

**ASSOCIATION OF LEADERS OF MISSIONARIES  
AND RELIGIOUS OF IRELAND  
  
STATUTES**

## GENERAL NORMS

### ART 1. ORIGIN OF THE ASSOCIATION OF LEADERS MISSIONARIES AND RELIGIOUS OF IRELAND

The Association of Leaders of Missionaries and Religious of Ireland (the “Association”) is made up of the members of the Conference of Religious of Ireland (CORI) and of the Irish Missionary Union (IMU).

CORI was established under the title Conference of Major Religious Superiors of Ireland (CMRS) by a decree from the Sacred Congregation of Religious dated 9<sup>th</sup> November 1960.

The IMU was set up in 1970 for the broad purpose of providing a collaborative network of missionary groups in co-operation with the Church in Ireland, in liaison with the Episcopal Conference, the Episcopal Commission for the Missions and the National Mission Council. The main aim of the IMU in collaboration with the Bishops is to be a prophetic voice in the Church and Society in the task of spreading the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Underpinned by a profound respect for the innate dignity of human persons, and by a desire to facilitate human flourishing (Jn. 10:10), the members of CORI and the IMU, motivated to represent and promote active collaboration between Religious Institutes, Societies of Apostolic Life and duly recognised missionary organisations, and seeing their Mission as responding to existing and emerging realities both in Ireland and overseas by supporting and energising the life and ministries of our members and of the wider Church with a renewed sense of hope and relevance, came together in 2016 to form the Association.

The Association is organised and governed by the present statutes and takes the place of what was formerly CORI and the IMU.

### ART 2. IDENTITY, MISSION AND GOALS OF THE ASSOCIATION

#### 1. Identity

The Association is a body which seeks to serve the leadership and thereby the membership of Religious Institutes and Societies of Apostolic Life. Its purpose is to encourage, support and facilitate leaders and religious generally and to provide an arena in which they can work together in the mission they hold in common.

#### 2. Mission

Impelled by a Commitment to Mission and Evangelisation the Association seeks to inspire and facilitate its members:

- To be missionary, prophetic and charismatic in following Jesus
- To be truly prophetic and faithful in mission
- To be marked by inclusiveness, compassion, creativity and collaboration
- To honour the diversity of their roots while fostering a relevant unity of purpose.

The Association does so by helping its members to participate actively and effectively in the mission received from Jesus (cf. John 20:21) so that collectively they might be a prophetic voice in the Church and in Society.

3. The Association fosters cooperation among Religious Institutes and Societies of Apostolic Life and with the Episcopal Conference, clergy and laity. It provides a common representation for members of the Association with constituted authorities, both ecclesiastical and civil.
4. The Association seeks to play its part in this mission by
  - (1) developing and promoting religious, apostolic and missionary life as a vibrant, organic and integral feature of the life of the Church.
  - (2) discerning and striving to respond to the changing needs and challenges facing its members.
  - (3) bringing a gospel-based voice in relating to the issues of our society and world.
  - (4) promoting justice, liberation and the integrity of creation among peoples in the light of gospel values.
  - (5) animating a sensitivity to and awareness of missionary responsibility by diffusing information about mission (cf. *Ad Gentes* 36).
  - (6) seeking to integrate the missionary ideal into Christian life, inspiring missionary vocations and encouraging new ways of participating in mission, and doing all that is possible to sustain these forms of participation.
  - (7) promoting inter-religious dialogue.
  - (8) having an appropriate and effective structure in place to ensure delivery of its goals.

### **ART 3. POWERS OF THE ASSOCIATION**

1. The Association possesses deliberative and executive powers sufficient for all that concerns its own organization and administration of its affairs, but none in respect of the individual member Institutes and Societies themselves.
2. The Association must respect the full internal autonomy of the Religious Institutes and Societies of Apostolic Life of which it is composed. Likewise the full or partial use of the services which the Association offers is left to the free judgment of each Institute or Society.

### **ART 4. FUNCTIONS OF THE ASSOCIATION**

The Association pursues its purpose by offering to Leaders<sup>1</sup> who compose it, a means of co-operation and co-ordination of activity and effort. It achieves this purpose through various activities such as:

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<sup>1</sup> The term Leader is to be understood in the sense of ‘major superior’ found in canon 620. It refers to leaders both of Religious Institutes and Societies of Apostolic Life. \*\*\*\* *We have just used the generic term “leader” since “Congregation Leader” might be misunderstood.*

1. The co-operative study of problems of common interest.
2. The exploration and provision of opportunities for actual co-operation between Institutes and Societies.
3. By assistance, through its activities and support, in all that can lead to the advantage of Religious Institutes and Societies in general or of a particular Institute or Society.

