

**RULE of LIFE**  
and  
**LITURGIES of the SECULAR ORDER**  
of the  
**SERVANTS OF MARY**

San Marcello, Rome  
1995

Ave + Maria

Prot. 415/95

Rome, 4th May 1995  
*Feast of St. Peregrine M. Laziosi, OSM*  
*650th Anniversary of his death*

**TO THE SISTERS AND BROTHERS  
OF THE SECULAR ORDER OF THE SERVANTS OF MARY!**

The Holy Spirit, who called our First Fathers in 1233, has also called you to witness the Gospel in fraternal communion, so that you might be at the service of God and mankind, drawing inspiration from Mary, the Mother and Servant of the Lord. The Risen Lord invites you to walk in the way of holiness, which for 762 years has been the task of all the members of our Order, and to prolong in your families and in your christian communities the active presence of Mary, the Mother of Jesus.

The Holy See, in granting its approval of your «Rule of Life» on the 29th April 1995, has shown its appreciation of the path taken by you and your fraternities, in following the directions of the Second Vatican Council and of the experimental Rule of Life approved by the General Council on the 2nd October 1982.

You, a vital part of the Servite Family, by living your baptismal consecration in the light of this «Rule of Life», walk on the road to holiness, building up the communion of the Church, announcing the Gospel in those places and in those situations in which only you, because of your position as laity, can bear witness to Christ, Son of Mary and first-born among many. You thus participate in the Church's mission of evangelisation, carrying to your sisters and brothers, as Mary did, that Word which saves, and, in order to bring comfort and a redeeming presence, you should stand with Her at the foot of the countless crosses borne by mankind.

The «Rule of Life», approved by the Holy See, will become operative on the 15th August 1995, the Solemnity of the Assumption of Our Lady into heaven, the day on which, according to tradition, our First Seven Fathers arrived at Monte Senario.

In your Christian community and in your fraternity, follow that road of faith and love exemplified in the Virgin of the Magnificat; you will thus become a participant in the "great things" which the Lord has done in Her and you will, one day, join Our Lady in heaven, where she reigns gloriously and intercedes kindly on behalf of all her Servants.

Rejoice and be glad! Call others to be part of your fraternity. Spread your charism of unity and fraternal love within the Church and throughout humanity, so in need of harmony, peace and mutual understanding!

Fraternally,

Fr. Reinhold M. Bodner, OSM  
Secretary of the Order

fr. Hubert M. Moons, OSM  
Prior General

CONGREGATION  
FOR INSTITUTES OF CONSECRATED LIFE  
AND SOCIETIES OF APOSTOLIC LIFE

Prot. n. S. 48-1/95

DECREE

The Prior General of the Order of Servants of Mary, with the consent of his Council, has requested the Holy See to approve the «Rule of Life» of the Secular Order of the Servants of Mary, revised in accordance with the spirit of the Second Ecumenical Vatican Council and the norms of Canon Law.

The Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, after having considered this request and given due attention and consideration to the matter in question, hereby approves and confirms with this present Decree - in respect of law - the aforementioned «Rule of Life», edited in English, and of which it conserves a copy in its archive.

The members of the Secular Order of the Servants of Mary, by following in the footsteps of the Seven Holy Founders of the Order, will lead *a faithful and full christian life* and will tend with increasing progress, day by day, towards the perfection of their state of life.

Notwithstanding anything to the contrary,

Given at Rome, the 29th April 1995.

Eduardo Card. Martínez Somalo  
Prefect

+ Francisco Javier Errázuriz Ossa  
Secretary

## Historical Note on the Servite Secular Order

The present Constitutions of the Order of Friar Servants of Mary note in the initial chapter that the communities of Servites have always attracted around them numerous families and groups which, whether religious or lay, constitute particular expressions of the one unique vocation<sup>[1]</sup>.

From the very beginnings of the Order of Servants of Mary (1233), our Seven Holy Founders became aware that there were individuals and even married couples who, while wishing to retain their status as lay persons, wanted to be attached in some way to the Order and its spiritual ideals<sup>[2]</sup>. The Benedictine usage of having lay *oblates* attached to their monasteries was the first method used in accepting these lay persons, and the first documented oblate of the Servites - even before the Order was approved - was a contemporary of the Founders, a certain Arrigo of Baldovino dell'Anguillara, who in October 1265, was welcomed as an *oblatus* (also sometimes called *converso* or *devoto*) at the Church of St. Mary of Cafaggio in Florence by the Prior General, Manettus of Florence. Between 1265 and 1372, the existing records show that there were 58 Servite oblates spread among 12 different communities in Italy<sup>[3]</sup>.

It was not, however, till 1424 that the Servite Secular Order took on an officially recognized form when Pope Martin V issued specific norms in his decree **Sedis apostolicae providentia** (15th April 1424). It was around this period that all those groups of lay persons associated with mendicant Orders such as the Dominicans, Servites, Augustinians and Carmelites were formed into "Third Orders", and each given a specific rule of life. The norms issued by **Sedis apostolicae providentia** remained the foundation of the Servite Third Order Rule of Life until the major reforms of 1925. The name "Third Order" was the one which attached itself to these groups, although they were variously called "Consortium" or "Company" of the Servants of Mary.

More recent historical research shows that this Third Order of the Servants of Mary was supported and encouraged greatly by successive Priors General, particularly after the end of the 16th century.

A revised rule of life for the Servite Third Order was written in 1966 under the generalate of fra. Alfonsus M. Montà, and consequently approved by the Congregation for Religious on the 1st May 1966.

Following the Second Vatican Council, the Servite Friars began the process of revising their Constitutions, beginning with the special General Chapter of Madrid in 1968 and achieving final approval by the Holy See in 1987. For the Servite Secular Order, the General Council of the Friars set up a special commission to consult with the secular members of the Order and to help with the renewal of their rule of life. Following two extensive consultations with secular members, a revised rule of life was approved "ad experimentum" by the General Council in October 1982.

In 1989, the General Chapter of Rome requested the General Secretariate for the Secular Order to undertake a further consultation with the Secular Order members, and to prepare a definitive text of the rule of life for submission to and approval by the Sacred Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life. The present definitive edition of the **Rule of Life for the Secular Order of the Servants of Mary** was approved by the Holy See on the 29th April 1995.

## RULE OF LIFE OF THE SECULAR ORDER OF SERVANTS OF MARY

### I. THE ORDER OF THE SERVANTS OF MARY

1. The Order of Friar Servants of Mary, which arose as an expression of evangelical apostolic life, is a community of men gathered together in the name of Jesus the Lord. Moved by the Spirit, they commit themselves, as did their First Fathers, to witness the gospel in fraternal communion and to be at the service of God and all people, drawing abiding inspiration from Mary, Mother and Servant of the Lord<sup>[4]</sup>.

2. In order to serve the Lord and their sisters and brothers, the Servants have dedicated themselves from their origins to the Mother of God, the Blessed One of the Most High. They have turned to her on their pilgrimage to Christ and in their task of proclaiming him to the world. From the *fiat* of the lowly servant of the Lord<sup>[5]</sup>, they have learned to receive the word of God and to be attentive to the promptings of the Spirit. From the participation of the mother in the redemptive mission of her son, the Suffering Servant of the Lord, they have learned to understand and alleviate human suffering<sup>[6]</sup>.

3. Sensitive to the needs of the Church, the Servants seek to know more about Mary, God's Mother and ours, and her mission in the mystery of salvation. Seeing in her the "*most excellent fruit of redemption*"<sup>[7]</sup>, they energetically support individuals and society in their struggle to be free. Aware of the divisions among Christians, they do all that they can so that the Daughter of Zion become a symbol of unity for all. To the insecure they propose as a model of confidence of God's children, the humble woman who placed all her hope in the Lord<sup>[8]</sup>.

4. By drawing abiding inspiration from Mary, Mother and Servant of the Lord, many religious congregations and lay groups, each of which constitutes a particular expression of consecrated or lay life, have grown up around the communities of the Order of Servants of Mary<sup>[9]</sup>. Others already in existence, attracted by this same ideal, have associated themselves with the Order. Each of these, be it religious or lay, expresses in its own way the one vocation which is common to us all.

### II. THE SECULAR ORDER OF THE SERVANTS OF MARY AND THE LIFE OF THE FRATERNITY<sup>[10]</sup>

#### CHAPTER 1 - The Secular<sup>[11]</sup> Order of Servants of Mary

5. The Secular Order of the Servants of Mary consists of lay men and women who, united by their Christian baptism and directed by the Holy Spirit in the path to holiness, wish to align and unite themselves in the Service of Christ and their sisters and brothers in the world by drawing on the inspiration of Mary, the Mother and Servant of our Saviour Jesus Christ. In the Order of Servants of Mary, they commit themselves as lay or secular persons, to follow in their family and social life, the path of the Seven Holy Founders of the Servants of Mary.

