

## **The General Statutes Militia Immaculatae—MI**

### **PREAMBLE**

Erected as a Pious Union on January 2, 1922, by the Vicariate of Rome, the *Militia of the Immaculata* has received particular attention and special care from the Supreme Pontiffs. Among the examples of this attention and care are the Brief of Pius XI (December 18, 1926), which grants indulgences and privileges, and the subsequent Brief of the same Pontiff, *Die XVIII mensis Decembris* (April 23, 1927), by which the *Militia of the Immaculata* was raised to a Primary Pious Union. On November 8, 1975, the Pontifical Council for the Laity approved the General Statutes of the *Militia of the Immaculata* and this approbation was renewed on December 20, 1980, *ad experimentum usque ad accommodationem novo Codici iuris canonici*. On October 16, 1997, the Pontifical Council for the Laity decreed, in a document signed by Cardinal J. Francis Stafford, the erection of the *Militia of the Immaculata* as an International Public Association, in accordance with can. 312, §1, 1° et seq. of the Code of Canon Law, approving at the same time its General Statutes.

### **NATURE**

#### **Art. 1**

The *Militia of the Immaculata* (MI), founded in Rome by Saint Maximilian Kolbe OFM Conv. and his six confreres Friar Henry Granata, Friar Jerome Biasi, Friar Anthony Glowinski, Friar Joseph Pal, Friar Quirico Pignalberi, and Friar Anthony Mansi, on October 16, 1917, is an international public association of the faithful. It is open to the laity, clerics and consecrated persons, and is governed according to the norms of canons 298–320 of the CIC [*Code of Canon Law*] of 1983, the directives of the Catholic Church, and the present Statutes. The name of the Association, based on the original inspiration of Saint Maximilian and his companions, who defined it as eminently apostolic in nature, can vary, in order that it may respond better to the different theological, pastoral and cultural needs of our time, but the international acronym MI remains unchanged (cf. *KW* [*The Writings of St. Maximilian Maria Kolbe*], 1211, 1220, 1327). The name that the MI adopts in each nation must be approved by the presiding International Council. The MI International Center is located at the Convento San Massimiliano Kolbe, Via San Teodoro 42, Rome, of the Friars Minor Conventual, historically the Primary Seat of the Association.

### **PURPOSE**

#### **Art. 2**

The purpose of the MI, universal like its mission, consists of collaborating in the conversion and sanctification of all, thus obtaining the greatest glory of the Most Holy and Undivided Trinity (cf. *LG* [*Lumen Gentium*] 69). MI members live their own baptismal consecration by welcoming the gift of the Redeemer from the Cross: “Behold your Mother” (Jn 19:27). They entrust and give themselves completely to the Immaculata with a view to their own sanctification and in order to collaborate in Mary’s maternal mission to direct the heart of each person toward Christ. On Calvary, Christ Himself accomplishes the first act of entrusting, giving the disciple to Mary and Mary to the disciple (cf. Jn 19:25-27),

and thus the life of the disciple, from that moment, is characterized by her maternal presence (cf. *RM [Redemptoris Mater]* 45). One of the ways in which the special entrusting of a person to the Mother of Christ has been practiced and expressed within the history of the Church is that of Saint Maximilian Kolbe. He lived that vital, dynamic relationship with Mary in a unique way, understood as becoming “*changed* into her, transubstantiated into her” (*KW* 508), in order to reach a more perfect union with Christ and in order to point Him out to all people, as she did (cf. Jn 2:5).

### **Art. 3**

The giving of oneself completely to the Immaculata in the spirit of the MI is a conscious and dynamic commitment to live the following of Christ after the example of Mary, to grow in faith, hope and charity in such a way as to put oneself at the service of His salvific mission.

## **SPIRITUALITY**

### **Art. 4**

The MI is an association in which the members, along with Saint Maximilian, contemplate in Mary Immaculate the unspoiled beauty with which the Father has thought of us, in Christ, since the beginning of the world, when He chose us to be holy and blameless in his sight, to be full of love (cf. Eph 1:3-14). Mary is that new creature fashioned by the Spirit (cf. *LG* 56), “full of grace” (Lk 1:28) in view of her mission as Mother of the Son of God. She is the beginning of our Redemption, the anticipated fruit of Christ’s Passion, Death and Resurrection, resplendent with the beauty of the Risen One before the pilgrim Church (cf. *LG* 68). The members of the MI, seeing in her the firstfruits of God’s gifts to humanity, and considering how in her earthly life she advanced in her pilgrimage of faith, following her Son with complete dedication from the Annunciation unto the Cross (cf. *LG* 58), recognize in her the exemplar of sanctity that inspires their own following of Christ.