**ART 5. RELATIONSHIP OF THE ASSOCIATION TO ECCLESIASTICAL AUTHORITY**

1. The Association depends immediately on the Holy See by which its statutes have been approved (Can. 709) and with which it will communicate officially by the intermediary of His Excellency, the Apostolic Nuncio to Ireland.
2. The Association seeks “to collaborate diligently and in a spirit of trust with the Episcopal Conference and promotes joint discussion on matters having reference to both Bishops and Religious Institutes and Societies of Apostolic Life (*Mutual Relations*, n. 63).
3. The Association encourages dialogue between the various Institutes serving in a diocese and between them and the bishop for the pastoral good of the local Church (*Mutual Relations*, n.48).
4. Without prejudice to the constitutions of its individual member-bodies, the Association shall be an organ of liaison between the Irish Episcopal Conference and the missionary, mission-sending and mission-aid organisations for all that pertains to the recruitment, training and sending overseas of missionary personnel.

**ART 6. QUALIFICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP**

1. The Association is open to membership by all the Leaders with responsibility for Religious Institutes and Societies of Apostolic Life present in Ireland.
2. Institutes and Societies not directly represented in the Association may make use of the services of the Association, by arrangement with the Executive Council.

**ART 7. MEMBERSHIP OF THE ASSOCIATION**

1. Members of the Association are Leaders of organisations who have formally joined the Association through the approval of the Executive Council and who continue to subscribe to the support of the Association.
2. Legitimate successors of Leaders who have been members of the Association, are themselves members of the Association by the very fact of assuming office.

3. In the case of Institutes or Societies whose Leaders reside outside Ireland, such Leaders may be directly involved in the Association, or may appoint a delegate in Ireland to represent them.
4. All Leaders who cease to hold office also cease to be members of the Association.

## **ORGANISATION OF THE ASSOCIATION**

### **THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL AND STANDING COMMITTEES OF THE ASSOCIATION**

#### **ART 8. MEMBERSHIP OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

1. The Executive Council is composed of at least eight and not more than twelve elected members of the Association, of which there must be at least three women and three men.
2. The Executive Council shall have a Standing Committee which will have the power to make decisions on behalf of the Executive Council when necessary.
3. The Standing Committee will consist of the President, Vice-President, and two other Executive members appointed by the Executive Council.
4. The Executive Council should reflect as far as possible the variety of Religious Institutes and Societies of Apostolic Life in Ireland.

#### **ART 9. ELECTION FOR MEMBERS OF EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

1. Members will be informed of the number to be elected and in what categories they occur.
2. Members give in nominations of those who have agreed to be so nominated.
3. Ballot list is presented for election at the General Assembly.
4. Election takes place by means of a secret written ballot.
5. The actual election will be determined as follows:
  - (a) An absolute majority is required for election.
  - (b) If after the first scrutiny, no candidate has obtained an absolute majority, a second ballot will be made forthwith.
  - (c) If this second ballot produces no election, a third and last ballot will be made, in which a relative majority of votes will suffice.
  - (d) In this third and last ballot, only those candidates can be voted for, who have tied for first and second place in the second ballot, or should no such tie have

occurred, the candidate who came first together with the candidate or candidates who came second.

- (e) If in this third ballot there is a tie between the two or more with a relative majority, the election will be decided by lot.

**ART 10. THE TERM OF OFFICE OF MEMBERS**

1. The members of the Executive Council are elected for two years and may be re-elected for one further term.
2. If before the expiration of the two year term, an office on the Executive Council becomes vacant, it is filled by nomination and postal vote unless it occurs within three months of the next General Assembly.
3. The Executive Council may appoint a person to be a member of the Executive Council either to fill a causal vacancy or as an addition to the existing Executive Council members. Any such Executive Council member so appointed shall hold office only until the next following General Assembly, and shall then be eligible for re-election.