6. The Secular Order of Servants of Mary, made up of men and women living out their baptismal consecration in the world, is one of these expressions of the shared vocation of the Servite

Order<sup>[12]</sup>. It shares in the same ideal, commitment to evangelical, apostolic life and piety towards the mother of God; with the Servite Order it constitutes a single family.

7. As secular members of the Servite Order, these sisters and brothers are an authentic witness to the lay origins of the Order of Servants of Mary, whose Seven Founders began their pilgrimage as lay people united in prayer and service in honour of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

8. The Secular Servite vocation is a special calling within the Church, the holy People of God. It consists of an invitation freely given by God to which a free and conscious response is made. In this gift, Servites recognise the efficacious maternal presence of Mary.

9. This gift of a vocation finds its roots in baptismal consecration and with its acceptance the Servants of Mary commit themselves to follow Christ and bring to fulfillment the evangelical commandment of love.

10. Members of the Servite Secular Order are men and women who support each other in their marital, family, and social life and in their active involvement in the world. They strive toward holiness according to the spirituality of the Servite Order, following its directives and their own designated Rule.

11. They undertake to make their own the religious experience of our Seven First Fathers, who lived in fraternal communion so as to be able to render greater service to God, to the Blessed Virgin, and to their sisters and brothers. Gathered together in the name of the Lord, Secular Servites discover His presence in the secular community and find the support they need to respond to their special call to holiness.

12. Through listening to the Word of God and prayer, Secular Servites deepen their own proper christian vocation and mission within the ecclesial community and in the world. As living members of the Church they commit themselves to knowing and living her teaching in their own life and apostolate.

13. According to the spirit of the Order, Secular Servites draw abiding inspiration from Mary, Mother and Servant of the Lord. They look toward her as a guiding image leading them to a life of simplicity and service, totally dedicated to God. They regard her as the perfect model for the disciple of Jesus and dedicate themselves entirely to her, honouring her especially as the Virgin of Sorrows. They commit themselves to deepening their knowledge of her and her place in the mystery of salvation through study and personal prayer.

14. The Secular Servant of Mary expresses a voluntary commitment to be faithful to their proper secular vocation and to maintain a living bond with the Order by means of their Promise.

## CHAPTER 2 - The Life of the Secular Fraternity

15. Following the example of the first Christians who "were of one heart and one mind"<sup>[13]</sup>, the sisters and brothers of the Servite Secular Order meet together as a sign of their fraternal communion and to further their knowledge of each other and to strengthen each other on their journey together toward Christian perfection and in the loving service of all people.

16. All take an active part in the regular meetings which celebrate the life of the Secular Fraternity. With simplicity they offer their personal contribution of experience and ideas.

17. The Secular Fraternity meets to proclaim the Word of God and reflect together on it and to examine and study the Rule, matters of human, social and religious concern, and issues related to Servite life.

18. The Secular Fraternity has living links with the local Church and the local Servite religious community, whose spirituality it shares and in whose apostolic work it takes part.

19. Whenever possible, sisters and brothers of the Secular Fraternity take part in the prayer life of the religious community, and, when invited, share its renewal sessions, chapters, and meals.

20. The Secular Fraternity keeps in constant touch with those sisters and brothers who, because of particular circumstances, are unable to attend the meetings of the group. It encourages them and supports them in heartfelt solidarity and in religious growth. Likewise, it maintains bonds of communion, family spirit, and association with those numerous Families and Groups who share the same Servite vocation and together form one single family. A special attention should be given to communication and collaboration with other lay associations of the Servite Order.

21. In the spirit of the Beatitudes, the Secular Fraternity shares a communion of goods. The members contribute, according to their means, to the expenses of the local, national and international fraternities, and to the assistance of sisters and brothers in financial difficulties.

### CHAPTER 3 - Prayer

22. Prayer is an essential duty for every Christian. But for Secular Servites who have chosen to follow Christ, his example, and his teaching, it constitutes a special commitment to growth in faith and hope and to bringing the commandment of love to perfection.

23. Secular Servites know well that to live constantly in God's presence, personal, silent, and hidden prayer is a necessity, as Jesus Himself so wonderfully exemplified.

24. Prayer is a meeting with God in faith; on this journey the Blessed Virgin, the highest example of a person of prayer, is the sure guide and support of Secular Servites.

25. Faithful to their vocation, Secular Servites attach great importance to common prayer; together with their sisters and brothers they explore the depths of the Word of God and intercede for all people and the world itself.

26. Among the various forms of prayer, liturgical prayer holds priority of place. Secular Servites participate in the liturgical and sacramental life of the Church.

27. In the Eucharist the sisters and brothers of the Secular Fraternity recognise that they make present the Passover of the Lord and establish a bond of love between themselves and all humanity. The Eucharist is the sacramental sign of communion and the highest expression of prayer.

28. Secular Servites take an active part in the Mass; whenever possible, they participate in the Mass of the local Servite religious community. They also try to take part often in the Morning and Evening Prayer of the Church.

29. In accordance with the traditions of the Order, the Secular Fraternity shows special honour to the Blessed Virgin by means of particular acts of devotion such as the Hail Mary, the Vigil of the Blessed Virgin, and the Rosary of the Seven Sorrows; it celebrates as family feasts the principal Marian feasts of the Order and the local Church, and keeps the memorial of Our Lady of Sorrows, as well as the solemnities and memorials of the saints and blessed of the Servite Order.

30. The Secular Servite will pray often for their departed sisters and brothers, imploring the Lord's mercy on their behalf. On the day of death and of burial of a sister or brother, the Secular Servite will join in the bereavement of the family by offering the appropriate prayers for the repose of the soul of the deceased.

31. It is one of the duties of the Secular Fraternity to organise regular days or periods of recollection, in which all the sisters and brothers strive to participate.

#### CHAPTER 4 - Penance and Conversion

32. For Secular Servites, dedicated to bringing the commandment of charity to perfection, penance is a Gospel value and a sure means of conversion.

33. Following the example of our first Fathers and the tradition of the Order, penance for Secular Servites consists primarily of charity, understood as acceptance and service of one another.

34. Convinced that the following of Christ requires a constant orientation toward the will of God, Secular Servites are alert to the many opportunities everyday life offers for practicing penance, regarding them as graces and calls to conversion. They make frequent use of the sacrament of reconciliation, the works of mercy, and the virtue of moderation, particularly during the liturgical seasons of Lent and Advent.

#### CHAPTER 5 - The Witness of Poverty

35. The Secular Servant of Mary strives to live the evangelical beatitude "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of heaven"<sup>[14]</sup>, following the example of Mary, poor and humble servant of the Lord.

36. By conscientious work, simplicity and austerity of life style, sensitivity to the needs of others, and service to those most in need, the Secular Servants of Mary give testimony of their love for the poor Christ, both individually and communally, and proclaim to the people of today, tempted by wealth, power, and pleasure, that God is the one necessary good, who alone can satisfy the longings of the human heart.

#### CHAPTER 6 - Apostolate

37. Faithful to their vocation of service, Secular Servites will radiate the love of Christ throughout the world and offer to all people a living testimony of self-giving to others, following the example of Mary.

38. Recognising the fact that the family is the cornerstone of all civil and lay society, Secular Servites will give primary importance to the apostolate and testimony of christian family life. Within

the community of this "domestic church" of family, the mutual love and respect of parents, together with the care and christian upbringing of their children, shall be a particular focus of prayer and encouragement by the Fraternity<sup>[15]</sup>.

39. As members of the Church and the world, they share the anxieties and the aspirations of both, and urged on by the love of God, they cooperate in the building of a new world in the light of Gospel values.

40. Each day, the Secular Servite will strive to live according to the Spirit in their prayer and apostolic endeavours, their married and family life, their daily labour and in their moments of leisure, that all these may be transformed into the spiritual sacrifice acceptable to God through Jesus Christ<sup>[16]</sup>.

41. As active members of the Secular Fraternity, Secular Servites cooperate in the apostolic endeavours taken on by the group in response to the needs of the neighbourhood and the local Church. According to their means and talents they also strive to take part in the particular works of pastoral service of the local religious community or parish<sup>[17]</sup>.

42. Through devotion to the Mother of Sorrows, the Secular Servite acquires a particular interest in service to the sick, the infirm and the most needy, whether physically, spiritually or morally. In this commitment of service, the figure of Mary at the foot of the Cross will be their guiding principle. Because the Son of Man is still being crucified daily in his sisters and brothers, the secular Servant of Mary wishes to be present with Mary at the foot of these infinite crosses<sup>[18]</sup>.

43. The Secular Servite Fraternity supports and participates in the Order's work for vocations and in its apostolates, especially the missions<sup>[19]</sup>.