### **Art. 5**

Recognizing in the Immaculata the perfect disciple of the Lord, the paragon of the believer, MI members take up the invitation of Saint Maximilian to “become her” by following an itinerary by which they can make their own the Virgin’s dispositions in her relationship with God and others. Thus, after the example of Mary, the attentive Virgin, the Virgin in prayer, the Virgin-Mother, the Virgin presenting offerings (cf. *MC [Marialis Cultus]* 17–20), they will strive to practice:

- listening to the Word of God;
- liturgical and personal prayer;
- charity toward everyone;
- offering their own being, in order to collaborate with Christ in the salvation of the world.

**Art. 6**

The MI affirms the preeminence of the interior life, according to a principle dear to Saint Maximilian: “First of all, be dedicated completely to your own spiritual life, so that you may give yourself completely to all . . . by way of overabundance” (cf. *KW* 971, 980). MI members renew daily their own offering to the Immaculata and the ejaculatory prayer: “O Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to you, and for all those who do not have recourse to you, especially the enemies of holy Church, and all those recommended to you,” together with the intentions suggested monthly by the International Center. As a sign of their own belonging to the MI, members wear with faith the *Miraculous Medal* (cf. *KW* 21).

## FORMATION

**Art. 7**

The members of the MI are called to be responsible for their own spiritual formation in accord with the purpose of the Association. The MI International Center will provide annual general guidelines for the formation of members, with special attention to new developments in Mariology, the deepening of the spirituality proper to the Association and the missionary dimension that characterizes it. For their part, MI members will nourish their formation, both personal and communal, drawing on the riches of Saint Maximilian’s writings and life, on the Magisterium of the Church, and on the various initiatives proposed by the Association. In its attention to the Church’s pilgrim journey, the MI promotes initiatives at the national and international levels for the formation and preparation of leaders, in order to sustain them in the task of transmitting the ideal of the MI in the present time, in ways appropriate for the various categories of persons and diverse cultures.

## MISSION

**Art. 8**

The MI was defined by Father Kolbe as “a global vision of Catholic life in a new form, consisting in the bond with the Immaculata, our universal Mediatrix before Jesus” (*KW* 1220). In fact, the MI aims to promote the extension of the Reign of Christ in the world through the action of the Immaculata, encouraging all Christians to unite themselves to the Immaculate Heart of Mary and to place themselves at her service in the mission that she has as Mother of the Church.

**Art. 9**

The members of the MI make the mission of the Church their own: “to carry forth the Gospel of Christ, the source of hope for humanity and the renewal of society” (*ChL* [*Christifideles Laici*] 29). The specific feature of the MI consists in living this mission in the hands of Mary and after her example. Indeed, it was she who first welcomed Christ into her womb, who carried Him to the house of Elizabeth, gave Him to the world, showed Him to the Magi, pointed Him out in Cana as the Word of truth and life. It was she who, at the foot of the Cross, accepted from Him the mission of being our Mother, and in the Upper Room gave witness to Him before the first community born out of His Passion, Death and Resurrection.

#### **Art. 10**

There are three fronts of action for the members of the Militia of the Immaculata: oneself, one's surroundings, the world. Indeed, the person who chooses to belong to the MI:

1. Begins his/her mission by conversion and personal sanctification; the evangelization of oneself being, in fact, the starting point of one's mission;
2. Discerns then in family, in neighbors, in the field of his/her work and free time, the providential terrain to evangelize by the witness of charity, by word at opportune times while respecting the liberty of others;
3. Widens his/her mission to embrace every person and the entire world.

#### **Art. 11**

MI members live their mission above all by witness in their ordinary activities and in the various sectors of social activity in which they are immersed, permeating with an evangelical spirit every human reality (cf. *KW* 92). In every environment in which they live and work, they are called to promote the protection of life from conception to natural death, to offer themselves in service to the integral dignity of the person, and to set forth the values of fraternity, justice and solidarity.

#### **Art. 12**

Always and everywhere, all members of the MI are aware of being missionaries. They are such in the measure in which they live their union with Christ the Redeemer after the example of Mary. In recognizing that the true missionary is one committed to the way of holiness, they give primacy of place to the evangelical means of prayer, sacrifice and the witness of their life (cf. *RMi* [*Redemptoris Missio*] 90). They also take it upon themselves to distribute the *Miraculous Medal*, which Father Kolbe strongly recommended as a sign of Mary's maternal concern for each human being.