**ART 11. THE OFFICES OF PRESIDENT AND VICE-PRESIDENT**

1. The President and Vice-President are elected from amongst the members of the Executive Council by the members of the Executive Council.
2. When the person elected as President is a man the Vice-President will be a woman and vice versa.
3. The President gives any necessary directions to the Secretary General which may arise out of decisions of the Executive Council.
4. In the case of a tie in a vote by the Executive Council, the President decides the matter by use of a casting vote.
5. The Vice-President co-operates with the President in all matters pertaining to the Association and presides at meetings of the Executive Council in the absence of the President.
6. If the office of President becomes vacant the Vice-President assumes the office until the election of the President at the next General Assembly. The Executive Council shall then appoint from among their number a Vice-President who will act until the next General Assembly.
7. The term of office of the President and Vice-President is for a period of two years, renewable once.
8. Officers take office immediately after election.

9. Minutes of the elections and of the Annual General Assembly as a whole, drawn up by the Director/Secretary General are distributed to all the members. Copies are sent to the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life through the Apostolic Nuncio.

#### **ART 12. THE FUNCTION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

1. The Executive Council exercises a leadership role in the Association and it is competent to take all lawful measures necessary and useful to promote the purposes of the Association as set out in Art. 2.
2. It belongs to the Executive Council to:
  - (a) Formulate strategy to respond to the needs of members.
  - (b) Address the business of the Association in the Annual General Assembly.
  - (c) Delegate implementation to the Secretary General and Team.
  - (d) Foster a high standard of governance and compliance with Canon law.
  - (e) Ensure a high standard of fiduciary responsibility and approve the financial statements and annual budget for presentation to the Annual General Assembly.
  - (f) Recommend the level of subscription to the members at the Annual General Assembly.
  - (g) Consider and approve structures, processes and resources when proposed by the Secretary General.
  - (h) Set up or dissolve committees and regional associations. Approve committee structure and membership and define their terms of reference.
  - (i) Appoint the Association representatives to other Bodies.
  - (j) Persons appointed to represent the Association on external bodies shall submit a brief annual report to the Executive Council through the Secretary General.
  - (k) Approve the annual report of the year's activities of the Secretary General and of the Secretariat for presentation to the General Assembly.
  - (l) Appoint or terminate the employment of the Secretary General.

#### **ART 13. PROCEDURE FOR TRANSACTION OF BUSINESS**

1. The quorum necessary for a meeting of the Executive Council is an absolute majority of the members present of Executive Council.
2. Normally decisions on matters of business are arrived at by consensus. If a matter requires an urgent decision, a show of hands may be required by the President, in which case a relative majority decides.
3. In a particular matter the President may decide that a secret ballot is necessary, or if some members request such.
4. The Executive Council shall meet not less than four times each year.

5. The Secretary General attends all meetings of the Executive Council unless requested by the President not to do so.
6. The Executive Council shall allocate an annual sum to meet the out-of-pocket expenses of President and Vice-President.

## **THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE ASSOCIATION**

### **ART 14. THE AUTHORITY OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

1. The General Assembly is the supreme authority of the Association.
2. Through the elections, the General Assembly gives the Executive Council authority to act in its place.
3. The Executive Council is responsible to the General Assembly.

### **ART 15. MEMBERSHIP OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

1. The General Assembly is open to all members of the Association.
2. Members who are unable to attend may nominate in writing a substitute with voting power. Any such substitute must be a member of the Religious Institute or Society of Apostolic Life in question.

### **ART 16. TIME AND PLACE OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

1. The General Assembly will take place once a year. The Executive Council will declare time and place of the General Assembly and will also prepare the agenda. Notice of the Assembly and its agenda will be sent to all members of the Association.
2. The President shall call an extraordinary general assembly if the Executive so decides or if at least one-third of the members request it. Members shall receive notice of this assembly as well as its agenda, at least ten days in advance.
3. In accordance with the Motu Proprio "*Sollicitudo omnium ecclesiarum*" (1X,2) the Apostolic Nuncio will be invited to the opening session of the General Assembly.

### **ART 17. COMPETENCE OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

1. **The General Assembly is competent:**
  - (a) to discuss and decide all matters relevant to the purpose of the Association as stated in Art. 2 of these Statutes.

- (b) to approve the report presented by the Secretary General on the activities of the Association since the previous General Assembly.
- (c) to approve the financial report for the same period and the budget for the following year.
- (d) to revise these Statutes by an absolute majority vote of the assembly; such revision requires the subsequent approval of the Holy See.