## CHAPTER 7 - Formation

44. The vocation of the Secular Servant of Mary is nourished within the Fraternity and in communion with the whole Servite Family. In their continuing formation, the Secular Servants of Mary will seek through study to deepen their knowledge of the official documents of the Church and the Order.

45. The Secular Fraternity offers to every sister and brother the experience of communion of life and constant help; the community of the whole Servite family offers the riches of the Church and the Order.

46. Servants of Mary are aware that bringing their vocation to full maturity demands personal commitment and the effective use of their gifts and talents in relationship to God and all humanity.

47. While the Virgin Mary shared on earth the life that is common to all, full of family worries and work, she was always in intimate union with her Son, sharing in the Saviour's work in a most singular way. She is therefore the model for every Secular Servant of Mary.

## III. ENTRY INTO THE SECULAR FRATERNITY.

## CHAPTER 8 - Admission

48. Those may be admitted into the Servite Secular Order who manifest a sincere desire to share the ideals of the Order of Servants of Mary, undertaking to live and express in their own family and social context the human and evangelical values of the Christian life, honouring and imitating the Blessed Virgin in a particular manner, according to the spirit of the Order.

49. For admission to the Secular Order, a written request must be submitted to the Council of the Secular Fraternity, whose right it is to accept the candidate.

50. Admission to the Secular Fraternity is conducted according to the Ritual proper to the Secular Order of the Servants of Mary.

51. Following admission, in order to determine the authenticity of the candidate's vocation, the candidate, through study and practice of the Rule, begins an experience of life in the Secular Fraternity.

## CHAPTER 9 - Probation or Novitiate

52. Probation is the period of time from admission to the Promise. Normally this will last at least one year.

53. During the period of probation, the candidate, under the guidance of the person responsible for formation and the assistant, undertakes:

- to gradually discover and assimilate the specific vocation of the lay-person in the Church and the characteristics proper to the Servite Secular Fraternity;
- to study the Rule and Statutes proper to the Secular Order of the Servants of Mary;
- to deepen their knowledge and understanding of the doctrine on the Virgin Mary in the Mystery of Christ and the Church;
- to understand the essential elements of the history and spirituality of the Servite Order.

54. For sound reasons and taking into account the candidate's preparation and maturity, the period of probation may be shortened or lengthened at the discretion of the Council of the Secular Fraternity.

## CHAPTER 10 - The Promise

55. The Promise is the act by which the candidate renews the consecration made at baptism, undertaking to live it according to the spirituality of the Servite Order, in solidarity with all the communities of the Servite family and in accordance with the Rule and Statutes of the Servite Secular Order.

56. By the Promise, the candidate is enrolled perpetually into the Secular Order of the Servants of Mary, and shares in the life of the whole Servite family.

57. The request for admission to the Promise must be made by the candidate in writing and be accompanied by a written report from the person responsible for formation. The request is made to the Council of the Secular Fraternity. The candidate must be at least eighteen years of age.

58. The rite of the Promise follows the formula prescribed by the Ritual of the Secular Order of Servants of Mary and is presided over, according to circumstances, by the prior of the religious Community or by a delegate of the Order.

59. For just and valid reasons the Council of the Secular Fraternity can dispense from the Promise, temporarily or definitively, and can dismiss a person with the Promise, after having set forth its reasons and having heard the person concerned.

#### IV. ORGANISATION OF THE SECULAR FRATERNITY

##### CHAPTER 11 - Organisation

60. The Secular Order of the Servants of Mary is made up of local Fraternities which, united by the same ideal of life, form the international Fraternity.

61. Secular Fraternities may group together according to city, region, or country.

62. The internal life of each Secular Fraternity or group of Fraternities is regulated by the Fraternity itself under the leadership of the respective priors/prioresses and councils.

63. Each Secular Fraternity is connected to the Order through a duly designated Assistant.

##### CHAPTER 12 - Official Ecclesial Recognition of Fraternities

64. a) In the case of a group originating around a community of friars, it pertains to the conventual chapter of the friars to recognise it as authentically Servite and to support its request for official ecclesial recognition.

b) The other branches of the Servite family (enclosed nuns, sisters, secular institutes) may also recognise the authenticity of a group originating around them, and similarly to support its request for official ecclesial recognition.

c) In the case of Secular Fraternities originating away from Servite communities, the competent authorities for recognition are, according to the particular case, the Vicarial, Provincial or General Councils.

65. Official ecclesial recognition of a Fraternity of the Secular Order is accomplished by a decree of the Prior General.

66. For official ecclesial recognition a written request is necessary. In the case of a Fraternity originating away from a community of the Servite Family, authorisation from the Ordinary of the place is also required.

67. The Secretary General for the Secular Order and Lay Groups is to be informed of each official ecclesial recognition.

##### CHAPTER 13 - Government

###### 68. *The Prior General*

The Prior General of the Order, sign of unity of the whole Servite Family, exercises authority in a spirit of service over the whole Servite Secular Order, respecting its autonomy.

###### 69. *The Secretary General*

1. The Secretary General is named by the General Council of the Order. The Secretary General's principal task is animation and coordination on the level of the entire Order.

2. In collaboration with the members of the General Secretariate and the other Assistants at various levels, the Secretary General directs the attention of the Secular Fraternities to the spiritual and pastoral directives of the Church and of the Order, and also communicates information about the more significant activities and experiences of the individual Secular Fraternities.

70. *The Prior/Prioress of the local Fraternity*<sup>[20]</sup>

1. The Prior/Prioress, first among the sisters and brothers, presides over the fraternity in a service of love; together with the Council and each member of the Fraternity, he/she has responsibility for the Fraternity.

In the exercise of service the Prior/Prioress should be aware of bearing witness to Christ who came not to be served but to serve, and to give more abundant life to his disciples.

2. It is the role of the Prior/Prioress:

- to convoke and preside at the meetings of the Secular Fraternity and its Council;
- to foster and encourage the spiritual and apostolic endeavours of the Fraternity;
- to be vigilant about observance of the Rule and Statutes;
- to collaborate with the Assistant and the officials of the Fraternity.

71. The Prior/Prioress is elected according to the norms of the particular statutes of the Secular Fraternity.

72. *The Council*

1. Each Fraternity has a Council. The members of the Council are the Prior/Prioress, the Assistant, and at least three councillors elected by the Fraternity itself.

2. It pertains to the Council:

- to collaborate with the Prior/Prioress in the leadership and animation of the Fraternity;
- to accept candidates for admission and the Promise;
- to dispense from the Promise;
- to dismiss a member of the Fraternity, when this proves necessary, after hearing the

person

concerned.

73. *The Assistant*

1. Each Secular Fraternity, or group of Fraternities, has an Assistant, named by the competent authority of the Servite Family. In cases where the Assistant is not a member of the Servite Family, the competent authority of the Order makes the nomination upon presentation by the local Fraternity and confirmation is then given by the local Ordinary.

2. The Assistant may be a sister or brother of the Servite family (friar, nun, sister, member of a Servite Secular Institute), a priest member of the Servite Secular Order, or another priest.

3. The Assistant should be competent and willing, committed to studying more deeply the specific vocation of the Secular Servite with the sisters and brothers with whom a common journey of faith is shared.

4. The Assistant is to foster the spirit of the Servite family among the members of the Fraternity and to offer a spiritual service of encouragement.

74. *The Secretary*

1. Each Secular Fraternity will have a Secretary.

2. It is the responsibility of the Secretary:

- to keep the minutes of the meetings of the Fraternity and its Council;
- to keep the register of admissions and Promises up-to-date.

- to look after and keep up-to-date the records of the Fraternity.
- to maintain contact with those sisters and brothers who cannot attend the meetings.

## V. PARTICULAR STATUTES OF THE SECULAR FRATERNITY

75. Each Secular Fraternity, or group of Fraternities, must have its own Particular Statutes for the practical implementation of what is laid down in the present Rule, and they are responsible for their approval.

76. In particular, these Statutes should establish:

- the method of election and length of term of office of the Prior/Prioress;
- the method of election and length of term of office of the members of the Council;
- the number of Councillors, if more than three are required;
- the number, the responsibilities, the method of election and length of term of office of

other

- officials of the Fraternity;
- other duties of the Secretary.

