, legitimised in some way by PCO VI. The Commission takes note of this development but proposes that even in the case of investments one must always stop at *limited interest*, avoiding any form of speculation and taking as the norm people of lowly condition, as is said elsewhere in the current Constitutions (nos. 66,2; 67,2) and in the *Proposed revision* (Cf. nos. 72,2; 73,2).

- (4) The proposed revision adds the phrase *observing the precepts of our own law*, because we are convinced that this subject needs to be carefully regulated at Order level and in the circumscriptions.

### n. 73

| CONSTITUTIONS (1990)   | PROPOSED REVISED TEXT   |  |
|--|---|--|
|  | CONSTITUTIONS   | COMPLEMENTARY CODE   |
| 67,1. Let the brothers show people by their life that voluntary poverty liberates them from greed, the root of all evil, and from anxious concern for tomorrow.  | <b>Current text (67,1)</b><br>1. The brothers should show people by their life that voluntary poverty liberates them from greed, the root of all evil, and from anxious concern for the future.   |  |
| 67,2. Therefore, superiors should carefully avoid every accumulation or speculation in the use of money, although modest financial security may be maintained.   | <b>Current text (67,2), with one change</b><br>2. Therefore, <i>the ministers and guardians</i> should carefully avoid any accumulation or profiteering in the use of money, although modest financial security may be maintained.  |  |
| 67,3. For every use of goods, including money, the provinces, fraternities and brothers should use as a precise and practical criterion: the minimum necessary, not the maximum allowed.   | <b>Current text (67,3), with one change</b><br>3. For every use of goods, including money, the <i>circumscriptions</i> , fraternities and brothers should apply a precise and practical principle: the minimum necessary, not the maximum allowed.  |  |
|  | <b>New text</b><br>4. <i>This principle needs to be implemented in the different social contexts in which we live</i> <sup>(1)</sup> .  |  |
| 67,4. That we may not become degenerate sons of Saint Francis by keeping things unjustly, the goods not needed by a fraternity should be handed over either to the major superiors for the needs of the jurisdiction, or to the poor, or for the development of peoples, according to the norms established by the provincial chapter. Let the local chapter frequent make a common reflection on these matters. | <b>Current text (67,4), with additions</b><br>5. So that we do not become degenerate sons of Saint Francis by keeping things unjustly, goods not needed by a fraternity should be handed over either to the major superiors for the needs of the circumscription <i>and of the Order</i> <sup>(2)</sup> , or <i>should be distributed</i> <sup>(3)</sup> to the poor, or <i>earmarked</i> <sup>(3)</sup> for social development, according to the norms established by the provincial chap- | <b>New text</b> <sup>(4)</sup><br><i>The minister, with his council, having consulted the local chapter, determines the maximum sum that each fraternity can manage and makes appropriate arrangements concerning money that is not necessary for the needs of the local fraternity. It is appropriate that the economic administration in each circumscription be centralized. For this purpose it is useful that there be a system of budgets at each level</i> <sup>(5)</sup> . |

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|  | ter. The brothers should frequently reflect together on all these matters in the local chapter.   |   |
|  |   | <b>New text</b><br><i>In each circumscription the chapter is to decide how much is necessary for the ordinary management of the circumscription, and the total amount held in reserve for internal extraordinary expenditure (maintenance of buildings, the sick, employees insurance, formation)) and for external solidarity (missions and charity). Monies exceeding the ordinary and extraordinary needs of a circumscription should be generously made available to the Order, the Church and the poor, in ways determined by the general chapter or by the general minister and his definitory</i> <sup>(6)</sup> . |
| 67,7. It is the responsibility of the general minister with the consent of the definitory to dispose of the surplus goods of the provinces.  |   | <b>Current text (67,7)</b><br>It is the responsibility of the general minister, with the consent of the definitory, to decide what is to be done with the surplus goods of the provinces <sup>(7)</sup> .   |
|  |   | <b>Current text (Ordinances 4/3)</b><br>It pertains to the Provincial Chapter to lay down norms for the use of the goods of suppressed fraternities, maintaining the wishes of the founders and donors and their legitimately acquired rights. If the goods of a suppressed circumscription are involved, the competent authority is the general minister, who must proceed collegially with his definitory, having consulted the relevant conference and the major superiors concerned, together with their councils.  |
| 60,4. Poverty demands a frugal and simple way of life in clothing, food, dwellings (...)<br>67,5. Let the brothers initiate in the local chapter a reflection on the correct use of goods, recreation, the accumulation of clothes, personal gifts, travelling, and similar things according to the mind of the Constitutions. | <b>Current texts (60,4 and 67,5) merged, with additions</b><br>6. The brothers in the local chapter, according to the intention of the Constitutions, should reflect on the correct use of goods in terms of recreation, clothing, gifts <i>made to individuals and to the community, use of the media and technology, travel, and similar matters</i> <sup>(8)</sup> . |   |
|  | <b>New text</b><br>7. <i>We should also reflect on what means to adopt in carrying out our tasks and</i>  |   |

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|  | <i>ministries, always choosing those that are suited to our condition as lesser brothers</i> <sup>(9)</sup> . |  |
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## Explanatory Notes

