

The Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life

His Excellency Archbishop Jose Rodriguez Carballo, OFM, Secretary

Founded by Pope Sixtus V in May 1586 with the title Sacred Congregation for Consultations about Regulars, and confirmed by the Constitution *Immensa* (1588), the Congregation was joined in 1601 to the Congregation for Consultations about Bishops and Other Prelates. St. Pius X, by the Constitution *Sapienti Consilio* (1908) separated the two institutions again and, placing the Bishops under the Consistorial Congregation, made the Congregation for Religious autonomous.

By the Constitution *Regimini Ecclesiae Universae* (1967) of Paul VI, the Congregation for Religious was named the Congregation for Religious and for Secular Institutes. The Apostolic Constitution *Pastor Bonus* (1988) of John Paul II changed the title to the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life.

The Congregation is responsible for everything that concerns institutes of consecrated life (orders and religious congregations, both of men and of women, secular institutes) and societies of apostolic life regarding their government, discipline, studies, goods, rights, and privileges. It is competent also for matters regarding the eremetical life, consecrated virgins and their related associations, and new forms of consecrated life. Its competence extends to all aspects of consecrated life: Christian life, religious life, clerical life; the relationship is of a personal character and has no territorial limits; certain determined questions of their members, however, are remanded to the competence of other Congregations. This Congregation also can dispense those who are subject to it from the common law. Further, it is competent for associations of the faithful erected with the intention of becoming institutes of consecrated life or societies of apostolic life, and for Third Orders Secular.

Since October 1951, the Practical School of Theology and Law for Religious has been functioning at the Congregation and the review *Informationes SCRIS* (in several languages) has been published since May 1975.

Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life

Religious institutes and secular institutes are the two main categories that constitute the state of consecrated life through profession of the evangelical counsels in the Church. Societies of apostolic life (can. 731.1) have canonical legislation that is in some respects similar to that governing institutes of consecrated life, though they form a separate category.

Consecrated persons are lay persons or clerics who assume the evangelical counsels by means of a sacred bond, and become members of an institute of consecrated life (can. 573.2).

Institutes of consecrated life are societies established and approved within the Church, and are governed by means of suitable Church legislation. Some of this legislation covers all institutes; some is proper to the individual institute (Rules, Constitutions, Statutes). The intention of the legislation is to ensure that the consecrated life can be lived out in a suitable way (can. 576).

Institutes of pontifical right are those erected or approved by the Holy See by formal decree. Institutes of diocesan right are those erected by bishops and which have not obtained a decree of approval from the Holy See (can. 589). The *Annuario Pontificio* lists only the institutes of pontifical right.

Religious Institutes

The religious state is a public and complete state of consecrated life. As well as the precepts which are to be observed by all, religious observe the three evangelical counsels of chastity, poverty, and obedience. They bind themselves to observe these by means of vows, which are either perpetual or temporary but renewed when they expire (can. 607.2). These vows are always public vows, i.e., recognized as such by the Church (can. 1192.1). This religious state requires fraternal life in community and also a degree of separation from the world in conformity with the character and purpose of the individual institute (can. 607.2 and 607.3).

Some Institutes are called Orders: these are Institutes in which, for historical reasons or because of their character or nature, solemn vows are made by at least some of the members. All members of these orders are called regulars, and if they are women they are called nuns. Other religious institutes are called congregations, or religious congregations. Their members are called religious of simple vows (can. 1192.2). The orders are older than the congregations.

The Code of Canon Law calls some institutes “clerical.” These are Institutes which, in accordance with the intentions of the Founder or by reason of legitimate tradition, are governed by clerics, assume the exercise of sacred Orders, and are recognized by the Church as clerical Institutes (can. 588.2). If the spiritual heritage of an institute does not include the exercise of sacred Orders then the institute is recognized by the Church as a lay institute (can. 588.3).

In the Code of Canon Law, religious institutes are regulated by a general discipline. There continue to exist, however, different categories that correspond to varying forms which religious life has taken over the course of history.

Secular Institutes

The historical origins of these institutes go back to the end of the sixteenth century, even though their juridic recognition as a state of consecrated life approved by the Church took place only on 2 February 1947, with the Apostolic Constitution *Provida Mater Ecclesia*.