## **rites of admission to the period of probation in the secular order of servants of Mary**

### **INTRODUCTION**

- 1.** The request for admission into the Secular Order of the Servants of Mary must be presented in writing in the manner indicated in the Statutes.
- 2.** The admission of women and men into the Secular Order is an event which is of interest to the local Church, to Servite friars, nuns, sisters, and to the members of the secular institutes, Secular Order and other Servite lay groups. It is therefore fitting that notice of the celebration of the rite of admission be given in such a way as to encourage the participation, or at least the prayers, of all the members of the Servite family.
- 3.** The local prior or assistant of the Secular Fraternity presides at the rite of admission. If the Secular Fraternity is erected in a convent of sisters, the local prioress/superior or the sister assistant may preside.
- 4.** It is fitting that the rite of admission take place on a Sunday, a feast of the Blessed Virgin Mary, or a feast of the Order.
- 5.** The rite of admission may take place:
  - a) during a Liturgy of the Word (Form I);
  - b) during the Liturgy of the Hours, especially Morning or Evening Prayer (Form II);
  - c) during the Vigil of Our Lady (Form III).
- 6.** Respecting always the structure of each type of celebration, the rite of admission should normally take place after the proclamation of the Word of God.
- 7.** Those planning the celebration of the rite should keep in mind the character proper to the Secular Order. Therefore, no part of the rite itself (readings, songs, homily...) should contain expressions which reflect aspects more appropriate to religious life and thus not in keeping with the secular character of the Secular Fraternity<sup>[21]</sup>.

**DURING A CELEBRATION  
OF THE WORD**

**INTRODUCTORY RITES**

- 8.** The celebration begins with the singing of the *Hail Mary*:

Hail Mary, full of grace,  
the Lord is with you;  
blessed are you among women,  
and blessed is the fruit of your womb, Jesus.

- 9.** The presider then greets the assembly with these or similar words:

The mercy of God our Father,  
the grace and peace of Christ,  
and the love of the Holy Spirit  
be with you all.

All:

Blessed be the Lord forever.

Or:

And also with you.

**INTRODUCTORY REMARKS**

- 10.** If desired, the presider or a lector may briefly introduce the Rite.

- 11.** The presider then invites all to pray:

Let us pray.

All pause for a moment of silent prayer, and then the presider says this, or some other suitable prayer:

Merciful Father,  
you are the beginning  
and end of our earthly pilgrimage.  
Look kindly on these daughters and sons of yours  
who desire to walk the paths of the world  
in the light of your Gospel,  
united to us in the service of the Virgin Mary.  
Grant, we pray,

that the Virgin may be for them  
a guide on their journey  
and a light for their quest,  
so that they may know your Will  
and fulfill it with heartfelt love.  
We ask this through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

## II. LITURGY OF THE WORD

**12.** The reading of passages from Sacred Scripture then follows. Each reading should be followed by the singing of a psalm, a responsory, or a pause for silent reflection. Other selections may also be read: from the magisterium of the Church on Christian commitment in the world and in the life of the Church; from Servite history and spirituality, especially from the *Legenda de origine* ; from the Fathers of the Church or other approved authors, especially Servite authors.

Those planning the celebration of the Liturgy of the Word should keep in mind that the Liturgy should:

- have thematic unity;
- not be too long, because of the number or length of the readings
- be planned together with the candidates;
- respect due balance between word, song and silence;
- give prominence to the proclamation of the Gospel.

### REQUEST FOR ADMISSION AND ACCEPTANCE

**13.** After the proclamation of the Word of God, the presider addresses the candidates in these or similar words:

Sisters and brothers,  
what do you ask of me  
and of the Order of Servants of Mary?

The candidates respond:

We ask to be admitted  
into the period of probation  
in order to experience the life  
of the Secular Fraternity of the Servants of Mary.

**14.** The request for admission may also take place in the following manner: after the proclamation of the Word of God, the candidates, standing, may all say together - or one in the name of all - these or similar words:

We ask you Sister/Brother N. to be admitted  
into the period of probation  
in order to experience the communion and life  
of the Secular Fraternity of the Servants of Mary.  
We desire to live more intensely

the commitment of our baptismal consecration.  
We wish to share the ideal  
of life of the Servants,  
and to give a living witness  
of our devotion to the Mother of God.  
We therefore desire to learn about  
the history, life and spirituality of the Order.  
and to collaborate in fulfilling  
its mission in the Church.

**15.** The presider accepts the requests, in these or similar words:

May the Lord Jesus Christ  
grant you his grace, sisters and brothers,  
and may he permit us to accompany  
you on your journey  
of studying and experiencing the life  
of the Secular Order of Servants of Mary.

All: Amen.

**16.** The presider now comments on the readings and explains the meaning of membership in the Secular Order of Servants of Mary. These comments should highlight the charism of the Order and the values of loving communion among all members of the Servite family.  
If circumstances permit, this reflection on the Word may take the form of a dialogue under the presider's direction.

### III. COMPLEMENTARY RITES

#### GIVING OF THE RULE AND THE ROSARY

**18.** After the reflection on the Word, the presider gives each candidate the Rule and Rosary of Our Lady of Sorrows, saying:

Sister/Brother, receive this *Rule of Life*  
and the Rosary of the sorrows of the Virgin.  
Bear witness to the Gospel of Christ in the world,  
and stand, like Mary,  
near the crosses of your sisters and brothers.

The candidate responds:

Amen.

**19.** If the Prayerbook is given in place of the Rosary, the following formula is used:

Sister/Brother, receive this *Rule of Life*  
and Book of Prayer.  
Bear witness to the Gospel of Christ

and be, like Mary,  
a voice in praise of God  
and of intercession for your sisters and brothers.

The candidate responds:

Amen.

**20.** After all the candidates have received the *Rule* and the Rosary (or Prayerbook), a suitable Marian hymn is sung.

#### PRAYER OF INTERCESSION

**21.** The prayer of intercession then takes place. Those present may freely add other intentions to those proposed here:

Presider:

To God the Father,  
who is pleased with the prayers of the humble  
and the supplications which rise  
in unison from the faithful,  
we now address these prayers  
for the Church,  
for all peoples  
and for our Order.

Lector:

*Hear, O Lord, the prayer of your Servants.*

Or:

*Remember your family, O Lord.*

1. For the Church,  
that it may spread the Kingdom of Christ  
through Word and Sacrament  
for the glory of God  
and the salvation of all people,  
we pray to the Lord.
2. For lay women and men,  
that they may give daily witness  
to Christ and the Gospel,  
and be mindful of their prophetic, kingly,  
and priestly dignity,  
in their family, professional, and social life,  
we pray to the Lord.
3. For our Order,

that it may be faithful to its ideal  
of community and service,  
drawing inspiration from Mary,  
let us pray to the Lord.

4. For our sisters and brothers (N.N.),  
who today begin their experience of life  
in the Secular Order,  
that they may live their baptismal  
commitments more intensely,  
by sharing the ideals of the Servants of Mary,  
let us pray to the Lord.

(other intentions)

**22.** The presider then concludes the prayers of intercession, saying,

Look kindly, O Lord,  
upon these our sisters and brothers,  
who, by the gift of your Spirit,  
begin today an experience of life  
in our family.

Grant that in imitation of the Virgin,  
Mother and disciple of Christ,  
they may live in your service  
and the service of their sisters and brothers.

As they follow in the footsteps  
of our Seven Holy Fathers,  
may they be gentle, humble, and merciful,  
and form with us one heart and one mind.

Like St. Juliana,  
may they offer to you  
the pleasing sacrifice of a life  
lived according to the Gospel.  
We pray through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

#### IV. DISMISSAL

**23.** The dismissal takes place after the prayer. According to the circumstances the prioress/prior of the Secular Fraternity may address those who have been admitted to the period of probation in these or similar words:

Sisters and Brothers,  
the rite by which you have been admitted  
to the period of probation

in order to experience the life  
of the Secular Order of Servants of Mary  
marks the beginning of a journey.  
Go forward with humility and perseverance,  
trusting in the mercy of God  
and the help of Our Lady.

## BLESSING

If the presider is a priest or deacon, he says:

The Lord be with you.

All:

And also with you

Presider:

God has redeemed us in his Son  
and made our labours holy.  
With his help  
and the guidance of the Spirit of Christ,  
may you fulfill your commitment in the world.

All: Amen.

If the presider is a priest or deacon, he says:

May the blessing of almighty God,  
the Father, and the Son + and the Holy Spirit,  
come upon you and remain with you forever.

All: Amen.

**24.** The presider dismisses the assembly, saying:

Go in the peace of the Lord  
and live in the light of the Gospel of Christ.

All:

Thanks be to God.

**25.** Following the tradition of the Order, the *Salve Regina* or another hymn to the Blessed Virgin is sung.

**26.** The admission of the sisters and brothers to the period of admission should be entered in the Register of the Secular Fraternity.

**27.** After the prayer service it is fitting that there be a time for fellowship and informal celebration.

## II

### DURING THE CELEBRATION OF MORNING OR EVENING PRAYER

#### I. INTRODUCTORY RITES

**28.** Following the tradition of the Order, the celebration begins with the singing of the *Hail Mary*.

Hail Mary, full of grace,  
the Lord is with you;  
blessed are you among women,  
and blessed is the fruit of your womb, Jesus.

Then follow the introductory verses of Morning or Evening Prayer:

God, come to my assistance,  
- Lord, make haste to help me.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son,  
and to the Holy Spirit:  
as it was in the beginning, is now,  
and ever shall be,  
world without end. Amen.