#### **Art. 13**

The members of the MI avail themselves of the means that Father Kolbe used with prophetic and Franciscan spirit, thereby becoming apostles "of the pen, the microphone, the screen, or whatever other means" (*KW* 382).

They collaborate in the mission of evangelization of the local communities in which they live, in particular:

1. Through the proclamation of the Word of God: catechesis; traveling missions; programs for spiritual formation; initiatives for keeping up to date in Mariology and Marian pastoral care;
2. Through the human promotion, paying particular attention to emerging needs of the area;
3. Through preferential care for young people and families;
4. Through the use of mass media (publishing activity, radio and television, electronic technologies, etc.).

#### **Art. 14**

In its mission the Association collaborates with the Order of Friars Minor Conventual, with Institutes of consecrated life as well as other actualities of Kolbean inspiration.

## CONDITIONS OF MEMBERSHIP IN THE ASSOCIATION

### Art. 15

MI members are to be baptized members of the Catholic Church and have reached the age of maturity. To belong to the MI it is essential to give oneself completely to the Immaculata: body and soul, human abilities and spiritual gifts. One may enroll in the MI after sufficient preparation, the recitation of the act of consecration and receipt of the Miraculous Medal. The enrollment is celebrated following the ways of the locality. The name of the new member is inscribed in the register of the Association at a Local Center or a juridically erected National Center. A member of the MI who wishes to voluntarily relinquish his/her membership in the Association must provide written notice to the National President, after having consulted with the National Assistant. A member of the MI may legitimately be expelled from the Association for serious incompatibility with the life and work of the Association, but while safeguarding the right of the member in question to offer arguments in his/her own defense.

### Art. 16

Following the directives of Father Kolbe, in the MI the entrustment/consecration can be lived out in a total and unconditional way:

1. Individually and spontaneously, according to the *original program* drafted by the founder himself: “1. Total offering of oneself to the B.V.M. Immaculate, placing oneself as an instrument in her immaculate hands. 2. Wear the Miraculous Medal” (KW 21).

This is the MI/1.

2. In an associative form, constituting themselves as groups to achieve together the formative and apostolic purposes of the Association.

This is the MI/2.

3. In bodies that are legitimately autonomous from the government of the Association, and that are devoted exclusively to the cause of the MI.

This is the MI/3.

It is possible, for pastoral reasons, to render the term “entrustment” as “consecration” whenever the latter is found more suitable in the countries in which it is used.

### Art. 17

The Association directs particular attention to young people. Every National Center is to do everything possible to promote the *MI Youth Movement* (MI Youth and Young Adults) as an area of the apostolate of the Association. For this purpose, the MI will produce specific formation resources.

### Art. 18

Persons who suffer (“Knights at the Foot of the Cross”) constitute a significant presence in the MI and therefore are an important area of MI apostolate. Their consecration to the Immaculata, by offering up their own sufferings, makes the entire Association a participant in the redemptive mystery of Christ and renews its missionary thrust.

## **GOVERNMENT OF THE MI**

### **Art. 19**

The Association includes the following structures:

- The International Center
- National Centers
- Regional Centers
- Local Centers.

### **Art. 20**

The International Center carries out the governing and coordinating of the Association worldwide. Its task is to see that Father Kolbe's ideal and spirituality are strengthened and developed through in-depth studies and new projects, keeping pace with the Church's journey.

### **Art. 21**

The International Center is made up of:

- The President (priest, religious, or lay man or woman)
- The Presidential Council (composed of five people)
- The Assistant (a solemnly professed friar of the Friars Minor Conventual).

The National Centers are structured in a like manner.

### **Art. 22**

The government of the Association consists of:

- The International President
- The Presidential Council
- The General Assembly
- The Board of Auditors, which is the administrative oversight body, comprised of three people.

### **Art. 23**

The International President is the legal representative of the Association. It is his/her responsibility to:

1. Convoke and preside over the Presidential Council twice a year;
2. Convene and preside over the General Assembly every six years;
3. Administer the goods of the Association;
4. Establish National Centers, with the deliberative vote of the Presidential Council;
5. Coordinate, with the Presidential Council, the work of the National Centers;
6. Represent the MI before agencies of the Apostolic See;
7. Promote, with the Presidential Council, meetings, study conferences, and participation in activities promoted by other institutions, bringing, where it is useful and opportune, the contribution of the charism of the MI;
8. Engage, with the Presidential Council, those responsible on the national level in the realization of the official program of the Association;
9. Resolve, with the advice of the Presidential Council, conflicts that may occur within the Association.

The International President, in the fulfillment of his/her duties, works in active collaboration with the International Assistant.

