

CHIROGRAPH OF JOHN PAUL II WHEREBY THE INSTITUTE FOR THE WORKS OF RELIGION IS GIVEN A NEW STRUCTURE

English translation of the original Italian version

With a Chirograph dated 27 June 1942, my venerable predecessor Pope Pius XII established the Institute for the Works of Religion in Vatican City and granted it juridical personality. The Institute incorporated the pre-existing Administration for the Works of Religion, whose Statutes had been approved by the same Supreme Pontiff on 17 March 1941, and which itself originated in the Commission *ad pias causas* established by Pope Leo XIII in 1887.

With a further Chirograph dated 24 January 1944, Pope Pius XII provided new regulations for the Institute, leaving it to the Supervisory Commission of Cardinals to propose whatever amendments to the Statutes of 17 March 1941 might prove necessary for the Chirograph's implementation.

Now, in order to better adapt the Institute's organization and activities to current needs, particularly by drawing on the cooperation and sense of responsibility of competent Catholic lay persons, I have decided to provide the Institute for the Works of Religion with a new structure, while retaining its name and purpose.

1. The aim of the Institute is to provide for the custody and administration of moveable or immovable goods transferred or entrusted to the same by physical or juridical persons, and intended for works of religion or charity.
2. The Institute enjoys juridical personality and has its offices in Vatican City. For any dispute that may arise, the competent court is that of the Vatican City State.
3. The following are agencies of the Institute:
 - The Commission of Cardinals
 - The Prelate
 - The Board of Superintendence
 - The Directorate
 - The Board of Auditors.
4. The Commission of Cardinals is composed of five Cardinals appointed by the Supreme Pontiff for a five-year term which can be renewed. It oversees the Institute's adherence to statutory norms in accordance with the procedures provided for in the Statutes.
5. The Prelate, who is appointed by the Commission of Cardinals, follows the Institute's work, serves as Secretary of the meetings of the Commission, and attends meetings of the Board of Superintendence.
6. The Board of Superintendence is responsible for the administration and management of the Institute, and for overseeing and supervising its financial, economic and operational activities. The Board is appointed by the Commission of Cardinals and is composed of five Members, each of

whom is appointed for a five-year term which can be renewed.

7. The President of the Board of Superintendence is also the legal representative of the Institute.
8. The Directorate is made up of the General Director and the Vice-Director, both of whom are appointed by the Board of Superintendence with the approval of the Commission of Cardinals. The Director can be appointed for either a definite or an indefinite term. The Directorate is responsible for all the Institute's operational activities and is accountable to the Board of Superintendence.
9. The Board of Superintendence is to appoint three Auditors with proven administrative and accounting ability for a term of no more than three years. This term can be renewed. The Auditors report directly to the Board of Superintendence.

This Chirograph will be published in the *Acta Apostolicae Sedis*, together with the new Statutes of the Institute for the Works of Religion, which, following my approval, will be published as a supplement to the *Acta Apostolicae Sedis*.

Given in Rome, at Saint Peter's, on 1 March in the year 1990, the twelfth of my Pontificate.

IOANNES PAULUS PP. II

SUPPLEMENT INSTITUTE FOR THE WORKS OF RELIGION STATUTES

English translation of the original Italian version

CHAPTER I NAME, PURPOSE AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE INSTITUTE

Art. 1

The Institute for the Works of Religion (hereafter "the Institute") enjoys canonical juridical personality and has its offices in Vatican City.

Art. 2

The purpose of the Institute is to provide for the custody and administration of moveable or immovable goods transferred or entrusted to the same by physical or juridical persons, and intended for works of religion or charity.

The Institute therefore receives goods intended, at least in part or for the future, according to the ends defined in the above clause. The Institute can accept deposits of goods from agencies and individuals of the Holy See or the Vatican City State.

Art. 3

The Institute is responsible for the custody and administration of goods received.

This responsibility is regulated by the current laws of the Vatican City State, by the provisions of the present Statutes and by the Institute's Regulations, as well as by specific conditions established for individual transactions.

For any disputes that may arise, the competent court is that of the Vatican City State.

**CHAPTER II
ORGANIZATION OF THE INSTITUTE**

Art. 4

The following are agencies of the Institute:

- The Commission of Cardinals
- The Prelate
- The Board of Superintendence
- The Directorate
- The Board of Auditors.