The hymn from the office of the day is then sung.

#### INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

**29.** After the hymn, if desired, the presider or a lector may briefly introduce the Rite.

#### II. PSALMODY

**30.** The psalms and antiphons of the office which is being celebrated follow.

#### III. READING OF THE WORD OF GOD

**31.** The proclamation of the reading from Scripture follows the psalmody. This should be taken from the office of the day or chosen according to the norms in the *General Instruction of the Liturgy of the Hours*, no. 46.

A responsorial chant or short responsory follows. Another hymn of the same character approved for such usage may be substituted for this responsory.

#### REQUEST FOR ADMISSION AND ACCEPTANCE

**32.** After the responsorial chant, the presider addresses the candidates in these or similar words:

Sisters and brothers,  
what do you ask of me  
and of the Order of Servants of Mary?

The candidates respond:

We ask to be admitted  
into the period of probation  
in order to experience the life  
of the Secular Fraternity of the Servants of Mary.

**33.** The request for admission may also take place in the following manner: after the responsorial chant, the candidates, standing, may all say together - or one in the name of all - these or similar words:

We ask you Sister/Brother N. to be admitted  
into the period of probation  
in order to experience the communion of life  
of the Secular Fraternity of the Servants of Mary.  
We desire to live more intensely  
the commitment of our baptismal consecration.  
We wish to share the ideal of life of the Servants,  
and to give a living witness  
of our devotion to the Mother of God.

We therefore desire to learn about  
the history, life, and spirituality of the Order,  
and to collaborate in fulfilling  
its mission in the Church.

**34.** The presider accepts the requests, in these or similar words:

May the Lord Jesus Christ  
grant you his grace, sisters and brothers,  
and may he permit us to accompany  
you on your journey  
of studying and experiencing the life  
of the Secular Order of Servants of Mary.

All: Amen.

**35.** The presider and members of the Secular Fraternity express their acceptance of the request with a suitable gesture. In the meantime a song is sung which manifests sentiments of communion and joy.

MEDITATION ON THE WORD

**36.** The presider now comments on the reading and explains the meaning of membership in the Secular Order of Servants of Mary. These comments should highlight the charism of the Order and the values of loving communion among all the members of the Servite family.  
If circumstances permit, this reflection on the Word may take the form of a dialogue, under the presider's direction.

#### IV. COMPLEMENTARY RITES

##### GIVING OF THE RULE AND THE ROSARY

**37.** After the reflection on the Word, the presider gives each candidate the Rule and Rosary of Our Lady of Sorrows, saying:

Sister/Brother, receive this *Rule of Life*  
and the Rosary of the sorrows of the Virgin.  
Bear witness to the Gospel of Christ in the world,  
and stand, like Mary,  
near the crosses of your sisters and brothers.

The candidate responds:

Amen.

**38.** If the Prayerbook is given in place of the Rosary, the following formula is used:

Sister/Brother, receive this *Rule of Life*  
and Book of Prayer.  
Bear witness to the Gospel of Christ  
and be, like Mary,  
a voice of praise to God  
and of intercession for your sisters and brothers.

The candidate responds:

Amen.

**39.** After all candidates have received the Rule and the Rosary (or Prayerbook), a suitable Marian hymn is sung.

##### PRAYER FOR THE CANDIDATES

**40.** The presider then invites all to pray, saying:

Let us pray.

After a pause for silent prayer, the presider then continues:

Look kindly, O Lord,  
upon these our sisters and brothers,  
who, by the gift of your Spirit,  
begin today an experience of life

in our family.

Grant that in imitation of the Virgin,  
Mother and disciple of Christ,  
they may live in your service  
and the service of their sisters and brothers.

As they follow in the footsteps  
of our Seven Holy Fathers,  
may they be gentle, humble, and merciful,  
and form with us one heart and one mind.

Like St. Juliana,  
may they offer to you  
the pleasing sacrifice of a life  
lived according to the Gospel.  
We pray through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

## V. THE GOSPEL CANTICLE AND INTERCESSIONS

### GOSPEL CANTICLE

**41.** The celebration of the Liturgy of the Hours then continues with the corresponding Gospel canticle - the Canticle of Zechariah at Morning Prayer or the Canticle of Mary at Evening Prayer - accompanied by the antiphon which is taken from the office of the day.

### INVOCATIONS OR INTERCESSIONS

**42.** After the Gospel canticle, there are recited the invocations for dedicating the day to God at Morning Prayer or the prayers of intercession at Evening prayer. In both cases it is well to remember also, in a suitable place, the candidates who have been admitted to the period of probation in the Secular Fraternity. After the last invocation or intercession the *Our Father*, which may be preceded by a brief introduction, is recited by all.

### CONCLUDING PRAYER

**43.** Immediately after the *Our Father* the concluding prayer of the office of the day is recited.

## VI: DISMISSAL

**44.** The dismissal takes place after the prayer. According to the circumstances the prioress/prior of the Secular Fraternity may address those who have been admitted to the period of probation in these or similar words:

Sisters and brothers,

the rite by which you have been admitted  
to the period of probation  
in order to experience the life  
of the Secular Order of Servants of Mary  
marks the beginning of a journey.  
Go forward with humility and perseverance,  
trusting in the mercy of God  
and the help of Our Lady.

## BLESSING

If the presider is a priest or deacon, he says:

The Lord be with you.

All:

And also with you.

Presider:

God has redeemed us in his Son  
and made our labours holy.  
With his help  
and the guidance of the Spirit of Christ  
may you fulfill your commitment in the world.

All: Amen.

If the presider is a priest or deacon, he adds:

May the blessing of almighty God,  
the Father, and the Son + and the Holy Spirit,  
come upon you and remain with you forever.

All: Amen.

**45.** The presider dismisses the assembly, saying:

Go in the peace of the Lord  
and live in the light of the Gospel of Christ.

All:

Thanks be to God.

**46.** Following the tradition of the Order, the *Salve Regina* or another hymn to the Blessed Virgin is sung.

**47.** The admission of the sisters and brothers to the period of probation should be entered in the Register of the Secular Fraternity.

48. After the prayer service it is fitting that there be a time for fellowship and informal celebration.

### III

## DURING THE CELEBRATION OF THE "VIGIL OF OUR LADY"

### I. INTRODUCTORY RITES

49. The Vigil begins in the usual manner: with the antiphon *Blessed are you* if the first form is used (*Saint Mary, Lady of her Servants*) or with the verses *Blessed are you...Come, let us praise the Lord* if the second form is used (*Saint Mary, Servant of the Lord*).

### INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

50. Introductory remarks may be made before the first antiphon of the first form or after the hymn if the second form is used.

### II. PSALMODY

51. The psalms and antiphons then follow, according to the form chosen.

### III. READING OF THE WORD

52. After the psalmody there is the proclamation of a Marian reading from Sacred Scripture, from the documents of the Church or the Order, from the writings of the Fathers of the Church, or from other approved authors (*Vigilia de Domina: A Marian Prayer-Watch of the Servants of Mary*, p. 31 or 43).

The reading is followed by the singing of a responsory chosen from those found in the *Vigil* (see p. 32 for the first form, or pp. 44-45 for the second form) or of another suitable text.

### REQUEST FOR ADMISSION AND ACCEPTANCE

53. After the responsorial chant, the presider addresses the candidates in these or similar words:

Sisters and brothers,  
what do you ask of me  
and of the Order of Servants of Mary?

The candidates respond:

We ask to be admitted

into the period of probation  
in order to experience the life  
of the Secular Fraternity of the Servants of Mary.

**54.** The request for admission may also take place in the following manner: after the responsorial chant, the candidates, standing, may all say together - or one in the name of all - these or similar words:

We ask you Sister/Brother N. to be admitted  
into the period of probation  
in order to experience the communion and life  
of the Secular Fraternity  
of the Servants of Mary.  
We desire to live more intensely  
the commitment of our baptismal consecration.  
We wish to share the ideal of life of the Servants,  
and to give a living witness  
of our devotion to the Mother of God.  
We therefore desire to learn about  
the history, life, and spirituality of the Order,  
and to collaborate in fulfilling  
its mission in the Church.

**55.** The presider accepts the request, in these or similar words:

May the Lord Jesus Christ  
grant you his grace, sisters and brothers,  
and may he permit us to accompany  
you on your journey  
of studying and experiencing the life  
of the Secular order of Servants of Mary.  
All: Amen.

**56.** The presider and members of the Secular Fraternity express their acceptance of the request with a suitable gesture. In the meantime a song of joy is sung which manifests sentiments of communion and joy.

#### MEDITATION ON THE WORD

**57.** The presider now comments on the reading and explains the meaning of membership in the Secular Order of Servants of Mary. These comments should highlight the charism of the Order and the values of loving communion among all the members of the Servite family.  
If circumstances permit, this reflection on the Word may take the form of a dialogue, under the presider's direction.