- (1) Cf. PCO VI, *Proposal* n. 13: “The Constitutional norm : **“The minimum necessary, not the maximum allowed”** ( 67,3) can only be meaningfully applied in the context of the societies in which our friars live. We therefore propose that the Brothers in each circumscription apply this norm to their own specific circumstances”. This norm is connected to the other principle stressed by PCO VI, that of equity, and reminds us of the need for pluriformity, which has to be adapted to different cultures: “This Plenary Council of the Order reaffirms that poverty, too, as an essential element of our life, must be lived in the light of what the Constitutions say about the unity and pluriformity of our Franciscan vocation. On the one hand, unity refers to brotherhood and to the principle that “because of the same vocation, the friars are all equal” (Const. 84,3). But situations differ, so that without sound **inculturation**, no true pluriformity or evangelization will ever be possible. Inculturation of poverty must go as far as our dwellings, buildings, lifestyle, the poor means we use in the apostolate, and our external appearance” ( PCO VI n. 12).
- (2) The insertion of *and of the Order* seems timely, to widen horizons and develop the sense of solidarity.
- (3) The changes clarify the three alternatives proposed in the current text.
- (4) The material proposed in § 4 of the constitutional text requires regulation. The two new texts drafted for the complementary code correspond to the constant teaching of the General Ministers in recent decades, to the Plenary Councils, especially PCO VI (nos. 33 and 36), and to a growing awareness that has been developing in the Order.
- (5) The proposed text is derived from PCO VI: **“Local chapters** are the ideal occasion for preparing the fraternity budget and monitoring how money is spent. Our administration of money is one of the ways in which brotherhood is expressed, and the local chapter is the proper place to examine whether it conforms to gospel values, minority, etc.” (*Proposal* n. 31). “The **local fraternity** can have only short-term capital investments (cash in bank). The capital at its disposal represents only what is necessary for the ordinary running of the community. The Major Superior and his council should establish the upper limit that each fraternity may manage (cf. Const.67,4). For this purpose the circumscription should produce appropriate forms or models, and assess whether a centralized economic administration at provincial level is advisable”. (*Proposal* n. 33). The text formulated by the Commission does not speak of “the ordinary running of the community” since our legislation provides the possibility even for guardians to incur “extraordinary expenditure” within the limits of their competence (Cf. Const n. 72,2-3). Neither do we think it appropriate to add any further explicit details – either in the Constitutions or in the complementary code – about budgets. Further specifications on these matters can be put into an additional statute or in the particular Statutes of the circumscriptions.
- (6) The text of the complementary code reproduces almost literally *Proposal* n. 36 of PCO VI: “Each circumscription, bearing in mind the principles of solidarity established by this Plenary Council and the provisions of our Constitutions (cf. 67,7; 73,1), and after consulting its own Conference, should determine, at the level of the definitory or of the chapter if necessary, what is required for its ordinary administration. It should decide the amount to be held in reserve/investments for internal extraordinary expenditure (maintenance of buildings, the sick, employee insurance, formation) and for external solidarity (missions and charity)”.  
The Commission thought it right to leave it to the Chapter of each jurisdiction to set the maximum limit of the sum it would manage for its own administration, both ordinary and extraordinary.  
The meaning of the clause found in PCO VI (*after consulting its own Conference*) does not appear easy to implement at the present time, so it has been moved to the complementary code. Further consideration of this question at Order level may bring us to a more precise formulation.  
At the end the proposed text speaks of *ways determined by the general chapter or by the general minister and his definitory*. Such “ways” have clearly become more and more necessary for the implementation of what is prescribed by the Constitutions (n. 67, 4 = Proposed revision n. 73,5).

- (7) According to *Project 2006*, norm n. 67,7 should be transferred to the complementary code, immediately followed by the prescription in the current Ordinances, 4/3.
- (8) The text has been compiled from elements of the current n. 60,4 and 67,5. The details listed are examples, intended to refer to a much wider field which would be the subject of the *scrutinium paupertatis* to be conducted in the local chapter. The particular mention of *technological instruments* (cell phones, internet, computers and many other electronic gadgets) seems timely in an age in which we are literally invaded by them and when their use is universally widespread, even indiscriminate.<sup>36</sup>
- (9) The Commission thinks that the insistence on *poor means* should be brought out in the text of the Constitutions. “We must seek to implement models of evangelization that are less bound up with the power and security that derives from having many expensive resources. We should be more ready to learn from the poor and to place our trust in God alone” (PCO VI, *Proposal* n. 11). “Inculturation of poverty must go as far as our dwellings, buildings, lifestyle, the poor means we use in the apostolate, and our external appearance” (VI PCO, *Proposal* n. 12).

n. 74

| CONSTITUTIONS (1990)  | PROPOSED REVISED TEXT   |  |
|---|---|--|
|   | CONSTITUTIONS   | COMPLEMENTARY CODE   |
|   | <p><b>New text</b></p> <p>1. <i>Following the teaching of Saint Francis, in a spirit of minority, we should trustfully make known to one another our every need, recognizing in our mutual dependence an essential component of fraternal communion and a source of mutual support</i> <sup>(1)</sup>.</p>                          |  |
|   | <p><b>New text</b> <sup>(2)</sup></p> <p>2. <i>We should practise solidarity, a privileged expression of brotherly love, and resolutely commit ourselves to the good of each and every person, because all of us are responsible for everyone</i> <sup>(3)</sup>.</p>   |  |
| <p>67,6. The individual fraternities of the same area and even the provinces of the Order should be ready to share their goods or necessities among themselves and with others in cases of necessity.</p> | <p><b>Current text (67,6), with changes</b></p> <p>3. When the need arises individual fraternities of the same area and even <i>circumscriptions</i> of the Order should <i>promptly and in a spirit of sacrifice</i> <sup>(4)</sup> share even their necessities among themselves.</p>   | <p><b>New text</b></p> <p><i>According to needs, economic solidarity in the Order shall be regulated by an appropriate statute, which defines the relationships between the circumscriptions and the conferences, among themselves and with our entire Fraternity. This statute is to be approved by the general chapter</i> <sup>(5)</sup>.</p> |
|   | <p><b>New text</b> <sup>(6)</sup></p> <p>4. <i>Broadening the ambit of our charity we should express our solidarity with all the brothers and sisters of the Franciscan Family, and, in collaboration with them, share with all people of good will the commitment to promote justice and a fair distribution of resources.</i></p> |  |

<sup>36</sup> Cf. Br. JOHN CORRIVEAU, *Circular Letter* n. 24 (22 May 2005) n. 6.2; VII PCO, n. 26.