**CHAPTER III
THE COMMISSION OF CARDINALS**

Art. 5

The Commission of Cardinals is made up of five Cardinals appointed by the Holy Father and is headed by a Cardinal President designated by the Members of the Commission.

The Members of the Commission are appointed for a five-year term which can be renewed.

Should a Member leave office, the Holy Father shall provide for his replacement; the new Member will remain in office until the end of the Commission's term.

Art. 6

Meetings of the Commission of Cardinals are convened by the Cardinal President at least twice a year

and on any other occasion he deems fitting.

As a rule, each Cardinal must be notified of the meeting and provided with its agenda at least five days before the meeting takes place, except in emergency situations.

Art. 7

For the Commission's meetings to be valid, at least three Cardinals must be present. Decisions must be made on the basis of an absolute majority of the votes of the Cardinals present, or else unanimously when only three Cardinals are present.

The minutes of each meeting are to be drawn up by the Prelate in his capacity as Secretary of the Commission; they are to be read and approved at the subsequent meeting.

Art. 8

The Commission of Cardinals oversees the Institute's adherence to its statutory norms.

The Commission appoints and removes members of the Board of Superintendence and, at the Board's request, its President and Vice-President.

In addition, the Commission:

- a) decides on the allocation of earnings, after examining the Financial Statement and taking into consideration the Institute's minimal capital requirements;
- b) proposes statutory amendments to Higher Authority;
- c) determines the remuneration assigned to the Members of the Board of Superintendence;
- d) approves the appointment and removal of the Director and Vice-Director as decided by the Board of Superintendence;
- e) settles questions which may arise regarding Members of the Board of Superintendence or the Directorate.

**CHAPTER IV
THE PRELATE**

Art. 9

The Prelate is appointed by the Commission of Cardinals, and

- a) follows the Institute's work and has access to the Institute's records and files;
- b) serves as Secretary at meetings of the Commission of Cardinals, and is responsible for drawing up the minutes;
- c) attends the meetings of the Board of Superintendence;
- d) submits his observations to the Commission of Cardinals, communicating them likewise to the Board of Superintendence.

The Prelate has his own Office within the Institute.

CHAPTER V THE BOARD OF SUPERINTENDENCE

Art. 10

The Board of Superintendence is responsible for the administration and management of the Institute, and for overseeing and supervising its financial, economic and operational activities.

Art. 11

The Board of Superintendence is appointed by the Commission of Cardinals and is made up of five members, each possessing recognized economic and financial experience and proven trustworthiness.

Each Board Member serves for a five-year term which can be renewed.

If a Board Member leaves office, the Commission of Cardinals provides for his replacement.

The new Board Member remains in office until the end of the Board's term.

Art. 12

Meetings of the Board of Superintendence are called by the President at least quarterly, and on other occasions, when deemed necessary, or at the request of two of its Members, submitted in writing to the President with a statement of reasons.

The President is to notify the Board Members by letter, telex or fax, indicating the day, time and place of the meeting, and the agenda.

The notification must be received by Board Members at least ten days before the date of the meeting or, in cases of emergency, at least two days before.

If in the course of a Board meeting the President announces the time and place of the next meeting,

those Board Members present are considered to have been duly notified.

Art. 13

For the validity of decisions made by the Board of Superintendence, a majority of the Board Members must be present.

Decisions are made by an absolute majority of the Board Members.

If only three Board Members are present, the vote must be unanimous.

To approve the financial statement and to appoint the Director and Vice-Director, a majority of four Board Members is required; in the event that a Board Member is unable to be present in person, his vote can be expressed in writing.

The method of voting is determined by the President.

If the President is absent or unable to attend, his place is taken by the Vice-President.

Art. 14

The Board of Superintendence appoints, for each meeting, one of the Institute's executive officers to serve as Secretary. The latter must draw up the minutes of the meeting and sign them, together with the President. The Secretary can also authorize copies and abstracts.

The minutes of each meeting of the Board of Superintendence are to be read at the subsequent meeting, and are to be approved and signed by the Board Members present.

Art. 15

The Board of Superintendence reviews and evaluates the Directorate's activities and its adherence to regulations, instructions and directives, on the basis of the monthly written statement as mentioned in Art. 22.

Art. 16

The Board of Superintendence approves, by 30 April each year, the Financial Statement prepared by the Directorate, and then forwards it to the Commission of Cardinals, accompanied by a report on the Institute's economic and financial status, and the conformity of its activity to its statutory aims.