#### IV: COMPLEMENTARY RITES

##### GIVING OF THE RULE AND THE ROSARY

**58.** After the reflection on the Word, the presider gives each candidate the Rule and Rosary of Our Lady of Sorrows, saying:

Sister/Brother, receive this *Rule of Life*  
and the Rosary of the sorrows of the Virgin.  
Bear witness to the Gospel of Christ in the world,  
and stand, like Mary,  
near the crosses of your sisters and brothers.

The candidate responds:

Amen.

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**59.** If the Prayerbook is given in place of the Rosary, the following formula is used:

Sister/Brother, receive this *Rule of Life*  
and Book of Prayer.  
Bear witness to the Gospel of Christ  
and be, like Mary,  
a voice of praise to God  
and of intercession for your sisters and brothers.

The candidate responds:

Amen.

**60.** After all candidates have received the Rule and the Rosary (or Prayerbook), a suitable Marian hymn is sung.

##### PRAYER FOR THE CANDIDATES

**61.** The presider then invites all to pray, saying:

Let us pray.

After a pause for silent prayer, the presider then continues:

Look kindly, O Lord,  
upon these our sisters and brothers,  
who, by the gift of your Spirit,  
begin today an experience of life  
in our family.

Grant that in imitation of the Virgin,  
Mother and disciple of Christ,  
they may live in your service  
and the service of their sisters and brothers.

As they follow in the footsteps  
of our Seven Holy Fathers,  
may they be gentle, humble, and merciful,  
and form with us one heart and one mind.

Like St. Juliana,  
may they offer to you  
the pleasing sacrifice of a life  
lived according to the Gospel.  
We pray through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

## V. HYMN TO THE BLESSED VIRGIN

**62.** The *Vigil* concludes with a solemn hymn to Our Lady.

a) If the first form is used, the *Salve Regina* is sung with the following verse:

Pray for us, O holy Mother of God:  
- that we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

And one of the two traditional prayers:

All powerful and ever living God,  
by the power of your Spirit,  
you prepared Mary, the glorious Virgin Mother,  
to be a worthy dwelling place for your Son.  
As we celebrate her memory with joy,  
grant that through her motherly intercession  
we may be preserved from evil in this world  
and from eternal death.  
We ask this through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

Or:

In your loving kindness, Lord,  
break the chains of our sinfulness.  
Through the intercession of blessed Mary,  
Mother of God,  
Our Seven Holy Fathers,  
your servant St. Philip,  
and all the saints,

assist and make holy  
N., our Pope,  
N., our brother and prior general,  
(N., our sister and prioress general/president)  
our communities  
and all our benefactors;  
deliver our parents, relatives, and friends  
from evil and fill them with every gift of life;  
grant us peace and health;  
drive far from us all enemies seen and unseen  
and repel every sinful desire.  
Give us wholesome air and fruitful soil;  
free the world from hunger, war,  
and every disaster,  
and protect this city (country, place)  
and all its inhabitants  
from every misfortune.  
Pour out your love  
upon our friends  
and upon our enemies  
and grant eternal rest to all those  
departed in faith.  
We ask this through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

b) If the second form is used, the *Salve Regina* with the verse and prayer indicated in the preceding paragraph may be sung, or another Marian hymn without a concluding oration.

## VI. DISMISSAL

**63.** If desired, the prioress/prior of the Secular Fraternity may address those who have been admitted to the period of probation in these or similar words:

Sisters and brothers,  
you have been admitted to the period of probation  
in order to experience the life  
of the Secular Order of Servants of Mary.  
Trust in the grace of God  
and under the protection of the Virgin  
travel the road of service  
which you have begun today.

**64.** Then the presider dismisses the assembly with this or another usual form of dismissal:

May our Lady  
protect us  
and guide us on the way of life.

All: Amen.

**65.** The admission of the sisters and brothers to the period of probation should be entered in the Register of the Secular Fraternity.

**66.** After the prayer service it is fitting that there be a time for fellowship and informal celebration.

**RITE OF THE PROMISE  
IN THE SECULAR ORDER  
OF SERVANTS OF MARY**

**INTRODUCTION**

**67.** The request for admission to the promise in the Secular Order of the Servants of Mary must be presented in writing in the manner indicated in the Statutes.

**68.** The definitive entrance of a member into the Secular Order is an event which is of interest to the local Church, to Servite friars, nuns, and sisters, and to members of the secular institutes, Secular Order, and other Servite lay groups. It is therefore fitting that notice of the celebration of the rite be given in such a way as to encourage the participation, or at least the prayers, of all members of the Servite family.

**69.** The prior of the local religious community or a duly named delegate of the Order presides at the rite.

**70.** It is fitting that the rite of the promise take place on a Sunday, on a feast of the Blessed Virgin Mary, or on a feast of the Order, especially the solemnity of the Seven Holy Founders, St. Juliana (who is the patroness of the Secular Order), or on the feast of All Saints of the Order.

**71.** The rite of the promise may take place:

- a) during the eucharistic liturgy, after the proclamation of the Gospel;
- b) during the Liturgy of the Hours - especially Morning or Evening Prayer - after the proclamation of the Word of God.

**72.** Those planning the celebration of the rite should keep in mind the character proper to the Secular Order. Therefore no part of the rite itself (readings, songs, homily...) should contain expressions which reflect aspects more appropriate to religious life and thus not in keeping with the secular character of the Secular Fraternity<sup>[22]</sup>.

**73.** If the candidate is a priest or deacon, he should participate in the rite exercising in the context of the celebration the duties proper to his order (a priest by concelebrating the Eucharist, a deacon by proclaiming the Gospel). He would join the other candidates only in the "rite of the promise" in the strict sense: from the request to the concluding prayer.

I

**DURING THE CELEBRATION**

**OF THE EUCHARIST**

I. INTRODUCTORY RITES  
AND LITURGY OF THE WORD

**74.** The introductory rites and the liturgy of the Word take place in the usual manner. To recall that the "promise" has its roots in the fundamental baptismal consecration, it is suggested that the Rite of Blessing and Sprinkling of Holy Water be substituted for the penitential rite.

II. RITE OF THE PROMISE

REQUEST

**75.** After the proclamation of the Gospel, all are seated. The person responsible for formation calls the individual candidates who rise and approach the celebrant, who is standing in front of the altar, or in some other suitable place. The candidates, standing, address the request for "admission to the promise" to the celebrant and the prioress/prior of the Secular Fraternity, all together or one in the name of the others, in these or similar words:

After having completed the period of probation  
in the Secular Fraternity N.,  
we, N. and N., ask to be received  
into the Secular Order of the Servants of Mary.

We wish to follow Christ  
as people committed to our state of life,  
giving witness to the Gospel  
in this earthly city.

In this way we wish to serve  
the Blessed Virgin Mary  
according to the ideal of life of the Servants.

The celebrant says:

May the light of the Lord's countenance  
shine upon you and confirm  
the proposal you have made in your hearts.

All: Amen.

HOMILY

**76.** The celebrant delivers a homily in which he comments on the readings and explains the meaning of the promise. These comments should highlight the charism of the Order and the values of loving communion among all the members of the Servite family.

#### PRAYER OF SUPPLICATION

**77.** After the homily the candidates light a candle from the candle on the altar and they hold it until they have made the promise. The celebrant then introduces the prayer of supplication with these or similar words:

Let us pray to God the Father  
through Jesus Christ his Son and our Lord,  
that he pour out his grace  
upon these our sisters and brothers,  
who have requested to live their baptismal  
consecration with renewed commitment  
in the Secular Fraternity of the Servants of Mary.

**78.** At this point, if it seems fitting, the litany of Servite saints may be sung. Other invocations may also be added in appropriate places, such as the patron saints of the church, diocese, city, or the candidates.

Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us.  
Holy Mary, Servant of the Lord,  
Holy Mary, Virgin of Sorrows,  
Holy Mary, Queen of your Servants,

St. Joseph,  
St. John the Baptist,  
Saints Peter and Paul,  
St. Augustine,

Seven Holy Founders,  
St. Philip Benizi,  
St. Juliana Falconieri,  
St. Peregrine Laziosi,  
St. Anthony Pucci,  
St. Clelia Barbieri,

Bl. James,  
Bl. Joachim,  
Bl. Andrew,  
Bl. Bonaventure (of Pistoia)  
Bl. Ubald,  
Bl. Francis,  
Bl. Thomas,  
Bl. Joan,  
Bl. Benincasa,

Bl. Jerome,  
Bl. Elizabeth,  
Bl. James Philip,  
Bl. Bonaventure (of Forlì)  
Bl. John Angelo,

All our holy sisters and brothers,

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**79.** After the invocation of the saints, or if the litany was not said, after the introduction by the celebrant, the lector reads the intercession in the usual form of the general intercession. Other petitions may be added according to the circumstances.