**Art. 24**

It is the task of the International President to present every year to the Pontifical Council for the Laity a written report on the activity of the Association and its administrative operation, in accordance with the provisions of canon 319 of the Code of Canon Law and as approved by the Presidential Council.

**THE INTERNATIONAL PRESIDENTIAL COUNCIL**

**Art. 25**

The International Presidential Council is made up of:

- The President
- The Vice President
- The Secretary
- Three Councilors
- The International Assistant.

**TERM OF OFFICE**

**Art. 26**

The mandates or terms of office at the international level last for six years and are renewable for a second term, but not beyond that.

**RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PRESIDENTIAL COUNCIL**

**Art. 27**

It is the responsibility of the Presidential Council to:

1. Propose, examine and approve projects and activities according to the purposes of the MI;
2. Discuss and examine the report of the International President and the budget and balance sheet presented by the Treasurer;
3. Approve by deliberative vote the erection of National Centers;
4. On the instruction of the President, prepare the list of three nominees for the Board of Auditors to be presented for election by the General Assembly;
5. Approve the annual balance sheet and budget of the International Center and give its consent to extraordinary acts regarding its patrimony;
6. On the proposal of the President, appoint the Editor of *Miles Immaculatae*, the official voice of the Association.

## THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

### Art. 28

Given the universality of the Association, the General Assembly of members is constituted in a representative manner by:

- The International President
- The Presidential Council
- The International Assistant
- The National Presidents
- The National Assistants
- The delegates of the MI Youth Movement
- The delegates of the individual nations, the number of which is established by the Presidential Council.

## ELECTIONS

### Art. 29

All elections must be conducted by secret ballot. For first and second terms of office, an absolute majority is required for the election to be valid.

It is within the competence of the General Assembly to:

1. Elect, according to the norms of Canon Law, the President—who may be a priest, a religious, or a lay man or woman—and the members of the Presidential Council;
2. Elect the Board of Auditors, composed of three members;
3. Discuss and approve the report of the International President;
4. Approve the balance sheet and budget of the International Center;
5. Examine and evaluate the proposals of the Presidential Council and of the members in view of the growth of the MI worldwide, keeping in mind the administrative aspect of these proposals;
6. Examine the reports of the National Centers;
7. Deliver its opinion with a two-thirds majority vote on the dissolution of the Association.

The election of a priest or religious to the office of President or Council member must be confirmed by the competent major superior.

When an office falls vacant for whatever reason, an election should be held as soon as possible, and no later than three canonical months after. If the General Assembly is not in session, the members of the Presidential Council may elect a new member. If the office of President is vacant, the Vice President assumes the position until the next elective Assembly.



### **Art. 30**

The International Assistant is the Minister General of the Order of Friars Minor Conventual.

The International Assistant serves as spiritual guide of the Association. In the fulfillment of his duties, he works in active collaboration with the International President. He is a member of the Presidential Council with no voting rights.

The International Assistant may delegate the performance of his functions to a solemnly professed friar of the Friars Minor Conventual.

### **Art. 31**

The principal tasks of the International Assistant are to:

1. Guarantee the accurate interpretation of the charism;
2. Maintain the historical link between the Association and the Order of the Friars Minor Conventual, in which Saint Maximilian and the other founding friars professed their vows;
3. Provide guidance through clarifications regarding the doctrinal principles that must inform the various actions of the Presidential Council;
4. Foster within the Presidential Council an atmosphere of prayer, that it may animate all the Council's apostolic activity;
5. Appoint the National Assistants;
6. Convoke and preside over the Conference of National Assistants, the body that has the responsibility to coordinate the action and formation of National Assistants worldwide;
7. Provide for and encourage the formation of the National Assistants through conferences organized *ad hoc*;
8. Present a written report, approved by the MI International Presidential Council, to the General Chapter of the Friars Minor Conventual in accord with the General Statutes of the Order (117, §1).

## **FINANCES**

### **Art. 32**

The Association is non-profit. Its resources are made up of:

- proceeds of the specific activities of the International Center
- annual contributions of the National Centers
- bequests, endowments and various donations

- third-party benefits
- subsidies from public and private entities as possible.

Services rendered by members in the exercise of their duties in any office within the ambit of the Association, unless otherwise arranged by the National Councils, fall within the category of voluntary contributions and thus are treated as free in all respects, except for reimbursements for expenses upon presentation of supporting documentation to the Treasurer.

### **Art. 33**

The administration of goods falls to the International President, who may carry out or authorize all the acts and transactions permitted the Association. For decisions regarding acts of an extraordinary nature, which may result a diminution or augmentation of the patrimony, such as, for example, an alienation, purchase, renunciation or acquisition of an inheritance, etc., it is necessary to obtain the approval of the Presidential Council.