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|  | <p><b>New text</b></p> <p>5. <i>We should promote a sharing culture, raising people’s awareness of the universal destination of resources, which must be used with a sense of responsibility for future generations. In this way we foster genuine economic and social development based on ethical and religious foundations, rooted in a heightened sense of God and of the dignity of the human person.</i></p> |  |
|  | <p><b>New text</b></p> <p>6. <i>By our very life in poverty and minority, voluntarily chosen and lived with joy in a spirit of sharing, we play our part in building a society founded on justice and peace among peoples.</i></p>   |  |

### Explanatory Notes

- (1) § 1 is proposed in order to highlight the aspect of *mutual dependence*, which is a very important component of our form of life and spirituality, found in *Rnb*: “Let each one confidently make known his need to another so that the other might discover what is needed and minister to him. Let each one love and care for his brother as a mother cares for her son, in those matters in which God has given him the grace” (9,10-11). The context is what the Rule was speaking of before: questing, and the difficulties that can arise in the exercise of this office (shame, the affront of the people etc.). In the midst of life’s difficulties brotherhood and mutual love should be a material and moral support for the brothers. In order for this to happen certain conditions are necessary, both on the part of the person in need and of the one who helps. No-one may enclose himself in his own discomfort in a vain attempt to bear everything and resolve everything by himself. There is no room in the Franciscan life for self-sufficiency. Francis has given us the golden rule of inter-dependence. Therefore each one must allow his brother to know that he needs something, especially that he needs help, so that he can be loved and cherished. In the Italian text of the Rule (and in the one proposed for the Constitutions) the attitude of the person in need is described by the noun *fiducia* (trust). The Latin text of the Rule says *secure manifestet*, (let him confidently make known), which highlights even more the correct psychological attitude Francis wishes to see in the relationships of his brothers with one another. The adverb *secure* (etimologically derived from *sine cura*) corresponds to “unworried, without fear, without anxiety or trouble, with no hesitation at all”<sup>37</sup>, but rather with confidence, i.e. with that psychological certainty that in some way one can rely on one’s brother in time of need. The passage from *Rnb* is also found, with some variations, in *Rb* 6,7-8: “Wherever the brothers may be and meet one another, let them show that they are members of the same family. Let each one confidently make known his need to the other, for if a mother loves and cares for her son according to the flesh, how much more diligently must someone love and care for his brother according to the Spirit?”. The context is still that of poverty and of the most absolute material insecurity. “The sublime height of most exalted poverty” is not risk-free. But it is precisely the lack of human support that should bind the brothers all the more closely in the bond of brotherly love. The only life-insurance policy Francis is able to offer his brothers is the genuinely Christian and evangelical one of brotherhood, understood as a perfect communion of life in which every poor person can and should find refuge and support<sup>38</sup>. Here we see clearly the relationship of inter-dependence that exists between poverty and brotherhood. There is no brotherhood without poverty. Brotherhood is not the

<sup>37</sup> Cf. A. ERNOUT – A. MEILLET, *Dictionnaire étymologique...*; sub voce: *cura*; AE. FORCELLINI, *Lexicon totius latinitatis...* IV, sub voci-bus: *secure*, *securus*.

<sup>38</sup> Cf. F. IOZZELLI, *La vita fraterna nell’Ordine Franciscano primitivo* in C. DI NARDO – G. SALONIA (a cura), *La “Fraternitas” di Francesco d’Assisi. Novità e attualità*. Giulianova, Edizioni Italia Franciscana, 2003; 88-90.

cause, but in so far as it is a gift of God it is the effect of our meeting with Him, the effect of prayer. At the same time it is the effect of a life without anything of one's own, where by denying ourselves material goods and every form of pride we are rendered capable of accepting our brothers and of entrusting ourselves to them. This is the lot we choose, and it leads to the land of the living. The text on austerity should be read in this light (see above at n. 64,2-3), in the light of PCO's VI and VII and of the Circular Letter n. 24 (*Courageous choices for a more fraternal world*) of Br. John Corriveau (22 May 2005).

§ 1 on reciprocal dependence introduces the consequences of solidarity, which were drafted on the basis of *Proposal* n. 21 of PCO VI: "Indeed, Francis states clearly that dependence on others is a consequence of being created and redeemed, and is therefore a right (Rnb 9, 8). Furthermore, interdependence requires the theological gift of love, which enriches giver and receiver alike (Rnb 9, 9). Fraternal communion and interdependence should inspire and determine our structures of solidarity within the local, provincial and international fraternities, as well as our interaction with the world, particularly the world of the poor"<sup>39</sup>.

- (2) The current Constitutions, at n. 67,6, present a text on economic solidarity within the Order. In the light of PCO VI it seems appropriate to develop this aspect, outlining the need for solidarity both within and outside the Order.
- (3) The proposed text is inspired by the Order's experience in the field of economic solidarity in the last decades and refers immediately to *Proposal* n. 21 and to the Encyclical *Sollicitudo rei socialis* (n. 38) of John Paul II, quoted by the same PCO<sup>40</sup>.
- (4) The exhortation to *share promptly* seems more incisive than the present "they should be ready to share". The Commission also thought it right to add *in a spirit of sacrifice*, intending to suggest that solidarity among ourselves should be practised even when it requires sacrifice.
- (5) It is sufficient to provide a *Statute for Economic Solidarity* in our fundamental law, without specifying any further details. The requirements of the PCO's can be accommodated in the Statute itself which, once it is approved by the General Chapter, becomes a part of the Order's particular law.
- (6) The texts proposed in paragraphs 4, 5, 6 were drafted in the light of *Proposals* (nos. 21-28) of PCO VI, but their spirit is found in the text of the current Constitutions. In particular, *Proposal* n. 36 is echoed in *Const* 60,4-5; 97,2; 99,1-3; *Proposal* n. 27 intends to update the prescriptions of *Const* 11,4-5; 94-95; 97; 100,1-4; 147,4, by promoting the culture of participation. Therefore, solidarity is not absent from the current Constitutions. However, given the importance of the subject at PCO VI, it seems appropriate to make it even more explicit here.<sup>41</sup>

### Article III Poverty in Our Buildings

#### n. 75

| CONSTITUTIONS (1990)   | PROPOSED REVISED TEXT  |                    |
|--|--|--------------------|
|  | CONSTITUTIONS  | COMPLEMENTARY CODE |
| 68,1. We must spend our lives in humble and poor dwellings, always living there as pilgrims and strangers. | <b>Current text (68,1)</b><br>1. We must spend our lives in humble and poor houses, always living there as pilgrims and strangers. |                    |

<sup>39</sup> Cf. Circular Letter n. 15 (*Solidarity and interdependence*) of Br. John Corriveau (1 November 1999).

<sup>40</sup> Cf. also *Caritas in veritate* n. 38-39; PONTIFICAL COUNCIL FOR JUSTICE AND PEACE, *Compendium of the social teaching of the Church*; Br. JOHN CORRIVEAU, Circular Letter n. 15 (1 November 1999).

<sup>41</sup> Cf. also *Project 2006*, 43,4; 45,3-4.