Lector:

*Hear, O Lord, the prayer of your Servants.*

Or:

*Lord, remember your family.*

1. a) For the Church:  
that it might spread the Kingdom of Christ  
through word and sacrament,  
for the glory of God  
and the salvation of all people,  
we pray to the Lord.

b) For our Pope N. and our Bishop N.,  
for priests, deacons, religious,  
and all the faithful:  
that they may build up the Church  
into God's holy temple,  
according to their gifts and responsibilities,  
we pray to the Lord.

2. a) For these our sisters and brothers  
who wish to share our ideal of life:  
that they may attain full conformity with Christ,  
as they walk with us,  
under the protection of the Blessed Virgin,  
we pray to the Lord.

b) For these our sisters and brothers, N. N.:  
that they may be sensitive to  
the suffering of others,  
and share in their hopes and aspirations,  
in a way that is faithful  
to the choice they have made

and in a spirit of service,  
we pray to the Lord.

3. a) For our Order:  
that it may remain faithful  
to the spirit of the Seven Founders  
and foster holiness of life,  
we pray to the Lord.

b) For all sisters and brothers of our Order:  
that they may remain faithful  
to the commitment they have made  
to Christ and his Church,  
we pray to the Lord.

4. For all lay women and men:  
that they may give daily witness  
to Christ and the Gospel,  
and be mindful of their prophetic,  
kingly, and priestly mission,  
we pray to the Lord.

(Other intentions)

**80.** The celebrant concludes the prayer of supplication saying:

Hear, O Lord, the prayer of your Servants  
and look with kindness on these  
your daughter and sons whom in your love  
you have called to the service of the Virgin Mary  
in the Secular Order of Servants of Mary.  
We pray through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

**81.** One by one, the candidates pronounce the promise in front of the celebrant, the prioress/prior of the Secular Fraternity, and another member of the Secular Order who acts as witness:

Trusting in the Lord's grace,  
I promise to God  
before you father,  
and you, my sisters and brothers,  
to live the commitment  
of my baptismal consecration  
more intensely.  
I will be faithful  
to my family and social obligations,  
and observe the Rule and Statutes  
of the Secular Order of Servants of Mary,  
in order to share your vocation  
of service and loving union,

drawing inspiration always from Mary,  
Mother and Servant of the Lord.

May the intercession of Our Lady,  
and your love  
support me in this commitment.

After pronouncing the words of the promise, the candidate places the lighted candle in a place prepared for it near the altar.

#### SIGN OF MEMBERSHIP

**82.** Immediately afterwards, the celebrant confers on the candidate a sign of membership in the Secular Order (according to local custom: a medal, scapular, ring, badge...) saying:

Receive this symbol  
of your membership in the Secular Order  
of Servants of Mary:  
may it be a reminder for you  
to faithfully fulfill your commitment.

The candidate responds:

Amen.

The candidate then returns to her/his place.

#### ACCEPTANCE

**83.** When all the candidates have made the promise, the celebrant accepts the new members into the Servite family, in these or similar words:

Sisters and brothers,  
with great joy  
I receive you into the family  
of the Servants of Mary,  
as members of the Secular Fraternity.  
Though we have a diversity of tasks,  
we shall live in unity of spirit,  
and follow the same ideal of life,  
under the protection of the Blessed Virgin.

All:

Thanks be to God.

**84.** The prioress/prior and the members of the Secular Fraternity ratify the acceptance of the new members into the Secular Order by a fitting gesture. In the meantime all present express their union and joy with an appropriate hymn.

## CONCLUDING PRAYER

**85.** The celebrant then concludes the rite with this prayer:

O Lord, look on our sisters and brothers,  
who have placed in your hands  
their promise to follow Christ  
in the Secular Fraternity of the Servants.  
Watch over them in your love  
and make their hearts attentive  
to the voice of your Spirit.

May they be courageous witnesses of the Gospel  
in their families and at their work,  
and by word and example  
may they spread the Kingdom of Christ.

May they be humble, simple, and compassionate,  
diligent in love,  
joyful in the service of others,  
and fervent in their apostolic commitment.

May they be faithful servants  
of the Blessed Virgin, and,  
as they contemplate the Virgin at the Cross,  
may they find their place  
with her wherever others suffer  
and Christ is still being crucified.

Grant, Father,  
that the common ideal of service  
may make our love for each other grow,  
and may this journey  
which we undertake together  
in the footsteps of our Seven Holy Fathers  
lead us to the city of the living  
where Christ is the radiant star  
of the eternal morning.  
He who lives and reigns  
for ever and ever.

All: Amen.

## III. EUCHARISTIC LITURGY

**86.** The celebration proceeds with the presentation of the eucharistic gifts. It is fitting that while an offertory hymn is sung, some of the new members of the Secular Order bring up the bread, water, and wine for the sacrifice, and also other symbolic gifts, especially for the poor.

- 87.** At the end of the rite, the celebrant, the prioress/prior of the Secular Fraternity, the witnesses and the new members of the Secular Order sign the acts of the celebration in the presence of the assembly.
- 88.** Following the tradition of the Order, the *Salve Regina* or another hymn to the Blessed Virgin is sung.
- 89.** After the celebration it is fitting that there be a time for fellowship and informal celebration.

## II.

### DURING THE CELEBRATION OF MORNING OR EVENING PRAYER

#### I. INTRODUCTORY RITES

- 90.** Following the tradition of the Order, the celebration begins with the singing of the *Hail Mary*:

Hail Mary, full of grace,  
the Lord is with you;  
blessed are you among women,  
and blessed is the fruit of your womb, Jesus.

Then follow the introductory verses to Morning or Evening Prayer:

God, come to my assistance.  
- Lord, make haste to help me.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son,  
and to the Holy Spirit:  
as it was in the beginning, is now,  
and ever shall be, world without end.  
Amen.

The hymn from the office of the day is then sung.

#### INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

- 91.** After the hymn, if desired, the presider or a lector may briefly introduce the Rite.

#### II. PSALMODY

- 92.** The psalms and antiphons of the office which is being celebrated follow.

### III. READING OF THE WORD OF GOD

**93.** The proclamation of the reading from Scripture follows the psalmody. This should be taken from the office of the day or chosen according to the norms found in the *General Instruction of the Liturgy of the Hours*, no. 46.

A responsorial chant or short responsory follows. Another hymn of the same character approved for such usage may be substituted for this response.

### IV: RITE OF THE PROMISE

#### REQUEST

**94.** After the responsory, all are seated. The person responsible for formation calls the individual candidates who rise and approach the presider, who is standing in front of the altar or in some other suitable place. The candidates, standing, address the request for "admission to the promise" to the presider and the prioress/prior of the Secular Fraternity, all together or one in the name of the others, in these or similar words:

After having completed the period of probation  
in the Secular Fraternity N.,  
we, N. and N., ask to be received  
into the Secular Order of Servants of Mary.

We wish to follow Christ  
as people committed to our state of life,  
giving witness to the Gospel  
in this earthly city.

In this way we wish to serve  
the Blessed Virgin Mary  
according to the ideal of life of the Servants.

The presider says:

May the light of the Lord's countenance  
shine upon you and confirm  
the proposal you have made in your hearts.

All: Amen.

#### MEDITATION ON THE WORD

**95.** The presider now comments on the reading and explains the meaning of the promise in the Secular Order of Servants of Mary. These comments should highlight the charism of the Order and the values of loving communion among all the members of the Servite family.

If circumstances permit, this reflection on the Word may take the form of a dialogue under the presider's direction.

#### PRAYER OF SUPPLICATION

**96.** After the reflection on the Word, the candidates light a candle from the candle on the altar and they hold it until they have made the promise. The presider then introduces the prayer of supplication with these or similar words:

Let us pray to God the Father  
through Jesus Christ his Son and Our Lord,  
that he pour out his grace  
upon these our sisters and brothers,  
who have requested to live  
their baptismal consecration  
with renewed commitment  
in the Secular Fraternity of the Servants of Mary.

After a pause for silent prayer, the presider concludes the prayer of supplication saying:

Hear, O Lord, the prayer of your Servants  
and look with kindness on these  
your daughters and sons whom in your love  
you have called to the service of the Virgin Mary  
in the Secular Order of Servants of Mary.  
We pray through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

**97.** One by one, the candidates pronounce the promise in front of the presider, the prioress/prior of the Secular Fraternity, and another member of the Secular Order who acts as a witness:

Trusting in the Lord's grace,  
I promise to God  
before you, father,  
and you, my sisters and brothers,  
to live the commitment  
of my baptismal consecration  
more intensely.  
I will be faithful  
to my family and social obligations,  
and observe the Rule and Statutes  
of the Secular Order of Servants of Mary,  
in order to share your vocation  
of service and loving union,  
drawing inspiration always from Mary,  
Mother and Servant of the Lord.  
May the intercession of Our Lady,  
and your love  
support me in this commitment.