The Presidential Council appoints the Treasurer, who is not part of the Council itself.

### **Art. 34**

It is the task of the Board of Auditors to examine the balance sheet and budget to be submitted annually for the approval of the Presidential Council and, at the end of each six-year period, to the General Assembly.

### **Art. 35**

The dissolution of the Association is decided by the International Assembly with a vote of two-thirds of qualified participants in favor, and becomes effective after ratification by the Apostolic See. The residual patrimony, once the liquidation is complete, is donated to another similar non-profit Association.

## **NATIONAL, REGIONAL AND LOCAL CENTERS**

### **Art. 36**

1. The National Centers come under the authority of the International Center with respect to the faithful interpretation and realization of the aims of the Association, and are governed by their own National Directory, ratified by the International Presidential Council on the basis of the present Statutes.

2. It is the competence of the National President to present to the International Assistant, according to the norms of the National Directory, a list of three names proposed by the National Council for the appointment as the National Assistant.

3. With due regard for the unity of the Association, every National Center, with the prior consent of the International Presidential Council, is to work to obtain recognition as a juridical person according to the laws of the State.

### **Art. 37**

1. The recognition of the International Presidential Council is required for the opening of a National Center. This Council will evaluate on a case-by-case basis the opportunity to confer approval.

2. The National President, elected by the General Assembly according to the norms of Canon Law and the National Directory, is to be confirmed by the International President or by his/her delegate who by right presides over the meeting.
3. The National Council shall coordinate and promote the Association throughout the nation, according to the norms of the National Directory.
4. The National President shall submit to the National Council for its approval initiatives of greater importance.
5. The National President is to submit annually a detailed apostolic and administrative report, approved by the respective National Council, to the International Presidential Council.
6. In nations where there exists a City of the Immaculata that is the National Center, the National Assistant is the Guardian or one of his delegates.

**Art. 38**

The initial cell of the Association is the group. The Local Center is formed of one or more groups recognized by the Regional Center or by the International Center. The Regional Center is formed of one or more Local Centers recognized by the National Center or by the International Center. The National Center is formed of one or more Regional Centers, recognized by the International Center, and requires the approval of the Presidential Council. In nations where only one Local Center exists, it may be recognized as National Center by the International Center. The Local, Regional and National Centers are structured after the pattern of the International Center.

**VALIDITY OF THE NORMS**

**Art. 39**

Any changes in the present Statutes must be decided upon by the General Assembly and submitted for approval to the Apostolic See (cf. canon 314).

**Art. 40**

With regard to what is not expressly foreseen in these Statutes, reference is to be made to the pertinent canonical dispositions in force.

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In conformity with the original text, filed in the Archives of the Dicastery.  
Vatican, March 25, 2015

Most Reverend Monsignor Miguel Delgado Galindo  
*Undersecretary*



PONTIFICIUM CONSILIUM PRO LAICIS

299/15/AIC-75

DECREE

The *Militia of the Immaculata* was founded by Saint Maximilian Kolbe on October 16, 1917, and erected as a Pious Union on January 2, 1922, by the then Cardinal Vicar of Rome, Basilio Pompilj. With the Briefs of December 18, 1926, and April 23, 1927, Pope Pius XI granted the Militia of the Immaculata indulgences and privileges and afterward raised it to a Primary Pious Union. Following the approval of the General Statutes by the Pontifical Council for the Laity, on November 8, 1975—renewed on December 20, 1980, *ad experimentum usque ad accommodationem novo Codici iuris canonici*—the same Dicastery, on October 16, 1997, erected the Militia of the Immaculata as a Public International Association of the Faithful, approving at the same time its new General Statutes.

In view of the petition of November 6, 2013, in which Ms. Raffaella Aguzzoni, as President of the Militia of the Immaculata, requested the approval of the General Statutes revised and accepted by the General Assembly of the Association;

Having considered the proposed modifications, aimed at endowing the Militia of the Immaculata with a juridical structure more in keeping with the needs of its mission and its lay identity;

In view of article 134 of the Apostolic Constitution *Pastor Bonus* on the Roman Curia and canons 298–320 and 327–329 of the Code of Canon Law;

The Pontifical Council for the Laity decrees:

The approval of the Statutes of the Militia of the Immaculata, whose written modification is this day duly authenticated by the Dicastery and deposited in its archives.

Given in the Vatican, on March 25, 2015, the Solemnity of the Annunciation of the Lord.

Msgr. Josef Clemens  
*Secretary*

Stanisław Card. Ryłko  
*President*