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| <p><b>68,2.</b> In choosing the site of a new house, we should keep before our eyes our life of poverty, the spiritual good of the brothers, and the various ministries that must be exercised. Let the dwellings be arranged in such a way that they do not appear inaccessible to anyone, especially to the lowly.</p> | <p><b>Current text (68,2), with additions and changes</b><br/> 2. In choosing the site of a new house, we should not lose sight of our life of poverty, <i>the living conditions of the poor of the region</i> <sup>(1)</sup>, the spiritual good of the brothers, and the various ministries that must be exercised. Houses should be so arranged that they <i>are accessible to all</i> <sup>(2)</sup>, especially to those from the lower strata of society.</p> |  |
| <p><b>68,3.</b> Nevertheless, let houses be suited to the needs and ministries of the fraternity, and conducive to prayer, work and fraternal life.</p>  | <p><b>Current text (68,3), with changes</b><br/> 3. Houses should be <i>suitably proportioned to the real needs</i> <sup>(3)</sup> of the fraternity and its ministries, and be conducive to prayer, work and fraternal life.</p>   |  |
| <p><b>60,2.</b> Chapters should consider in a special way the social use of the goods entrusted to [our] fraternities, whether money, houses or lands, that we might willingly commit ourselves to use them for the advantage of others.</p>   | <p><b>Current text (60,2), expanded</b><br/> 4. In particular, chapters should <i>frequently assess how far our houses correspond to a life that is truly poor and lowly</i> <sup>(4)</sup>, and should discuss the social use of goods entrusted to the fraternities, whether money, houses or lands. We should gladly use them in the service of people, <i>taking care not to accumulate either money or real estate</i> <sup>(5)</sup>.</p>                     | <p><b>New text</b><br/> <i>Each circumscription should periodically assess the buildings it has available, and proceed to sell those that are unnecessary or to allow others to use them, observing the norms of common and particular law. Where possible, this should be done in dialogue with the neighbouring circumscriptions and with the conference. For this purpose the General Minister with his definitory should issue appropriate guidelines.</i></p> |

### Explanatory Notes

- (1) The proposed addition (*the living conditions of the poor of the region*) is made to encourage us to implement our commitment to poverty and apply the principle of pluriform ways and sound inculturation. This is not simply a response to PCO VI (Cf. *Proposals* nos. 12-13) and of PCO VII (Cf. *Proposals* nos. 27b ; 49), but also to the constant legislative tradition of the Order, according to which the brothers: “Should take as their model the small dwellings of the poor, not modern houses”<sup>42</sup>.
- (2) The majority of the Commission agreed that the concept should be expressed positively (*(so) that they are accessible to all*) rather than negatively (“in such a way that they do *not* appear *inaccessible* to anyone”).
- (3) The current text has been slightly recast to reflect the *criterium veritatis*, (principle of truth) which should always inspire and guide us in identifying real needs, and only what is truly necessary.
- (4) The additions at the beginning and end of the text are intended to underline in a striking way the meaning of the *scrutinium paupertatis* (poverty-check) which challenges the conscience of any Capuchin fraternity: the fraternity is obliged to see how it measures up to the fundamental requirements of our charism. For this reason the text speaks of conformity *to a life that is truly poor and lowly*. The stress should be placed on the word *truly*. Indeed, we are to examine our life to see whether it corresponds with the *truth* of our charism. In the *scrutinium paupertatis* or in reviewing one’s life one must always reaffirm the contents or values which are or should be the foundation of everything we do. In this sense

<sup>42</sup> Cf. *Constitutiones ... saeculorum decursu promulgatae*. vol. I, 55; 108; 174; 252; 599; vol. II, 94; 246; 400; 511.

PCO VI reminds us that “with respect to **houses**, the guidelines given in the Constitutions and previous Plenary Councils are more than sufficient to provide solutions in particular cases (cf. I PCO, 53)”, and it goes on to say: “The Brothers are to live in this world as pilgrims and strangers. We therefore encourage them to re-examine whether their present dwellings make it sufficiently obvious that we are called to rely on divine providence. They should assess whether their residences are in proportion to the number of Brothers and to the work carried out there” (*Proposal* n. 38).

- (5) The final insert of § 4 and the text proposed for the complementary code are once again dependent on PCO VI (nos. 38 and 40) and should be considered together. Individual circumscriptions, too, are obliged to conduct assessments periodically to avoid all forms of accumulation *either of money or real estate*. In particular, the complementary code intends to encourage a resizing of our structures and works. This is urgent in some areas of the Order and permanently relevant to all of us if we wish to be faithful to our fundamental charism as a “Reform”. If our life is in need of constant renewal in order to be open to the voice of the Spirit and to interpret correctly the signs of the times, then the work of “resizing” becomes an ongoing commitment aimed at continuously renewing ourselves, our fraternities and our circumscriptions. This process of constantly adjusting the dimensions of who we are is much more than a merely contingent need, it is a requirement of our charism. The principal subjects of this continuous process of verification and resizing are *the individual circumscriptions* as such. We need to stop thinking of “resizing” in this sense as a bureaucratic operation conducted from the top downwards by an elite. Everything will need to be done to involve the largest possible number of brothers. But it also requires a patient, firm authority that produces unity and is capable of ensuring the execution of the task.<sup>43</sup> The proposed text also suggests that the process of “resizing” is not a private matter for each circumscription. It is a problem that involves the entire Order and requires broader planning to guarantee the vitality of our charism and so that we choose presences that have real significant in the different ecclesial contexts and geographical and cultural areas. For this purpose we suggest that circumscriptions enter into dialogue with their neighbours and with the Conference, and also that it would be appropriate to issue guidelines at Order level. On the question of the disposal of buildings we no longer need, PCO VI presents some very clear guidelines: renting is not the first or the only recourse to solve the problem of superfluous or unused buildings, but it “(is) acceptable in the context in which we live and according to norms to be determined by the General Minister and his definitory. We highly recommend the sale of goods and land which we no longer use. If this is not possible they should be used for social purposes at non-speculative rents” (VI PCO, *Proposal* n. 40).