Art. 17

The Board of Superintendence is charged with the following tasks:

- 1) it formulates overall policy guidelines and basic strategies for the Institute's activity in accordance with its institutional ends;

- 2) it defines criteria for advancing the programmes and annual goals of the Directorate and the approval of its proposals;
- 3) it monitors the Institute's economic and financial activity;
- 4) it oversees the implementation of already established programmes and goals, insofar as investments and other activities are concerned;
- 5) it determines the most appropriate financial organization for the Institute, while proposing improvements and, in general, the most suitable means of increasing its capital and operations, in strict compliance with economic and financial regulations and with the aims of the Institute;
- 6) it proposes to the Commission of Cardinals any amendments to the Statutes, provided that such amendments have been unanimously approved by the Board;
- 7) it issues the Institute's Regulations, which are to contain detailed descriptions of the powers and areas of competence of the Board and the General Directorate;
- 8) it grants to the Director and, at the request of the same, to the Vice-Director, Executives and Officials, power of signature in the name of the Institute, in accordance with the procedures set down in the Regulations;
- 9) it approves the annual report of the Directorate.

CHAPTER VI LEGAL REPRESENTATION OF THE INSTITUTE

Art. 18

The legal representative of the Institute is the President of the Board of Superintendence.

CHAPTER VII THE DIRECTORATE

Art. 19

The Directorate is composed of the General Director and the Vice-Director. They are appointed by the Board of Superintendence with the approval by the Commission of Cardinals.

The Board of Superintendence can remove the General Director and the Vice-Director, with the approval of the Commission of Cardinals.

Art.20

The General Director can be appointed for either a definite or an indefinite term, which can be renewed.

The General Director and the Vice-Director conclude their service on their seventieth birthday.

In exceptional cases, and for good reasons, the agencies responsible for appointing them may decide to extend the service of the General Director and the Vice-Director beyond their seventieth birthday.

Art. 21

Executives and Officials are proposed by the General Director and appointed by the Board of Superintendence.

Art. 22

The Directorate is to prepare a monthly written statement of the economic and financial status at the end of the previous month. This statement is communicated to the Members of the Board of Superintendence and the Prelate, together with an explanatory report.

Art. 23

In the first quarter of each year, the Directorate draws up the financial statement for the previous business year (gains and losses, and overall capital status), in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles.

This statement must be accompanied by a report on the Institute's management trends.

The financial statement and supporting documentation must be sent to the Board of Superintendence at least thirty days before the meeting scheduled for the approval of the financial statement.

This documentation is also sent to the Board of Auditors.

Art. 24

The Directorate is responsible for all the Institute's operational activities and is accountable to the Board of Superintendence according to directives received.

The Directorate's areas of competence and specific powers are listed in the Institute's Regulations.

Art. 25

The Directorate submits to the Board of Superintendence every act that does not fall under its mandate.

In case of emergency, the Director can be given authorization to act by the President of the Board of Superintendence, after the latter has consulted at least one Board Member. Resolutions signed by the General Director with immediate effect with regard to third parties must nonetheless be ratified by the

Board of Superintendence at its next meeting.

The Director, and in his absence the Vice-Director, is ordinarily invited to attend the meetings of the Board of Superintendence.

CHAPTER VIII AUDITORS

Art. 26

The Board of Superintendence appoints three Auditors with particular administrative and accounting expertise for a maximum term of three years. This term can be renewed.

The Auditors report directly to the Board of Superintendence, which can call upon them to give a report at their meetings.

Art. 27

The Auditors must carry out, at least quarterly, audits of assets and administrative and accounting checks of books and entries.

If requested by the Board of Superintendence, they may carry out internal audits or other such checks.

The Board of Superintendence can assign specific tasks to the Board of Auditors or to its individual Members.

The relevant findings are made available to the Board of Superintendence and to the Prelate.

Art. 28

The Auditors examine the annual financial statement, along with the Directorate's report and supporting documentation, and they must submit their observations, in writing, to the Board of Superintendence; they must also communicate them to the Directorate and the Prelate.

CHAPTER IX GENERAL PROVISIONS

Art. 29

The Statutes of 17 March 1941 concerning the Administration of the Works of Religion, and all other provisions contrary to these Statutes, are hereby revoked.

Art. 30

All matters not covered by these Statutes shall be governed by the canonical provisions in force.

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The original Italian version is available at:

http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/letters/1990/documents/hf_jp-ii_let_19900301_ist-opere-religione_it.html