Christians consecrated to God in Secular Institutes follow Christ by undertaking to observe the three evangelical counsels by means of a sacred commitment, and they dedicate their life to Christ and to the Church, by devoting themselves to the sanctification of the world, particularly by working within the world (can. 710).

The word *secular* is meant to underline the fact that the persons who make profession in this state of consecrated life do not change the status they have as in the world, and they continue to live and to work in the midst of the people of God in the normal conditions of their own social setting (can. 711; can. 713.2) according to the secular style of life which is proper to them.

Secular Institutes may be clerical or lay, male or female.

Societies of Apostolic Life

Societies of apostolic life, called in the 1917 Code of Canon Law “societies of men or women who live in common without vows,” are defined by can. 731.1 and 731.2 in the 1983 Code of Canon Law as follows:

“Comparable to institutes of consecrated life are societies of apostolic life whose members without religious vows pursue the particular apostolic purpose of the society, and leading a life as brothers or sisters in common according to a particular manner of life, strive for the perfection of charity through the observance of the constitutions. Among these there are societies in which the members embrace the evangelical counsels by some bond defined in the constitutions.”

St. Philip Neri can be considered the father of men's Societies of Apostolic Life, as we now know them, and St. Vincent de Paul of women's Societies.

Societies of Apostolic Life can be clerical or lay, male or female.

Federations of Institutes of Consecrated Life and of Societies of Apostolic Life

The first general congress of the states of perfection, held in Rome at the beginning of December in the Holy Year 1950, invited religious institutes and secular institutes, male and female, from each nation to join in federations, conferences or councils of major superiors. This kind of organization very soon extended to almost every nation (can. 708). These conferences of major superiors have their own statutes approved by the Holy See, by which they are erected (can. 709). There are also worldwide conferences (of men and women superiors general) and continental conferences (Latin America and Europe), also erected by the Holy See.

On 23 May 1974, the Holy See gave juridic personality to the World Conference of Secular Institutes.

Source: http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/ccsclife/documents/rc_con_ccsclife_profile_en.html



José Rodríguez Carballo, OFM (born 11 August 1953) was named secretary for the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life in April 2013. He had previously served as General Minister of the Order of Friars Minor from 2003.

Carballo was born in Lodoselo (Sarreaus), Spain. He entered the Minor Seminary of the Franciscan Province of Santiago de Compostela in Zamora in 1964. The next year he studied at the seminary Herbón, La Coruña. He made his novitiate at the Convent of Pontearreas, concluding with his profession of temporary vows on 9 August 1971.

He moved to Jerusalem in 1973 where he continued his theological studies, earning a BA in 1976. He made his solemn profession of vows on 8 December 1976 in the Basilica of the Annunciation in Nazareth and was ordained a priest on 28 June 1977 in Jerusalem at the Church of San Salvatore.

Beginning in 1976 he attended the Studium Biblicum Franciscanum of Jerusalem, earning a degree in Biblical Theology in 1978. He then enrolled at the Pontifical Biblical Institute in 1981 and obtained a degree in Sacred Scripture.

He returned to the province of Santiago de Compostela as master of postulants and treasurer. In 1989 he became Rector of the Guardian and Convent of St. Francis in Santiago de Compostela and Master of the Friars of temporary profession. He was a professor of Sacred Scripture at the Diocesan Seminary of Vigo from 1982 to 1992, and at the Center for Theological Studies of Santiago de Compostela from 1985 to 1992 he taught the Theology of Consecrated Life.

He was elected Provincial Minister of Santiago de Compostela in 1992. From 1993 to 1997 he was also President of the Union of the Franciscan Provincial Ministers of Europe. On 5 June 2003 he was elected general Minister of the Order of Friars Minor, the 119th successor of St. Francis of Assisi. On June 4, 2009 was elected to another six-year term.

On 6 April 2013, Pope Francis appointed him secretary of the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, filling a position that had been vacant for several months, and named him Titular Archbishop of Bellicastrum.

Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jos%C3%A9_Rodr%C3%ADguez_Carballo

Photo Source: <http://www.ofm.org/capgen/00/varia/cgmingennewen.html>