### [Complementary Code] <sup>(1)</sup>

| CONSTITUTIONS (1990)   | PROPOSED REVISED TEXT |   |
|--|-----------------------|---|
|  | CONSTITUTIONS         | COMPLEMENTARY CODE  |
| 69,1. The construction, acquisition and alienation of our houses pertains to the provincial minister with the consent of the definitory, while observing the prescriptions of the law.         |                       | <b>Current text (69,1) with changes</b><br>1. The construction, acquisition and alienation of our houses is the responsibility of the <i>minister</i> with the consent of <i>his council</i> , the prescriptions of law being observed. |
| 69,2. When the construction of houses has been completed, a local superior may not construct or demolish anything or enlarge a building without consulting the local chapter and obtaining the |                       | <b>Current text (69,2) with changes</b><br>2. When construction is finished, a <i>guardian</i> may not build or demolish anything or enlarge a building without consulting the local chap-  |

<sup>43</sup> Cf. CICLSAL, *Fraternal Life in Community* n. 50; 67; *Vita consecrata* 63.

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| consent of the councilors and the permission of the major superior.   |  | ter, and obtaining the consent of the counselors and the permission of the <i>minister</i> .   |
| 69,3. The local superior should carefully provide for the maintenance of the house and the care of the property obtaining the consent of the councilors in matters of greater importance. |  | <b>Current text (69,3) with one change</b><br>3. <i>The guardian</i> must carefully provide for the maintenance of the house and the care of the property, obtaining the consent of the counselors in matters of greater importance. |

### Explanatory Notes

- (1) Following the choice made by *Project 2006*, we propose to transfer to the complementary code n. 69 of the current text, as we do not consider that it must necessarily be in the Constitutions.

### n. 76 <sup>(1)</sup>

| CONSTITUTIONS (1990)  | PROPOSED REVISED TEXT<br>CONSTITUTIONS  |
|---|---|
| 70,1. Churches should be simple, becoming and clean. 2. Let great care be taken to see that they are appropriate for celebrating liturgical functions and eliciting the active participation of the faithful.                           | <b>Current text (70,1-2), expanded</b><br>1. Churches should be simple, dignified and clean. Great care should be taken to see that they <i>foster a life of prayer and fraternity</i> <sup>(2)</sup> , are appropriate for celebrating liturgical functions and for ensuring the active participation of the faithful. |
| 70,3. Sacristies must be suitable and sufficiently provided with sacred furnishings. 4. Everything that is used for divine worship should be becoming and in conformity with liturgical norms without offending poverty and simplicity. | <b>Current text (70,3-4)</b><br>2. Sacristies too should be suitable and sufficiently provided with the requirements for worship. Everything used for divine worship must be becoming and must conform with liturgical norms without offending poverty and simplicity.  |

### Explanatory Notes

- (1) According to can. 608, “A religious community is to live in a lawfully constituted house, under the authority of a Superior designated according to the norms of law. Each house is to have at least an oratory, in which the Eucharist is celebrated and reserved, so that it may truly be the centre of the community”. The church, therefore, or at least an oratory, is one of the constitutive elements of a religious community. For this reason we do not think it is appropriate to transfer to the complementary code the prescription found in n. 70,1-4. However the current text has been contracted into two paragraphs, leaving its content intact.
- (2) The addition to the text comes from can. 608 mentioned above. Our churches must be above all functional in relation to a life of prayer and brotherhood.

Article IV  
The Administration of Goods

n. 77

| CONSTITUTIONS (1990) | PROPOSED REVISED TEXT  |
|----------------------|--|
|                      | <p><b>New text</b><br/>1. <i>The precise and careful administration of the goods entrusted to us is one of the ways in which we observe poverty and greatly contributes to fraternal life</i> <sup>(1)</sup>.</p>  |
|                      | <p><b>New text</b><br/>2. <i>Transparency should be an obvious quality in our individual and fraternal life, so that trust, sincerity and communion may grow among us. It should also be a feature of our administration of goods at every level, and commit us to account for everything we receive and use</i> <sup>(2)</sup>.</p>   |
|                      | <p><b>New text</b><br/>3. <i>Since we share responsibility for the life of brotherhood, we should foster the active participation of all the brothers, so that decision-making, even in the area of administration, may be the fruit of joint reflection and shared as widely as possible, while respecting the roles and competence proper to each person</i> <sup>(3)</sup>.</p> |
|                      | <p><b>New text</b><br/>4. <i>And let us always remember that witnessing effectively to our life must always prevail over efficiency and productivity</i> <sup>(4)</sup>.</p>   |
|                      | <p><b>New text</b><br/>5. <i>During formation, starting from the time of initiation</i> <sup>(5)</sup>, <i>due care should be taken to ensure that the brothers acquire a correct understanding of the spirit of the fraternal economy</i> <sup>(6)</sup>, <i>according to the requirements of our life in poverty and minority.</i></p>   |

**Explanatory Notes**

- (1) The text of this number is totally new. Taking account of PCO VI and VII and of the animation that has followed from it in the last decade (cf. in particular the Circular Letters of Br. John Corriveau) one cannot fail to insert those elements now proposed for the Constitutions. § 1 is an introduction. In it, the relationship between “administration of goods” and “fraternity” should be particularly noted. This was strongly brought out by PCO VI, which aimed to stimulate the Order to ponder once more and to study in depth the significance of *our gospel poverty in brotherhood*, from the communitarian, institutional and structural point of view. The very title of PCO VI, **Living Poverty in Brotherhood**, is highly significant.
- (2) The principle of transparency was particularly highlighted in PCO VI: “Fraternal life also requires **transparency** in local, provincial and general administration. Such transparency begins with the individual friar, continues in the local fraternity and finds its completion in the circumscription to which the fraternity belongs. Transparency expresses and facilitates brotherhood and solidarity among all the constituent parts of the Order” (*Proposal* n. 30). In the precise context of transparency it is not out of place to mention the need for accountability in all that we receive and use at every level, individual and communal.

- (3) The text presents *participation*,— together with *transparency, equity, solidarity and austerity* — as criteria or principles of the fraternal economy, based on the particular accentuation placed on them at PCO VI (Cf. n. 29 e 45) and in Circular Letters n. 17 e 24 of Br. John Corriveau. *Active participation* and *sharing* must characterise our mutual fraternal relations even when the administration of goods is at issue, because we all share responsibility for fraternal life in each of its aspects.
- (4) While the text of § 4, as formulated here, is not found literally in PCO VI and VII it does suitably interpret the mind of both plenary councils. In particular, *Proposals* 29 and 37 of PCO VI can be seen in the background of this number. In fact, accuracy and precision, transparency and sharing can and should be features of any administration, but they do not ipso facto express the inner quality of the administration of goods by religious. Our administration of money and other assets must be conducted with full respect for our state of life and of our vocation. Therefore it develops along different parameters from that of efficiency, by which persons and things are normally measured. The Order and its Provinces are not companies, nor should they become such.
- (5) The concern expressed in this § corresponds to the decision of the General Chapter of 2006<sup>44</sup>.
- (6) The expression *fraternal economy* does not appear in the *Proposals* of PCO VI. It arose out of the later reflections, after the plenary council itself<sup>45</sup>, and reappears several times in the *Proposals* of PCO VII. (Cf. n. 6. 40. 51).