**ART 18. PROCEDURE OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

1. An annual report of the activities of the Association shall be submitted to the General Assembly by way of accountability. Such a report shall be prepared singly by the Executive Council, the Secretariat and, where appropriate, by each Commission. Proposals for action for the year ahead will be elicited from the General Assembly.
2. Persons appointed to represent the Association on external bodies shall submit a brief report for inclusion in the Annual Report through the Secretary General.
3. Proposals for the AGM will be sought from members of the Association prior to the General Assembly.
4. Proposals for the AGM must be approved by the Executive Council, who may also combine submissions if they are broadly the same.
5. For a proposal to be put to the floor of the Annual General Assembly, the motion must have both a proposer and a seconder, the proposer/delegate being present at the AGM to speak briefly to the motion.
  - (a) Each motion is to be suitably discussed before a vote is taken; the motion is decided by a majority vote, i.e. by an absolute majority of the votes of those present.
6. The vote of the Assembly may be taken in either of two ways:
  - (a) usually by an open vote, i.e. by a show of hands,
  - (b) by a secret ballot, if in the judgment of the President, such is required.

**ESTABLISHMENT AND MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEES OF THE ASSOCIATION**

**ART 19. ESTABLISHMENT AND MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEES OF THE ASSOCIATION**

1. The Executive Council may establish Committees of the Association, each concerned with an aspect of the activity of the Association.
2. Appointments to the Committees shall be made by the Executive Council.

3. The Executive Council shall appoint the Chairperson of the Committees.
4. Each Committee shall have its own Terms of Reference approved by the Executive Council.

**ART 20. OBJECTIVE OF THE COMMITTEES**

The objective of each Committee shall be to promote the Purpose of the Association (Art. 2) in the area for which the Committees have responsibility.

**ART 21. OPERATION OF THE COMMITTEES**

1. Each Committee of the Association is responsible through the Secretary General and submits reports regularly.
2. The Secretary General or his / her nominee normally attends the meetings of the Committees.
3. The Committees deal with the Secretariat for information and services through the Secretary General.

## **THE SECRETARIAT OF THE ASSOCIATION**

**ART 22. THE SECRETARIAT AND ITS FUNCTION**

1. The Association will have a Secretariat with appropriate quarters and facilities. The location of the Secretariat will be determined by the Executive Council and the running expenses will be arranged for in the annual budget.
2. The Secretariat is for the service of the Association. Each member of the Association may communicate with the Secretariat for information.

**ART 23. COLLECTION AND CUSTODY OF THE ASSOCIATION ARCHIVES**

1. The Secretary General will arrange for collection and safe custody of all documents that concern the Association and its Committees.
2. The material conserved in the archives may be consulted at the Secretariat but original copies may not be taken away. Authenticated copies of material will be made available by the Secretary General when necessary.

**ART 24. THE SECRETARY GENERAL**

1. The Secretary General is appointed by the Executive Council for a period of three years and the Secretary General may be reappointed.

2. The Secretary General shall be appointed on such remunerations and upon such terms and conditions as the Executive Council may think fit.
3. The Secretary General is responsible to the Association through the Executive Council and will have the following responsibilities:
  - (a) Implementing the strategy of the Association
  - (b) Carrying out the policy of the Executive Council and contributing to policy making.
  - (c) Being responsible for setting priorities and resource planning.
  - (d) Co-ordinating the work of the Secretariat and the various offices.
  - (e) Being responsible for the day to day running of the Secretariat which is the Executive arm of the Association.
  - (f) Ensuring that the services for the Executive Council, the Committees and the Association as a whole are provided efficiently.
  - (g) Negotiating, when designated to do so, on behalf of the Association.
  - (h) Representing the Association and speaking on its behalf where appropriate. Liaising with other Bodies for the Association.
  - (i) Being responsible for financial control of the funds of the Association.
  - (j) Preparing an annual budget
  - (k) Presenting an annual financial report.

#### **ART 25. COMMUNICATION WITHIN THE ASSOCIATION**

Structures which will facilitate communication within the Association shall be established where appropriate, with the approval of the Executive Committee.

These will include:

- Electronic databases;
- Group meetings of Leaders known as Networks;
- Associations for members at regional level;
- Special meetings to deal with different areas of the apostolate or issues which may arise;
- Regular communication to members through Newsletters or e mail bulletins.

The aim of all such structures will be to promote the purpose of the Association as stated in Art. 2 of these Statutes.

#### **ART 26. CONCLUDING NORM: REVISION OF STATUTES**

These Statutes, approved by the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, can be changed only after an absolute majority of those voting in the General Assembly have agreed to the change and that change has been approved by the Congregation.

In the case of a lacuna in the operative norms of these Statutes, the Executive Council has the authority to draft interim norms which will be presented to the next General Assembly. That Assembly must then decide whether or not to include the interim norms in these Statutes.