After pronouncing the words of the promise, the candidate places the lighted candle in a place prepared for it near the altar.

## SIGN OF MEMBERSHIP

**98.** Immediately afterwards, the presider confers on the candidate a sign of membership in the Secular Order (according to local custom: a medal, scapular, ring, badge...) saying:

Receive this symbol  
of your membership in the Secular Order  
of Servants of Mary:  
may it be a reminder for you  
to faithfully fulfill your commitment.

The candidate responds:

Amen.

The candidate then returns to her/his place.

## ACCEPTANCE

**99.** When all the candidates have made the promise, the presider accepts the new members into the Servite family, in these or similar words:

Sisters and brothers,  
with great joy  
I receive you into the family  
of the Servants of Mary,  
as members of the Secular Fraternity.  
Though we have a diversity of tasks,  
we shall live in unity of spirit,  
and follow the same ideal of life,  
under the protection of the Blessed Virgin.

All:

Thanks be to God.

**100.** The prioress/prior and the members of the Secular Fraternity ratify the acceptance of the new members into the Secular Order by a fitting gesture. In the meantime all present express their union and joy with an appropriate hymn.

## CONCLUDING PRAYER

**101.** The presider then concludes the rite with this prayer:

O Lord, look on our sisters and brothers,  
who have placed in your hands  
their promise to follow Christ  
in the Secular Fraternity of the Servants.  
Watch over them in your love  
and make their hearts attentive

to the voice of your Spirit.

May they be courageous witnesses of the Gospel  
in their families and at their work,  
and by word and example  
may they spread the Kingdom of Christ.

May they be humble, simple, and compassionate,  
diligent in love,  
joyful in service of others,  
and fervent in their apostolic commitment.

May they be faithful servants  
of the Blessed Virgin and,  
as they contemplate the Virgin at the Cross,  
may they find their place with her  
wherever others suffer  
and where Christ is still being crucified.

Grant, Father,  
that the common ideal of service  
may make our love for each other grow,  
and may this journey which we undertake together  
in the footsteps of our Seven Holy Fathers  
lead us to the city of the living,  
where Christ is the radiant star  
of the eternal morning.  
He who lives and reigns for ever and ever.

All: Amen.

## V. THE GOSPEL CANTICLE AND INTERCESSIONS

### GOSPEL CANTICLE

**102.** The celebration of the Liturgy of the Hours then continues with the corresponding Gospel canticle - the Canticle of Zechariah at Morning Prayer or the Canticle of Mary at Evening Prayer - accompanied by the antiphon which is taken from the office of the day.

### INVOCATIONS OR INTERCESSIONS

**103.** After the Gospel canticle, there are recited the invocations for dedicating the day to God at Morning Prayer or the prayers of intercession at Evening Prayer. In both cases it is well to remember also, in a suitable place, the candidates who have made the promise in the Secular Fraternity. After the last invocation or intercession the *Our Father*, which may be preceded by a brief introduction, is recited by all.

If the rubrics permit, in place of the intercession of the office of the day the following may be said.  
The presider begins:

Let us thank God our Father  
who has sanctified us in baptism with his Spirit  
and invites us each day to follow generously  
the example of Christ and the Virgin Mary;  
let us cry out with joy:

*The Servants of the Virgin Mary praise you, O Lord.*

Lector:

Glory to you, holy Father,  
for you have raised up in your Church  
the Order of Servants of Mary;  
- it is our family, called to witness Christ  
and his Gospel in loving union.

Glory to you, gracious Father,  
for you have given us the Virgin Mary  
as mother and sister, guide and refuge;  
- she is Our Lady  
to whose service we dedicate our lives.

Glory to you, merciful Father,  
for you gave the Seven Holy Founders  
an abundance of the gifts of your Spirit;  
- they are our Fathers,  
whose path we faithfully follow.

Glory to you, just Father,  
for today you have called N. and N.  
to be part of the Secular Order  
of Servants of Mary;  
- they are our sisters and brothers,  
committed to living a Christian life  
in this earthly city,  
drawing inspiration from Our Lady.

Glory to you, Father of life,  
for you have called us to be with  
the Sorrowful Virgin  
near the cross of all who suffer;  
- they are our sisters and brothers,  
in whom your Son is still being crucified.

#### CONCLUDING PRAYER

**104.** Immediately after the *Our Father* the concluding prayer of the office of the day is recited.

## VI. THE DISMISSAL

**105.** The dismissal takes place after the prayer.

If the presider is a priest or deacon, he says:

The Lord be with you.

All:

And also with you.

Presider:

God has redeemed us in his Son  
and made our labours holy,  
With his help  
and the guidance of the Spirit of Christ,  
may you fulfill your commitment in the world.

All: Amen.

If the presider is a priest or deacon, he adds:

May the blessing of almighty God,  
the Father, and the Son, + and the Holy Spirit,  
come upon you and remain with you forever.

All: Amen.

**106.** The presider dismisses the assembly, saying:

Go in the peace of the Lord  
and in the service of each other.

All:

Thanks be to God.

**107.** Following the tradition of the Order, the *Salve Regina* or another hymn to the Blessed Virgin is sung.

**108.** The promise of the sisters and brothers should be entered in the Register of the Secular Fraternity.

**109.** After the prayer service it is fitting that there be a time for fellowship and informal celebration.

## Notes

<sup>[1]</sup> *Constitutions of the Friar Servants of Mary*, art. 5.

<sup>[2]</sup> For a fuller history of the origins of the Servite Secular Order, cf. *Terz'Ordine o gruppi laici dei Servi ieri e oggi*, A.M. Dal Pino, Monte Senario, 1969.

<sup>[3]</sup> *Gli oblati dei Servi in Italia nel Due-Trecento*, D.M. Montagna OSM, in *Studi storici*, 1978, p. 250.

<sup>[4]</sup> *Constitutions of the Order of Friars Servants of Mary*, art. 1.

<sup>[5]</sup> Cf. *Luke 1:38*.

<sup>[6]</sup> *Constitutions OSM*, art. 6.

<sup>[7]</sup> Constitution on the Liturgy, *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, no. 103.

<sup>[8]</sup> *Constitutions OSM*, art. 7.

<sup>[9]</sup> *Constitutions of the Order of Friar Servants of Mary*, art. 5.

<sup>[10]</sup> In countries or cultures where the word «*fraternity*» can imply an exclusive gender, a suitable alternative name can be used.

<sup>[11]</sup> The word `Secular' here is used strictly in the sense of the original Latin root `saeculum', meaning someone who lives "in the world", in contrast to someone who lives in a religious house.

<sup>[12]</sup> Members of the diocesan clergy can also be admitted as members of the Secular Order of the Servants of Mary.

<sup>[13]</sup> *Acts 4:32*.

<sup>[14]</sup> *Matt. 5:3*.

<sup>[15]</sup> cf. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1994, III, 2, 2, 4; *Familiaris Consortio*, 1983; *Letter to Families from Pope John Paul II*, 1994; *Letter of the Pope to Children in the Year of the Family*, 1994; *Charter of Rights of the Family*, 1983.

<sup>[16]</sup> cf. *1 Peter 2:5*, *Christifideles Laici*, no. 14; *Lumen Gentium*, No. 34.

<sup>[17]</sup> "Strengthened by their active participation in the liturgical life of their community, they are eager to do their share in apostolic works of that community. They lead the Church people who are perhaps far removed from it; they earnestly cooperate in presenting the Word of God especially by means of catechetical instruction; and offer their special skills to make the care of souls and the administration of the temporal goods of the Church more efficient."

cf. *Christifideles Laici*, No. 33; Vatican II, *Apostolicam Actuositatem*, No. 10.

<sup>[18]</sup> *Constitutions OSM*, no. 319.

<sup>[19]</sup> "The lay faithful should accustom themselves to working in the parish in close union with their priests, bringing to the Church community their own and the world's problems as well as questions concerning human salvation, all of which need to be examined together and solved through general discussion. As far as possible the lay faithful ought to collaborate in every apostolic and missionary undertaking sponsored by their own ecclesial family".

cf. *Christifideles Laici*, No.27; Vatican II, *Apostolicam Actuositatem*, No. 10.

<sup>[20]</sup> The title of "President" may be used in place of Prior/Prioress.

<sup>[21]</sup> NOTE: The *Rite of Admission* has been drawn up for the admission of more than one candidate, both women and men. When it is used for only one candidate, or only women or men, the text should be adapted accordingly.

<sup>[22]</sup> NOTE: the *Rite of Promise* has been written as a celebration for more than one candidate, both women and men. When it is used for only one candidate, or only women or only men, the text should be adapted accordingly.