## n. 78

| CONSTITUTIONS (1990)  | PROPOSED REVISED TEXT  |   |
|---|--|---|
|   | CONSTITUTIONS  | COMPLEMENTARY CODE  |
| 71,1. For the administration of money and other goods, treasurers should be appointed in the general and provincial curias by the respective major superior with the consent of the definitory.                                     | <p><b>Current text (71,1), with additions and changes</b></p> <p>1. For the administration of money and other goods, there should be bursars in the general and provincial curias, <i>and in the vice-provinces and in the custodies</i> <sup>(1)</sup>, appointed by the respective <i>minister</i> with the consent of <i>his council</i>.</p> |   |
| 71,2. Individual houses may also have local treasurers, appointed by the provincial ministers with the consent of the definitory. The office of treasurer in larger houses should ordinarily be distinct from that of the superior. | <p><b>Current text (71,2), with changes</b></p> <p>2. Individual houses may also have local bursars, appointed by the <i>minister</i> with the consent of <i>his council</i>.</p>  | <p><b>Current text (71,2)</b></p> <p>In the larger houses their office [the office of the bursar] should ordinarily be separate from that of the superior <sup>(2)</sup>.</p>                                     |
| 71,3. Treasurers should be truly qualified and fulfill their office under the direction and vigilance of the respective superior according to the norms of law and to prescriptions of the definitory.                              | <p><b>Current text (71,3), with additions and changes</b></p> <p>3. Bursars should be well qualified and fulfil their office <i>in harmony with our style of life</i> <sup>(3)</sup> under the direction and supervision of their <i>minister or guardian</i>, following the norms of law and the directives of the <i>council</i>.</p>          | <p><b>New text</b></p> <p><i>In each circumscription, or if appropriate also at other levels, formation and in-service training of brothers in economic administration should be provided</i> <sup>(4)</sup>.</p> |

<sup>44</sup> Cf. *Atti dell'83° Capitolo generale*. . . . vol. II; 834.

<sup>45</sup> Cf. Fr. JOHN CORRIVEAU, *Scelte coraggiose per un mondo più fraterno*. Lettera circolare n. 24 (22 maggio 2005), n. 6.1.

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|   | <p><b>New text</b></p> <p>4. <i>Administrators and bursars</i> <sup>(5)</sup> <i>should not be left to carry out their service alone, nor should they appropriate it to themselves. Because of the importance and sensitivity of their task, they should not ordinarily remain in the same job for too many years</i> <sup>(6)</sup>.</p> | <p><b>New text</b></p> <p><i>It is the responsibility of the chapters in each circumscription to determine the length of office for brothers in the service of the economy and administration</i> <sup>(7)</sup>.</p>  |
| <p>71,4. All treasurers, administrators and local superiors should give an exact account of their administration to their respective superiors, local councilors and local chapter at a time and in a manner determined by the major superiors.</p>   |   | <p><b>Current text (71,4), with changes</b> <sup>(8)</sup></p> <p>All bursars, administrators and <i>guardians</i>, at a time and in a manner determined by the <i>ministers</i>, are to give an exact account of their administration to <i>their superiors</i>, and to the <i>fraternity</i> <sup>(9)</sup>.</p>   |
| <p>71,5. When they make their triennial report, the provincial ministers shall draw up a document signed by the definitory and present it to the general minister. This should contain an accounting of the financial situation of the province so that its needs may be appropriately provided for and the observance of poverty effectively supervised.</p> |   | <p><b>Current text (71,5)</b></p> <p>On the occasion of the triennial report, the provincial ministers, in a document signed by the definitory, shall present to the general minister a true account of the financial situation of the province, so that its needs may be appropriately provided for and the observance of poverty effectively supervised.</p> |
| <p>71,6. Vice provincials and superiors regular should also provide a financial statement for their respective major superiors, signed by the councilors if this can be conveniently arranged.</p>  |   | <p><b>Current text (71,6), with changes</b></p> <p>The vice-provincial and <i>custos</i> also provide a financial statement for their <i>minister</i>, signed by the councilors if this can be conveniently arranged.</p>  |
| <p>71,7. The general minister should provide a statement on the financial condition of the Order at the general chapter in a manner determined by the chapter itself.</p> <p>8. Major superiors shall do the same at their respective chapters.</p>   |   | <p><b>Current text (71,7-8), with one change</b></p> <p>The general minister shall report on the financial situation of the Order at the general chapter in the manner determined by the chapter itself. The <i>other ministers</i> shall do the same at their respective chapters.</p>  |
| <p>71,9. As far as possible, let the administration of goods be entrusted to lay people, especially when it pertains to social or charitable works in which the brothers are only spiritual directors.</p>  | <p><b>Current text (71,9), with changes</b></p> <p>5. In the administration of goods <i>it is appropriate to avail of the services of competent lay people, whose work should be carefully supervised</i> <sup>(10)</sup>. In the case of social or charitable works, <i>the administration should be</i></p>                             |  |

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|   | <i>entrusted to lay people, the limits of their competence being determined and ensuring that the nature and aims of the work are respected, and leaving the pastoral management in our hands</i> <sup>(1)</sup> .  |  |
| 67,8. The other prescriptions of the universal law concerning contracts and alienation [of property] should be exactly observed.<br>71,10. The prescriptions of the universal law should be scrupulously observed in the administration of goods. | <b>Current texts (67,8 and 71,10) merged and expanded</b><br>6. The prescriptions of universal law regarding administration of assets, contracts and alienations shall be scrupulously observed, <i>while keeping rigorously to ethical principles in conformity with the social teaching of the Church</i> <sup>(12)</sup> .   |  |
|   |   | <b>Current text (Ordinances 4/1)</b> <sup>(13)</sup><br>To change regulations regarding temporal goods or to take any action involving them, the permission of the immediate major superior is required. |
|   |   | <b>Current text (Ordinances 4/2)</b><br>In the circumscriptions of the Order and in all houses the finance committee mentioned in CIC can. 1280 must be set up.  |
|   | <b>New text</b><br>7. <i>The Order should have a special Statute for the Administration of Assets, based on the norms of the Constitutions and of the Complementary Code, setting out the principles and practical guidelines for sound and just administration and management of financial resources. This Statute, approved by the General Chapter, is to be revised periodically</i> <sup>(14)</sup> . |  |
|   | <b>New text</b><br>8. <i>There should be similar statutes in each circumscription or for a group of circumscriptions or at conference level, which are to be approved by the respective chapters and by the General Minister with his definitory. The ministers and guardians should ensure that they are faithfully implemented</i> <sup>(15)</sup> .  |  |

### Explanatory Notes

- (1) The reasons for the inclusion of the extra phrase into the text are easy to understand.
- (2) The second part of the § in the current text (n. 71,2) is a specific instance of the preceding statement. As such it can be transferred to the complementary code, leaving in the Constitutions the statement of principle that in each of our houses there should be a bursar.

- (3) The expression *in harmony with our style of life* comes from *Proposal* n. 41 of PCO VI. This is the first and most fundamental requirement when discerning the suitability of brothers called to serve in economic administration. The expression is ideally connected to what is stated above in n. 77,4.
- (4) The text proposed for the complementary code repeats *Proposal* n. 41 of PCO VI. It refers to initiatives geared to formation and updating in the circumscriptions *or at other levels*, meaning by the latter any joint ventures undertaken by two or more jurisdictions at Conference level.
- (5) The text speaks of *administrators* and *bursars*, referring not only to brothers in charge of the administration of the local fraternities, the provincial curia and the general curia, but also to those entrusted by their ministers with the care of particular structures such as missions, the office of the postulator or vice-postulator, pastoral activities (parishes) social works, various funds, etc.
- (6) This § was drafted out of an awareness of how sensitive the task entrusted to bursars and administrators is. There is a ministry which is becoming more and more complex and problematic. This makes it necessary to provide real communal support to these brothers. The proposed text is also based on a reference to our specific charism and to the spirit of minority, which requires that there be a turnover of brothers who occupy the various offices, jobs and services. Even the service of administration depends on the same charismatic reference. In this connection the words of PCO VII, referring to the management of works of social development, must be kept in mind: “Because these works often involve the exercise of great power, no brother should stay in a position of leadership or control for too long. To do otherwise risks abusing power and developing habits inconsistent with our life of minority. The norm of tenure for a brother in such a position might be similar to that of a provincial minister, i.e., no more than six consecutive years in leadership” (n. 51).
- (7) The proposed constitutional text enshrines a principle of flexibility which attempts to take account of particular situations in the various circumscriptions of the Order. Hence it says: *they should not ordinarily remain in the same job for too many years*, and in the complementary code the faculty is given to the chapters in each circumscription *to determine the length of office for brothers in the service of the economy and administration*.
- (8) Following *Project 2006*, we propose to transfer to the complementary code all the norms currently contained in nos. 71,4-8 concerning economic reports.
- (9) The current text has been slightly modified for greater clarity and simplicity.
- (10) The proposed formulation is not intended to nullify the concerns underlying the current text (n. 71,9), which, however, could appear contradictory in certain aspects to the previous prescriptions concerning bursars and the administration of goods.
- (11) The Commission tried to make the current text more precise by adding some elements based on experience. However the subject needs further reflection and study in the light of PCO VI and VII.
- (12) To avoid useless repetitions the prescriptions of nos. 67,8 and 71,10 have been merged. But we think it fitting that this paragraph should remain in the text of the Constitutions and enriched by references to *ethical principles*, as suggested by PCO VI (*Proposal* n. 37) and decided by the General Chapter of 2000<sup>46</sup>. Also, for reasons that are more than obvious to us religious, there should be a reference to the *social teaching of the Church*. In fact the two elements should be understood as being closely connected: it is a matter of keeping to *ethical principles according to the teaching of the Church*. “[...]Today we hear much talk of ethics in the world of economy, finance and business. [...]It would be advisable, however, to develop a sound criterion of discernment, since the adjective “ethical” can be abused. When the word is used generically, it can lend itself to any number of interpretations, even to the point where it includes decisions and choices contrary to justice and authentic human welfare. Much in fact depends on the underlying system of morality. On this subject the Church's social doctrine can make a specific contribution, since it is based on man's creation ‘in the image of God’ (Gen 1:27), a datum which gives rise to the inviolable dignity of the human person and the transcendent value of natural moral norms. When business ethics prescind from these two pillars, it inevitably risks losing its distinctive nature and it falls prey to forms of exploitation; more specifically, it risks becoming subservient to existing economic and financial systems rather than correcting their dysfunctional aspects. Among other things, it risks being used to justify the financing of projects that are in reality unethical. [...]” (*Caritas in veritate* n. 45).

<sup>46</sup> Cf. *Atti del Capitolo generale LXXXII celebrato in Roma... dal 25 giugno al 16 luglio dell'Anno Santo 2000*. Edizione ufficiale a cura di Fr. Felice Cangelosi... Roma, Curia Generale OFMCap, 2001; 713.

- (13) In the context of the administration of goods, the two current Ordinances (4/1 and 4/2) go to the complementary code.
- (14) The text we propose to insert in § 7 seems important and urgent. It is obvious that not everything that concerns the correct administration of goods can find a place either in the Constitutions or in the complementary code (General Statutes or Ordinances). Neither is it opportune that the Constitutions or the complementary code should mention everything, including investments, budgets, etc. This is a subject that requires more detailed regulation. For this reason, as already anticipated in the Introduction, we propose the creation of a special *Codex additicius*, (additional code) at Order level.
- (15) Many circumscriptions have already drafted this kind of Statute. It is not at present explicitly envisaged in the Constitutions, but indirectly it can be derived from n. 72, which speaks of economic commissions, whose competence is to be determined by the Chapter (72,2). The clause in the proposed text calling for these economic Statutes to be approved *by the General Minister with his definitory* should come as no surprise. In reality, the purpose of these documents is to apply the Constitutions, and as such they come under the principle enunciated by the Constitutions themselves in n. 184,5: “Provincial chapters or Conferences of Major Superiors may enact particular statutes so that the regulations of the Constitutions may be properly applied to the situations of provinces and regions. Such statutes need the approval of the General Minister with the consent of the definitory”.

**[Complementary Code] <sup>(1)</sup>**

| <b>CONSTITUTIONS (1990)</b>   | <b>PROPOSED REVISED TEXT</b> |   |
|---|------------------------------|---|
|   | <b>CONSTITUTIONS</b>         | <b>COMPLEMENTARY CODE</b>   |
| 72,1. It is recommended that one or more committees on financial matters be established in the provinces and vice provinces. Their function will be to offer advice concerning the administration of goods, and the construction, maintenance and alienation of houses. |                              | <b>Current text (72,1)</b><br>1. The establishment of one or more committees on financial matters is recommended in the provinces and vice-provinces. Their function would be to offer advice about the administration of goods, and on the building, maintenance and alienation of houses. |
| 72,2. The chapter establishes these commissions and also determines their competence. However, the major superior with the consent of the council appoints their members, some of whom may be lay people.   |                              | <b>Current text (72,2), with one change</b><br>These commissions are established by the Chapter, which also determines their competence. However their members, some of whom may be lay people, are appointed by the <i>minister</i> with the consent of the council.                       |

**Explanatory Notes**

- (1) In n. 72 the current Constitutions make a recommendation; the text is not strictly binding. For this reason we propose to transfer it to the complementary code.

[Complementary Code] <sup>(1)</sup>

| CONSTITUTIONS (1990)   | PROPOSED REVISED TEXT |  |
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|  | CONSTITUTIONS         | COMPLEMENTARY CODE   |
| 73,1. After consulting the major superiors or, if necessary, the Conference of Major Superiors, the general minister with the consent of the definity is to establish limits, according to the differing values of currencies, beyond which major superiors are bound to ask either the consent of the council or the permission of the superior given in writing before contracting obligations, alienating goods or making extraordinary expenses. |                       | <b>Current text (73,1), with changes</b><br>After consulting the <i>ministers</i> or, if necessary, the Conference of <i>ministers</i> , the general minister with the consent of the definity, should establish limits, according to the differing values of currencies, beyond which <i>ministers</i> are bound to ask either the consent of the council or the permission of the <i>minister</i> given in writing in order validly to contract obligations, alienate goods or incur extraordinary expenses. |
| 73,2. The major superior, with the consent of the Council, shall do the same with appropriate adaptations for the local superiors of his territory.  |                       | <b>Current text (73,2), with changes</b><br>The <i>minister</i> , with the consent of the Council, will do the same with appropriate adaptations for the <i>guardians</i> of his circumscription.  |
| 73,3. The expenses are considered extraordinary, however, that are unnecessary either for the major superior to exercise his office or for the ordinary service of the brothers or for the local superior in those matters that do not pertain to the ordinary care of the fraternity entrusted to him.  |                       | <b>Current text (73,3), with changes</b><br>Expenses are considered extraordinary, however, that are unnecessary either for the <i>minister</i> in the exercise of his office or in the ordinary service of the brothers, or for the <i>guardian</i> in those matters that do not pertain to the ordinary care of the fraternity entrusted to him.   |

**Explanatory Notes**

- (1) We propose to transfer to the complementary code the current n. 73 regarding the limit sums for extraordinary expenditure.

**n. 79**

| CONSTITUTIONS (1990)  | PROPOSED REVISED TEXT   |
|---|---|
| 74,1. Called to the gospel way of poverty, let us accustom ourselves to being in need after the example of Christ and mindful of Saint Francis who wished to be poor in such a way that, liberated from all things and from the chains of the heart, he might give himself completely to the Father Who cares for us all. | <b>Current text (74,1)</b><br>1. Since we have been called to the gospel way of poverty, we should accustom ourselves to being in want, after the example of Christ; we should also remember Saint Francis, who wished to be so poor that, laying aside all things and attachments, he could entrust his whole self to the Father Who cares for us. |

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| 74,2. Let us not wish to be numbered among those who go by the fictitious name of "poor" who love to be poor in such a way as to lack nothing.   | <b>Current text (74,2)</b><br>2. Nor should we wish to be numbered among those who are wrongly called poor, who love to be poor as long as they lack nothing.   |
| 74,3. Let us acknowledge that Gospel poverty and its perfection consist principally in being totally available to God and people.  | <b>Current text (74,3)</b><br>3. We should remember that Gospel poverty and its perfection consist principally in being totally available for God and for people.   |
|  | <b>New text</b><br>4. <i>Let us therefore long for perfect charity, loving with all our hearts God who is all goodness, and spreading his kindness to all people and all creatures<sup>(1)</sup>.</i>   |
| 74,4. Therefore, let us not cling to earthly goods with an inordinate affection so that we may use this world as though not using it for the glory of the Father and the good of His children. | <b>Current text (74,4), expanded</b><br>5. Therefore, let us not be inordinately attached to earthly goods, so that we may use this world as though not using it, for the glory of the Father and the benefit of His children, <i>and with praise and thanksgiving give back all that is good to the Lord our God, Most High and All-Powerful, Who is all our wealth and sufficiency<sup>(2)</sup>.</i> |

### Explanatory Notes

- (1) The concluding text of chapter IV has been kept in its entirety. However, we think it appropriate to add some theological and spiritual enrichment. Firstly by inserting a new paragraph, inspired by Proposal 3 of PCO VI: : “Conversely, for Francis poverty and minority are not ends in themselves, but help us to put into practice “the highest gift” (cf. 1Cor 12,31) which is **love**, expressed for people and for all creation in Franciscan brotherhood”. In a text such as chapter IV, which frequently speaks of earthly and material goods, it is more than appropriate at the end to turn one’s eyes towards “the Good”. This is done in the words of Saint Francis (cf. *Rnb* 23,8-9).
- (2) The text that has been added to the final paragraph comes from *Rnb* 17,17 and *LodAl* 5. This second insertion is justified by an attitude that was typical of St Francis. Precisely because he did not want to appropriate any good thing he had received from the Lord, he knew that everything had to be given back to Him. The word “render” is typical of Francis’ vocabulary, and he uses it in the context of praise and thanksgiving. It also seems quite fitting, at the conclusion of the chapter on poverty, to affirm that the poor possess the greatest of treasures: *God is all our wealth and sufficiency.*